

AN ACCOUNT OF THE PARTICULAR BAPTIST SOCIETY

FOR
PROPAGATING THE GOSPEL
AMONG THE HEATHEN;

INCLUDING
A NARRATIVE OF ITS RISE AND PLAN;

*With a short Address earnestly recommending this benevolent
Design.*

THE object of this society is to evangelize the poor, dark, idolatrous heathen, by sending missionaries into different parts of the world, where the glorious gospel of Christ is not at present published, to preach the glad tidings of salvation by the blood of the Lamb.

It is a very affecting fact that according to the lowest computation, there are at this moment above FOUR HUNDRED MILLIONS of our fellow-men in a state of pagan darkness; many of whom (as the inhabitants of *New Zealand*, and most of the islands in the *Pacific Ocean*) not only live in the habits of offering human sacrifices, but are most certainly proved to be absolute cannibals, frequently engaging in wars, and feasting on the flesh of their enemies.

Can it then be an object unworthy of the most ardent and persevering pursuit, to disseminate among them the humane and saving principles of the christian religion, in order to bring these uncivilized barbarians to yield obedience to the Prince of Peace, and to found christian churches in places which now exhibit nothing but scenes of desolation?

Were these ignorant immortals but thoroughly instructed in the doctrines and precepts of christianity, their civilization would naturally follow. And what miseries would be hereby prevented! How great the blessings that must certainly ensue, on their reception of the glorious gospel of the blessed God!

What pains and expense does it not deserve to attempt to rescue at least some out of so many millions from ruin! Was man formed in the image of his God, and is it not desirable to endeavour to use those means which are calculated to restore that lost image? Is man the representative of Deity, to the inferior creation, and ought he to be neglected and deserted, though in a ruinous state? Hath not God

made of one blood all nations, and shall not we respect all our fellow-creatures as brethren? And if we really consider them as such, should not love and compassion excite us to promote their present, and especially their eternal welfare? Did the Saviour stoop so low as to visit our benighted, wretched, sinful world, to recover an apostate race from deserved ruin? Were the most undeserving and guilty, the most sinful and depraved, made the objects of his self-moved compassion? Can we give a better evidence of our partaking of his grace, than by an earnest endeavour to imitate his example, and to subserve the design of his coming into the world, and laying down his precious life; by labouring to promote the salvation of the most ignorant and helpless of mankind?

Do we, indeed, believe the gospel? Do we receive it in reality not as the word of man, but of God? Do we admit into our minds the representations therein given of the state of man? Have we experienced the remedy in any measure, and can we be willing this remedy for perishing souls should remain so very much unknown to the greater part of the world? Or rather, if we have experienced its healing influence, shall we not be concerned that this gospel, with all its treasures and consolations, should be universally known?

Ah! if the soul of a Hottentot, a Hindoo, or a Negro . . . be like mine! And who can dispute it?—Capable of becoming like God in his moral image—Capable of enjoying his favour and love—Capable of communing with him, glorifying him, and being happy in his smiles for ever! How desirable is it to be instrumental to such inexpressibly glorious ends!

Never let us yield to discouragements from the apprehension that the attempt would be in vain. If we have duly considered the methods whereby God has already accomplished the designs of his grace in some degree, we cannot consistently object to the adoption of similar measures now. The Acts of the Apostles (those most ancient records of christian history) shew us that God hath chosen to propagate his truth among mankind by the efforts of their fellow-men, committing the precious treasure of the gospel into "earthen vessels," that the excellence of the power might the more eminently appear to be of God, and not of men.

The *Jesuits* and other *Papish* missionaries have, in modern times, taken immense pains to propagate their very defective and corrupt kind of christianity, in divers heathen countries. And our protestant brethren belonging to other nations have

laboured

laboured with considerable success. Especially the *Danish* mission to the coast of *Coromandel*, in the East-Indies, has since the year 1706 brought above 18,000 Gentoos to the profession of christianity. The *Dutch*, in the island of Ceylon, and other of their East-India settlements, have had still more extensive success.—In *North-America*, the apostolic *Eliott*, in the last century, was the chief instrument of the evident and thorough conversion of many of the native Indians, and by his labours, and that of other excellent Pædobaptist ministers, several churches were raised from among those poor savages, some of which were supplied with ministers of their own race, and others with Anglo-Americans. Nor were the *Baptists* without a hand in that blessed work. In the present century, the *Presbyterian society in Scotland for propagating christian knowledge* has lent its support to several useful missionaries among the American Indians. The excellent *David Brainerd*, an account of whose life and singular success among the Indians was published by President Edwards, and after him his brother *John Brainerd*, were supported by this society. They still afford their assistance to Mr. *Kirkland*, from whom very pleasing accounts have been lately received; and there is also a Mr. *Sergeant* that is successfully employed among the Indians at this time.—The *Moravian Brethren* have, within these sixty years past, sent missionaries to various heathen nations, and have discovered a zeal for the propagation of the gospel, which ought to provoke in all other denominations of christians, a godly emulation. Their success has been remarkable among the *Greenlanders* and in the *Danish West-India-Islands*. They also have sent missionaries among the *American Indians*, and the *Esquimaux* on the coast of *Labrador*, who have been hopefully owned for the conversion of souls; and have attempted to preach the gospel to the *Tartars*, and to the *Hottentots*, to which last people they are about to renew their mission. We are informed, that in the year 1788 they had in their societies above 15,000 converted heathen. The *Weslean Methodists* have, within these few years, attempted a mission to the *Caribbs*, who are natives of the West-India islands, and have laboured with success among the negro slaves in those islands.—The labours of brother *George Liele*, the Baptist negro in *Jamaica*, have been greatly blessed among his fellow Africans both bond and free. The success of our worthy brethren, who have thus hazarded their lives for the sake of the Lord Jesus, may serve at once as a reproof to our indolence, and as a spur to

our activity. Who that realizes the value of one immortal soul, but must be stimulated by these brilliant successes to assist in extending the kingdom of God?

To such an effort, arguments of the most powerful nature must impel every believer in divine revelation, and well-wisher to mankind: for various as the different opinions of christians may be with respect to particular parts of the gospel-scheme, all will agree in this, that the sacred scriptures assure us of the universal conquests of the Redeemer, that "his dominion shall extend from sea to sea, even to the ends of the earth:" that "the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ;" and that "the isles shall wait for his law."

Will not God, who seeth the heart, be well pleased with every sincere and earnest effort to promote his blessed cause? Without the divine blessing, we readily believe nothing to purpose can be effected. But is this an excuse for inactivity and sloth? are we not encouraged by innumerable promises and prophecies of the divine word; and by an evident blessing crowning the labours of our brethren and predecessors? Let then every christian who loves the gospel, and to whom the souls of men are dear, come forward in this noble cause. If God hath given us of this world's goods, to what more valuable purpose can we apply a portion of them than in endeavouring to send to our poor brethren the bread of life, of which they stand in such perishing need? Let every one that is free-hearted offer unto the Lord. For the silver and gold, as well as our souls which he bought with his blood, are not our own, but his. And whether we can or cannot thus honour him with our substance, let us attend the generous donations of those that are able to contribute to the support of his cause, with our most fervent prayers. Many christian societies have, for some years back, united in extraordinary prayer, for the enlargement of the Redeemer's kingdom: than which nothing can be a more certain harbinger of success. Let us persist, and we shall prevail. Pray ye for the peace and increase of the church, they *shall* prosper that love her. Ye that mention the name of the Lord keep not silence yourselves, nor let him rest in silence, until he establish, and until he render Jerusalem a praise in the earth.

The SOCIETY took its rise in the following manner:

IN the year 1791, at a Ministers' meeting at *Clippstone*, in *Northamptonshire*, after two discourses had been preached by

by Brother *Sutcliff* and Brother *Fuller*, on *Jealousy for the Lord of Hosts*, and *The pernicious influence of Delay*; a query was proposed by Brother *Carey*, If it were not practicable, and our bounden duty to attempt somewhat toward spreading the gospel in the Heathen world? As the public service had been attended with more than ordinary solemnity, so this consultation was managed with a good degree of serious and earnest concern to exert ourselves for the propagation of the kingdom of our Lord. But the principal thing then agreed upon, was, to desire Brother *Carey*, upon whose mind the subject had been laid with peculiar weight for a considerable time, to draw up his thoughts concerning it. and publish them.—At the next association of the Baptist churches at *Oakham*, June 16, 1791, it was desired by the ministers who had been present at *Clipstone*, that Brothers *Sutcliff* and *Fuller* would print their sermons, mentioned above; with which request they complied. Some months after, Brother *Carey* printed his pamphlet, entitled, *An Enquiry into the Obligations of Christians to use Means for the Conversion of the Heathen, &c.* At the next annual meeting of the association at *Nottingham*, May 31, 1792, the subject was revived, and a resolution made, That a plan be prepared against the next Ministers' meeting at *Kettering*, for forming a Baptist society for propagating the gospel among the Heathen. And Brother *Carey* generously engaged, that whatever profits might arise from his late publication, should be devoted to the use of such a society: Accordingly at the Ministers' meeting at *Kettering*, Oct. 2, 1792, after the public services of the day were over, the ministers retired to consult farther on the subject, and to lay at least a foundation for a society; when the following resolutions were proposed and unanimously agreed to:

Resolutions at a meeting of Ministers of the Particular Baptist denomination, held at *Kettering*, in *Northamptonshire*, Oct. 2, 1792.

1. Desirous of making an effort for the propagation of the gospel amongst the Heathen, agreeably to what is recommended in Brother *Carey's* late publication on that subject, we, whose names appear in the subsequent subscription, do solemnly agree to act in society together for that purpose.

2. As in the present divided state of Christendom, it seems that each denomination, by exerting itself separately, is most likely to accomplish the great ends of a mission, it is agreed, that this society be called, *The Particular Baptist Society for propagating the Gospel amongst the Heathen.*

3. As such an undertaking must needs be attended with

expense, we agree immediately to open a subscription for the above purpose, and to recommend it to others.

4. Every person who shall subscribe ten pounds at once, or ten shillings and sixpence annually, shall be considered as a member of the society.

5. That the Rev. Messrs. John Ryland, Reynold Hogg, William Carey, John Sutcliff, and Andrew Fuller, be appointed a committee, three of whom shall be empowered to act in carrying into effect the purposes of the society.

6. That the Rev. *Reynold Hogg* be appointed treasurer, and Rev. *Andrew Fuller* secretary.

7. That the subscriptions be paid in at the *Northampton* Ministers' meeting, Oct. 31, 1792; at which time the subject shall be considered more particularly, by the committee and other subscribers who may be present.

Signed, John Ryland, Reynold Hogg, John Sutcliff, A. Fuller, Abraham Greenwood, Edward Sharman, Joshua Burton, Samuel Pearce, Thomas Blundell, William Heigh-ton, John Eayres, Jos. Timms; whose subscriptions in all amount to 13*l.* 2*s.* 6*d.*

Second Meeting of the Primary Society, at *Northampton*,
October 31, 1792.

The secretary chosen at the former meeting, being ill, sent a written copy of the former resolutions, with an account of two new subscribers of one guinea, one of which engages to continue it annually; and also information from Brother *Carey*, who was likewise prevented from attending, that a gentleman from Northumberland had promised to send him twenty pounds for the society, and had engaged further to subscribe four guineas annually.

Brother *Pearce* of *Birmingham* gave us information that having mentioned the business to his friends, at his return from the first meeting, and preached upon the subject, they were so suitably affected with the importance of the affair, as immediately, without any personal application to an individual, to offer their generous contributions, which they sent by Mr. Pearce to the amount of *seventy* pounds, which he paid into the hands of the treasurer.

Our good friends of *Birmingham* also adopted a most agreeable plan, of forming a distinct society in aid of the mission, for the purpose of receiving both occasional contributions, and annual, quarterly, or weekly subscriptions, and to co-operate by every other means in their power with the primary society, in pursuing the grand object we have conjointly in view.

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At this meeting at *Northampton*, two other friends subscribed and paid two guineas a-piece, two more one guinea each, and another half a guinea, making six guineas and a half in all.—And such members as were present of the first subscribers paid their subscriptions into the hands of the treasurer; who proposed to put the sum now received into the hands of a banker who will pay interest for the same.

The following resolves were passed :

1. Resolved, That the most hearty thanks of the primary society are due to the congregation in Cannon-street, *Birmingham*, for their generous exertions in so good a cause.

2. That we cordially approve of the step taken by our friends in *Birmingham*, in forming an assistant society, to act in conjunction and union with the society begun by the *Northampton* and *Leicestershire* association.

3. That if this plan shall meet with the general or increasing approbation of the Baptist churches, we shall rejoice to find a number of corresponding united societies formed in different parts of the kingdom.

4. That Brother *Pearce* of *Birmingham*, who was a member of the primary society, and is the delegate from the corresponding society at *Birmingham*, be considered as a member of the committee.

5. That in order to promote the extension of this society, it appears proper to print a brief narrative of its rise, and plan, accompanied with some short address, and such further additions as shall be determined upon by a meeting of the committee at *Northampton*, Nov. 13, 1792.

Third Meeting of the Primary Society, at *Northampton*, November 13, 1792.

After spending time in prayer, consultation, and revising the preceding narrative, &c. it was farther resolved,

1. That every corresponding society, that shall be formed in different districts, be invited to send either two delegates, to any meeting of the primary society, or one delegate who shall have two votes.

2. That all persons who may be disposed to favour the design of the society be invited to send their contributions to the Rev. *R. Hogg*, of *Thrapston*, treasurer; the Rev. *A. Fuller*, of *Kettering*, secretary; or the Rev. *S. Pearce* secretary to the corresponding society at *Birmingham*.

3. That the society would be truly obliged to any of the friends of this design for any hints of information or advice, forwarded to the treasurer or secretaries aforesaid.

N. B. The following articles we wish to be examined and discussed in the most diligent and impartial manner :—

What qualifications are especially requisite in missionaries ? What persons are known, or supposed to be, both suitable and willing to be employed in this business ? What advice should be given the missionaries, or what regulations adopted concerning them ?—Also, In what parts of the heathen world do there seem to be the most promising openings ? What information on this head may be obtained from any late books of travels, or from Christian merchants, or from such persons as would at least favour the design of converting the Heathen ?

4. That it is advisable to appoint an agent in London to receive subscriptions.

5. The next meeting of the committee shall be at the Ministers' meeting at *Arnsby*, in Easter-week, unless any interesting circumstances render it expedient for the treasurer or secretaries to call one sooner.

The names of all the subscribers will be printed at a future period, if judged best.

EXTRACTS

FROM THE PAPERS

OF THE

MORAVIAN BRETHREN.

Account of Brother Samuel Watson's visit to the island of Montserrat, in the West Indies.

NOVEMBER 7th, 1790, I went from *Gracehill*, in *Antigua*, to *St. John's*, and about eleven in the forenoon set sail for *Montserrat*, praying unto our Saviour, to assist me with his gracious presence in fulfilling my commission. After a safe passage of twelve hours we came to an anchor at *Plymouth* in *Montserrat*, and in the morning I went on shore. In the first conversation I had with Dr. Y. I gave him, upon his request, a description of our doctrine and constitution, and of our method of preaching the gospel to the Negroes. My answer to his question, Whether we saw any fruits of our labours ? was confirmed by a gentleman who just happened to be present, and who has two estates in *Antigua*.

This raised his attention, and he immediately expressed his earnest desire, that if any missionary could be spared from *Antigua*, he might come to *Montserrat*, and begin a mission upon the same footing : For, added he, our Negroes stand in need of a thorough reform-

reformation. From this day forward, during my whole stay at *Montserrat*, I lodged at his house. He had frequent visits from respectable men, with many of whom I likewise became acquainted. During my stay he declined the invitations of several gentlemen, and invited them to his house, being desirous, as he expressed it, that others might have opportunity of profiting by edifying conversation. Several gentlemen urged me very pressingly to leave *Antigua*, where I had lived so long, and to settle as a missionary in *Montserrat*.

I was once invited in company with Dr. Y. and another gentleman, to the house of Mr. B. I found him a very sensible man, a lover of the truth, and a zealous promoter of every good cause. He bestows great pains upon his Negroes, and wishes to render their slavery as comfortable as possible. This gentleman likewise offered me his assistance if we would begin a mission here. He promised to give us land on his estate, and to provide us board and lodging in the house of his steward, till we were able to build a house for our own use; adding, that he was fully convinced of the friendly disposition of many gentlemen on the island towards our missions. But what caused me the greatest pleasure was this, that in walking the streets, I was desired by the Negroes to preach to them; adding, that they had no body to instruct them, since the Romish priests, who had baptized many of them, had been absent above three years. I said I was willing to serve them, if there were only Negroes who wished to hear and to receive the gospel. Upon this they shewed me into the house of a Negro, in which I spoke of the love of our Saviour to poor sinners. The Negroes now begged earnestly for a meeting on the following evening, Nov. 10th. I therefore chose a place for it in the open air, under a large tamarind tree, and here I spoke with a warm heart to a multitude of Negroes, white people, and Mulattoes, concerning the grace and freedom from sin, procured for us by the blood and death of Jesus on the cross, for which everlasting thanks and praises are due to him, both in heaven and upon earth. At eight o'clock in the evening of the 11th and 12th, I preached again, according to the request of the Negroes. On Sunday the 14th I could not satisfy their wish, because it rained all day long, and my preaching-place was too wet. Once a Negro woman, of whom I wanted to buy some oranges in the street, gave me the best she had, but refused to accept any money for them, saying, "I think myself well paid with what I heard yesterday at the meeting. God strengthen you, that you may be able to preach again to us this evening." I confess that in general I was well pleased with the Negroes in *Montserrat*; and if they had only an opportunity to hear the gospel, and were to happy as to be supplied with proper teachers, I think our Saviour would receive many an one as the reward of his sufferings from among them.

About 9000 Negroes are said to be in *Montserrat*, a small number in comparison with that in *Antigua*, which is said to be 30,000.

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The island is not so large, and has higher mountains than *Antigua*. There are many Roman Catholics, even among the white people: but those with whom I became acquainted, did not seem to possess any enmity against the other denominations.

I took leave of my worthy friend Dr. Y. with many thanks for all the kindness I had enjoyed in his house, and wished him God's blessing in return.

On the 16th of November, at ten in the evening, I left Montserrat, and after a passage of twenty-nine hours arrived in *Antigua*, at three o'clock in the morning of the 18th. After a short stay with the Brethren in St. John's, I hastened to my dear Gracehill, where I arrived at noon.

SAMUEL WATSON.

We are very sorry to add, that this worthy servant of the Lord Jesus Christ is no more amongst us. He entered into the joy of his Lord, July 11th, 1792. The loss suffered through his decease is very great.

He had served the mission in *Antigua* about twenty years, and during this period suffered much from illness and a tender constitution. The Lord was pleased to call him to everlasting rest in the 47th year of his age.

The latest accounts received from several Moravian Missions.

1. **L**ETTERS from *Tranquebar*, dated in January 1792, inform us, that the three Brethren who sailed from Copenhagen for that place, on the 5th of September 1790, arrived there, after a voyage of seventeen months, safe and well, to the great joy of all our Brethren, who had suffered much anxiety on account of their long stay. The settlement has not been disturbed by the war with Tippoo Saib since February 1791, for which the Brethren are truly thankful to our Saviour. They live in harmony and peace, his presence comforting their hearts.

2. *Extract of a letter from Nazareth in Pennsylvania, &c. containing an account of the visit paid to the Brethren there by some Indian Chiefs and Warriors on their way to Philadelphia.*

March 8, 1792, above fifty Indian chiefs and warriors, from the Six Nations, arrived at Nazareth with their minister, the Rev. Mr. Kirkland, their conductor, interpreter, and a few other white people. They were on their way to Philadelphia, being invited thither by the President and Congress of the United States. The Brethren bid them welcome, and desired them to consider themselves as being at home with some of their best friends.

As no Indians have been here for many years, their persons, dress, singular ornaments, language, and behaviour, attracted the attention of all the inhabitants. Some of them were fancifully equipped. It being cold and snowy weather, they wore, in addition

dition to their usual clothing, loose blankets thrown over their shoulders. A few of the chiefs had fine cloth coats with red hoods to draw over their heads; but most of them wore caps of skins. They seem proud of wearing ornaments of silver in their ears and nostrils, and lay a powder of a deep vermillion colour very plentifully over their crowns, ears, and temples, having well rubbed those parts with bear's or deer's grease to prevent its falling off. Their heads were adorned with feathers, and their faces painted with a variety of colours, by which they acquired a very singular appearance. When they came to our inn, their first care was to warm their apartments, to dry their blankets, and after supper they lay down quietly on the floor to sleep.

They had with them the usual accoutrements of Indian warriors; viz. bows and arrows, tomahawks, and scalping-knives, but few guns. Their tomahawks or hatchets serve also occasionally for tobacco pipes, being ingeniously bored and fitted for that purpose; and for every day they travel, they make a cut round the handle. They spoke different dialects or languages, being the leading men of several distinct tribes or nations. After taking a hearty breakfast of boiled beef and potatoes, during which (as well as at other times) they conducted themselves with the greatest regularity and decency, their minister, the Rev. Mr. *Kirkland*, gave out an hymn of praise to God in the Indian language, which they sung in a melodious manner, and with great devotion. Brother *Reichel*, minister of the congregation at *Nazareth*, having invited them to come to see the church, they marched thither in Indian file, one after the other. First they were conducted into a spacious room adjoining the chapel, and each of them presented with a pipe, an handful of tobacco, some apples, and a piece of gingerbread, all which pleased them much. Their attention was particularly drawn to some paintings of our Lord's sufferings hanging round the room, which their interpreter explained to them. After they had taken some refreshment, they entered the chapel. Being seated, the chorus played and sung, "Glory to God in the highest, peace on earth, good will towards men;" and other pieces of sacred music, to which the Indians listened with apparent satisfaction. Then the congregation present sung some verses of praise and thanksgiving in English, which some of the Indians understood. After a short pause, a select company of them rose, and joined their minister in singing hymns in the same strain in the Indian language, among which was that beautiful hymn of Dr. *Doddridge*, "Jesus! I love thy charming name, &c."

I cannot express how delighted we were to behold an assembly of such different people, many of whose forefathers falsely maintained, that they were not descended from one first parent, now cordially united to praise their common God and Saviour. It reminded me of that approaching blessed period, when every nation, kindred, tongue, and people, shall, with one accord, praise the Lamb that was slain, for ever and ever.

The singing being concluded, an elderly chief, named *Peter*, who is much respected among his countrymen, rose up, and addressed himself in a solemn manner to the leading men of this town, and to all the inhabitants thereof. He first thanked that great Spirit who made and preserved all things, for having thus far brought them on their journey in peace. He then returned thanks in the name of his people, for the kind reception they had met with here, saying, "That they had not only been treated well, but as friends and brothers, and that they should not forget it." He declared, that it was a great pleasure to them to see our manners and religious worship, adding, that he believed we possessed the pure oracles of divine truth concerning the revelation of Jesus Christ in the world. He then desired us to pray for them to the great Spirit, who, as he believed, delighted to dwell in our town, that he would be pleased to grant them a safe journey.—In the course of his long oration (which was interpreted to us by Mr. *Kirkland*) he often uttered the name of Jesus, laying at the same time his hand upon his breast. Brother *Reichel* then addressed him in return, and told him, that we were all very glad to see them, and to have an opportunity of shewing them all the friendship in our power; that it was a particular pleasure to us to find, that so many of them had embraced the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, and that we hoped they would abide in it. He then wished them peace and a good journey, adding, that our prayers would certainly attend them, &c. Mr. *Kirkland* repeated these words in the Indian language, and *Peter* made a short reply, to which all the Indians signified their hearty assent by several guttural sounds in their language.

This chief *Peter* is of the *Oneida* tribe, and in high esteem among all the Six Nations. He is renowned for his wisdom, moderation, and retentive memory, and is a constant advocate for peace. He is said to be 76 years of age, though he appears to be very strong and healthy. On account of his piety, he is always called *Good Peter*. There is a certain dignity in his manner of delivery which is very striking. He addressed us by the usual friendly appellation of *Brothers*. The Rev. Mr. *Kirkland* afterwards assured Brother *Reichel*, he was persuaded that *Peter* and many other of his christian followers truly believed in Jesus, and would rather suffer death than deny the gospel. After the speeches, several other anthems were performed, which evidently pleased the Indians much. They then got up to view the different musical instruments, and after satisfying their curiosity, returned quietly and gravely to their seats. During this time, the venerable chief *Peter* rose, and with the utmost affability and good humour, shook hands with all the children, both boys and girls. The other Indians followed his example, and good humour was visible in every countenance; they were particularly pleased to see boys from so many different states in the academy. This mark of true civility in the Indians was peculiarly gratifying to

all of us, and upon the whole, the reciprocal friendship shewn on this occasion, without any preconcerted formality, left a pleasing impression on old and young, that will not be easily erased.

The Indians were then led to see the whole town. As they passed the single Brethren's house, an hymn-tune was played upon the trumpets, and the single sisters received them in their meeting-hall, singing hymns, and playing upon the harpsichord to their great satisfaction. After their return to the inn, they prepared to set off for *Bethlehem*, which they intended to reach that night. About one o'clock they left us in sledges, seemingly much pleased with every thing they had seen and heard. They came from a great distance, some having travelled 41 days before they reached this place. The oldest Brethren here say, that they never remember to have seen so splendid and respectable an embassy of Indians. We cannot but add, that in their religious deportment, in the respect they pay to the aged, and in the general temperance and good order prevailing among them, they are an example to the white people who call themselves Christians. This company consisted of 50 Indians, viz. 29 Seneca, 6 Onondago, 3 Tuscarora, 2 Cajuga, 8 Oneida, and 2 Mahikander: they arrived at Bethlehem on the 10th, and made a stay of two days.—During this time, they had a meeting with the Brethren's Society for propagating the gospel among the Heathen, at which the old covenant made between the Brethren and the Six Nations was renewed and confirmed. On the 12th, in the afternoon, they attended a sermon, delivered by Brother *Ettwein* on these words: *There is no difference, for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus, whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood.* Rom. iii. 23, 24, 25.—The Rev. Mr. *Kirkland*, the missionary, having repeated the contents of the discourse, in the Indian language, the above-mentioned Oneida chief, *Peter*, rose, and confirmed these words, that all men were sinners, and could not be saved but by faith in Jesus Christ, as exactly consistent with his own experience, when he received the gospel 40 years ago. His discourse seemed to make much impression on the minds of his hearers. The Indians having visited the schools, begged their missionary, that a school might also be established in their country for their children, adding, that this would be the most effectual means of subduing the natural fierceness of the Indians, and instilling mild and humane dispositions into the minds of the rising generation. They seemed much satisfied with their reception, and set out on the 13th for Philadelphia.

3. From the three *Danish West-India Islands*, *St. Thomas*, *St. Croix*, and *St. Jan*, we have received lately more pleasing accounts than for some time past. The drought has ceased, and the state of the poor Negroes is rendered more bearable. They can again come to hear the word of God, which continues to shew its divine power, in calling sinners to the knowledge of a gracious and almighty Saviour,
who

who is able to change their hearts, and to deliver them from the power of sin. In the year 1791, 222 adults have been baptized. The number of believing Negroes, in the care of the Brethren's missionaries, in all three islands, is about 8000. The missionaries are filled with renewed hope and confidence, that by the powerful help and blessing of our Saviour, still many thousands of these poor people will be gained, as the reward of the travail of his soul.

4. The three Brethren, going to the *Cape of Good Hope*, to renew the mission among the *Hottentots*, sailed from *Amsterdam* on the 25th of June, on board the *Duifge*, Capt. *Oblhoff*. They were driven into the *Downs* by blowing weather, and proceeded thence on the 21st of July, all well.

5. The last letters from *Surinam*, in *South America*, were dated April 27th, 1792. They inform us of the health of all the missionaries in all places. In *Paramaribo*, fifteen Negroes have been baptized in 1791. The free Negroes in the high lands were visited by the Brethren *Wiez* and *Randt*, from *Bambey*, in December 1791, and March 1792. They both perceived, with joy, that the gospel was more welcome than formerly. Twenty baptized free Negroes lived with the missionaries in *Bambey*, at the close of the year 1791. At *Hoop*, on the river *Corentyn*, in the Indian country, a new awakening appears among the native Indians; 108 of the baptized have left their roving life, and live with the missionaries—and 77 are yet scattered in different places.

6. The last letters from *St. Kitt's* are dated on the 24th and 28th of July. The new chapel at *Basseterre* is, at all opportunities, filled with attentive hearers, and the missionaries preach the gospel at four different places in the country, with an abiding blessing. The Negroes belonging to their congregation come from thirty-nine plantations.—Of these 624 are baptized, or candidates for baptism; and about 300 new people have desired to have their names written down, wishing to be remembered by the missionaries. The grace and blessing of God attends the course of that mission, and peace and love prevail among his servants.

7. The mission in *Antigua* continues to be blessed by the Lord with a constant increase in number, and in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, which becomes evident in the walk and conversation of the believing Negroes. From Easter 1791 to Easter 1792, 640 were baptized in *St. John's* and *Gracehill*. A third settlement is much wished for by the missionaries.

At present there are 135 Brethren and Sisters engaged in the service of the missions abroad, and about the same number of widows, children, and superannuated missionaries, who are supported by the committee appointed by the synod of the Brethren to manage the affairs of the missions, or by the Brethren's Society for the furtherance of the gospel in London.

E X T R A C T S

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

THE DOVER ASSOCIATION met at the Diamond meeting-house in Essex county, Virginia, 1790. Saturday, October 9, at noon, Elder Lewis Lunsford, pursuant to appointment, preached the introductory sermon, from Isaiah, i. 25, 26. *And I will turn my hand upon thee, and purely purge away thy dross, and take away all thy tin: And I will restore thy judges as at the first, and thy counsellors as at the beginning: Afterward thou shalt be called, The city of righteousness, the faithful city.*

Divine service was still continued out on the stage, and the messengers convened in the meeting-house. Prayer then being made, letters from 27 churches were read, and Elder William Webber was chosen moderator, Elder Henry Toler clerk, and Brother Samuel Templeman, his assistant.

Elders William Webber, Reuben Ford, Lewis Lunsford, John Courtney, and Theodoric Noel, were appointed a committee of inspection to arrange the business before this association. Elder Hugh French and Brother Samuel Gresham were appointed a committee to receive the contribution sent to the association fund.

Elders Lewis Lunsford, John Courtney, and Thomas Chisman, were appointed to preach on the following day, divine service to begin at ten o'clock.

On the Lord's day both preachers and hearers appeared to be in the spirit, and to enjoy a season of love.

Monday, October 11. Met again, and after divine service proceeded to business. The committee of inspection gave their report. The minutes and circular letter from the general committee were received. The plan of government for the association, which had been partly formed by a committee appointed for that purpose, was read, and with amendments received. And it was recommended that it be entered in the front of the association book by the secretary, Elder Ford, appointed to keep the same.

Elder Henry Toler, pursuant to appointment, brought in the circular letter to the churches, which was read and approved; it consists of six octavo pages on the subject of *justification*.

Elders Lewis Lunsford, William Webber, Reuben Ford, and John Courtney, were appointed messengers to the next general committee, to be holden the second Saturday in May next, at Nuckold's meeting-house in Goochland county. Elder Lewis Lunsford was appointed to write a circular letter to the churches for next association, upon the subject of the *Covenant of Grace*.

Agreed that the next association be holden at Kingston meeting-house the second Saturday in next October, and that Elder Lewis Lunsford preach the introductory sermon, and in case of failure, Elder John Shackelford.

The same ASSOCIATION was holden at the Kingston meeting-house, in Matthews county, Virginia, 1791.

Saturday, October 8. At noon Elder Lewis Lunsford, pursuant to appointment, preached the introductory sermon from *Rev. ix. 2. And he opened the bottomless pit; and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit.*

The messengers convened in the meeting-house, and prayer being made, letters from 27 churches were read.

There were but 13 of these Societies which gave an account of their numbers; 12 of them contain 2316 members, and one of the 13 churches has no less than 596 members.

Elder William Webber was chosen moderator, Elder Henry Toler clerk, and Brother Andrew Broaddus, his assistant.

Elder Lewis Lunsford, who was appointed last association to write a Circular Letter on the Covenant of Grace, having failed doing it, is requested to prepare one for next association on that subject; and to write the present Circular Letter as he shall think proper.

Elders James Hutchison, William Webber, and Lewis Lunsford, were chosen to preach on the following day.—Divine service to begin at nine o'clock, A.M.

Had a comfortable meeting on the Lord's Day.

Monday, October 10. Met, and after divine service proceeded to business.

The Circular Letter by Elder Lunsford was read and approved.

Elders Lewis Lunsford, William Webber, Henry Toler, and Reuben Ford, were appointed messengers to the next *General Committee*, to be holden at the Tomahawk meeting-house, Chesterfield, the second Saturday in May 1792.

Agreed that the next association be at Bruington meeting-house, in King and Queen county, the second Saturday in October 1792; and that Brother Andrew Broaddus preach the introductory sermon, or in case of failure, Elder John Courtney.

The Circular Letter to the Churches says, that the meeting was large, and attended with great peace and harmony; and that, taking all things together, the hopes and expectations of the Brethren were greatly raised with the appearance of a general spread of the Gospel: To which grand event every thing seems gradually tending.

The WARREN ASSOCIATION (Massachusetts's) held at the Baptist meeting-house in Harvard, 1792.

Tuesday,

Tuesday, September 11. At two o'clock, P.M. Brother Maxcy, according to appointment, preached the introductory sermon, from *Rev. i. 16. And he had in his right hand seven stars: and out of his mouth went a sharp two-edged sword.*

Brother Noah Alden, moderator, and Brother Joseph Grafton, clerk.

Read the letters.

There are, including *Marblefield*, which was received this session, forty churches in this convention, 3556 members—increase in thirty-nine of the churches, the past year, 234.

Sermon in the evening by Brother Pecken, from *1 Theff. i. 5.*

Wednesday, Sept. 12. Received *minutes* from the Philadelphia and Stonnington associations; *letters* from the Woodstock, New Hampshire, and Bowdoinham association; *letters and minutes* from Charleston, Vermont, and Shaftsbury associations, and from the Baptist General Committee of Virginia.

Read, and approved, the circular letter prepared by Brother Baldwin.

The church in Colerain, finding it more convenient to meet with the Shaftsbury association, requested to be dismissed for that purpose; voted, to grant their request. The church in Rehoboth, and Southington, having, for a number of years, neglected sending either letter or messengers to the association; voted, that we consider them as not belonging to this body. The first Baptist church in Newport, at their request, is left out of the minutes.

Entered on business relative to the *education fund**. The VIIth article, which confines the education of all those who shall receive assistance from this institution, to Rhode-Island College, was objected to by the church at Newton. After a candid and deliberate conversation upon the point, voted, that the VIIth article of the *Baptist education fund* be erased. Proceeded to the choice of Trustees; agreeable to the plan introduced the last year, "So many of the Baptist Fellows of Rhode-Island College, who are members of churches, shall be Trustees of this charity; the remaining number shall be elected (by ballot) by the Warren association." Of that description were five, viz. Doctor Stillman, Messrs. Hezekiah Smith, William Williams, Jonathan Maxcy, and Robert Rogers. The remaining seven were chosen by the association, and are as follow: Messrs. Isaac Backus, Joseph Grafton, Noah Alden, Thomas Baldwin, Thomas Green, George Robinson, and Isaiah Parker. Voted, that Dr. Stillman, Mr. Backus, Mr. Baldwin, Mr. Green, and Mr. Grafton, be a committee to whom any persons, or churches, aggrieved, by being *taxed to other denominations* †, may apply for advice. Received and read a letter, signed

* See page 292 of the Register.

† A while since I received some pleasing accounts from several of the American Baptist churches, mingled with *complaints of their being taxed by other denominations*, and immediately forwarded the packet to Dr. PRICE, conjecturing,

signed by seven respectable ministers belonging to the Shaftsbury and Vermont associations, containing "A proposal for a *General Committee*, to be composed of delegates sent from each Baptist association in New-England; and if this association should approve the proposition, they may appoint the time and place for their first meeting. It is supposed that such a *committee* would save much riding and expense to all the associations; for it would supersede the necessity of sending messengers from one association to another; and would be a place of general information and communication." Especially, it would be a great mean of collecting materials for the *Baptist Annual Register*, publishing by Brother Rippon. From these considerations, and others that might be mentioned, which we view as tending greatly to promote religious knowledge; voted, that this association approve the proposal for a *General Committee*; and that the town of Adams, in this Commonwealth, be the place, and the last Wednesday in June 1793, the time, of their first meeting. Also voted, That our Brethren Isaac Backus and Joseph Grafton be our delegates to the *General Committee*. Appointed messengers to the corresponding associations—supplies for destitute churches—and Brother Maxcy to write the Circular Letter for next year. Voted to hold our next association at Attleborough, the Tuesday after the first Wednesday in September 1793, Brother Green to preach; and if he fails, Brother Baldwin. Concluded by prayer. Sermon in the afternoon by Brother Robinson; and one in the evening by Brother Roots.

jecturing, that his opinion, if obtained, would be more likely to influence the conduct of the Transatlantic persecutors than any thing that could be said by any other man in Great Britain.—Having read the letters, he returned the following answer:

"DEAR SIR,

"I am obliged to you for the papers and letters... There are some parts of them with which I am much pleased; but what is intimated in them, concerning an attempt to oblige the Baptists to contribute towards supporting a religious worship, from which they dissent, gives me much concern. NOTHING CAN BE MORE INCONSISTENT WITH RELIGIOUS LIBERTY, and it is also *contrary to the declaration of rights which forms the foundation of the Massachusetts constitution*. I shall be in London on Tuesday, and shall call at Mr. Dilly's about two o'clock, and should you happen to be there I shall be glad to meet you. With all good wishes I am, your's, RICHARD PRICE."

In virtue of this billet one of our Senior Ministers and I spent an hour with the Doctor, in Mr. Dilly's dining-room. He quite entered into the subject on which we met, and gave it as his decided opinion, "That for one denomination of Christians to tax another, without their consent, to support a religion of which they did not approve, was a species of the most horrid tyranny, as much reflecting on the wisdom as on the goodness of its abettors."

That this mode of oppression, peculiarly iniquitous and detestable, should be even so much as *heard of* at this time of day, and especially in AMERICA, is almost incredible, and must be for a lamentation to every *disinterested* person.

EDITOR.

The

The DANBURY ASSOCIATION (Connecticut) held in New-Hartford, 1792.

September 19th. Elder Seth Higby delivered the introductory sermon from John, iii. 3. *Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.*

Elder Adam Hamilton, moderator; Deacon Samuel Heart, clerk.

Letters from the churches in our connection and corresponding associations were read, which afforded us matter of agreeable intelligence.

The second church in Wallingford was cordially received into our fellowship the present year.

Appointed Brethren to write to the Shaftsbury, Stonington, New-York, and Philadelphia associations.

Public worship this evening in various parts of the vicinity.

Sept. 20th. Sermon by Elder Samuel Waldo from John, xiv. 6. *I am the way.*

Letters to the corresponding associations were read and approved.

Appointed messengers to the associations in our connection.

The Circular Letter written by Elder Calvin Hulbert, on *the offers and invitations of the Gospel*, was read, approved, and voted to be printed with our minutes.

Questions presented by different churches were discussed and answered; and supplies for destitute churches appointed.

Our next annual meeting to be held at the Baptist meeting-house, in Southington, on the third Wednesday in September next at one o'clock, A.M.

Elder Reots to preach the introductory sermon; in case of failure, Elder Hastings.

Elder Hamilton to write the Circular Letter for the next year.

The PHILADELPHIA ASSOCIATION, held at Philadelphia, 1792.

Tuesday, October 2. At three o'clock, P.M. The Rev. Dr. William Rogers delivered the introductory sermon, from Philipians, iii. 8. *Yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord.*

After worship proceeded to business.—Rev. Isaac Skillman was chosen moderator, and the Rev. Burgiss Allison clerk.

Letters from thirty-six churches were read—increase of members forty-two. Eight other churches were enrolled, from which no intelligence was received—in all forty-four churches, including *Sideling-hill* and *West Creek*, both of which were admitted this association.

Wednesday, October 3. Two letters were read from the Warwick association for the years 1791 and 1792, the former not having come forward last year; which association, according to their request, was received by their messengers Rev. Thomas Mon-

tanye and Benjamin Pelton, as a corresponding association. A letter was also read from the New-York association, requesting union and correspondence with us, which was unanimously agreed to.

Letters were received, and read, from the associations of Charleston, Shaftsbury, Warren, and Danbury—and printed minutes from those of Warwick, New-York, Warren, Charleston, Kehukee, Bethel, and Portsmouth, Virginia.

Brethren were appointed to write to the corresponding associations.

The Circular Letter was read.

Mr. Smalley was appointed to write the Circular Letter for the ensuing year.

Thursday, October 4. The committee appointed to revise the Circular Letter written by Brother Joshua Jones, on *the assurance of Grace and Salvation*, approved the same, and made their report.

Queries from several churches were answered. The churches of Mount Bethel and Lyons Farms, requested a dismissal from this association to join that of New-York, as being more convenient.

Letters written to the corresponding associations were read and approved.

Elders Patten, Clingan, and Vaughan, agree to travel for three months in the ensuing year, about Juniata and the West Branch of Susquehanna, to preach the gospel to the destitute; and this association recommend that a sufficient sum be subscribed by the churches, and paid immediately into the hands of Col. Samuel Miles, to bear their expenses.

In answer to a letter received from some destitute persons at Niagara, it is recommended to such of the ministering Brethren as have it in their power to pay them a visit.

This evening Brother Roots preached from Heb. ii. 3.

Friday, attended to certain difficulties subsisting in the Pitt's Town church.

Appointed supplies for the church of Kingwood.

Dr. Jones, agreeably to a resolve of last year, brought in an abstract from the minutes of the preceding years. The next association to meet in Philadelphia, on the first Tuesday in October, A. D. 1793.

Brother Skillman to preach the introductory sermon, and, in case of failure, Brother David Jones.

Rev. Mr. Montanye preached in the evening.

Rev. CURTIS GILBERT, of Roxbury, died in the year past.

The BOWDOINHAM ASSOCIATION (Massachusetts) held at Bowdoin, 1792.

Wednesday, October 3. At one o'clock, P. M. Elder Isaac Case preached the introductory sermon, from Matt. ix. 38. *Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest.*

Brother.

Brother Case was chosen moderator, and Brother Joshua Young, clerk.

Read letters from the churches. Five churches were received into union this year, viz. No. Four, Lewistown, Winthrop, Sterling, and Miscongus Island.

Sermons in the evening in different parts of the town, by Elder Smith and Brother Cushman.

Thursday, October 4. Read, revised, and adopted, the circular letter prepared by Brother Flagg, on *the right reading the Word of God*.

Chose Elder Isaac Case to prepare a letter for next year.

Agreed on supplies for destitute churches.

Voted, that this association be held in Winthrop, the 4th Wednesday in August, at one o'clock, P. M. 1793. Brother Woodward concluded by prayer.

THE STATES

IN WHICH SOME DENOMINATIONS TAX OTHERS.

—As you desire to know how our *American* States do respecting taxes * for the ministers of religion, I will give you a distinct account:

New Hampshire supports ministers by taxes, and allows the same power to *Baptist* ministers as to others. The *Massachusetts* continue the use of force for *congregational* ministers, but this power is daily growing weaker, and I trust they must soon give it up, and so must *Connecticut*.

Rhode Island, *New Jersey*, *Pennsylvania*, and *Delaware*, never did support their ministers by taxes; and *New York*, *Maryland*, *Virginia*, the two *Carolinas*, and *Georgia*, now do so no longer. All the remains of their episcopal establishment in *New York*, *Maryland*, *Virginia*, the *Carolinas*, and *Georgia*, are the ministerial lands which are yet held by episcopal ministers; but they have no power to tax any who do not choose them; and the Baptists in *Virginia* are vigorously endeavouring to have these lands sold for public uses, and to have the episcopal places of worship free for all preachers whom the people chuse. The report "That our States oblige all people to contribute some part of their property toward the support of public worship, in some way or other," hath no truth in it; only in *New Hampshire*, *Massachusetts*, and *Connecticut*, unless there is something of it in *Vermont*, which is now a distinct State, and has, I think, given up the practice.

* See page 387 of the Register.

THE
COMMENCEMENT
AT THE
BAPTIST COLLEGE,
PROVIDENCE, RHODE-ISLAND,
1792.

ON Wednesday, September 5, the anniversary Commencement of Rhode-Island College was celebrated.

The procession, at half past ten o'clock, moved from College-hall, in the usual order, to the Baptist meeting-house, where, after an introductory prayer by the Rev. Dr. *Stillman*, the following exercises were performed, viz.

1. Salutatory oration, in Latin, and an English oration on the French revolution—by Bildad Barney.

2. An oration on the advantages of good government—by Paraclete Tew.

3. A Greek dissertation on the effects of luxury—by Richard Stites.

4. An oration on the rise and progress of astronomy—by William W. Folwell.

5. A dispute on the justice and policy of emancipating the slaves in America—by William V. King, Eli Smith, and Peter O. Alden.

6. An oration on the improvement of the mind—by Ebenezer Withington.

7. An oration in French on air-balloons—by David Leonard.

8. A dissertation on prosecuting the war with the Indians—by Elijah Dix Green.

9. An oration on the theatre—by Thomas Cranston Hazard.

This concluded the exercises of the forenoon.

The procession then proceeded to the Chancellor's house; and at three o'clock they returned to the meeting-house.

In the afternoon the following exercises were performed:

1. An oration recommending Rhode-Island College to the patronage of the State—by Jahaziah Shaw.

2. An oration on the wealth of nations—by Nathaniel Hazard.

3. An oration on the establishment of societies in America—by George Larned.

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

Peter

Peter Oliver Alden, Bildad Barney, Thomas Murray Clark, William Watts Folwell, Elijah Dix Green, Thomas Cranston Hazard, Benjamin Hazard, Nathaniel Hazard, William Vernon King, George Larned, David Leonard, George Jaffrey Patten, Jahaziah Shaw, Eli Smith, Richard Stites, Paraclete Tew, and Ebenezer Withington,

Mr. Philander Shaw, A. B. of Harvard, was admitted *ad eundem*.

And the degree of Master in the Arts was conferred on the following gentlemen, *Alumni* of this college, viz.

Rev. Micaiah Porter, Dr. Philip Paddleford, James Fenner, Esq. Dr. Jeremiah Brown Howell, Mr. John Clark Nightingale, Mr. Nicholas Power, jun. Mr. Paul Draper, and Mr. Edward Richmond.

Rev. John Crane, A. B. of Harvard, was admitted to the degree of Master in the Arts.

Mr. Leonard White, A. M. of Harvard, was admitted *ad eundem*.

James Brown, Esq. A. M. of Harvard, was admitted *ad eundem*.

The honorary degree of Master of Arts was conferred on the following gentlemen, viz. Mr. John Francis, Rev. Joshua Crosby, of Greenwich, in the county of Hampshire, Massachusetts—Rev. Thomas Dunscombe, of Coate, Oxfordshire, in England—Rev. John Fawcett of Hebdenbridge, Yorkshire, in England—Rev. Benjamin Francis, of Horsley, Gloucestershire, in England—Rev. Richard Furman of Charleston, South-Carolina.

The degree of Doctor of Divinity was conferred on the Rev. John Rippon, of London—Rev. John Ryland, jun. of Northampton, in England, and Rev. Benjamin Foster, of New-York.

The degree of Doctor of Laws was conferred on the Rev. Perez Fobes, of Raynham, Mr. Benjamin West, of Providence, and the Hon. Alexander Hamilton, Secretary of the Treasury of the United States.

A charge † was then given to the graduates, by the Hon. David Howell, Esq. who officiated as President for the day.

Then followed the valedictions, and an oration on the pleasures of the imagination—by Thomas Murray Clark.

A prayer by the Rev. Dr. Stillman concluded the exercises.

The governor's company of light-infantry, in a new and elegant uniform, commanded by Colonel Whipple, performed the military duties of the day, and made a very foldier-like and handsome appearance.

The exercises of the day were enriched by an excellent band of music procured at the expence of the graduates.

† If this charge had come to hand it would have been inserted in the Register.

The young gentlemen performed their parts in such a manner as reflected great honour on themselves, as well as those who have had the care of their instruction ; and from which we anticipate their future usefulness.

A large and brilliant assembly exhibited in a striking manner the opinion the citizens entertain of the importance of *education*.

At a meeting of the Corporation of the college on Thursday, Sep. the 6th, the Rev. Jonathan Maxcy, Pastor of the Baptist church in Providence, and Professor of Divinity in the college, was elected President of the college *pro tempore* ; and the Hon. Benjamin Bourn, Esq. was elected a trustee of the college.

Tuesday, Sep. the 4th, was ordained in Providence, the Rev. Peter Philanthropos Roots. The Rev. Dr. Stillman preached on the occasion from 2 Cor. iv. 7. The other gentlemen who officiated, were the Rev. Messrs. Williams of Wrentham ; Green of Cambridge ; Grafton of Newton ; and Maxcy of Providence.

To the Rev. JOHN RIPPON.

VERY DEAR SIR,

Middleborough, Nov. 5, 1792.

I AM once more set down to communicate to you some accounts of the mercies of God to our sinful land.

I sent you, last spring, a concise history of our association, including some account of the Baptist church in *Woodstock* in *Connecticut* ; to which I may now add, that a happy revival of religion was granted among them last winter, which prevailed so far that two new churches were formed, partly out of it, and pastors have been ordained in each of the three churches ; Mr. *Samuel Webster* was ordained in the old church, June 20th ; Mr. *Daniel Bolton*, in the east part of *Ashford*, June 27th ; and Mr. *Amos Wells*, in the second church in *Woodstock*, August 9, 1792. The number of members in the first church you will have in our minutes ; the numbers of the others I have not obtained ; but I know each of their pastors, and esteem them all as sound in the faith, men who are earnestly concerned for the interest of vital and practical religion among mankind. I have also to inform you, that a powerful visitation of the Spirit of God was granted in *Plainfield*, in *Connecticut*, in the summer past, which produced the hopeful conversion of a considerable number of people, as well as quickening and comfort to many who knew the truth before. In my late journey to *Norwich* I preached among them twice, and heard several of them give the reason of their hope to good satisfaction. Twenty-five persons were baptized in *Plainfield* since last July, and a Baptist church was constituted there, October 16, 1792, to whom Mr. *Nathaniel Cole* preacheth, who was ordained in the second church in *Swansea*, as an itinerant minister. All these four churches are in the county of *Windham*.

I would also observe, that on the sea shore, between *Plymouth* and *Boston*, for forty miles, the great revival of religion in our land, fifty years ago, was generally opposed by all their ministers
and

and a great majority of their people, and in most of the towns they are still of the same disposition; but there have been a few Baptists in *Marshfield*, for fifty years past, who joined themselves to the Baptist churches in *Boston*; and about nineteen years ago I was invited to preach in that place, as others of my Brethren were soon after; and a steady meeting for worship hath been kept up among them a great part of the time since. In the year 1786 a Baptist meeting was set up in *Pembroke*, but in the next year they joined in meeting with the people at *Marshfield*, and a church was formed there June 11, 1788, and they built a convenient house for worship in the year following, and in 1791 a fresh revival of religion was granted among them, which encouraged them to invite Mr. *Joseph Butterfield* to come and preach to them through the winter following. He first preached there in October 1791, and his labours were so acceptable that he was called to be their pastor, and was solemnly set apart to that office, May 16, 1792, by assistance from their sister churches of *Boston*, *Cambridge*, *Newton*, *Braintree*, *Middleborough*, *Bridgewater*, and *Carver*.

The eastern parts of *New England*, in the district of *Maine*, have been the most destitute of public worship of any part of this country, from its first plantation; but in October 1781, a man near *Kennebeck* river met with a remarkable change (as described in our history, vol. II. p. 392, 394), and his labours, with others, were a means of the hopeful conversion of many, and some of them were led into the doctrine of believers baptism who had never seen a Baptist Minister, and they sent fifty miles for one to baptize them: As I received an account of these things in a letter from thence, I read it to Brother *Isaac Case*, of *Rehoboth*, who had been newly called into the work of the ministry; and, after some months consideration, he was so fully convinced of his duty to go into those parts, that he was ordained for that purpose, September 10, 1783, and set out directly, and was favoured with a great blessing on his labours, in *Harpswel*, *Thomaston*, and other places; and a Baptist church was constituted at *Bowdoinham*, May 24, and one at *Thomaston*, May 27, 1784. Brother *Macomber*, who went from our church, was ordained pastor of the first of these churches, August 18, 1784; and Brother *Case* settled with the other, which increased to an hundred members in less than two years. A Baptist church was formed at *Harpswel*, January 20, 1785; Elder *James Potter* was ordained there as an itinerant minister, October 5, 1785; and as he was instrumental of beginning the reformation in those parts (as is before mentioned), so he continues a father among those churches to this day. A fresh revival was granted two years ago, and ten, if not more, Baptist churches have been constituted since, in the counties of *Cumberland*, *Lincoln*, and *Hancock* alone; and when I last heard from thence, the work still prevailed. O that we might all be stirred up rightly to improve these heavenly favours!

Dear Sir, in this request you will doubtless join with your fellow-labourer in the Gospel of Christ, ISAAC BACKUS.

SCHEDULE of the whole Number of Persons within the several Districts of the United States, according to an Act "Providing for the Enumeration of the Inhabitants of the United States," passed March 1, 1790.

With the Amount of Duties on Imports, and the Value of Exports.

| DISTRICTS. | Representatives in Congress. | Free white males of sixteen years and upwards, including heads of families. | Free white males under sixteen years. | Free white females, including heads of families. | All other free persons. | SLAVES. | TOTAL. | CHIEF CITIES, With their POPULATION. | ABSTRACT of the Amount of Duties on Goods imported into the United States, the Tonnage and the Value of Goods exported, from October 1, 1790, to September 30, 1791. (a) | | | | | |
|----------------------|------------------------------|---|---------------------------------------|--|-------------------------|---------|----------|--------------------------------------|--|--------------------|--------------------------|------|--------|----|
| | | | | | | | | | Net Amount of Duties. | Amount of Tonnage. | Value of Goods exported. | | | |
| | Dollars. | Cts. | Dollars. | Cts. | Dollars. | Cts. | Dollars. | Cts. | Dollars. | Cts. | Dollars. | Cts. | | |
| Vermont | 2 | 22435 | 22328 | 40505 | 252 | 16 | 85536 | Bennington | 27000 | 29 | 420707 | 17 | 22405 | 73 |
| New Hampshire | 4 | 36086 | 34851 | 70160 | 630 | 158 | 141885 | Portsmouth | 27000 | 29 | 107102 | 35 | 1970 | 50 |
| Maine | 14 | 24394 | 24748 | 46870 | 538 | None. | 96540 | Portland | 27000 | 29 | 106351 | 53 | 3789 | 37 |
| Massachusetts | 14 | 95453 | 87289 | 190582 | 5463 | None. | 378787 | Boston | 27000 | 29 | 619534 | 16 | 22546 | 34 |
| Rhode Island | 2 | 16019 | 15799 | 32652 | 3407 | 948 | 68825 | Newport | 27000 | 29 | 6598 | 68 | 302 | 94 |
| Connecticut | 7 | 60523 | 54403 | 117448 | 2808 | 2764 | 237946 | New Haven | 27000 | 29 | 707955 | 29 | 20092 | 73 |
| New York | 10 | 83700 | 78122 | 152320 | 4654 | 21324 | 340120 | New York | 27000 | 29 | 322964 | 92 | 13230 | 46 |
| New Jersey | 5 | 45211 | 41416 | 83287 | 2762 | 11453 | 184139 | Trenton | 27000 | 29 | 334995 | 83 | 25513 | 9 |
| Pennsylvania | 13 | 110788 | 106948 | 206363 | 6537 | 3737 | 434373 | Philadelphia | 27000 | 29 | 58861 | 42 | 8895 | 91 |
| Delaware | 1 | 11783 | 12143 | 22384 | 3999 | 8897 | 50996 | Wilmington | 27000 | 29 | 234082 | 23 | 14515 | 40 |
| Maryland | 8 | 55915 | 51339 | 101395 | 8043 | 103036 | 310728 | Baltimore | 27000 | 29 | 42285 | 9 | 9928 | 96 |
| Virginia | 19 | 110936 | 116135 | 215046 | 12866 | 292627 | 747610 | Richmond | 27000 | 29 | 3006722 | 82 | 145347 | 46 |
| Kentucky | 2 | 15154 | 17057 | 28992 | 114 | 12430 | 73677 | Lexington | 27000 | 29 | 58861 | 42 | 8895 | 91 |
| North Carolina | 10 | 69988 | 77506 | 140710 | 4975 | 100572 | 393751 | Newbern | 27000 | 29 | 234082 | 23 | 14515 | 40 |
| South Carolina | 6 | 13103 | 14044 | 25739 | 398 | 29264 | 240073 | Charleston | 27000 | 29 | 42285 | 9 | 9928 | 96 |
| Georgia | 2 | 6271 | 10277 | 15365 | 361 | 3417 | 82548 | Augusta | 27000 | 29 | 3006722 | 82 | 145347 | 46 |
| S. Western Territory | | | | | | | 55691 | | | | | | | |
| N. Western Territory | | | | | | | 4280 | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | 8933035 | | | | | | | |

Estimate of the Expenditure of the U. S. for 1792.

| | Dollars. | Cts. |
|----------------------|----------|---------|
| Civil List | - | 320653 |
| Extraordinaries | - | 56 |
| War Department | - | 197119 |
| Interest of the debt | - | 49 |
| | - | 1108399 |
| | - | 89 |
| | - | 2849194 |
| | - | 73 |
| | - | 4484367 |
| | - | 67 |

The expence of collecting the above Duties, dollars 108,316. 16
The excise for one year is estimated at 150,000 dollars.
Assumed debt - - - 21,500

(a) The fractions of cents are omitted.

M I N U T E S

O F

THE THREE

PARTICULAR BAPTIST ASSOCIATIONS,

In the PRINCIPALITY of WALES,

In the year 1792.

SOUTH-EAST ASSOCIATION.

MINUTES of the association held at *Bethesda*, Monmouthshire, on the 5th, 6th, and 7th days of June.

Met Tuesday evening. Brother D. Williams introduced the opportunity by prayer; then Brother J. Richards prayed, and preached from Zech. ii. 4, 5, and concluded the service.

Met Wednesday at nine; Psalm cxxii. was read, then the Brethren J. Evans, J. Jones, M. Evans, and Miles Edwards prayed; Brother Timothy Thomas preached from John, xiv. 6.; and Brother B. Francis preached in English from Phil. i. 6. Praises were sung several times, and Brother D. Hughes concluded by prayer. Adjourned for a short time.

The next opportunity was introduced by singing; Brother D. Powell prayed, and Brother Enoch Francis preached in English, from 1 Cor. ix. 16. After singing, Brother David Evans, of Maesf-y-berllan, preached from Isa. liv. 4. and concluded by prayer. Then the letters from the churches were read, which mentioned an addition to each one, and gifts appearing in several; but that our esteemed Brother C. Harris, of Abergavenny, was removed by death. The work of the day concluded in prayer by Brother D. Oliver.

Met Thursday; after singing, Brother T. Evans and Brother T. Morris prayed. Agreed to encourage the churches to assist towards the meeting-house in Aberhaveſy, and send their collection by their messengers to the next association.

Next association to be at Llanwenarth, on the first Wednesday and Thursday in June 1793. Brother H. David to preach, or in case of failure, Brother Gabriel Rees. The letters to be read on Thursday morning. The whole concluded in prayer by Brother Edmund Watkins.

Signed by the Moderator,

TIMOTHY THOMAS.

| | | | | | | | |
|--------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|--------|
| Baptized | - | - | - | - | - | - | 169 |
| Restored | - | - | - | - | - | - | 10—179 |
| Dead | - | - | - | - | - | - | 28 |
| Excluded | - | - | - | - | - | - | 21—49 |
| | | | | | | | <hr/> |
| Increase this year | | | | | | | 130 |

SOUTH-WEST ASSOCIATION, 1792.

MINUTES of the association held at *Moleston*, Pembroke-shire, June 13th and 14th.

Met Wednesday morning; Brother D. Davis prayed in Welsh, and Brother Benjamin Evans in English; then Brother Morgan Rees preached, in English and Welsh, from Mat. xvi. 18. and Brother W. Williams* in English and Welsh, from Psal. cxix. 18.; and concluded in prayer. Adjourned for a short space.

Met again, Brother J. Jones prayed in Welsh, and Brother H. Evans in English; then Brother J. Reynolds preached, in English and Welsh, from Isa. xxv. 6.; and Brother M. Jones, in English and Welsh, from Mat. xv. 13. They sang at proper intervals, and the day was concluded in prayer by Brother H. David.

Met Thursday morning; Brother B. Phillips prayed in English; the letters were read from the churches; the various informations occasioned a mixture of joy and sorrow—to our grief we heard of the death of our Brother D. Jones.—Agreed,

To receive the new church at *Ty-coëb* (which separated in peace from the branch in Priory-street, Carmarthen) to be a member of the association:

To encourage the churches to make a larger collection among themselves towards the Circular Letter, that something similar to a small fund may be brought to the association, for purposes that the convention may judge needful:

That Brother B. Davis, or any other of the *Moleston* ministers, be permitted to visit the churches to receive their assistance towards defraying the expense of erecting the meeting-house at *Haverfordwest*:

To encourage the churches, at the request of Brother M. Rees, to make a collection towards giving the word of the Lord to the people in France; and to send the several sums to Mr. Williams, of Cardigan, to be remitted to those who shall distribute the French bibles:

That the next association be at *Cwm-dû*, in Carmarthenshire, on the second Wednesday and Thursday in June 1793; the Brethren, W. Williams, J. Hier, and J. Jones, to preach:

* His civil title, justly and deservedly, is Esquire.

To observe a meeting of humiliation and thanksgiving on the Wednesday month after the association. Brother D. Rees then concluded the whole by prayer, in English and Welsh.

Signed by the Moderator,

MORGAN REES.

| | | | | | | |
|--------------------|---|---|---|---|---|-------|
| Baptized | - | - | - | - | - | 240 |
| Restored | - | - | - | - | - | 33 |
| Received by letter | - | - | - | - | - | 2—275 |
| Dead | - | - | - | - | - | 33 |
| Excluded | - | - | - | - | - | 60—93 |
| Increase this year | | | | | | 182 |

THE NORTH-WALES ASSOCIATION, 1792.

MINUTES of the association at *Nevin*, Carnarvonshire, June 26th, 27th, and 28th.

Met Tuesday at four in the afternoon; the opportunity was introduced by Brother Richard Michael; then Brother James Evans preached from Psal. xxxiv. 6.; and Brother Jenkin David from Rom. x. 4.; and Brother J. Richards concluded in prayer. Singing as usual.

Met about nine o'clock on Wednesday morning; Brother J. Jones began the solemnity by prayer; then Brother Joshua Thomas preached from Isa. xxxiii. 20.; and Brother Timothy Thomas from Eph. i. 18.; and Brother J. Richards from Isa. xl. 4, 5.; then Brother John Evans closed by prayer. Singing at proper times. Adjourned for a little time.

Met again about two; Brother W. Jenkins began in prayer, Brother J. Reynolds preached from James, i. 25.; and Brother Morgan Rees from Isa. xi. 9.; and concluded in prayer. Adjourned again about an hour or more: Then Brother Thomas Jones, of Glyn, prayed; Brother John Rees preached from Isa. lii. 7.; and Brother Morris Jones from Luke, xii. 37.; Brother John Edwards prayed, and the multitude was dismissed. Singing as usual. We had occasion to conclude that the Lord was among us in his gracious presence.

Met Thursday morning about nine; Brother N. Lewis prayed, then the letters from the churches were read; the account in general was rather comfortable; some addition to every church, ministerial gifts appearing in several. Brother Charles Evans is settled in the ministerial care at Ebenezer, in Anglesea. Salem, in Denbighshire, laments the loss of their minister who leaves them and removes to another place. The letter from the association to the churches was read and assented to.—Then agreed,

That

That the church at Street Isaf, Denbighshire, should be admitted a member of this association :

That Brother R. Michael should go to the churches which had not assisted towards the expense of the meeting at Beaumaris, in Anglesea :

To encourage the churches to set up a fund among themselves, to build meeting-houses, &c.

To keep a meeting of prayer and thanksgiving on the Wednesday month after the association.

Next association to be at Cefn, Denbighshire, the last Wednesday and Thursday in June 1793; the Brethren W. Williams, Benj. Davis, and David Evans, of Maef-y-berllan to preach. The whole concluded in prayer by Brother J. Reynolds.

Signed by the Moderator,

JOSHUA THOMAS.

| | | | | | | |
|-----------|---|---|---|---|---|------|
| Baptized | - | - | - | - | - | 66 |
| Restored | - | - | - | - | - | 7—73 |
| Dead | - | - | - | - | - | 9 |
| Excluded | - | - | - | - | - | 20 |
| Dismissed | - | - | - | - | - | 1—30 |

Increase this year - - 43

| | | | | |
|----------|---|---|---|-----|
| Bethesda | - | - | - | 130 |
| Moleston | - | - | - | 182 |
| Nevin | - | - | - | 43 |

355 the increase of the three associations.

The beginning of the association letter gives a general idea of the faith and practice of the Welsh churches †—it reads thus :

“ The ministers and messengers of the several churches of Christ, [in the three Baptist associations in Wales] owning the only true God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, in inseparable yet distinguishable union; also that [a profession of] faith precedes baptism; and the major part practising the laying on of hands on the baptized; all holding the bible to be our perfect rule of doctrine, practice, and experience; our light in which, respecting particular points, may be seen partly in the *confession of faith* usually referred to. . . . To all the churches. . . pertaining to these associations. . . . Send brotherly salutation.

† Is nearly the same words as in 1790. See Register, p. 64. EDITOR.

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS.

1. It was agreed that, this year, the same letter should be sent to the three conventions. The subject of it is *the new commandment*, or *the excellency of brotherly love*; probably it was designed to promote harmony and affection.

2. Bethesda borders upon England, so that English was necessary there. In the east side of South-Wales there is always an English sermon at the annual meeting, and generally in the South-west. That part of Pembrokeshire about Pembroke town, &c. has been inhabited by a colony of English some hundreds of years, who still continue their own language. Moleston is actually among the English inhabitants; that was the reason so much of the worship was in that language. Nevin is in the West part of North-Wales; it was there quite improper to have any part of the service in English.

3. It is rather remarkable that in three associations, consisting of about forty-six churches, every church should have some addition, and each of them send a messenger or more, most of them two. The addition at Llangloffan alone is 103. May the glory be ever given to the Author of all grace.

4. The associations in America are very friendly in sending letters and messengers from one convention to the other. Those in the Principality have not yet adopted that method, yet some of the ministers attend all three associations. Brother John Jones, in the North, attended the two in the South, this year and last year. The consequence of it last June was, that seven ministers from the South came in a body to the meeting at Nevin. Brother Timothy Thomas attended, and preached at two of the conventions; and so did Brother J. Reynolds, Brother J. Richard, Brother Morgan Rees, and Brother Morris Jones—these all preached in the South and in the North.

5. For so many to preach, as did at Nevin the same day, to be sure was uncommon; but in that country several of the places of worship are often destitute; a great multitude assembled, and it was a remarkably fine day, the preaching was out of door, the ministers were covered from the sun; the auditory was too numerous for any house in the country; and all those who preached on that day were strangers who were come a great way out of love, and the good people were very desirous to hear them all; and the sermons, prayers, and singing, were short.

N. B. These observations were made by the translator of the Minutes, Rev. *Joshua Thomas*.

EDITOR.

M I N U T E S *

OF AN

ASSOCIATION OF GENERAL BAPTISTS,

Holden at *Halifax*, Yorkshire,On Wednesday and Thursday, *May 2d and 3d, 1792.*

PUBLIC worship began, Wednesday morning, at half past ten o'clock. Brother WILLIAM BURGESS prayed, and Brother SMITH preached from 1 Cor. iii. 11.

Afternoon, Brother D. TAYLOR preached from Phil. i. 18.

Thursday Evening, Brother D. TAYLOR preached from 1 Pet. iii. 18.

Wednesday evening business began.

Chairman, DAN TAYLOR.

Moderators, JONATHAN SCOTT, and JOHN TAYLOR.

Scribes, WILL. BURGESS, and WILL. PICKERING.

Clear increase in the 32 † churches, since the former Association, 103 members, including Birmingham the account of which came too late for insertion in the list.

As the Rev. Mr. Rippon is engaged in publishing a work, under the title of the *Baptist Annual Register*; it is agreed that we transmit to him the Minutes of our Annual Associations, for his use in the above work.

We apprehend it will be of considerable use to our connexion, if our next annual letter have for it's object, to demonstrate the *utility of Associations*, and, of course, the necessity of their being properly countenanced by a *great number* of ministers and representatives from all the churches. We wish brother John Deacon to undertake this important business; and that he will have it ready, God willing, the next Association.

It is the opinion of this Association, three neuters excepted, that a Catechism, shewing our reasons for *nonconformity*, and particularly suited to our connexion, as *General Baptists*, is needful, and will be of use. Brother John Taylor produced one in manuscript, which, being thought too large, he was unanimously desired to compose a fresh

* The Minutes are *here* abridged. EDITOR:

† See page 179 of the Register.

one, on a narrower scale. Brother D. Taylor is also unanimously desired to compose a Catechism of the same nature.

The next Association to be holden at Hinkley, in Leicestershire, on Wednesday and Thursday in Easter week, being the 3d and 4th days of April, 1793.

Persons who attend, may be accommodated at the Ram Inn.

The persons appointed to preach, are

| | | |
|---|------------------------|--|
| $\left. \begin{array}{l} \text{J. TAYLOR,} \\ \text{D. TAYLOR,} \\ \text{W. BURGESS.} \end{array} \right\}$ | In case of failure, | $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{J. SCOTT,} \\ \text{W. THOMPSON,} \\ \text{T. PICKERING.} \end{array} \right.$ |
|---|------------------------|--|

LETTER TO THE CHURCHES.

Rom. xii. 1, 2 verses. “ *I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye be not—conformed to this world.*”

Beloved Brethren,

BE assured that we, your pastors and ministers, met in association once more, have your spiritual and eternal welfare really at heart ; and therefore we take the liberty, with much affection, of addressing you on the important subject of *worldly conformity* : a subject worthy of an inspired apostle to mention expressly and strongly to militate against, in an epistle to a famous Christian society at Rome. And, if you are well acquainted with the *present state* of the Christian church, in general, a subject you will think highly necessary to be treated of, in a circular letter, to a number of Christian churches.

It is, therefore, the primary design of this letter, to set before you what we understand by worldly conformity, and to dissuade you from it.

By worldly conformity, we understand such an agreement with the men and manners of the world, that we thereby become, in many respects, one with them, or act in conformity to them, and their maxims and examples, and so imitate them and follow their practices, in those things which are sinful, either in their own nature, or in their consequences.

When a person, under a religious profession, *associates* with carnal worldly-minded men, and does this out of choice ; when he, instead of “ coming out from among them,”---seeks for their company, and talks as they talk, and acts, in a variety of respects, as they do ; this person is most certainly chargeable with a sinful conformity to the world. And it has been often asserted, that a man may generally be known by the company he associates with, or chuses to keep.

Again, when such a person *speaks the language* of the men of this world, he conforms to the world. If we keep them company and imitate their language, and join with them in idle unprofitable talk, surely we must be so far conformed to them. For, as by the company he keeps, so by the language he speaks, a man may be known :—“ For, out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaketh.”

Once more, when we are taken with the *fashions* of the world which prevail around us,—when persons are pliable enough to imitate worldly people, not only in associating with them, and speaking their language,—but also in *dress*ing as they do, and discover a fondness and forwardness in following every novel fashion, as it becomes modish, however ridiculous modish fashions are,—nay, however immodest, foppish, and foolish they appear ;—what numbers, and even among professors too, are ready to conform to follow them !

And this is oft done, to the extravagant waste of time, and also of money, which ought to be laid out and expended in a very different manner, and to very different purposes. And, shameful to relate, this is the practice, not only of the rich and opulent, but of many common farmers and trades-people,—nay, of too many persons but in low circumstances, and even down to common labourers and servants.

How many dress very unbecoming their station and characters, their situation and circumstances ! And some even run into debt, and involve themselves and their families in very great difficulties, from a fondness for dress, and vain show and parade ! fine and fashionable clothes must be had, if they are bought upon credit ; and the mercer, draper and milliner, never receive pay for their goods.

This is a practice highly censurable indeed ! for it is unjust—pernicious to trade and civil society—not to say
how

how contrary it is to religion, and a profession of godliness.

Let those persons chargeable with such practices recollect what the sacred scriptures say against the foolish passion for fashionable dress, in adorning the body. The Jewish women were severely censured, and some awful threatenings denounced against them on that account Isa. iii. 16—26. The inspired apostles, Paul and Peter strongly militate against the practice we wish to censure and reform: their advice is, “That women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness, and sobriety: not with brodered hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; but (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works; whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel: but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. For, after this manner, in the old time, the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves.” 1 Tim. ii. 9, 10. 1 Pet. iii. 3, 4, 5.

These apostolic solemn charges, to all professors of religion, in every station of life, are so strong and forcible in themselves, that they need not any comment of ours: Let all professors hear the apostles, and attend closely to their sacred injunctions, and carefully reduce them to practice;—ever bearing in mind, that this is most certainly the will of God, in Christ Jesus concerning them.

Moreover, we apprehend that many professors of the present day are chargeable with worldly conformity, in their *style and manner of living*. They expend a great deal of money, in many superfluities, not only in dress, but in house-furniture—in eating and drinking, and keeping company, and making entertainments for the rich, and those who move in the higher stations of life whom they visit, and receive visits from; while, we fear, the poor are too often overlooked and disregarded.—And so much being expended in other things, much too little remains to feed the hungry, clothe those who need raiment, or to support the cause of religion in the world.

And we also conceive, that conformity to the world in the above instances, and others which might be mentioned, oft leads professors to form near connexions with

carnal and worldly people, to the discredit of their holy religion, and to the very great injury of themselves, and their families. How many instances have we known of young professors who, by associating with worldly people, and visiting among the gay circles of the land; have almost insensibly been led to form close, personal, and family connexions with those of no religion, to their great loss and affliction through life.

And how common it is for the people of God to contract *complimentary habits of speaking and acting* even one towards another, until they lose sight of their spiritual relation as Christians, and forget to use the scriptural appellation of Brother and Sister; addressing each other as if no such relation subsisted. And, instead of their visits being spiritual and improving, they become formal and trifling; and all this through a conformity to the world.

Nor is it uncommon, for many professors of the present age, to imitate worldly minded people, in being anxious about “laying up treasures *for themselves on earth*,” though directly contrary to our Saviour’s express prohibition, Matth. vi. 19, 20, 21. How frequently is it the case when an opportunity offers, for persons to amass a great deal of riches together, without ever apprehending they act like “the men of this world, who have their portion in this life!” They never dream of being covetous idolaters—or of loving this present world: their anxiety is only a necessary frugality, *they suppose*; while those who are better acquainted with them, fear they come under the apostle’s description, of such “who *will* be rich, and fall into temptation, and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition, and pierce them through with many sorrows.” 1 Tim. vi. 9, 10.

Now, we suppose all those who associate with, and talk like carnal and worldly-minded people—who imitate them in dress—style of living—complimentary parade—and who form personal and family connexions with them—or who amass wealth, and lay up *for themselves* treasures on earth, and all such like, are most certainly those who are highly censurable for worldly conformity, in the scripture sense of the word: and we must endeavour by every argument we can use, within the compass of a letter, to dissuade them from being thus conformed to the world.

This being the second end proposed in this letter, we proceed to mention a few things in order to effect our design.

Remember

Remember, brethren, you profess not to be of the world, but to be called out from among the wicked and ungodly.—How unbecoming is it then for you to be conformed to, or like the world in associating with, and talking as they do, in a loose carnal manner, and imitating them in dress and gay pursuits, and forming connexions with them!—Is not this in effect to declare you prefer these things to Christ and religion? We wish you seriously to think of this.

Besides your Divine Master has solemnly declared that —“His kingdom is not of this world.” Now if you love the world, and are in eager pursuit after its riches, honours, and pleasures—or if you are anxious about the world and its concerns, and are taken up with its gaiety, grandeur and fashionable formalities; how do you prove yourselves subjects of that kingdom which is not of this world? Nay, don't you rather give proof—convincing proof of the contrary?

Again, you profess to be subjects of Christ's spiritual kingdom, and to enjoy the immunities of that kingdom, which are said to be, in general, “righteousness and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.”—“Now, we beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God,” by his great love to you in Christ Jesus—by the death of your Divine Saviour—by pardoning mercy—by justifying grace—by adopting love—by all your invaluable privileges in Christ Jesus—and by all He has done for you—is to you—and by all you enjoy through Him, and from Him—that you be not conformed to this present evil world.

Once more, you, as true believers in Christ Jesus, have promises of future glory—and raised expectations concerning a better world; a kingdom and a crown which are infinitely preferable to all the gaudy tinsel toys of this poor, fading, transitory state. Now, in being conformed to the world, and its foolish fopperies and fashions, you act quite beneath the character of those who have in view, “An inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and which fadeth not away.” You degrade your high character; and act below, far below your privileges and prospects.

Moreover, conforming to the world, you give the men of it a dreadful occasion to reproach you, and that religion you profess—“That you must have recourse to worldly profits, honours, and gratifications, for satisfaction while you talk of the superior pleasures of religion.” Is it not the

way to make them believe, that there are no such superior pleasures to be found in wisdom's ways, and that her paths, are rather paths of pain than peace?" Don't you take the direct method to bring an evil report upon both the good land, and the way which leads thither?

Again, while you are guilty of a sinful conformity to the world, in the above instances and such like, you will rob yourselves of the comforts of religion—bring upon your minds painful sensations, and, in proportion to your compliances with, and conformity to the world, you will lose your taste for divine things, and become more and more indifferent to the things of God, and thereby make sad work for repentance, and awfully prove the truth and certainty of that saying,—“Ye cannot serve God and Mammon.”

And we beseech you, brethren, also to think, and to think closely and seriously, what you must feel in your dying hours, should you be sinfully and improperly attached to the world, and conformed in an undue and censurable degree to its maxims and manners.—O what reluctance to die!—What mental struggles to part with the world, and leave all its pleasing and gay scenes behind, for ever!—And ah! what clouds and darkness hang upon the mind at that awful period, in consequence of having been too much conformed to the world,—and far too little transformed into the image of the Lord Jesus.—Alas! you are likely to be much distressed in mind and conscience for want of better evidence of your title to the heavenly world.

Lastly, we only, in addition to the former arguments, say—That, if you would be examples to one another, and all around you—if you would glorify God, honour your divine master, and credit your profession; if you would not act out of character, nor live below your privileges, either as to comfort or duty; if you would live usefully, and be happy in death, and have the delightful prospects of the heavenly state before you in a dying hour, we must, by every thing sacred, intreat and beseech you, that ye be not conformed to this world; but that you live above it, and look beyond it, in the lively exercise of that “faith, which is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen”—until faith be turned into sight, and hope end in full fruition of those pleasures which are to be enjoyed at God's right hand for EVERMORE! Amen!

Signed, in behalf of the Association,

W. THOMPSON.

THE
MIDLAND LETTER,

ON THE SIMPLICITY THAT IS IN CHRIST.

The Elders and Messengers of the Baptist Churches,
statedly assembling at Bond-street and Cannon-street
Birmingham, Cusely, Evesham, Pershore, Ryeford, Tewkes-
bury, Upton, Warwick, Westmancoat and Worcester.

Having received Letters from *Bewdley, Stourbridge and*
Willenhall.

Being met in Association at UPTON, *May 29, 30, 1792* *.

Dear Brethren!

FAVOURED as we are, once more to meet in Association, we have read your several Letters with a mixture of pleasure and pain. We rejoice in the appearances of peace and prosperity, in any of the churches connected with us, and feel an hearty and undissembled sorrow for the low estate and declensions of any of them. The death of several of our Brethren, with whom we formerly went to the house of God in company, as well as of other distinguished characters who held stations of importance, reminds us, that the time is short, life is passing away, and eternity is at the door. While, therefore, we express our thankfulness to God, for the liberty we enjoy of worshipping him according to the dictates of our consciences; our concern for the glory of his Name, and for the happiness of the Members of the respective Churches, leads us to suggest, that there is no token of a declension in religion *more*, if any *so* melancholy, as the mistaking for the peace of the Church, or the soul, a kind of dead calm, a listless, formal tranquility, which bears a greater affinity to the stupor of them that are at ease in Zion, than to the life and peace of those that are spiritually minded; and, in fact, is a *using liberty for an occasion to the flesh*. God knows how it is with you as individuals; but it is our duty, as those who know something of the deceitful and hardening nature of sin, and as

* The doctrinal articles the same as in 1791. See Register, page 201. EDITOR.

watchmen that must give an account, to call upon you to enter into your own hearts. We do this, also, with the most friendly view, that believers who have declined, may remember whence they have fallen; and that, if any amongst you retain nothing more than the profession of the gospel, they may, by the Divine blessing, be roused from their insensibility, and Christ may give them life. It is not our intention, however, to particularize the many tokens of lifelessness in the duties of religion; of a want of proper affection for the brethren; of too close an attachment to present things; and of a conformity to the customs and manners of the age we live in. Let every man examine himself, how far these disorders prevail in him, and what are their deplorable effects. We wish rather to assist you in this enquiry, by leading you into an examination, Whether you are in the faith; by calling to your serious recollection, the manner in which you, if real Christians, must have set out in the way of life; and by proposing to your consideration, that only, that unfailing remedy for every spiritual malady, which, if felt and digested, will, at once, point out to you the evils we mean to warn you of, and what will be their effectual cure. This remedy we cannot describe better, than in those tender words by which the Apostle as a father concerned for the health of his children expressed his solicitude for the spiritual prosperity of the Corinthian church, 2 Cor. xi. 3. *But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.*—Paul was a great master in the knowledge of human nature, and well knew how to trace practices to their genuine principles. He saw many things in the Corinthians which deserved rebuke, and he suspected there were more; but he was confident, that whether more or fewer, a departure from the simplicity of the doctrine of Christ, was the root of all. To recommend and enforce that simplicity was the great subject of his ministry; because he was certain, that every opinion or practice, which sunk beneath Christ, would be of the earth earthy, would favour of corruption, would contaminate the mind; and that, therefore, let it come in by whatever artifice or disguise it might, it would be a like sort of *deceivableness of unrighteousness*, to that by which Eve was beguiled to contradict the command of her Maker, to eat of the forbidden fruit, and thereby to poison her whole frame. Dear Brethren! As this earnestness of the great Apostle of the Gentiles
needed

needed no apology, we hope none is necessary from us, while we call *your* attention also to the

SIMPLICITY THAT IS IN CHRIST.

In common, the idea which we have of *simplicity*, is that of being pure and unmixed. So we speak of the clear and limpid stream, of pure and unadulterated wines, of pure and undebased gold. Applied to the religion of Christ, we apprehend the word must intend, his righteousness, as the only ground of our acceptance, and the chief source of our spiritual ; comfort with the genuineness of our love and obedience to him, as our Lord and Husband *.

The general declaration at the head of our Letter states a belief of the *imputed righteousness* of Christ, as the *alone* ground of our justification and acceptance with God ; and we wish you to have a right understanding of this truth, as all the rest of your religion will take a tincture from your view of it. Sinners as we are, who have violated God's holy law, who have nothing by nature good in us, and who can never, by any means, make whole that which we have broken, the Lord Jesus came to work out an entirely new and perfect righteousness, by which all the seed of Israel (that is, all who believe) should be justified, and in the knowledge of which they should glory. This he completely accomplished by his holy life and spotless offering ; the splendour of his Godhead shining through the whole undertaking. God looks at nothing but this righteousness, in the acquittal and justification of a sinner ; but this he has testified his full approbation of, by raising up the Lord Jesus from the dead, and giving him glory, that our faith and hope might be in God. 1 Pet. i. 21. It is held out in the word accordingly, as the only efficacious means of relieving us from fears of condemnation ; of introducing us into the company of the Most High, of entertaining our minds, and of detaching us from this present evil world. It is now, and and will be to eternity, the wonder and praise of angels and glorified spirits above. And what can so profitably fill up our meditations, or employ our tongues, as, glory to God in the highest, peace on earth, and good-will towards men—God manifest in the flesh—justice and mercy united, and harmonizing in the

* This section perhaps is not exactly like the original, but considering the state in which the letter came to hand ; it has been made out as well as possible by the EDITOR.

salvation of fallen man—transgression punished, and yet pardoned—everlasting love displayed, in a way consistent with the most inflexible honours of God's government—even the malignity of sin over-ruled to subserve a greater good—truth and faithfulness to the promises demonstrated—and rebels, condemned to die, made heirs of eternal life? All the glories of the creation fade before the brightness of these objects: and these, with a thousand other delightful and interesting topics, are comprehended in the simplicity that is in Christ.

Of course we conclude, that where that simplicity is actually known and believed in, it will be the chief comfort and delight of that Soul. And from a regard for your spiritual prosperity, to this point we would direct your enquiries. Do you hope and profess that you are believers, and partakers of the benefits proceeding from Christ? Is your chief consolation then in Christ, or in the world; in Christ or in yourselves? Who has your hearts and choicest affections? Was the Lord Jesus clad with zeal as with a cloak? Did he, on the wings of love, fly to our help? For the joy that was set before him, did he endure the cross and despise the shame? And now he is on the right-hand of the Majesty on high, does he behold us indifferent about him? O! Are not our very souls abased before him, for every symptom of so ungrateful a return? But the simplicity of Christ is a remedy for this also; and we are persuaded, that not only is the dislike the unconverted bear to Christ owing to ignorance of his excellency, but that the coolness, the wanderings and declensions of even believers, proceed frequently from misapprehensions of the truth, as it is in him: and here give us leave to explain ourselves.—When an effectually-called sinner is first brought under the operations of the blessed Spirit of God, the Lord convinces him of nothing respecting himself, but that he is a sinner; lost—undone—helpless and perishing. That man cannot take comfort from any thing within himself—not even from his convictions; for they only shew him that he is unholy and unhappy. The simple encouragement that he has to hope for mercy, is a discovery made to him by the same Spirit, through the word of the righteousness of God in his Son, and that, as he sees he wants it, so it is free for him, though a sinner. To that blessed hope, therefore, he flies for refuge, and in the simplicity of Christ finds safety and rest for his soul. Does conscience or Satan accuse him of sin? The blood of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, cleanseth from all sin. Is he satisfied that God is his
Father

Father? He is a child of God, by faith in Christ Jesus. Is he in afflicted and distressed circumstances? In Christ he sees all things to be well; for all things are of God, who hath reconciled him to himself by Jesus Christ. Is he sick and in pain? Christ is the strength of his heart. Does he look forward to eternity with pleasure? Christ is his life, and by his love quickens him, to rejoice in hope of the glory of God. In one word, has he any fellowship with God, or delight in him in any sense whatever? Christ introduces to it by unveiling the knowledge of himself to the soul, as the express *image* (or *character*, as the Greek word is Heb. i. 2.) of the Father's person. The more simply Christ is eyed, the purer and more refreshing the comfort. Has this been your experience? As then ye received Christ Jesus the Lord, so, in the same manner, walk in him; daily falling under the sense of your unworthiness, and daily (in all your failings, infirmities, and even sins, as in many things we offend all) still looking to, and living upon, the invariable all-sufficiency, freeness, and faithfulness of Jesus. Thus, by faith, we shall stand and become established in the grace of God. But, when we lose sight of this our first experience and constant application to the Saviour of sinners, we lose our main support, and fall from our steadfastness; the pleasing lustre of Jesus is withdrawn from our sight; our spirits grow flat and formal; the empty glare of the world insinuates itself into our hearts, captivates our minds, and wastes our strength; and what, if in the hour of adversity we lament, that we have followed after lying vanities, and forsaken our own mercies? Have we already found any of these effects, in this day of small things? Come, let us return to the Lord. We have destroyed ourselves, but in him is our help. Jesus Christ is the same to-day as yesterday. The simplicity of his gospel is the sovereign balm. His Spirit is the physician that applies it. His word and ordinances are the means, in which we may expect that application, and to recover. Whatever are our complaints, we must come to Jesus, that by his stripes we may be healed. Other methods, however specious, will prove physicians of no value.—Are your frames low, and your prayers dull and distracted? One sight of the fulness, the glory and love of Christ, will warm and revive your souls, and you shall find it good to wait upon God. Are your minds dark and dejected, so that you are dubious whether you ever knew the Lord? Yet go, as sinners merely, to Jesus. The fountain of living waters is as open as ever; and let your case in time

past have been how it may, you shall know the Lord, and taste of his love. Are your souls barren as the desert, that you have no relish for duty, but the world gets the ascendancy over you; you carry it with you into the closet, and to the house of God; and you drag on heavily, as if religion were a burden? Yet Christ's love can turn the barren wilderness into a fruitful field, recruit your former vigour, make his yoke easy, and his burden light. Let no sense, therefore, of past misconduct, or present miscarriages, let no sins, temptations, or corruptions, deter you from making use of this efficacious remedy. Confess your sins; but do not think that humility implies a state of despondency, of diffidence, or hesitation, whether Christ still be free for you. This is unbelief, that departs from the living God; and it will depress and harden your heart. Daily contemplate the simplicity that is in Christ, and pray for an understanding, that you may know him that is true; and under the Divine teachings you will quickly perceive, that you have no reason to go to Ekron to enquire after health 2 Kings i. 6. or to the world, to seek after happiness; but your own experience will witness to you that there is a God in Israel, and that his loving kindness is better than life.

This happiness also, wherever possessed, will prove its genuineness, by the simplicity of your regard for Christ, and obedience to him: for, out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. The Lord Jesus is the Head and Husband of his Church. Whom then should she hold but her head, or obey but her husband? Who says, *Forget thine own people, and thy father's house. So shall the King greatly desire thy beauty; for he is thy Lord, and worship thou him.* Psal. xlv. 10, 11.—As it is not the property of Divine refreshment to lie dormant in the mind, but to excite to vigour and activity; so he that is won over to the obedience of faith, desires to have no will but that of Christ, to follow no leader but Jesus. He does not pay implicit respect to any man or set of men; but takes the book of God into his hands, and from thence, as led by the spirit of truth, enquires what the Lord will have him to do. *O that my ways were directed to keep thy statutes.* Psal. cxix. 5. Christ's word he reads, and the way which Christ has pointed out, he pursues; so testifying that he is Christ's disciple, that he does whatsoever he commands him. Such is his esteem for the Lord Jesus, that he is jealous of the least deviation from his Lord's rule, because, however small, its effects will lead to depreciate the Saviour; and hence

hence, the *manner* of his worship is simple, without exterior ornament, or ceremonious pageantry : for, as Christ is all his hope, he goes directly to him for comfort, and honours him in all ; whereas, a multitude of rites and ceremonies seem to insinuate, as if Christ were not enough, but it were necessary to mix with his worthiness, certain tedious formalities (after the methods of modern compliment) in order to set off Christ, to paint the diamond, that it may seem the more beautiful, or to become ourselves entitled to communion with him.

We add, that where the simplicity that is in Christ takes place in the mind, it will have a general influence upon the life and behaviour. If there be found any consolation in Christ, it will humble the man before him ; it will stamp the image of Christ upon the warmed and softened heart ; and so assimilate the soul to Christ, that the same mind will be in it that was in Jesus. He that lives by the faith of the Son of God will not be conformed to this world, but transformed by the renewing of his mind ; and will, by the artless simplicity of his manners, study to copy the sublime example of him who was holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners ; being spiritual and yet chearful, meek and lowly, forbearing and forgiving ; acting without disguise, and strictly doing that to another, which he would that the other should do to him. David argues it particularly, to be the effect of the pardon of sin, felt in the conscience, that in that spirit there is no guile, Psal. xxviii. 2. When also he spoke, Psal. lii. 4. of a man who loved devouring words, and was deceitful ; he further described him, ver. 7. *Lo ! this is the man that made not God his strength* ; for, if he had, it must have been through the simplicity of Jesus ; and he who lives upon him has that confidence in his management of whatever concerns him, besides that delight in the truth itself, that he scorns duplicity, and will not bend to practices which are dishonest or dishonourable. While, therefore, the animosities, and other disorders of the Corinthians, rendered their chaste adherence to Christ very suspicious, the holy Apostle exulted thus concerning himself and his fellow-labourers ; *Our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, with trick and cunning, as the world acts, but as taught by the love and grace of God our Saviour, we have had our conversation in the world* : and, the same principle, imbibed in the heart, will, we doubt not, be productive of the same fruits of righteousness, which are by Christ Jesus, to the praise and glory of God. Too

often, alas ! has the misbehaviour of professors exposed the good ways of the Lord to the derision of men, who know not how to distinguish between truth and error, and who, from the faults of a few, take occasion to reproach all who separate from the multitude, and appear to let conscience have any place in their religion. But, beloved, we hope better things of you, and things which accompany salvation, though we thus speak, and have taken the liberty to warn you, from an affectionate desire, that you may be grounded in the truth ; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith ; that your love to him, and to one another for his sake, may abound ; and that your conversation may be as becometh his gospel. Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen.

Signed by order of the Association,

By the Moderator,

L. BUTTERWORTH.

BREVIATES.

THE Elders and Messengers of the Churches met on *Tuesday* Evening at six o'clock. Brother Davis, Jun. introduced the service in prayer ; Brother L. Butterworth was chosen Moderator, and then read over the Account of the Rise, Nature, and Design of the Association : the Letters from the Churches were read, and Brother Edmonds concluded the Evening service in prayer.

Wednesday Morning, at six o'clock, they met again. Brethren Dawson and Davis, sen, prayed : Agreed to receive into the Association, the Church at *Willenball*, in the County of Stafford, consisting of thirteen Members dismissed from the Church at *Cosely*. Also to print the Account of the Association * produced by the Moderator, for the inspection of the Churches, and to receive any further improvements which may be thought necessary, that it may become a standing rule to direct the Association in all its future operations. And to request that the Churches would send, in their Letters to the Association, an account of the number of Circular Letters they wish to receive. Brother Jenkins then produced and

* This account of the Association contains six pages, and is omitted in the Register for want of room. EDITOR.

read the Circular Letter which was approved, and signed by the Moderator, who concluded the Morning Meeting in prayer.

At ten o'clock, the public service began; Brother Aston prayed; Brother Pearce preached from Heb. viii. 6. "But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the Mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises."—Brother Edmonds prayed. Brother L. Butterworth preached from Eph. i. 7. "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace."—And Brother Jenkins concluded in prayer.

Half-past five in the Evening, met again: Brother Reece prayed; Brother Benjamin Francis preached from Phil. i. 6. "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Christ." And Brother Biggs closed the service in prayer.

Agreed to hold the next Association at Bond-street, *Birmingham*, on Tuesday and Wednesday in the Whitsun-week; our Brethren Jenkins and L. Butterworth to preach, in case of failure, Brother Aston.

Put up at the Union Tavern, Cherry-street.

In the associated churches last year, there were

| | |
|--------------------------------|-----------|
| Baptized | 75 |
| Received by letter | 12 |
| Church at Willenhall | 13 |
| | <hr/> 100 |
| Dead | 15 |
| Dismissed | 22 |
| Excluded | 18 |
| | <hr/> 55 |

Total increase this year 45

N. B. The Letter from the church at *Leominster*, did not come to the hands of the Moderator time enough to have its contents inserted. Brother Thomas intended being at the Association, but was prevented by the weather.

M I N U T E S

OF THE

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE ASSOCIATION

Assembled at *Nottingham*, May 29, 30, and 31, 1792.

Tuesday evening six o'clock. The ministers and messengers being assembled, Brother Hopper, the minister of the place, began in prayer. Brother Ryland jun. was chosen Moderator. The letters from the churches were read. Brother Burton of Foxton concluded in prayer.

Wednesday Morning six o'clock. Met for prayer, with singing at intervals: when the following Brethren engaged; Fletcher of Codnor, Lingford of Botsford, Blundell of Arnby, Mills of Sheepshead, Cox a Deacon of the Church at Nottingham, and Jones of Lincoln.

At ten o'clock, Brother Morris prayed, Brother Sutcliff introduced the work of the day and prayed, Brother Carey preached from Isa. liv. 2, 3. "Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thine habitations; spare not, lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes: for thou shalt break forth on the right hand, and on the left; and thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles, and make the desolate cities to be inhabited." Brother West concluded in prayer.

Afternoon, half past two. Brother J. Edmonds prayed and Brother Ryland jun. preached from Zech. iv. 6. "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts." Brother T. Edmonds concluded,

Evening six o'clock. Brother Craps prayed, Brother Greenwood preached from Psalm xlviii. 12, 13, 14. "Walk about Zion, and go round about her: tell the towers thereof. Mark ye well her bulwarks, &c." Brother Fuller closed.

The Circular Letter drawn up by Brother Ryland, jun. was read, partly after the afternoon meeting, and the rest in the evening, to the ministers and messengers, who ordered it to be printed.

Thursday Morning six o'clock. After prayer, by one of the Deacons of the church, the ministers related their experiences as usual, and Brother Briggs of Burton-upon-Trent concluded the public meeting. The ministers and messengers then attended to the business of the fund. Voted five guineas to be transmitted by the Moderator to the Chairman of the Committee for procuring the Abolition of the inhuman and ungodly Trade in the persons of Men. Also two guineas to encourage

courage the preaching of the gospel at Derby, where a number of Baptists, members of the Church at Nottingham reside. One guinea to encourage preaching the word at Braybrook. And half a guinea a-piece to four Brethren from distant and poorer churches to defray the expences of attending the Association.

Resolved, that a plan be prepared against the next Ministers' meeting at Kettering, for forming a Baptist Society for propagating the Gospel among the Heathen. Brother Carey generously engaged to devote all the profits that may arise from his late publication on this interesting subject, to the use of such society. The Moderator closed the Association with prayer.

| Churches | Pastors * | Decrease | | | Increase | | | Number of Members |
|----------------------|------------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|----------|-------------------|
| | | Dead | Dimissed | Excluded | Restored | By Letter | Baptized | |
| 1 Codnor | William Fletcher | 1 | - | 2 | - | - | - | 62 |
| 2 Sutton Ashfield | | - | - | - | - | - | - | 9 |
| 3 Nottingham | Richard Hopper | 1 | - | 2 | - | - | 13 | 111 |
| 4 Sheephead | Robert Mills | 2 | - | - | 1 | - | 2 | 108 |
| 5 Leicester | William Carey | 1 | - | - | 1 | - | 9 | 63 |
| 6 Sutton in the Elms | Thomas Edmonds | 3 | - | - | - | - | - | 41 |
| 7 Arnsby | <i>Thomas Blundell</i> | 1 | 2 | - | 1 | - | - | 83 |
| 8 Clipstone | John Webster Morris | 1 | - | - | - | - | 4 | 68 |
| 9 Gullborough | John Edmonds | 1 | - | 3 | - | 1 | 3 | 78 |
| 10 Foxton | Joshua Burton | - | - | 1 | - | 3 | 2 | 24 |
| 11 Oakham | Abraham Greenwood | - | - | - | - | - | - | 50 |
| 12 Grettton | William Butler | - | - | - | - | - | 2 | 37 |
| 13 Kettering | Andrew Fuller | 3 | - | - | - | 1 | 12 | 111 |
| 14 Walgrave | Alexander Payne | 1 | - | 2 | - | - | - | 45 |
| 15 Moulton | <i>Edward Sharman</i> | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | 33 |
| 16 Northampton | John Ryland | 5 | 2 | 1 | - | - | 5 | 183 |
| 17 Road | William Heighton | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | 24 |
| 18 Olney | John Sutcliff | 2 | - | - | - | - | 1 | 59 |
| 19 Carlton | John West | 2 | - | 1 | - | - | 1 | 75 |
| 20 Thorn | Robert Fawcner | 2 | - | - | - | - | 6 | 59 |
| 21 St. Alban's | John Gill | 2 | - | - | - | - | - | 25 |
| 22 Spalding | Richard Crapps | 2 | - | - | - | - | 12 | 142 |
| 23 Soham | Francis Bland | 2 | - | - | - | - | - | 37 |
| 24 Braunstone | John Simmons | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | 24 |
| Increase 31. | | 33 | 4 | 13 | 3 | 6 | 72 | 1551 |

* Those persons whose names are in Italics, are not yet Pastors.

The next Association to be held at Northampton in Whit-sun-week, May 21, 22, 23, 1793. Brother Morris and Brother Fawcner to preach, in case of failure Brother West and Brother Simmons.

Put up at the Angel.

THE NORTHAMPTON LETTER, ON GODLY ZEAL.

Dearly beloved Brethren,

WE have reason once more to acknowledge the divine goodness in granting us a very pleasing, and, we hope, a profitable interview with each other. The intelligence received from most of the churches was of an agreeable and encouraging nature. The truths of the Gospel appear to be held fast, and their sweet and holy influence felt among our brethren. Several of your letters and messengers attested the happy effects of engaging in extraordinary prayer with more vigour and earnestness than before; and we hope these promising appearances of a revival will encourage those churches to go on, and engage others to adopt the same method. We recommend it especially to those societies that complain most of barrenness and declension, as a very seasonable and scriptural duty. "Turn ye *even* to me, saith the Lord, with all your heart, and with *fasting*, and with weeping, and with mourning. And rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your God; for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil. Who knoweth if he will return and repent, and leave a blessing behind him, and no more make you a reproach among the heathen?" Surely the state both of the world, and of the church, calls loudly upon us all to persist in wrestling instantly with God, for greater effusions of his Holy Spirit, and that we may be found prepared for our Lord's appearance whether in a way of judgment or mercy.

Many circumstances induce us to hope, that the glorious prophecies of enlargement to the church of God shall soon receive a more ample accomplishment. And though it is not for us to know the times and the seasons which the Father hath reserved in his own power, it is certainly our duty to be found, not only waiting and praying for the accomplishment of his blessed promises, but vigilant and strenuous in our exertions for his sacred cause; considering it as our highest honour to be subservient to its advancement.

The subject allotted for consideration in our annual letter at this time, is that of GODLY ZEAL, and we hope you will cordially receive the few observations and exhortations,

exhortations, we may have room to offer you, upon that interesting subject.

Zeal is a fervid, vehement emotion of the mind, enflamed with love to some peculiar object, whereby it is excited to exert itself with earnestness and vigour in its behalf, and warmly to oppose every thing that threatens its injury.

The opposite to zeal in general, is lukewarmness or indifference. But as the objects of ardent affection may differ widely, it may be either virtuous or vicious to an extreme. Accordingly the same word is used in scripture, in a good sense in some places, and in a bad one in others.—Nothing can be more opposite than true zeal and false. The one is a heavenly flame, the other is infernal fire.—*Fervent disinterested affection* is holy zeal. *Selfish interested affection* is its opposite, the immediate source of envy, spite and malice.—*Godly zeal* expands the heart, and unites with the whole empire of God, pursuing a good of which all its members may partake without envious competition. *Selfishness* contracts the heart, and would sacrifice the good of any, or of all mankind, yea and the divine glory itself, to the interest of the individual.

GODLY ZEAL, therefore, is the *Fervor* of true Benevolence, or of HOLY LOVE, exciting the subject of that sacred affection to vigorous exertion for the good of its beloved object, and to strenuous opposition of whatever tends to its injury.

The *Law of God*, which is the original standard of all true Virtue, or real Holiness, is summed up in one word, LOVE. The *object* of true benevolence, or of that love which the divine law requires, is UNIVERSAL BEING, including God, and all intelligent creatures. For the *first* and greatest command of the law enjoins supreme love to the uncreated Being, who is infinitely greater and more excellent than all created beings united: and the *second* branch of the law requires an universal and disinterested regard to our neighbour's welfare, even loving him as ourselves.—*Zeal* is fervent, active benevolence, or the celestial fire of love kindled into flame; and breaking forth in ardent desires and earnest efforts to promote the best interests of every individual, so far as the happiness of the individual is found consistent with the greatest good of the whole. The *chief good* is comprized in the glory of God, and the perfection and happiness of his kingdom.

Instead of glowing with heavenly zeal, the hearts of apostate men are wholly destitute of disinterested benevolence. They are fallen, as one expressed it, *into a gulph of sinful Selfishness*. For that *Self-Love* which is absolutely predominant in every carnal heart, is the root, or rather the essence of all

fin. It is the greatest practical lie in the universe; by which an animated atom would import, "*I am, and there is none besides me.*" It would, if it had power equal to its tendency, turn the universe upside down, and try to make an immense pyramid rest on its inverted point. Or, operating equally in a number of created beings, it would detach them from their only proper centre; disunite them from each other, crumble the moral world into discordant particles, and fill the universe with everlasting war and confusion.---This interested selfish affection, by which a person regards a private interest of his own, disconnected from the divine glory and the good of others, is direct enmity against God and his law, and the immediate spring of envy and enmity among mankind. Yet *self* reigns in one form or other, in every unrenowned soul; and, if grace prevent not, it must *reign unto death*: for it entirely deadens the soul to God, and to the good of others; every thing being disregarded but what may subserve some selfish end; and therefore God's glory and the general good require that such dead souls should be buried in hell.

But in regeneration a *right spirit* is created in a sinner. Holy affection begins to warm and animate his breast. He is quickened from above, and lives no longer for himself, but for God. The ever-glorious God is loved supremely, and becomes his exceeding joy. Nor can the *first* part of God's law be inscribed on the heart without the *second*. The true convert feels a new kind of affection for his fellow-creatures. Placing his own happiness in an object which can be enjoyed by unnumbered millions at once, he delights to unite with others in the pursuit of the same infinite good.

The christian, beholding the glory of God, discerns the equity of his requirements, and cordially acknowledges all his commandments to be right: and, conscious that he has already violated them, he is aware that punishment is due to his transgressions. Nor can he pretend to plead that death itself is too severe a sentence. An honest heart must lead a sinner to justify God, and condemn himself. Though he still feels that aversion to his own misery which is common to all intelligent beings, and the idea of eternal separation from God is far more painful to him than ever; yet, were he to expect this awful doom, he could not but acknowledge that God and his throne were guiltless; for he had really deserved to be for ever banished from the society of God and all holy beings: and however desirable his own felicity may appear, the real convert could not be happy in the thought, that God had brought everlasting reproach on his own government,

vernment, by suspending the due execution of his law in favour of so vile a criminal.—By this sense of the equity of the law, he was prepared to embrace the *gospel* with the most cordial affection. With transporting joy and gratitude he receives the blessed information of a great and glorious Saviour, who hath glorified God in the highest, while he hath made peace by the blood of his cross. He readily admits salvation is all of *grace*, and rejoices that God can at the same time be *just*, and yet the *justifier* of the ungodly, who believeth in Jesus. He welcomes these heavenly tidings, as worthy of all acceptance; and he longs to impart them to others, conscious that nothing can so glorify all the divine perfections, nothing can so secure the happiness of his fellow-sinners as the gospel of the blessed Redeemer.

The primary *objects* that demand our *zeal*, are, the *glory of God*, and the *good of mankind*.—The infinitely glorious God is the *first* object of benevolence to every virtuous mind: and though we cannot increase his *essential glory* and bliss, we may be instrumental in the advancement of his *declarative glory*, and subserve his gracious purpose of communicating his fulness to his needy creatures.—He that truly regards the glory of the Creator, will be also a zealous friend to the interests of his fellow-creatures. Could a true saint have information of God's being glorified and enjoyed in distant worlds, it would give him heart-felt joy. But his sphere of action is confined. He has at present no opportunity to glorify God but among his own species. This is the world where God has chosen to magnify his grace in the salvation of sinners: and here only are we called to subserve his glorious designs.—The glory of God, and the welfare of his kingdom among men, are most intimately and inseparably connected; indeed they involve each other. For you cannot manifest any *zealous* regard for the glory of your *Lord*, but as you endeavour to bring others to know, love and enjoy him, and devote themselves wholly to his service. Nor can you discover true *zeal* for the highest interests of your *fellow-men*, without endeavouring to bring them to the knowledge, love, enjoyment and resemblance of God.

The *knowledge of the TRUTH*, and the *practice of HOLINESS*, are the principal means of advancing the kingdom of God among men; and consequently, are necessary objects of *christian zeal*.

Zeal for the *DIFFUSION OF TRUTH*, is essentially requisite to the promotion of the divine glory, and the manifestation of our good will to men.—For God cannot be *glorified*, actively and intentionally, unless he is *known* in his true moral character.

character. It should, therefore, be our incessant concern to form just ideas of his glorious perfections, and to make known his glory and excellency to others.—God cannot be *enjoyed* without being *loved*, and he cannot be *loved* without being *known*; if, therefore, we wish to promote the happiness of our fellow-men, we must endeavour to teach them *the good knowledge of the Lord*.—Wrong ideas of the divine perfections lie at the bottom of all capital mistakes in religion. Christian *zeal* will excite you to labour after an increasing acquaintance with divine truth. Knowing that God has magnified his word above all his name, you will be zealous for the honour of the sacred scriptures. You will study their harmonious contents, and be charmed with the blessed discoveries they contain. You will desire impartially to regard every truth, and wish to enter deeper and deeper into the treasures of divine wisdom. Meanwhile you will be concerned to feel answerable affections attending your own knowledge of sacred truth; sensible that spiritual knowledge is ever attended with holy affections, and that merely speculative notions, without sincere and cordial love to the truth, would only prove aggravations of guilt. You will therefore attend to the sanctifying influence of the truth on your hearts and lives, and be concerned that others may, in like manner, manifest that they receive the truth in the love of it.

The *propagation of the truth*, and the *practice of holiness*, have a most intimate connection and reciprocal influence on each other, and are therefore the united object of *christian zeal*. The best way of recommending true principles to others, is to demonstrate, both by *argument*, and especially by their *visible influence* on our own lives, their *holy tendency*.—Unless we thus enter into the real spirit of the gospel, there will be the most just ground to suspect that we never thoroughly understood it ourselves.—No doubt many wretchedly deceive themselves in this respect. They adopt certain phrases, without entering into their genuine meaning; and while they profess uncommon zeal for evangelical truth, if they were aware of the full import of the doctrines of grace, they would reject them with the most bitter hatred. But, alas! their embracing them, *as they hold them*, and defending them *in the manner they defend them*, does them ten times more injury than any opposition they could make to them. For, *either* they state them so unguardedly as to make one part of revealed truth clash with another, pouring contempt on the law under pretence of honouring the gospel:—*or*, they disgrace their evangelical talk by their ungodly walk and conversation; indulging themselves in *intemperance*, or minding earthly things,

things, as if their eyes and their heart were only for their *covetousness*: or finally, while they abstain from *fleshly* lusts, they are wholly under the dominion of *spiritual* pride, rancorous bitterness, party spirit, and notorious self-righteousness, though they suppose themselves so far from that evil.

The true believer is peculiarly *zealous* for the *Practice of Holiness*, even *universal holiness*, or holiness in *all manner of conversation*, for he hath *respect* unto *all* God's *commandments*. His ardent desire is to experience himself more of the *power of godliness*, and to subserve its promotion in others. For the grace of God, that bringeth salvation, teacheth him to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world.—He is zealous for *sobriety*, for temperance, chastity, self-denial, humility, and self-government; sincerely desiring, through the Spirit, to mortify the lusts of the *flesh*, and the lusts of the *mind*; that his bodily appetites, and his mental passions, may be brought into subjection to the divine will.—He is zealous for *righteousness* in all his dealings with men; careful of his *actions*, that they are not injurious to others, but that he may evidently do unto others as he could reasonably desire they might do unto him; he is concerned to owe no man any thing but love, and that love which he continues to owe, he is zealous constantly to pay: he is careful of his *words*, not to offend the law of truth, the law of kindness, or the law of purity and edification; he is careful of his very *thoughts*, lest he should injure others by unjust suspicions and evil surmises, or even lest he should unfit himself for a readiness to do them good, by needlessly dwelling upon their real faults. He is zealous for *godliness*; for the worship of God, public and private, for the ordinances of his house, for gospel institutions, in their original simplicity and purity, as far as he has light into the will of God concerning them: but especially for internal religion, for repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ, for supreme love to God, submission and resignation to his will, and real conformity to his moral perfections.---These are the great essentials of religion, which he aspires after an increasing enjoyment of himself, and burns with zeal against the opposite evils in his own breast. And this is the religion he is zealous to promote among mankind: it is not a name, a form, or a party, which he longs to see prevail, but real powerful godliness, ruling in the heart, and regulating the whole tenor of the life.

He is zealous for the *conversion of sinners*. What an honour

nour would he account it to be instrumental in bringing others to the knowledge and love of God, that are now strangers and enemies to him! It is true, the judicious christian is led, by the divine word, by a reflection on his own experience, and by observation of the state of mankind, to entertain such a conviction of the total depravity of the human heart, and the insuperable obstinacy of the rebellious will of man, that he would despair of the conversion of any sinner in the world, without the regenerating influences of the Holy Spirit. Hence one principal effect of godly zeal will be, his abounding in fervent prayer for divine power to attend the ordinances of God's house. But though *regeneration*, strictly speaking, be allowed to be the immediate effect of divine agency, beyond and above the use of *means*, yet God is accustomed to employ them in bringing sinners under those awakenings and convictions that usually precede regeneration; and it is likewise in the use of means, that the secret influence of renewing grace, is manifested by *active conversion*. There is therefore nothing in the doctrine of Efficacious Grace, when rightly explained, that tends to discourage us from expressing our zeal for the conversion of souls, by the most diligent use of every means that is suited to instruct, alarm, or allure the mind.

Were it needful to prevent some other of our principles from being misunderstood by those who embrace them, or misrepresented by those who oppose them, we might briefly shew that the doctrines of *future punishment*, of God's *special electing love*, or of the *divine decrees* in general, form no objection to your seeking the salvation of all around you, and will be no excuse for the want of zeal in this case.---It appears from fact, as testified in the divine word, that the wisest and most benevolent of beings did not think it would tend to produce the greatest quantity of happiness, to ensure the final felicity of every individual. Sin and misery have taken place, though we cannot rationally doubt his ability to have prevented their existence. We are sure he had good reasons for his conduct in not hindering the introduction of evil, and fear not but the final issue of events will fully justify his determination, and prove the plan he has actually adopted to be the wisest and best of all possible schemes. Though we expect the apostate angels, and a considerable number of our own species, will be miserable for ever, we are persuaded that when all the saved are made perfect in benevolence, they will applaud the conduct of the Great Supreme, and all heaven will resound with hallelujahs, though the smoke of their torment, who persisted in impenitence, shall ascend for ever

ever and ever.---But God's decrees are unknown to us till their accomplishment. We know not one individual that he hath determined to abandon to his own lusts. It is our part to exert ourselves, in the present state, with the warmest zeal, *warning every man, and teaching every man*, with an ardent desire to *present every man perfect in Christ Jesus*. Who would excuse a watchman, who, perceiving fire breaking out in a house, should neglect any attempt to alarm the family, and, after they were burnt to death, should plead that God had decreed they should be consumed? The fulfilment of God's *secret* will in their death, would not prove it contrary to his *revealed* will that *he* should be put to death for his neglect. Or, where is the predestinarian who loves money, who would infer, because he never shall get more than God has determined, that therefore he need not use means to oblige his customers, or to engage them to come to his shop, &c. Alas! if some, who scandalize our principles, did but love God's glory, and the souls of men, as well as they love the mammon of unrighteousness, they would easily understand the consistency of the doctrine of the decrees, with their laying out themselves continually, to improve every talent, and to use every opportunity, to secure these blessed objects. Instead of being excused from activity in the cause of God, by the doctrine of *sovereign, efficacious* grace, that truth is highly necessary to support the truly benevolent mind, under the discouragements which would arise from a view of human depravity, as not only attested in scripture, but confirmed by evident fact. A man thoroughly engaged in the promotion of truth and holiness might well sink into despair, upon perceiving that *the carnal mind is enmity against God*, cannot brook subjection to his law, nor be induced sincerely to comply with the *gospel*, by the wisest and best of means; if it were not for the comfortable assurance that God can turn the heart, and take away the very disposition to resist, by the energy of his Spirit; and were he not also assured that he has promised and predetermined to effect this happy change on an innumerable multitude of the children of men.

But the zealous friend of the Redeemer is not only concerned to see multitudes espouse his cause; he ardently desires that all the professed followers of Christ may evidence the sincerity of their attachment to him by their *growth in grace*, or their *progress in the ways of Holiness*. He is zealous for *personal religion*. He feels his own imperfections, and is humbled on their account. He finds his heart is perpetually prone to wander from God; and the more he knows

it, the more he distrusts it. Zeal for God makes him jealous of himself, lest he should ever deal treacherously with his best friend. When most active in his service, he considers his exertions as miserably languid, compared with the obligations he feels himself under. But to think of openly disgracing the cause of Christ, or only secretly backsliding from his God, would be enough to break his heart, with a sense of the baseness and ingratitude of such conduct. How fervently does he pray, *Never let them that seek thee be ashamed for my sake, O God!* Yea, no degrees of grace will satisfy him. Perfection is the mark he aims at. And he cannot be satisfied till he fully apprehends *that* for which he was apprehended of Christ. Mean-while he longs to see his brethren partake the same blessedness which he pants after himself. Though more ready to suspect himself than others, because he knows most of himself, yet he is aware also that the best of his fellow-christians are far from what they should be; he watches over them with a godly jealousy, and entreats that they would do the same by him. Love to God and love to the brethren unite in exciting him to guard them against temptations, especially such that he himself has suffered by. He watches not *for* their halting, but would gladly prevent it. He mourns for the miscarriages of professors, and longs to see all that name the name of our Lord Jesus united in the closest bonds of love to each other, and most thoroughly conformed to his blessed image. Surely then the zealous christian may always find enough to do for God, both at home and abroad, and there is infinite reason that he should not be slothful, but always abound in the work of the Lord. *He that hath wrought us for the self-same thing is God, who hath given us the earnest of his Spirit:* this may well encourage us to aspire after the full enjoyment of the hope set before us; and though not warranted to conclude we shall fully attain our wish in this life, yet we are confident God hath not set us such narrow limits, as that any of us need slacken our pace, on the supposition that we are got as near to the mark as we can be in this world; nor need we leave off combating with our spiritual enemies, upon the supposition that no farther victory can be obtained over them while in this militant state.

Dear brethren, -we have hitherto treated this subject chiefly in a *descriptive* way. We have given you a definition of **CHRISTIAN ZEAL**,—we have represented its *general nature*,—and pointed out its *principal objects*:—If you begin to feel the importance of the subject, perhaps you are by this time wishing for some *more particular DIRECTIONS*, how you should

should manifest your zeal for God, how you should discover your regard for his glory, and for his kingdom among men? You are ready to ask, what can we do more to promote the salvation of souls, and the prosperity of the church, than we have done already? Dear brethren, if you are sufficiently in earnest in these enquiries, you may easily obtain an answer to them. It is true, you are not all in the same stations, you have not all the same talents and opportunities; but each in his respective situation may doubtless find employment in subserving the dear and glorious cause. Had we a greater measure of zeal, a variety of means would appear at hand, which have hitherto been strangely overlooked and neglected.

Brethren, let us use the stile of *exhortation* as most suited to the interesting nature of the subject,—*Let your zeal begin at home.* Walk closely with God. Let your souls follow hard after him. Shew that you are strangers and pilgrims upon the earth, whose conversation is in heaven. Let your spirits make diligent search into your *real* state Godward. Let zeal against sin appear in detecting and opposing the evils of your own hearts. Be more severe and rigorous in regard to your own tempers and practices; in condemning, bewailing and opposing whatever is contrary to the life of a christian, than you can be concerning others. Beware of spiritual pride and ostentation. Indulge not vain self-complacency in present attainments, but ardently press toward the mark. Let it appear that your hatred of sin is universal; that you hate every false way. Be holy in all manner of conversation and godliness. Let every thing you engage in be made subservient to religion. Do all to the glory of God. If religion is thus evidently treated as your main and only concern, what weight will this give to your own testimony, and that of your ministers in its favour! Nothing can tend more to the conviction of sinners, the animation of your brethren, and the confusion of all who persist in their opposition to God's truth and ways.

Were all your hearts, brethren, enflamed with more holy zeal, how many ways are there in which, not only ministers, but private christians, might hope to be instrumental to the conversion of souls! Would it not excite you to greater *diligence* in instructing your own *families*, your dear *children*, your *servants*, all those that God in his providence has more immediately committed to your care?—Would it not engage you to forward the instruction of others by every means in your power? Many might do more service than they have yet done, by religious conversation with their neighbours,

neighbours, especially in times of sickness: visiting the poor particularly, and relieving their necessities, and at the same time giving them seasonable advice, and offering to pray with them. If you have but small gifts for instructing them yourselves, might you not take a book with you and read to them; and either lend it, or give it them as you can afford? *Scott on Repentance*, *Hallyburton's Great Concern*, *Guthrie's Trial of a Saving Interest in Christ*, &c. would be very proper for such purposes. How much good might richer christians do, by giving away these, and other books, among their neighbours! How many ways might they find of gratifying a benevolent spirit, if they had more ardent zeal for God! Much good might be done to the rising generation by encouraging Sunday Schools, and other charity schools, especially if the subscribers would inspect them, and assist in them occasionally themselves. If all our church-members, and the constant hearers of the gospel, had more zeal, they would open their houses for the preaching of God's word in many dark *villages*, and encourage it by their own attendance; and by setting up *meetings of prayer*, and *reading sermons* to their neighbours, would labour to diffuse divine knowledge. Unspeakable weight would be added to all your instructions, and to the occasional discourses of your ministers, if your neighbours in every village were constrained to allow that all your deportment was consistent and exemplary; if religious servants were more diligent, faithful, sober and peaceable than any others: tradesmen, husbandmen, and others, more punctual, equitable, beneficent, &c. always disposed to do good, even to enemies and persecutors; ready to deny themselves for the sake of serving their neighbours, and never so happy as when opportunities offer of honouring God, and expressing kindness to their fellow-men. Can you doubt of it, brethren, that if every one was unweariedly employed in seeking the honour and success of the gospel, accompanying these efforts with strong cries and prayers to God for his blessing, this labour of love would not be in vain in the Lord?—It would especially be an hopeful symptom of an approaching revival, if christian churches were induced more generally to unite in the frequent observance of days of **FASTING** and **PRAYER**, a practice which has too much sunk into disuse among protestant dissenters, in the present century; but of which some of our brethren have attested the happy effects within the last year, and profess that the more frequently and fervently they have engaged in this solemn duty, the more satisfaction and enjoyment they have found therein. Certainly

it tends to increase our engagedness of heart in the service of the Lord, and if you are but excited to, persist in thus wrestling with God, in the strength of Christ, you must and will be successful.

O that we were indeed inspired with greater zeal for the divine glory, for the honour of religion; for a closer union among all true christians; for purity of doctrine; for the support of in our discipline churches, for the practice of pure and undefiled religion!—The limits of our letter prohibit enlargement; we must only add a few necessary CAUTIONS, and shall then close with some animating MOTIVES.

Unite zeal for principle and for practice. All evangelical truth is of a holy tendency, and is either misunderstood, or you do not enter into the spirit of it, if it does not regulate your tempers and influence your lives. On the other hand, nothing can so happily promote beneficence, integrity, and equity towards men, and piety towards God, as evangelical truth. Indeed there can be no genuine piety without faith in Christ Jesus. And our regard to our fellow *men* will prove essentially defective, and will be found to flow merely from worldly policy, or some modification of self-love, if it has not vital faith for its source.

Let your *zeal* be *consistent and universal*. Consider the connection between the several branches of religious truth; especially between the *law* and the *gospel*.—They who deny the infinite glory and atoning sacrifice of the Redeemer, cannot have any very exalted views of the moral government of God. They must deny the infinite evil of sin, the unalterable equity of the law, and consequently the infinite loveliness of the Deity, and the infinite importance of supporting its authority. Thus, by detracting from the dignity of the *Saviour*, they equally degrade the dignity of the *Law-giver* and moral Governor of the world.—No man can understand the *law* of God, without seeing his need of the *gospel*; as no one can understand the *gospel*, without seeing therein God's zeal for the honour of his *law*: nor can he approve of Christ, unless he approves of his mediation, in *this* view, as securing the honour of God as a righteous law-giver.—Many of old were zealous for the law of Moses, who did not understand the spirituality of the *moral* law, nor the meaning of the *ceremonial*, nor the noblest design of the whole *Mosaic* dispensation, and so went about to establish their own righteousness, in opposition to the essential righteousness of the divine nature, as well as to God's established method of justifying sinners. *Many* in the present day tread in their steps, and reject the atonement as unnecessary.—

Others

Others profess a great zeal for free grace and the gospel, who never saw themselves to be *fairly* condemned, and consequently never could see their real need of grace; for it is a certain axiom, that *there can be no more of GRACE in our salvation*, than there would be of JUSTICE in our *condemnation*. Such persons are often virulent and bitter in their zeal, and as full of Pharisaic pride and self-righteousness as any professed advocates for human merit; though they hide it from themselves by a few free-grace phrases. There is much room to fear the whole religion of such persons is founded merely in SELF-LOVE, and a previous confidence that they are God's peculiar favourites; they can bear to hear *nothing* preached up but their supposed *privileges*; and all instruction, caution, admonition, and exhortation, excites their contempt and indignation. May your zeal, dear brethren, be evidently of a different kind; leading you at once to support the glory of God's righteous *government*, and the honour of his sovereign *grace*, as the alone source of your salvation.

Manifest that you are zealous *not merely for the letter but for the spirit of the gospel*: that your zeal is not merely for the phrases of a party, but for those happy effects which evangelical truth, justly stated, and cordially believed, directly tends to produce. It is *by the truth* as it is in Jesus, that the Holy Spirit humbles, encourages, and sanctifies the soul, and hence the zealous concern of the believer for its support and propagation.

Let your zeal for *particular truths or duties be in proportion to their comparative importance*. Though no part of religious truth is trivial or useless, all the doctrines of God's word are not equal in their importance. It indicates a dis-tempered zeal when persons are violent in their defence of lesser points, on which it is evident that true saints have had different apprehensions in the present imperfect state of the church, and at the same time languid in their support of the more essential doctrines of christianity, in which there is a much greater agreement among all humble and holy souls. If our zeal is *well proportioned* it will not suffer a little difference to disunite us, more than our agreement on many more important articles can endear us to each other. Nor shall we, as the case has sometimes been, oppose *those* the most warmly, who come the nearest to our sentiments, without agreeing in every punctilio.—Thus also, as to *practice*, neglect *no* duty, but shew the greatest zeal for the weightier matters of the law; and let opposition to sin

be against *every false way*. A counterfeit zeal is only against some particular sin; like Jehu's against the worship of Baal, but not against the worship of the Golden Calves. "Thus
 " some will seem to be very zealous against profaneness, and
 " pride in apparel, &c. who themselves are notorious for
 " covetousness, closeness, and it may be backbiting, envy,
 " turbulency of spirit, and rooted ill-will to those who have
 " offended them."

Watch and pray that your zeal may be *attended* with the exercise of *humility, self-denial, meekness, patience*, and real *prudence*; otherwise you may greatly injure the cause you mean to promote, and give your enemies opportunity to reproach the ways of God. Never was any mere man more zealous than Paul, yet he united much caution and circumspection with his zeal, 1 Cor. x. 32, 33. and exhorted others to the same practice, Rom. xv. 1, 2. xii. 15. xiv. 16. 19. Eph. iv. 5.—It is spiritual pride that leads us to disregard all consequences, and to despise the idea of guarding our temper and conduct, lest, when we have been warm in a good cause, our zeal should *degenerate* into mere party-spirit, or become *mixed* with some corrupt principle.

True zeal will actuate you to *oppose error and sin*, and you must not be slack in that opposition, but never forget two cautions concerning it. (1.) Let the *opposition* your zeal makes to *evil* be *firstly* and *chiefly* directed against the evils of *your own* hearts and lives; and, (2.) let the opposition your zeal excites you to make against error and iniquity in others, be evidently the *opposition of love*. Shew that it is *love* to God and man, which inkindles your resentment against sentiments or practices that would dishonour him, or injure them. Manifest that love even to the souls of those persons whose opinions and practices you oppose, constrains you to that opposition, and induces you to conduct yourselves in that manner which you hope will be best suited to reclaim them from the evil of their way. And be sure use no unhallowed weapons in defence of the cause you espouse, but only such as are authorised by truth and real benevolence.

Beware, dearly beloved, in every exercise of zeal, lest *self-love* burn in your bosoms, instead of disinterested *benevolence*. Nothing can be more opposed to the fervor of true benevolence, than the fervor of selfishness. Yet, as we have already suggested, this most hateful temper may sometimes put on the garb of religion, and even of evangelical religion. A man having been terrified by the *power* of God's anger,
 but

but who never saw the *justice* of his displeasure against sin, may afterwards presume that Christ is his saviour, though he never was *well pleased* with him for his *righteousness* sake, or because he hath magnified the law and made it honourable; yet the persuasion of his own safety and exaltation, may inspire him with plenty of zeal for what he *calls* the gospel; and supposing he is not bound to trouble himself about *moral duties*, he has the more time to spend in defence of his *muti-lated* system of religion; while he is destitute of love to God, and full of hatred to men, except those of his own party. He regards what he calls GOD, merely as the image of himself, and as having the same partial regard for him, which he has for himself: caring nothing for the divine character, or for the general good, he is not anxious to prove the consistency of the method of salvation with the divine perfections and government, but accounts it all lost labour if others engage in that attempt: And if he should lose his confidence, and but suspect that God will deal with *him*, as he expects he will with the major part of mankind, his love would be immediately turned into bare-faced enmity, and he would be ready to blaspheme the ruler of the skies.— There needed no regeneration to produce such religion as this. *Do not even sinners*, said our Lord, *love those that love them?* It was not founded in a spiritual sense of the divine glory, but all originated in a supposed immediate witness to his personal safety. The more of this religion men have, the more they are inflated with pride, and inflamed with rancour, against all who submit not implicitly to their dogmatical assertions, and arrogant claims of infallibility. This fire cometh from beneath, and it burns like the devouring flames of hell. We exhort you, brethren, not only to beware of the predominance of such a counterfeit zeal, but of every corrupt mixture of the kind, and of whatever would tend to nourish so hateful a disposition.

But it is time to close with some MOTIVES suited to excite you, beloved, to greater degrees of genuine zeal for God and his blessed cause.

The first motive we shall urge is, *the extent and magnitude of the object of true benevolence*. Its object, we observed, is *universal Being*, including God and his intelligent creatures; seeking the welfare of every individual, as far as it consists with the *greatest good* of the whole system; which is comprised in the glory of God, and the perfection and happiness of his kingdom.— God's *essential glory*, or his intrinsic excellence and infinite felicity, cannot be increased or diminished. But this consideration is no more reason why *any* individual should

should neglect his service, or disregard his *declarative* glory, than it would be for *all* created beings to do so. Rather the supreme excellence of Jehovah, from whence his supreme happiness necessarily results, is the primary ground upon which all his creatures are required to live to Him, and not to themselves. And though his *essential* glory is ever the same, his *manifestative* or *declarative* glory admits of increase, and we may be the honoured instruments of advancing it; for this consists in the discovery and communication of his fulness to his creatures.—In proportion as God is known and loved by rational creatures, their present happiness is promoted, and their future felicity ascertained. Hence *love to God*, and *love to man*, unite in urging you incessantly to aim at the advancement of your Creator's glory, and at the good of your fellow-men.—Consider the cause you espouse is that of GOD, the Greatest and Best of Beings. And the interest of his kingdom comprehends the whole of intelligent existences, except only those final impenitents, who persist in opposing their Maker, who are less than nothing in comparison with Him, against whom they have revolted without cause. And as to created beings, how many more are there for us, than all that are against us? The glorious angels participate the happy consequences of redemption, though in a more indirect manner than the ransomed children of men. Though they never transgressed the divine law, and therefore never needed salvation, they feel the most rapturous joy at the repentance of every saved soul, and contemplate with unspeakable profit the harmonious manifestation of the divine perfections in the cross of Christ.—We have room to believe, that at length all the friends of God in all parts of the universe, even though residing in distant worlds, shall be known to one another, and the happiness of every individual shall make some addition to the happiness of each other.—In other cases, we expect, that if people are zealous at all, their zeal will bear some proportion to the greatness of the enterprize in which they are engaged. Let it be so here. Every thing else, in which the affections and passions of mankind can be engaged, is less than nothing and vanity when compared with the cause and kingdom of God.

We beseech you, *holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our Profession, Christ Jesus*. Let the excellency of his cause, the ardor which he himself hath shewn in it, the personal obligations you are under to him, and blessings derived from him to all his people, excite your *zeal* to the uttermost.—Reflect on
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the original dignity which he eternally possessed, and consider the depth of humiliation to which he condescended for your sakes. He took upon him the form of a servant, and how did he exert himself then in the glorious cause. He was unwearied in seeking his Father's glory; he made it his meat and drink to do his will. He could truly say, *the zeal of thine house hath eaten me up*. He was perpetually employed in doing good to the bodies and souls of men, though he suffered so incessantly the contradiction of sinners against himself. *He put on righteousness as a breast-plate; and the helmet of salvation was on his head: and he put on the garments of vengeance for his cloathing; and he clad himself with zeal as with a mantle*. He set his face like a flint against all opposition; and gloriously finished the work which his Father had given him to do, though it was the most arduous task that ever was atchieved, even the reconciliation of transgressors unto God. The difficulties in his way were such as none could have surmounted but himself, and it cost him his life to effect his wonderful design. He willingly sacrificed himself to secure the happiness of his people, in perfect consistency with the divine glory. The kingdom of God among men, the kingdom of righteousness and yet of peace, was founded in Immanuel's blood. He knew it could not be erected at less expence; but it had been foretold that he should not fail, nor be discouraged, until he had set judgment on the earth, and that the isles should wait for his law. And now the most difficult part of his work is finished; he accomplished the purchase of redemption by himself alone. But having applied that salvation to your hearts, he condescends to employ you under him in the further advancement of his cause. And can you be languid and lukewarm in the service of such a friend? Let his love, his dying love, constrain you to imitate his example, and exert yourselves in his interest. Had he never died for you, it would have been robbery of your Maker to have employed your powers not for him, but for another. But you are now the Lord's by a new and more endearing tie. He has not only brought you out of a state of non-existence, but bought you off from that punishment which would have deservedly rendered your existence infinitely more dreadful than non-existence; and now he has called you to glory and virtue. Certainly he needs not your aid, but he honours you by employing you in his service. And though we must confess that without him we can do nothing, we ought to consider ourselves as much bound to activity in behalf of his blessed kingdom, as if its prosperity depended on our exertions,

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Let the *greatness of the opposition that is made to the reign of God on earth* stir you up to the more ardent zeal.—Are not the hosts of hell in league against you, and your glorious Lord? Are not the major part of mankind still engaged on the side of sin? And were not you yourselves once active enemies to the blessed Saviour? Let reflection upon your former servitude rouse you to assert that glorious liberty where with Christ has made you free. Be at least as active for the best of Masters, as you were once for the worst of tyrants. Think how much dishonour has been unjustly cast upon God by yourselves, and by your fellow-sinners. Reflect how greatly God may be glorified after all in your pardon and recovery. Let these thoughts stimulate you to activity in glorifying him.—Remember the power and policy of hell are engaged against you, and yet they shall never prevail; for the captain of your salvation has proved himself more than a match for the powers of darkness. He has triumphed gloriously, and his promise ensures your victory; but it will not be obtained without an earnest conflict. You must engage with principalities and powers, and combat with enemies who once lorded it over you. But Omnipotence is on your side. Through your God you may do valiantly, for he shall tread down your enemies for you.—Be not contented with standing merely on the *defensive*. Carry on the war in the name of Jesus into the empire of your adversary. Through the Spirit you shall mortify the deeds of the body, and obtain farther conquests over your in-bred foes. And you are warranted to labour and hope to be instruments of rescuing others from the prince of darkness that are now led captives by him at his will.

Consider *the miserable state of mankind*. O that you had all of you a conception of the extent of Satan's empire over the children of men. We recommend to your serious attention, ~~the~~ sketch which brother CAREY has lately given of the *state of the heathen world*, and the sermons published by brother SUTCLIFF and brother FULLER on *Jealousy for the Lord of Hosts* and the *pernicious influence of delay*. In these you will find many particulars, which we have not room to lay before you in this letter, that will tend, if you have any feelings in your souls, to excite your compassionate concern for your brethren of the human race, who sit in darkness and the shadow of death. How great are their present miseries! And what ruin is before them! O the poor miserable Heathens! Mahometans! Papists! Eastern Christians! Nominal Protestants! What a state are they

in! Read books of history and geography with tears of compassion. Let every newspaper excite your pity. Open your eyes, and look round your towns, your villages, yea round our congregations, and see what multitudes are *sinfully dead* to God; then say, how dwelleth the love of God in us, if we feel not for these wretched souls! Yet may these dry bones live, though they are very many and very dry. God can as easily convert any one of them as he could you. And it is his will that you should enquire of him concerning these things, and seek to him for the effusion of his Holy Spirit upon them.

Had we more zeal for God, how much happier should we be! Activity is the best proof of life. Exercise is conducive to health. The exercise of grace is the health of our souls. Brethren, the dreaming lives too many of us live, have but little pleasure in them, and no wonder. Henceforth, *while we live, let us live!* May we live more abundantly to God. May we press forward in his ways. *The way of the Lord is strength to the upright.* They that *run* therein shall *not be weary*; but if we only *walk*, the most that can be said is, we *shall not* utterly faint. The most active christian will be ordinarily the most happy, the most honourable, the most useful.—But how does our Lord hate lukewarmness, and how should we hate it. Read his message to Laodicea, and tremble. Rev. iii. 16. Regard his animating charge, *Be zealous, and repent*, v. 19. Repent of past lukewarmness, and watch against it in future. But unless zeal is continually in exercise, how sensibly will its odious opposite extend its baneful influence over us. How will it chill our hearts and enervate our hands. How will it render such that should be as the salt of the earth, as salt that hath lost its flavour, which is fit only to be thrown out and trodden under foot of men. Think of the many instances in which you have seen the love of others wax cold, and dread lest the epidemic infection should seize yourselves. See the *activity* of your Lord's enemies, and let their fervor in a bad cause provoke you to jealousy. Shall they be active who are engaged in the same war with Devils? and will you be indolent who are engaged on the same side with Angels?

Certain victory awaits the zealous followers of the Lamb.—Not only shall each obtain the victory individually, and inherit a crown of glory; but a glorious period is hastening, when the kingdoms of this world shall *become the kingdoms of our LORD and of his CHRIST*. God has promised to do *great things* before the end of time, and we know not how soon the happy period will commence. The present age
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seems pregnant with great events. The nations of Europe appear in commotion, and whatever may be the views of contending parties, God our Saviour has a good and benevolent end to answer, to which even the efforts of his enemies shall be subservient; but how great the honour of being numbered with his sincere and zealous friends. If the days we hope for are at hand, the question concerning the present race of professors is this, Shall *we* be among *those* who will be employed in bringing forward the glorious period, *or* among *those* that must be removed out of the world before the happy times can begin? *The whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain until now, and certainly, if we have the first fruits of the Spirit, we also shall long and labour for the redemption of the whole mystical body of Christ.* Hitherto we have been ready to complain, *We have not wrought any deliverance in the earth, neither have the inhabitants of the world fallen.* But let us not cease crying mightily unto the Lord, *until the SPIRIT be poured upon us from on high*; then the wilderness shall become as a fruitful field, and the desert like the garden of God.—Yes, beloved, the scriptures cannot be broken. *JESUS must reign universally.* All nations shall own him. All people shall serve him. His kingdom shall be extended, *not* by human might, or power, *but* by the effusion of his Holy Spirit. He will be *exalted in his own strength.* Whatever dark scenes we may see first, *his brightness is as the light.* He cannot err. His whole plan is clear before him; and he hath power absolutely infinite to execute it. His strength is so far from being exhausted, that it hath not yet been all exerted. All the displays of his power hitherto have been rather *the hiding of his power*, than the full manifestation of it. He intends to accomplish far greater events before the end of time, than have yet taken place; and as he loves to make his *strength perfect in weakness*, our own insufficiency and imbecillity is no objection to his using us in the advancement of his blessed cause. The weaker we are in ourselves, the more will the excellence of the power appear to be of God. *Wherefore, beloved, be ye zealous, steadfast and unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as your labour is not in vain in the Lord.*

Signed by order of the Association,

JOHN RYLAND. jun.
Moderator.