

THE
NORTHAMPTON LETTER.

H O L Y P E A C E,

Described and recommended, in a Circular Letter, from the Baptist Ministers, and Messengers, assembled at OAKHAM, *June* 14, 15, and 16, 1791.

MAINTAINING the important doctrines of three equal Persons in the Godhead; eternal and personal election †, &c. &c.

To the several churches they represent, or have received letters from, meeting at Codnor in *Derbyshire*, &c. &c *

Grace be to you, and peace from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

Dear Brethren!

THE goodness of God, which endureth continually, having permitted us once more to enjoy our annual assembly in peace, we gladly call upon you to unite with us, in grateful acknowledgments of the same; especially as the letters from the churches generally contained agreeable intelligence, that the work of the Lord is still going on, and that some of them especially have a pleasing prospect of future increase, through the hopeful awakening of such as were lately *dead in trespasses and sins*. We have also reason to bless God, that he has kept our churches stedfast in their attachment to the glorious Doctrines of Grace, and we earnestly pray that their genuine influence may be more abundantly felt in your hearts, and be displayed by the regularity of your lives, and your fruitfulness in every good work.

Amidst the pleasures of our interview, one afflictive providence was deeply felt by us all, (which indeed was noticed with sympathetic concern in most of the letters from the churches,) the removal of our very dear and highly valued

† * Their Confession, and number of Churches as last year : See Register, Part I. 1790, Page the 26th.

Brother *Hall**, who was so active in the first formation of this Association, and who has all along been so great a blessing and ornament to the whole connection. May you continue to pray for the bereaved church at *Arnby*, that God would raise up for them another Pastor after his own heart; and pray for us, that the ministers who remain a while longer with you, may have a double portion of the HOLY SPIRIT poured down upon them, and be enabled more than ever to be *valiant for the truth upon earth*, till he, who hath taken away our dear father from the midst of us, shall say to us also, *Come up hither*.

In our last year's letter we endeavoured to explain and enforce the Christian duty of *Patience*. This year we would call your attention to another of the *Fruits of the Spirit*, which is PEACE. Gal. v. 22.—The blessing of *Peace* is one of the most invaluable of our present enjoyments. Peace is exceedingly desirable in nations, in neighbourhoods, in families, and in churches; and in short, in every department of life. But above all, in our intercourse with God. *Peace with God* is of greater importance than all the rest, because its consequences remain for ever, and it is the origin of every other description of *holy peace*.

At the first creation of mankind, they were formed after the image of God, and consequently, were the objects of his approbation. As long as this continued, all was peace and harmony between heaven and earth. To the pleasures of a good conscience, and the sweets of an undisturbed society, (with angels it is probable, as well as with each other,) were added the endearing smiles of God.—But this, alas! was of short continuance. By sin we became at variance with God and each other, and we were justly exposed to the fierceness of the wrath of the Almighty. It is no wonder, therefore, that anarchy and confusion have prevailed in this world ever since. Our natures were so formed at the first, that *Peace with God* should have an inseparable connection with *Peace with one another*, and even with *ourselves*. Hence it came to pass, that this being once lost, the rest, as a righteous judgment, followed after it of course. God having declared man his enemy, and passed sentence of

* According to the desire of the afflicted family and church, Brother *Ryland* has just published the sermon he preached at the funeral of our dear friend, and annexed a pretty large account of the first rise of the church at *Arnby*, and of its successive pastors, particularly of this late faithful servant of our blessed Lord. The price is one shilling. It is sold in London by *Mathews, Vernor, Ash, and Button*.

condemnation against him, Angels, from loyalty to their offended Sovereign, would naturally withdraw their friendly intercourse, a spirit of discord would rage among sinners themselves, and guilt, and shame, and horror infest their own bosoms.—Such a state of things must nearly approach to that of the fallen angels; and had it not been for the free mercy of God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, we must have had our portion with them, where hope and peace never come. But adored be his name, his thoughts respecting us, were *thoughts of Peace, and not of evil*. The remedy was provided before the disease existed. That which was afterwards declared by Angels at the Messiah's birth, was settled in the Divine Councils, namely, *Peace on earth, and good-will to men*. When all other means must have failed, Immanuel said, *Lo I come*. He came in the *fulness of time*, and shed his blood, as the price of our pardon. With His sacrifice God was well pleased; and through Him, has deigned again to dwell with man upon the earth. Thus the divine holiness, justice, and faithfulness, which must for ever have been at war with our welfare, are now engaged in behalf of all who believe in Jesus. And being reconciled unto God by the death of his Son, we also have fellowship with Angels: we are come to that *innumerable company*; they acknowledge us as brethren, Rev. xix. 10. and officiate as ministering spirits for our good.—From the shedding of the blood of Jesus, we derive Peace to our own souls; and in him find a bond of union which cements us to each other, whatever have been our distinctions or variances in former periods. Thus *all things are gathered together in one, viz. in CHRIST, both which are in heaven, and which are in earth, even in Him*.

What a foundation does all this afford us, brethren, for abounding in Peace! A stranger to mankind would suppose, an object so desirable, accompanied with such motives, must be universally pursued. Yet we see not only a great part of the world still at war with God, with one another, and with themselves; and others whose enmity is more concealed, resting in a false peace; but even those of whom we hope the best, actually enjoy but little of that to which they are introduced.—There is reason to think that were it not owing to our own fault, we might all enjoy much more than we do of that sweet tranquillity which the primitive Christians felt, in being reconciled unto God; much more harmony with one another; and much more of that holy calm
of

of mind, which arises from having this *witness in ourselves that we have pleased God.*

To assist you, brethren, in the pursuit of these desirable objects, is the design of the present letter. We may presume on your candid attention, while we lay down a few DIRECTIONS, and offer a few MOTIVES to this purpose.

First. Cultivate a spirit of trust or confidence in God.—They are kept in continued peace whose minds are stayed upon Him. A fixed, habitual, and lively dependence on the Son of God for the salvation of our souls would tend to exclude those dark and boding fears which annoy our Peace. Could we but say with the Apostle, *I know whom I have trusted, and that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him,* we might look at even death and judgment with composure. It is for want of confidence in God that we are tossed about, as we are, by the afflictions and troubles of the present state. Confidence in the wisdom, power, goodness, and veracity, of God, would turn many a storm into a calm. The thoughts of his being at the helm of the universe; of all that befalls us being by his appointment; of every possible event coming within his knowledge, forming a part of his great plan, and working together for good to them that love him; are enough, if realized, not only to quiet, but to transport us; to make us *rejoice in tribulation* itself, and *count it all joy when we fall into divers temptations.*

*Secondly. Preserve a conscience void of offence towards God and towards man**.—The peace of God cannot consist with criminal indulgences. Sin has ever been the great make-bate in God's world. It was that which at first separated chief friends, and wherever it prevails, it still continues to produce the same effect. Watch against all sin, but especially against those sins which most easily beset you; those to which you are most exposed from age, circumstances, or connections.

* “ A seasonable, steady performance of *secret duties* in their proper hours, and a careful improvement of *all time*, filling up *every hour* with some profitable labour, either of head, heart, or hands, are excellent means of spiritual peace and boldness before God. *Christ* indeed is our peace, and by him we have boldness of access to God; but a good conscience, void of offence, is an excellent preparation for an approach into the divine presence. There is a difference between *self-confidence* and a *self-righteous pleasing ourselves*, with our own duties, attainments and spiritual enjoyments, which godly souls sometimes are guilty of, and that *holy confidence* arising from the testimony of a good conscience, which good *Hezekiah* had, when he says, *Remember, O Lord, how I have walked before thee in truth, and with a perfect heart.*—Then, says the holy Psalmist, *shall I not be ashamed, when I have respect to all thy commandments.* Filling up our time with and for God, is the way to rise up and lie down in peace.” *Edwards's life of Brainerd*, page 75, 76.

Thirdly. As you are subject every day to sin against God, and bring guilt upon your consciences, *take heed that you do not go on in such a way, without renewed repentance, and fresh application to Christ.* We read of some who had *sinned* and had *not repented* of their deeds. It is to be feared this is the case with too many in the present day, and where it is so, solid peace must needs be a stranger. Such was the situation of David after his fall, and previous to the message sent him by Nathan. While he *kept silence*, not confessing his sin, *his bones waxed old*, his prayers, or, as he calls them his roarings, were not heard, *day and night God's hand was heavy upon him*, till at length his *moisture was turned into the drought of summer*. Ps. xxxii. 3, 4. The longer any sin lies upon the conscience unlamented, the more hold it gets of the soul; and the more danger accompanies its operations. It is like a cancerous tumour in the flesh, whose fibres shoot and spread deeper and wider, till at length, if not stopped, it proves fatal, by infecting the whole mass of blood. Well might the Son of God, in his address to the churches, charge them who had sinned to *repent and do their first works*! We have an Advocate with the Father, so that he who hath sinned need not despair: and as every day is attended with new guilt, we had need, if we would enjoy the peace of God, to be often examining, reflecting, and repairing to the cross. Those who are now clad in white garments, washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

Fourthly. *Strive for the things that make for peace among your fellow-men, and fellow-christians.* Particularly, *shun disputes*, especially what is usually termed, disputation for disputation's sake. A litigious spirit is the bane of society, whether civil or religious. *Perverse disputings* indicate a *corrupt mind, destitute of the truth*. 1 Tim. vi. 5.—Lay aside *envies* and *jealousies* one of another. Where these are, there is confusion, and every evil work. From hence arise evil surmisings, misconstructions, swellings, tumults. *Wrath* is cruel, and *anger* is outrageous, but who can stand before *envy*? *Those* are generally of but short continuance, and may be avoided; but *this* is a slow secret, malignant, undermining principle; it lays a plan for the destruction of its object, and never rests till it is accomplished. A jealous temper often indicates a dishonest heart; such persons know themselves to be bad, and think none can be otherwise. Perhaps Satan would not have been so suspicious of Job's sincerity, but that, being conscious he had no disinterested love

love in himself, he thought to be sure Job had not. Let us have a care lest we imitate him.—Avoid interfering in the temporal concerns of others. Unless persons act immorally, so as to bring disgrace upon religion, we have no concern with their affairs. A temper of mind busying itself in other men's matters, has often broken the peace of families and churches. Encourage no tale-bearers, these often separate chief friends: we cannot always shut our doors against persons of that disposition, but it were well to shut our ears against them. Heal differences; it is an honour to be a repairer of a breach. It is true, it is often difficult work, but we must not mind a few hard sayings, that we may obtain the blessing of the *peace-makers*, and be called *the children of God*. *Forgive injuries*; he whose mind harbours resentment after an acknowledgment, is unfit for society; and has reason to fear, that he is unfit for the kingdom of God: for Christ expressly teaches, that if we forgive not men *their trespasses*, neither will God forgive ours. *Avoid provoking language, and bitter invective*. Some persons have a provoking manner of speaking on almost all occasions, especially in telling another of a fault, which tends more than a little to defeat every good purpose. Reproofs will do more harm than good, unless they are tempered with love. Watch against a *touchy disposition*. Some are as irritable, and as ready to take offence, as others are to give it. There are cases, to be sure, in which we have a right to be offended, yea, in which it is our duty; but these cases are not so frequent as we, for want of humility and true greatness of mind, are ready to think them. Charity is not soon angry:

“ For every trifle, scorn to take offence;

“ It always shews great pride, or little sense,

In fine, *sacrifice almost any thing for the peace and welfare of society, except truth, and a good conscience*.—Peace obtained at the price of these would be too dear, and when obtained but of little value. The wisdom from above is *first pure, then peaceable*. But other sacrifices may be safely made, and very rarely furnish matter for repentance.

We will close the present address, brethren, by offering a few MOTIVES to enforce the subject.

Consider, in the *first* place, *That peace is a blessing of such importance, that you cannot do without it*.—The want of it either in your own minds, in your families, or in the church, will embitter all your other enjoyments, and render them but of small account.

To bear the afflictions and troubles of life with patience, it is requisite that we have peace within. This affords a resort to the mind, when furrounded with clamour and confusion from other quarters. Hence, when the disciples were going forth as sheep among wolves, their Lord bequeathed them this blessing, *My peace I give unto you, my peace I leave with you*, let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

Secondly. Consider the advantages you enjoy for the obtaining of this blessing.—The dispensation under which you live is more favourable to peace of mind, and communion with God, than any that has been heretofore. We are not come to Mount Sinai, but to Mount Sion. We are taught to approach God as *our Father*, which was not common under the old testament; and hence, perhaps, we are said to have *received not the spirit of bondage, again to fear, but the spirit of adoption, crying Abba, Father.*—The rest which the churches enjoy, and have enjoyed for a century past, from persecution, ought also to be reckoned amongst the advantages of our times. It will be greatly to our reproach, if, when the enemies of religion have left off to smite us, we shall begin to smite one another; or if the cessation of alarms from those quarters should be followed by a spirit of slumber, inactivity, or security. When the primitive churches *had rest* from persecution, *they were edified*, and walked *in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost*, and were multiplied. Acts ix. 31.

Thirdly. Honour and happiness are its attendants.—*I am one of them*, said a good woman, *that are peaceable and faithful in Israel.* 2 Sam. xx. 19. A great honour, indeed, to have these *two* qualities united in our character. As the *former* without the latter would soon become unworthy of its name, by degenerating into meanness, so the *latter* without the former would soon degenerate into bitterness; but, blended together, they form a character truly honourable, and useful in every department of social life. Such a spirit is as comfortable as it is reputable. It is a source of abundant happiness to ourselves, and tends to diffuse it on those around us. It will afford peculiar comfort to your ministers to be with a people of such a character, while the contrary is invariably observed to embitter their lives, and abate their affection which is so necessary for your edification.

Fourthly. The success of the Gospel is generally connected with it.—When dissention prevailed in the primitive church at Jerusalem, things were at a stand; but when that subsided, *the word of God increased, and the number of the disciples*

iples multiplied. Acts vi. 7. The same track of things is observable to this day. Where dissensions prevail, the Word of God is hindered, the hands of ministers are weakened, young converts are stumbled, and the enemies of religion gratified. *Aha, Aha, say they, so would we have it!—Live in peace,* said the Apostle, *and the God of love and peace shall be with you.* The Holy Dove loves to dwell with the peaceable, and the humble, but flies from the abodes of noise and strife.

Fifthly. The heavenly state to which you are going, requires it as a preparative.—Those who enter there, will enter into peace. Sin being no more, all will be harmonious. Internal conflicts shall no longer agitate our bosoms; the flesh lusteth not against the spirit, nor is the spirit there engaged in lusting against the flesh. No distance or reserve of any kind shall have place between God and us; nor shall envies, or jealousies, or any evil tempers, disturb the peace of that holy society. If our eyes are ever blessed with a sight of the heavenly Jerusalem, we shall see it a quiet habitation. Why then should we indulge dispositions unsuitable to the state to which we profess to aspire? If we live all our years under their influence, we have reason to dread a denial at last; or if we should be admitted, why should we cherish those things that must then be left behind us?

Dear brethren! Let us have an interest in your prayers; you have an interest in ours. The desires of our hearts for every individual amongst you, cannot be more fitly expressed, than in the words of the priests of old, when blessing Israel. “The LORD bless thee, and keep thee; the LORD make his face to shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee; the LORD lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee Peace.” Amen.

B R E V I A T E S.

Tuesday Evening. Met soon after 6 o'clock. Brother Greenwood was chosen Moderator, and began in prayer. The Letters from the Churches were read, and minutes taken as usual. Brother Carey (lately ordained at Leicester) concluded in prayer.

Wednesday Morning, 6. Met for prayer. The following Brethren were engaged: Ayre, Butler, Sharman, Heighton, and Meltcham.

At 10½ Brother Craps prayed; Brother Ryland gave a short account of the nature and design of the Association; Brother Burton preached from Matt. vi. 10, “Thy kingdom come.” Brother Fuller prayed; and Brother Gill preached from Isaiah xiv. 32. “What shall one then answer the messengers of the nation? That the Lord hath founded Zion, and the poor of his people shall trust in it.” Brother Hopper concluded.

Evening, 6. Brother Mills prayed, and Brother Sutcliff preached from 2 Cor. vi. 18. "I will be a father unto you, and ye shall be my Sons and Daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." Brother Smith (who was the first Pastor of the Church at Oakham, and is now Pastor of the Church in Eagle-street, London) concluded in prayer.—After the public meeting, the circular letter, written by Brother Greenwood, was read, and being approved of, was ordered to be printed.

Thursday Morning, 6. Met again: Brother Ryland prayed, and the Ministers of the Association gave a brief account of their own experiences, during the course of the last year; after which Brother Simmonds of Braunstone prayed. We then attended to the business of the association fund, &c. and the Moderator concluded in prayer.

With respect to the fund, as several of the associate churches do not contribute towards it, we agreed to remind them all, that various valuable ends might be answered by it, if it were more generally encouraged. We now voted half-a-guinea a piece to four of the poorest of our brethren who came from a distance; but would recommend it to all the churches, that they should, if possible, bear the expence of their own minister's journey to the association, that the fund may be better able to give assistance in other cases. It was unanimously voted, that five guineas should be sent up to the Treasurer of the Society for procuring the abolition of the Slave Trade, that we might shew our hearty abhorrence of that wicked and detestable merchandize; the reception of which sum has been since acknowledged in the most obliging manner, by Granville Sharp, Esq. Chairman of the Committee; who assures us, that the Committee "are now more animated, if possible, than ever, against the iniquitous and disgraceful practices of Slave-dealers and Slave-holders, and are firmly determined (as by an indispensable duty to God and man) to persevere in their endeavours, by all legal means, to effect the abolition of such enormities."

State of the Churches since the last Association.

Added	{	Upon a profession of faith	-	101
		By letters of recommendation	-	5
		Restored after exclusion	-	2
				----108
Diminished	{	By death	-	39
		By dismission to other Churches †		14
		By exclusion	-	17
				---70
				<hr/>
		Increase		38

† Ten of these were dismissed from the Church at Nottingham, to form a new Church at Botsford.

The next association to be held at Nottingham, in the Whitfun-Week, on Wednesday May 30, 1792. Brother Carey and Brother Ryland to preach; in case of failure, Brother Greenwood and Brother West. Put up at the Flying-Horse,

THE
M I D L A N D L E T T E R *

ON A REVIEW OF PROVIDENCE AND GRACE.

The Elders and Messengers of the several Baptist Churches, meeting at Cannon-street, *Birmingham*; *Evesham*, *Leominster*, *Pershore*, *Ryeford*, *Tewkesbury*, and *Upton*.

Having also received Letters from Bond-street, *Birmingham*; *Bewdley*, *Coseley*, *Hook-Norton*, *Stourbridge*, *Warwick*, and *Worcester*.

Being met in Association at Ross, *June 28, 29, 1791.*

M AINTAINING the important doctrines of Three equal Persons in the Godhead; eternal and personal election; original sin; particular redemption; free justification by the righteousness of Christ imputed; efficacious grace in regeneration; the final perseverance of the saints; the resurrection of the dead; the general judgment at the last day; and the life everlasting.

With the independence of the several Christian Societies they represent—*To whom they send Christian salutation.*

Dear Brethren!

WELL may we adopt the language of inspiration, and say, *It is of the Lord's mercies we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not.* Since our last annual meeting, many of our esteemed brethren, who *then* were useful in churches, in associations, in their families, and in the world, have been removed by death. We cannot but lament; yet we do not sorrow as those without hope—our loss is their unspeakable gain! May we, their survivors, both ministers and people, “*whilst we live, live!*”

Various as the scenes have been through which you have passed, you have reason to say, Goodness and mercy have hitherto followed us. . . . Permit us, brethren, in this our annual address, to recommend your taking a general and par-

* Wherever dots occur thus in this, or any other letter, there the paragraph is abridged.

ticular review of what God hath wrought for you, both in Providence and Grace.

The children of Israel were commanded to observe the month Abib. So ought you (who are professionally, the children of God) to survey the Divine conduct towards you in a way of Grace. Once you were *dead in sin*; but now are made *alive from the dead*, having *risen with Christ*—you were darkness, but now are light in the Lord. With the man who was born blind, but afterwards received his sight, you can say, *We see*. Your natural state was a state of enmity to God and goodness; now the enmity is subdued, and reconciliation has been effected by the blood of Christ: wherefore you are no more . . . strangers, and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God: you are blest with a good hope through Grace, being cleansed from sin by the blood of Jesus, enriched with the graces of the Holy Spirit, and made children of God by adoption and regeneration. Behold! what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon you, that you should be called the *sons of God*!!

Contemplate the *sovereignty of his grace*. Had the Lord left us in our sin, and chosen others of our race to his kingdom and glory, he had still been just. It is his prerogative to have mercy on whom he will. Remember, that Almighty power alone can effect a moral change in fallen man. That change you have experienced, while others are still in the gall of bitterness, and bonds of iniquity. It is the work of a Divine hand! All blessings, past, present, and to come, of which you have been made recipients, or hope to be indulged with, are God's free donations conferred upon the unworthy. These considerations should excite both your humility and gratitude.

Recollect also, with abundant thankfulness, the constant care which the Shepherd of Israel hath taken of you in Providence. His bestowments have exceeded not only your deserts, but most sanguine expectations. God has never failed in his promises respecting you. When helpless infants, hanging on your mother's breasts, he was your powerful guardian, and faithful friend—a friend ever nigh. When arrived at riper years, from what follies did he restrain you, and from what dangers and evils did he graciously deliver you! Being sanctified in Christ Jesus, he preserved you, and called you with an holy calling.

Since that happy period, forget not his dealings with you—Has he been a barren wilderness to you? Though God leads

leads his people through a wilderness, yet in himself he is not a desert, but a paradise of delights. Are not you constrained to acknowledge "That the Lord is good?" You may have been led by a rough and intricate way, but the issue hath proved it was the right way to the city of habitation. The path of heavy affliction—of spiritual desertion—and strong temptation, you have found perfectly consistent with the Divine perfections and promises. Truly, no affliction for the present is joyous, but grievous; and if you, in circumstances of sorrow, are only looking at those things which are temporal, you cannot expect relief; but raising your hearts to those things which are not seen, which are eternal, with Paul you will be enabled to say, "These light afflictions work for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."

Sanctified afflictions are of eminent service to God's believing people: they purify from sin by embittering it to the heart, sweeten God's promises to the soul, and draw forth the Christian graces into exercise: they brighten our evidences, endear Christ to us, and excite an earnest desire to depart, and to be with him, which is far better. Thus reflecting on the valuable purposes accomplished by affliction, you are constrained to confess, that it is good for you to be afflicted.

The way of spiritual desertion is very gloomy and undesirable; yet God often leads his people by this way. . . . Then how frequently do they fear that they shall never more see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. Our way (say they) is hid from the Lord, and our judgment passeth over from our God. Having no sensible communion with Christ, no present manifestation of the love of God, they are intimidated with the terrors of the Lord, and condemn themselves for hypocrites, or temporary believers. This way, indeed, is also rough, but still it is the right way, through which their Covenant Father is conducting them to the Canaan of peace and joy. . . .

Again, the way of temptation is distressing and dangerous: but as our Lord was led into the wilderness to be tempted of the Devil, so his members are open to the assaults of the destroyer. Yet the same general end shall be answered by them, as by other painful exercises. Like the unconquered Canaanites among the ancient Jews; though in themselves disposing to evil, God shall make them subserve purposes of goodness—the oftener the enemy appears, the more habitually prepared should we be to oppose him.

Assisted

Assisted by Heaven we shall at last be more than conquerors, for *with every temptation our God will make a way for our escape.*

Much of this, brethren, you have realized. In affliction you have exclaimed, All these things are against us! yet your memories testify that occurrences, in themselves afflictive, have been the means eventually of dissipating your fears, strengthening your faith, reviving your hope, and animating your hearts. All things have worked together for your good, and for the display of the ineffable perfections of your Saviour.

Dear brethren, seriously to recollect the conduct of God respecting us, is both our *duty* and *interest*.

The sacred Scriptures enjoin us to remember all the way through which the Lord our God has led us. The example of holy men in all ages, calls upon us to engage in these retrospective meditations. "I will remember thee," said David, "from the land of Jordan, &c." Psalm xlii. 6. Without considering our experience, we have no subject for praise. If we forget his mercies, we cannot exalt his name—gratitude must cease to exist, when obligation is forgotten. But the more we cherish attention to the Divine conduct, the more exalted will be our gratitude, the more ardent our praises. Hence, saith the Psalmist, "While I mused the fire burned, then spake I with my tongue;" and we should remember, that we are not our own, but bought with a price; in order to excite us to glorify God with our bodies and spirits, which are his.

Nothing more than this will tend to calm and tranquillize your minds under present trying providences. As churches or individuals, you are taught by experience, that many are the afflictions of the righteous: on various accounts, each hath his distresses and perplexities—every heart knoweth its own bitterness. Whatever tends to promote submission to the Divine disposals, and acquiescence in his dealings, is highly desirable. To obtain this, familiarize yourselves with God's past dispensations respecting you; consider the connection of *seeming evil* with *real good*. *Acquaint now thyself with him and be at peace, and thereby good shall come unto thee.* The God who hath delivered you from similar difficulties to which you are now exposed, is an unchanging God; his Grace is as sufficient now as ever, and his disposedness to exercise that Grace is still as great. Reflections, such as these, will bring divine composure into your hearts: under these impressions you will kiss the rod,

rod, and bless him who hath appointed it—you will say, *It is the Lord, let him do with us as seemeth good in his sight!* the agitation of your minds will cease, the discomposure of your passions be over, and every ungovernable power sink into repose: you will bear the indignation of the Lord, not only because you have sinned against him; but, from a firm persuasion that the issue of every trial will be your eternal advantage. Hereby your faith and confidence will be confirmed, as the Psalmist's, in similar circumstances; who, recurring to former experience, said, *Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God, for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God.*

Consider, brethren, how much the frequent recollection of your past experience of divine goodness, is connected with your happiness, your interest, and the glory of your God; and let the consideration excite your diligent attention to that duty, which is at the same time your inestimable privilege.

May great grace be upon all the holy brethren, for Christ's sake! Amen.

Signed by the Moderator,

June, 29, 1791.

JAMES WILLIAMS.

B R E V I A T E S.

The Ministers and Messengers met on *Tuesday* Evening at half past six. Brother *Aston* of *Perthore* began in prayer; Brother *Williams* of *Ross* was chosen Moderator. The Letters from the several Churches were read, minutes taken, and the service concluded in prayer by Brother *Smith* of *Perthore*.

Wednesday morning met at half past six. The Moderator prayed; matters relative to the various Churches were discussed, and the meeting adjourned.

Soon after TEN public service began; Brother *Wilkins* of *Bourton* prayed; Brother *Thomas* of *Leominster* preached from Psal. cxxii. 7. "Peace be within thy walls, and prosperity within thy palaces." After singing (Brother *Hiller* of *Tewkesbury*, last year appointed for this service, being removed by death, who had been, for twenty years, a valuable and honourable member of this association; and Brother *Dore* of *Cirencester*, who was nominated in case of failure, being detained by indisposition) Brother *Pearce* of *Birmingham* preached from 2 Pet. iii. 18. "But grow in grace;" Brother *Butterworth* of *Evesham* concluded this service in prayer.

After

After public service, the Circular Letter, drawn up by the Moderator, was produced, approved, and ordered to be printed.

At THREE assembled again; Brother *Thomas Evans* of *Carleon* prayed; Brother *Birt* of *Plymouth Dock* preached from Acts xiii. 38. "Be it known unto you, therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins." Brother *Belcher* concluded in prayer.

Met again at SIX; Brother *Symmons* of *Wootton-under-edge* prayed; Brother *Redding* of *Truro* in *Cornwall* preached from Acts xi. 21. "And the hand of the Lord was with them; and a great number believed, and turned unto the Lord." Brother *Duncombe* of *Cheltenham* concluded the services of the day in prayer, and dismissed the people with the usual benediction.

Agreed to hold the next association at *Upton*, on Tuesday and Wednesday in the Whitfun-week; our Brethren *L. Butterworth* of *Evesham*, and *Pearce* of *Birmingham*, to preach; and, in case of failure, Brother *Reece* of *Warwick*.

Put up at the Talbot.

In the associated Churches the last year there were

Baptized	-	-	-	-	75
Received by letter and experience					10
Restored	-	-	-	-	2
Omitted in former accounts	-				21
					— 108
Dead	-	-	-	-	19
Dismissed	-	-	-	-	8
Excluded	-	-	-	-	16
					— 43

Increase this year - - - 65

N. B. The Baptist Meeting-house being at *Ryeford*, a small village at some distance from the town of *Ross*, application was made to the Reverend Mr. Rogers, minister of the Independent Congregation, for liberty to hold the association in their place of worship. To this request the following answer was received, which, for the truly affectionate and liberal spirit it breathes, is here presented to our congregations at large, hoping that the worthy characters whose signatures it bears, will with readiness accept this public expression of our gratitude.

To the Reverend the Ministers, and to the other Representatives of the Associated Churches, now assembled at Ross, Herefordshire;—The Church of Christ meeting at Ross aforesaid, sendeth Christian Salutations, as to Brethren of the same Household of Faith, though differing in Sentiment on one Article.

Rev. Sirs—Brethren!

IT is the amiable peculiarity of the religion of Jesus, that it unites its genuine professors in one common bond of affection, even where their opinions disagree on its

less important doctrines. The precision of him "who spake so as never man spake," is not for a moment to be questioned; yet it is a fact, to which past and present times bear unwilling testimony, that all his sincere disciples do not clearly understand *the whole* of his will. Whether the wise intention of this be, either to shew the remaining darkness of the human mind, to excite the diligent investigations of his faithful followers, or to call for mutual forbearance and candour, may yet remain a question. While it is the duty of all who love the Lord Jesus, "to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints," it is equally their duty to receive, with christian affection, all who appear steadfast in their adherence to the peculiar doctrines of the gospel, though differing in their ideas of some less important points of their religious creed; remembering, for their mutual instruction, that in the present state, even "*the watchmen on Mount Sion do not see eye to eye.*"

Under these circumstances, we, as a church of Christ, united with yourselves in allegiance to our common Lord, are not content to give you, our reverend brethren, an entrance within our walls;—we embrace the present occasion to wish you all prosperity and peace in the name of the Lord. We rejoice in your zealous labours for the enlargement of the Redeemer's kingdom, and the good of souls; in your steadiness to the distinguished doctrines of the gospel of Christ; in your firm opposition to the innovations of designing men in matters of religion; in your avowed acknowledgment of Christ as the only Lord of conscience, and the sole law-giver in his church;—nor do we less express our satisfaction in these your annual associations, believing, that the good of the church at large, and of your respective congregations in particular, is the disinterested principle from which they proceed. May an unction from the Holy One, descending upon you with copious effusion—in the present solemnity, encrease their, your, and our joy in the Lord!

Go on, reverend sirs, in your sedulous endeavours for the salvation of immortal souls. May the blessing of the Holy Spirit succeed your zealous aims to turn many to righteousness! may you long shine in the gospel hemisphere, as lights in the church and world; and, after distinguished usefulness in the cause of Christ, receive that "crown of righteousness which fadeth not away;" a late, and large reward, in the kingdom of our God and Father.

We hope, that you will not be unmindful of us in your devout supplications at the throne of grace. We have,
great

great reason to address you in the words of the apostle, "Brethren pray for us ! that the word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified !" We are, truly, a church in the wilderness ; but, we trust, loyal to Christ, steady to his cause, zealous for his honour, and firm to our own profession, amidst many trying discouragements. We expect that these will be more or less the lot of all the faithful followers of the Lamb ; and while, through faith we commit ourselves to the superintending care of the great Head of the church, we rejoice in this evidence of being among that "little flock, to whom it is our Father's good pleasure to give the kingdom."

Though distant from some of you in place, though unknown to many of you in person, we hope one day to join your company, and unite with you to adore the Son of God in the realms of light and glory. We are,

Rev. Sirs—Brethren,

Your servants in our common Lord,

Signed at our Church-meeting
at Rofs, June 26, 1791. { J. ROGERS, Minister.
G. WILKINSON, Deacon.
W. LLOYD.

E X T R A C T S

From the American Association Letters, &c. * and from the personal Correspondence between the *English*, the *American*, and other Brethren.

THE WOODSTOCK ASSOCIATION, consisting of twenty-four churches, in the states of New-Hampshire and Vermont, was held in *Canaan*, on Wednesday and Thursday, Sept. the 29th and 30th, 1790. Elder *John Peckers* delivered the introductory sermon from Psa. lxxxv. 8. "I will hear what God the Lord will speak; for he will speak peace to his people, and to his saints : but let them not turn again to folly." An account, truly joyful, came to hand by Elder *Stephen Royce*, with a letter and minutes of the MEREDITH ASSOCIATION, consisting of six churches. Appointed

* Several English Association Letters are postponed in this Number, notwithstanding their excellencies. Some of them are fourteen pages each. On account of their length, and the great quantity of matter in hand, it will be a favour done the Register to abridge them : this omission pains the Editor.

the next association to meet at *Westmoreland*, the last Wednesday in September 1791. Thursday evening Elder *Royce* preached from Jude ver. 21. "Keep yourselves in the love of God." The letter to the churches (in three pages) explains and recommends the duty of "the instruction, or early education of children;" and is concluded thus: "We have had a very agreeable interview at this annual meeting, and have heard of a work of the Spirit of God, to the *Eastward*, in Stratham, the towns adjoining, and in a large extent of country in our *Northern* wilderness, which looks like the opening of glory. Let us stand, equipped with the whole armour on, that we may be ready to follow our dear brother, Elder *Williams*, of Grafton, whose sudden death has deprived the Church of Christ of an useful member, and a faithful servant of Jesus Christ the Lord. Amen."

Increase, - - - - - 79

Total number of members, - 996

The BOWDOINHAM ASSOCIATION (Massachusetts's) of six churches, met at *Harpswell*, on Wednesday and Thursday, Sep. 29th and 30th, 1790. On the first of these days, Wednesday, at one o'clock, P. M. Brother *James Potter* preached the introductory sermon from Jude ver 1; and in the evening, Elder *Isaac Case* delivered a discourse from 1 Cor. ix. 4. The next association to be held at *Balltown*, the Wednesday before the first Lord's day of October, 1791. The letter (of two pages) on *Faith*, informs us, that "the churches stand fast in the faith," and have enjoyed "considerable revivals."

The VERMONT ASSOCIATION, holden at *Wallingford*, Vermont, Wednesday and Thursday October 6th and 7th, 1790, opened with a sermon by Elder *Peter Werden*, from Heb. xiii. 2. "Be not forgetful to entertain strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares." Thursday another was delivered on Psalm cxxxiii. 1. "Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." The association to convene at *Orwell* the first Wednesday in October, 1791. The circular letter, on *Practical Godliness*, is composed in two pages: It says, "You must be sensible, that a mere belief of, or assent to, the great doctrines of the Bible, will not cleanse our hearts from sin, denominate our conduct consistent, nor prepare us for that state of glory into which the righteous will shortly be admitted. We may assent to the most important and interesting truths of Christianity, and, from a view of their *secondary* beauty, feel great animal operations, and ecstasies of joy in our spirits; and, at the same time, for want of a true discovery of the *primary beauty and excellency of those objects*, the heart may be left destitute of that proper sense of their weight and importance, which alone is productive of the genuine fruits of religion. On these

these shoals have thousands made total shipwreck in their voyage to the New-Jerusalem."

This is a convention of thirteen churches, in which there are 740 members. Increase 92.

The STONINGTON ASSOCIATION, of fourteen churches, in Rhode Island and Connecticut, was held at Elder *Simeon Brown's* meeting-house, in *Stonington*, Tuesday and Wednesday, October 19th and 20th, 1790. Brother *Isaac Backus* delivered the introductory sermon from 1 Sam. xxii. 1, 2. Sermon in the evening by Brother *Joseph Grafton* from 1 Tim. iv. 8. The letter is about a page, recommending a firm and practical attachment to the laws and ordinances of Christ, as the indispensable duty of every Christian.

There are, in these fourteen churches, 1160 members. Increase 62.

Boston, Massachusetts's, April 7th, 1791. "There is a considerable revival of religion at *Reading*, twelve miles to the Northward of Boston, under the ministry of Mr. *Sanburn*, a young Pædobaptist, whom I know not personally, but who, as I am informed, is a faithful minister of Christ. Also at *Braintree*, *Stoughton*, *Bridgewater*, and *Abingdon*, which places are contiguous, extending eighteen or twenty miles. Both Baptist and Pædobaptist ministers are honoured instruments in this work. I have just heard also of a very extraordinary revival on *Long Island*, to the Eastward of Boston, in Penobscott Bay, but am not able to furnish you with the particulars of it."

The VIRGINIA PORTSMOUTH ASSOCIATION, by the Minutes of their meeting, dated May 21—24th, 1791, say, that, "Whereas, for good causes shewn, the *Kebuky* Association, at their last annual meeting, thought proper to divide; and as the place from which that Association took its name is in another boundary, resolved therefore, That this Association be known by the name of the *Virginia Portsmouth Association*. The introductory sermon was preached on Saturday May 21st, by Brother *David Barrow*, from 1 Cor. xiii. 13. 'Now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.' Brethren *Hughes*, *Mercer*, *Burkitt*, and *Baker*, were appointed to preach on the Lord's day, May 22d; service to begin precisely at nine o'clock, A. M. Monday, &c. proceeded to business. Adopted both the constitution, or form of government of the *Kebuky* Association*, held at *Whitefield's* meeting-house, Pitt county, North Carolina, October, 1789, as far as it is consistent with the division of the Association which took place at

* See a sketch of the minutes in the Second Part of the Register for 1790, p. 48.

Davis's meeting-house, October, 1790; and also their Abstract of Principles, published in 1789." Advised the churches to encourage *itinerant preaching*. Ordered, That Brother Armistead and Brother Barrow attend as our delegates, the next general committee, of the Baptist denomination, in Virginia, to be holden at Tomahawk meeting-house, Chesterfield County, the second Saturday in May next. That Brother Edward Mintz prepare a circular letter for the next association *, the subject to be Brotherly Love; and that he preach the association sermon next year; or, in case of failure, Brother Meglamre. Resolved, That our next association be held at Brother Morrals meeting-house, on Meherrin River, in Southampton County, on the Saturday before the fourth Lord's day in May next.

There are twenty-one churches in this association, consisting of 1355 members.

The WARWICK ASSOCIATION. Agreeable to letter received from a conference held at *Mount Pleasant*, proposing a convention for the purpose of constituting an Association. The representatives of a number of churches attended at the aforesaid place on May 31st and June 1st, 1791.

An introductory discourse was delivered by Brother *Thomas Montayne*, from 2 Tim. iv. 3. "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine." Letters from the fourteen churches disposed to form themselves into an Association, were read: the number of members appeared to be 625. On the second day of meeting, Brother *John Dodge* preached from Matt. i. 21. "And thou shalt call his name Jesus; for he shall save his people from their sins." The members of this association declare, that their sentiments respecting the apostacy of mankind, and the recovery of such as shall be saved, &c. &c. agree with the confession of the kirk of Scotland, of the reformed Dutch church, of the congregational church, and with the Saybrook platform, in Connecticut; but that they prefer, to all other human compositions, the confession of faith put forth, in England, by upwards of one hundred churches of the Baptist denomination in 1689, and adopted by the Philadelphia Association and others in America. Voted, That this Association meet alternately on the East and West sides of Hudson's River; and that the next Association be held at *Warwick*, on the third Tuesday in October, 1791.

The SHAFTSBURY ASSOCIATION, from Massachusetts and New-York, convened at Stockbridge, June 1st and 2d, 1791. Elder *Justus Hall* preached the introductory sermon from 1 Tim. ii. 5. Brother *Blood* delivered a discourse the next day from 1 Cor. iv 20. Their circular letter is on the difference there is

* There was none printed with these Minutes of 1791.

between the power of churches and that of an association. The next annual meeting to be at Elder *Power's* meeting-house, in *Stillwater*, on the first Wednesday in June, 1792. This body is an union of twenty-six churches: their numbers stand thus: 408 added, 63 dismissed, 31 excluded, 15 dead. Total in communion 1777. In the additions of this year, two of these churches are remarkably distinguished. To the church at *Battskill* 111 are added, and to the church at *Stillwater* 182.

Salem, August 24th, 1791. I have very lately received a letter from Mr. Merrill, a young candidate now preaching at Sedgwick, who writes thus: "It is now harvest time with us; there has been a shaking among the dry bones for more than three months past. Looking round in the valley and prophecying has made my fatigues great, and engrossed my time. There is also considerable attention to religion in several of the adjacent towns: I often preach in one or another of them. This day I preached at Penobscott. Such a solemn and serious attention to divine things I never saw before. From thirty to forty, we believe, have been brought into the liberty of the sons of God, and the numbers of the faithful, I have reason to think, increase almost daily. Comfort our friends with this good news."

On June 1, 1791. The CONVENTION OF MINISTERS OF THE STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE, met according to adjournment, at *Concord*.

THE Rev. Mr. Macclintock preached a sermon from Haggai xi. 7. After divine service, the following votes were passed:

1. Voted that the thanks of the Convention be given to the Rev. Mr. Macclintock, for his excellent sermon, preached before them.

2. That the Rev. Mr. Farrar be appointed to preach the next convention sermon.

3. That the Rev. Mr. Church be appointed to preach, during four weeks, to the inhabitants of some of the new settled towns in this State, who are destitute of preaching.

4. That the Ministers of the SEVERAL DENOMINATIONS in this State, who are judged by their own orders and societies to be men of virtue, and in regular standing, be invited to join this Convention at their next meeting, to form ONE UNITED CLERICAL BODY.

5. That a Committee be raised to draft an Address to the vacant societies in this State, requesting and exhorting them to take great care that they do not employ *vicious men as preachers*: nor any men unless they have *good recommendations* from a number of ministers of known reputation and virtue.

From MAJOR GOFORTH *, *Washington, Kentucky,*
September 3, 1791.

" ONE of the Indian captives lately died at this place—his Excellency Governor St. Clair gave liberty to the rest to bury the corpse according to the custom of their nation : the mode is, that the body be wrapped in a shroud, over which they put a blanket, a pair of moggasins on the feet, and seven day's rations by the side of the head, with other necessaries. The march, from Fort-Washington was very solemn ; on their arrival at the grave, the corpse was let down, and the relatives immediately retired—an aged matron then descended into the grave, and placed the blanket according to rule, and fixed the provision in such manner as she thought would be most handy and convenient to her departed friend ; casting her eyes about to see if all was right, she found the deceased was barefoot, and enquired why they had omitted the moggasins ? The white person who superintended the whole business, informed her, that there were no good moggasins in the store, but that by way of amends they had put a sufficiency of leather in the knapsack to make two pair—at the same time shewing her the leather. With this she appeared satisfied, saying, that her friend was well acquainted with making them.

" A few particulars respecting this country may not be uninteresting to you.

" Washington is the county town for the county of Mason, and is the second, in point of population, in Kentucky.

" The county of Hamilton lies between the two Miami Rivers. Just below the mouth of the Little Miami is a garrison called Fort Miami. At a small distance below this garrison is the town of Columbia. About six miles from Columbia, is the town of Cincinnati, which is the county town of the county of Hamilton ; and here is erected *Fort-Washington*, the head quarters of the Federal Army. This fort is pleasantly situated on the banks of the Ohio, opposite the mouth of Licking River. Seven miles below this is a settlement of eighteen or twenty families, called South Bend—about seven miles from this, also on the Ohio, is the city of Miami, founded by the Hon. John Cleves Symmes—12 miles up the Great Miami is the settlement called Dunlap's Station—and 12 miles up the Little Miami is a settlement called Cavault's Station. The numbers of militia in these places, according to the best accounts I have received, are, at Columbia, 200—Cincinnati, 150—South Bend, 20—city of Miami, 80—Dunlap's, 15—and at Cavault's, 20."

* Of the Baptist Society.

THE
COMMENCEMENT
AT THE
BAPTIST COLLEGE,
PROVIDENCE, RHODE-ISLAND.
1791.

ON Wednesday September the 7th, was celebrated the Anniversary Commencement of Rhode-Island College.

The procession, at half past 10 o'clock, A M. moved in the usual order (preceded by the Independent Artillery Company, commanded by Col. Tillinghast, in uniform), from the College-Hall to the Baptist Meeting-House, where the following exercises were performed, after an introductory prayer by the Rev. Dr. Stillman:

Salutatory oration—The history of eloquence—By William Hunter.

A dissertation.—Comparison of ancient and modern literature.—By Samuel White Baylies.

An English oration on the causes of the difference of the moral faculty—By George Rawson Burril.

A dissertation on civil Liberty—By James Ellis.

A disputation on the following question. "Is fashion, every thing considered, beneficial to mankind?"—By Elisha Fairbanks and John Morse.

An oration on Villany considered as the source of empire--- By James Brown Mason.

A Greek oration—A comparison of Demosthenes and Cicero—By Chiron Penniman.

An oration on the influence of the fine arts on society—By Samuel King.

This concluded the exercises of the forenoon.

The procession then returned to the Chancellor's house.

At three o'clock, P. M. they returned to the Meeting-house.

In the afternoon were the following exhibitions by the candidates for the Master's degree.

An oration on the difference between law and constitution, by James Burril.

An oration on the death of the Rev. President Manning, by Simeon Dogget.

An oration—past, present, and future prospects of America, by Jabez Bowen.

An oration on the rights of brutes, by Herman Dogget.

An oration on the difference in the spirit of heroism in the different periods of society, by Josias Lyndon Arnold.

The degree of Bachelor in the Arts was then conferred on the following young gentlemen, *viz.*

Jonathan Abbot, Samuel White Baylies, Barnabas Billing, George Rawson Burril, James Ellis, Elisha Fairbanks, William Hart, Joseph Searls Hunt, William Hunter, John Jones, Samuel King, James Brown Mason, John Morse, Chiron Penniman, Obadiah Penniman, and Jonathan Russell.

And the degree of Master in the Arts on the following young gentleman, *viz.*

Mr. Tutor Doggett, Amos Maine Atwell, William Barton, Jabez Bowen, James Burril, Samuel Eddy, George Jackson, Harding Harris, Eli King, Benjamin Adams, Stephen Tillinghast, Benjamin Whitman, and Josias Reed.

Josias Lyndon Arnold, alumnus of Dartmouth college, was admitted to the degree of Master of Arts; also Apollos Leonard, of Taunton, Esq. and Joseph Holbrook.

The degree of Master of Arts was also conferred on the Sieur Joseph de la Tomb, Consul of France, resident in Boston.

The President then gave a charge to the Bachelors of Arts.

Then followed the valedictory oration, by Jonathan Russell.

A prayer by the Rev. Dr. Stillman concluded.

The exercises of the day were enlivened and enriched by some excellent pieces of music, performed by the Boston band, which the young gentlemen who graduated had procured for this occasion.

The Hon. David Howell, Esq. was appointed President for the day, and did himself honour by the judicious manner in which he executed that important trust *.

The young gentlemen performed their several parts to the universal applause of crowded audiences, in both parts of the day. And although it was wet, and rather disagreeable weather, it did not prevent a brilliant assemblage from enlivening, by their presence, the exercises of the day. The order and decorum, on this occasion, were remarkable.

At the late meeting of the corporation of Rhode Island college, Mr. Nicholas Brown was elected a trustee in the place of Nicholas Brown, Esq. deceased; Mr. John Francis was elected a trustee, in the place of John Jenckes, Esq. deceased; and Mr. John Mason was elected a trustee in the place of Colonel Sylvester Child, resigned.

The Rev. Jonathan Maxcy was elected Professor of Divinity in the College.

Mr. Asa Messer, of Haverhill, a graduate of the college, was elected a tutor.

* His elegant and animated charge to the graduates follows.

C H A R G E *

Delivered by the Hon. DAVID HOWELL, Esq.
to the Graduates of *Providence College* on Com-
mencement day, Sept. 7th, 1791.

YOUNG GENTLEMEN,

THE occasion which has devolved on me the duty of addressing you, cannot fail to impress your minds with an uncommon degree of seriousness.

Your beloved President, from whose lips you have been accustomed to receive lessons of wisdom, is not here to give you his last benediction; he is gone to the world of spirits; and, as we hope and trust, to receive the rewards of his labours of love and of virtue.

The patrons of the College could not, however, permit you to bid adieu to this institution without authorising one of their number to address you.

Although I have not a personal acquaintance with all of you, and cannot, therefore, be supposed to entertain such an affectionate solicitude for your welfare as your immediate instructors; yet the part I have taken, as an overseer of your progress in learning, and the former relation I sustained to this College, for many years, as a teacher, awaken in me, on this solemn occasion, the most tender and sincere concern for your future welfare in life.

The pittance of time allotted to a collegiate education, can suffice only to lay the foundation of learning: the superstructure must be reared by the assiduous attention of after-years.

This day enlarges you into the world. Extensive fields open to your view. You have to explore the scenes, and to make an election of the character that best pleases you on the great Theatre of Life.

"*Seekest thou great things for thyself? Seek them not,*" said the ancient prophet to Baruck his scholar and scribe. An overweening fondness for our own abilities, leads us, in the ardour of youth, to pourtray in our imagination future greatness. Time and experience only can correct the

* Copied from the GAZETTE OF THE UNITED STATES, published by John Fenno, Philadelphia.

error, and reduce us to think of ourselves soberly, and as we ought. Human life is full of disappointments.

A readiness to listen to counsel is the surest mark of wisdom in youth. "*In the multitude of counsellors there is safety.*" When, therefore, you are about to take any important step in life, omit not to consult your friends; and let your decision be the result of deep reflection, and the most careful circumspection.

If you wish for prosperity in your worldly affairs, rise early in the morning, and attend to your own business with diligence, punctuality, and order; pay a sacred regard to truth and justice; live temperately, and moderate your passions by listening to the voice of reason. Take not the lead in fashions, nor suffer yourselves to be noted for singularity. Discover your knowledge on proper occasions, but avoid an affected and pedantic display of it.

Let the rights of man ever be held sacred. A moment's reflection will convince you, that others' rights are as inviolable as your own; and a small degree of virtue will lead you to respect them. He that serves mankind most successfully, and with the best principles, serves his Creator most acceptably. Be cautious of bandying into parties; *they* regard neither the abilities nor virtues of men, but only their subservency to present purposes; they are a snare to virtue and a mischief to society. With this caution on your mind, you will never revile or speak evil of whole sects, classes, or societies of men.

In the choice of friends and companions, rather aspire to those above you in life, than sink to those below; the former line of conduct will mark a generous ambition, the latter indicates baseness and exility of thought: from the former you are to expect advantages, and from the latter an incumbrance. To obtain this object, will require the extension of your abilities and the growth of your virtues.

Never aim to rise in life by depressing others; it is more manly to rely on the strength of ones own abilities and merit. Avoid publishing, or even listening to scandal. To mention, with pleasure, the virtues even of a rival, denotes a great mind.

Trifle not with yourselves, nor suffer yourselves to be trifled with by others. If you rightly estimate your own merit, the world will not long differ from you. Avoid contradictions, or soften them. Aim to instruct and entertain your company, rather than to divert them with the affectation of wit, and scurrility of a droll.

Render to your superiors due respect. Order is Heaven's first law. Nature teaches subordination ; society demands it. The best soldiers make the best officers ; and the best citizens the best rulers. Yet carefully distinguish the honours paid to rank and office, from those paid to personal merit ; and let the latter be the principal object of your ambition.

Forget not this precious motto : "*Nil humanum a me puto alienum.*" Consider every one in human shape as your brother ; and "*let charity in golden links of love connect you with the brotherhood of man.*" Let your benevolence be broad as the ocean ; your candour brilliant as the sun, and your compassion and humanity extensive as the human race.

The brevity and uncertainty of life, should admonish us never to procrastinate the duties of the present time. Of all things, our salvation is of the greatest moment. Man is fallen into a wretched state of sin and depravity, and needs a renovation of nature—the implantation and cultivation of the sublime virtues of Christianity to restore him to his true dignity—to qualify him for happiness. The very natures of God and his creatures give birth to fixed and immutable relations between them. These are the foundations of virtue, and as solid as those of the everlasting mountains. It is not possible for man to become happy otherwise than by conforming to the laws of his nature ; by becoming really and truly such as man ought to be, in thought, word, and deed.

The sacred Scriptures are to be the study of your lives ; nor let it be thought an employment beneath a gentleman ; Newton, Locke, and the most eminent philosophers studied and wrote commentaries on them. It is a mark of vanity to speak lightly of revelation. Not to admire those ancient and sublime books shews a want of taste in fine writing, as well of real judgment in discerning the truth. And here let me caution you never to ridicule whatever may be held sacred by any devout and judicious man. If you cannot join with him, at least do not disturb him by your irreverence.

Young gentlemen, it is your good fortune to enter on life in a country peculiarly favoured by the bounteous hand of Nature, and blessed with the best government in the world. Your education distinguishes you among your fellows ; the eyes of many are fixed on you. Your parents and friends have, no doubt, the most flattering hopes of your future eminence : Do not disappoint them. The

patrons of this college also feel a peculiar interest in your prosperity; let me entreat you, therefore, as you esteem your friends, as you respect the place of your education, resolve to act your parts in life well, and may Heaven strengthen you with grace so to do.

The day is at hand when all of us, whether young or old now, must appear, and give an account of our conduct, before the Creator and Governor of the World. "*That is the day of days; the important day,*" as the Poet says, "*for which all other days were made.*" Time with all its concerns and enjoyments, will then vanish from our eager grasp—Eternity will then commence, and a solemn COMMENCEMENT will *that* be. Your worthy President has gone before you. If you loved him, or if you even love yourselves, let me, in the most earnest and solemn manner, call on you to recollect, and imprint on your memory, his pious care over you, his faithful admonitions, and his amiable example; and to prepare to follow him.

In behalf of the Corporation,

Young Gentlemen,

I bid you FAREWEL.

On Wed. Sept. 28, 1791, was celebrated the ANNUAL COMMENCEMENT OF PRINCETON COLLEGE, NEW JERSEY. The exercises of the day being concluded, the degree of Bachelor of Arts was conferred on the following young gentlemen.—Joseph Caldwell, John Noble, Jesse Taylor, Maltby Gelston, Richard Harwood, Stephen Wayne, John R. Bleecker, David Barclay, Francis Markoe, Samuel Sharp Dickinson, Ebenezer Rhea, James C. Roosevelt, Allen B. Duckett John M'Crady, Stevens J. Lewis, Ebenezer Peirson, Jacob Burnet, Elias Vanartsdalen, Peter Wikoff; and on Mr. Frederick Stone, Robert H. Gale, Henry Holiday, all of Maryland; and also Messieurs James Campbell, Henry and Robert I. Callaway, of Virginia; members of this class who were absent. Mr. David Bogart of Columbia College, Batchelor of Arts, was admitted *ad eundem*. Mr. Loren Law, of Yale College, Batchelor of Arts was admitted *ad eundem*. The degree of Master of Arts was conferred on Mr. James Thomson, James Imlay, Nathaniel Howel, Tredwell Smith, John Murray, Ralph Hunt. *alumni* of this College. And on

The Rev. Gerardus Arnest Kreyffers, one of the ministers of the Low Dutch Church, New York. *The degree of DOCTOR IN DIVINITY was conferred on the Rev. John Newton, of St. Mary Woolnoth, London; the Rev. Moses Mather, of Middlesex, Connecticut; and*

and on the Rev. John Jamieson, of Forfar, in Scotland. The degree of DOCTOR OF LAWS was conferred on the Hon. Thomas Jefferson, Esq. Secretary of State, and on the Hon. Alexander Hamilton, Esq. Secretary of the Treasury *

Philadelphia.

"It is said that Mr. Robert Carter, of Nominy, Virginia," the gentleman who is so respectfully mentioned in a former part of the Register †, "has emancipated 442 slaves.—This is a sacrifice on the altar of humanity of perhaps an hundred thousand dollars." If this be true, vote him a triumph, crown him with laurels, and let the million listen while he sings—

"I would not have a slave to till my ground,
To carry me, to fan me while I sleep,
And tremble when I wake, for all the wealth
That sinews bought and sold have ever earn'd.
No: dear as freedom is, and in my heart's
Just estimation priz'd above all price,
I had much rather be MYSELF the slave,
And wear the bonds, than fasten them on HIM."

Extract of Letters from Boston and Philadelphia dated Oct. 5, &c. 1791.

THERE has been a very pleasing revival of religion at Boston for eighteen months past. The Lord has evidently been at work in that city. Dr. Stillman, Pastor of the first Baptist Church there, had for some time felt a greater desire than usual for the conversion of sinners, which naturally led him to more than common exertions. These circumstances gave encouragement to hope, that the Lord was on his way to visit his people. An uncommon seriousness and attention were observed in the public assemblies; the people seemed to stand on tip-toe to hear the word, at length some persons became anxious and inquisitive about their salvation. About August 1790, several young persons went a small distance into the country to visit a sensible pious friend. His godly conversation was the means of awakening one or two of them; who, when they got among their young acquaintance, in a factory where they all wrought together, were the means of awakening several others; and, at length, a considerable number of them were evidently under great concern of mind. Some of them visited the Rev. Mr. Baldwin, pastor of the second Baptist church at Boston; thirteen or fourteen of them at a time, have

* Had the full account of this commencement arrived it should have been introduced.

EDITOR.

† Part the Second, for 1790; page 107.

bcen

been in Dr. Stillman's study, enquiring what they should do to be saved. At this time Mr. Baldwin, or Dr. Stillman, preached or expounded almost every night in the week; and several evening societies were set up, which have been generally thronged ever since. Those persons who, in a judgment of charity, were brought to the knowledge of the truth, made a public profession; others were deeply convinced of sin, by seeing their companions leaving them, and, as they thought, going to heaven. Thus the work, which was chiefly among the young people, went on gradually, and what is a very pleasing circumstance, *rationally*, without much noise or show. It was remarkable, how clearly they appeared to be convinced of their guilt, and lost condition, and of the justice of God in their condemnation, as well as of the method of salvation by Christ. Thirty-eight have been already added to Dr. Stillman's church, of the number is one of his own daughters, a most amiable natural temper, lately married, and ten more candidates for baptism were in the same society, besides others hopefully brought to believe in Jesus. Thirty-three have been joined to Mr. Baldwin's church in the course of the year, and at the above date they had a number waiting for the holy ordinance of baptism. Several persons also have been taken into the Rev. Mr. Thacher's, and the Rev. Mr. Eckley's church (two respectable Pædobaptist ministers at Boston) but we have not the pleasure of being able to say how many. One of the letters, from which the above is extracted, expresses a fear that the work is almost over; another says, we hope that God will continue to work gloriously; all the glory shall be his for ever. Dr. Stillman's meeting-house, has just been enlarged at one end twenty-two feet, it is now seventy-eight by fifty-six feet.

One of the correspondents adds, "I hope at some future period, I shall be able to give you an accurate account of a glorious work of God's Spirit in New Hampshire, which began a year ago, last spring, and has extended through several towns. The Rev. Samuel Shephard has baptized more than an hundred and fifty, and the work still goes on. There have been also very considerable revivals* in many churches of other denominations in this land."

Extract of a Letter from an Evangelical Episcopalian Clergyman in WALES, dated November, 1791.

YOU enquire about the state of the churches in Wales. I have nothing but what is favourable to communicate. We had lately a very comfortable Association at Pwllhelly, some thousands attended, more than ever were seen there before. And here, in our town of Bala, we have had a very great, powerful,

* Accurate accounts of them from any person, would be highly acceptable.

EDITOR.

and

and glorious out-pouring of the Spirit of our God on the people in general, especially on children, and the young people. The state of the soul is become the general concern of the country. Scores of the wildest and most inconsiderate of our young people of both sexes have been awakened. Their convictions have been very clear and powerful, and, in some instances, so deep as to bring them to the brink of despair. Their consolations also have been equally strong. If the Lord is graciously pleased to continue the work, as it has prevailed for some weeks past, the Devil's kingdom will be in ruins in this neighbourhood. Ride on! ride on! thou king of glory, is the fervent cry of my soul day and night. I verily believe the Lord means soon to give the kingdom of darkness a dreadful shake, for he takes off the pillars of it. Those who were foremost in the service of Satan, and rebellion against God, are now among the foremost in seeking salvation in the blood of the Lamb. It is an easy work to preach the Gospel of the kingdom here at this time. Divine truths have their own infinite weight and importance on the minds of the people: beams of divine light, together with divine irresistible energy accompany every truth delivered. It is glorious to see how the stoutest hearts are bowed, and the hardest melted down. I would not have been without seeing what I have lately seen; no, not for the world. These are the blessed things I have to relate to you, my dear Brother, respecting poor Wales. The charity schools here are abundantly blessed. Children that were aforetime like jewels buried in rubbish, now appear with divine lustre, and transcendent beauty. Little children from six to twelve years, are affected, and astonished, and overpowered; their young minds, day and night, are filled with nothing but soul concern. All I say is matter of fact; I have not exaggerated in the least degree, nor related but a small part of the whole: the Lord hath done great things for us: And to him be all the praise.

A N E L E G Y

ON THE DEATH OF THE

Rev. ROBERT DAY, A. M.

Who departed this life April 1st, 1791.

By the Rev. BENJAMIN FRANCIS.

WHAT, DAY no more! the holy prophet dead!
 What pungent grief the doleful tidings spread!
 Fair Zion weeps and trembles at the sound;
 The stroke how heavy, and how deep the wound!
 Insatiate death! how hast thou forc'd away,
 From our embrace, our dear, our honour'd DAY!
 How hast thou snatch'd the shepherd from the flock;
 Thy steps how silent! ah, how great the shock!

While

While silent grief fits pensive on each eye,
 And friendship heaves the sympathetic sigh,
 The plaintive muse would bear her tender part,
 And sing the feelings of a mournful heart ;
 A heart whose fibres long had twin'd around
 The lovely faint, on earth no longer found ;
 A heart that bleeds for her departed DAY,
 And longs, like him, to drop her cumb'rous clay.
 Calm and resign'd his checquer'd life he clos'd,
 On Jesu's breast his weary head repos'd ;
 Lay undismay'd 'midst savage death's alarms,
 And fell asleep within his Saviour's arms :
 But fell asleep to wake in endless light,
 A shining saint enrob'd in spotless white,
 To join with angels in their blest employ,
 And take his fill of everlasting joy.

Come ye, his dear relations, clad in grief,
 (The smiles of Heaven afford you full relief !)
 Come ye, the people of his joy and care.
 Whose fruits of love, alas, no more ye share !
 Fruits sweet and pleasant, wholesome and mature,
 To feed the hungry, the diseas'd to cure —
 Come ye, his brethren in the Lord of Love,
 Whose souls, like his, would bear us all above, —
 Come ye, his friends in parts remote, whose eyes
 No more behold him underneath the skies :
 Come ye, who saw the christian and divine,
 For half an age, in him so brightly shine, —
 Come, join the muse around the prophet's tomb,
 Where dwells a long, but not an endless gloom ;
 With mingled tears bedew the dear remains,
 Where lodg'd a soul that now in glory reigns ;
 The ambient air with lamentations load,
 And send your sighs thro' all the land abroad :
 Then cease to weep, and raise your glitt'ring eyes
 To the bright mansions in the blissful skies :
 There, there, behold, still listening to his song,
 The shining saint among th' angelic throng ;
 Nor cease to gaze, till ye, like DAY ascend,
 And, round the throne, with him your praises blend.

No more, alas ! we see the lovely face,
 And placid mien, that shone with every grace,
 That gladden'd all within his dear abode,
 The friendly circle, and the house of God !
 No more, alas, we hear his charming tongue,
 With hallow'd fire, address th' attentive throng,
 And sound abroad the great Redeemer's name,
 His peerless glories and his deathless fame !

No more the widow and the orphan find
 In him a friend benevolent and kind !
 Death's dark abode conceals him from our eyes ;
 But oh, what worth in death's dark mansion lies !
 In early youth how singularly meek !
 How rarely virtuous ! how inclin'd to seek
 Celestial wisdom for his constant guide !
 And how devoid of arrogance and pride !
 How he devoted to his Saviour's praise
 The strength and beauty of his younger days,
 With cheerful feet his shining footsteps trod,
 And burn'd with love to his redeeming God !
 How was he bless'd with every grace divine,
 That made his spirit and deportment shine !
 What lowliness, what rectitude of mind,
 What meekness, zeal, and sanctity, combin'd
 With christian prudence, fortitude serene,
 And soft address, adorn'd his humble mien !
 Humility, with all her beauteous train,
 Ran thro' his conduct, like a golden chain ;
 And could his virtues be described at large,
 A stranger might with fulsome flattery charge
 Th' impartial muse, while friends who knew him best
 Would own that half his worth was not express'd.

A friend to concord, and a foe to strife,
 He walk'd with God thro' every stage of life.
 The sacred page, devotion, prayer, and praise,
 Were dear companions of his toilsome days.
 In prayer how fervent ! how devout ! how sweet !
 And oh, how humble at Jehovah's feet !
 His mind how placid 'midst tempestuous grief !
 In each distress he found divine relief.
 How did he hold communion with his God,
 While the vain world beneath his feet he trode.
 How did his soul ascend the realms above,
 On the strong pinions of seraphic love !
 And how, at length, she took her joyful flight
 To those fair regions of supreme delight !

In him the christian, husband, parent, friend,
 And pastor, shone resplendent to the end ;
 Nor can the Muse determine, (such his light !)
 In which he shin'd superlatively bright.

Fir'd with a sacred evangelic zeal,
 For Jesus' name, and man's immortal weal,
 By Heaven commission'd for the grand design,
 And fraught with knowledge, human and divine,
 He spread the tidings of salvation round,
 His trumpet gave a sweet and certain sound.
 From Sinai's top wrapt in the thundering cloud,
 The sinners doom first he pronounc'd aloud,

With awe describing his tremendous state,
 'To rouse the wretch asleep at hell's dark gate;
 Next, from the summit of fair Zion's hill,
 Where flowers abound, and copious dews distil,
 He pour'd a flood of gospel light along
 From a warm heart and a melodious tongue.
 Christ and his cross was his delightful theme,
 The fountain whence immortal blessings stream.
 How he describ'd the wonders of his love,
 Or bleeding here, or triumphing above!
 How he proclaim'd his free stupendous grace,
 Shewn to the vilest of our guilty race!
 How clear, important, and harmonious were
 The various truths with which he charm'd our ear!
 And what an unction from above perfum'd
 His ministrations, and his mind illum'd!
 Th' attentive sinner trembled at the sound,
 The contrite heart sweet consolation found:
 Each heavenly grace beneath his doctrine grew,
 His doctrine fell as the refreshing dew,
 And the plantation favor'd with his care
 Bore ample fruit, delicious, kind, and fair:
 Still, like the cedar, may it spread its root,
 Still, like the vine, produce abundant fruit.

Wise as the serpent, harmless as the dove,
 He shone with prudence, while he flam'd with love.
 No frothy wit, that damps devotion's flame,
 Defil'd his lips, to gain a vulgar fame:
 His solemn, meek, engaging manner shew'd,
 His mind was with each heavenly grace endu'd.
 No furious zeal, no speculations wild,
 Possess'd his soul devout, serene, and mild:
 A sacred ardor, fed with love divine,
 Glow'd at his heart, and made the preacher shine.
 No filthy lucre, and no vain applause,
 Inflamed his breast; he serv'd the noble cause
 Of pure religion with the purest mind:
 Celestial fire had all his soul refin'd.

But ah, bright DAY no longer shines below!
 No longer cheers us in a world of woe!
 The radiant Orb no longer gilds the west!
 Ah, *Wellington!* how sad thy throbbing breast!
 The radiant Orb is set, but set to rise
 With greater lustre, and in brighter skies;
 He now reflects the Savior's praise above,
 And beams with glory in the realms of love.
 Adieu, blest Saint! till we thy face behold
 Where Jesus dwells, where all his charms unfold,
 And with thee there join all the ransom'd throng,
 To praise the Lamb in one immortal song.

Nor DAY alone, more Lights that us'd to move
 And shine along, like brilliant stars above,
 Have lately set, or rapidly descend,
 And soon, alas, their radiant course will end.
 What sadness spreads o'er Zion's face around !
 What awful gloom o'erwhelms her hallowed ground !
 How long shall death, the king of terrors, reign,
 And hold his captives in his dark domain ? —
 For ever ? No ! the Prince of life, ere long,
 Shall, with his arm omnipotently strong,
 Dethrone the tyrant, last of Zion's foes,
 Of all her mental and corporeal woes ;
 Shall with his voice burst open all the cells
 In death's dread prison, where confusion dwells,
 And with the brightness of his face illumine
 The deep recesses of the dismal tomb.
 Lo ! endless life and heavenly beauty spread
 Thro' all the regions of the pious dead :
 Behold the saints in shining crowds arise
 To meet the Lord in the empyreal skies !
 There, there I see my honored DAY ascend !
 Now, cease my grief, my plaintive numbers end.

The Rev. Mr. ROBERT HALL.

MR. ROBERT HALL was born in 1728, *April 15*, old style, at a village called *Black-Heddon*, in the parish of *Stannington*, about twelve miles north-west of *Newcastle-upon-Tyne*, in *Northumberland*. His father, Mr. *Christopher Hall*, was a reputable farmer, as were his ancestors ; his grandfather, it is said, lived on the same farm, and was born in the same house, with his great-grandson *Robert*. His father was a worthy honest man, of the *episcopal persuasion*, but his mother was a *presbyterian*. He hoped they were both possessed of true religion. His father died when he was between eleven and twelve years old, after which *Robert* was brought up with an uncle, at *Kirkley*, three miles east of *Black-Heddon* ; where he attended the *presbyterian* meeting ; but with little advantage, the minister being the most gross *Arminian* he ever met with.

However, the first year after he went there, being only twelve years old, he was brought under deep concern of soul. Hearing another youth, who was himself very profligate, repeat



Ph^o Van Dyke. Pinx^t.

T. Trotter. sculp^t.

THE REV^d M^r ROBERT HALL,
late of Arnsby.
Leicestershire.

Published as the Act directs Aug^r 1st 1798

repeat some awful things respecting the Torments of hell, which he had heard “the parson say at church” a few days before, he was immediately, on this relation, seized with an overwhelming sense of guilt, and the misery of eternal banishment from God. From that day, self-abhorrence attended with black despair occupied his mind continually; often accompanied with horrid temptations and blasphemies which ought not to be uttered. He could see no way of escape from everlasting ruin, nor was any satisfactory method of salvation pointed out to him by the minister he then sat under. Thus he lived for months and years, as on the brink of hell, without a gleam of hope; and so oppressed with this constant burden, that he could scarcely think of any thing else, and hence often thought of himself that he had not common sense.—Near the beginning of this time, he met with a painful accident, by which he broke his arm and three ribs; and before he was cured, being sent out into the harvest-field, on a young horse, with his arm in a sling, and riding near a place where they were felling some trees, the sound of the ax affrighted his horse, which ran away with him, and threw him among the fallen branches. By this fall his arm was broken again, with his other arm and collar bone, and his shoulder put out. But he has repeatedly declared, that all the pain of these broken bones did by no means equal the anguish of his mind. The doleful sound of ‘damnation, damnation,’ seemed continually in his ears. He apprehended that his sins were unpardonable, and that God *could not* save him *if* he would. He really thought God must be reproached as an *unholy Being*, if he shewed favour to such a sinner; and therefore he concluded it was a *sin for him to desire salvation*. During this long season of distress he had some paroxysms of anguish still more violent than what he felt in general, with now and then a little occasional relief. And one time having imbibed a notion, some how or other, that it was impossible for him to obtain acceptance with God, and to be finally saved, except he arrived at a state of sinless perfection, he strove very hard for it. In order to bind himself more effectually to duty, he entered into a written covenant with God; this he did, it is thought, more than once. However, he always broke in upon his engagements, and was convinced that he had sinned again. He was much concerned about this, and the notion still continuing that he must either arrive at sinless perfection or perish, he concluded, as the last expedient of which he could think, that he would enter into a covenant

with God *written with his own blood*: and he actually tied a ligature round his finger, pricked it, procured blood for that purpose, and gave himself up to God to be ruined to eternity if he ever sinned again. The form of the covenant is not known, but the tenor of it was never to sin again while he lived. For two or three days he thought he kept it, but after that he was convinced he had sinned again. Then he thought it was all over with him, and he concluded that he must be damned. But he had very hard thoughts of God for making the conditions of salvation so hard; and as he expected that he must certainly perish, he thought with himself whether it would not be a negative benefit to him were he to put an end to his life immediately. He knew that suicide was a great crime, but he concluded that if he lived a few years, the number of sins he should commit, in that time, would more than equal the guilt of self-murder: he therefore resolved, as the best thing he could do upon the whole, to destroy himself. One day, when he was at home at his father's house, he made preparation to execute the horrid design; but before he did it, he resolved that he would take his last leave of the bible; for, as he has said several times to his brethren in the ministry when he has related this story, Nothing grieved him so much when he thought of putting an end to his life as this, I shall never see the bible any more. He accordingly took his bible, not having his mind any more upon one passage than another; he opened it, and the first words that met his observation were these, *Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool*, II. i. 18. This passage afforded him a gleam of hope, and he desisted from the shocking purpose, though the habitual gloom of his mind soon returned again in a great degree, and he obtained no abiding relief, nor clear discovery of the gospel-method of salvation. But a considerable time after this, he took up the bible, and read in Exod. xxxiv. how JEHOVAH proclaimed his name before Moses, "*The LORD, the LORD GOD, merciful and gracious, &c. FORGIVING INIQUITY, TRANSGRESSION, and SIN, and that WILL BY NO MEANS CLEAR THE GUILTY,*" &c. But instead of finding any relief from this encouraging passage, he was tempted to throw away his bible as containing irreconcilable inconsistencies, in declaring that God would *forgive iniquity, transgression, and sin*, while yet it asserts that *He will by no means clear the guilty*.—But at length, after continuing in this state

of distress and despondency full *seven* years, he obtained relief by a believing view of the *Gospel Method of Salvation*. This he had never heard stated by another, but one day, resolving to look once more into the bible, if possibly it might discover to him any door of hope, he cast his eye on Gal. iv. 4, 5. *God sent forth his SON, made of a woman, MADE UNDER THE LAW, to REDEEM THEM that WERE UNDER THE LAW, &c.* Immediately a new train of thought struck his mind, '*Christ was MADE under the law,—then he was not under it originally;—for what end was he made under the law?—to redeem them that WERE under the law:—were under the law!—then they are not under the law now, but redeemed.*—There is, therefore, a way of redemption for sinners from the curse of the law, by which it is possible even I may be saved!'—Being thus enlightened to see that God *could* save him, if he pleased, without debasing his own perfections, the bare possibility of salvation, in a way consistent with the divine glory, made his heart glad indeed. He now began to search the scriptures for further discoveries of this glorious gospel: and having once got hold of the right clue, he read them as it were with new eyes. The difficulty was now solved, which had once tempted him to burn the bible; he understood *how* God could *forgive* sin, and yet *not clear* the *guilty*. Soon after this, his own salvation began to appear not only possible, but probable, and at length certain. This was in May 1748. He now was convinced and rejoiced that salvation was of *GRACE indeed*, and abhorred the *Aminian* sentiments, which had so long held him in dreadful bondage. He remarked long after to a friend, "perhaps, I should never have detested that system as I do, had I not once drank into it, and felt its effects." On this account he left the minister upon whom he formerly attended, and travelled five miles to another *presbyterian* meeting, where the gospel was preached, and joined in communion with that people. The minister at this place was a Mr. *Dryden*, who had a few young men under his care designed for the ministry. Mr. *Hall* contracted a peculiar intimacy with two of these students, Mr. *James Rutherford* and Mr. *William Peden*.

About this time there began to be a great noise in those parts, respecting the *Anabaptists*, as they were stiled, who had licensed a house for preaching, about twelve miles off. Mr. *Hall's* mother having married again, her eldest son *Christopher* left her, and went to reside in the county of *Durham*. And now *Robert* heard that his brother *Christo-*

pher had joined these *Anabaptists* at *Hamsterley*; he abhorred the very name, and did not like to hear his brother mentioned, because he was one of them, and had married a sister of the man at whose house they had set up preaching, five miles from *Hexham*. At last, however, he agreed with his two friends, *Rutherford* and *Peden*, to go and dispute with the *Anabaptist* minister, that, if possible, they might put a stop to his farther progress in that neighbourhood. Accordingly under colour of Mr. *Robert Hall's* visiting his new relation, they went together to the place, called *Juniper-dye-house*, on a Saturday evening, when they knew that the minister, Mr. *David Fernie*, would be there, ready to preach on the morrow. They were all three kindly entertained, and, according to their eager wish, soon got into a close dispute upon *Baptism*. They were three to one; nevertheless, in about two hours, the young men were all entangled and ashamed. They then went out, laid their heads together to muster up fresh arguments, and returned to the company and renewed the debate; but to their great mortification, were again quite silenced, though not convinced. It had been their design to have stopped and heard Mr. *Fernie* on the morrow, but the two students were so chagrined that they would not stay, but set off homeward. After this repulse, they all three met frequently, to fortify themselves for a future attack, being resolved not to give up the point, but to go again when prepared. But they were disappointed in their purpose of going together, for Mr. *Dryden* soon after gave up his academy, and that scattered them. However, Mr. *R. Hall* determined he would go once more, and try what he could do by himself. Accordingly, he got what books he could against the *Baptists*, intending to confront Mr. *Fernie* with arguments from them. But upon thinking what Mr. *F.* might possibly urge in reply to these arguments, he found none of them would stand: so that by searching the scriptures upon the subject, and reading *Wilson's Scripture Manual*, which fell into his hands, he was convinced of *Believer's Baptism*, without any more dispute. The next time that he saw Mr. *F.* he was baptized by him, Jan. 5, 1752, at *Juniper-dye-house* aforementioned, and received into the little church at *Hexham*: it was then a branch of a larger church, whose principal meeting-place was in the county of *Durham*, where the minister then resided, but visited this place once a month; another branch of his church met at *Marten*, in *Yorkshire*, a few miles south of *Stockton-upon-Tees*.

The church conceiving that Mr. *Hall* was possessed of ministerial talents, urged him immediately to attempt expounding the scriptures; and by their persuasion he made a trial privately, before the members of the church, and founded his discourse on the same text that he left for his funeral, "*It is finished.*" He has often said, he began where he should have left off, and that if he knew which should be his last sermon, he would preach it from those words. After five or six months trial by the church, Mr. *Hall* was solemnly called out, by them, to public work, about June, 1752. He was then twenty-four years of age.

It is here needful to remark, that a serious good man from *Lutterworth*, who had been at *Carlisle*, in the *Duke of Cumberland's* army, had there contracted an acquaintance with Mr. *Hall's* eldest brother *Christopher*, who had been some time in the ministry, and was then assistant to an aged minister at *Broughton*, in *Cumberland*. After the rebellion was suppressed, and this good man had returned home, he was the instrument of Mr. *C. Hall's* being known to the people at *Arnsby*. Mr. *C. Hall* was applied to, and he spent two Sabbaths with them, in the latter part of the summer, 1752. And the people persuaded him to engage, that if no particular hinderance arose, he would visit them again in the spring. He had fixed to spend the ensuing winter at *Whitehaven*, where he had kept an occasional lecture: and by the spring a people were gathered there, who entered into a church state, over whom Mr. *C. Hall* was ordained pastor in *April*. Therefore early in the spring Mr. *C. Hall* sent information to *Arnsby*, that he could not leave his new-raised society, but that he had a younger brother, newly called out to the ministry, who was at liberty. They repeatedly desired him to send his brother. Mr. *Robert Hall* had then in view a place in *Yorkshire*. But, by his brother's advice, he went first to *Arnsby*. When he came there, he soon found his heart cleaving to the people, and was favoured with more liberty in preaching than had been common with him before. They were a poor, plain people, but Mr. *Hall's* low opinion of himself, made him really think himself "unfit to preach to any other but such." They pressed him much to abide with them, and his mind being greatly fixed on God's promise to *Moses*, *My presence shall go with thee*, he was encouraged to venture, and complied with their request, in *June*, 1753.

When Mr. *Hall* came to *Arnsby* first, the church and congregation being small and very poor, never raised him so much as 15l. a year: "nor indeed," said Mr. *Hall*, "for several years after, and my family increased fast, having had 14 children in all. But I found my heart so united to the people, that I never durst leave them, though I often thought I must. I trust the Lord was with us of a truth, and the *fifth* chapter of the first epistle of *Peter* was habitually impressed on my mind. It appearing pretty clear to myself and my wife, that we were where God would have us to be; this sense of Duty, and a willingness to live honestly, made us resolve in the strength of the Lord, that *we would not run into debt*, let us live as hardly as we might: which resolution he enabled us to keep. But many and unknown difficulties we grappled with: However I am thankful I have been enabled to continue with the people to this day, of whom I can say with truth, I love them in the Lord*."

Mr. *Hall's* first wife was *Jane Catchafide*, the daughter of very creditable parents, *Robert* and *Mary Catchafide*; born at *Proud-Hall*, April 15, 1729, and married July 18, 1751, who died Dec. 21, 1776. She was a great encourager of her husband, under the trials they encountered, when they first came to *Arnsby*, being naturally of a chearful, active disposition, and favoured with great spiritual enjoyments and consolations. For above *twenty* years she lived generally in an assured persuasion of the love of God; but for *four* years before her death, she underwent such sore afflictions of body and mind, as have seldom been equalled; yet died at *last* in a most *triumphant* manner. A brief account of the Occasion, Continuance, and joyful Conclusion of these sore conflicts, was published soon after her death, under the title of *Mercy manifested*; in a letter from Mr. *Hall* to a friend; which went through two editions in 1777. Under this af-

* Soon after his settlement at *Arnsby*, the doubts of his call and qualifications beset him; and on a Monday, he desired his wife to go to the people and desire they would provide a supply for the next Sabbath, as he could not preach. She refused, and said, Try what the Lord will do for you. On the Saturday, he repeated the request to her; and she denied, saying, Stay till to-morrow, and if they must be told so, go and tell them yourself, for I cannot. He went; and after telling his dismal ditty to the people, an old father said, Sir, go up into the pulpit and pray; and if you find your mind set at liberty, proceed in preaching; if otherwise, come down and we'll spend the time in prayer: for I trust you are with a sympathizing people. He went to prayer, and soon found his soul at perfect liberty, by the letting in of those words, Come, for all things are now ready. Almost every member present expressed the greatest satisfaction, and the preacher said, he found so great a fulness in the words, that he thought he saw matter enough in them to serve him to preach from as long as he lived.

fiction

affliction his supports and consolations were such, and his faith and patience so exemplary, as to fill all his friends with astonishment.

Mr. Hall was justly and highly prized by his brethren in the ministry, especially those who belonged to the *Baptist Association* (consisting principally of churches in *Leicestershire* and *Northamptonshire*), which he was greatly instrumental in forming. And several of their annual letters, on the most important articles, were written by this excellent man. None of them have been more deservedly esteemed than that, which he wrote in the midst of his most heavy affliction, viz. in the year 1776, upon the *DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY*. The letter being much approved by many of different denominations, a second edition was called for, and printed on a larger type, to which, by the desire of Mr. Ryland, jun. he annexed, *Some Thoughts on the causes of Salvation and Damnation*, in answer to Mr. Fletcher, of *Madely*.

In the year 1779, at the *Association* at *Northampton*, Mr. Hall delivered a discourse from *Isa. lvii. 14. Cast ye up, cast ye up, prepare the way, take up the stumbling-block out of the way of my people*. This sermon he was earnestly desired to print, with such circumstantial alterations or enlargements as he might judge proper. It was published by subscription in 1781, under the title of *HELP TO ZION'S TRAVELLERS: being An Attempt to remove various Stumbling Blocks out of the way, relating to doctrinal, experimental and practical Religion*. — This little volume, which principally contains a vindication of the genuine doctrines of grace, from the objections of *Socinians*, *Sabellians*, *Arminians*, and *Antinomians*, has met with considerable approbation, from godly, judicious, and learned men of various denominations.

Mr. Hall was married to a second wife on June 21, 1780, viz. Mrs. Elizabeth Swan, the relict of Mr. Swan of *Northampton*. Her maiden name was *Woodcock*, and she was a native of *Hinckley*. Mr. H. ever expressed great thankfulness for this connection; she proved a tender and useful nurse, as well as a sympathizing friend, in all his latter afflictions.

In *December*, 1783, he had a very narrow escape from being smothered in the snow; of which he gave a very affecting account, in a letter dated *January 15*, 1784, and then closed it with these sweet lines: " ——— Since I saw you, I have had more pleasure in my work, than has been common with me. Indeed (but I beg you not to mention a word of it to any one), I have had the most blessed half year in my soul, that I remember ever to have enjoyed.

The

The approach of Sabbaths has been pleasurable to me; my work a sweet reward; and the worship of God in general attended with meltings of heart, and solemn joy. I have thought, though a poor creature as ever crawled, yet I would not, on the whole, if I could, exchange my relative connection with Christ, and consequential state, with an *Angel*. Yet I tremble while I thus speak. I would not vaunt, and I dread desertion: but I make free with you, and intreat you to regard the prohibition above. I am, dear brother, yours in love and affection, sincere and fervent, *Rob. Hall.*"

In the beginning of 1788, his valuable life seemed twice exposed to imminent danger, from very trivial accidents. First, by a slight prick in his finger brought on a mortification, which was stopped with difficulty, and the loss of its first joint. A few months afterwards he seemed in equal danger from a slight friction in another part, which for several weeks caused an alarming inflammation on the right side of his head, about the temples, and behind the ear. Nor was he sufficiently recovered by the *Association*, May 27, to be able to attend it, though held so near as *Kettering*: but he sent the *Circular Letter* which he had been desired to draw up, and which was approved and ordered for the press. This letter principally treated on the *evil of sin*, and the *dignity of Christ*; and was meant to fortify the churches against every temptation to desert the doctrines of CHRIST's infinite *Dignity* and *invaluable Atonement*. These principles occupied a first place in his heart; they were his daily bread; it was under their influence that he ripened so much as he did in humility, heavenly-mindedness, and joy in God. *The dear and adorable Redeemer*, as he used to express himself, was his life in this world, and his hope for that to come.

When this letter was printed, his absence and illness was notified to the churches, and their prayers desired for his valuable life: and God granted that which they requested for near three years longer.—The *Association* at *Spalding*, in 1789, was too distant for him to attend, but his letter on *Communion with God*, was that year printed, which proved the last of his remains from the press. But in 1790 he attended the *Association* at *O'ney*, where he preached from *Acts xx. 24*. *But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus to testify the gospel of the grace of God.* This was the last time he was employed on a public occasion in his own connection.

Meanwhile his spasms, or fits of the cramp, returned frequently,

quently, and often with great violence. In his last letter to his son-in-law, Mr. *Isaac James*, of *Bristol*, dated *Feb. 4, 1791*, he thus writes. "In point of health, when my fits are off, I am as well almost as I could wish; and as to my state generally, rather happy in my mind. *The gospel bears my spirits up, A faithful and unchanging GOD, Lays the foundation of my hope, In oaths, and promises, and blood.* This verse often is, and long has been, precious to me. I have you all more in remembrance than ever. May the Lord say to each, *Thou shalt not be forgotten of me.*"

Feb. 17, 1791, he wrote to his old and intimate friend Mr. *Evans*, of *Northampton*. The following remarkable passages, I have extracted from that letter.—"As to myself, as I write to a dear friend, I may use a little freedom. You know I have had many things to crush my natural spirits, and often think, perhaps it was well for me they were broken down in early life. I have long groaned, being burdened, till a *low, timorous, pensive* frame of mind, became *habitual*: what you say of your *usefulness*, affects me to tears. I hope the Lord has made me useful, (and so he has you) but that never was to me a sufficient proof of his approbation. He will *call, comfort, and nourish* his own, though the instrument be only a *Nurse* for a time, yea, worse, a *black unclean Raven*. Many and many a day and year have I spent habitually bemoaning myself, *surely I am MORE brutish than any man*, &c. I have often dreaded and hung back from the Lord's work perhaps to the dishonour of his name and the discouragement of my friends, particularly young ministers; which I lament now, as such opportunities are over with me. Yet the Lord has been ever kind to *timorous, distrustful, ungrateful* ME. I have always dreaded long life, having a shattered memory at best, and apprehending that under natural decays, I should be *useless indeed*; nay, worse, a cumberer of the ground. But, dear brother, I mention it for your encouragement, though I dread saying too much, or that you should think I am more favoured than I really am; yet, I say, I may venture to mention to you, that hitherto my fears have not been verified. I trust the Lord is with me rather more than heretofore; and the word seems blest to *some, if not to many*. We are well attended, in bad weather excepted; and at evening meetings still more and more. But sometimes I preach with much difficulty, and Lord's day was fortnight did not at all, having a fit on me from morning

morning to night. I have many that are soon got off, but several have baffled all means of late; at least for a long time. The few last have been very different from what they used to be. My head has not been affected, nor breast in *much* pain: but I have been very sick, and inclined to swoonings. I have been generally very happy in my mind. Last Lord's day night had a very severe fit, though but of four hours continuance. They called my son John out of bed. I was happy beyond expression in my mind. It was a night of sorrow deluged with joy. What my dear wife and son, &c. feared, *that* I in a measure longed for. I say in a *measure*, because, though greatly afflicted, yet my comforts were so much superior, that I thought, and said, I cared not how long I lived, though I had fits every day, if the Lord continued me his heart-melting, heart-strengthening presence. I had general pain all over, but I could not forbear saying, Pain was pleasant, and sickness sweet, when the Lord is near. I thought of you, brother *Ryland*, &c. with great delight; and that if the Lord spared me, I would write a few lines on God's behalf, *viz.* to request you not to dread any thing but sin. I am sure the Lord can make you most *happy*, when afflictions are most *heavy*. He has really done so to me, poor me; and if so, can you distrust? One time (a while ago) those words, Fear not, *worm Jacob*, &c. were so much to me, that I told the Lord it was *enough*, I wished, I wanted no more. But last Lord's day night my cup ran over. O take care, dear brother, and never dishonour God, as I have done, by slavishly dreading old age, sore diseases, devils, or death. But here it becomes me to stop; I am yet in the body, having an evil heart; I know not how I may be yet, I therefore almost repent I have written what I have. However, I must and will say, truly the Lord is good, and *if* HE be with me, I will fear none evil, &c.

“After all, I know not the day of my death. The Lord may spare me to drag on for years. But none of these things move me, so that I may, be when it will, finish my course with joy.”

Mr. *Hall* had been going through the Epistle to the *Hebrews* in an expository lecture on the Lord's day evening; the last lecture was upon Heb. vi. 12. *That ye be not slothful, but followers of them, who through faith and patience inherit the promises.*

On the Lord's day wherein he was taken to rest, he appeared very well in the morning, and went into the meeting

ing at the usual time, and preached from John iv. 10. *If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith unto thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee LIVING WATER.* It was a pleasing circumstance to some, that this subject led him to mention, what they had never been told before, the *first* text he preached from at *Arncliffe*, which was in *Prov. xxv. 25. As cold waters to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far country.* Many thought that he spoke with uncommon vigour, beyond what they remembered for many years. He gave out at the close, 168th Hymn of *Rippon's Selection* *. *The fountain of CHRIST, LORD help us to sing, &c.* He afterwards ate his dinner as usual, and then lay down for a while, and slept soundly. About five he arose, as well, or rather better than usual. About six o'clock he retired into the little parlour, and staid about half an hour; when he came out again, Mrs. *Hall* first perceived him to be indisposed. He asked for some camomile tea, being very sick, and complained of a violent pain in his breast, though his sickness rather abated. A friend coming in to see how he did, he seemed at first not disposed to say much, but wished him good night, when he was going away; and presently, as if he suddenly recollected himself, he called him back, and said, "Friend *Looms*, fear nothing: do not be afraid of trouble, trials, nor even death: if the Lord is but with you, you will do." This he said, in a very animated manner, and with a chearful tone of voice, and then wished him good night again. To two others of his people he signified that he was not much inclined to try fresh medicines, "But," added he, "I have not lived so long in the world as to be weary of it, nor am I afraid to die. I don't care whether I live or die."—About eight o'clock he wished to go into the little parlour. Mrs. *Hall* took the candle to go before and light him, and his friends *Palmer* and *Vice* took hold of him as he got up, to lead him along more safely; when he said, "*I shall swoon;*" and sunk down to the ground, and expired without a groan or struggle.

On the *Thursday* afternoon following, his remains were committed to the grave; at which an oration was made by Mr. *Fuller*; the funeral sermon was preached by Mr. *Ry-*

* This Selection of Hymns, intended to be an Appendix to Dr. Watts's Hymns and Psalms, was very early indebted to Mr. Hall's patronage.—Several verbal alterations suggested by his critical acumen have been adopted in the 4th edition, by the

land, junior, in the yard, which adjoins both to the meeting and dwelling-house, (the concourse of people being too great to be contained in the place of worship,) from the text mentioned before, "It is finished."

A letter from a friend, who had been intimately acquainted with Mr. Hall for many years, containing a just delineation of his character, is inserted more for the imitation of the living, than for the honouring of the dead; those who were most intimately acquainted with him, will avouch it to contain the words of truth and soberness.

"The distinguished talents of our dear deceased friend, will long live in the remembrance of all who knew him. His advantages of education were extremely small, but possessing from his infancy a contemplative cast of mind, and an habit of patient thinking, he laid in a large stock of useful knowledge. In the character of a minister of the gospel, there have been but few more generally esteemed. Attentive only to the improvement of his hearers, he forgot himself, and appeared entirely absorbed in his subject. Though he was unacquainted with the graces of oratory, and the embellishments of language, scarce any man spoke with a more striking and visible effect. From nature he derived a large share of sensibility, and as he excelled at the same time in taking a profound and comprehensive view of a subject, the understanding and affections of his hearers were equally interested in his discourses, which generally flowed in a stream of argument and pathos. From a natural diffidence of temper, heightened by a consciousness of his want of education, he often ascended the pulpit with tremor; but as soon as this subsided, he generally led his hearers, step by step, into a large field of serious and manly thinking, kindled as he advanced, and expatiated with increasing energy and conviction till the subject was exhausted. His eminent piety lent a peculiar unction to the sentiments he delivered, led him to seize the most *interesting* views of every subject, and turned topics, which in the hands of others would have furnished barren speculation *only*, into materials for devotion and prayer. He appeared to the greatest advantage upon subjects where the faculties of most men fail them, for the natural element of his mind was greatness. At times he seemed to labour with conceptions too big for his utterance, and if any obscurity *ever* pervaded his discourses it must be traced to this source, the disproportion of his language to the vastness of his conceptions. He had great force without ornament, and grandeur without correctness. His ministry

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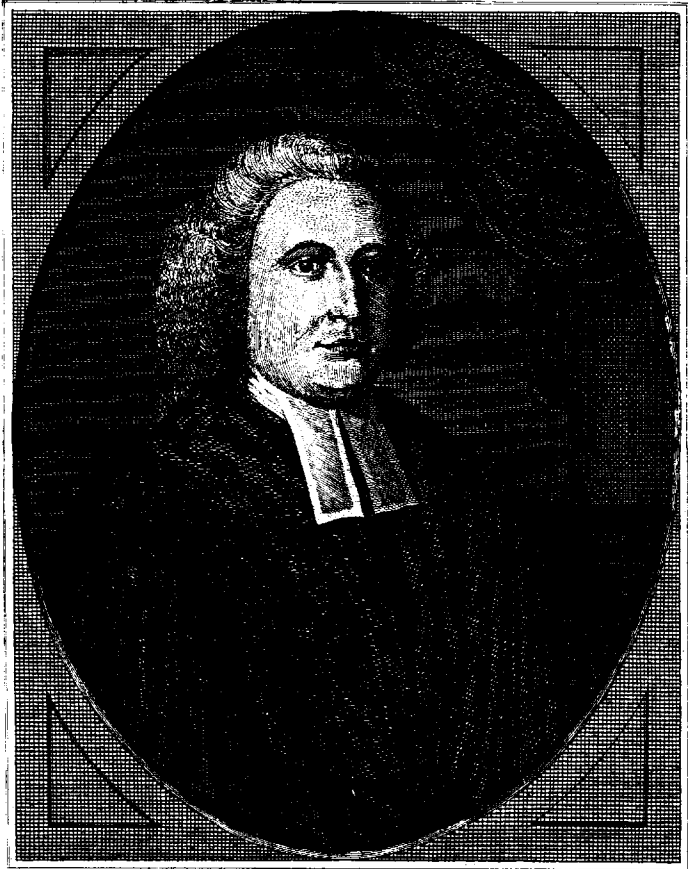
in the hands of God was effectual to the conversion of great numbers; and in this particular he was distinguished in a manner not very common, for the last years of his life were the most successful. But it was not only in the pulpit that he shone, in his private sphere of action as a Christian, his virtues were not less distinguished than his talents as a minister. Deep devotion and unaffected humility entered far into this part of his character. Few men have passed through greater vicissitudes of life than the deceased, and perhaps in each of them no man preserved with a more inviolable consistency the character of a Christian. He was very early introduced into the school of affliction, and the greater part of his subsequent life was distinguished by an uncommon succession of trials and distresses. On his first entrance on the ministry his fortitude was exercised in a scene of persecutions and reproaches, which lasted for many years; his worldly prospects at the same time were gloomy and precarious in a high degree, he had a very numerous family, and an income extremely limited.—He united great susceptibility of heart with firmness of mind, and endowed with these dispositions, he met reproaches with gentleness, sustained adversity with fortitude, and pains and sorrows of various kinds with exemplary patience. In the habitual frame of his spirit he *walked with God*. The consolations that supported him through life awaited him at death, for so tranquil were his last moments, so completely was he reconciled to the prospect of both worlds, that he declared a little time before he expired, he *would not give a straw to live or die*. From his first acquaintance with religion to the close of his life he was never known to express the least hesitation respecting his state, but enjoyed an uninterrupted assurance of a happy immortality. His conversation breathed so much of heaven, was so tinged with the very spirit of religion, that none could enjoy it without an opportunity of being made better. It was evident to all that knew him, that his religion was not a transient impression, but a permanent principle, that it blended itself with all his feelings and his actions, and that it raised his thoughts, his views, and his passions towards heaven.

In the first years of his ministry, he encountered, as hath already been remarked, much persecution and reproach; but at length his exemplary conduct dissipated these prejudices, and gained him so completely the esteem of all classes of mankind, that it may be doubted whether he had an enemy in the world, for certain he had none but those whom his piety

piety might make such. He was distinguished as a lover of peace, and as anxious to heal breaches as he was cautious to avoid them. With some, his extreme solicitude for the propagation of evangelical sentiments might seem like bigotry; but they who knew him best were well convinced that this was no part of his character, and that he regarded sentiments in no other light, nor cherished them in any higher degree, than as he conceived them favourable to the interests of holiness and virtue.

His brethren in the ministry will long and deeply lament him; for to them his talents and dispositions peculiarly endeared him. How many private circles hath he cheered and enlivened by his presence! In how many public solemnities hath he lifted up an ensign to the people, invited them to the standard of the cross, and warmed and exalted their affections, whilst "his doctrine dropped as the rain, and his speech distilled as the dew." Great abilities are often allied to pride, but the character of the deceased was an illustrious exception to this rule. His talents and virtues were in some measure concealed from the world, and almost entirely from himself, by a veil of the most unaffected modesty. He was never so happy as when he was permitted to sit in the shade, though the high opinion entertained of his abilities seldom allowed him that indulgence. It would be difficult to conceive a human mind more completely purged from the leaven of pride or of envy, than was that of our deceased friend. In this particular his magnanimity was so great, that he seemed, on all occasions, desirous of sinking the recollection of himself in the reputation and applause of his contemporaries. To cultivate the seeds of reflection and improvement in the minds of his inferiors, to behold the growing talents and virtues of his brethren, to draw merit from its obscurity and give confidence to timid worth, formed some of the highest satisfactions of his life.

His temper was grave and contemplative, yet few men took greater delight in Christian society, and on these occasions he seldom failed to mix with serious converse a vein of pleasantry and humour in which he greatly excelled. From his integrity and knowledge it may be inferred he was eminently skilled for imparting advice, yet so carefully did he shun every inclination to dictate, that he scarce ever gave it unsolicited. His sentiments, when required, he imparted with tenderness and freedom, but he never made advice a disguise for arrogance, or an engine of rule, nor ever presumed to think himself affronted



The Rev.^d JAMES MANNING, D.D.

*late Pastor of the Baptist Church and
President of the College at Providence,
Rhode Island.*

affronted if his counsels were not followed. In his whole deportment, prudence and humility were conspicuous; a prudence, however, that was candid and manly, as far removed from *art*, as his humility was from meanness. He had failings, no doubt, (for who is free?) But they were scarcely ever suffered to influence his conduct, or to throw even a transient shade over the splendour of his character. Upon the whole, if a strong and penetrating genius, simplicity of manners, integrity of heart, fidelity in friendship, and all these virtues consecrated by a piety the most ardent and sincere on the high altar of devotion, have any claim to respect, the memory of the deceased will long be cherished with tears of admiration and regret by those who knew him."

He died on March 13, 1791, in the 63d year of his age.

The REV. JAMES MANNING, D. D.

Providence, August 6, 1791.

ON Friday morning the 29th ult. at four o'clock, departed this life, at his house in this town, the Rev. JAMES MANNING, D. D. President of Rhode Island College, in the 53d year of his age.

He was born in New Jersey, and educated at Nassau Hall. Soon after he left College, he was called to the work of the ministry, by the Baptist church at the Scotch Plains, near Elizabeth Town.

After making tours to each extreme of the United States (then colonies) and preaching to different destitute churches in sundry places, he removed with his family to Warren in this state, preached to the church there, and opened a Latin school. In the year 1765, he obtained a charter of incorporation for Rhode Island College, of which he was chosen president. In the year 1770, the College was removed here, and he came with it of course, where he has since presided, and till of late years preached statedly to the Baptist church in this town.

In his youth he was remarkable for his dexterity in athletic exercises, for the symmetry of his body, and gracefulness of his person. His countenance was stately and majestic, full of dignity, goodness, and gravity; and the temper of his mind was a counterpart of it. He was formed for enter-

prize, his address was pleasing, his manners enchanting, his voice harmonious, and his eloquence irresistible.

Having deeply imbibed the spirit of truth himself, as a preacher of the gospel, he was faithful in declaring the whole counsel of God. He studied plainness of speech, and to be useful more than to be celebrated. The good order, learning, and respectability, of the Baptist churches in the eastern states, are much owing to his assiduous attention to ~~their~~ ^{their} welfare. The credit of his name, and his personal influence among them, perhaps have never been exceeded by any other character.

Of the College he must be considered as the founder. He presided with the singular advantage of a superior personal appearance, added to all his shining talents for governing and instructing youth. From the first beginning of his Latin school at Warren, through many discouragements, he has by constant care and labour raised this seat of learning to notice, to credit, and to respectability in the United States. Perhaps the history of no other College will disclose a more rapid progress, or greater maturity in the course of about 25 years.

Although he seemed to be confined to a sedentary life, yet he was capable of more active scenes. He had paid much attention to the government of his country, and had been honoured by this state with a seat in the old Congress. In state affairs he discovered an uncommon degree of sagacity, and might have made a figure as a politician.

In classical learning he was fully competent to the business of his station. He devoted less time than some others, to the study of the more abstruse sciences, but nature seemed to have furnished him so completely, that little remained for art to accomplish. The resources of his genius were great. In conversation he was at all times pleasant and entertaining. He had as many friends as acquaintance, and took no less pains to serve his friends than acquire them.

His death is a loss not to the College or Church only, but to the world. He is lamented by the youth under his care, by the churches, by his fellow-citizens, and, wherever his name has been heard, in whatever quarter of the civilized earth, the friends of science, of virtue and humanity, will drop a tender tear on the news of his death.

His amiable lady, the wife of his youth, and the boast of her sex, with all her fortitude of mind, which is great, must have sunk under the distressing loss, were she not sustained by Divine Grace. May heaven continue to support her,

her, for earth must have lost its charms. Few persons ever enjoyed a more excellent constitution, or better health formerly, than the doctor; but increasing corpulence gave him some complaints of ill health, of late years.

At the last annual meeting of the corporation of the College, he requested them to look out for a successor in his place. On the last Sabbath in April, he preached his farewell Sermon to the Baptist church in Providence; and on Lord's day morning, July the 24th, as he was at prayer in his family, he was seized with a fit of the apoplexy, in which he remained mostly insensible, till Friday the 29th, about four o'clock in the morning, when he died.

On Saturday his remains were carried into the College Hall, where his funeral was attended, and a prayer by the Rev. Dr. Hitchcock, and afterwards deposited in the north burial place in this town.

Order of the Procession.

STUDENTS.

STEWARD.

GRADUATES, OR SONS OF THE COLLEGE.

TUTORS.

PROFESSORS FORBES AND WEST.

THE CORPSE.

MOURNERS IN A COACH.

CHANCELLOR OF THE COLLEGE.

MEMBERS OF THE CORPORATION.

CLERGY.

PHYSICIANS.

MEMBERS OF THE BAPTIST CHURCH.

CITIZENS IN GENERAL.

The funeral is thought to have been the most numerous and respectable ever attended in the town of Providence.

The next day (Lord's day, July 31) the Rev. Jonathan Maxcy, A. M. now one of the professors in the college, delivered a sermon on the mournful occasion, from 1 Cor. xv. 26. 'The last enemy that shall be destroyed, is death.' The discourse closes in the following pathetic manner:

"Will not this consideration afford us consolation for the loss of our worthy friend, whose death we this day lament? Him the last week lodged in the house of death. But though he is dead, yet shall he live. For his enemy, his last enemy shall be destroyed.

To the mourning widow, the loss of Dr. Manning must be deeply affecting. The kind, the indulgent husband,

snatched unexpectedly from the midst of life, and health, and usefulness; torn from her bosom;—he, her other half, the partner of her joys, the reliever of her sorrows, is now wrapped in the cold ground. Farewell, my friend: But must thou go?—O, my God, to thee, to thee, I yield! “O that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night.—The last enemy shall be destroyed.” Cease to weep. “Behold the upright, for his end is peace.”

The absent relatives will sensibly feel the loss of their friend and brother. In both these capacities, he sustained an amiable character. As a brother, he was loving and affectionate; as a friend, he was constant and sincere. But his kind offices will no more be experienced. Cold, silent, he lodges in dust. His *enemy* is now victorious.—But, “thanks be to God who will give *man* the victory.”

The death of our friend has intimately affected the interests of the College in this place. It has drawn the veil of sorrow over her windows, and hung her walls with sable weeds. A melancholy silence reigns through all her mansions, save when the plaintive voice of woe is heard at midnight; when the pale moon, obscured with clouds, saddens the sky, and scatters her faint beams on the leafless oak of the mountain.—THAT SEAT OF LEARNING WAS THE CHILD OF OUR DEPARTED FRIEND. IT LAY NEAR HIS HEART. His friends, the corporation, most sincerely lament their loss. God has of late called to you; once and again—and again*. Thrice has the pale foot of death stepped down among your number; thrice has his voice penetrated your ears: “Be ye also ready.” Though you suffer loss, yet ascribe thanks to him, “that was dead, and is alive, and lives for ever.”

The immediate officers of instruction disburden their grief, and drop the friendly tear. Their faithful assistant in the labours of science is no more. But though he is a prisoner of the tomb, yet he shall be brought into the “liberty of the children of God. For the last enemy shall be destroyed.”

The students perhaps at present suffer the heaviest loss. To you death has come near in his late approach. He has taken away your literary guide and parent. Will not the love you bore him stamp his memory on your hearts? Will not the recollection of his friendship gush the tear of affec-

* Referring to the death of John Jenckes, and Nicholas Brown, Esquires, which preceded Dr. Manning's.

tionate sorrow, and sprinkle it on his tomb? Call to mind his anxious solicitude for your welfare; call to mind his readiness to accelerate your progress in the paths of science. Treasure up his wise instructions. As he was once young like yourselves, as he had trod the paths before you, he was qualified to give the best advice. Experience had taught him the difficulties you have to encounter, and the dangers to which you are exposed. Often did he, with all the affection of a parent, recommend an unwearied application to your literary pursuits. Often did he dissuade you from vice. How earnestly did he beg you to fly from it, as from a most deadly enemy? How often did he urge you to maintain a fair moral character? How frequently did his fervent soul, for your prosperity, rise on the wings of prayer to the throne of mercy? If you will do justice to yourselves, if you will do justice to the kind endeavours of your parents, you will regard the advice of your worthy president. Let it sink deep into your hearts, let it regulate your future conduct. The present, with you, is an important period. Your characters are now forming for future life. You know that vice and indolence will make you miserable; that virtue and industry will make you happy. Your usefulness and respectability in future life depend very much on your personal exertions. Lose not one of your golden moments. But amidst all your acquisitions "get understanding. Seek first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all other things shall be added. Remember now your Creator in the days of your youth." Religion and virtue will add the lustre to all your literary acquirements. "Seek the Lord while he may be found, call upon him while he is near;" while he comes near to you by the solemn voice of death. Improve this mournful scene of mortality to your own advantage. Be wise, be happy.

The attentive gravity of this church and congregation, evinces that they sensibly feel the stroke of that enemy that has laid their friend in dust. He has been a "light to your feet;" he has been a "lamp to your path." To you he has been a guide to the road of life. Often did he come to you "in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ." Oft did his tongue announce to you "glad tidings of great joy." But, alas! it is now silent for ever. Those of you who have been brought to the knowledge of the truth, under his ministry, must, on the present mournful occasion, be deeply affected. You have lost a father indeed. In his last affectionate address to you from this

place, when he bade you farewell, when he expressed the improbability of his ever preaching to you again, you could not restrain your tears. Sorrow, indeed, must now fill your hearts, because his face will no more be seen in the land of the living. Remember that God gave, and that God took away. Hear his voice—"Be still, and know that I am GOD."

The loss of this worthy man will be felt by the community at large. He moved in an extensive sphere. He was equally known in the religious, the political, and literary world. As his connexions were extensive and important, his loss must be proportionably great. As a man, he was kind, humane, and benevolent. As he was sociable, as he was communicative, he seemed rather designed for the theatre of action than for the shades of retirement. Nature had given him distinguished abilities. His life was a scene of anxious labour for the benefit of others. His piety and fervent zeal in preaching the gospel of Christ, evinced his love to his God and to his fellow men. His eloquence was forcible and spontaneous. To every one who heard him, under the peculiar circumstances in which he appeared in this place, it was evident that the resources of his mind were exceedingly great. The amiableness of his disposition was recommended by a dignified and majestic appearance. His address was manly, familiar, and engaging. His manners were easy without negligence, and polite without affectation. In the College over which he presided, his government was mild and peaceful; conducted by that persuasive authority, which secures obedience while it conciliates esteem. As he lived much beloved, he died much lamented. Well may we say that "a great man is fallen." O how is the amiable, the worthy, the benevolent, fallen! Though fallen, yet shall he rise; for his "last enemy shall be destroyed. The Lord himself shall descend from Heaven with a shout, and with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise." Then shall the man be delivered from the "bondage of corruption," to "shine like the sun in the firmament." Cease then to mourn, dry up your tears; submit to Him "which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty;" submit to Him who is "the first begotten of the dead, the Prince of the kings of the earth, who loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood;" to him let us ascribe "glory and dominion for ever and ever." AMEN.