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 * THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY, *
 * Princeton, N. J. *
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 * From the Rev. W. B. SPRAGUE, D.D. Sept. 1839. *
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S E R M O N S,

PREACHED IN LONDON,

AT THE FORMATION OF THE

London

MISSIONARY SOCIETY,

SEPTEMBER 22, 23, 24, 1795:

TO WHICH ARE PREFIXED,

MEMORIALS

RESPECTING THE ESTABLISHMENT AND FIRST ATTEMPTS
OF THAT SOCIETY.

ISAIAH *xlvi.* 3.—I have declared the former things from the beginning: and they went forth out of my mouth, and I shewed them, I did them suddenly, and they came to pass.

— *xlii.* 18. 19.—Hear ye deaf, and look ye blind, that ye may see.—Who is blind but my servant? or deaf, as my messenger that I sent? who is blind as he that is perfect, and blind as the Lord's servant?

BY ORDER OF THE DIRECTORS.

PUBLISHED FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE SOCIETY.

London:

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1795

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AN
INTRODUCTORY MEMORIAL
RESPECTING THE FORMATION
OF THE
MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

Published by the Directors.

“ ACCORDING to this time, it shall be said of
“ **A** Jacob, and of Israel, What hath God
“ wrought?” The surprising success which, at this
moment, seems to crown our endeavours, while it
comforts our hearts, calls us to the solemn recollection
of our personal unworthiness and insignificance. To
the self-evident excellency and grandeur of the
cause must it be ascribed, and to the interposition
of *the God of the spirits of all flesh* to whom the sal-
vation of human beings is dear, that such a multi-
tude of ministers and private Christians have so af-
fectionately united to form the Missionary Society.

It will be gratifying to those who now feel a
tender interest in this design, and perhaps to many
in the ages which are about to roll on, to be directed
to the *first publication* which stood in immediate con-
nection with the rise of this society. This was an
Address to Professors of the Gospel, by the Rev.
Mr. Bogue, of Gosport; published in the Evangelical
Magazine, for September 1794; whereof a copy
here follows:

CHRISTIAN BRETHREN,

GOD has favoured us with the knowledge of the way of sal-
vation through a crucified Redeemer. Our obligations to him on
this account are inexpressible; and, I trust, we are often prompted

from the fullness of our hearts to ask, *What shall we render unto the Lord for all his benefits?* If in many things we are anxious to make a suitable return, there is one thing with respect to which, if weighed in the balance of the sanctuary, we shall be found wanting. A survey of the state of the world presents to us more than one-half of the human race destitute of the knowledge of the Gospel, and sitting in darkness and in the shadow of death. Their deplorable condition it is utterly impossible for words to describe! And what have we done for their salvation? There are hundreds of millions of poor Pagans ignorant of the true God, and falling down before stocks and stones. There are hundreds of millions more blinded by the delusions of Mahomet; and unacquainted with Jesus, as the only mediator between God and man, whom to know is eternal life. If we have never thought of these things, there is much reason to lament our criminal unconcern for the honour of God, and for the salvation of the perishing souls of men. If they have been the subject of our serious consideration; with such a scene before our eyes, what methods have we employed that all these myriads of Pagans and Mahometans might be delivered from the power of darkness, and translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son?

While we are forced to acknowledge that we have as a body done nothing, we may justly reflect we are under the strongest obligations to do every thing in our power. We all know that it is the supreme end of our existence to glorify God. But can we suppose that though we endeavour *personally* to live to his honour, our obligations are fulfilled, while we have employed no methods *as a Christian body* to lead our brethren in Pagan lands to glorify him also, by making them acquainted with his nature, government, and grace? We profess "to love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity;" But are we not bound thereby "to shed abroad the sweet odour of his name in every place," till it be diffused throughout all the dark paths of the earth, the habitations of ignorance and cruelty? We are commanded "to love our neighbour as ourselves;" and Christ has taught us that *every man is our neighbour*. But do we display this love while we allow gross darkness to cover the Pagan and Mahometan nations, and are at no pains to send to them the glad tidings of salvation through the sufferings and death of the Son of God? Perhaps we have not considered our duty resulting from that command which was directed from the supreme authority to every follower of the Lamb: *Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature:* That has not yet been done. It ought to be done without delay; and every Christian is called upon to act his part, and cannot without criminality withhold his exertions towards procuring obedience to the command of his Redeemer and his Lord. *Gratitude* calls loudly to us to be active instruments in the hands of Christ, in proclaiming to the most distant parts of the earth that grace of which we hope we have ourselves been made partakers. *Justice* too unites her strong and imperious voice, and cries, "Ye were once Pagans, living

in cruel and abominable idolatry. The servants of Jesus came from other lands, and preached his Gospel among you. Hence your knowledge of salvation. And ought not ye, as an equitable compensation for their kindness, to send messengers to the nations which are in like condition with yourselves of old, to entreat them that they turn from their dumb idols to serve the living God, and to wait for his Son from heaven? Verily their debtors ye are."

But it may be asked, "Why are we in particular called on to exert ourselves in this work? Will it satisfy you if I answer, that I am one of you, and think myself on this account obliged to speak more immediately to you? A connection with a society or denomination of Christians should certainly influence us to seek the welfare of that society, and authorises us to invite its members to discharge the duties incumbent on them. Besides, all other bodies of professing Christians have done, and are doing, something for the conversion of the Heathen. The labours of the church of Rome have been far more abundant than those of all other sects whatever. O that they had but conveyed Christianity *pure* to the blinded Pagans! The Church of England has a Society of considerable standing, for the propagation of the Gospel. The Kirk of Scotland supports a similar institution. The Moravian Brethren have, if we consider their numbers and their substance, excelled in this respect the whole Christian world. Of late the Methodists have exerted themselves with a most commendable zeal. An association is just formed by the Baptists for this benevolent purpose; and their first Missionaries have already entered on the work. *We alone* are idle. There is not a body of Christians in the country, except ourselves, but have put their hand to the plough. We alone (and it must be spoken to our shame) have not sent messengers to the Heathen to proclaim the riches of redeeming love. It is surely full time that we had begun. We are able. Our number is great. The wealth of many thousands of individuals is considerable. I am confident that very many among us are willing, nay desirous, to see such a work set on foot, and will contribute liberally of their substance for its support. Nothing is wanting but for some persons to stand forward, and to begin.

We have the greatest encouragement, Brethren, to engage in this work of love. The sacred Scripture is full of promises, that the knowledge of Christ shall cover the earth, as the waters cover the channel of the sea; and every promise is a call and a motive to enter on the service without delay. It is the cause of God, and will prevail. Should we even fail in the attempt, we shall not lose our labour; for though the Heathen should not be gathered by our means, "yet we shall be glorious in the eyes of our God." But we have no reason to expect such an issue. For all who are engaged have met with such success, as to animate others to unite their vigorous endeavours. In no one place have pious and persevering Missionaries laboured in vain.

Some

Some perhaps may ask, what can we do? We are willing to assist; but how can our assistance avail? Need I say, Brethren, that our duty is to use the means of divine appointment? In every age of the Church, the propagation of the Gospel has been by the preaching of the ministers of Jesus Christ. By the same method are we to propagate the Gospel now. It is highly probable that some zealous men would present themselves, who are well qualified to go immediately on a mission among the Heathen. But in general they will require some previous instruction; and therefore it will be necessary to found a *Seminary* for training up persons for the work. An able and eminently pious minister in a central situation must be sought for to superintend it. And as the education of a Missionary must be in many respects widely different from that of those who preach in Christian countries, it may be expected that every man of talents will unite his endeavours to render the plan of instruction as well adapted to answer the end in view, and in every respect as complete as possible. For the support of the seminary, and of the missionaries, funds must be provided. And I do not think I am too sanguine in my expectations when I say I am fully persuaded, that in every congregation among us annual subscribers will be found, and an annual collection granted; and that the produce of these, aided by occasional donations, and by legacies from the lovers of our Lord Jesus Christ, will be sufficient for maintaining at least twenty or *thirty* Missionaries among the Heathen. What pleasing and glorious effects may result from their labours, it is impossible for the human mind to calculate.

With objects before us so grand, and prospects so delightful, I conjure you, Brethren, to exert yourselves in the cause of your Redeemer, and of perishing souls. An insulated individual, and not having an opportunity of consulting with others, I take this method of recommending the subject to your serious attention. Think of it in your most pious moments. Let it be matter of prayer before God; and make it the topic of your conversation one with another. As it is the duty of pastors of the Church “to be forward to every good work,” I call upon the ministers of the metropolis to consult together on this important subject, and without loss of time to propose some plan for the accomplishment of this most desirable end; that “our Lord Jesus Christ may have the Heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession.”

26th August 1794.

This address gave occasion to various private conversations; at length, on the memorable 4th of November 1794, the first concerted meeting with a view to this society took place. It was a small, but glowing and harmonious, circle of ministers of various connections and denominations. From that time,

time, then appeared a gradual increase of cordial friends to the perishing heathen, though many respectable characters whose early patronage of this cause was desired, yielded to cautious hesitation, and some were perhaps disposed to attach presumption to the undertaking.

Early in the month of January 1795, the Brethren who felt increasing ardour of zeal in this cause, resolved to try the disposition, and to call in the aid of Evangelical Ministers in London, and appointed the following printed Address (which was about the same time published in the Evangelical Magazine) to be sent to a considerable number of Ministers in the metropolis and its neighbourhood, accompanied with a written Letter. The Address and Letter are here subjoined.

An Address to Christian Ministers, and all other Friends of Christianity, on the Subject of Missions to the Heathen.

DEAR BRETHREN,

THE Address which appeared in the Evangelical Magazine of last September, on the subject of sending Missionaries to preach the Gospel among Pagan nations, seems to have awakened considerable attention. Many acknowledge the desirableness of the object; some lament, with tears, its having been so long neglected, and numbers only wait with anxiety for an opportunity of exerting themselves in so glorious a cause.

That something may be done *with effect*, it is hoped that not only Evangelical *Dissenters* and *Methodists* will be found generally disposed to unite in instituting a Society for this express purpose, but that many *Members of the Established Church*, of Evangelical sentiments, and of lively zeal for the cause of Christ, will also favour us with their kind co-operation. Indeed, the increase of union and friendly intercourse, among Christians of different denominations, at home, is one of the happy effects which will immediately flow from an institution of this nature.

In order to the organization of such a Society, it has been proposed that a *General Meeting of Ministers* should be held in London, early in the ensuing summer. In the mean while, that such a Meeting may be brought forward with advantage, it is warmly wished that Ministers and others, who favour the design, would immediately begin to *exert* themselves in their particular spheres.

It may be asked, *What can be done?*—In answer to this proper inquiry, the following *hints* are humbly suggested:—

Let

Let each individual, who is affectionately zealous in the cause, take every proper opportunity, by conversation and by letter, to endeavour to communicate the same sacred fire to others. Let him try to impress his friends, not only with the general importance of this business, but with the idea of its being practicable and expedient, in concurrence with others, to do something in it *now*. And where the force of argument seems to take effect, let him farther endeavour to persuade his friends to come forward with pecuniary support. By all the methods which a prudent zeal can suggest, let him make up as large a list, as possible, of respectable names and subscriptions. Proceeding in this manner, it is impossible to say what extensive success may soon follow the exertions even of a few individuals. To such as shall subscribe, it may not be amiss to hint the impropriety of diminishing their former liberality to other religious institutions, in order to extend it to this new undertaking. The Lord does not approve of “Robbery for burnt offering.” What is given, should either be saved from some article of unnecessary expenditure, or taken from what would otherwise be laid up in store.

By such efforts as these, a Christian may engage the support of his friends in behalf of this important enterprise; but let it never be forgotten, that it belongeth to “Him who hath the key of David, who openeth and no man shutteth, to open a great and effectual door” for the propagation of his Gospel. To Him, therefore, let every eye be directed! The great mean of obtaining his blessing on our benevolent exertions, is *Prayer*. Perhaps God’s putting it in our hearts to engage in this excellent design, is an answer to the prayers of many of his people, for a series of ages. Let us then take encouragement to stir up ourselves, and others in our several connexions, to *extraordinary prayer*, for the pouring out of the Spirit from on high, to direct and prosper this great attempt! For this purpose, the laudable example of our Brethren in Warwickshire is worthy of general notice; who have set apart the first Monday of every month, at seven o’clock in the evening, as a season of *United Prayer*, for the success of such attempts to spread the Gospel through the world. “Ye that make mention of the Lord, keep not silence; give him no rest till he establish and make Jerusalem a praise in the earth.”

Already has Divine Providence begun to smile on this infant design. In the Evangelical Magazine for November, one gentleman promises 100*l.* to the Society as soon as it is established; and 500*l.* more are promised by another gentleman for the equipment of the first six Missionaries to the South Sea Islands. The warmest gratitude is due to these two generous friends of the Christian interest in Heathen lands, and their animating example is worthy of being held up to general imitation. Though a Thornton is gone, we rejoice to think, that the lively efficient zeal of that great Christian philanthropist is not extinct, but warms the breasts of others, and prompts them to the same noble and strenuous exertions.

But the ardour of our joy is somewhat damped by the opposite consideration, that, even among serious and opulent professors of religion, *some* are to be found of a timid, cold, contracted spirit; who lose all their zeal in a false prudential delicacy; and who are ever crying out, "A lion is in the way," when any benevolent scheme is projected, so arduous and extensive as this before us!—With such an object in view, obstacles and opposition are to be expected; but what difficulty presents itself in this case, which by sovereign grace heretofore has not been, and may still be, surmounted? Even the temper of the times, which some would insinuate as unfavourable to our views, is, however spacious, no valid objection. That divine oracle is a sufficient reply, "He that observeth the winds will not sow." Besides, the faithful page of history tells us, that times of the most gloomy and unpromising aspect have, by the wisdom and power of the great Head of the Church, "rather tended to the furtherance of the Gospel." Was it not in the reigns of Tiberius, Caligula, and Nero, that "so mightily grew the word of the Lord, and prevailed?"

What remains then, but that (laying aside all excuses) we put our hand to the work with vigour and speed. Perhaps, some wish to wait till they see their seniors go before them; but this is a false modesty. Procrastination argues a torpid indifference. To be "*forward to every good work,*" ranks high both as a ministerial and Christian virtue. A few successive moments will terminate our present life; and with it, all opportunities of "serving the will of God in our generation," or of "seeking the profit of many, that they may be saved." Every argument that recommends the object at all, tends also to stimulate to instant exertion. The glory of God—the constraining influence of redeeming love—the deplorable condition of countless millions, who never heard of the great salvation, and "are ready to perish for lack of knowledge"—our awful responsibility for the use we make of the privileges and talents entrusted to us—and finally, the exalted honour and felicity awaiting those who "shall have turned many to righteousness"—are powerful incentives to speed and diligence in this noble design.

It is pleasing to anticipate the wide-extended happiness of Heathens, when converted to Christ, and brought "to know the joyful sound;" an anticipation, which, by the smiles of Heaven upon our endeavours, we may, by and by, see partly realized. As yet, it is only matter of prayer and contemplation—but if many hands set early to the work, who knows but before we ourselves are numbered with the dead, we may have cause to adopt that gratulatory, triumphant song of the Apostle—"Now, thanks be to God, who always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and by us maketh manifest the favour of his knowledge, in every place."

Yet a little while, and the latter-day glory shall shine forth with a reviving splendour, when, according to the predictions of the infallible word, "the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth, as the waters cover the sea; His name shall endure for ever: His

name shall be continued as long as the sun: Men shall be blessed in him; and all nations shall call him blessed."—Amen!

December 1, 1794.

Your's, &c.

REV. SIR,

BY appointment of several Ministers who have repeatedly met together, with a serious design of forwarding the great object which the prefixed printed Address recommends, I take the liberty to acquaint you, that another meeting for the same purpose is proposed to be held on Thursday the 15th inst. at 11 o'clock precisely. The place of meeting is the Castle and Falcon Inn, Aldersgate-street. It is also intended that the hour immediately before, viz. from 10 to 11, shall be employed in prayer at the same place.

We realize the cry of misery and destruction in destroying lands, where millions are perishing in the blood, gall and wormwood, of a Christ-less state, and are hastening to eternity in guilt, pollution, and darkness. We listen, with solemn regard, to the *voice of Infinite Grace*, which promises and commands, the publication of the everlasting Gospel, to every creature under heaven; and we earnestly desire to use some strong exertions, that, if it pleases our God, we may be, in some degree, instrumental to fulfil his merciful purposes respecting Heathen Countries.

Trusting that your sentiments of zeal and compassion are congenial with ours, we solicit, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, your kind co-operations by your council, influence, and prayers, and request, that you will favour us with your presence at the time of prayer and consultation above mentioned.

I am, Rev. Sir, with great respect,

Your most obedient humble Servant,

In Gospel bonds,

Jan. 9, 1795.

JOHN LOVE.

This epistolary communication discovered the affectionate willingness of a considerable number, to stand forth in this work. At the time specified they met together, and began jointly to call on God in reference to the salvation of the Heathen, mingling their applications with the reading of suitable portions of the blessed word of God, and afterwards consulting together on the best expedients for the formation of a regular Society. It was unanimously determined, that all party names and inferior distinctions should, in the prosecution of this vast design, be absorbed in the great Christian name and cause. And these Meetings held regularly once a fortnight,

fortnight, with much sacred pleasure and unanimity were resorted to, with a gradual increase of numbers, of zeal, hope, and delight.

The following short form of Association was early formed, and appears in the Minute Book, with the Subscription of the Names undermentioned.

“ WE whose names are here subscribed, declare our earnest desire to exert ourselves for promoting the great work of introducing the Gospel and its ordinances, to Heathen and other unenlightened countries, and unite together, purposing to use our best endeavours, that we may bring forward the formation of an extensive and regularly organized Society, to consist of Evangelical Ministers and Lay Brethren of all denominations, the object of which Society shall be to concert and pursue, the most effectual measures for accomplishing this important and glorious design.

Alexander Easton,
John Love,
Joseph Brookibank,
Edward Edwards,
J. A. Knight,
John Knight,
W. T. Platt,
Joseph Radford,
William Roby,
James Steven,
John Towers,
Matthew Wilks,
T. Williams,
John Eyre,
James Knight,
George Jerment,
Jonathan Scott,

John Reynolds,
Samuel Greatheed,
William Moore,
William Love,
Robert Simpson,
John Townsend,
Alexander Waugh,
James Weston,
George Townsend,
Henry Hatley,
T. Haweis,
Thomas Beck,
William Graham,
Andrew Duncanson,
Thomas Belt,
T. Prierley.

A Committee of correspondence being immediately appointed, a correspondence was opened with brethren in all parts of the country; and it soon appeared manifest, that the flame of heavenly zeal which had for a long time been secretly and in many places, already kindled, was now burning. There was no need to suggest new ideas on this subject; the Spirit of the Lord had happily anticipated our endeavours, enlarging the hearts of ministers and their people, towards the unknown inhabitants of distant lands.

It may gratify the friends of the Institution to peruse the following copy of the first circular letter, sent to Ministers in the country.

Jan. 27, 1795.

Reverend and Dear Sir,

AMIDST the desolating strife of mortals, God has often "appeared in his glory" to extend the kingdom of his dear Son. This remark, in the present æra, is suited to afford peculiar consolation. And the recent "shaking of nations" has led not a few pious minds to anticipate those glorious days, when "the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the whole earth."

Many Christians, both clergy and laity, have long pitied the deplorable blindness of Heathen countries, and have wished to do more than commiserate the unnumbered millions of their fellow men, who are "perishing for lack of knowledge." Some have written, with considerable energy, on the nature and expediency of missions to those remote inhabitants of the earth, and our baptist brethren have sent two persons to the East-Indies, where they meet with flattering encouragement.

Several meetings have lately been held in London, by evangelical ministers of various denominations, who cordially unite in this interesting subject. On Thursday the 15th of this month, a respectable body of ministers met at the Castle and Falcon Inn, Aldersgate-street, and appointed a committee of correspondence, for the purpose of collecting the sentiments of their reverend brethren in the country, relative to this affair.

We, the undersigned, being chosen to act as the said committee, are induced to make this application to you, by the sentiments we entertain of your piety, zeal, prudence, and compassion for perishing souls. We hope that your personal experience of the bitterness of a sinful state, and of the love, power, and riches of Jesus the redeemer, and your official employments in labouring to save immortal souls, will open your heart to the enlarged concern for millions ready to perish in "the dark places of the earth;" and prepare you to echo to the sounding of the bowels of Christian compassion towards them, from this favoured, though unworthy, country. We trust to find in you, not only a well-affected generous individual, but one whose active exertions will stir up and collect the scattered embers of holy zeal in the neighbourhood around you. Without, therefore, entering into long reasoning in support of our arduous attempt, we will briefly explain the service, which, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, we call you to undertake.

The object before us is of such magnitude, as to require the combined wisdom and exertions of many Gospel ministers, and societies. It is therefore in contemplation, to bring forward, early in the ensuing summer, a general meeting of ministers and lay-brethren, delegated from all parts of the country, at London, or some other central situation: their business when convened, will be

to plan and organize a society, for carrying these great designs into immediate effect. It is necessary, in the mean while, that some prudent and active individuals be at pains to collect information, respecting the number and abilities of ministers and congregations, who may be willing to afford their countenance to this undertaking. Such inquiries we wish you to make in the county where Providence has placed you, and to use all other endeavours for promoting this cause, which you may judge expedient.

We request your immediate answer, intimating your consent to engage in this service, together with your opinion, what is likely to be effected in your neighbourhood; and will be ready on our part to forward to you every information, and to answer any questions you or your brethren may propose. The Warwickshire Association have unanimously resolved to concur in the design, and have suggested the expediency of a short spirited address to be sent to ministers, to be distributed gratis among their friends.

Hoping that the Lord will incline and direct you to do his will in this business, and wishing that his truth and work may prosper in your part of the country, and particularly under *your* ministerial labours.

We are, with the greatest respect,

Rev. SIR,

Yours, in the fellowship of the Gospel.

(Signed)

P. S. Your answer may be addressed to the Rev. John Love, Queens' Row, Hoxton. We wish to unite with approved evangelical ministers, respectable in their moral conduct, and with all sects of every denomination.

JOS. BROOKSBANK,
JOH. EYRE,
JOH. LOVE,
WILL. F. PLATT,
JOH. REYNOLDS,
WILL. SMITH,
JAS. STEPHEN,
ALEX. WAUGH,
MAT. WILKS.

To this letter, such answers were received from different parts of the country, as afforded the greatest encouragement. One reverend brother begins thus: "Your kind letter I look upon as an answer from above. It has long been my wish, my prayer, and my hope also, that God would send forth his light and truth among the poor Heathen. To promote this cause, I will plead, preach, and spare no exertion."—Another thus: "We have all done too little for the souls of men, and the honour of our great Master. We have blessed ourselves in the possession of Gospel privileges, and almost forgotten our fellow men, in other parts

“ parts of the world; sunk in sin, and perishing in
 “ horrible darkness. Verily, we have sinned in this
 “ matter. May we be forgiven; and may we do so
 “ no more! Let us all rise up to the work of God,
 “ and he will bless the labour of our hands.”—And
 a third, with all the unsophisticated simplicity and
 warmth of a Christian, writes thus: “ Immediately
 “ on hearing *the good news*, I called the members
 “ of our little church together, to pray for a blessing
 “ on it. All rejoiced in the prospect of seeing many
 “ come from the East and West, the North and
 “ South, to sit down in the kingdom of their com-
 “ mon Father. And all signified their readiness to
 “ put their mite into your treasury. If it be but
 “ little, I am sure you will have their hearts, and, I
 “ hope, God’s blessing with it.”

From these few specimens, the reader may form
 an idea of the spirit, which breathes in many letters
 received on this occasion.

About this time, the committee circulated through
 the country, the following short address to the peo-
 ple, written by the Rev. Mr. Burder, of Coventry,
 which, though it is already in the hands of many of
 our friends, deserves to be transmitted to posterity
 in this volume.

*An Address to the serious and zealous Professors of the Gospel, of every
 denomination, respecting an attempt to evangelize the Heathen.*

IT is now almost eighteen hundred years since the Friend of
 Sinners left our world, and left it with this gracious charge to his
 disciples—“ Go ye forth, and teach *all nations* :” At the same
 time he assured them, that, thus employed, they should, in all ages,
 and in all places, enjoy his presence.

Thus commissioned and encouraged, the willing disciples gladly
 obeyed their Master’s last command, and found his promise verified.
 For when, full of the Holy Ghost, they proclaimed salvation to
Jerusalem sinners, thousands were pierced to the heart with a sense
 of sin, and cordially welcomed the blessings of the Gospel. A
 glorious church was quickly formed, and additions were con-
 tinually made to it “ of such as should be saved.”—“ So mightily
 “ grew the word of God, and prevailed.” And when, dispersed
 by persecution, they “ went every where preaching the word,”
 glorious indeed was the progress of truth, triumphant over all the
 opposition

opposition of earth and hell. In the course of about 300 years, notwithstanding every possible obstacle was thrown in the way, great parts of Europe, Asia, and Africa, were evangelized. A dark cloud indeed afterwards covered the earth. First, Arianism, and then Mahometanism ruined the East; and Popery, by the introduction of dangerous doctrines and superstitious rites, tarnished the glory of Christianity in the West. A long and awful night succeeded. At length the day-spring from on high revisited the earth. The apostolic spirit revived in the glorious Reformers. A part of Christendom regained, and has, in a measure, ever since preserved the light and power of sacred truth.

But it is astonishing and lamentable to reflect, how few and feeble the efforts of Christians, since that period, have been, to evangelize the Pagan part of the world. Some indeed have been valiant in preaching the Gospel at home. Others have done worthily by their excellent writings, in contending for primitive doctrine against internal enemies. But oh! where is the primitive zeal? Where are the heroes of the church—men who would willingly spend and be spent for Christ; who have the ambition not to tread in a line made ready for them, but to preach Christ, where, before, he was not named? Men who count not their lives dear, so that they might win souls to Christ?

We ought indeed to admire that peculiar providence which inclined a number of conscientious and persecuted Protestants to quit their native island, and to venture on the barren shores of America, where they not only established Gospel churches among themselves, but planted others among the native Indians*.

But oh! what a melancholy proportion of the inhabitants of the globe still remain in the shadow of death! It has been computed, that 48 millions are absolute Pagans, destitute of the knowledge of the true God, and of Jesus Christ, whom he hath sent.

During the last 50 years there has been a great revival of true religion among our lives. Many thousands of Britons have been brought to the knowledge of redemption. Jesus has become precious to multitudes, who were blind Pharisee or atrocious sinners. Much laudable zeal has been discovered by ministers and private Christians, in their endeavours to spread the Gospel in their respective neighbourhoods; and many a town, and many a village, can boast some new edifice, in which the precious name of Jesus is proclaimed, and his worthy praise resounded. Conscious, also, that hitherto their efforts have been confounded for want of union, societies of Christians begin, in several parts of the kingdom, to

* In 1692, Mr. Elliot, called by some The Apostle of the Indian, began to preach among them with great success. Several churches were professed, and some preachers and school-masters raised up among them. About 1712, Mr. David Brainerd went among them, and amidst many difficulties, was owned to the conversion of a great number. Mr. Kirilaud, and others, have lately been blessed with considerable success.

associate in a regular manner, and, in limited districts, to form new plans of usefulness, and to establish funds for the more effectual promotion of vital godliness.

Among the generous designs of lively Christians, we rejoice to hear that more than a few, unacquainted with each others wishes, have, in different places, expressed most vehement desires to do something for the poor Heathen ; and without any present specific plan of co-operation in view, have actually begun to lay by a little money, that they may be ready to contribute to so glorious a work, as soon as ever Providence may favour them with an opportunity.

Modern discoveries in geography have perhaps contributed to enlarge the desires of Christians in this respect. Captain Cook and others have traversed the globe, almost from pole to pole, and have presented to us, as it were a new world, a world of islands in the vast Pacific Ocean—some of them as promising in the disposition of the people, as in the appearance of the country. May we not reasonably hope that a well-planned and well-conducted mission to one or more of these, seconded with the earnest prayers of thousands of British Christians, will be attended with the blessing of God, and issue in the conversion of many souls ?

Enterprises of this kind, supported by the Danes, the Moravians, the society in Scotland, and many others, have had some success* : Although some of them have been conducted on plans, which experience has now taught us were very imperfect. The late attempt of our Christian brethren of the Baptist denomination, so highly honourable to their active zeal and true philanthropy, is already said to wear a promising aspect. Thus much at least we may infer, that when a benevolent scheme of this sort is adopted, neither money is withheld nor missionaries denied. Oh that we may soon hear of multitudes of Hindoos flying to Christ as doves to their windows, and uniting together in praising the Lamb !

May we not indulge a hope that the happy period is approaching, when the Redeemer shall take unto him his great power and reign ? “ He *must* increase. His name *shall* be great.” And is there not a general apprehension, that the Lord is about to produce some great event ? Already have we witnessed the most astonishing transactions ; and is it not probable that the great Disposer of all is

* In 1706, the King of Denmark sent Missionaries to Tranquebar, on the Coromandel Coast, in the East Indies. The Dutch opened a Church in the city of Batavia, in 1621, and from hence, ministers were sent to Amboyna. At Leyden, ministers and assistants were educated for the purpose of Missions under the famous Waleus, and sent into the East, where thousands embraced the Christian religion at Formosa, Columba, Java, Malabar, &c.; and though the work declined in some places, yet there are still churches in Ceylon, Sumatra, Amboyna, &c. &c.

But the *Unitas Fratrum*, or Moravians, have excelled all their competitors. Their calm, steady, persevering zeal, has done wonders in Greenland ; and set the rest of the Christian world an example worthy their imitation, and affording great encouragement.

now about, by shaking terribly the nations, to establish that spiritual and exte five kingdom which cannot be shaken? Let us then, utterly and sincerely disclaiming all political views and party designs; abhorring all attempts to disturb order and government in this, or any other country; vigorously unite, in the fear of God, and in the love of Christ, to establish a Missionary Society upon a large and liberal plan, for sending ministers of Christ, to preach the Gospel among the Heathen.

Many thanks are due to some late writers on this important subject. About three years ago, Mr. Carey, of Leicester, published "*An Enquiry into the Obligations of Christians, to use Means for the Conversion of the Heathen; in which the religious State of the different Nations of the World, the Success of former Undertakings, and the Practicality of further Undertakings—are considered.*" We beg leave to recommend the perusal of this well meant pamphlet to our readers; and to remind them that it derives no small addition of value from this consideration, that the Author "has given to his precepts the force of example," by becoming a missionary himself, and is now a preacher on the banks of the Ganges.

The Rev. Melvill Horne is also entitled to public thanks, for his "Letters on Missions; addressed to the Protestant Ministers of the British Churches." That gentleman has also been a volunteer in the service; and was, for a time, Chaplain of Sierra Leone, in Africa; and though he declined the arduous task, for reasons which he very candidly assigns, he has pleaded the cause of Missions in a manner more masterly and spirited than any of his predecessors. He has ably detected the mistakes which have too often occasioned the miscarriage, or small success, of former attempts; and, taught by painful experience, has pointed out a more excellent way. We sincerely hope, that this bold and zealous production, will have the most beneficial effects, both in promoting and directing future Missions. We must refer to both of these publications for answers to those objections which are so commonly started by *Laudian professors*. We must not dream of Missions destitute of difficulties; but these worthy men have showed, and experience has abundantly proved, that the difficulties are not insuperable. There is also every reason to believe that they may be lessened, both in their number and degree. But were it otherwise, ought we not to blush at being deterred from the godlike attempt, by difficulties scarcely considered when fame or worldly gain is the object? The brave officers of the army and navy, hide not themselves at home in inglorious ease and safety, when the dangers of their country call them to the camp or the ocean. Cook and other navigators have voluntarily exposed their lives in unknown tracts, in fields of ice, and in the abodes of savages. Our merchants venture into the burring and frozen regions, and trade with men of every colour and clime, for uncertain riches. And are there not yet among us numbers of ministers and pious youths, who would gladly fly to the ends of the earth, bearing with them the glad tidings of salvation?

salvation*? Let us but make the trial, and it will assuredly be crowned with success.

Dear brethren, let it be remembered, that Britain, Christian Britain, was once an island of idolatrous Barbarians: and such it had yet remained, unless some of God's dear people in distant countries—(Oh that we knew their names! *We shall* know them in glory)—unless they had formed the benevolent plan of sending Missionaries hither. Let us in return “go and do likewise.” Look on the terrestrial globe. Let Africa, Indostan, and China attract your notice. Behold the astonishing clusters of the South Sea Islands. Let us meet for prayer and consultation; let us set on foot a liberal subscription; let us look out for preachers of an apostolic spirit; let them, well provided for, depart in sufficient numbers to strengthen each others hands; let them cultivate a friendly intercourse with the natives, and by living among them in habits of friendship, adopt the most prudent means of leading them into a gradual acquaintance with the glorious truths of Revelation.

Surely such an attempt as this will be acceptable to our God, whether it meets with all desirable success or not. It will manifest, at least, that we love his name and prize his salvation; and he will say to us as to David, “Thou didst well that it was in thine heart.” This, however, we are sure of, that all endeavours to prevent the spread of the Gospel are extremely provoking to him. St. Paul says, that the Jews “filled up the measure of their sins by forbidding the Apostles to speak to the Gentiles, that they might be saved; and thus the wrath of God came upon them to the uttermost.” 1 Theff. ii. 16. By parity of reason, we may justly conclude, that it is highly pleasing to God, that they who have tasted that he is gracious, should exert their utmost endeavours to convert others. If to present a cup of cold water in his name be an acceptable service, surely it is a service of a superior nature to present the cup of salvation.

Let us do something *immediately*. Life is short. Let us “work, while it is called to-day;” the night of death approaches; and our opportunities of being useful will close for ever. “Whatsoever then our hands find to do, let us do it with all our might,” and that without delay.

To make an entrance on this great work, we beg leave to propose in the first place, that Gospel-Ministers will take the pains to stir up their respective auditories to a more close and serious consideration of the object in view, and to confer with them upon it.

* Mr. Horne informs us, in his Letters on Missions (p. 135), “that when, at Bethlehem, in North America, letters were read in the Brethren's congregation, stating that several of their missionaries had been carried off by sickness in the island of St. Thomas, in the West Indies, *that very day* seven Brethren offered to go and replace them.—This is just what things ought to be, and any church which can produce such men may engage in Millions.”

We then wish that some estimate may be formed of what each society may be able and ready to contribute annually, to a common fund, without injury to themselves or to their ministers. This done, we earnestly desire that a minister, or some other intelligent person, be deputed by the united congregations of each county or counties, to meet in London, as soon as possible in the course of the ensuing summer, there to confer in a solemn manner on this important affair; and, if the attempt be resolved upon, to choose a committee, resident in London, connected with corresponding committees in different parts of the country, to carry the plan that may then be adopted into execution, as soon as circumstances will admit.

It now remained only to concentrate the flame of pious benevolence, and to form a plan of combined operation. With this view, the General Meeting was appointed, wherein the auspicious commencement of the work hath, we presume, in the view of generous and impartial observers, marked the finger of God.

In the near approach of the General Meeting, the following circular Letter was extensively dispersed, among Ministers in the City and Country.

DEAR BROTHER IN THE LORD,

YOU have most probably been made acquainted, that some of your fellow-labourers in the Gospel of Christ, of different denominations, practising infant baptism, have united for the purpose of establishing a Society to support Missions in heathen and unenlightened Countries. The Committee, whose names are subscribed to this Address, compose a part of the number who have met, for several months past, in London, to seek the Lord's direction and blessing on this benevolent design. Though our plan is distinct from the undertakings of the Moravian Brethren, the Arminian Methodists, and the Churches who hold the necessity of adult immersion; we are far from opposing or disparaging their laudable endeavours: On the contrary, we applaud their zeal, and rejoice in their success, accounting it our duty to imitate their truly primitive example. At the same time, it is our desire to attempt an *improvement* of the plan on which they have proceeded, by an extension of its limits, both in the foundation and superstructure of the intended edifice. We therefore earnestly invite all who hold the truth in love, to unite in exertions which may hereafter be found extensively successful.

Early in the present year we wrote to several Ministers in the various counties of England, soliciting their co-operation, and requesting them to make known our communications in their respective

tive vicinities and connexions. A small printed address has been also widely circulated. Through the medium of the Evangelical Magazine, the subject has been frequently recommended to general attention. The answers received, both from individual and associated Ministers, have been of a very encouraging nature. By these our expectations are exceedingly flattered, as they contain expressions of the most lively pleasure, with which our Brethren concur in our design, and also assurances of their determination to afford us their most strenuous support. At length it has been resolved, to hold a General Meeting in London, on the 22d, 23d, and 24th days of next September, for the purpose of forming a permanent Society, and deciding upon the best mode of carrying our wishes into full effect. In prospect of this solemn assembly, we address you, dear Brother, as one who, we trust, feels no less interested than any of us, in the advancement of the kingdom of our Lord and Saviour. The success of the attempt appears, under God, to be almost wholly with the Ministers of Jesus, and where *they* lead, their flocks will probably follow—what *they* have faith and love to undertake, the people will easily find means to execute. For our own parts, we do not imagine, that the zeal of Gospel Ministers will be found wanting, as they know and believe, that the kingdom of their Lord is already universal in point of *right*, and must hereafter become so in *fact*. We hope, dear Brother, that you in particular, honoured with the fellowship of this ministry, are ready to stand among the foremost in whatever way the Lord is pleased to call you. Deeming it inexcusable to remain inactive, we have done, and, through grace, will continue to do what we can. We now apply to *you* for assistance—we put the cause into your hands—into your's, as much as any man's, trusting that it will not fail for want of your support; and that if it should stop short of its great end, it will be as far beyond your station, as your unwearied endeavours can advance it.

We request you, dear Brother, to make the congregation, over which the Lord hath placed you, acquainted with our design, and to recommend it earnestly to their serious, devotional, and practical regard. Improve every opportunity your situation affords of conferring with your neighbouring brethren, upon the best means of strengthening our hands in this good work. Where congregations cannot depute their minister to assist at our deliberations, we earnestly recommend, that such as are associated together will delegate, at least, one of their number for that purpose; and others, no doubt, will help us by their intercessions at the throne of grace.

After all, the chief difficulty will be to find proper Missionaries—men of God, full of faith, and of the Holy Ghost. We expect, however, to hear from many places, that the Lord has been stirring up the hearts of fit persons to this glorious work. Permit us to ask, Is there among your acquaintance any one desirous to take advantage of the opportunity which, we trust, will shortly be furnished, to become instrumental in conveying the glad tidings of redemption into the regions of the shadow of death? Your own judgment, and
that

that of your friends, as to the best manner of proceeding, in order to find such instruments, will be highly acceptable.

If it pleases the great Lord of the harvest to send forth many labourers into the wide-extended field of the Heathen world, considerable funds will be necessary, that the most distant climes may be visited with the fulness of the blessing of the Gospel of Christ. It is therefore desirable to form some estimate of what can be done, in the various Christian Societies that give attention to this call. If each congregation contributes something, however small the ability of many may be, the aggregate amount will be considerable. By the more affluent, a due regard, we hope, will be paid to the example of princely generosity already given, by some who have set their shoulders to this sublime work.

The time of the proposed meeting speedily approaches. What your hand finds to do, dear Brother, do it with all your might. Millions of immortal souls call upon us for the word of salvation. The honour of the holy and blessed Redeemer is bleeding in every climate, through the crimes of wicked men who assume the Christian name. What ought to be our feelings and exertions! Shall we not hope that the age of cold indifference is past, and that the Spirit of Christ has kindled in our hearts an unextinguishable flame of love to God and man? May He guide and prosper all your labours of love among the people of your immediate charge, and smile upon whatever you undertake for the furtherance of this grand object.

Commending both it and you to his gracious patronage,

We remain,

Your affectionate Brethren and

Servants for Jesus' sake,

JOSEPH BROOKSBANK,
JOHN LYRE,
SAMUEL GREATHELD,
JOHN LEVI,
WILLIAM F. PLATT,
JOHN RYLANDS,
WILLIAM SMITH,
JAMES STEVEN,
ALEXANDER WAUGH,
MATTHEW WILKS.

As the general concurrence in the formation of the Plan is an object much to be desired, we shall be happy to see you among us: Hoping to derive pleasure from your company, and assistance from your talents.

N. B. A consultation of the friends of the institution will be held, at the Castle and Falcon, Aldersgate-street, at six o'clock, on the Monday evening preceding the General Meeting, when your attendance will be particularly acceptable.

A short letter of invitation likewise was sent to many private Christians, in the city and its environs.

The preparatory meeting of Monday evening, September 21, exhibited an agreeable prelude of the transactions of the subsequent days.

At the appointed place of meeting there appeared a very numerous and respectable assembly of ministers and private Christians, an assembly whose aspect indicated seriousness, ardour, and harmony, worthy of so great an occasion. Sir Egerton Leigh, Bart. was voted into the chair; and after prayer by Mr. Boden, of Hanley, Mr. Steven of Crown Court, in a concise and affectionate manner, related to the assembly the steps which had been previously taken, to bring the important business to the present stage.

Mr. Love of Artillery-Street, who had acted as secretary to the committee of Correspondence, was then called on to read the letters from the country in his hands. After some remarks respecting the agency of the blessed Spirit of God, in uniting, and harmoniously animating, all his children, and bringing them to concur in important public exertions; a number of letters from ministers in the country were read, which afforded evident satisfaction to all present, particularly the intimation from a gentleman at Glasgow, that a number of praying-societies in that city and neighbourhood had resolved to devote themselves, on the ensuing day, to prayer for the success of this general meeting. It now appeared that a zealous union of spirit in favour of the attempt to enlighten the Heathen, prevailed not only in the assembly present, but among serious Christians throughout the Island, from East to West, from South to North.

The Rev. Mr. Haweis then, with much affection and energy, represented to the meeting the practicability of finding proper Missionaries, and read some very striking letters from persons who have generously offered themselves to this arduous service.

Then the meeting, by a unanimous lifting up of hands, declared their warm approbation of the design

design to establish a society, for sending missionaries to Heathen and unenlightened countries.

An overpowering pleasure attended in the breasts of many, the passing of this important resolution. The Rev. Mr. Eyre, when words almost interrupted with joy "found out their way," read the sketch of a plan prepared by the Committee, which was approved as proper to be laid before the general meeting on the ensuing day. Subscription books were then opened, and the thanks of the meeting were voted to the associated and individual ministers, who have favoured this design by their epistolary communications, or their presence; to the gentlemen of the committee who brought forward the plan, and to the chairman, Sir Egerton Leigh, for his polite attention to the business of this evening.

The Rev. Mr. Rowland Hill concluded the whole with prayer, and the assembly broke up with a gladness which the combinations of sensuality, avarice, ambition, or party-zeal, cannot inspire.

On Tuesday the 22d, and the two following days, there were successively held, in various parts of the city, six solemn assemblies for worship. Something, we are sensible, is to be imputed to the charm of novelty. But, after making all reasonable allowances of this kind, we appeal to every candid and intelligent Christian, who attended on these occasions, whether there did not appear tokens of a presence, infinitely more august, than that of a mere multitude of mortal sinful beings. The animated solemnity, unity, and zeal of these great assemblies, the spirit with which they were enlivened to the last, and the solid effects in overflowing liberality, for the advancement of the work in view, make it apparent, that God himself hath been the primary author of these movements.

What kind of materials were presented to the public mind, in these religious services, appears in this publication; men of candour, we hope, will not pronounce, that the people were brought together to

feed on the east-wind of empty declamation, or to be amused and cheated with the froth of unmeaning enthusiasm. The impartial reader will see with his own eyes, that the grand acknowledged doctrines and duties of Christianity, have been fairly exhibited in their benign aspect, towards the conversion of the Heathen, and the illumination of their dreary abodes.

In the intervals, between the more solemn services; meetings were held for transacting the business, and bringing into form the affairs of the infant society. In these meetings, amidst the difficulties of an indigested state of things, and the necessary ardour of candid and vigorous discussion, still the spirit of seriousness, and harmonious benevolence predominated, subduing all into order and coalition. In these conferences, considerable attention was bestowed on the following objects: viz. The discussion and settlement of the Plan of the Society, the nomination and choice of Directors, a Treasurer, and Secretaries, and the determination of the places and manner in which the first attempts ought to be made.

At Spa-fields Chapel on Tuesday, in the presence of a multitude of spectators, who tarried after the conclusion of the public worship, a numerous body of Ministers and Lay-Brethren, in the area of the Chapel, formed themselves into a Society; and chose the Rev. Mr. Kingbury of Southampton, to be President of the Meeting.

After prayer, by the Chairman, Mr. Eyre introduced the reading of the Plan, which had been prepared for the consideration of this Meeting, by a series of historical observations, pointing out the analogy between the first propagation of the Gospel, by the Apostles and others in the early ages, and the work now in view, of endeavouring to send the light of the Gospel into Heathen countries, and explaining the manner in which Christianity hath been, in later ages, introduced into some countries formerly Pagan, together with an account of Missionary attempts since

since the period of the Reformation. He then read over the Plan. A Committee being chosen, immediately retired to consider the Plan, and having made a few alterations, expressed their approbation of it, and returned it to the examination of the Meeting. The Plan was then read a second time, considered, discussed, and, with some corrections, adopted, article by article.

On the following day, after the public service, at Haberdaſher's Hall Meeting, the Rev. Dr. Hunter being voted into the chair, after prayer, a consultation was held of the Miniſters, chiefly reſpecting the nomination of proper perſons, to be entrusted with the management of the affairs of the Society, as Directors. The Committee, choſen the preceding day, were required to withdraw into the veſtry, and to bring forward, a liſt of perſons whom they judged fit for this important office. Their nomination being produced, was approved, and the Gentlemen, whoſe names were in this liſt, were appointed to make ſuch additions to it, as they might ſee proper. The whole liſt thus completed, was publicly read at the concluſion of the ſervice in the Tabernacle.

On Thursday the 24th, there was an early meeting of the Miniſters, at the veſtry of Surry Chapel, for the purpoſe of collecting the names of Miniſters, who have attended the formation of this Society, and of receiving the informations of gentlemen, delegated from congregations, or affiliated bodies in the country. After the public worſhip, the Rev. Mr. Haweis, explained, in a very energetic and convincing manner, his views of the expediency of fixing on the iſlands in the South Sea, as the firſt and immediate object of Miſſionary endeavours. And the large aſſembly then preſent, ſeemed warmly, and joyfully, to harmonize with his ſentiments, on that ſubject.

The General Meeting was convened for the laſt time, on this occaſion, the afternoon of Friday, the 25th, at the Caſtle and Falcon, Alderſgate Street.

The Rev. Mr. Pearcy being in the chair, after prayer, the Meeting proceeded to the choice of a Treasurer, Mr. Joseph Hardcastle was immediately nominated; when the Rev. Mr. Greatheed, stated Mr. Hardcastle's objections to this office; these objections were over-ruled, and Mr. Hardcastle was elected, with the greatest unanimity.

The Meeting then proceeded to the election of 25 Directors; the list of gentlemen nominated by the Committee being read, they were requested to withdraw, and by a distinct vote on each name, the following gentlemen were unanimously chosen; the Rev. Messrs. Boden, Bogue, Brooksbank, Burder, Eyre, Greatheed, Haweis, Hey, Hill, Lambert, Sir Egerton Leigh, Love, Mends, Parsons, Platt, Reynolds, Steven, Waugh, Wilkes, and Messrs. Foyster, Neal, Stokes, West, John Wilson, Thomas Wilson. To this list, were added, with the unanimous approbation of the Meeting, the following gentlemen, nominated by those now chosen, the Rev. Messrs. Saltern and Audley, and Messrs. Alday, Campbel, R. Cowie, R. Steven, Taylor.

Some difficulties occurred in the election of a Secretary, on account of the great diversity of abilities, requisite to the advantageous fulfilment of the complex, and various duties, which might be presumed to belong to that office, in a Society of this peculiar nature. These difficulties were afterwards adjusted by the Directors, at their first Meeting, to whom this business was referred; two Secretaries being chosen, the Rev. Mr. Love, who of course vacated the office of Director, and Mr. Shrubsole, to each of whom, distinct departments were assigned.

The attention of the Meeting being directed to the consideration of the places of the earth, which should engage their first exertions: It was unanimously resolved, that the first attempt of this Society, shall be to send Missionaries to Otaheite, or some other of the islands of the South Sea; and also, that Missions may be, as early as possible, attempted to
the

the Coast of Africa, or to Tartary, by Astracan, or to Surat, on the Malabar Coast, or to Bengal, or the Coromandel Coast, or to the Island of Sumatra, or to the Pelew Islands. And it was resolved, that if the Directors can prepare a Mission before the time of the next General Meeting, in May, 1796, they are empowered to expend on it such a sum, as may be necessary.

After various resolutions of a less important nature, the minute enumeration of which might be tedious, the whole business of this first General Formatory Meeting, of the Missionary Society, was concluded, as it had been begun, with prayer, unanimity, and joy.

Soon after the General Meeting was dissolved, the constituted Body of Directors began its operations. After many serious consultations, by much attention and labour, the business of the Directors is brought into a regular train, their various Committees are distinctly arranged, and the highly important and interesting work of examining candidates for the Missionary warfare, is now actually commenced.

Looking back to this singular epoch, we cannot avoid expressing our sense, of the condescension and tender mercy of our God, who hath benignly smiled on this rising institution. To Him, the unfeigned gratitude and praises of many are, we hope, on this account frequently ascending, like clouds of fragrant and acceptable incense.

Let not, however, the appearance of success and prosperity, in this arduous undertaking, seduce our vain hearts into carnal confidence, security, and presumption. Let us rejoice with trembling." "Let not him that girdeth on his harness boast as he that putteth it off." The great difficulties of the warfare have not yet been encountered. In vain do men flow in crowds to the places of worship, in vain "is gold lavished out of the bag, in vain do songs and shouts of triumph shake the starry vault," if there are not in secret places those agonizing wrestlings

lings of faith and compassionate supplication, which bear some proportion to the magnificent object, the conversion of Heathen nations. To these deep-felt, unostentatious, and truly Christian exercises, apply yourselves, with your utmost might, ye children of the living God, ye friends of Zion, *ye who love Jerusalem, and mourn for her.*

May we not allude to those words of our Lord, "This kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting." When fit messengers are found, great and mighty must be the operation of grace in their souls, raising them to such degrees of knowledge, courage, and spiritual energy, as hitherto we have seldom witnessed. For this end, your humble united cries must pierce the heavens, and, rendered efficacious by the blood of the everlasting covenant, bring down from on high, the Lord God of Elijah, Jesus the Lamb of God, the Spirit of Jesus, and of the apostles and witnesses of the Lamb. You must bear your missionaries on the wings of your faith and love, through those vast waters and unknown dangers which are between them, and the objects of their concern and exertion. And when they are set down in the midst of crowds of ungodly, Christless savages, will you forget them? Will you slightly regard their work? Will you contemplate the solemn spectacle with dry eyes? "Bear witness against us, ye blessed benevolent angels who rejoice in the repentance of a sinner, *let all the bright lights of Heaven become dark over us, yea, let the terrors of God set themselves in array against us, if we forget thee, O Jerusalem, if we prefer thee not above our chief joy.*"

Salutary effects at home, it may be hoped, will be seen to arise from the late combined, benevolent exertions. Ministers return to their particular work with increased fervour, courage, and union of spirit. The people are awakened to regard more seriously, and to search more deeply into that divine treasure, which they have themselves pronounced worthy to be carried to the uttermost ends of the

earth. Formality, and religious trifling of every species and description, will be ashamed and hide their heads, and every supporter of this institution will feel from it an additional motive to adorn the glorious Gospel, and to express its genuine power and influence.

Is it proper, on such an occasion, to advert to the ideas of baptized Pagans at home, who wilfully renounce their birth-right of access to the revelation and lively oracles of God? Perhaps the devil is prepared to resume the sneer of an affected infidel philanthropist (Lord Shaftesbury) who mentions with the disdain of an infernal spirit, "*the heroic passion of saving souls.*" But let him know that, even in this corrupted period, there are thousands whose hearts, enlarged by the power of the gospel, swell with generous concern for the salvation of far distant heathen tribes. And, whatever may be the comparison in point of intellect, their tender bowels of Christian compassion must hereafter be contrasted with the frigid and haughty malignity of the infidel, at the tribunal of Jesus Christ, the lover and saviour of immortal souls.

And let the lukewarm professor of orthodoxy know, that all are not of his selfish complexion, nor like him, wrapt up in ungenerous complacency, in supposed personal safety, saying, concerning the perishing Heathen, "Am I my brother's keeper?"

Finally, let every benevolent Christian, rejoice to know, that there are many thousands associated with him, in warm supplications at the throne of grace, and in earnest endeavours for the wide enlargement and glory of that kingdom, "which is righteousness and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." Such supplications and endeavours must at length prevail; because He lives and reigns in heaven, who hath said, "*Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son,*"
Amen.

The following Circular Letter, sent to Ministers in the Country since the General Meeting, is subjoined, especially, because it contains a Copy of the Plan, and the List of Directors as it now stands :

REV. AND DEAR SIR, AN earnest desire having long prevailed in the hearts of many ministers and private Christians, to make an attempt to evangelize the Heathen, a Committee of Correspondence, for the purpose of engaging the assistance of others in pursuit of the same object, was appointed, and some weeks ago had the honour of addressing a letter to you. In that letter they announced the intention of holding a general meeting in London, and solicited your concurrence, and, if possible, the favour of your presence and assistance in the conference.

Through the good hand of our God upon us, that meeting has been held; and, we are happy to add, with such circumstances of numbers, unanimity, and zeal, as induce us to hope, that the Great Head of the Church will deign to smile on our humble efforts, and ultimately crown them with distinguished success.

As some of our brethren were necessarily prevented from personal attendance, we hold it our duty to transmit the following concise account of our proceedings.

On Monday evening, the 21st of September, the first general meeting was held at the Castle and Falcon, Aldergate-street. This was attended by such a numerous and respectable company of ministers and gentlemen, as evinced that the public only waited for the signal to unite their efforts towards the attainment of the desired object. Letters were read from ministers in various parts of England and Scotland, expressive of their design to co-operate in whatever might tend to promote the undertaking. Letters were likewise read from several persons who are inclined to become Missionaries.

It was then resolved, with perfect unanimity, *That it is the opinion of this meeting, that the establishment of a society for sending Missionaries to heathen and other unenlightened countries, is highly desirable.*

On Tuesday morning a great congregation assembled at Spaxfields Chapel. Mr. Haweis preached from Mark xvi. 15, 16. Mr. Burder preached in the evening, at Crown-court, from Jonah iii. 2.

On Wednesday morning Mr. Greathead preached at Haberdasher's Hall, from Luke x. 29. and, in the evening, Mr. Hey, at the Tabernacle, from Ephesians i. 10.

On Thursday morning Mr. Hill preached at Surry Chapel, from Matthew xxiv. 16. and, in the evening, Mr. Bogue, at Tottenham-court Chapel, from Hag. i. 2.

All the above places were exceedingly crowded; and great numbers of persons were unable to gain admission. About two hundred ministers were present on these occasions. Those who preached, prayed, and engaged in other parts of the services, were much assisted in their work. Pleasure and delight seemed to fill every mind; and, we have reason to believe, that these solemn days will long be remembered with satisfaction and praise.

The intervals of worship were employed in constituting the society, of which the following is

THE PLAN.

I. *The Name*—THE MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

II. *The Object*—The sole object is to spread the knowledge of Christ among heathen and other unenlightened nations.

III. *The Members*—Persons subscribing one guinea, or more, annually—every benefactor making a donation of ten pounds—One of the executors, on the payment of a legacy amounting to fifty pounds, or upwards; and ministers, or other representatives of congregations in the country, which subscribe or collect for the use of the society five pounds annually.

IV. *General Meetings*—To be held annually in London on the second Wednesday of May, and oftener if necessary, to chuse a Treasurer, Directors, Secretary, and Collectors, and to receive reports, audit accounts, and deliberate on what farther steps may best promote the object of the society.—At every such meeting one sermon, or more, shall be preached by one or more of the associated ministers, and notice given, as is usual, on such occasions; the President for the day shall open and conclude the meeting with prayer, and sign the minutes of the proceedings.—All matters proposed shall be determined by the majority of the members present.

V. *The Direction*—To consist of as many Directors, annually chosen out of its members, as circumstances may require.—At the first meeting twenty-five shall be elected, with power to associate with themselves such an additional number, as may be judged by them expedient, when the extent of the society is ascertained.—Three fifths, and no more, of these Directors shall reside in or near London; where all monthly meetings shall be held for transacting the business of the society.—Not less than seven shall constitute a board.—For greater facility and expedition they may subdivide into committees, for managing the funds, conducting the correspondence, making reports, examining missionaries, directing the missions, &c. but no act of these committees shall be valid till ratified at a monthly meeting.—No expenditure exceeding 100*l.* shall be made without consulting all the Directors, or 500*l.* without calling a general meeting of the subscribers.—Annual subscribers of 10*l.* or upwards, and benefactors of 100*l.* or more, may attend, if they please, with the Directors, at any of the monthly meetings.—On any emergency the Directors shall call a general meeting of the society, to whom their arrangements shall be submitted: Nor shall they enter upon a new mission till they obtain the general concurrence.

VI. *The Funds*—Arising from donations, legacies, subscriptions, collections, &c. shall be lodged as soon as collected, in the hands of the Treasurer. The Directors shall place in the public funds all monies so paid, whenever they exceed 300*l.* until they are required for the use of the mission; excepting it appears to them prejudicial to the interests of the society.

VII. *Salaries*—The Secretary shall receive such a salary as the Directors may appoint; but the Directors themselves shall transact the business of the society without any emolument.

Joseph Hardcastle, Esq. Treasurer, Duck's-foot Lane, Thames-street,
 Rev. John Love, Hoxton,
 Mr. William Shrubsole, Old Street Road, } Secretaries.

Agreeably

Agreeably to this plan, the following persons are already chosen Directors, and are formed into distinct committees for the more ready dispatch of business :

Mr. John Alday, Carlisle Street, Soho.
 John Audley, Esq. of Cambridge.
 Rev. James Boden, Hanley-Green, Staffordshire.
 Rev. David Bogue, A. M. Gosport.
 Rev. Joseph Brooksbank, Newington-Green.
 Rev. George Burder, Coventry.
 Robert Cowie, Esq. Islington.
 Mr. Rob. Campbell, Marybone Street.
 Rev. John Eyre, A. M. Hackney.
 Sam. Foyster, Esq. Tottenham Street.
 Rev. Samuel Greathed, Woburn.
 Jos. Hardcastle, Esq. Duck's-foot Lane.
 Rev. Rowland Hill, A. M. Surry Chapel.
 Rev. Tho. Haweis, L. L. B. Aldwinkle.
 Rev. John Hey, Bristol.
 Rev. George Lambert, Hull.

Sir Egerton Leigh, Bt. Warwickshire.
 Rev. Herbert Mends, Plymouth.
 James Neale, Esq. St. Paul's Church Yd.
 Rev. W. F. Platt, Holywell Mount.
 Rev. Edward Parsons, Leeds.
 Rev. John Mead Ray, Sudbury.
 Rev. John Reynolds, Hoxton Square.
 Rev. John Saltren, Bridport.
 Rev. James Steven, Thornhaugh Street.
 Mr. Rob. Steven, Upper Thames Street.
 Walter Taylor, Esq. Southampton.
 Rev. Alex. Waugh, Allop's Buildings.
 Daniel West, Esq. Southampton Row.
 Rev. Matthew Wilks, Old Street Road.
 Rev. Edw. Williams, D. D. Rotherham.
 John Wilton, Esq. Islington.
 Thomas Wilson, Esq. Wood Street.
 Joseph Wilton, Esq. Milk Street.

The Directors having frequently assembled, various steps have been taken to promote the great object of the society; and very pleasing information has been received, of peculiar interpositions of Providence in our favour. One circumstance must not be omitted: A worthy Gentleman, who had retired to affluence and ease from the East India Service, hearing of our benevolent design, has voluntarily stepped forth, with a generous offer of his services to command any vessel we may employ in sending our Missionaries to the place of their destination. Such an occurrence, unlooked for and unsought, we could not but consider as an encouraging token of divine approbation.

Dear Sir, the commencement of our great undertaking being thus far succeeded, we beg leave, once more, earnestly to entreat your help. Our exertions must necessarily be proportioned to our fund. One mission is already determined upon. Missionaries have offered their services. A serious examination of their qualifications will soon be made. In the mean time, measures will be taken to prepare for their equipment; and the interval between their appointment and their departure, will be employed in rendering them as fit as possible for their work. Other missions are already in contemplation; and we hope that we shall soon be able to send forth many Missionaries to various parts of the world. A scheme so vast and comprehensive, demands a liberal and extensive support. Handsome donations and annual subscriptions are already made. But these form a small part of what we hope and expect. If you, Sir, and other valuable friends in town and country, will be pleased to exert yourself in the circle of your congregation and acquaintance, to procure donations and subscriptions, we hope to obtain such a fund as will enable us to employ a considerable number of Missionaries, who, agreeably to our Saviour's command, shall go forth into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature. Dear Sir, let not this favourable opportunity slip. We trust that God, our Saviour, is about to take unto him his great power and reign. Let us unite with pure and persevering zeal, earnestly praying that our joint efforts may be crowned with great success.

We shall feel ourselves obliged, by the earliest information of your endeavours, and the result of them, in a letter directed to our Secretary.

-London.

Oct. 5, 1795.

By order of the Directors,
 WILLIAM SHRUBSOLE, Jun. Secy.

SERMONS,
BEFORE THE
MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

SERMON I.
THE APOSTOLIC COMMISSION,
PREACHED AT
THE SPA FIELDS CHAPEL,
SEPTEMBER 22, 1795.

BY THE
REV. T. HAWEIS, L. L. B.
CHAPLAIN TO THE LATE COUNTESS OF HUNTINGDON, AND RECTOR OF ALL SAINTS,
ALDWINCKLE, NORTHAMPTONSHIRE.

The Prayer before Sermon.

THOU great and glorious head of thy Church and people, exalted to the throne of majesty on high, and reigning till every foe be made thy footstool, look down in tender compassion upon us, who bow before thee, our God and Saviour, and cry for wisdom and strength; conscious, that, without thy arm, every effort is impotent, and, without the guidance of thy spirit, every counsel is vain.

King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, bless the land of our nativity with all the glories of thy reign, that every knee may truly bow to thee, and every tongue in faith confess, that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Bless the sovereign, that through thy good providence, sways the sceptre of this realm. Give the king thy judgments, O God, that so he may reign in the hearts of his people, and over the neck of his and their enemies.

Bless the royal family, and every branch of it, and grant that there never may be wanting, to the latest times, in the House of Brunswic, an heir to the throne, endued with thy holy spirit, and enriched by thy heavenly grace.

Bless the magistracy of the land, from the highest to the lowest; may they be men attentive to the duties of their station, and as conscientiously active for the protection and praise of well-doers, as for the punishment of those who do evil.

Bless the clergy of this realm, the archbishops, the bishops, those of the Churches established in England and Scotland, and all the ministers of different denominations, that they may hold the unity of the spirit

in the bond of peace, and, conscious how much more important it is to spread the glorious Gospel of the ever blessed God, than to dispute about modes and forms, may we all, pursuing the best judgment of our own consciences, delight to shew the same indulgence to our brethren, that we claim for ourselves, and cease from every contention, but who shall love the Lord Jesus Christ with truest sincerity, and serve him with most unshaken fidelity.

Bless, Lord, the great congregation before thee, and look favourably upon the design we have in view; and, wakening up in every heart a greater concern about our own souls, may we be more anxious for, and exert more vigorous efforts to assist the souls of our brethren. And, in a particular manner, Lord, remember the poor Heathen; and, may thy servants be stirred up this day to concentrate their efforts for communicating to them thine everlasting Gospel. Endue us with hearts of deeper sensibility for their ignorance and misery; enflame us with more ardent love, such as apostles, martyrs, and confessors, have felt; bestow on us the holy wisdom to plan, the undaunted courage to execute, and unwearied patience to persevere in the work, till we shall see the bright beams of truth piercing through the clouds of darkness, and the sun of righteousness arising with healing in his wings on the most distant lands, the habitations of cruelty, and the regions of the shadow of death.

Bless, Lord, the word that may now be spoken, and all the words of the brethren appointed to stir up our minds, by way of remembrance, for the great object we have in view; and, pitying our infirmities, and pardoning our iniquities, bestow the full import of the prayer, which thou thyself, in compassion to our ignorance, hast taught us,

Our Father, &c.

S E R.

SERMON I.

MARK XVI. 15. 16.

And he said unto them, go into all the World, and Preach the Gospel to every Creature ; he that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved, and he that believeth not, shall be damned.

IT is with thankfulness and delight, that I look round on this great congregation, assembled for the noblest purposes, that can interest the best feelings of the human heart. No schemes of worldly advantage—no projects of vain ambition—no selfish ends or aims—contaminate our views. Nor will the *confused noise of the warrior, or garments rolled in blood*, mark our progress. We meet under the conduct of the Prince of Peace, and, unfurling the banner of his cross, desire to carry the glad tidings of his salvation to the distant lands, deep sunk in Heathen darkness, and covered with the shadow of death.

The petty distinctions among us, of names, and forms ; the diversities of administrations, and modes of church order, we agree, shall this day all be merged in the greater, nobler, and characteristic name of CHRISTIANS ; and our one ambition be, to promote no partial interests, since Christ is not divided, but with united efforts to make known abroad, the glory of his person—the perfection of his work—the wonders of his grace—and the transcendent blessings of his redemption—where his
adorable

adorable name hath never yet been heard ; but the God of this world still reigns the uncontrouled tyrant over the bodies and the souls of men.

The infidel, indeed, derides ; the careless look on with indifference ; and the cold hearted professor of every denomination is too much engrossed with selfish interests and earthly pursuits, to think of the concerns of immortal souls ; of Heathens ; of creatures of a different colour from our own—unless, perhaps, when the philanthropy and zeal of others awaken their enmity or their envy ; and then, like Sanballat and Tobiah, they would interrupt the work of God, put difficulties in the way, or pour contempt on the undertaking ; as though, “ if but
“ a fox go up, he shall break down their stone wall.
“ Hear, O our God, for we are despised ; and turn
“ their reproach upon their own heads !” Nehem.
“ iv. 4.

We own our efforts are feeble, and our abilities small ; but great events often flow from causes apparently insignificant. In the time of drought and famine in Israel, the cloud no bigger than a man's hand, was the prelude to abundance of rain. 1 Kings xviii. 44. If God will work, then none shall let it. The little portion of snow detached from the summit of the highest Alps, swells in its descent, into a mighty Avalanche *, and, thundering down the mountain's side, sweeps before it every obstacle. Hath not our glorious head the residue of the spirit ? Can he not raise up again instruments from the meanest of mankind, to produce changes great, as when he sent twelve poor fishermen to overturn triumphant superstition and idolatry, supported as they were by all the powers of empire, and the wisdom of philosophy ? Is his hand shortened, that it cannot save ? Let no man's heart then

* *Avalanche* is a collection of snow, frequent in Switzerland, descending from the Alps, and, gathering into an immense mass, buries whole villages beneath it.

fail, THOUGH WE ARE WEAK, OUR REDEEMER IS MIGHTY.

But are there not others more respectable than ourselves, wiser, and possessed of greater wealth and power for such an undertaking? assuredly. But must we for ever, like the clown, wait for the river's flowing by?

I am sorry to unveil the nakedness of the Land. Thou Lord seeest it, and every sensible Christian is conscious of the fact. It does not admit of concealment.

God knows, I desire to speak sine odio, sine ira, sine invidia.* But I must say, the members of the established religion are too much engaged after the pursuits of earthly dignities and emoluments, to quit them for a field so barren, as that we wish to cultivate. Nor can any thing truly great, noble, and evangelical, be expected from those, who *look every man to his gain from his quarter*. And still less is to be hoped from such, as, separated from the established Church, have renounced not only her forms, but the God we worship. Even of those who profess the tenets of barren orthodoxy, how many have turned their zeal from the power of religion to this world's politics? or gravely meet, merely to discuss the important means of promoting *the dissenting interest*.

Non tali auxilio, aut defensoribus istis

Opus egit.†

* Uninfluenced by dislike, resentment, or envy.

As I wish not to be misunderstood in any expressions, here used, or in any other part. I solemnly declare, that it is neither my intention, nor inclination to reflect on any man, or body of men, because they are not united with us in this, or on various other modes of procedure. I am conscious, that there are many, very many such, both among my brethren in the Church, and among the Dissenters, whose piety and zeal I reverence, and should be happy more abundantly to imitate. *No good man*, therefore, should be offended with, or apply to himself, what is solely and only addressed, to the careless, the worldly minded, and the lukewarm. When we are faithful to such men's consciences, they will either be angry with us, or with themselves.

† By such men, and such efforts, the cause can never be promoted.

It may be said indeed, that there are societies already established for propagating the gospel, and promoting religious knowledge, and they have funds, thousands, hundreds of thousands, appropriated for these purposes. But, except the books distributed by them, many of which are excellent, what hath ever yet been effectually done? As a missionary society where are their apostles? A pecuniary assistance has indeed been given to the Danish mission; But in what land is the voice, are the sufferings of *their* missionaries heard? what converts appear the fruits of their labours? where is the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ erected, preached, and glorified by their stipendiaries? Read their reports. In this line their efforts are below contempt.

Indeed how should the real Gospel of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ, be ever advanced by those, who have never themselves experienced the true grace of God, wherein we stand,—who would treat as enthusiastic, a divine call to the work,—and by whom a missionary spirit, (for I speak what I have repeatedly experienced) would be esteemed the most insurmountable obstacle to be employed in that blessed service.

But, my brethren, I turn this day to you, however the objects of contempt to proud priests, or frozen sectaries. If God be for us, we will not fear who may be against us: if he smiles approbation on our endeavours, we will disregard the frowns of abused authority, and despise the sneers of supercilious self-importance. That we may be inferior in the scale of earthly distinction, Preferment, Power, Wealth, and attainments in mathematics, or metaphysics, we will admit. But we have tasted that the Lord is gracious.—We have felt in the approaches to a crucified Jesus, what it cost him to redeem our souls from death, and to hide the multitude of our sins.—We have been taught of
God

God to know the value of our *own* souls, and that hath filled us with tender concern for those of our fellow sinners. We judge no object important, but as it relates to what is spiritual and eternal; and count one immortal soul gained for Christ, a greater acquisition than all the mines of Golconda. Animated with such a feeling sense of divine truth; (and what is religion without feeling?) animated, I say, with such a fervent desire after the souls of men, redeemed by the same price as our own, we long to communicate to them, the same gospel, which we have ourselves embraced. Should we fail of success, the very attempt would be noble; should we succeed, glorious.

And why not succeed? when *the shout of a King is among us*; and He, *the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, our Saviour*? Hath he not promised *to be with us always, even to the end of the world*? “Awake then, awake, O arm of the Lord, put on thy strength; awake as in the ancient days, in the generations of old.”

Encouraged, emboldened by such views, we have been lifting up the voice of Prayer to the Spirit of God and Glory, that he may rest upon us, and our undertaking—fill us with divine wisdom,—animate us with fervent zeal,—and kindle in our hearts, that love to our heathen Brethren, which many waters of temptation shall never quench, nor the floods of difficulties drown. Say to the children of Israel, between Pihahiroth, and Baalzephon, in the face of the pathless ocean, **GO FORWARD.**

Hear then the voice of the great Leader and Commander who yet speaketh from heaven. “Go into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature, he that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned.”

The words contain the following particulars, suitable to the present occasion.

1. Where we must go.
2. Who are to be sent.
3. What they must preach.
4. The result of their mission.

1. Whither we must go : *into all the world.*

*The Gospel, we know, before the end of time, must be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations**. But few of them, comparatively, have yet enjoyed its light, or felt its influence. *Darkness still covers the earth, and gross darkness the people.* Whoever casts his eye over the terrestrial globe will see, if he is a Christian, with grief and anguish of heart, the multitudes of nations, who *know not God, and obey not his gospel* : on whom no beam of the sun of righteousness hath yet arisen with healing in his wings ; but to this day, *groeping for the wall as blind, they walk on still in darkness, and all the foundations of the earth are out of course.*

I might indeed begin at home, and with too great truth observe, how little real, vital, christianity is to be found among those, who have assumed the profession of it. Not only have Popish superstition and idolatry blinded, and enslaved the principal kingdoms of Europe, but even in that portion, which glories in the name of Protestant, † the star **Wormwood**, hath fallen upon the waters, and embittered them with the fatal errors of Pelagius, Arius, and Socinus : and thus have the flood-gates been opened for that deluge of Infidelity, which threatens to raze the very foundations of the christian faith ; and, *if it were possible, ‡* that the adored name of God our Saviour, should be had no more in remembrance. Even in our own land, who, that is

* Matt. xxiv. 14.

† Rev. viii. 11.

‡ Mark xix. 22.

On the Lord's side, doth not lament these desolations, and tremble for their consequences? The fashion of the day indeed is to be humane, liberal, munificent: every want finds relief, and every disease an asylum, but the souls of men, who careth for? the very idea is in general treated as enthusiastic, and infidelity daringly suggests, that mankind may do as well without christianity, as with it.

Happily there is yet found a generation, who sigh for these abominations,—feel the religion of Jesus essential to life and hope—experience the constrainings of divine charity—and, undismayed by the difficulties of the attempt, desire to seek the sheep of Christ, dispersed through this present evil world.

Turn then, my brethren, your eyes to the burning sands of Afric, where scarce a gleam of light illumines the darkness, from the Pillars of Hercules, to the Cape of Good Hope. There the benighted minds of men, darker than their complexions, offer a scene dreadful as pitiable. There the sweet sounds of Gospel grace are never heard, and millions upon millions brutalized by superstitions, cruel as despicable, are led captive by the Devil at his will, alike strangers to their ruin as their remedy.

Pass to the vast continent of Asia, abundantly more populous than Europe. Under the Government of China alone, there are said to be three hundred million souls, and perhaps not an individual, that *knows the true God, and Jesus Christ, whom he hath sent.*

On the beautiful banks of the Ganges, where we have risen to wealth and empire, how shameful hath been our supineness and indifference respecting any communication of Gospel truth to the poor Hindoos? Among ten million subjects to the India company, I have never yet read of a single missionary sent

sent by them. Commercial Christians seem to worship no other God, but Gold.

The vast regions within and without the Ganges, the immense Plains of Tartary, the Kingdoms of Siam, Pegu, Japan, and the extensive islands which spread through the Indian Ocean, present one awful blank. Chaotic darkness, still brooding on the abyss, spreads its wings, and not a ray of truth sheds its blest influence from one end of these countries to the other. But idols, horrid as obscene, fill every Pagoda, and abominations, that, but to name, were shameful.

A new world hath lately opened to our view, call it Island or Continent, that exceeds Europe in size, New Holland; and now become the receptacle of our outcasts of society.--New Zealand, and the innumerable islands, which spot the bosom of the Pacific Ocean, on each side of the Line, from Endeavour Straits to the Coasts of America, many of them full of inhabitants,--occupying lands, which seem to realize the fabled Gardens of the Hesperides,--where the fragrant groves, which cover them from the sultry beams of day, afford them food, and clothing; whilst the sea offers continual plenty of its inexhaustible stores; and the day passes in ease and affluence, and the night in music and dancing. But amidst these enchanting scenes, savage nature * still feasts on the flesh of its prisoners--appeases its Gods with human sacrifices--whole societies of men and women live promiscuously, and murder every infant born amongst them;--whilst every turpitude, committed in the face of open day, proclaims, that shame is as little felt, as a sense of sin is known.

Ye untutored offspring of fallen nature! how are ye to be pitied! ye have wondered at our ships, admired the colour of our skin, and been contami-

* At Otaheite, they seem to have renounced this horrid custom,

nated by our vices, and have known to our confusion, that those who have infected you with their abominations, bore the name of CHRISTIANS. It remains, I hope for us, my brethren, to redeem the character of that sacred name, and the honour of our nation.

No region of the world, which I have yet observed, (and I have considered the matter with much attention) affords us happier prospects in our auspicious career of sending the Gospel to the Heathen lands; no where are the obstacles apparently less, or the opportunities greater, for the admission of the truth, as it is in Jesus. No persecuting government,--no Brahmanic casts to oppose,--no inhospitable climate to endure,--a language of little difficulty to attain,--and of vast extent,--with free access, and every prejudice in our favour.

But this subject will, I hope, be discussed by us in many a conference, and the particulars would occupy too large a space, to be admitted into this discourse. I shall only observe, that, if our brethren the Moravians, whose zeal for the Saviour, and love for men's souls, I shall always delight to mention to their honour, (oh, that we may imitate their fervour, and surpass them in success!) if they have been blest, beneath the frozen mountains of Greenland; if they, accompanying the thinly scattered hordes of savage Esquimaux, have lived on whale's flesh and seal oil, to make the name of Jesus precious to them, what may we not hope, with any similar fidelity, among the populous borders of Otaheite, or the friendly inhabitants of Anamooka, or Tongataboo*?

The world indeed is wide, and the field vast for millions. Circumstances will determine our choice, where to begin with the happiest prospect of success. The Lord direct our determinations, and crown our attempts with his benediction! At his

* There are more inhabitants in Otaheite alone, than in all Greenland, and the vast coasts of Labrador.

command we launch into the deep, and wish to carry his everlasting Gospel to the ends of the earth.

But, secondly, *whom shall we send, and who will go for us?* I answer, such as the Lord hath prepared, and qualified for the arduous task. Men, whose lives are not dear unto themselves, but ready to spend, and be spent in the honourable service.—Men, really moved by the Holy Ghost, to devote themselves to the work,—not daring blasphemously in the face of God, and the Congregation, to make such a confession, merely to procure a mission from man, and pave the way to honour and emolument, over a conscience, that knows, *it hath lied to the Holy Ghost.*—Men, who have an internal evidence of the spirit, *witnessing with their spirits, that they are the children of God;*—a divine ardor, prompting them to prefer the salvation of men's souls, to every earthly consideration,—and to determine on this pursuit, in the face of every difficulty and danger which may attend it. Such are the men, the great Shepherd and Bishop of Souls sends, such are the instruments we must seek.

Nor need we despair of finding them, if not in the schools of learning, or the seminaries of theology, yet among the faithful, in our several congregations.

Not that I think lightly of the advantages of education, or despise attainments of learning of any kind. Few have been found more indefatigable in the pursuit of these acquirements, than some, whom I am now addressing, and if we are treated with insolent contempt, by those, who imagine themselves the only wise and learned, we have to regret that our abilities have not equalled our application.

But here also God hath in his hands the hearts of all men. There may be found among the sons of the Prophets, some, who glorying in the cross, will feel it their privilege to lift up the standard,

and proclaim the crucified Lord, to their fellow sinners of the Heathen. Not that the knowledge of the dead languages, however desirable, is essential to the communication of Gospel Truth in the living ones. A plain man,--with a good natural understanding,--wellread in the Bible,--full of faith, and of the Holy Ghost--though he comes from the forge, or the shop, would, I own, in my view, as a missionary to the Heathen, be infinitely preferable to all the learning of the schools; and would possess, in the skill and labour of his hands, advantages, which barren science would never compensate.

But who shall judge of the *qualifications of missionaries*? I reply, such as have themselves been taught of God; and whose age and experience, in the good ways of our Saviour, enable them to discern between the ebullitions of mistaken zeal, and the deliberate devotedness of one truly sent and moved by the Holy Ghost.

I am, my brethren, an Episcopalian, and by choice, as by education, attached to the established Church, and wish to see her a glory in the earth; and I am persuaded, there is not one of you, my friends, of whatever denomination, but would delight therein. Yet I am no bigot, I neither suppose salvation restricted to her pale, nor the approbation of her rulers, however desirable, essential to an evangelical mission. Indeed, it is an axiom, to which every real Christian will accede, that no dignity of office, whether Bishop or Archbishop, nor a whole Presbytery, however wise or learned, if they have not themselves experienced the divine call, and been inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost, to take the sacred ministry upon them, (and the great Shepherd and Bishop of Souls, hath already pronounced, that otherwise HE will regard them as thieves and robbers,) such men I say, can be no more capable of judging the qualifi-
cations

cations of a missionary, than the stupid Omiah to solve the most difficult proposition in Euclid, or a deaf man to decide on the beauty of harmonical composition. Those qualified to judge of a missionary call must have drank into a like spirit. Whose eye is single to the divine glory,--whose heart hath tasted that the Lord is gracious,--whose life is habitually devoted to the work and service of God;--and whose exemplary zeal for the Redeemer's glory, is demonstrated in self-denied obedience, deadness to the world, and actual labours for immortal souls; ENDURING THE CROSS, DESPISING THE SHAME.

Such, I doubt not, my brethren, will be found among you, who will count themselves honoured and happy in the sacred charge, committed to them, of examining the candidates, and *praying in the Holy Ghost** for direction will decide, *without partiality and without hypocrisy.*

But 3dly: What must the missionary preach? THE GOSPEL, to every creature; the pure, powerful, unadulterated Gospel of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ. "And if I, or an angel " from heaven preach any other Gospel, let him be " accursed †." How important then is it for ourselves, for our work, that we should have clear, and precise views of the great fundamentals, which constitute the essence of Christianity, and without which it would be *another Gospel?*

And here, brethren, it is impossible for me not to advert to the shameful and fatal indifference about these doctrines, which, even among many, who presume to call themselves christians, is so fearfully entertained. A system of heathen Ethics, which they have honoured with the name of christian morality, hath been substituted instead of the

* Jud. 20.

† Gal. i. 8.

gospel of Christ, and considered as all sufficient for salvation: and, that, if among *us Christians*, the faith of the Gospel be taken in, as a make weight, the salvation would be very secure without it; however expresses the declaration, that only “ he that “ believeth and is baptised, shall be saved, and he “ that believeth not shall be damned.”

It would lead me too far out of my way to unveil the ignorance, detect the errors, and confound the confidences of the unawakened, the unhumbled, and the self-righteous. Suffice it to say, in the words of our Lord, “ they that are whole, need “ not a physician, but they that are sick*.” Till God shews a man the plague of his own heart; --his inbred corruption; --his carnal mind; --which is enmity against God, and impotent to obey him; --his many, great, and fearful departures from the living God; in thought, word, and deed, transgressing against the divine majesty, and, therefore, most justly deserving his wrath and indignation †; till God the spirit thus convinces of sin, *furdo narras fabulam* ‡; the Gospel hath nothing to procure it a welcome, “ Hearing, men hear, and never understand; and “ seeing, see, and do not perceive; because their “ foolish hearts are darkened.” Proud Pharisaism, and infidel self-sufficiency, will always insolently say, *are we blind also?* and thus *they stumble at the word* (*απειθεις* alike infidel as) *disobedient, whereunto also they were appointed.* 1. Pet. ii. 8.

What then are the doctrines essential to the name of Gospel, which believed secure salvation, and which not believed, leave the soul sealed up under wrath, unto the judgment of the great day?

* Matt. ix. 12.

† See Communion Confession.

‡ You address the deaf.

As a minister of the Church of England, I might refer you to those articles of faith, which, having subscribed, *ex animo*, I solemnly declare, in the presence of God, I have ever since, to the best of my abilities, endeavoured, for nearly forty years, to preach and teach. The same doctrines are contained in the Helvetic confession, the Assembly's Catechism, and every reformed Church in Christendom. In all which, Jesus Christ is the chief corner stone ;--his Godhead and glory expressly defined ;--his vicarious sacrifice in the human nature laid down as the sure foundation of a sinner's hope ;--his obedience to death imputed to us for righteousness by faith alone ;--his spirit communicated, as quickening the dead in trespasses and sins, and giving faith, and every grace, by his own divine inspiration ;--producing righteousness and true holiness ;--and leading infallibly to *eternal life, the gift of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord*. O blessed glorious Gospel of our great God and Saviour ! of which he is the sum and substance, the Alpha and Omega, the all and in all. Whom thus to know, by the revelation of himself, is everlasting life ; and whom not to know, or to deny his eternal glory and Godhead, is everlasting death*.

I need not tell you, brethren, that our day hath produced men, pretending high veneration for the Gospel, and yet daring to *deny the Lord, who bought us* with his blood ; and varnish over their degrading systems, that they may be more easily accommodated to philosophical reasoning, and better calculated to evade the offence of the cross. But, my brethren, *we have not so learned Christ* : nor dare we sacrifice *the truth as it is in Jesus*, to false pleas of candor and liberality ; or admit Latitudinarian principles, as at all consistent with *one Lord, one faith* †.

* See John iii. 36.

† Eph. iv. 5.

There are indeed, some, who affecting exclusive zeal for morality and good works, scruple not falsely to suggest, that we by faith make them void. But their suggestions only shew their utter ignorance of our principles, and demonstrate, how unacquainted they are with the power of *the love of God shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost given unto us*: while THEIR WHOLE CONVERSATION evidences, that they are themselves as far from righteousness, and true holiness, in practice, as they are strangers in spirit to the first elements of the Gospel of Christ.

We appeal to the experience of all ages, what ever did, or ever can controul the unruly wills and affections of sinful men, but the preaching the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ; by whom, saith St. Paul, *the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world*. Without this, what could a missionary effect in a heathen land? How poor, how unavailing would be all the weapons of vain philosophy, and false Christianity? *Imbelle Telum sine ictu**.

Brethren, our whole success will depend upon this one point;—if Christ be preached,—only preached,—always preached,—then shall we see the power of his death and resurrection, and the Lord will add again *daily to his church of such as shall be saved*.

Which brings me to the last particular, *the result and consequences of such a mission*. “He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved, and he that believeth not, awful alternative! shall be damned.”

Many false christians, under the cloak of pretended charity, have long been pleased to express their indulgent hope of mercy for the Heathen, whatever their religious creed may be, and some yet more liberal, have boldly taken upon themselves the confident exercise of divine favour to every individual of the human race, in a final restitution;

* The feeble effort of impotence.

and these are not a little severe upon us, uncharitable bigots, who neither daring to indulge vain conjecture, nor torture truth to support preconceived opinions, are confined to the narrow circle of revelation, nor affect *to be wise above what is written*. We acknowledge our belief that only few shall be saved; we suppose our Lord a faithful and true witness in his declaration, "that strait is the gate, and narrow the road which leadeth to life, and that there are few that find it, whilst the gate to destruction is wide, and the many go in thereat*", that the wicked, wherever found, will be turned into hell†, and all the nations, (however many or mighty) who know not, or forget God, and obey not his Gospel." It would be endless, and to you, my brethren, unnecessary to multiply scriptures on a subject, wherein, I am persuaded, we are fully agreed. Indeed it is the importance, the necessity of believing the truth, in order to salvation, that this day collects us in the house of God, to unite our efforts in devising the means, of sending the everlasting Gospel to the poor Heathen,—to call them "from darkness unto light, and from the power of Satan unto God,—that they, with us, may receive an inheritance among those, who are sanctified by faith which is in Jesus Christ."

It is with the sentiments of this divine charity, we are inflamed. We think, we should merit all their charges of severity, and uncharitableness if we sat down with folded arms, with all these denunciations in our view, and regarded with cold indifference, the travail of the Redeemer's soul. Yes, my dear friends, "it is because we believe the wrath revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men," and have felt something of the compassions of the friend of sinners, that ani-

* Matt. vii. 13. † Psalm ix. 17. Theff. i. 8.

mated by a measure of that spirit, which led him to die a death of torment on the accursed tree, to save the miserable, the helpless and the desperate, we are thus earnest to pluck some of the brands from the burning,--to plead with them, why will ye die;-- and "to beseech them, by all the tender mercies " of their incarnate God," and ours, "to present " themselves to him, living sacrifices, their bodies, " souls, and spirits, holy and acceptable, which is " our reasonable service."

We are sure, that *only* they, who believe, shall be saved. "But how shall they believe on him, of whom " they have not heard? and how shall they hear with- " out a preacher? and how shall they preach except " they be sent?" beautiful indeed will be the feet of those who preach the glad tidings of peace, and blessed next to those, who willingly offer themselves to the service, will be they who send them.

We know, brethren, (for I speak to those, who have themselves experienced the grace of God, in truth) we know, that the gospel is the power of "God unto salvation to every one that believeth*:" and entertain the reviving confidence, that wherever God, in his providence, opens a door of utterance and entrance, there hath he a people, *who shall be to the eternal praise of the glory of his grace: whom he hath not appointed unto wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ.* The doctrines of faith, will lead to the grace of faith, through the mighty efficacy of the spirit of faith, and "the justified will " be glorified†."

Oh, with what transports of delight shall we meet at the right hand of the son of God, those, to whose eternal salvation we may have been happily instrumental, by sending to them, the glorious gospel of the blessed God, and whom unseen, and un-

* Rom. i. 16.

† Rom. viii. 30.

known, we have loved and longed for in the bowels of Jesus Christ?

That "they who believe not will be damned," we dare no more doubt than that those, "who believe and are baptised will be saved." How can we? when the same authority sanctions the promise and the warning. And under such a conviction what zeal will it not work in us? Yea, what active energy to help, if yet there may be hope? where will the exercise of divine charity be truly found? with such as sit supinely still in the presumptuous confidence, that it is needless to warn sinners, ready to perish, to flee from the wrath to come? Or with those, who animated by holy pity, and fervent love, rush through fire and water to seek and save that which was lost?

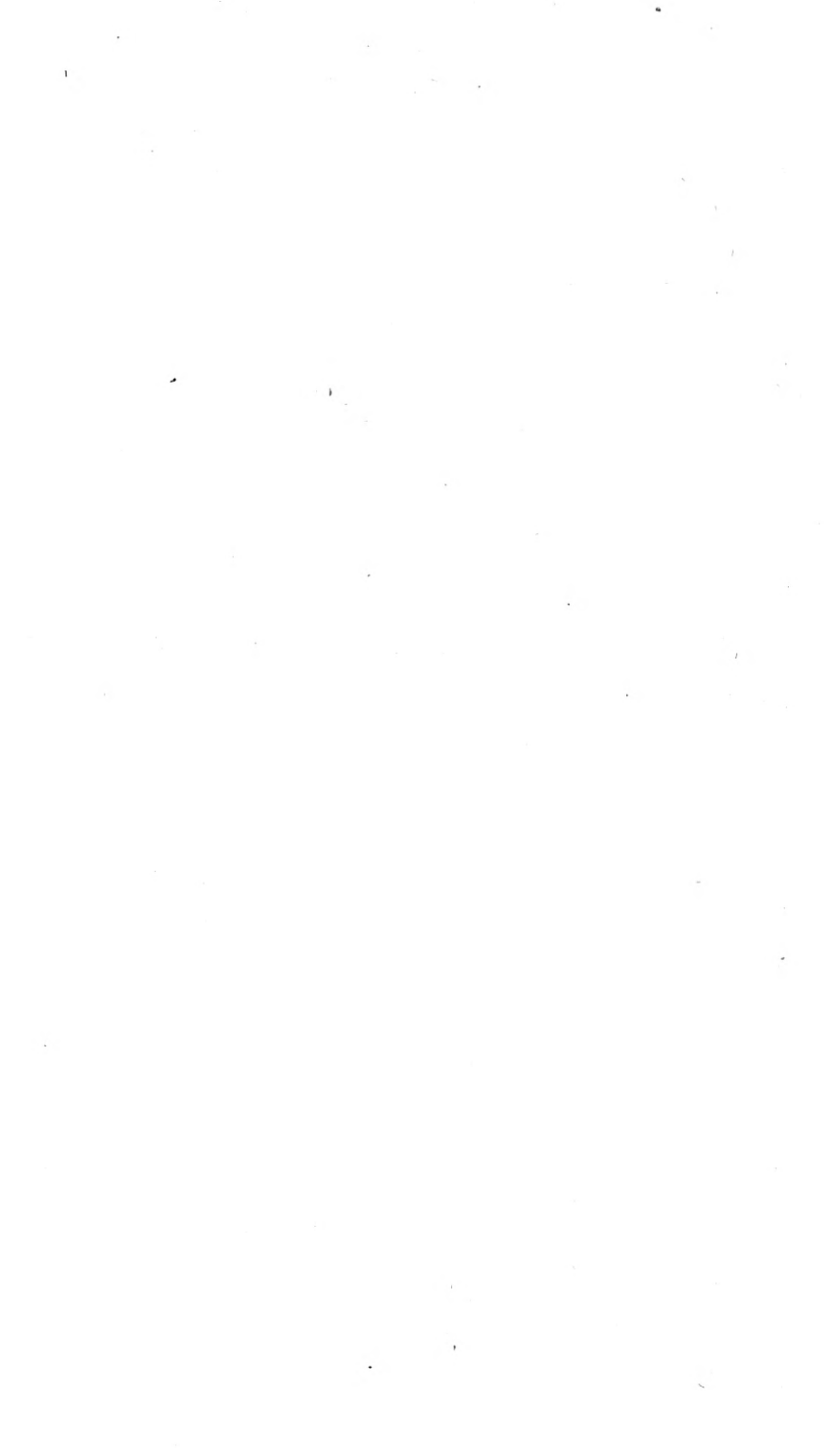
Thus, I trust, affected, and with such views of the awful truth of that word, which abideth forever in heaven, are we all here before God this day, invoking his benediction, and encouraging each others hearts to *this work of faith and labour of love.*

We know the time approaches when Ethiopia and Saba shall stretch out their hands unto God: when "the ends of the earth shall remember themselves, and be turned unto the Lord, and all flesh shall see the salvation of our God." From which extremity of the earth, the lightning shall flash, we know not; but one thing we know, that when the blessed period fix'd in his eternal counsels arrives, he will provide the means, and raise up the instruments, to fulfill all his pleasure. We hope he will favour, and graciously accept, our humble efforts to this end, and cause many to say, "here am I, Lord, send me."

It would take up too much of your time at present, to suggest the steps most eligible to be pursued. These will be the subject of repeated consideration, and matured by the united wisdom of a body, far superior to any individual. In one thing only,

only, I indulge the fullest confidence, that nothing will be wanting to furnish every necessary supply for a numerous mission. "The silver, and the gold are thine." These have often been lavished by our fellow citizens, to procure luxuries from the ends of the earth; and sometimes more fearfully to deluge the world with blood. Let us teach them a nobler use of riches, and procure for ourselves greater indulgences, the luxury of doing good; and instead of destroying men's bodies, employ them to save their souls.

May God our Saviour, prosper the attempt. Endue us with wisdom, zeal, and persevering diligence, and crown the labour with success, for the glory of his own great name, who liveth and reigneth with the Father and the Holy Ghost, the only true Jehovah, to whom be glory and dominion for ever and ever! Amen.



JONAH'S MISSION TO NINEVEH.

S E R M O N II.

PREACHED BY

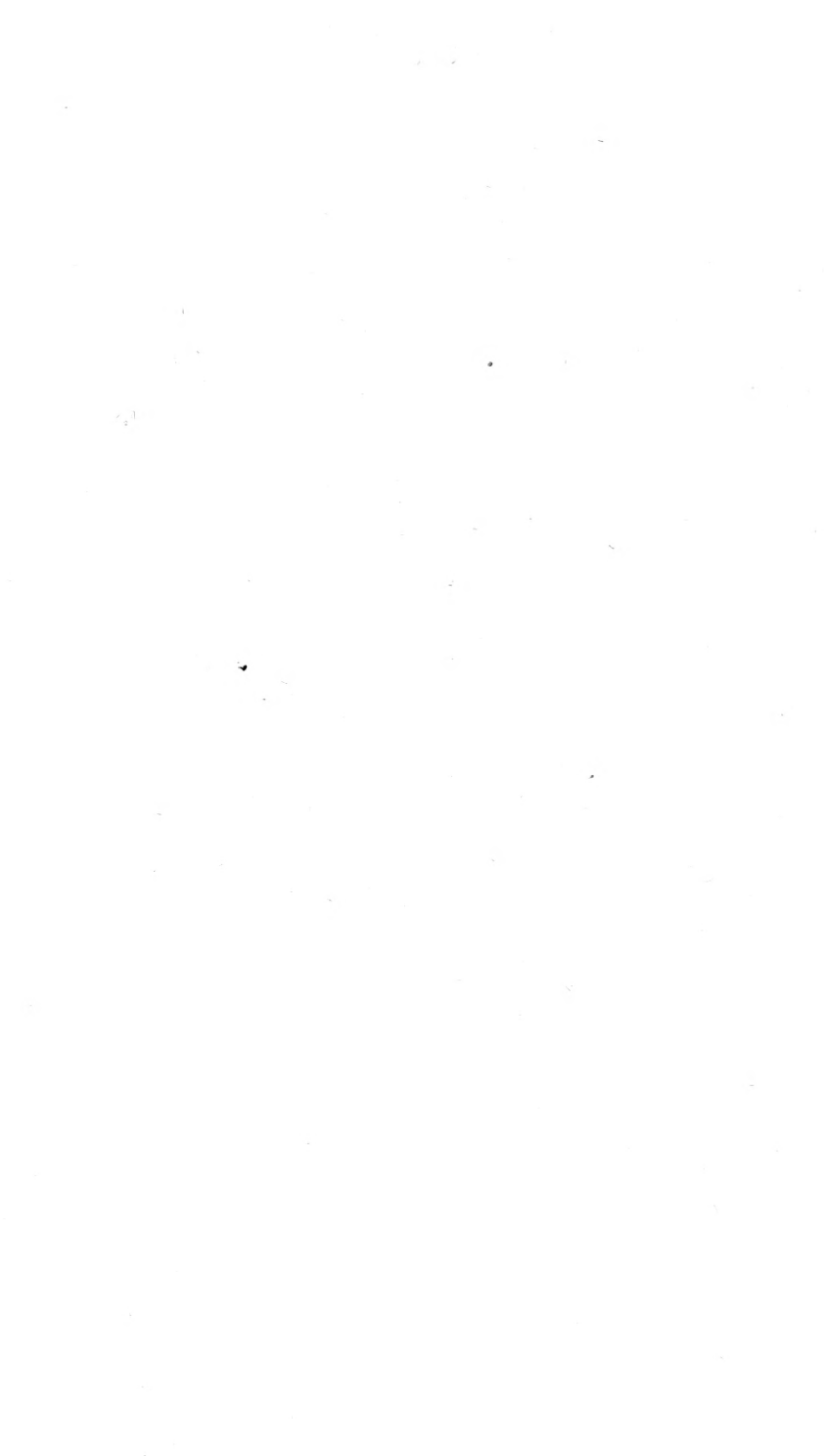
GEORGE BURDER,

OF COVENTRY,

AT THE REV. MR. STEVEN'S MEETING-HOUSE.

CROWN-COURT, ON TUESDAY EVENING,

SEPT. 22, 1795.



SERMON II.

JONAH iii. 2.

Arise, go unto Nineveh, that great City, and preach unto it the preaching that I bid thee.

I SHALL readily be credited, especially by my brethren in the ministry, when I say that I feel a peculiar awe upon my mind on the present occasion, arising, not merely from the number and respectability of the audience, but from the magnitude and importance of the business on which we meet. At any time, the consciousness of being employed to speak for God--to treat with immortal souls on the concerns of eternity, is enough to solemnize the mind. But now, in addition to these considerations, I feel myself engaged in a new and arduous work. I stand up as the advocate of thousands, of millions of souls, perishing for lack of knowledge. I stand up to plead the cause of Christ, too, too long neglected by us all—to plead the cause of the poor benighted heathen—to lay before you their miserable state—to convey to your ears and hearts the cry of their wretchedness—O that it may penetrate your souls—"Come over—Come over, and help us."

If I had thought that the success of this great enterprise depended in the least degree on the powers of eloquence, I should certainly have declined the task which the partiality of my friends has im-

posed upon me. Many, many others might have been found much fitter for the work, but none, I believe, more sincerely desirous of its success. And I am not a little animated by the belief, that a large part of this assembly is possessed of feelings in unison with my own.

Amidst a multitude of texts, which pressed on my mind, suited in some degree to the object before us, it was not easy to determine on any one, which might exactly comprehend all that I wished to say; at length, however, I fixed on the words which have been read; they contain God's second command to the Prophet Jonah; requiring him to go on a mission to Nineveh; a service he had before declined; and if I mistake not, we shall find several hints of instruction in the passage, adapted to our present undertaking.

When God has designs of mercy to a people, he will send a messenger to them, to call them to repentance.

The populous city of Nineveh had become exceedingly wicked; *their wickedness*, said the Lord, Chap. i. 2. *is come up before me. Go, therefore*, said he, *and cry against it.* The Lord could certainly have brought them to repentance without employing Jonah; but it is his general method to bring souls to salvation by the instrumentality of his ministers. In like manner, when the Eunuch of Ethiopia was to be converted, Philip was commanded to join himself to that nobleman's chariot. When that devout Roman officer Cornelius, was to become a Christian, Peter must be dispatched *to tell him words, whereby he and all his house might be saved.* (Acts. xi. 14.)

We may next observe, that when difficulty and danger attend the delivery of God's message, his servants are too apt to decline the task.

Thus Jonah, instead of flying with zeal to rescue the Ninevites from ruin, shunned the arduous work, and fled to Tarshish from the presence of the Lord.

O, how

O, how many of the Lord's servants have been like-minded? Has not each of us been, at times, a Jonah? Are we not all implicated in the charge? We have loved our ease too well to forsake our nests in England---to bid adieu to civilized society,---to encounter the dangers of the ocean---to learn a barbarous language,---to risk our lives among savages, in order to bring them to Christ and salvation. The time is however come, I trust, when we shall be convinced, that it is not right that we should *all* remain in Britain, while such vast numbers of our fellow creatures claim our pity, and our exertions abroad.

We may further observe, that God is greatly displeas'd with those who shun his work, because of its danger; and that, in fact, we expose ourselves by disobedience, to far greater dangers than those we would avoid.

When Jonah thought he had exonerated himself from the heavy task of converting Ninevites---when he was so secure in the ship, as to sleep with the greatest composure, *the Lord sent out a great wind into the sea, and there was a mighty tempest in the sea, so that the ship was like to be broken.* Ch. i. 4. The Lord, by the designation of a lot, pointed HIM out as the greatest aggressor, among a crew of heathen sailors; he was cast into the sea by divine permission; swallowed up by an enormous fish prepared for the purpose; and miraculously preserved alive in that situation, for three days. What a plain indication was this of the divine displeasure! what an awful method of constraining Jonah to be a missionary! Permit me to suggest my firm belief, that we have offended in the same manner; and may we not suppose that the Lord is displeas'd with us? Under the law of Moses, provision was made for the relief even of brutes in distress. *If, saith the Lord, thou meet thine enemy's ox, or his ass, going astray, thou shall surely bring it back to him again. If thou see the ass of him that hateth thee,*

bring

lying under his burden, and wouldst forbear to help him, thou shalt surely help with him. *Exod. xiii. 4. 5.* "Doth God take care for oxen?" Doth he require compassion to a beast, and will he not resent the neglect of men? Assuredly he will. Observe what he saith, *Prov. xxiv. 11, 12.* *If thou forbear to deliver them that are drawn unto death, and those that are ready to be slain; if thou sayest, Behold, we knew it not: doth not he that pondereth the heart consider it? and he that keepeth thy soul, doth not he know it? and shall not he render to every man according to his works?* It is evident, from hence, that man is prone to excuse himself from the labours of love; and that God notices and resents the criminal neglect. May not this be the cause, that we have so often to complain, *Who hath believed our report, and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed!* Allow me, however, to express my assured expectation, that if we heartily engage in this good and great work, we shall not only be blessed with success abroad, but with a revival of religion at home. That gracious Saviour, whose love and grace we publish beyond the seas, will testify his approbation, by pouring out his spirit in a larger measure upon us, and our churches. But I will not enlarge on these observations. The text suggests some other ideas, which demand a larger portion of our attention.

I cannot suppose that any secret infidel, any mere moralist, any lukewarm professor, or any priestly hireling can enter into our views. A real friend to missions, must *know* the Gospel, and *love* it. His understanding must be enlightened with its heavenly truths; he must feel its energy within, as the power of God to his own salvation, and his heart must glow with the ardors of the love of Christ. Give me leave then, ere I lay before you the deplorable state of the heathen, or try to excite your exertions in their favour, to call to your recollection, the admirable glories, the infinite excellencies,

cellencies, the everlasting blessings of the gospel of Christ: and if, indeed, we can so discern and enjoy these, as to be duly sensible of our distinguished happiness, we shall not dare to withhold the blessing from our fellow men.

Arise, go unto Nineveh, and preach unto it the preaching that I bid thee—the preaching that I bid thee; and what was that? Cry against it—Denounce the divine anger kindled by their accumulated sins: accordingly this was the substance of his preaching, when he actually reached the place. Yet forty days and Nineveh shall be overthrown. Heavy tidings these! an awful message! But my brethren, what is the preaching that God bids his ministers preach to all nations. It is *the Gospel. The Gospel of God. The Gospel of Christ. The Gospel of Salvation. The glorious Gospel. The everlasting Gospel.* These are its scriptural titles. These point out its excellency. These unite to recommend it to us. These call upon us to recommend it to all the world.

This Gospel alone displays the divine perfections. Here the whole Deity is known. Without the Gospel, on every altar must be inscribed, as on that at Athens, *To the unknown God.* But here, *Holiness* beams forth in all its purity. Here *Justice* blazes in all its dreadful majesty. Here *Truth* appears inviolate and eternal. Here *Love* opens its boundless and undiminished stores. Here *Wisdom* shines in all its manifold directions. Here *Almighty Power* discovers itself more magnificently than in the first creation. O what a glorious God is that of the Gospel!

This Gospel, my friends, claims universal regard, for *this alone affords to sinners solid and certain hope of pardon and acceptance with an offended God.* Broken and mangled fragments of Gospel hope, may be discerned among the rubbish of ancient mythology, and in the religious rites of the most barbarous nations. Sacrifices, of some sort, have been generally offered,

offered;—and the still prevailing custom of human sacrifices in the South sea Islands, shews that their expectation of pardon is by blood. God grant that we may soon have opportunity to improve upon their mistaken traditions, and to say, *Behold the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world.* Hence it was, that St Paul gloried in the gospel, because it was “a ministration of righteousness,” because “therein is the righteousness of God by “faith, revealed for belief †.”

Remember, christians, *That this Gospel is the grand, the only instrument of Sanctification and Holiness.* Take a view of human depravity. “The whole head is sick, the whole heart is faint;” “from head to foot, all is wounds and bruises, and purifying sores.” The whole world is a horrid mass of moral corruption. And who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? What Hercules can purge this Augean stable? It is beyond the power of man. Great men, great philosophers, have tried their skill in vain. “Sanctify them through thy truth, thy word is truth.” The Gospel is the Catholicon, the universal remedy for the disease of sin. In all countries the human heart is equally depraved, and from this source flow the horrid impieties and outrages of mankind. Hence Drunkenness, Whoredom, War, Murder, and all the list of human abominations: And in every country, where the streams of the sanctuary have reached, some have been healed. The sanctifying Spirit of grace is the same in his operations in Europe, in Asia, in Africa, and America. The polished courtier in Britain, and the African slave, groaning under his burden, alike experience his healing power.

Let *Humanity* join the christian in celebrating the praise of the Gospel. The Gospel civilizes as

† See Haver's Translation of the New Testament.

well as saves. This Gospel abolished the inhuman games and gladiatorial shews, celebrated by the Romans, in which, horrid to relate! from ten to twenty thousand in a month, are said to have lost their lives. The barbarous custom of murdering slaves to honor the funerals of their masters, ceased before its benign influence. This Gospel has called wandering tribes of American Indians to social life. This Gospel will, we trust, put a period to the cruel penances endured by Eastern Bramins, and their deluded votaries; and the still more dreadful usage of burning women with the dead bodies of their husbands.

See human nature languishing under innumerable evils--Sickness, Poverty, Oppression--

This is the balm for every wound,
A cordial for its fears.

The Christian knows where to find a refuge in every trial; he learns patience from a suffering Saviour, can smile in tribulation, and triumph in death. In the immediate prospect of dissolution, he looks forward with inexpressible joy to an everlasting inheritance, and to a Redeemer ready to welcome his soul to mansions of blessedness. This, my friends, this is the Gospel, which you enjoy in Britain. Blessed be God for it! The Lord teach us to prize it as we ought; and knowing this truly "joyful sound," may we continually "walk in the light of his countenance!"

But let us stop a moment and ask--Does every fellow creature enjoy this blessing? Is Jesus, the Saviour of the world, preached to every creature? Ah! no--not to one half of the human race. If there be eight hundred millions of men on earth, five hundred millions, at least, of these, know nothing of his precious name.

Arise, go to Nineveh that great city, and preach, &c. it was a great city--an exceeding great city--a city of three days journey.

The compassionate Father of men mentions the *greivels* of that populous city, as an inducement to the Prophet to preach there; and when he peevishly repined at the Lord's mercy towards the people, in revoking his sentence against them, the Lord reprov'd him in these words: *Doest thou well to be angry for the gourd? Thou hast had pity on the gourd, for the which thou hast not laboured, neither madest it grow: which came up in a night, and perished in a night. And should not I spare Nineveh, that great city, wherein are six score thousand persons, that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand?* (Chap 4, 9, &c.)

It is generally accounted one of the greatest mysteries in the conduct of divine providence, that this glorious Gospel, so honourable to God, and so beneficial to man, should not have had an universal spread. Great success attended the first promulgation of it at Jerusalem. Many thousands embraced it in a few days. By the dispersion of the disciples, it was spread on every side. In the course of sixty years, an individual Apostle, had fully preached it in all the countries, from "Jerusalem to Illyricum." In about three hundred years, the Roman Empire became Christian. In succeeding ages, it gained ground in Persia, Ethiopia, Hungary, Scotland, Ireland, and England. A long night of papal darkness succeeded, and what was then called the Gospel, adulterated as it was with innumerable errors and superstitions, would have been scarcely worthy of the acceptance of the Heathen. When the Reformation restored to a part of Christendom the beauties and blessings of Gospel truth, one might have expected that the whole Protestant Church would have burned with zeal to diffuse the knowledge of Christ. But alas! little, comparatively, has been done: We must except America. The Puritans carried with them real purity of doctrine and discipline; they fled from Protestant persecution

secution for the sake of Christ, and preferred a waste and howling wilderness, with religious liberty, to all the accommodations of bigotted Britain. Blessed be God, there are millions of persons called by the name of Christ in North America; nor have they been wholly wanting in attempts to convert the Indians; though little progress has been made in that great work.

The discoveries of Cook, and other celebrated navigators, have lately opened to our view, a new world, equal perhaps in population to America itself---Clusters of inhabited islands, scattered throughout the vast Pacific Ocean, and all these inhabited by poor benighted Pagans.

Those who are acquainted with the state of the world, need not be informed, that the heathen tribes, are in general, shockingly uncivilized. I have a view more particularly to the inhabitants of the South Sea Islands. Some of their customs are far too indelicate to be rehearsed in a Christian audience. On the coast of Terra del Fuego, they are elevated but a small degree above the very brutes. Ought we not to pity fellow-men so degraded in the scale of society; and knowing the vast advantages of a civilized state, endeavour to civilize, may I not say, to *humanize* them?

Where ignorance so awfully prevails, is it any wonder that men are extremely wicked? Drunkenness is dreadfully prevalent among some. Lasciviousness is the reigning vice of others. Theft is almost universal among the inhabitants of the South Sea Islands. Cruel revenge and bloody murders are too frequent. Who can read without horror, the account of the death of Captain Furneaux's people, or the slaughter of the famous, but unhappy Captain Cook? It is a fact, but too well established, that the inhabitants of New Zealand, who are frequently at war, neither give quarter, nor take prisoners,

soners, but are absolutely canibals, and feast on the flesh of their slaughtered enemies.

Their superstitions are also very affecting to a pious mind. How strange, how absurd, are their ideas of a Divine being! Who can enumerate the multiplied gods of the Heathen? What has reason, with all its boasted powers, effected for man with regard to divine worship? Natural religion has not much to be proud of, when we reflect, that Greeks and Romans, polished as they were---“*became vain in their imagination, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools: and changed the glory of the uncorruptible God, into an image made like to corruptible men, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things.*” Indeed, the Devil is the chief object of Pagan worship; for every object of worship, who is not the true God, is set up in opposition to him. And O how long has he triumphed over the children of men! Some of the Heathen rites are acts of abominable lust, and others of savage cruelty. The Deities themselves were examples and patrons of vice, and the most filthy and abominable deeds were committed under the notion of consecrated acts, acceptable to their gods, and beneficial to their souls. Human sacrifices, as before observed, are still common in the South Sea Islands: when a king is going to war with another Island, he invokes his Eatooa to succeed his bloody designs: he sends some of his servants privately to murder one or more of his subjects. The unhappy victim is called Taata taboo, or the consecrated man; he is presented at the Morai, to their god, who is supposed to feed with much delight upon the sacrifice. Ten such wretched victims were presented on a single occasion; and no less than forty-nine skulls were found at a Morai, which, not being much altered by the weather, were supposed to have been collected in a short time.

In other parts of the world, incredible tortures are endured on a religious account; whether as a penance enjoined to expiate crime, or as the means of attaining higher degrees of perfection, by a greater abstraction of mind, and mortification of the animal nature. “ Some are hung up forty feet high in the air, by flesh hooks fastened in their backs, and thus swung and whirled round for a considerable time. Others have threads, thirty yards long, passed through both their sides, in six different places, the ends being fastened, while they dance backward and forward as in a rope-walk. Others pass a spit four feet long through their tongue, drawing it backwards and forwards. Others have fixed themselves in a certain position, for several years, exposed to the extremes of heat and cold.”

O Sirs! can you hear these things, without longing to go, or send to them, and to tell them of Jesus Christ, that he is able and willing to save them, “ without money, without price,” without torture? That *his yoke*, altogether contrary to the Devil's, *is easy*, that *his burden is light*, and that *none of his commandments are grievous*? It is a pleasing anecdote which was related to Mr. Thomas, at Calcutta, respecting one of the Malabarian Missionaries* :

“ A certain man on the Malabar Coast, had enquired of various devotees and priests, how he might make atonement for his sin; he was directed to drive iron spikes, somewhat blunted, through his sandals, and on these he was to place his naked feet, and walk (if I mistake not) 250 fols, or 400 miles; if through loss of blood, or weakness of body, he was forced to halt, he

* See Periodical Accounts of the Baptist Missionary Society, (No. 1,) page 28, &c.

“ might wait for healing and strength : he under-
 “ took the journey, and while he halted under a
 “ large shady tree, where the gospel was sometimes
 “ preached, one of the Missionaries came, and
 “ preached from these words---*The blood of Jesus*
 “ *Christ cleanseth from all sin.* While he was preach-
 “ ing, the poor man rose up, threw off his torturing
 “ sandals, and cried aloud---This is what I want ;
 “ and he became a lively witness, that the blood of
 “ Jesus Christ, does indeed cleanse from all sin.”

Who can tell, till a trial be made, how many wretched men may be found, labouring under fearful apprehensions of divine wrath, and trying in vain, by the superstitions of their country to obtain peace, who would gladly listen to gospel ministers, --- *Preaching peace by Jesus Christ. He is Lord of all !*

“ Arise then, go to Nineveh, that great city :” See millions of men immersed in ignorance, wickedness, and superstition, ready to perish. Their souls are of equal value with ours. They must exist for ever in happiness or woe. At present, their state is awful beyond description. *The wages of sin is death*, not in England only, but every where. These unhappy persons have no written law---but *they shew the work of the law written in their hearts* : they are sinners against that law, and we are assured by St. Paul, that *as many as have sinned without law, shall also perish without law*, (Rom. ii, 12, 15.) We do not believe, nor dare we assert, that their salvation is impossible ; but admitting their salvation possible, is there not reason to fear that the greater part perish in their sins ? if we are really believers, we must take our estimate of these matters from the sacred word, and thence we learn that the heathen *sit in the region and shadow of death*, (Matt. iv. 16,) that they are blind ; that they are in darkness ; that they are in Satan's kingdom ; that he works in their hearts, and leads them captive at his will ; that they are
 I without

without God, without Christ, without hope; in a word, *children of wrath*. Is this their condition? and such it surely is; for so the God of truth declares it to be, and shall we not from our hearts pity them, and unite all our strength in making some generous and bold efforts for their relief? Supposing the salvation of the Heathen possible without the Gospel, yet would the Gospel be of no advantage to them? Would it be no advantage or pleasure, to know *that* Jesus, to whom all salvation must be ascribed---to know the nature and perfections of the only true God; to be delivered from devils and devil-worship, and from all their horrid and painful superstitions? Would it be no advantage to them to know the whole will of God, the doctrines of truth, the history of the creation, the fall of man, the method of restoration by Jesus; his wonderful incarnation, his holy life, his miracles of mercy, his love to sinners; the account of that death by which we live; his resurrection, ascension, and glory; together with the whole work of the Spirit, and the history of the church? It is impossible, that any one, who understands, believes, and loves his bible, should not be desirous, that the light of truth may become universal, like the light of the sun, and that the glorious doctrines of grace should be known by every rational being. To neglect the conversion of Pagans, on the supposition of their salvation without knowing the Gospel, would be as absurd as to say, that as Englishmen may be saved without learning to read or write, therefore those accomplishments are of no use; or to affirm, that because a man may subsist on bread and water, other sorts of aliment are quite unnecessary; or because a man may enjoy his health in slavery, therefore liberty is of no value.

A word of exhortation, shall close my discourse.

Hitherto, the christian world in general, like the ten virgins in the parable, has slumbered and slept.

slept. It is high time to awake out of this sleep, and by ten-fold diligence make amends, in some measure, for the long neglect. Should we hereafter succeed in preaching to the Heathen,--when they shall have tasted that the Lord is gracious, may we not expect they will ask us, Why did you not bring us the Gospel before? It was known for many hundred years in your favoured island; thousands, you tell us, lived and died happy in the knowledge of it; why then did you keep it from us, while, here, successive generations were perishing in sin? What answer, my friends, could we give to such a cutting question?

I am well aware that various objections will be started, both by friends and foes, to our present attempt. It is right that they should be attended to; and I have the pleasure to inform you, that one of the succeeding sermons will be chiefly devoted to this purpose, and I have no doubt that the most formidable objections will then be fairly stated, and fully removed.

By entering with our whole hearts into this great work, I think we shall prove our love to Jesus Christ. Does loyalty and love to an earthly prince require that we should endeavour to support and extend his dominions; and shall not we, the sworn subjects and soldiers of the King of Kings, go forth to spread the conquests of his word, and extend the limits of his empire? Why should the foe of God and men boast that more than half the globe is his? Let us go forth then, though armed like David with a sling and a stone, against the Goliath of hell; and shall we not prove victorious like him?

We dream not of missions without difficulties. Indeed they are many, and, in some points of view, formidable. But the success of our predecessors, under various disadvantages which we hope to avoid, has been very considerable. Difficulties
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may be great, but they are not insuperable. "Prayers and pains, through faith in Jesus Christ, will do any thing," so said the Apostolic *Elliot*, when, with incredible pains, he had finished his Indian grammar. That great and good man had the unspeakable pleasure to see a church of Indians soon formed at *Natick*, and afterwards several more in other places. *Brainerd*, in his solitary mission, and under disadvantages which might have been prevented, was the honoured instrument of converting great numbers. The *Mayhews*, father and sons, were the spiritual fathers of 1500 in Martha's Vineyard. The Danish missionaries on the coast of Coromandel are said, since the year 1706, to have brought 18,000 Gentoos to the profession of christianity. The Moravian brethren, by labours unparalelled in their firmness and perseverance, have been owned for the conversion of vast multitudes in Greenland, in the West Indies, in America, and among the Hottentots. In the year 1788 they had in their societies nearly 15,000 converted heathen.

Is not this sufficient encouragement? Delightful thought! To snatch sinners as brands from the burning. To rescue immortals from the power of the devil. To advance the kingdom of our glorious Jesus. How would you feel, to hear a company of converted savages uniting with heart and voice in that sweet hymn,

"Jesus, I love thy charming name."

Such a pleasure did some of our christian brethren enjoy at Nazareth in Pennsylvania. At least we may hope to *hear* of such a blessed event; yes, and we may hope to meet redeemed Pagans before the throne, there reap the fruit of our present labours, and join with them in the praises of Jesus.

My brethren, the honour of the christian name requires some exertions at our hands.—I blush for my country, when I reflect, that the peculiar impiety and unbridled lusts of Englishmen, have left a stain on the christian religion, wherever they have

resided. O cruel Britain, not content with the honour of discovery and the gain of commerce, thou hast, with a christian name, communicated vice and disease to the poor helpless Pagan Islanders! Christians! if you deserve that honourable appellation, for Christ's sake, endeavour to retrieve the forfeited glory of our religion, and let these abused people know that our Saviour came *not to destroy men's lives but to save them*,--to save them *from their sins*, not to promote their dreadful reign.

What a cutting reproach was lately conveyed to our country by a letter from the East Indies, written by some persons lately converted to christianity. "O great Sir, though we thought that many nations had many kinds of *Shasters*, (or holy laws) yet in the country of the English we thought there was no Shaster at all: for, concerning sin and holiness, those that are here have no judgment at all. We have even thought that they were not men, but a kind of other creatures like devourers†."

It has been objected to the truth of christianity, that it is so partially established in the world. "If, say the infidels, it were of God, how is it that the larger part of the globe is, after 1700 years, confessedly destitute of the Gospel?" I deeply feel the severe reproach, for a reproach it is. But on whom? On the blessed and benevolent author of our religion? No, it cannot belong to him, for he strictly charged his disciples to *Go into all the world--to all nations, and publish his Gospel to every creature*. Shall we then calmly resolve our sinful negligence into the divine decree. God forbid! I reverence, I adore the divine decree, as much as any man in the world; But the partial distribution of the Gospel is to be ascribed to the cold, the cruel, the criminal neglect of christians; their want of love to God and man. Let us rouse ourselves

† Periodical Account of the Baptists, No. i. page 32.

from this wicked indifference, and by our utmost exertions try to remove this fatal stumbling block out of the way.

We may reasonably hope, that besides the success which we trust will crown our efforts abroad, no small advantage will accrue to us at home. God has said, and I believe it,—Pray ye for the peace, or prosperity, of the church, they shall prosper that love her. A pious friend of another denomination thus expresses himself in a letter to me on this subject.

“ Had I no hope of success attending future
 “ efforts among the Heathen, yet I could not but
 “ rejoice in the effects which I am persuaded will
 “ attend the present exertions at home. In propor-
 “ tion as christians enter into the real spirit of mis-
 “ sions, so will their personal piety be promoted.
 “ They must necessarily think much on the subject :
 “ and habitual reflection on a subject so intimately
 “ connected with the cross of Christ, and the best in-
 “ terests of man, will, if I may so express it, engender
 “ a habit of pious meditation, which will prove a
 “ happy mean of growth in grace, and a pressing
 “ on towards perfection. To enter heartily into
 “ a mission, will undoubtedly promote the expan-
 “ sion of the mind. Selfishness will be expelled,
 “ great and generous thoughts, desires and reso-
 “ lutions will follow, and the man will acquire
 “ a public spiritedness of feeling, to which before
 “ he was totally insensible. Nor can I class it
 “ among the least advantages which will result
 “ from the present emulation among christians of
 “ different names, to distinguish themselves by their
 “ efforts to evangelize the Pagan world, that a
 “ more free and affectionate intercourse will be
 “ opened among ministers and others in England,
 “ who being separated in situation and denomina-
 “ tion were hardly known to each other before.
 “ Now one common cause unites us all: we see,
 “ we feel, that whatever hard thoughts we pre-
 “ viously

“viciously indulged, the honour of Christ, and the
 “happiness of souls prevails over every other feel-
 “ing in our brother’s bosom, as well as in our own.
 “To mark this temper must be to love its owner.
 “Love will promote intercourse, and intercourse
 “in its turn strengthen love. Party spirit, abash-
 “ed, will hide its head, and so the unity of the
 “spirit be preserved in peace. Jealousies, invective,
 “insinuations, sneers and bigotry will be banished
 “from the churches; and thus the way will be pre-
 “pared for the watchmen’s seeing eye to eye, and
 “the Lord’s name becoming *one* over all the
 “earth.”

To conclude, humbly hoping, that what has been said will contribute to the furtherance of our design, I cannot finish without recommending it to your *incessant and earnest prayer*. I am well aware, that however wisely we may lay our plan, however vigorously we may pursue it, nothing effectual will be done without the Lord’s blessing. Let us humbly acknowledge this to-day, lest through our forgetfulness of God, we learn it hereafter by painful experience. I mention this, lest, through the eagerness of our zeal, we should fondly dream of success, without an entire dependance on “power from on high.” In primitive times missions were undertaken with fasting and prayer. Pray then, that the Lord would direct, as to what part of the world we should send missionaries. Pray, that truly wise and good men may be thrust forth into the harvest. Pray, that the Directors of the Society, may be vigilant and laborious, committing themselves to the work, as if they were born to accomplish that alone. Thus, my friends, may we hope, that a business begun with earnest prayer, will be prosecuted with success, and be productive of salvation to souls, and glory to God. To that God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, be glory, in all the Churches, throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.

A MISSION TO THE HEATHEN,
FOUNDED UPON THE MORAL LAW.

S E R M O N I I I .

DELIVERED AT HABERDASHER'S HALL MEETING
HOUSE, IN THE FORENOON OF
SEPTEMBER 23, 1795,

BY SAMUEL GREATHEED,
OF WOBURN, BEDFORDSHIRE.

MEN, BRETHREN, AND FATHERS.

IT is not without a sacrifice of my feelings, that I attempt an engagement, which so many, now present, might have fulfilled, in a far more suitable and useful manner. The Gentlemen of the Committee, who arranged measures preparative for these solemn assemblies, and with whom I have had the honour in some instances to act, well know, that in my appointment to this part of the work neither my inclination nor my judgment was consulted. But, in whatever relates to a MISSION, it ill becomes any individual to have a will or an opinion of his own. And I do not hesitate to declare, that, high as this auditory stands in my esteem, your *mere approbation* seems to me, at this moment, a matter light as air. I am conscious of standing before a superior tribunal, which occupies my thoughts and engrosses my concern. May Jesus Christ, the judge of all, approve and prosper the attempt, however feeble, to *your* salvation, and to that of *others* by *your* means!

You are already possessed of the *outlines* of our subject; and the excellencies of the *Gospel* which we exhort you to send to heathen nations, with the *wretched circumstances* of these countless millions of your fellow creatures, are *parts* of the subject which have been entered upon, in a masterly and pathetic manner, by persons as superior to myself in spiritual attainments, as in the stores of knowledge and in the powers of persuasion. You are, I doubt not, well informed in your judgments, and deeply impressed in your affections, by what you have al-

ready heard. But they who are to conduct at home the important affairs of a mission, as well as those who pursue its glorious aims, in distant regions, have need to act upon something more than a system, however just and beautiful; upon something more than the emotions of the heart, however properly and powerfully excited. The principle which actuates you, should be immoveable; whatever difficulty, delay, discouragement, or disappointment, may assail it. I know of none more applicable, or more adequate to this purpose, than the *plain command* and *immutable authority* of the *moral law* of God.

Conscious of the impossibility of doing justice to such a subject, but hoping both for your candid attention, and for divine assistance through your prayers, I shall endeavour to suggest some considerations resulting from the enquiry, addressed to our Lord Jesus Christ by a teacher of the Jewish law, which you may find recorded in

LUKE X. 29.

“ *And who is my Neighbour ?*”

The spirit and design of this question were not good. It is therefore to be lamented that they are not uncommon. Among persons who understand and profess the Gospel, its practical influence and effects are too often notoriously deficient; and perhaps no excuse is so readily or generally admitted, by consciences that are more enlightened than sanctified, as the difficulty of deciding upon the *proper objects* towards whom the precepts of christianity are to be performed. No one disputes the duty of *charity*; but how many allow themselves in the neglect of it, whilst they say, “ Who will shew us proper objects of charity ?” Numerous and important are the exhortations in the New Testament to *brotherly love* among believers; but how rare the fulfillment of them, through the
specious

specious plea, "who are my brethren?" So the Jewish Teacher in the text, charged by his own conscience with having not obeyed the law which he inculcated on others, "thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself," attempts to justify himself by this question, "*Who is my neighbour?*"

The more nearly we can look into the hearts of our fellows, the more we may discover their resemblance to our own. The picture, which the text presents to us, may probably remind us of *other* failures in duty, besides those, of which I trust we have mostly, now, began to entertain some conviction, relative to *Heathens*. Far be it from me to direct your attention to them *alone*; or to set your duty towards them at variance with your duty towards those who are related to you, not only as fellow children of Adam, but as your intimates, or nearer kindred. Yet, whilst much love should be shewn to these, is *none* to be expressed towards Heathens? How awful will our past inattention to them appear, if it proves to have always been our duty, "*to love them as ourselves!*"

In considering *the dependence which our more immediate object*, that of a mission to idolatrous and unenlightened nations, *has upon the moral law*, it seems necessary to notice somewhat distinctly, the PRINCIPLE we are to adopt, the EXTENT in which it is to be applied, and the EXERCISE of it that is called for by the present occasion.

The *principle*, to be adopted in our conduct towards our neighbour, is couched in one short word, LOVE! I believe it to be the most comprehensive term that language can supply. It appears to me no *Hyperbole*, to assert that it expresses more than the whole universe contains; for the Apostle John declares that "GOD IS LOVE." It is, therefore, not strange, that we find the *whole duty* of Man, both to his neighbour, and to God himself, comprised in the same word; for, to *what* can man aspire beyond a resemblance of God? The speaker

in the text had been enquiring of Christ what he should do to inherit eternal life. It was an important question, and seems to have been proposed in a respectful manner. But the aim of the enquirer was not the improvement of his own knowledge, but to make trial of the knowledge of Jesus.—Do we ever attend on preachers with no higher view? It is dreadful to trifle with the doctrine of eternal life!—Our Lord always knows what is in man; and he came not on earth to answer curious questions. He therefore refers the Jewish Doctor to the writings of Moses, which he professed to study, and which he was accustomed to read to others in the synagogues. “What is written in the law? How readest thou!”—We should make use of the knowledge we have acquired, if we profess a wish to increase it.—The lawyer’s answer was such as our Lord approved; and, upon another occasion, himself adopted, as the substance of “all the law and the prophets*.” It was selected from two detached parts of the Pentateuch†, but we are told that both were daily read in the Jewish liturgy. “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind;—and thy neighbour as thyself.”—My friends, can we read these precepts; and remember, without trembling, that he, “who continueth not in all things commanded in the law to do them, is accursed?”—Blessed be Jesus who bore the curse in our stead! From his lips we now receive this law; not as the condition of everlasting life, but as the holy, just, and perfect rule of conduct, to the obedience of which we are laid under tenfold obligation by his redeeming love!

* Matthew xxii. 40.

† Deuteronomy vi. 5. and Leviticus xix. 18.

From this summary of the moral law you see that the principle on which we are to act towards God and man is that of *Love*. It is true that with regard to God, expressions are accumulated, and language is exhausted, to describe what is due from us. Still *Love* fulfills the law: but to God it should be perfect, it must be supreme; consequently it must be limited and subordinate towards *fellow creatures*. Religion and Morality, so far from being opposite, or even independent principles, are the very same; but they are directed to different objects, and in different measures. *Religion* is the love of God. *Morality*, the love of mankind; or, as the original scripture, when ascribing it to God our Saviour*, expresses it in one word, PHILANTHROPY.

If we, my friends, have any real love towards God--and, without it, what are we but incarnate fiends?--it is *unlimited*. It will admit of no comparison with other attachments, much less of any restriction or controul from them. When "the word and the covenant of God" require it, we must imitate Levi, "who said unto his father and his mother, I have not seen them; who acknowledged not his brethren, and knew not his own children †." It peculiarly behoves a *Missionary* to remember the declaration of our Lord; "If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters; yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple ‡." To love the creature more than the creator, is the worst idolatry. It is that, not of the posture or the speech, but of the *heart*; which God claims as his own exclusive right, and without which no gift or service can be fit for his accept-

* Titus iii. 4. ἡ φιλάνθρωπία ἐπεράνη τῷ σωτῆρις ἡμῶν θεῷ.

† Deuteronomy xxxiii. 9. ‡ Luke xiv. 26.

ance. Yet to this enormous sin we are universally and continually prone; and we have need, in our love to fellow-creatures, to guard against erring on the right hand, as well as on the left. The only path, in which we can walk with safety, is that of the law of God. He has given a plain and perfect rule, for the *degree*, as well as for the nature, of our principle of duty, in saying, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour AS THYSELF." To exceed, therefore, or to come short of an equal regard for the soul, the body, the possessions, the interests, of our neighbour, as for our own, is alike to disobey.

Such I consider to be the *principle* which the law of God requires us to adopt respecting our neighbour. May his Holy Spirit cause it to be rooted and grounded in your hearts, that you may be fruitful in every good word and work! *Then*, I am confident, you will not consider it as an unnecessary, or unimportant matter, to send the word of Salvation to distant heathens. You will interest and exert yourselves for this great object; you will cordially unite with those who have the honour to recommend it to you; you will highly esteem them for the work's sake; and no future obstacles, however arduous, dispiriting, or wearisome, will prevent your steadfast perseverance in the undertaking.

If you have willingly admitted the principle, that it is incumbent upon us, "to love our neighbour as ourselves;" I do not apprehend it will be difficult, in treating of its *extent*, to convince you that it is *applicable to the whole human race*.

When it is said, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself," is it not evident that the affection required by the law of God is not a mere emotion of natural feelings, produced by accidental circumstances, and dependent upon different degrees of constitutional sensibility?—It is also plainly distinct from that partial attachment, which is produced by the amiable and excellent qualities of some, in mind or person; or a similarity of dis-

position, habits, or sentiments, in others. If you are biassed, by the prejudices of a national or sectarian partiality, to join with this Jewish teacher in the question, "Who is my neighbour?"--attend to our Lord's reply. No weapon can be more completely adapted to demolish all the partition walls that human bigotry ever did, or ever can erect. It leaves not one stone of them standing upon another; it raises their deepest foundations: and it is owing only to the want of its proper application, that the ground, which they have encumbered, has not been sown with the seeds of peace and joy, and yielded an abundant harvest to the glory of God, and the salvation of souls.

Had the love of our neighbour admitted, in *any* case, of limitation, by national or religious distinctions, the *Jews* might have been excusable in restricting this duty to their own tribes. Descended from one father, and separated by God himself, to preserve his knowledge and his worship; forbidden to intermix with any of the idolatrous nations around them; and divinely appointed to be instrumental to the extirpation of some; what could be more natural than that *they* should confine their philanthropy within the bounds of their own nation, and add to the law of love towards their neighbour, the traditionary sanction of "hatred to their enemy?" But our Lord commanded his disciples, in contradiction to this favourite maxim, "Love your enemies, bless them who curse you, do good to them who hate you, and pray for them who despitefully use you; that ye may be the children of your father who is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust *."

Our Lord replied to the Jewish Lawyers' question in my text, in a manner perfectly agreeable to the

* Matthew v. 43, 45.

exhortation he had given to his own disciples. To render conviction more impressive, he couches the solution under a beautiful narrative, and draws the interpretation of it from the enquirer himself, in a confession of the possibility that even a *Samaritan* might deserve to be accounted the neighbour of a Jew. It is well known that the Samaritans, though in our Lord's time seemingly not addicted to idolatry, were, of all classes of people, the most odious to the Jews. We find repeated instances of their mutual enmity in the histories of the Old and the New Testaments. When the remnant of the kingdom of Judah was permitted to return from captivity, and to rebuild the temple at Jerusalem, the Monarch, whom God made his instrument for their restoration, assigned to them the tribute he had before received from their neighbours of Samaria; his predecessors having peopled that country with families collected from various parts of their dominions, after they had transported to distant countries the remains of the conquered kingdom of Israel. Hence the Samaritans strove by fraud and force to prevent the re-establishment of the Jews, and the new erection of their temple and their city. It was not likely that such treatment would not be resented; and a variety of circumstances occurred to cherish and heighten their animosity. This, however, was not the mind that was in Christ. In passing from Judea to Galilee he was obliged to cross the country of Samaria*. We have a delightful account of his interview with a poor abandoned woman, and others of the inhabitants, who become the first fruits of the Gentile harvest. Yet we find, that, in a farther attempt to do them good, in returning to Jerusalem, he was repulsed, and denied accommodations in one

* John iv. 4. &c.

of their villages, when he had not where to lay his head. The fact is related in the chapter immediately preceding that of our text; and it more strongly marks the philanthropy with which our Lord selects a good *Samaritan* for a pattern of compassion, and commands a Jewish teacher to “go and do likewise.”

This demonstrates to us the extent in which we are to understand the *title* in our text. “Who is my neighbour?” The *English* term in its derivation, as well as its common use, signifies one who *dwells nigh* to us: but the *original* word of the Old Testament, to which the question refers, has much more latitude of meaning, and is sometimes translated, one’s “friend,” one’s “fellow,” or companion; and, often, “one another.” In one place also our Lord adopts the most unlimited expression, when inculcating the proper exercise of mutual and equal love. “Therefore all things whichsoever ye would that MEN should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets*.” The Hebrew term †, to which I alluded, is derived from the pasturage of flocks, and admonishes us to regard *all mankind* as “sheep of God’s pasture;” equally depending on his power and goodness; and related, both to Him, and to each other, by a thousand endearing ties. Could a Pagan Comedian say, “I am a man, and I esteem no human being as an alien ‡:” and shall *we*, to whom “there is one God, and one Mediator between God and Men, the MAN Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time §”—shall *we* contract our regard to the narrow limits of our visible hori-

* Matthew vii. 12. † רעע from רעה.

‡ Homo sum: humani nihil à me alienum puto.

Terenc. Heautontim.

§ 1 Timothy ii. 5, 6.

zon, or to the yet smaller circles of our several religious assemblies and habitations? No; since the adventurous wings of navigation have compassed all the globe, since they have assured us that the continents and islands at our antipodes are filled with fellow-men, it has become our duty to love *them* as ourselves, to do to *them* what, in a like situation, we believe to be the greatest good they could have done to *us*--to send them the Gospel of Salvation. Alas! hitherto, how grossly have we failed! What inattention have we not shewn to our national advantages for the most extensive and important usefulness! What insensibility have we not discovered of that distinguished mercy which waisted the joyful sound, at so early a period of Christianity, to our remote and barbarous shores! May our immediate and unremitting exertions prove the sincerity of our repentance; though they cannot repair the sad effects of our past negligence, nor ought to annihilate our sensations of regret and shame!

The wishes of mankind, to diminish the number of those, towards whom important duties are to be exercised, are indisputably proved by their conduct; and sometimes even acknowledged and defended. It is, indeed, for those who deny the *duty* of doing good, but are strangers to the *pleasure* it yields, the only way to save themselves the trouble. Especially in a duty of such magnitude, as that of exercising love to others *equally as to ourselves*, it is not wonderful that the selfish, the covetous, and the indolent, leave no pretence untried, in order to reduce the multitude of claimants to the smallest possible extent. Nor will a person, who rejects the plain command of Christ respecting *all* men, be likely to satisfy himself with contracting the exercise of benevolence, till he concentrates it wholly in his own fordid interests; and stands, insulated from mankind, within the impassable line, which his deceitful heart, in agreement with the malignant powers of hell, has drawn around him. *Where* would you limit

limit philanthropy? Is it to Christendom? like Gideon's army of twenty thousand*, the number of your neighbours is too many. Detach all nations but your own: Like *his* forces, when reduced by timidity, they are yet too numerous. You must still thin their ranks by every possible distinction of civil or religious party; though the difference of sentiment or practice be of no more importance than that of lifting up water to the mouth, or bowing down to drink it. Sorry I am, that a difference, no greater, has power to cut off Christians from each others fellowship in the ordinances of Christ. But *so* contrary is the heart of man, even though partially renewed, to the nature and the tenor of the Gospel!

I stand before you, my brethren, not without a sense of my unfitness for the office, as an advocate for the whole human race. I plead that *all* may be admitted to the rights, or rather to the possession of your neighbourly affection. I recommend to your compassion their wives, their little ones; nay, not a hoof shall be left behind†. I claim for them an *equal* love with what you ought to bear to those most dear to you, with what you feel for your own-selves. This needs not, will not, cannot lessen your love to any. Philanthropy can do more than the rays of the sun; for not only, like them, it is undiminished when shared by millions, but it can enlighten and warm both hemispheres at once. Whilst you extend this love to the most remote and savage of mankind, it will have the happiest influence on your daily conduct towards your families, your friends, and fellow Christians. To none of these, individually, are you required to exercise a superior love to that which you bear to *yourself*. You owe nothing to any one, but "to love another "as yourself." There are gradations in the affini-

* Judges vii.

† Exodus x. 24, 26,

ties of life, but the duties of the highest are fulfilled by this alone. How tender, yet how strong, are the bonds of duty to our *parents!* And still there is a bond of higher obligation: for a man shall leave his father and his mother, to cleave to his *wife*. But when the Apostle inculcates, among the believers at Ephesus, a conduct worthy of the Gospel in the conjugal state*, he can require no more than that “every one in particular, should so love his “wife, even as himself.”

Whilst, therefore, a variety of relations, in the world, and in the Church of Christ, call for different degrees of our attention in the exercise of mutual love; and whilst the scriptures abound with exhortations to a suitable conduct; it is still plain that what we owe to all is the same in principle; it is *love*: and that to all we owe it *as to ourselves*. The differences that must and should subsist, in our exercise of this principle, towards various individuals or classes among our fellow creatures, seem reducible to three heads; the ability, the opportunity, and the necessity, for a proportionate exercise of love to others as ourselves. In each view, the Heathen have a claim to our practical regard. I proceed then, more particularly, to recommend to you the EXERCISE of this principle, as called for by the present occasion.

Every command of Christ implies endowment with *ability* for the performance. With the principle of love to others as ourselves, established in our hearts by the spirit of God, we are to exercise it to the utmost ability which God bestows. “If there “be first a willing mind, it is accepted according “to that a man hath, and not according to “that he hath not†.” If our qualities of mind, our strength of constitution, our situation in life, are such as enable us to encounter the difficulties, that may be expected in preaching the Gospel to

* Ephesians v. 33.

† 2 Corinth, viii. 12.

the Heathen, the principle of love to them, as to ourselves, requires that we should be ready for the arduous undertaking. Where *this* ability is deficient, it becomes us to do *what we can* towards the object. Can our knowledge of the Gospel, or of the world; our talents for instruction, or persuasion; our property, or our prayers; contribute to the bringing millions of our fellow creatures acquainted with the "only name under heaven whereby men can have salvation?" Oh, let not any of us be found wanting according to the ability which God hath given! Whether we have received five talents, or one only, let us be diligent in the proper application. The widow's mite was even more acceptable than the rich man's abundance, for she did more than others *in proportion* to her ability.

"As we have *opportunity*," said the Apostle of the Gentiles, let us do good to all, especially to them who are of the household of "Faith*." To such, if we act consistently, as Christians, we shall have *most* opportunity of doing good. From *them* our companions will be chosen. Their temporal wants will come most within our notice; and their spiritual trials will open peculiar channels for our benevolent assistance. But how strange a comment would it be on such a text, to argue that our philanthropy should *not* be extended to others! How unlike God our Saviour, who "when we were "without strength in due time died for the ungodly†!" How unsuitable a disposition in those whom Jesus came to seek and save, when lost! An *opportunity* now presents itself of doing good to distant Heathens. Surely, if you have the spirit that was in Jesus, and in his servant Paul, you will eagerly avail yourselves of the occasion. I fear it can hardly be said of us, as that Apostle wrote to the Philippians, "ye also *were* careful but ye lacked

* Gal. vi. 10.

† Romans v. 6.

" oppor-

“ opportunity.*” Had we been sufficiently intent on doing good in this important manner, we should probably have sought and found an earlier opportunity. But *now* the fairest, the most promising occasion courts your regard. The pitying friend of sinners stands at the door, and knocks. Oh! sleepers, rise and welcome him! Opportunity is furnished to those who are ready, “ for his name’s sake to go forth to the Gentiles:” opportunity is furnished to us all, to “ receive such, that we may be fellow helpers to the truth.†” No talent needs longer to be unemployed: here is room, here is a call for every one.

Do you wait for a stronger plea than those of your ability and opportunity for doing good to the heathen? I hope better things concerning you. Yet a stronger, if required, is at hand. Consider their *necessity* of your help! Who would not withhold, from the person dearest to him on earth, the satisfaction of one meal amidst daily abundance, to save a mere *stranger* from immediate death by famine! And are there those who argue that the heathen should be left to perish for lack of knowledge, because some corners of our own Island have not the Gospel preached in what we esteem purity! How many of our towns, and even villages, are feasted to the full! How many alas, seem glutted with wholesome doctrine, and evidently lothe it, as the satiated stomach does the honeycomb!

In *this metropolis*, might not one half the number of preachers, and places of worship, suffice for all who are disposed to hear the Gospel! Nothing is farther from my wish than to make you indifferent to the advancement of Christ’s cause around your own abodes. The principle I have recommended, if exercised to the utmost of our ability and op-

* Philippians iv. 10. † 3 Epist. John 7. 8.

portunity, will prompt us to much greater usefulness than has yet been attempted in our own, as well as in heathen countries. And, give me leave to ask, *who*, among those that slight our present object, have made more exertions for spreading the Gospel throughout England, than some who now discover the most ardent zeal for its extension to the heathen world: Besides a society has long been established for the former purpose, and its present funds are answerable to its calls. And are the heathen to be denied the crumbs that fall neglected from our tables? Is *this* to love them as ourselves?

The *necessity* I urge is that of the *Gospel*, not of the sovereign and *renewing grace* of the spirit of Christ. Of *that*, every one amongst us is in as great necessity for our salvation as the most savage heathen. *That*, we pretend not to communicate to others. Happy is it for us if we possess it ourselves! If so, we esteem the *Gospel* precious. We have found it to contain the only information that can satisfy our souls. Amidst all the advantages we enjoy from civilized society what should we do without it? What then can the poor heathen do, who are destitute of the numerous and important benefits of this kind, which we enjoy? You have heard some of the miseries which are produced by their infernal superstitions and uncontrouled depravity, described to you in very affecting terms dreadful as these have been represented to be, you cannot deny the probability of the facts, if you know the plague of your own hearts; or if you consider the condition of the Gentiles, before the Gospel was first preached among them, as it is related in the scriptures. If a doubt remains upon any of your minds about the awfully *necessitous* condition of heathens, examine carefully the last twelve verses of the first chapter to the Romans. They paint in gloomy colours indeed, the most exact resemblance of what man ever was, and ever

would be, without the genial influence of the word of God. They hold out to us a faithful mirror of our own natural face; and if we turn with horror from the loathsome image, let it be to reflect with the more lively gratitude, on what *we* owe to those who first brought the Gospel here; and to pursue, with more steadfastness and ardour, the measures, by which we may transmit this invaluable blessing to *others*, who still remain “in darkness, and in the shadow of death.”

To follow the example and directions of our Lord, we must seek out the most necessitous, as the *chief* objects of our attention. When reproached for associating with the more despised, and even the more profligate among the Jews, “They who are whole,” said he, “need not the physician, but they who are *sick*. I came not to call the righteous, but *sinners* to repentance*.” “What man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the rest, and go after that which is *lost*, until he find it.”—And why? its *necessity* requires his search. Why all that joy over the returning *prodigal*? Hear the glad father cry; “This my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found†!”

The whole scriptures abound with delightful instances of God’s peculiar regard to the most necessitous of his creatures; but no passage, perhaps, is better suited to connect this argument in behalf of wretched heathens, with those which have preceded, than the beautiful narration, by which our Lord replied to the enquiry in my text. Much has been said and written upon this pleasing pattern of compassion to the miserable; and the views, in which it has been exhibited, have varied, according to the authors, or preachers, aim and sen-

* Mark ii. 17. † Luke xv.

timent. I mean to present it to you simply in that light which most strongly reflects upon the immediate object of our attention.

In answer to the lawyer's question; "and *who is my neighbour?*" Jesus said, "A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead."—Poor unhappy creature! was this to have been expected from *fellow men*? probably, also, of the seed of Abraham!--Yet whilst we grieve, we cannot wonder. Ye shores of Africa! Ye realms of Indostan! hide forever those streams of human gore, that cry to heaven for vengeance on the rapacious cruelty of christians and of Englishmen! But what is the christian, or the British name, to persons who have no principle of *love* to fellow creatures? as well might this poor traveller have met a ravenous tyger, or a bear bereaved of her cubs, as men whose lusts and passions were unrestrained by the fear of God, or the love of human kind.

Alas! what misery has sin occasioned! Can its damage, in any degree, be repaired? As yet this ill-fated traveller is not wholly dead. He still breathes; though with difficulty. Timely relief may, perhaps, avail. And, happily, it is approaching. "A certain *priest* came that way." How seasonably is an instrument provided for the help of this languishing wretch! How *fit* an instrument, the Minister of God! How fair an *opportunity* is afforded to him of doing good! Can *necessity* ever plead more urgently than now?--Yet--is it possible?--he flies not to his help!- he turns away, and leaves the wretch to groan, and welter in his blood. But a Levite, also, another servant of God, comes to the spot; he looks at his helpless fainting fellow mortal; and he likewise passes by on the other side. What could be the intention of our Lord in ad-
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ducing instances like these? Can we suppose that teachers of religion are of all mankind the most hard-hearted? Are we to consider Ministers as Monsters?--I dare not, I would not, make the inference; though I can make no other. Blessed be God for the numerous assembly present, of those who preach, as well as of those who hear the Gospel! Yet, where are many *others*? Far be it from us to brand the greater part of pious clergymen, and orthodox Dissenting Ministers in this immense town, as the Priests and Levites of their day! Whether prejudice or prudence separates them, as yet, from our assemblies, I trust they will, upon mature reflection, either do us the pleasure to unite with us, or the honour to follow us, as far as we are followers of Christ. If they do *neither*, we cannot but grieve for the honour of their Lord and ours. With their *reasons* we have nothing to do. Whether good or bad, the *event* is the same. Doubtless the Priest and Levite had *their* reasons for passing by on the other side; but we are not informed of them. We know not what their *feelings* were on the occasion, or what *prayers* they might offer up that the Lord would succour this miserable object, in *his* way and time. We only know that *they* afforded not their help. They would have done it, had they loved their neighbour as themselves. They had the ability, the opportunity was presented, the necessity was obvious and affecting, but they had not the principle at heart. This, I trust, is not the case with many of these, who, hitherto, have given us no encouragement, would it were so with none!

I cannot proceed without remarking how great a difference of *outward character* may subsist in persons, who, notwithstanding, act upon the very same principle. How widely distant, in the eyes of most men, must have been the characters of the Priest and the Levite, from those of the banditti, who plundered and half murdered the poor traveller! These Ministers

nisters of religion would, probably, themselves, on returning to Jerusalem, enter the temple, and pray, each by himself, “ God I thank thee that I am not “ as the wretches who murdered the poor man I saw “ expiring !” Yet do you think they would go home justified in God’s sight ? It is plain they were as destitute of love to their neighbour, as the thieves and murderers themselves. Let not us, my friends, content ourselves with doing no *injury* to others. Love, indeed, “ worketh no ill to his neighbour : “ therefore love is the fulfilling of the law* ;” of that law which prohibits injury. But if love is the reverse of *hatred*, it is, also, essentially distinct from cold *indifference* : and a supine inattention to the *benefit* of fellow creatures is as absolute a proof that we love not our neighbour as ourselves, as if we were active to their detriment. Had the priest and Levite been actuated by a principle of philanthropy, they would as readily have availed themselves of the opportunity, to relieve this unhappy traveller, as the thieves did, to enrich themselves by his plunder. Their conduct proved them to be strangers to the principle. God forbid that our own should speak a similar language ! We vainly suppose ourselves to be effectually distinguished from those who have been instrumental in bringing heathen nations into a state of wretchedness, if we make no exertion towards their relief.

But a more pleasing scene waits our attention. At length a person comes, who “ has compassion on “ him that fell among the thieves.” But *who* is he ! A *Samaritan* ! Can any good thing come from Samaria ! It seems that, in this case, no good came from any other quarter. Perhaps, my friends, most of *us* are already stigmatised by some terms of contempt, either religious or political, by some of those who do not choose to join us in this endeavour to do good. And the rest of us may expect, at least, to be called enthusiasts for our pains. No matter, if

* Rom. xiii. 10.

we, under God's blessing, can accomplish, what others leave unattempted. And, if we fail, the *guilt* will not lie at our door, whatever *reproach* may be cast upon us. We prefer the latter to the former.

This Samaritan loved his fellow creature as himself. The spirit of God had implanted this principle in his heart, and now the providence of God furnishes him with an occasion for its exercise, in leading him, we know not how, to travel the same road. Whatever his business at Jerufalem, had been, his situation there must have been uncomfortable; for the Jews would certainly have no dealings with him. It seems, also, rather strange, that he should be on the way to Jericho; for it did not lead to his own country. Whatever was *his* object, God's design was evident; and he was ordained to fulfil it. He goes to the naked, bleeding, almost expiring Jew; pours healing balm, and invigorating liquor into his gaping wounds; binds them up with care and tenderness; resigns his own beast, for the support of the feeble but reviving man; conveys him to a place of accommodation upon the road; nurses him whilst he can stay, and leaves a strict charge for his proper attendance, when about to depart; taking upon himself the expence that might be needful for his cure.

Go, YE, and do likewise! The poor Gentiles are presented as objects for your compassionate regard. Their *Souls* are ready to sink into everlasting death. Sin hath stripped and wounded their noblest powers. Will *you* withhold the healing balm of a dying Saviour's love, which has been made known to you? Will you not hold out to their relief that wine which *you* hope to drink, in its perfection, in your Father's kingdom? God has given you ability, of various kinds, to contribute towards so delightful a consummation. Even with the unrighteousness Mammon you may make your selves friends that shall hereafter receive you into ever-

everlasting habitations. By a small *temporal* sacrifice, you may promote abundant *spiritual* good. The opportunity invites you, as it did the good Samaritan. Do not, like the priest and Levite, render it unproductive of anything but guilt!

Need I urge *authorities* for doing to others as you would have them to do to you. The unparalleled excellence of such a rule of conduct speaks for itself to *every* man's *conscience*. Even those who are so daring as to deny, or so unreasonable as to doubt the truth of a divine revelation, unanimously concur in admitting *this* principle. This doctrine, perhaps alone, has never, to my knowledge, been called in question where it has been heard of. But it is not the growth of earth, however admirably suited for the improvement of every soil. How generally soever it passes current, it is not of human coinage: it bears the image and superinscription of God alone. Man never saw the arche-type of this idea, but in the life of the Lord Jesus. Nor would any man have appointed a rule which none ever consistently practised. We have it besides *on record*, in sacred writings, which allow none that are profane to enter into competition respecting *antiquity*. And this law, which came by Moses, was illustrated and completed, not abrogated by the grace and truth which came by Jesus Christ. How often is it repeated, how beautifully enforced, both by *our Lord*, and after the effusion of the Holy spirit, by *his Apostles*! Let us be like them, "not without law to God, but "under the law to Christ*." If we reject his perfect law, of liberty from sin, and of filial obedience we are indeed less excusable, but not less deplorable in our condition, than the heathen whom I recommend to your compassion. No bark, without compass or helm, driven about by every gust of wind,

* 1 Corinth, ix. 21.

and crossed by every wave, could be in more uncertainty or danger, than we must be in renouncing the guidance of God's law. May we never lose the sight of our interest, nor the sense of our obligations, to "love our neighbour as ourselves!"

"Behold the *Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world!*"—Consider the glory of his person, and the greatness of his sufferings: think of the inestimable benefits received by his death, and hoped for through his life of intercession and authority; and ask yourselves whether delay and indolence are suitable, when HIS kingdom and HIS salvation are concerned!

Brethren, "what our hands find to do," towards extending the Gospel of Jesus to heathen and unenlightened nations, I trust we are resolved to "do with our might." Let us be careful to *act from the proper principle*. Let us often recur to our spring of action. We undertake a mission to the heathen, because the law of God, and the grace of Christ, teach us to "love our neighbour as ourselves." Whatsoever we do can be only acceptable to him from whom alone we can hope for success, as it proceeds from *this* motive. Whatever language we may speak, whatever gifts we may possess, whatever exertions we make, even in a cause so noble as the present, "without love we are nothing*."

Love, brethren, is an *universal* principle. Where it is genuine it extends to all our fellow creatures; it is applicable to every action of our lives. Let us *aim at consistency*. Let our love to distant heathens appear to be sincere from our dispositions and conduct towards those who are always with us. To *which*, amongst them, have we yet given suf-

* 1 Corinth. xiii. 2.

ficient proof that we love them as ourselves? Let our civil and religious connections find *their* advantage from the attention that has been raised, and the affections that have been excited towards the wretched heathen. I trust the several denominations to which *we* belong, are, by our concurrence in this grand object, already drawn into closer union, than they ever were, or perhaps, otherwise ever might have been. Cherish this auspicious harmony! May it prove the dawn of a brighter day than we yet have seen or thought of! But especially, may you, my friends, who are likely to be peculiarly charged with the conduct of this important concern, attend to that exhortation, “let all your
 “ affairs be done with charity*. You know, “ it
 “ suffereth long and is kind; it envieth not;
 “ vaunteth not itself; is not puffed up; doth not
 “ behave itself unseemly; seeketh not its own; is
 “ not easily provoked; thinketh no evil; rejoiceth
 “ not in iniquity,—but rejoiceth in the truth;
 “ beareth all things; believeth all things; hopeth
 “ all things; endureth all things†.”

Let us *trace this sacred stream up to its original fountain*. It is the effect, therefore, the evidence, of spiritual life. “The end of the commandment is
 “ love, out of a pure heart, a good conscience, and
 “ faith unfeigned‡.” It is the leading fruit of the spirit of Christ§. Without this principle, the exercise of which is now called for towards the heathen, we are none of Christ’s; for we have not his spirit¶. But we may rejoice in the certainty of having passed from death to life, if indeed we love our brethren||.

* 1 Corinth. xvi. 14. † 1 Corinth. xiii. 4. 7.

‡ 1 Timothy i. 5. § Galations v. 22.

¶ Romans viii. 9. || 1 John iii. 14.

Finally,

Finally, let us *follow it till it issues in a boundless ocean of bliss and glory*: many things are commonly esteemed religion, which, like the rivers of Arabia, are absorbed in their course, and never reach the sea. Not so the fraternal love of him who believes in Jesus. It is congenial with heaven, and preparatory for it. It is the earnest and the foretaste of everlasting life. In us, perhaps, the stream has yet been confined and broken. We trust it is widening as it flows, and deepening with its length. May the love of Christ bear us onward with resistless force, till mingling with the fullness of the Gentiles, we shall ascribe “to the Lamb that was slain, and hath redeemed us to God by his blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, for ever and ever§,” Amen!

§ Rev. v. 9, 13.

THE FULNESS OF TIMES.

SERMON IV.

PREACHED AT THE TABERNACLE,

September 23, 1795,

BEFORE THE MISSIONARY SOCIETY,

By JOHN HEY,

BRISTOL.

SERMON IV.

EPHESIANS i. 10.

That in the dispensation of the fulness of times, he might gather together in one, all things in Christ; both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, even in him.

REAL religion, produces in all who possess it an astonishing greatness of soul. It swells the bosom with the purest desires, and expands the heart with the most unbounded wishes for the happiness of men, and the honour of GOD.--This remark derives ample proof from the character and conduct of the great Apostle of the Gentiles: What sacred philanthropy dwelt in his breast!--What seraphic zeal fired his noble mind! Happy in the knowledge of his own salvation, he ardently panted for the salvation of others: and with all the vigour and warmth of an inspired man, he laboured to win souls to JESUS CHRIST. Every consistent method that could be devised he readily adopted, and *became all things to all men, if by any means he might save some.*

Nor was this all; his fervent love to precious souls was increased by their conversion to GOD. When they were sunk in sin, he exerted all his powers to rescue them from impending ruin; and

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when they were brought into a state of grace, and were happily devoted to the Lord, then, he beheld them with paternal affection, and rejoiced over them with exceeding joy.--Viewing them as his peculiar charge, he *cherished them, as a nurse cherisheth her children.*

From this source of pastoral love, emanated the various epistles of Paul to different churches, and individual characters. And among all that he wrote, I know not any which breathe a diviner spirit than this to the Ephesians. It commences with an affectionate salutation. Then follows a general account of those blessings, which were vouchsafed to them ; together with that of the fountain from whence, and the medium through which they flowed. To this is added the great design of God in bestowing them ;--viz. The praise of the glory of divine grace.

The believing Ephesians, were doubtless, led to wonder at such a display of infinite love : but the Apostle, to increase their admiration, conducts them into a still higher field : He informs them that GOD had revealed so much of the mystery of his will to him and his fellow Apostles, as to authorize them to assert, that what was already done by the light and power of the Gospel, was but a specimen of what should succeed ; for in the dispensation of the fulness of times GOD would gather together in one, all things in CHRIST, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth, even in HIM.

In the discussion of the subject our thoughts will be employed in meditating ;--on the important period specified in the text, and--on that glorious work which will be accomplished during the same.

I. The important *period* specified in the text.--Our Apostle calls it, *The dispensation of the fulness of times.* By which he intends a marvellous season of grace, which has not (at least in the fullest sense of the

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the words) yet taken place.—To discover the import, strength, and beauty of these expressions, we must fix our attention.

I. On the *times* referred to.—The bible speaks of various times; such as times appointed, times predicted, *times and seasons which the FATHER has put in his own power*. These several periods include every moment of terrestrial existence, from the creation to the end of the world; together with all that astonishing variety of occurrences which are comprised and connected in the universal providence of GOD. These multitudinous events, present themselves to our view in the page of both sacred and profane history, in greatly diversified colours and forms.

We read of *times* of ignorance. Our world hath been most awfully afflicted with times of mental obscurity; *darkness hath covered the earth, and gross darkness the people*. It is true, some celestial rays, have been granted to particularly illustrious characters in the most benighted times. Several of the Antediluvian patriarchs were divinely illuminated of GOD. After them venerable Abraham and his descendants were, for many ages, highly distinguished in this respect, because to them pertained the adoption and the glory, the covenants, and the giving of the LAW: to them were committed the ORACLES of the living GOD.

But alas! what clouds of intellectual gloom enveloped the Gentile nations: They literally sat in the shadow of death. For though there were some among them, who, by the aids of philosophy, or rather the diverging rays of revelation, discovered something, of what many have called natural religion; yet with all their boasted wisdom, how bewildered did they remain? They had just light sufficient to render their darkness visible. The chief good and the way to attain it were equally concealed from their view.

But

But we have the pleasure to observe, that mankind have been favoured with *luminous times*. JESUS, the great Angel of the covenant, foreseen by the eye, and foretold by the lip of prophecy, descended and lightened the earth with his glory. *Life and immortality were brought to light by the Gospel*. When the refulgent SUN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS unveiled his hidden glories; the dismal caverns of darkness which were lined with thickest folds of fullen obscurity, and impervious to every inferior beam, became irradiated with the splendors of heavenly day. Temples of impious idolatry, were converted into places of sacred devotion, and millions of souls exulted under the smiles of their incarnate GOD.

Happy, thrice happy, we are ready to say, would it have been for the immortal race of Adam, if this delightful period, this golden age of grace, had never been obscured by footy exhalations ascending from the bottomless pit. But hell had not as yet, exhibited its master piece. Devils now began to sit in permanent council, and all, that Satanic skill could devise, all, that Satanic influence could produce, was determined upon.

In pursuance of this, appeared the Pagan fury, in the Roman emperors. That *fury*, which for the space of near three hundred years most cruelly shed the blood of christians, and glutted itself with human gore. Soon after this followed the great, infamous Arabian deceiver Mahomet; whose accursed limbs were also bathed in blood, while he compelled the nations, that he conquered, to receive his baneful tenets on the point of the sword. About one hundred years after him, in the seventh century, that hydra-headed monster the Papal beast took his rise, that beast, that *opposeth and exalteth himself, above all that is called God*. His coming, says an Apostle, was *after the working of Satan, with all power, and signs, and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness*

circableness of unrighteousness in them that perish. From hence resulted a season greatly to be lamented, viz.

A time of error and general defection from the primitive faith. The author of the second Epistle to the Thessalonians describes this event in the predictive language of *falling away*. By this peculiar circumstance, the man of Sin, the son of Perdition, was to be manifested; and marked with such notorious abominations, as to be read and known by all enlightened persons. This almost universal declension had a surprizing effect on the professors of christianity, and produced an astonishing alteration, both in the state and the appearance of things; for from this alarming apostacy resulted

A time of awful superstition. The most ridiculous, not to say blasphemous modes of worship, were now invented, an almost endless train of contemptible, unmeaning, and useless ceremonies, were introduced into the pretended service of God; while a long catalogue of ecclesiastical names and titles, were fabricated for the purpose of adding strength, firmness, and permanency to the anti-christian hierarchy. The hemisphere of the church, now became obscured, by successive swarms of locusts, which issued from the volcano of Rome. These continued to multiply, spread, and prevail, till,

A time of tremendous persecution began under the reign of the Papal beast. This persecution raged with unabating fury for several ages. The most cruel and unheard-of torments were inflicted on those who worshipped God in spirit and in truth. Ah! what did the christians in the vallies of Piedmont and other places suffer during this period? What lowering clouds of ignorance, superstition, and barbarity, overspread the christian world, till it pleased God, by raising up eminent men, to bring on

The time of the glorious Reformation. This was a time of joy and prosperity to the church of God.

Truth

Truth now began to shine in its native lustre and beauty. The most solemn protestations were made against the errors of the church of Rome. The most bold and effectual measures were concerted, and adopted, for the subversion of the Papal system. Thousands were speedily led to the reception of evangelical doctrines; and whole nations, including both princes and people, which had long groaned beneath tyranny and oppression, obtained liberty of conscience, and glorified God.

We are now brought to that period, referred to in the text. We have glanced at times of almost every description; times of ignorance, defection, superstition, persecution, light, and reformation; at length we are arrived at the period called *the fulness of times*.

God, who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, hath, in his unerring wisdom, given permission to new and false prophets, sin and hell, popes and devils, to exert their utmost rage and influence in opposition to his cause and interest in the world. And now to confound these mighty adversaries of his church, he will bring on, in the end of those times, a dispensation of incomparable glory. This is styled in our text *the dispensation of the fulness of times*.

What can our apostle intend by this, but the last stage of the gospel dispensation; that epocha of it, in which, the refulgence of sacred truth will burst forth with overwhelming glories, and continue to shine till the gloom of superstition, of error and of sin, is for ever banished from the face of the earth. This thought introduces the subsequent part of the subject, which is,

II. That glorious work which will be accomplished during this wonderful dispensation. The nature of this work is expressed under the idea of gathering together in one all things in Christ, &c.

viz.

viz. To incorporate in one body, or unite in one complete system, all things in heaven and on earth.

This presupposes that a disunion and disagreement have taken place, between the various ranks of beings, which God hath made. Several considerations unite to corroborate this idea. That happy and reciprocal influence which the creatures would otherwise have had upon each other, appears to have been perverted, and in numerous instances rendered noxious and destructive.

If we take a survey of the system of nature in general, we behold the red lightning gleaming through the vast expanse and menacing the inhabitants of the earth with fiery ruin. We see winds and storms deracinating shrubs and trees, and sweeping away the herbage of the field; while tremendous earthquakes rend the ponderous rocks asunder, and hurl the huge mountains from their deepest bases.

So terrible and violent are the convulsions of nature sometimes, that it appears as if she meditated her own destruction. If we turn to the brutal tribes, we clearly perceive with what sanguinary gust, and savage ferocity many of them prey upon each other. If we contemplate beings of a higher order, beings that are distinguished by rational and immortal powers; what baneful and destructive quarrels have obtained among them? we see not only one individual rising up against another; but nation against nation, kingdom against kingdom, and not unfrequently a whole continent of nations, kingdoms and empires, engaged at once in the mutual slaughter. Nor is this all; the disagreement has reached even heaven itself. How has the divine majesty been insulted by the avowed rebellion of wicked and ungrateful men! How have holy angels been displeased at the conduct of human sinners, at a line of deportment so dissimilar to that of their own! While deeply fallen devils, envying the glory of the
seraphic

feraphic legions, and exulting in the apostacy of man; have felt the most malignant joy at the awful breach that has taken place.

This alarming disagreement was occasioned by sin. Sin entered into the world; and death, death, with all its harbingers, concomitants, and consequences, by sin. The earth sustains a curse in consequence of the original transgression of man; *curfed* (said the Lord to Adam) *is the ground for thy sake.*

Ferocious animals, in all probability inherit their rapacious dispositions and devour their kindred beings under the influence of this curse. That pride and accursed ambition, which have generated the most desolating wars, and rendered the world a theatre of blood, a mere slaughterhouse of men, have originated in sin. That variance which has so long existed between heaven and earth, is ascribable to the same nefarious cause.

But notwithstanding these awful breaches, the LORD JEHOVAH will fulfil his gracious purpose in *gathering* together in one, all things in CHRIST; both which are in heaven and which are on earth.

The precise import of these expressions may perhaps be difficult to ascertain, but probably the following observations may tend in some degree to their elucidation. When the apostle asserts that God will gather together in one, all things in Christ, he means, That all things in creation, together with every event of divine providence and effect of sovereign grace, are, and will be, so connected, as to compose one grand system of universal economy; in which all the perfections of DEITY will shine forth with ineffable splendour and glory. The happy spirits around the throne in heaven, incessant in their adorations of the great supreme, unite in the subject of their songs, creation, providence, and grace. See Rev. chap. iv. and. v.

But again; The inhabitants of different climes, customs, colours, habits, and pursuits, both in Christian and in Pagan lands, shall be united in one large society under the genial influence of gospel grace: *so that there shall be one fold under one shepherd.* If this is adopted as the leading sense of the passage; then by *heaven*, may be intended the church of CHRIST already existing in the world, and by *earth*, those benighted lands which are sunk in Pagan delusion and idolatry. But without recurring to this construction of the passage, we know from the positive declarations in the Bible, that JEHOVAH has determined to unite in JESUS CHRIST, both Jews and Gentiles, Barbarians, Scythians, bond and free, that *Christ may be all and in all.*

These words may signify farther, that human and angelic intelligences will be associated in harmony and love. It is evident beyond dispute, that angelic beings have been employed with rapture and delight in announcing the glad tidings of salvation to men, and when by efficacious grace, men are reconciled to God, they desire an assimilation to those ethereal spirits. Our adorable IMMANUEL has informed us that the time will come when the millions of redeemed men, shall be as the angels of God.

Some have supposed that the happy effect of this general union, will be the universal agreement of the instinctive and irrational tribes. Agreeably to this, speaks the prophet Isaiah chap. ii. ver. 6, 7, 8, 9. *The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid and the calf, and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together, and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp. And the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice's den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be*

full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.

Is it improbable that the above cited passage may be literally fulfilled? As the gospel spreads, it will promote civilization, population, agriculture, and commerce: these will increase till every part of the habitable globe is cultivated and occupied. The result of this will be the extirpation of most of the noxious creatures, and may not those which remain, perhaps, be so far domesticated, as to herd with tamer animals, and even suffer children to play with them without injury?

But we have more immediately to do now, with that blessed union which will take place among men, when the Lord shall have accomplished his purpose in converting the heathen nations to himself. All mankind will then be made to drink into one spirit, agree in one hope of their calling, and unite in the worship and praise of the one everlasting JEHOVAH. In that *day there shall be one Lord, and his name one.* No God shall be worshipped but the true God, and all shall join in the delightful exercise.

The grand instrument by which this amazing work will be accomplished is the glorious gospel of God our Saviour. *All things are to be gathered together in CHRIST, even in HIM.* viz. In his name, through his mediation, and by his power.

The great commission with which the heralds of salvation are invested, is to go and preach repentance and remission of sins, in IMMANUEL'S NAME among all nations. To inform them that GOD *was,* and still is, in CHRIST, *reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them.* The propriety and glory of this gospel message, are founded on the mediatorial work of JESUS CHRIST. *He who knew no sin, was made a sin-offering for men that they might be made the righteousness of GOD in him. He died the just for the unjust to bring sinners unto GOD.*

It is by the Almighty power of JESUS, that this great work is to be accomplished. For this purpose all power is given unto HIM in heaven and in earth. We have a fine illustration of this in Psalm cx. 1, 2, 3. *The Lord said unto my Lord, sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool. The Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion. Rule thou in the midst of thine enemies. Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning thou hast the dew of thy youth.*

There are weighty reasons to be assigned why this important work will be effected by the instrumentality of the Gospel of CHRIST.

I. It is superior to all other systems. This appears in *the excellency of its doctrines*. The essential doctrines of the Gospel lie in a narrow compass; They are remarkably perspicuous, simple, and plain; though at the same time inconceivably sublime. The principles on which they are founded, are the most obvious to men, viz. Justice and Mercy, and notwithstanding their numerous ramifications, yet by no means beyond the reach of the human understanding. These sentiments are rendered indisputable by matter of fact. How many thousands are there in our own land, who, though their capacities are extremely feeble and entirely unaided by literary advantages; yet understand, love, and adorn the Gospel of JESUS. That which has enlightened the poor and ignorant of one country is equally adapted to the instruction of the poor and ignorant of every country under the sun.

The Gospel surpasses all other systems in the *Glory of its Promises*. It engages to bestow on its votaries, something infinitely more felicitating and delightful than Elysian fields and sensual gratifications. It insures to all who embrace it, inviolable security, strong consolation, and ample support under all the trials

trials of the present state. It promises hope and joy, in death: and beyond the grave *an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away.*

It excells all other systems in *the purity of its precepts.* These infinitely transcend all the maxims of morality invented by heathen sages, or imposed by the corruptors of christianity. Gospel precepts are clear, concise, and deeply interesting. They prohibit only what would injure us, and enjoin nothing but what will essentially contribute to our peace and happiness. *The Statutes of the Lord are right rejoicing the heart. The commandments of the Lord are pure enlightning the eyes.* We know him who hath said, *My yoke is easy and my burden is light.*

The threatnings contained in the Bible render it a fit instrument for converting the heathen. They speak the language of impartial justice, and with God-like authority, are calculated to alarm the guilty conscience in the most effectual manner, and to deter the ungodly from the perpetration of abominable crimes. The thundering sound of that text; *The wicked shall be turned into hell, with all the nations that forget God;* has prevented the commission of many crimes and much evil in the world.

II. The success which has heretofore attended the preaching of the Gospel evinces it to be the proper instrument for the conversion of mankind. On turning an eye to the historic page, we clearly perceive that it has operated wonders already. With what incredible rapidity did it fly through the nations, when first promulgated by the Apostles and their immediate successors! How mightily did it prevail over the ignorance of savage Barbarians, and the deep-rooted prejudices of Jewish unbelief and Grecian pride? every effort that could be devised, was made to stem that torrent of Gospel light which was then rolling on a benighted world. The implacable malevolence of infidel Jews; the terrible vengeance of the Roman arm; and the un-

bounded

bounded licentiousness of Gentile idolaters; were all united to stop the progress of the conquering Saviour, but in vain. Jesus rode on in his Gospel chariot with majestic sway, till his blessed word in a short time was fully preached from Jerusalem, round about to Illyricum.--Rom. xv. 19.

Since the reformation, the Gospel has gained ground; for notwithstanding the supposed increase of deism, we have reason to believe that truth was never preached in greater purity, and never heard by greater numbers among us than it is at this day.--And we hope the time approaches when a still brighter dispensation, and a more extensive spread of the Gospel will take place even in European, as well as in foreign and heathen lands.

III. Our expectations, as to the spread and prevalence of the Gospel, are greatly encouraged by the promises which the divine *Father* has made to his incarnate SON. *Ask of me and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for a possession. It is a light thing that thou shouldst be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel; I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles that thou mayest be my salvation to the ends of the earth.* Can everlasting veracity fail to accomplish such promises as these? No! sooner shall heaven and earth pass away, than one jot or tittle of these pass unfulfilled.

The predictions with which the Bible abound respecting this wonderful event, animate and confirm our hopes. Many of the prophecies have already had their accomplishment, others remain to be fulfilled. Let us select a few. *He shall have dominion from sea to sea, and from the river unto the end of the earth.--It shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established on the top of the mountains; and all the nations shall flow into it; I will gather all nations and tongues, and they shall come and see my glory. From the rising of the sun, even unto the going down of the same, my name shall be great*

great among the Gentiles, and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name, for my name shall be great among the heathen, saith the Lord of hosts.

This Gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world, for a witness among all nations, and then shall the end come.

Hail, happy, happy, period ! in which God will dispense the blessings of his kingdom, kept in reserve for those who shall live in the latter days. When the streams of richest grace shall emanate from the fountain of life, and flow in every direction to the most distant climes of the habitable globe. When *living waters shall go out from Jerusalem, half of them towards the former sea, and half of them towards the hinder sea, in summer and in winter shall it be.*

From a review of what hath passed under our notice at this time, we may derive encouragement, as to our present momentous undertaking.

That arm which stands engaged to bring salvation to the heathen, is omnipotent. He that hath promised to gather the outcasts of the people is JEHOVAH, and His designs cannot fail. He is a rock, and his work is perfect.

From predictions recorded ; from promises given ; from that success which has attended and crowned feebler efforts already made ; from that ardent desire which glows in the bosoms of thousands, both ministers and people ; from the present state of illusive systems, and the cool indifference of their respective votaries ; from the prognosticating aspect of the times ; but above all from the infinite love, the inviolable truth, the immutable faithfulness and the uncontrollable power of the LORD ALMIGHTY ; What may we not expect ?

But with all this encouragement let us not forget our province as to a vigorous, diligent, and persevering use of means. The means are now before us, and that important plan by which our active endeavours will be regulated is now formed. All that we can possibly do, by rendering pecuniary

aid, by fervent and continued prayer, by encouraging those who are judged fit persons for a missionary life, to undertake so noble a work for God and for precious souls; all that can be done in these, or in any other way, demands our zealous co-operation, and our exertions ought to bear some proportion to the prospects which open to our view.

My brethren, has the gospel come to us *in power, in the HOLY GHOST, and in much assurance?* Do we indeed believe the Bible, and credit its divine testimony respecting the awful realities of the eternal world? Have we formed a proper estimate as to the value of immortal souls? Do we indeed love like those who are born from above? and shall we refuse to embark in so glorious a cause? Have we not applauded the transactions of our redeeming GOD? Have we not professed to admire the wisdom that shines and the grace that reigns in the plan of our salvation? And do we not from sabbath to sabbath in heavenly concert, crown the bleeding SAVIOUR with sacred acclamations for his dying love, for his rising power; for his groans on Calvary, and for his gracious intercession on Zion's holy hill? And shall we discover any inattention to, or reluctance in a work of such mercy and magnitude as that now before us?—O let us not forget our closet sighs, our secret groans, our private vows. Have we not prayed ten thousand times, *Thy kingdom come?* Have we not said among our friends, in our pulpits, and in our most solemn addresses to GOD; have we not said, *For Zion's sake I will not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth, And will she become a name and a praise in all the earth;* And shall we after all wrap ourselves and our talents in the napkin of indolence, and sit down in a state of cold indifference? God forbid. While we enjoy the means of grace, the light of truth, and the blessings

blessings of salvation, while we participate the prelibations of unclouded glory ; O let us remember our brethren who are perishing for lack of knowledge ; let us remember and pray for them ; let us remember and act for them ; let us remember and go, and shew unto them the way of salvation.

In order to animate our minds and stimulate our efforts, we ought to contemplate the delightful effects which will result from our united exertions when succeeded by the blessing of God. Behold the messengers of the Lord winged with celestial alacrity and love, flying to different and widely distant climes, bearing the precious treasure of the everlasting gospel in their hearts and on their tongues ; see them, after having been divinely preserved on the mighty ocean ; see them, embracing foreign shores, and penetrating barbarous regions ; regions, full of the habitations of cruelty and wretchedness. Behold these servants of the most high God, fixing the lamp of life and joy in the vallies of darkness and woe ; while the savage tribes, late sunk in ignorance and misery, but now secretly drawn by sovereign grace, press in crowds to catch the cheering ray. Behold these servants of the most high God, erecting the standard of evangelic truth on the gloomy mountains of superstition and gross idolatry ; and Ethiopia stretching forth her hands, to partake of the golden fruit, produced by the bending TREE OF LIFE and designed for the healing of the nations.

What a pleasing change now takes place ! How different the aspect of those countries where the gospel hath come with invincible energy. The seed of life is sown, heavenly dews descend upon it, it takes root, springs forth, and produces in some thirty, in some sixty, and in others an hundred fold. Now, beings who were once accustomed to plunder and slaughter, and who lived more like wild beasts than men, are delightfully humanized, and their

their native ferocity yields to the influence of civilization. Immortal minds, which were held under the empire of darkness, immersed in sensuality, and prostituted to the most barbarous customs, and the most abominable crimes, are now made light in the LORD, holy in their affections, are divinely employed in acts of sublime devotion, and engaged in the sacred service of the great JEHOVAH. Where the savage war whoop, the dismal howl, that portended the sanguinary onset of murdering legions was heard; there, even there the melody of gospel songs resounds in the vallies, echoes through the plains, bounds over the hills, and flies across the nations; and the lands of rapine, of horror, and of blood, become as fields which the Lord has blessed. Where smoking altars stood, overspread with human victims, even there, do peaceful temples of righteousness and love appear, in which, not burning bodies, but glowing souls ascend to God in the sweet incense of tributary praise. In fine; regions which resembled the very antichamber of hell, where the prince of darkness reigned in uncontrolled tyranny, infolding his subjects in blackest wreaths of infernal gloom: these regions are happily emancipated from the most horrid slavery, and illuminated with celestial beams, whilst JESUS, the prince of peace, enthroned in the serene glory, reigns over the nations with mildest grace and infinite love. *Now the wilderness and the solitary place is glad, the desert rejoices and blossoms as the rose, and the barren land is converted into delightful fields of fertility and joy.*

How solemn is this time! How eventful is this period! What objects do our wishes and hopes embrace?—Our mutual efforts aim not at the acquisition of territory; or the accumulation of wealth; we do not aspire after dominion over the persons, the property, the consciences and liberties of men; no, we wish to promote the temporal and everlasting happiness of our fellow creatures;

the felicity of individuals, of families, of nations, yea, of all nations were it the will of God.--What will the result of these our united exertions be? Unseen worlds are waiting in silent suspense to see the mighty issue; for mighty it will be, either in its failure or success. It will either tend to establish the triumphs of infidelity, or to spread the glories of IMMANUEL'S NAME. O when I reflect on this, how is my heart affected? but I will dismiss my fears; JESUS must reign till all his enemies are put under his feet.---Opposition we must expect. The powers of darkness grin horribly; sceptics will hold our attempts in derision; timid and hypocritical professors will censure our zeal; while savage barbarity and heathen priest-craft will make the most avowed and obstinate resistance to our well-meant endeavours.--But let us take courage; notwithstanding this formidable alliance we may be confident of success. Greater are they that are for us than all that be against us. Good men are praying for us; smiling angels are waiting ready on the wing, to aid our every struggle; And our adorable MASTER bids us go forward, saying, *Fear not for I am with thee, be not dismayed for I am thy God, I will keep thee, I will strengthen thee, yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness. Be not weary in well-doing, for in due season ye shall reap if ye faint not.*

God grant his blessing through Jesus Christ.

GLORIOUS DISPLAYS OF
GOSPEL GRACE.

S E R M O N V.

PREACHED AT SURRY CHAPEL,

September 24, 1795,

BEFORE THE MISSIONARY SOCIETY,

BY THE

Rev. ROWLAND HILL, A. M.

ADVERTISEMENT

TO THE READER.

THE Public are requested to notice, that this Sermon was entirely extempore ; the preacher, not in the least supposing that it would be demanded for Public inspection, had nothing before him but a few references to different passages of scripture ; and that the short-hand writer could scarce preserve a quarter of what was then delivered, as from the multitudes that attended, he was placed in a situation, in which he had neither room to write, nor an opportunity distinctly to hear. The preacher, however, has done his best in recollecting what was then delivered ; and has preserved, to the utmost of his power, the free, plain extempore style of his sermon ; nor has he conceived himself at liberty to add a new thought to the subject ; but as he was compelled by necessity, either to keep up the connexion, or from the scantiness of the materials he had for the work.

SERMON V.

MATT. XXIV. 14.

This Gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations, and then shall the end come.

IF ever my mind, felt the solemn weight of those words of the good old Patriarch, "surely this is "none other" but the house of God and the gate "of heaven," it is on this present occasion. Can we suppose that so many of God's ministers and people should find it in their hearts to assemble together on such a glorious design, and He not be present with them? O surely not! we believe him to be in the midst of us. Nor can any thing short of his special presence, crown our labours with success. What a mercy then, that we live in a day, in which the Lord's promise is, we hope, to be remarkably verified, "*Behold I am with you always, even to the end of the world.*"

Matters of salvation are of infinite importance. The glory of bringing souls to Christ is the greatest honour God can confer upon us. The salvation of one soul is of more worth than a thousand worlds. My dearest brethren in the ministry, may God fill us with the like ardent desires to those which warmed the Apostle's heart, when he was constrained

strained to declare to his Galatian hearers, that *he travail'd in birth again till Christ was formed in them.* And while you thus assemble upon the business of sending the Gospel to heathen nations, may you on your departure, beloved brethren, from this our British Jerusalem, be so filled with the spirit and power from above, as that you may be a thousand times more successful, not only in promoting good among those whom you are more immediately concerned to serve in the ministry of the word, but also for the conversion of the *poor heathens in your neighbourhood*; for O, what crowds of heathens, and worse than heathens, though under the christian name, are every where to be found amongst us! And why may we not expect that such a fire shall now be kindled as that not only wonders be done among the nations that know not God, but that even in our own land, it shall be our portion also to be indulged with a remarkable revival of the power of religion, “a time of refreshing from the “presence of the Lord.”

What littleness and insignificance are stamp'd upon all the things of time and sense, when compared to such blessings as these! what avail the things that are temporal in comparison of those that are eternal? here are glories that words can never reach, nor tongue express, and I wonder not at the sensations of one happy mind, who, though quite in the agonies of dissolving nature, and beyond the power of giving an intelligible answer to any question ask'd, yet, with a hope full of immortality though in the jaws of death, felt such blessedness upon his mind as constrained him to lift up his arms in triumph, and with a very heaven on his countenance thrice to repeat, O the glories! O the glories! O the glories!

Now to be made the happy instruments of conveying so much felicity, in such solemn circumstances, as this dying man felt, what an honour!
while

while we live, may God fill our hearts with these surprizing glories; that they may be our cordial in our departing moments; and may divine mercy teach a world of sinners to seek the same!

We shall not then blush, at what the world calls the irregularity of our conduct: When an Apostolic warmth of zeal shall make every minister a Missionary around his own neighbourhood; and when, touched with the sacred tenderness of Christian compassion, he can never be contented while on earth, to leave a single sinner within his reach, unconverted to God.

A poor sinner in her dying moments, requesting that a despised servant of Jesus Christ, might visit her before her departure, heard some one ridicule her choice, that she should call in one of such a methodistical character, a common street-preacher, and field-preacher; roused with zeal and gratitude to God, for the instrument of her conversion, she said to those who stood around her, "let who will
"despise him, I will thank him before men and an-
"gels, that he went out into the streets and lanes of
"our city, to bring my lost wandering soul to God:" I drop the hint, to encourage you my brethren in the blessed work of field preaching, that we may be instant in season, and out of season, and do the work of an Evangelist. But I am now to follow the plan designed from the text, Lord help me! The word before us, gives us to understand, that as wonders have in former ages been done by the Gospel, so in future, still greater glories shall be accomplished: Nor in our day *is the Lord's arm shortened that it cannot save, or his ear waxed dull, that it cannot hear.* Nay, the longer we live, the manifestation of still greater glories ought to be expected: for the time is still to come, when the *knowledge of God, as says the voice of prophecy, shall cover the earth, as the waters do the sea: yea, the kingdoms of the earth shall become the kingdoms of our Lord, and his Christ: while*

faints and angels wait with holy impatience, were it possible, to rend the vault of Heaven at the arrival of the time, when that song, more universally than ever, shall be sung, *Hallelujah! for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth: King of Kings, and Lord of Lords!*

I mean not merely to shew that the gospel of the kingdom was preached in all ages, since the fall of man; but more especially to note the out-pourings of the spirit in different ages, under the divine manifestation of mercy to mankind, that our hearts may be enlarged, and our hopes quickened on this present occasion.

No sooner had our first parents brought sin into the world by their transgression, and scarcely had divine justice pronounced the curse, when sovereign mercy dropt the gracious promise, *the seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head*; thus was the gospel first preached in Paradise itself; they, to whom it was preached, we trust, lived upon the promise given, and looked with long expectation after it; they even seemed to conclude, they had obtained the accomplishment, when Eve, upon the birth of her first son, to render the passage more literally, cried, *I have gotten a man, the Lord.*

This we may call the first spring of mercy to fallen man; but we find it awfully limited to a narrow channel throughout the Antediluvian world; while such floods of iniquity overspread the face of the earth, that God himself is described as "*repenting that he had made man,*" yea as being on this account, "*grieved at his heart:*" In the family of Noah alone, was the knowledge and fear of God preserved.

But now the stream that began to flow from the most early period of time, gradually increases and continues upon the increase like a spreading river, till its wide extended currents open themselves into the bosom of the ocean.

God

God separated Abraham and his family early for that purpose. The faith of that renowned Patriarch was strong and clear, respecting the person and glories of Christ. Faith is a long-sighted grace, for notwithstanding the distance of time, *he rejoiced to see Christ's day, he saw it and was glad.* Paul declares that the same faith, which justified Abraham, justifies believers in Jesus in all ages; that the blessings of the same salvation, are to be imparted to us also, if blessed with the same faith that dwelt in him, who is the father of the faithful. And indeed, all the great works done by the worthies of old, are described in the eleventh of the Hebrews, as done by faith in the Lord Jesus, which alone rendered them acceptable in the sight of God, for "*without faith it is impossible to please him.*"

A glorious increase was to be given to this family, the more they were persecuted, the more they multiplied. Divine ordinances, instituted by God himself, were given them, that they might be kept apart from all other nations, and preserved from their idolatry, and might be at the same time instructed to understand, and to wait for the kingdom of the Lord Jesus; this was the casket, in which the jewel of divine truth was preserved, till it shone forth with all its lustre, under the gospel dispensation. The first display of a more immediate outpouring of the Spirit of God, seemed to be, when the out-stretched arm of the Lord brought this his Israel out of Egypt. In reference to this period, the Lord thus expresses himself, concerning them, *go and cry in the ears of Jerusalem; thus saith the Lord, I remember thee; the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals, when thou wentest after me in the wilderness, in a land that was not sown; Israel was holiness unto the Lord, and the first fruits of his increase,* Jer. ii, 2. And O that God would now create in the hearts of many, the same holy and devoted zeal, leading them to take pity upon heathen lands,

that they may go forth for his dear name's sake, in a wilderness, in a land that is not sown. While God proposes the question, who is he that will go for me? may the ready answer be found in the hearts of many prepared by himself, "here am I, send me."

We next notice other revivals that succeeded: Caleb the son of Jephunneh, and Joshua the son of Nun, stand highly recorded in sacred writ. Though sin kept the generation of their contemporaries from the promised land--They rotted through unbelief in the Wilderness--yet nothing could affect the lives of these men of renown, or prevent them from possessing their desired Canaan: great was the revival of religion in their days, and much good was done by their instrumentality: God was eminently with them, and they acknowledged him in all their ways. No Canaanitish foe could prevent their glorious progress, they were conquerors, yea more than conquerors, because they believed on their God. And cannot God give the like precious faith in the present undertaking? When God says, *let there be light*, is it in the power of all hell to create darkness? When he says, *arise, shine*; shall not Omnipotence prevail? we triumph while we believe in God. *If God be for us, who can be against us?*

Once my mind had its doubts respecting a mission to the heathen: Unbelief said there were a thousand difficulties in the way. I thank God that my soul was made to blush, when that text was brought to my recollection, *God is able from these stones, to raise up children to Abraham*. Now what is so inanimate as a stone? Had the metaphor been taken from trees, or any other part of the vegetable creation, there we might have discovered the existence, at least of vegetable life; but what power can command stones to live, but the power of the living God?

We want men for this business, Calebs, and Joshuas; such as these only ought to go forth, and such only as are armed out of God's armoury, shall succeed. Some that have worn their own earthly armour, have fatally proved how ill it answers their design; it interrupts their agility, and frustrates their intent; but the armour, which God's people are commanded to wear, proves just the reverse. The helmet formed by man, though it adds a tallness to the stature, and a dignity to the person, yet must be supported by the head which wears it; but the divine helmet supports the head; it lifts the wearer up with a hope full of immortality. The shield of an earthly warrior is burdensome to the arm that supports it, but the christian feels that it is not the strength of his arm which supports the shield, but that it is the marvellous virtue of the shield to support his arm. The sword of the spirit, which is the word of God, is a living word; the life of God is in it, and it shall not be directed by the hand, but it shall direct the hand of the Christian, and shall bathe itself in the blood of all his spiritual enemies. O our God, give us but this panoply, and *one shall chase a thousand, and two shall put ten thousand to flight*; let us have but the heroism of the gospel and the work is done. The promises of the word of God are gloriously large; may our minds be impressed with their vast extent, and then what has been done shall be again done. May the Lord rouse the spirits of his people, and fill you, beloved brother ministers, with a greater and a more enlarged expectation of doing good; and the very expectation of doing good, will enable you to accomplish it. Let nothing discourage you. Behold God is your salvation! he goes before you, and he also is your rearward. Your front and your rear are both defended by omnipotence. The devil has therefore no place left for his attack. How glorious the defence of the children, and ministers of our God!

Several

Several other revivals of the power of religion next appeared, under the different governments of the judges of Israel; here, at times, God's people lamented their sins, and under their national humiliation, they sought him, and he was found by them. According to the multitude of his tender mercies, God addresses his people as in the bowels of a man; for he condescends to say, that *his soul was grieved for the miseries of his people*. He first constrained them to repent, and then graciously revealed his pardoning mercy and tender compassion towards them.

Time would fail us to trace the like divine displays of grace, through the regency of Samuel, and the first part of the reign of Saul; and the increasing glories which rested on the church of God, while the sceptre was entrusted in David's hands. We hasten to the time of Solomon. Then the reflected light given through that dispensation shone with its fullest splendour; but, like the shining of the moon which gradually withdraws her humble light till she totally disappears and hides herself behind the sun, so we shall find that these gracious revivals gradually declined, till Jesus the Sun of Righteousness arose, creating the gospel day of grace, and adorning it with all the glories of his great salvation.

Solomon's reign was filled with wonders; we trace however but the more pure and chaste part of his history, while the Lord was truly with him.

He began his reign with divine communications with his God, and while he maintained communion with him he prospered; his noblest wish was to build the temple. It was during that period that the heart of this prince was fully devoted to the Lord; his wisdom, his riches, and his honours were entirely dedicated to promote the glory of his God; with zeal he completes the work which God had given him to perform. And now the temple is to be dedicated to him, for whose service it was built. And

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O what a day is this, when all Israel appears before the Lord like a multitude which no man could number. The king himself leads the devotions of his people, and God miraculously declares his approbation of the solemn work, while flakes of holy fire descend on the sacrifice already prepared for the divine service, and the glory of God fills all the temple, and constrains the people to rejoice with reverence and godly fear.

And can we suppose that a mere outward and visible manifestation of the glory of God was all that the great majesty of heaven designed hereby? O surely no! he that is as a refiner's fire to the hearts of his people, was now doubtless working upon their hearts also, by his invisible agency, that he might prepare them for himself, and then take them to his glory. In short, does not this appear as the great Pentecost of the Old Testament church, similar in its nature and effects to that recorded in the New Testament, when cloven tongues of fire rested upon the heads of the Apostles, a visible sign of their preparation for their important ministry, that through their instrumentality, great grace might rest upon the hearts of thousands, to prepare them for glory?

And O! what views further open to our minds, when we meditate on the multitudes of glorified spirits already brought to God, under these different out-pourings of the spirit of grace; they are long ago safely landed, and are waiting with holy joy for those that are now coming, and for others that shall yet come, till God shall have accomplished the number of his elect, and finished his great work of the salvation of millions of mankind.

After the days of Solomon, we find through the conduct of wicked rulers, awful declensions among the people; but still different revivals are to be traced. As through the influence of bad kings all the works of sin and the devil were promoted, so through
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the instrumentality of good kings, God again revived his work in the midst of them.

During the reign of Aza, there was a glorious display of the revival of religion. Azariah the prophet faithfully discharges his duty as a preacher before his king, while the king with no less devotedness attends to the word; with all diligence he sets himself upon the work of a universal reformation, destroys every abominable idol out of the land, and again erects the altar of the Lord which, in the times of idolatry, had been broken down. He gathered all Judah and Benjamin, and the strangers with them out of Ephraim and Manasseh, and out of Simeon, *for they fell to him in abundance when they saw the Lord was with him, and they offered unto the Lord of the spoil which they had brought, seven hundred oxen and seven thousand sheep; and they entered into a covenant to seek the Lord God of their Fathers with all their heart, and with all their soul; and they swore unto the Lord with a loud-voice, with shouting, with trumpets, and with cornets; and all Judah rejoiced at the oath, for they had sworn with all their heart, and sought him with their whole desire; and he was found of them, and the Lord gave them rest round about.* 2 Chron. xv. 8. 16. Now, how many precious souls were saved under this revival, a future day alone can declare.

Again we trace another display of the power of religion in the reign of Jehoshaphat, or rather a continuation of the same good work carried on by the son, so happily begun in the days of his Father. He reforms the land from the remains of idolatry, and appoints godly judges to govern in different cities, and when he was in danger from the kingdom of Moab, he *sought the Lord with all diligence*, proclaimed a fast, and called all Israel and Judah to attend to it. They came with their wives and their little ones; they repented before the Lord, they acknowledged their wickedness, and made a solemn renunciation of those sins which bring down the wrath of God on his

his people. Then the God of Israel protected them, and then they appeared glorious as the Israel of God indeed. When shall England be blessed with such solemn fasts as these? When shall we prove that we meet in earnest for national humiliation, that national reformation may be affected thereby? when shall our great men lead the work, so as to be among the first who shall renounce and abandon those evils, that have caused the righteous God in judgment to bring forth his vengeance against us? Time would fail were we yet to proceed further, to shew the blessed and prosperous state of religion that next appeared under the reign of good king Hezekiah; how immediately when he began to reign he opened the doors of the house of God, restored religion, which had been brought into sad decay through the wretchedness of his father Ahaz; commanded the priests and Levites diligently to seek the Lord, and do his will; directed that the house of God should be cleansed, and that all the divinely appointed sacrifices should be duly offered up.

Again we find him calling all Israel and Judah together to celebrate a solemn passover, inviting them by a most persuasive letter to come and seek the Lord God; and bending the hearts of multitudes to obey the summons; for we are told *the hand of God was to give them one heart to do the commandment of the king, and that divers of Asher and Manasseh and Zebulon humbled themselves, and came to Jerusalem.* And no wonder when God himself constrains the assembly to draw near, that a peculiar blessing is given to such waiting tribes. Read the history of this great reformation at large, as recorded in the 29th 30th, 31st of the 2d of Chronicles: there you will see the feelings of this great man's heart; he conceived himself not a king for himself; but a king deputed of God to promote his praise, and to do his will as a vicegerent of God's

own theocracy. O the glories of such a kingdom, under such a government, with God himself in the midst of it!

The last revival under the reigns of the kings of Judah was but of short duration; we are told how diligently young Jofiah fet his heart to seek the Lord; and nothing in his reign deserves so much our notice, as the tendernefs of his fpirit in reading the word of God. This fet him immediately on the work of God; once more religion lifts up its now languid head; and the folemn paffover appointed by the king is attended with the bleffing and prefence of God. Again they renew their covenant with him, and yet they were (though as we learn, Jer. iii. 6. 10. many among them turned but feignedly) enabled for a feafon to abide by their folemn vows; for during all the days of Jofiah, *they departed not from following the Lord the God of their fathers.* 2d Chron. xxiv. 33.

And now a long night enfues. Through a fpace of near feven hundred years, we read in the infpired records (excepting what is referred to in the 44th Pfalm and fome other places,) but of one revival of the power of the glorious faithfulnefs of the Jewifh church in days of dreadful perfection of religion, and that was under the government of Ezra and Nehemiah on the return of Ifrael from their Babylonifh captivity. Let us a little investigate the glories of that revival. The people had polluted themfelves by their unlawful connexions while captives in an heathen land, and even after their return from the captivity. Thefe by the command of God were to be renounced; and yet what dearer to nature than the wife of a man's bofom? but Ezra, the holy reformer was at a point with the people: the command was explicit; wives taken unlawfully are now to be rejected, and they yield obedience to what nature would call this fevere injunction of the Lord.

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Whatever may be dear to us, may our Lord and God be dearer still! yea dearer and dearer day by day! and O that Christ may find out for us, on this present work, those that can forsake houses, lands, brothers, sisters, husbands, wives, and all for his dear sake! and why should any refuse to forsake such low things as these for him, who forsook his heaven, his glory, and hid not his face from shame and spitting, and at last laid down his life to ransom us from the hell, that sin most righteously deserves, that he might make us partakers with himself of blessedness in eternal glory? I will make a few observations further on this last revival of religion before the coming of our Lord. The word of God was again brought forth into public notice. Ezra the scribe, stands on a pulpit of wood, from the sun rising, till the noon-day; for six hours at one time, he reads and expounds the word of God, assisted by twelve others of the princes of Israel, six of them standing on the one side, and six of them on the other; thus they laboured to instruct the people; for *they read in the book the law of God distinctly; and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading.* Nehem. viii. 8. Nor were they tired with the length of the sermon: no, a weeping congregation will not speedily be weaned of the word of God, and it was a strong evidence on their behalf that God was with them of a truth, that their hearts were melted before the Lord, and their eyes were a fountain of tears.

O what a refreshing sight would it be to us, my brethren, if such were the state of our congregations to manifest such tenderness of heart, and such readiness at once to obey all that they hear from the sacred word of truth! sure I am, that no sight is so glorious as the presence of God upon a worshipping congregation; nor any thing so animating to the heart of a minister, as when he perceives that the word he preaches comes to

the hearts of the hearers, with *the demonstration of the spirit and of power.*

After this period till the coming of Christ, a gross darkness for the most part covered the earth, religion seemed sunk into formality, while the institutions of God, at the same time were wretchedly blended with the inventions of men.

The spirit of prophecy was now totally withdrawn: no zealous reformers made their appearance, nor were any indications given of the people lamenting over their deserted state, or longing for the returning mercies of the Lord.

It is observed, that the darkest moment in all the night, is the moment which precedes the first break of day; and blessed be God, we are now to contemplate the glories of that bright day, created by the presence of him who is *the brightness of his father's glory, and the express image of his person.*

But there is somewhat in the progress of this light, which demands our attention. We find some wonderful stirrings of conscience, (and it is well when God sets conscience at work) under the preaching of John the Baptist. Plain was his appearance, but powerful was his word; his business was to *prepare the way of the Lord.* If however his word seemed to have but a transient effect upon the minds of his hearers; one could not but suppose that when the son of God commenced a preacher, wonders indeed would be wrought, and that not a hearer could resist when the incarnate Jehovah delivered his own word. But what was accomplished by the preaching of our Lord? His word was indeed with authority, and his astonished hearers were constrained to acknowledge *never man spake like this man.* But notwithstanding all this, and though he had multitudes for his hearers, in so much that he was obliged to take the mountain for his pulpit, though he went about from village to village, and from city to city to preach the gos-
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pel of the kingdom, we find no more after the crucifixion than a hundred and twenty souls, collected together in an upper room for fear of the Jews. Where were the thousands that attended the ministry of the Baptist? where were the multitudes that attended our Lord, and were fed by his miracles? The glorious power was not yet revealed, that effectually does the work, *the Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.* He must first put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. It was not meet that the blessing should be vouchsafed till the curse was removed, but when once the great work was finished, when Jesus had ascended into his heavenly kingdom, according to the glorious word, *lift up your heads O ye gates, and be ye lift up ye everlasting doors, and the king of glory shall come in*; when he had finished his conquests and had ascended up on high, leading even captivity captive, then came the blessed time when he would give his gifts to men, *even the rebellious, and come and dwell amongst them.* Thus having prepared the mansions for his people, he next sends down his spirit to prepare his people for those mansions. O the glories of that sacred day! *behold, now indeed, the tabernacle of God is with man!* According to our Lord's direction, the disciples waited at Jerusalem for the fulfilment of his promise, and lo! he comes, their understandings are enlightened, to understand the scriptures: their hearts are inflamed and they preach the word with faithfulness and power; before neither the thunders of John, preaching in the wilderness, nor yet the words of grace that dropt from the lips of Jesus Christ himself, could effectually impress the minds almost of any; but now the preaching of a poor set of illiterate fishermen, melts the adamantine hearts of the murderers of Christ, and brings them by thousands to submit to his righteous and merciful sceptre: On the very first day after the day of Pentecost was fully come, we hear of

three thousand; at another time, we hear the numbers increased to *five thousand*; then again, that *believers were added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women*; and further, *the number of disciples multiplied greatly*; and, what was the greatest wonder of all wonders, that *a great multitude of the priests were obedient to the faith*. Yea, we hear of whole villages, towns, cities, countries, which at once were subjugated to the Lord Jesus, *so mightily grew the word of God, and prevailed*; now was the time, that *a nation should be born at once, and as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children*. O the power that then went with the word! those that heard were at once pricked to the heart; their cry directly was, *what must I do to be saved?* and the answer, as directly given, was, *believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved*: How must the decency, as we suppose of religious worship, have been interrupted thereby, but O blessed interruption, when God himself wrought so gloriously, and so many souls were brought into divine subjection to the cross of Christ! May God send us such blessed interruptions in all our congregations? Oh they are Glorious!

It may be asked what became of the multitudes that attended the ministry of our Lord, and his harbinger John? It strikes me that many of these had now their convictions revived, and were found among the happy thousands who received the Gospel dispensation. The seed was first sown by John, and by our glorious Lord, and afterwards being watered by the descent of the Holy Ghost, sprung up to the glory of God: what encouragement this to every sincere minister to be diligent in his work? secret convictions may a long time abide in the heart, before a thorough conversion to God is effected. *Cast thy bread upon the waters, and thou shalt find it after many days*. We shall reap if we faint not.

Oftentimes, when I have been engaged in preaching, and perhaps in the contemptible work of
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street preaching too, when I have thought that the whole town was dead in trespasses and sins, some few secret ones have been found, allow the plain expression, and I left them like nest eggs. I visited them again, and the numbers soon increased, till the little one became a thousand.

But what remarkable evidence is given by all these revivals, that the work in which we are engaged, is indeed, the work of God; *not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit saith the Lord*; for what was the doctrine, especially in the great revival on the day of Pentecost? The plain simple preaching of the cross of Christ. And who were the instruments? A set of plain illiterate fishermen: Better a thousand times, to have the simplicity of a Peter, than the eloquence of a Longinus, if we are but made useful to the souls of our fellow creatures, that preaching is always the best, that best answers the end of preaching; let us, therefore, go forth preaching, as it is worded in the text, *the gospel of the kingdom*, and that too with simplicity, and godly sincerity, and not with fleshly wisdom, and what has been done, shall be done. God will ever stand by his own truth, and if he be for us, who can be against us? Preaching the Gospel of the kingdom, does all the work. I hate the pride of such, as would fain attempt to set aside this glorious dispensation, and are ever attempting to establish, what they call, the powers of reason in its stead, and are ever boasting of the mighty things that it can effect: had they, however, a little more of the same faculty, they pretend so plentifully to possess, they would not expose themselves by such assertions, for what can reason do, while under the influence of corrupted nature? Nay, say they, it is *passion*, and *appetite*, not *reason*, that then govern the man; but if passion and appetite prevail over the human understanding, so that good is avoided as an evil, and evil sought after as a good, and these furnish

our reasoning powers with their materials, we may easily conclude what will be the conduct and the choice; nay, say they, shall it be said, that a drunkard acts according to reason? certainly not; but he acts according to *his* reason; and, does a man, in a violent passion, act according to reason? according to that, which he, at that instant of time, calls reason, he certainly does. And both the drunkard and the passionate man will give you a *thousand reasons*, as they call them, for their conduct; and, however, badly they reason, it is reason to them; and, however, *wrongly* they may be guided, yet *their reason* was their guide; and it is not likely, that a *wrong guide will lead a man right*: in short, every man's reason directs him to seek after happiness, and while the carnal mind supposes there is happiness to be had in the indulgence of lust and passion, reason will lead that road: In short, *sound reason* can never be engrafted, but upon *real religion**.

The fact proves itself. Where are the converts of these boasted rational preachers? A fig for all their pretensions to wisdom, if they cannot produce one single sample of a precious soul being converted from sin to God thereby.

I bring forward the character of the great Mr. Whitfield on this occasion; I hope you do not blush for me, that I mention his name on this subject, for verily I shall not blush for myself. God gave him a most enlarged mind, liberated him from all the wretched trammels of education; he knew no party, his glory was to preach the Gospel to every creature; bigotry his soul abhorred; and like

* If any one chuses to try the strength of his reason, a little further on this subject, I would refer him to that masterly production on the will, published by president Edwards, and I should hope that his reasons may correct the reasoning of those, who expect right reason from a darkened understanding, and a depraved heart.

a second Sampson, he has so made her main supporting pillars to totter, that you and I, my brethren, rejoice that she trembles to the very foundation, and live in daily hopes, that her complete destruction shall complete our joy.

Now I will not say, I thank the devil for any thing ; but I will say, I thank God for that permissive providence, whereby that great man, being turned out of the churches, esteemed it his duty to preach at large. His first attempt was among the poor Kingswood colliers ; I defy any missionary upon earth, to find a darker spot, or to visit a more benighted people ; these he called out of the holes and dens of the earth, and to these he preached *repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ* : And O, it was a lovely sight, to behold the glorious effect ! Eyes unaccustomed to weep before, now began to flow with the tears of repentance unto life, white streaks appearing thereby on their black faces, now turned up towards heaven, praying for mercy and forgiveness ; knees unaccustomed to prayer before, are now bended down in fervent devotion before God ; and their lives well and wisely regulated by the power of that grace, which had done such wonders on their hearts. Now mind what these fastidious sons of pride, and self conceit, had to say on this occasion ; to be sure, Whitefield has done good among these low sort of people : Now we cannot thank them for their compliment, as it is given with such a wretched ill grace ; but a higher panegyric cannot be framed. We generally suppose, he is the best physician that cures the most desperate diseases : And we should also suppose, that he is the best minister, notwithstanding the *convenient* terms of methodist and enthusiast, that cures the diseases of the mind, in its most desperate state.

Let us try how some of these rationalists in religion, (as they *humbly* wish to be thought) would be
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likely to succeed on a similar occasion. Let them seek for some other colliery of the like description; there take one of their nicely composed paper-pop-guns, and read it among the multitude. I would willingly and gladly carry the stool behind them, to see what sort of figures they would cut, in their attempts to reform. I hate such silly pride, and it is best corrected by the lash of ridicule and contempt.

But a part of our plan is yet to be considered. To trace what has been done since the apostles' days, time would by no means allow; and successes of a later date have already been well presented before you. We have now to encourage ourselves from the promises and prophecies of the word of God, of the glory that shall be revealed. The text itself gives blessed encouragement to our expectations, *the Gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world, for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.* And what may we not yet hope for, when the Lord himself has said to his well-beloved Son, *ask of me, and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.* In Isaiah, prophecy abounds to encourage our hopes. God shall say *to the North give up, to the South hold not back; bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the end of the earth.* (Isa. xliii. 6.) *For I will give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation to the ends of the earth. In an acceptable time have I heard thee, in a day of salvation have I helped thee; I will preserve thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, to establish the earth, to cause to inherit the desolate heritages; that thou mayest say to the prisoners, go forth; and to them that are in darkness shew yourselves.* (Isa. xlix. 6, 8, 9.) And again in the 60th of the same prophet, how gloriously the Gentile church is called to *Arise and shine, since her light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon her. Even while darkness covered the earth and gross darkness the people, the*
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Lord should arise upon Zion ; and the Gentiles should come to her light, and kings to the brightness of his rising, that her sons should come from far, and her daughters should be nursed by her side ; at your leisure read the whole of the chapter, and take encouragement therefrom to set about this blessed work of God, with all your hearts, and all your souls, and all your strength. Convinced therefore, from the word of prophecy, that greater things are to be done than ever yet have been done, let us encourage ourselves in our God, waiting with holy expectation till other nations *shall cast away their idols, that they have made, to the moles and to the bats, and turn unto the Lord.* Yes, my beloved, may not even we, that now compose this solemn assembly, live in humble hopes, that ere long we may see some devoted missionary returning, in holy triumph, to this his native land, with some detested idol, that had robbed the great Jehovah of his honour, renowned and adhered to by its once deluded votaries, now in the midst of the congregation exhibited the sportive triumph of all our hearts? and further may we not expect to behold some humble convert himself blessing God in the midst of us for the work of this glorious day, in consequence of which his soul was brought out of darkness, to behold the marvellous light of the gospel of Christ? And we have recent instances before us, that greatly encourage us to the work. I am very glad to mention the conduct of our Moravian brethren in this respect; their zeal, their patience, and disinterested diligence, in the like work, are beyond the praise that words can reach, and our gracious Lord has astonishingly blessed their attempts: some of our West India Islands have been surprizingly evangelized by them; the inhospitable climates of Greenland and Labradore have received the glad tidings of salvation, through their instrumentality, neither the burning regions of the South, nor yet the frozen forests of the North, could ever impede

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their amazing love for souls. A nobler, amore disinterested example we cannot follow than theirs; I hope, we shall all feel it our privilege to keep up the most friendly correspondence with them. We will thank them heartily to tell us how they did the good, that we may go and do likewise; a better way we cannot devise, than theirs; for it has answered the end; souls have been brought to Christ thereby; they that do not speak most honourably of their mission, do themselves the greatest dishonour. But I will take the liberty to remark one odd fancy of theirs; they suppose that the soul of a poor man is equally valuable, in the sight of God, as the soul of a rich man, and they have ever proved it, by going among the most abject of mankind.

What has been also done by our own government, by sending out some valuable missionaries to the East Indies, deserves a token of acknowledgement, and I heartily pray that the Arminian Methodists, so called in their mission, may send a *free grace* Gospel throughout the world, and the late attempt set on foot by our Baptist brethren, I trust will be crowned with large success; and though our difference about the ordinance of baptism may constrain us to act in different lines, and they cannot permit us to communicate with them, yet we are determined to be up with them, for both they, and others, if they love the Lord Jesus in sincerity, shall be most heartily welcome whenever they please, to communicate with us.

Our design is all the same: no matter for the name of the boat that ferries over the poor benighted sinner into the land of Gospel light and liberty, provided the blessed work be but accomplished. I hate bigotry with my soul, and while so many gospel ministers of different denominations assemble together, for the same purpose, I still hope to live to see it subsist no more, to divide the
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christian from the christian; while each of us serves God in his own line, why cannot we love as brethren?

Let names, and sects, and parties fall,
And Jesus Christ be all in all.

I confess, in the simplicity of my heart, that some expressions have dropt from my lips, which I never designed on this very solemn occasion; I am sure your patience and candour will instruct you to forgive, but we must be serious, serious indeed, while we conclude with some remarks, on what ought to be the character of the missionaries themselves.

And what manner of persons should these indeed be, in all holy conversation and godliness! how full of that heavenly mindedness, and spiritual mindedness which shall raise them so far above the world, as though they had scarce an existence in it! what a holy burning zeal for the salvation of souls? and what wisdom from above to conduct that zeal! what purity of knowledge to deal with those whose deep-rooted fondness for their antient superstitions, will make them watch, with a jealous eye over every attempt to declare among them the truth, as it is in Jesus.

Nor should their patience, meekness, and child-like simplicity, be less eminent than their zeal. They must win by love, and conquer by holy perseverance; they must not be like some sort of missionaries, who suppose they are to be sent a pleasant voyage at the public expence: but they must be men *that count not their lives dear unto themselves, so that they may finish their course with joy, and the ministry which they have received of the Lord.* Men that can be contented out of pure love to Christ, *to stand in jeopardy ever hour.* They must not only *live* like martyrs, but perhaps *die* like martyrs;

tyrs; we know not but the ancient proverb of the primitive Christians, is again to be revived, the blood of the martyrs, is the seed of the church; they must be as dead to themselves, as if they had no being, they must be completely crucified with Christ; in short, ere they embark upon the work, they must learn to *leave themselves behind them*; with holy triumph they must be taught to say, farewell my dear native land, farewell to all the ease and happiness, and earthly indulgences I have enjoyed therein; welcome affliction, necessities, distresses of every kind; labours, watchings, fastings, I now dread no more. Welcome a life now to be spent in journeying often, on perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils by the sea: yea, welcome weariness and painfulness, hunger and thirst, cold and nakedness; yea, welcome death itself, whenever the blessed Lord himself, who died for me, demands that costly sacrifice at my hands: These are the men that shall be made more than conquerors, over all the difficulties that human prudence, or unbelief, would present before us, to impede the way.

Human wisdom we well know, would soon puzzle herself in the undertaking; while her little taper is brought to find the way through the darkness of the night, she only appears to add blackness and obscurity to all things beyond the little region her rays can reach; but when the sun shines forth, he spreads his light upon the most distant objects, and every path is plain before us.

Some may have apprehensions that little can be done, because miracles are wanting, and the gift of tongues is withdrawn: Doubtless, Peter had a notable proof at hand of the doctrine he preached, while the lame man was leaping in the temple, who had been healed by the name of the Lord Jesus but just before: But miracles never cease, while souls
are

are converted to God; nor will tongues be ever wanting, while the wonderful change wrought by the grace of God, so loudly bespeaks the praises of his wonder-working power; let heathens see what grace can do on a real convert; and we need not any further be discouraged for want of miracles and tongues. And that spirit of unanimity and zeal which has hitherto attended the work, is a happy sign that good shall be done, while the torrent runs with such rapidity, for the accomplishment of so good a design, I would not for the world but appear on the Lord's side, on this occasion. *Curse ye Meroz, said the angel of the Lord; curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof, because they came not to the help of the Lord; to the help of the Lord against the mighty.* No, my brethren, the providence of God commands that we exert ourselves for his glory: Difficulties there doubtless are; and an abundance of prayer, prudence, and holy zeal, will be necessary to conduct the work; but God can provide all that is necessary to carry on his own work, in his own way; and we have nothing to do but to follow as he condescends to lead. Thanks be to God for the unanimity, and good will, that have hitherto subsisted among us, and may we still be found steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch, as we are assured, that our labours shall not be in vain in the Lord.



O B J E C T I O N S
AGAINST A MISSION TO THE HEATHEN,
STATED AND CONSIDERED.

S E R M O N VI.

PREACHED AT
TOTTENHAM COURT CHAPEL,
BEFORE THE
FOUNDERS OF THE MISSIONARY SOCIETY,

On Thursday the 24th September, 1795,

By DAVID BOGUE,
OF GOSPORT



SERMON VI.

HAGGAI. i. 2.

Thus speaketh the Lord of Hosts, saying, this people say, the time is not come, the time that the Lord's house should be built.

WHAT dost thou here Elijah? was a question proposed of old, from the throne of heaven, to one of the most eminent Servants of the Lord of hosts. His answer is recorded by the unerring pen of inspiration, in 1 Kings xix. 14. and deserves our notice. *I have been very jealous for the Lord God of Hosts; because the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy Prophets with the sword.* Should the Great Jehovah deign to ask the reason of our meeting at this time, and to say to each of us; *What dost thou here?* I trust we can reply, “ We feel a zeal for the glory
“ of the Lord God of hosts: we are deeply grieved
“ for the state of the heathen nations, because they
“ are strangers to the covenant of promise; aliens
“ from the commonwealth of Israel, and living
“ without God, and without hope in the world.
“ Of the numerous temples which decorate their
“ cities, not one do we perceive dedicated to the one
“ true God: They are all the habitation of idols.
“ Altars we see in vast abundance, but not one
“ erected to Jehovah. They are all for sacrificing to
R “ demons,

“ demons, or gods the work of their own hands,
 “ With grief we behold the greater part of the ha-
 “ bitable globe in this condition, and far more than
 “ one half of the inhabitants of the earth ignorant of
 “ the true God, and of Jesus Christ whom he hath
 “ sent, whom to know is eternal life. And deeply
 “ concerned both for the honour of God, and their
 “ salvation, we are met under the auspices, we hope,
 “ of infinite wisdom, power, and grace, to concert
 “ a plan for sending missionaries to the heathen, to
 “ proclaim the glad tidings of salvation through the
 “ blood of the cross, and to turn them from darkness
 “ to light, and from the power of Satan unto God.”

O that the same spirit who came down on the
 Apostles, on the day of Pentecost, may descend on
 us, to inspire us with wisdom, love, and zeal to
 make the meeting profitable and delightful to our
 own souls, and to honour us as his instruments for
 conveying the knowledge of salvation to those
 miserable nations which are sitting in darkness and
 in the shadow of death.

You have already attended on the labours of
 five of the Ministers of Christ who have preached
 to you on this solemn occasion. It is allotted to
 me to close the service. May I be assisted with
 your prayers, and the supply of the spirit of Jesus
 Christ. What I have in view is to consider the ob-
 jections which may be raised against the design of
 our present meeting, and to suggest such answers,
 as will, I trust, be deemed satisfactory. The words
 of the text, set before us a class of men exactly
 similar to those with whom I am called to contend.

They said *the time is not come, &c.* Difficulties
 and dangers appeared before their eyes; the dispen-
 sations of Providence, and the aspect of human
 affairs did not seem to favour their efforts, and
 therefore they think it best to relinquish the object
 for the present, and wait for a more convenient
 and auspicious season. Too many now imitate the
 spirit

spirit of these ancient objectors, and say, “ The time is not come when the mountain of the Lord’s house shall be established on the tops of the mountains, and exalted above the hills, and all nations shall flow into it. The time is not come, the time when God will give his son the heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession.” But the objections will, I flatter myself be found equally vain. Jehovah himself, deigns to answer those timid and incredulous Jews, declares their fears to be groundless, and commands them to put their hand to the work without delay. While in a humble dependance on his aid, I attempt a reply to modern objectors, by considerations drawn from his word and Providence, may He who teacheth man knowledge, and can make babes eloquent, suggest suitable ideas to my mind, and instruct me to express them in fit and acceptable words, that conviction may be carried to every heart, and that we may all with one accord cry out, “ The time is come, the time that the house of the Lord should be built. Let us labour with all our might, that it may soon rise strong, beautiful; and extensive, from the ruins in which it has so long lain.”

Some think the following general observation sufficient to destroy the force of every thing that we can urge. “ Numberless difficulties present themselves to my mind, so that I am quite discouraged: the object, though desirable, has so many formidable hindrances, that in present circumstances, it cannot succeed.”

In answer to this, I would briefly remark that the man who does not expect difficulties, has estimated the matter unwisely. Difficulties, the most tremendous difficulties are to be looked for. Will Satan suffer his kingdom to fall without a struggle? No, he will rouse all hell to arms against us; and his instruments on earth uniting themselves to the

Host from beneath, will do every thing in their power to prevent the progress of the gospel of the Redeemer. But here is the foundation of our hope. Christ has all power both in heaven and in earth. He is infinitely mightier than his opposers, and all his enemies shall be made his foot-stool: and he has assured us, that He came to be a light to enlighten the heathen, as well as to be the glory of his people Israel. Carry this thought in your minds, my dear hearers, in the answer I propose to every objection; that, while I endeavour to shew it as void of strength, and point out the great encouragement we have to hope for success, our sole dependance, in the use of his appointed means, is placed here, namely, on the wisdom, grace, and power of the Lord Jesus Christ.

But I proceed to consider the strongest particular objections, which have occurred to my own mind, or have been suggested to me by others.

It is objected by some; "the work itself is so very arduous, that success cannot be hoped for."

True, my friends, you have mentioned one of the greatest difficulties we have to encounter, I perceive it in all its force. Were the attempt, to prevail with men of distant lands, merely to lay aside their ancient prejudices, to cast their dumb idols which cannot save, to the bats, and to the moles, and to assume but the outward profession of the christian religion, even this would be unspeakably difficult. For we see how strongly people are attached to the religious systems, received by tradition from their fathers. But this would not satisfy us, could we persuade them to renounce their idolatry, and to espouse the christian name, and join us in the ordinances of worship, if we did no more than produce an external conformity, we should account nothing done. The object we have in view is infinitely beyond this. It is to illuminate the brutish mind of a Pagan besotted with ignorance
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and superstition, in the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus. It is to make him feel his miserable state as a sinner, and to lead him to a cordial acceptance of Christ as made of God unto him, "wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption." It is to bring him from the love of the world, to a supreme love to God as his Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier. It is to draw him away from the indulgence of divers lusts and pleasures which reigned in his soul, and from all the impurities of a Pagan conversation, to a life of unreserved and universal obedience to the will of God. It is to lead him from the stupid adoration of stocks and stones, and the senseless, impure, or sanguinary rites of the Heathen mythology, to worship the Father in spirit and in truth, and to render to him the homage of a pure heart, wholly devoted to his service. How difficult these things are, no true Christian need be told. Yet this is what we wish to do, what must be done; and nothing short of this will suffice. But who is sufficient for these things! may we not sit down in despair and throw the design aside? Yes, if we required or expected these things to be done by man, we might. But they are the work of God who has promised to perform them: and then I say, why are ye cast down, ye timid souls, and why are your unbelieving hearts disquieted within you: Man we regard as the instrument, as the pen in the hand of a ready writer, as the harp emitting a melodious sound, but we look up to God for his mighty power to accomplish the arduous work of the conversion of the soul. All now is easy, every obstacle disappears. He who created all things out of nothing, by a word, cannot he create the soul anew in Christ Jesus unto good works? He who raiseth the dead from the grave, cannot He raise the chief of sinners from the death of sin to newness of life?

life? He who turneth the shadow of death unto the morning, and changeth the blackness of the night into the brightness of noon day, cannot he make the heathen man who was once darkness, light in the Lord, and enable him to walk as a child of light? our faith is confirmed by the unquestionable evidence of facts. God has already performed this work in millions of instances, and in circumstances as unfavourable as we can possibly meet with. What he has done, he can still do; for he is the same yesterday, to day, and forever. With these truths let the christian's mind be fortified; and the objection will be heard no more.

II. Another objection very frequently urged, is
 “ that the time for the conversion of the heathen
 “ is not yet come, because the Millenium is still at
 “ the distance of some hundred years.”

“ It is not for you,” said Christ to his disciples, on a certain occasion, “ to know the times
 “ and the seasons which the Father has reserved in his
 “ own hands.” Till predictions be accomplished we cannot, in most cases, define with certainty, the precise period of fulfillment. There are various opinions with respect to the commencement of the Millenium, or that Æra when all the nations of the earth shall have received the gospel. Many have placed it at the distance of two hundred years, or in the two thousand year of the christian Æra. Some suppose that it will begin about the middle of the next century. It is neither my province nor my purpose to determine the dispute. But I beg you to consider that in aiming to propagate the gospel, we are to be guided by what God enjoins as a duty, not by what he delivered as a prediction. He has plainly told us that, “ in Christ all the
 “ families of the earth shall be blessed.” He has informed us that by the preaching of the gospel this great work will be accomplished; and he has taught us the strong obligations we are
 under

under to pity those who are sitting in darkness and in the shadow of death. Here is sufficient authority for us to form a mission without delay. Let all other things be left to God. I will grant, if you please, for the sake of argument, that before the millennium arrives, two hundred years must yet elapse. This in my view does not furnish any cause of discouragement. That the success of the gospel will be so rapid, "that a nation shall be born in a day," does not appear to have the weight of evidence which many, without examining the matter, have always taken for granted. The work may be gradual, and if so, it will be allowed, that it is more than time to begin. But if we consider the subject attentively, we shall be compelled to acknowledge that in order to propagate the gospel throughout the whole world in the space of two hundred years, its progress must be rapid indeed. In that space, to bring all the extensive Mahometan kingdoms to the faith of Christ, to convert all the vast Pagan empires in the east and north; and all the idolatrous inhabitants in the thousands of islands scattered over every sea, the progress of the gospel must be amazingly great, and millions must be converted in a year. In a word the religion of Jesus must have more rapid success than it has ever had, since it was first preached in the world; more rapid success than it had under the ministry of the apostles themselves. So that if we view the objection closely, so far from being in danger of a spirit of procrastination, we must feel anxiety not to lose a single day ere we begin. If the shorter period mentioned above be the true one there is need of haste.

Further suppose we cannot hope for the millenary state of the church among the Heathen in our time, should that discourage us? I ask *you*, my brethren, who preach the gospel, whether it was with the hope of producing such a state, that you undertook the pastoral care of the several churches, over which
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the Holy Ghost hath made you bishops. All will say: "we should rejoice in such a state, but we do not expect it here in our days. We think ourselves more than amply repaid, if we can see religion flourishing, though in a degree unspeakably short of the glory of the millennium." Well then, if by the labours of our missionaries abroad, we can but produce such a state of religion as in the best of our churches at home, will there not be the greatest reason to rejoice that we have not laboured in vain, nor spent our money and strength for nought. It may be the will of God, that by the labours of missionaries, religion shall attain the same degree of progress among those who are now Pagans, as among us: and that thus they shall be prepared for some remarkable outpouring of the spirit, which shall precede and introduce the glory of the latter days.

What has already been effected by the preaching of the gospel among the Heathen, tends farther to destroy the force of the objection, and to encourage even sanguine hopes of doing great things. Every effort that has been made, has been crowned with as much success as could, all things considered, have been reasonably expected. The missionaries of the church of Rome boast of hundreds of thousands, nay, of millions converted by their labours. But to pass over their zeal, and their patient, vigorous ardent and extensive exertions, and to say nothing of the facility with which idolatrous Pagans might embrace their shewy religion, their pompous ritual, and the worship of images, as all bearing some resemblance to their own system, the success of the Danish missionaries in Hindostan, of the Moravian brethren in Greenland and the West-Indies; of the ancient pastors of New England, Elliot and Mayhew among the Indian tribes, and of the Scotch society among men of the same origin, by the ministry of Brainard, Horton, and others in later times; these all give us

the most ample encouragement to proceed; and plainly shew that God is willing by his spirit to give efficacy to the word of his grace, and “that the time
“ to favour Zion, yea the set time is come.

III. Others say “what is there in the state of the
“ Christian church at present that flatters with peculiar hopes of success for a mission to the Heathen? Many ages have elapsed and little has
“ been done, what makes the time now so favourable. Are we better than our fathers?”

That christianity has spread itself among the heathen nations, in a very inconsiderable degree, for at least a thousand years past, is a mournful truth. Indeed if we except the colonies planted in Pagan lands, the boundaries of the church have been rather lessened than extended. But this is no ground of discouragement, to those who consider the matter with attention. The church of Rome, which for the greatest part of this long space of time overspread nearly the whole of christendom, had so obscured christianity by an innumerable multitude of rites, ceremonies, traditions and errors, that the purity and simplicity of the gospel were almost wholly defaced. In such a state of things could we wish Popery to be spread over the face of the earth? what would this have been but to substitute one superstition for another? A reformation greater than the first, would have been necessary to make the people acquainted with the nature and spirit of the gospel. See ye not then my dear hearers, sufficient reasons why it was the will of God that what was then called christianity should not become an universal religion in the world, and that the heathen should continue in their Pagan state during the days of Popery.

At the reformation the Bishop of Rome lost his power. From that time to the present century, the Protestant churches spent their chief efforts in establishing themselves in authority; in each party

trying to vault into the saddle of power, and ride upon the back of all others; in furious contests with each other; in inflicting or enduring cruel persecutions; in resisting oppression; or in attacking, and defending themselves against the Papal pretensions to dominion. These causes prevented the propagation of the gospel. In the present century, the nature of the church of Christ, as a spiritual kingdom, and not of the world, has been better understood than it ever was since the days of Constantine; and Christians have felt their obligations to send the gospel to the heathen nations. Some efforts have been made by different sects, but with one exception, feeble in comparison of what might have been; and I know not that any denomination has Missionaries among the heathen, much exceeding in number, the Apostles of our Lord. Every one, however, who is awake, hails with joy the dawning of a bright day of true Christian zeal for the spreading of the gospel in the world, and salutes with affection the various societies engaged in this divine work.

We have now before us a pleasing spectacle, Christians of different denominations, although differing in points of church government, united in forming a society for propagating the gospel among the heathen. This is a new thing in the Christian church. Some former societies have accepted donations from men of different denominations; but the government was confined to one. But here are Episcopalians, Methodists, Presbyterians, and Independents, all united in one society, all joining to form its laws, to regulate its institutions, and manage its various concerns. Behold us here assembled with one accord to attend the funeral of *bigotry*: And may she be buried so deep that not a particle of her dust may ever be thrown up on the face of the earth. I could almost add, cursed be the man who shall attempt to raise her from the grave.

grave. Besides the display of liberality, greater than has ever appeared, I might add, that it is likewise a time in which the doctrines of the gospel are at least as well understood as they ever were before. If I should say *better*, it would not be arrogance, or assuming any peculiar excellence to ourselves; because we stand upon the shoulders of preceding ages, and the many venerable men who lived before us, have by their labours illustrated and confirmed the truth, refuted error, and freed the gospel from all foreign and corrupt mixtures. As God has favoured us with it in its genuine simplicity, may we not consider this as a happy omen, that he will cause it to run, and be glorified? When Christianity at first was most pure, God gave it great success; as it grew corrupt, its progress was stopt: Now when he has restored it to its pristine purity, may we not hope he will revive its ancient influence in the world? When Christianity was divided into many bigotted parties, to propagate it would have been the diffusion of the rancour of schismatical violence, the hot spirit of sectarian zeal more widely in the world; and therefore the gospel was not spread. Now, when there was a union of different denominations acting cordially together for the propagation of their common Christianity, may we not look for success? At first believers were *all of one heart, and of one mind*; as to the things of religion, in the latter days, it will most probably be so again. But is it not an approach to such a state, when the disciples of Christ, agreeing in the grand doctrines of the gospel, unite in ministerial and Christian communion, and join to diffuse Christianity, and not their own particular sects, and a simple mode of church government drawn from the apostolical writings, which shall be found best adapted to the state of the heathen world, and not the distinguishing modes of any one denomination. I cannot but augur well from such a beginning; and

I own

I own I feel a considerable degree of pleasing confidence, both that we shall be drawn into a closer union with each other at home, and that our united efforts will, by the peculiar blessings of heaven, be crowned with success abroad.

IV. A common objection is: "The governments of the world will oppose the exertions of your plans," and defeat its design.

Is not this a groundless fear? Let us hope they will not oppose us. Why should they? From our own government we shall meet with no opposition: On the contrary, I flatter myself they will countenance our proceedings, and favour our efforts in countries where their influence extends. This I consider as an advantage to those missions which may be employed in the vast empire of Hindostan. As to the governments of the countries to which our Missionaries go, I am sure they will have no reason to oppose us. It is a fundamental law of our society: "That the Missionaries shall not in the smallest degree interfere with the political concerns of the countries in which they labour, nor have any thing to say or do with the affairs of the civil government: And whoever shall transgress this rule, will be immediately dismissed with shame." The sole business of a Missionary is to promote the religion of Jesus. Whatever may be the duties of a settled pastor in his own country, where he is not only a minister of the gospel, but likewise a subject, a citizen, and a member of the community, (all which relations lay certain obligations upon him, and call for a corresponding conduct) it is certain that a Missionary, who is an alien in a foreign land, has nothing to do with civil affairs, and his only business is to propagate religion. The knowledge of our sentiments on this subject, and the peaceable, harmless, and benevolent conduct of our Missionaries may remove the prejudices of those in authority, and influence them to grant our friends

friends protection, and treat them with kindness. Christianity is a system of divine truth, highly favourable to the peace, virtue, and happiness of civil society; gives by its moral principles the greatest stability to governments; binds together the body politic in the strongest and closest bonds; and forms the surest barrier against those sentiments and vices which loosen the bands of social union, and endanger a country's welfare.

But whatever influence these considerations may have on the minds of the rulers of the world, let us ever remember this reviving truth, That all human governments are under the dominion of the great Head of the church, who turneth the hearts of kings as he doth the rivers of water, and can so dispose their minds as to make them favourable to our plans, and willing to permit our Missionaries to preach the gospel in the countries where they reign. On this doctrine should our hearts rest with unshaken faith; and here ought our chief dependence to be placed. Who will venture to assert that the heathen governments which now exist, are worse than those of old, where Tiberius, Claudius, Nero, and Domitian reigned at Rome; or other monarchs at the same time in Parthia, Ethiopia, and India. Yet under them was the gospel propagated in the world. He who of old made lions tame while Daniel was in their den, so contracted their rage, and conquered their dislike, or else so fully engaged their thoughts about other subjects, that the word of the Lord had free course, and was crowned with great success. When they manifested cruel opposition to the cross of Christ, he moderated their fury, and after a season put a stop to their violence by death, or change of mind; so that the truth continued insensibly to spread, and the very sufferings of believers proved the increase of the church. What God did then, cannot he do now? And are not the souls of men and the interests

terests of his church as dear to Him now, as they were then? Animated by these encouraging views, may we not go forth, trusting in Him who is infinitely higher than the highest upon earth, and who received his kingdom for this very purpose among others, that He might exercise his power in restraining and subduing all the opposition, which the principalities and powers of this world should make to the diffusion of his glorious gospel. I proceed to a

Vth Objection. Many say: "The present state of the heathen world is so unfavourable with respect to religion, that little hope can be entertained of success."

That the religious state of those countries, which are ignorant of the Gospel, is truly deplorable, all who view it with eyes enlightened from above, will readily allow; "the dark places of the earth are full of the habitations of ignorance and cruelty." Mahometans blend some knowledge of a supreme being, with a thousand absurdities; and the Pagan nations have not gone so far in the path of religion, as to learn the existence of one God, the creator of heaven and earth; and are besides sunk into the lowest abyss of ignorance, idolatry, superstition, and vice: A mournful sight indeed to the lover of God and man! But what sentiments and conduct should it inspire? when Paul of old, surveyed the famous city of Athens, he saw the inhabitants wholly given to idolatry; but did the views generate despair? Did it influence him to leave the Athenians to follow their own wicked devices? No, his spirit was stirred within him; the divine word, was as a fire in his bones; and he felt all the eagerness of Apostolical zeal to proclaim aloud in their ears, the doctrines of the glorious Gospel: And should not the state of the heathen world which is so deplorable, produce the same effect in us? Were it not bad, it would not require our aid. In proportion to its
badness,

badness, are we called to help; and its extreme badness, furnishes the most powerful motive to exert ourselves to the utmost, for the salvation of their perishing souls. Could we survey each of the heathen nations with minute attention, while we saw reason to weep over their deplorable situation, we should yet find no cause to despair of success; their ignorance is brutish: But is not the Sun of Righteousness able to banish it, by shining upon them with salvation on his beams: Their prejudices may be strong and obstinate; but is not the power of the glorious Gospel of the blessed God, able to dispel them all. Their enmity to the self denying doctrine of salvation, by the righteousness of Christ, may be inveterate; but is not the energy of divine grace, able to bring down every high thought that exalteth itself against the honour of his cross? Their wickedness may be very great, and their long habits of iniquity, such as nature and reason cannot destroy; but is not the Holy Spirit of Christ, able to renew their depraved hearts, and to bring them to the obedience of faith, and evangelical sanctity of life? Some of their civil institutions, and modes of life, may appear to raise a formidable barrier against the approach of the Gospel; but is not the united power of divine providence and grace, able to level this barrier to the ground, and to make a plain path for the entrance of the religion of Jesus into the soul. As an instance of the impediments thrown in the way by civil institutions and local customs; the different casts into which the inhabitants of India are divided, have been considered by many, as presenting a state of society, which must effectually hinder their conversion; but is it proper for us to entertain such a thought? That they are to be converted, is plain from the word of God. That this impediment will be removed out of the way, is equally certain too. God may, indeed, by terrible things in righteousness, employ such dispensations

tions of providence, as shall effectually destroy these pernicious distinctions which Satan hath formed, and so prepare the way for the entrance of the Gospel; but he can easily do the work by the Gospel alone. To pass by the Mahometans there, who are not subject to these absurd restraints, the lowest classes cannot be much degraded by embracing christianity, and those who have lost cast, not at all; and, by our Missionaries associating with them, they may, on the contrary, acquire some degree of respectability and consequence; and their souls are as noble and valuable, as those of the proud Bramins: When a hundred or two are converted, here is an asylum, into which, converts of superior casts may retire, and the enlightening doctrines of the Gospel, when once they enter into their souls, will destroy the pride of casts, and contempt of others, and teach them to embrace with affection, every Christian whatever he formerly was, as a brother. And, when once a Christian cast, if I may so speak, is formed, it will appear more honourable than all the rest, and every believer will consider himself as exalted, not degraded, by the change, as the number of converts increases, the impediment will be lessened, till at last, it entirely vanishes away. Besides, when we recollect, what Christian converts have parted with, and what they have endured, in numberless instances, for the sake of the Gospel; can we think it impossible, for an Indian to submit to loss of cast, for the love of Jesus Christ, the joys of his salvation?

But the weakness of this objection, will be still more apparent, if we consider for a moment, the state of the antient Pagan world. The capacity and disposition of the Heathens, to receive the Gospel; is not a new question, just proposed for investigation, it is above seventeen hundred years old: Nay, it has been tried, and a decision given in our favour. The Gospel was preached to them, and it was crowned
with

with success ; nor does it appear, that the condition of the Heathens was more favourable to the Gospel, than it is now. In these ancient days, their ignorance of God was as profound, their prejudices as violent, their enmity as strong, their vices as detestable ; the worldly interests of many who lived by the follies of superstition, as much affected by the reception of the truth ; the Pagan priests were at least as numerous, as bigotted, as powerful in their influence, and as feelingly alive to their honour, their wealth, and their rank among the people, as they are now in any land ; sages and philosophers were as proud, as strongly attached to their own systems, bore as great a sway over the minds of the people, from a supposition of superior wisdom, and discovered a sovereign contempt of Christianity, and its professors ; and princes were as jealous of their authority, as fearful of any thing that might infringe on their dignity, and as sanguinary in opposing whatever they thought had a tendency to lessen their power, as any can possibly be in modern times ; yet even then the Gospel flourished, and not merely while the preachers had the power of miracles and the gift of tongues ; but for ages after these had ceased. Does not this representation afford much encouragement to us ?

The wicked lives of men called Christians, may be urged as a peculiar disadvantage in modern times. It is undoubtedly a stumbling-block in the way, and must beget strong prejudices in Pagan minds. But though this did not exist of old, the belief of it did ; and that was almost as bad in its effects. Need I inform you that Christians were charged with murdering children, and drinking the blood in their solemn rites ; that they were accused of promiscuous intercourse in their religious assemblies ; that they were considered by the multitude as guilty of the most odious vices. On these accounts, according to the prediction of our Lord, we are informed

formed by some of the gravest historians, that the Christians were hated by the whole human race, as a detestable horde, polluted by the most atrocious crimes. With such sentiments, circulating among all ranks of men, and generally credited, did the ancient Pagans hear the Gospel; and, in spite of all these, multitudes embraced it. Matters, then, with respect to this circumstance, are more nearly on a level, than may be at first imagined: and, as the convert of old, soon perceived the falshood of the reports circulated against Christians; with the same facility the regenerated Pagan now will learn the difference between a true Believer, and the mere nominal Professor who disgraces the title, and the stumbling-block is thereby removed. The great David Brainerd informs us, that the rude Indians urged this objection against Christianity, from the wicked lives of its professors, and with all the energies of ingenuity and eloquence. But they were converted by the power of the Gospel: and the same glorious truths confirmed by the holy lives of our missionaries, and accompanied by the energy of the Spirit, will, I trust, still produce the same effects.

Some might represent it as an advantage of modern Times, that whereas of old, Christians were treated with contempt, and were for a season confounded with the Jews, a despised people, now many of the barbarous nations look up to Christians as a superior race of beings, on account of their eminent skill in arts and sciences; and are therefore more likely to receive the Gospel. But I lay no great stress on it in the argument. The people of Lystra who venerated Paul and Barnabas, as Gods come down from Heaven, and hastened with sacrifices to testify their veneration, in a little while stoned them with stones, as the vilest of men, and dragged Paul out of the City as dead. I may however observe, on the whole of this particular, that we have no reason to shrink from the comparison,

or to consider modern Heathens as more averse to the Gospel than ancient Heathens were.

The great and hurtful mistake in the whole of this objection lies here. People consider missionaries going forth among the Heathen as mere men with no wisdom superior to their own, with no strength above human, and they are greatly dispirited; but did we view a missionary as we ought, and as he is, with Jesus his master at his right-hand, accompanying him on the way, and the Holy Spirit resting on him like a flame of fire, with all his powerful energies, we should not be cast down, but maintain a cheerful hope amidst the darkest appearances of Pagan ignorance and obstinacy, and persevere, trusting in the Lord, and in the power of his might.

VI. objection is: "How and where shall we find proper persons to undertake the arduous work of missionaries to the Heathen."

This is certainly a matter of the highest importance; on good missionaries how much depends! It is indeed an arduous office, and requires the union of two distinguishing qualities in an eminent degree, *Knowledge* and *Zeal*. A missionary must be a burning and a shining light. The rays of divine knowledge must shine forth brightly from his mind, and the fire of divine zeal burn with a pure flame in his heart. Heat without light will not suffice, for the health and growth even of vegetables, far less of spirits. Heat without light is considered as descriptive of the Pit below, not of the New Jerusalem where Jehovah dwells. He that goes to preach Christ in Heathen lands, should be a seribe well instructed into the Kingdom of God. His knowledge of divine things should exceed those of an ordinary pastor of a church already formed, because from him a whole country may receive its views of the Gospel, and be cast as it were into his mould. And how pure and full should his ideas of the Gospel be! When God sent forth the first missionaries

to plant christianity among the heathen, he inspired them with a perfect knowledge of it in all its parts. And is it not incumbent on us so far to respect the divine pattern shewn in the Mount, as to do all in our power that those whom we send out to the same glorious work, shall be men eminently distinguished for an enlarged and comprehensive understanding of the mystery of the Father and of Christ? Things produce their like. Error in the missionary will produce error in the converts; ignorance will produce false and imperfect views; and pure truth in all its parts will produce pure truth on the Pagan's mind, and sanctity and consolation as naturally flowing therefrom. We are going to send by our missionaries to the Heathen, a gift of inestimable value, and while we are anxiously careful that it may not be polluted by the defiling fingers of error, should we not also feel a holy solicitude, that it may not be mutilated or defaced by the rude hand of Ignorance? But though knowledge be so important and so necessary, it is not sufficient of itself. The pale rays of the moon would bring neither grass, nor corn, nor fruit to maturity. To accomplish this, the Sun's genial beams must diffuse their fructifying virtue over the face of the earth. In like manner to the light of knowledge, there must be added in a good missionary, the celestial heat of zeal; pure, ardent, persevering zeal for the glory of God, and the salvation of man, must, like unextinguished fire upon the altar, burn continually within his breast, unabated by all the difficulties and discouragements which from time to time set themselves in array against him. I might add, that to these radical qualities, he should join the wisdom of the serpent, to the harmlessness of the dove, the most exalted devotion, the most profound humility, unconquerable meekness, and patience under sufferings, and trials, which nothing can subdue. Such are the men whom we wish to send to the Heathen. To find them

them will be, we must own, a matter of very great difficulty; but the difficulty is not insurmountable. Such men have been found. There were many such in the primitive ages of the church, not only in the days of the Apostles, but likewise in succeeding centuries, long after miracles and the gift of tongues had ceased to accompany the preachers of the Gospel. What has been may be again. There are just the same materials to work upon; and the same artificer as of old. Human nature is just the same as then: if it be not better, it is not worse. Christians, too, are the same: there are the same divine principles in the word of God, and the same almighty Grace in the Holy Spirit, to make them what they were in ancient days. Why then should not as good missionaries be produced now as of old? Ministers are found who are faithful, and zealous, and successful: but the same grand qualities are required in them as in missionaries, and it deserves enquiry, whether it may not be laid down as a general remark, “that the same talents
 “and dispositions, which form a good minister
 “in England, would, by a difference of application,
 “and by adaption to studies, objects, and pursuits,
 “somewhat varying in kind, have formed a good
 “and useful missionary for the service of the Hea-
 “then. Besides, missionaries have been formed by other societies. The Danes, the Scots, the Moravians, have not been suffered to leave their plans abortive for want of labourers: and have not we as extensive a field of selection as any of them can boast of?

If we enter into a consideration of the requisite attainments, we shall find nothing insisted on, that is impossible. To learn the language of the heathen is necessary for a missionary. But do not ten thousands learn foreign tongues for amusement, or for gain; and will the love of Christ and of souls be found a less powerful motive for exertion. Self-denial is of indispensable necessity. But do we not see

see men practice it from inferior considerations? They bid adieu to their dearest friends; they cross the mighty ocean; they dwell in the most sultry climates; they associate with the rude and barbarous inhabitants; and are for many years deprived of that society which was so sweet to them in their native land, and for what, to amass wealth. And will not the certain prospect of treasures in Heaven, and of one of the brightest crowns of glory, animate the Christian missionary to submit to similar hardships and restraints? Nor is this grace peculiar to him; for in what part of the world can a man be a good minister of Jesus Christ, without the exercise of much self denial in his work? Patience and zeal are required of a missionary in an abundant degree. But do we not see them exercised by the man of the world, to attain the object of their pursuits? How many are there now in India who have been for twenty years patiently and zealously following the wished-for prize. And when we consider this, shall we not be ashamed to object that we are afraid we shall not be able to find missionaries who will be patient and zealous, when labouring in the work of the Lord, that he may see of the travel of his soul and be satisfied. To make the way of salvation known to Pagans how difficult, yet absolutely necessary! all good ministers feel something of this in conveying divine instruction to the young and to the ignorant. Besides, does the adventurous trader continue to make himself understood by the naked Savages, if we have aught to buy or to sell; and though the subject be more difficult, cannot the missionary let it be known that he brings the glad tidings of salvation to them, and that they are required to come and buy it without money and without price? Though hard, this is not impossible, for he who created the soul of man, framed the gospel of Christ. And he made them so to correspond to each other, as that the soul should be large enough to receive

receive the gospel, and men of the most ordinary capacity in Heathen lands should be able to understand it.

But where, it may be said, are those missionaries? Can you point them out? Had Christ, before he called his disciples, informed one of the Jewish Rabbies that he wanted twelve men to send into all the world, and convert the nations to the faith of his gospel, would not the wise Rabbi have smiled at the supposed folly, and have said, "where are these twelve men to be found? They have not yet breathed the breath of life." But when Christ wanted these, he soon found them, and in situations where no proud Rabbi since his time would have looked for them. And after keeping them in his academy for three years and a half, where they received lectures in theology, and saw every principle displayed, and every rule exemplified in his life and at his death, he filled them with his spirit, and sent them forth to bring the nations into subjection to him. How well qualified they were for the office both their writings and the success of their ministry afford a satisfactory proof. And cannot our Lord with equal ease find out missionaries now? He can and will. As soon as they are wanted these objectors may be convinced that Jesus will call them, put the desire into their heart, and they will offer themselves willingly for his service. Indeed I believe that not a few have already discovered an earnest desire to be employed in this arduous but glorious work. In fine, if it be but considered with serious attention, that our Lord Jesus Christ, when he ascended up on high, received gifts for men on purpose to qualify them for every employment in his church, even the most difficult; and that it is his office, and will be his delight to fit missionaries for pulling down the thrones of Satan, and extending the kingdom of the Redeemer, certainly the
objection

objection will be withdrawn. Perhaps some may even object.

VII. Whence will the society and the missionaries be able to find support?

I cannot think the main difficulty lies here. Considerable funds will indeed be necessary; but they will be also readily provided. When folly and vanity call for support, no lack of money is observed. When an opera house or a theatre are to be erected, is it found impossible to provide funds? And if these haunts of mere amusement can be raised with ease, shall it be an insuperable difficulty to procure a sum of money to convey instruction necessary to the happiness of immortal souls? If the lovers of vanity be thus liberal to gratify a forlorn and depraved taste, shall not we who profess to love God and Christ, and the souls of men, exert ourselves, and contribute of our substance to attain the highest ends which a creature can possibly pursue, the end for which Jesus shed his blood upon the cross? Are thousands of professing Christians riding in chariots, and shall support be wanting for missionaries to travel in the apostolical mode for the conversion of the heathen? "Is it time for you (says the prophet in the context to the Jews of old) to dwell in cieled houses, and this house "Iye waste?" The same argument would I urge. Many of you dwell in splendid houses, elegantly furnished, and some have more than one; and have you nothing to bestow towards building the house of the Lord of hosts? Others are growing rich through the bounty of Providence; and have you nothing to spare for Christ and his cause? It cannot be. It is needless to urge the matter. In this manner had I purposed to reason with you. But to my unspeakable joy, you have rendered these few hints almost needless by the many examples of generosity which have far exceeded our expectations. Here we have already beheld, and there certainly

certainly we shall still behold the triumphs of Christian benevolence, and the liberal free will offerings of pious zeal. The abundant oblation of the affluent; the generous contribution of the industrious, the day labourer's pence, and the widow's mite, will furnish a sacred treasure sufficiently ample for building the house of the Lord in all its glory, and for providing support to those who minister in the sanctuary from year to year till the heathen say: "It is enough."

An VIIIth objection urged by many is: "There is no door opened in Providence, for the entrance of the gospel: We should wait till such an event take place," and then diligently improve it.

Is not this founded in a mistake? Certainly a door is opened in Providence; and we are called upon to enter in. Formerly, in the dark ages, nations had little intercourse with one another; and such as were separated by the sea, or by countries intervening, scarcely knew of each others' existence. But since the invention of the mariner's compass, every part of the globe has been explored; nearly all the tribes of the earth have been brought into view, and some kind of intercourse established with them. And for what end is all this? Was America discovered to our view, that those inhuman ruffians who first landed on her shores, might rob the inhabitants of their country, murder them by millions, and send the few that remained into the bowels of the earth to dig for gold to allay the cravings of their accursed avarice? Were thy coasts, O Africa, unveiled to our eyes, that Christian merchants, sanctioned by Christian legislatures, might drag thy unoffending sons and daughters from their native soil, and all the tender charities of life, to be bondmen and bondwomen in their distant colonies, till welcome death put an end to the bitterness of sorrow, and proclaimed deliverance from the galling yoke? No one that has the

spirit of man within him will dare to assert the impious falsehood. Do ye think, ye men of literature and philosophy, that the chief design is to gratify your curiosity, to make your maps more full, your systems of geography more compleat, and your histories of man in his various forms and institutions more perfect? Do ye suppose, ye men of commerce, that the great end of God in this dispensation is, that the manufactures of England might find a more extensive and profitable market, and that the commodities furnished by these distant lands might minister to our convenience, luxury, and affluence? No; these are the false imaginations of worldly men who see objects through a distorted medium. The true state of the case is this. God in his Providence has discovered these nations to us, and given us intercourse with them, that a door might thereby be opened for the entrance of the gospel, and that messengers might be sent to them with the joyful tidings of salvation by the cross of Christ. Nay the very discovery of them, is the hand of God opening the door, and a loud call to the lovers of the gospel to enter in, and labour for the salvation of perishing souls. Philosophers account the mere discovery of these distant countries, a door opened for them to go in, and reap all the improvements which science can possibly collect. Merchants think the mere discovery, a door opened wide enough for them to go in, and purchase from the inhabitants, the commodities of their country, and dispose of their own in return. And after this shall we hear christians whine that a door is not opened to the heathen for them to enter in, and strenuously exert themselves for the salvation of guilty and miserable men? For shame brethren, shall it be said that the love of science, and the love of gain are more powerful in their principles, more active in their exertions, and less cold and formal in seeking an introduction to the heathen, and cultivating

tivating a friendly intercourse with them, than christian zeal, and the love of immortal souls!

What door, I would ask, do you wish to be opened to you? what do you effect? what can you expect more than is already done? We have the Gospel. They have souls to be saved. We know how to convey it to them. We can learn their language to teach them religion, just as readily as another can to acquire wealth, and so have a door of utterance. And by humble and fervent prayer, we may hope for the Divine blessing and God's powerful aid, to convert the sinner and give a door of entrance. What more then can we require? what is necessary besides, to constitute an open door? Do you expect they will send for us to come to them? But how can that be, seeing they are ignorant of the gospel, and know not, unhappy creatures! what the invaluable blessing is which they need, and which we have to bestow upon them?

Some men in the course of life, meet with uncommon events, or miracles in Providence; and are therefore ready to look for something extraordinary in the way of direction and encouragement. But this is not God's common method in the government of the world; nay not even in his dispensations towards the church. If you read the history of the planting of christianity, you will find in a very few instances God giving his Apostles particular directions to whom to go, and where to preach. But ordinarily there was nothing of this: they went forth led by the dictates of christian providence, and christian zeal, wherever there were precious souls, and preached the word, the Lord working with them. From an accurate perusal of ecclesiastical history, it appears that this has been the way ever since, in all the efforts which have been made to propagate the gospel, even in the most remarkable seasons. What open door had

Luther,

Luther, Zwinglius, and Calvin to preach the pure doctrine of the cross to the millions sunk in ignorance and superstition? Were they guided and authorized by visions and revelations of the Lord? or did they at first find men inviting them to expose the errors of Popery, and to feed them with evangelical doctrine! No, it was while they preached, that people were convinced of their errors, and embraced the truth. And this may be considered as a general rule. Before the ministers of Jesus set out to preach, matters have been precisely in the same situation as now with us. Providence unbarred her gate, and shewed them where there were souls to be saved, and this was all the encouragement she gave. But when they had gone forth, and were preaching the word, God opened a door of faith, removed obstacles out of the way, and gave efficacy to the word of his grace, and this frequently, where at first there were the most unpleasing appearances, and the most violent opposition; if these things be seriously reviewed, it will no longer be objected, that a door is not opened for the preaching of the Gospel to the Heathen.

IX. It is objected by some, “ what right have we to interfere with the religion of other nations?”

Some think it enough, if people have a religion, and if they be sincere in it, they conclude, that they shall certainly be saved, no matter of what kind the religion is. This discovers the lowest abyss of mental stupidity, and an utter ignorance of the nature of God and virtue. Is there not a difference in things themselves; will poison nourish the body, like wholesome food? Will a spell or a charm, heal diseases, like an efficacious medicine? Will darkness serve to shew a traveller his way as well as light? If a man sets out on a journey and advances with diligence, does it not matter, whether he be on the right road? Is there no difference between
truth

truth and error, between verity and falsehood, between right and wrong? Can the infinitely wise God, be pleased with a religion full of ridiculous absurdities? Can a holy God be delighted with a homage, which does not proceed from holy dispositions, and which has no tendency to produce them? Can a righteous God ever accept services which give no honour to his rectitude; but on the contrary, trample it under foot? Can a good and gracious God, look with approbation on a ritual, sanguinary in its nature, and nourishing the seeds of enmity and revenge, and where there is not a spark of benevolence, or love to God, and love to man? If after this, a person will still maintain, that it matters not what a man's religion is, provided he be sincere, to argue with him, is to loose both time and labour.

But some who acknowledge the religion of "the Heathen to be bad," still say, "what right have we to interfere?" If report speak truth, this was urged in the first assembly of a Christian land, by a great name in the *literary*, nay in the *religious*, or rather in the *ecclesiastical* world. How little weight there is in the objection, when ever, or by whomsoever urged, will be evident, when you consider, that we have an authority, paramount to every other; the authority of Jehovah himself, for carrying the Gospel to the Heathen, and not only his authority, but his express command, which makes us criminal if we disobey. "Go," says the Son of God, to his disciples, Matt. xxviii, 19, "go, teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you, and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world, Amen." Such is the commission, and it must abide in force, till it be executed, that is, till all nations be taught, and with respect to time, until the end of the world, should
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the design not be accomplished sooner. As the nations are not yet all taught the religion of Jesus, it is evident, that the obligation to teach them, is in force on us, as his disciples; and we have the highest authority to proceed in the work, and to interfere with the religion of the heathen nations.

But to descend from authority to reasoning: Is not active benevolence, one of the grand principles of Christianity? I never felt the obligation to exercise it in an extensive degree, as I do now; and, I fear we have all greatly neglected this part of duty. Benevolence teaches us to do good, both to the bodies and souls of man; and the numerous distresses, and miseries, which overspread the earth, are loud calls to every Christian's benevolence for relief, and to his utmost exertions if possible, to lessen or remove them. If a country were starving from a grievous famine, would it be a culpable interference, to freight a vessel, and send them our bread to eat? And if their souls be starving from a famine of the word of God, shall it be accounted wrong, to convey to them the bread of life? Did pestilential disease ravage an unhappy land, and there was no medical man to administer relief; if a physician should kindly go to dispense a sovereign remedy, and restore the sick to health, would it be an improper interference? And if by the raging of the mortal malady of sin, the whole head be sick, the whole heart faint, and miserable Pagans ready to perish, is it blameable to attempt to heal and save their diseased souls? If we heard, that in a Pagan country, superstition and fanaticism, brought annually to the altar, a hundred thousand men and women, would an attempt in some ardent philanthropist, to convince them of the folly and wickedness of the barbarous custom be a criminal interference with the religion of the infatuated people? And shall the endeavours of Christian benevolence to save hundreds of thousands of perishing sinners among the
Pagans

Pagans from the miseries of the second death, be branded with this defaming name of a meddler in other men's matters? If a nation were ignorant of the arts of civilized life, and of those discoveries which contribute to human happiness, would it be a culpable interference for a society to send persons to teach men to sow and plant, to build houses, and procure abundance of every comfort? And shall a crime be imputed to these who would teach rude Pagans, ignorant of all the arts of the spiritual life, the science of faith in a Saviour, the art of holy living, so as to please God, the way of maintaining fellowship with the Father, and with his son Jesus Christ, and the certain method of securing eternal blessedness beyond the grave? rise up now thou who utterest the objection, and say, what man, or body of men have obtained a patent from Heaven, to stop the current of Christian benevolence from flowing through the place of their abode, or to concenter and perpetuate misery in the country where they dwell? Stand forth, and speak before the thousands who surround thee. But thou art wise to hide thy head for shame, and conceal thy folly. Once more,

X. Others say: "We have Heathens enough at home, let us convert them first before we go abroad."

That there are vast multitudes in England, as ignorant as Heathens, it is painful to be compelled to acknowledge. That every method should be employed for their instruction and salvation, what Christian will not loudly affirm. But do you mean by the objection, that all the people at home should be converted before we go abroad? This mode of arguing would effectually prevent proceeding in the villages too, because those who are in town, may on these principles say, "There are hundreds in the neighbouring streets, still in a state of impenitence, why therefore should I go out into the
 1 "places

“places around, while there are so many wicked people at my door.” Such reasoning, and such conduct would hinder the progress of the Gospel in the world, and restrain that active benevolence to which God has here assigned some peculiar service, and to which he has proposed objects so numerous and important.

The Apostles did neither argue nor act in this way, else they had never gone beyond the bounds of Jerusalem or Judah; and the Gentiles had remained ignorant of the gospel unto this hour. Had Peter said: “There are unbelieving enough in the land of Canaan, let us convert them first, before we go to the Gentiles,” what would have become of these who were not of the seed of Abraham? or if Paul the Apostle of the Gentiles, when he went down to Antioch, and preached in that populous city, had, if requested to go into Greece or Italy, made this reply; why should I? there are a hundred thousand heathens in Antioch: It is needless for me to go further, as long as I live. What would then have become of us, or of all who live in these remote parts of the earth? But this objection is not derived either from apostolical reasoning or conduct. They were itinerant preachers: They travelled from city to city, and from country to country. Wherever they went, they scattered the seed of the word, made converts, formed them into a church, and then removed to some other place, where the sound of the gospel had not been heard. This has likewise been the method in all remarkable revivals of religion, as at the reformation from Popery, and in more limited effusions of the holy spirit on particular lands. Besides, it is with a bad grace indeed that the objection is offered among us. For more than two hundred years has the gospel been preached in England: And now, when it is proposed to send it to Pagan nations, an objection is raised, in order

to quench the sacred fire of pious zeal. What have you been doing all your days in converting the heathen in the dark places of England? If nothing—with what face could ye object to this benevolent plan? If something—then go on at home, while others labour abroad: And both domestic and foreign heathens will receive unspeakable benefit. That apostolical man Brainerd mentions that the conversion of the Indians had a very happy effect on some of the people in America, by producing a solemn fear lest they should be rejected and cast off. Singular advantages will, I trust, result to the people of England from the successful exertion of our plan, and the zealous efforts of our Missionaries among the distant and unenlightened nations of the earth.

I have now considered every objection which appeared likely to be raised: Shall I flatter myself that I have given a satisfactory answer? Where prejudice and dislike to the cause proposed the difficulties, it is not to be expected that I should prevail. But where the objections have been made by candid and impartial minds, which had not weighed the matter attentively, nor had sufficient means of information, I would fain hope I have not spoken in vain.

Is there then no difficulty in the way but may be surmounted, let me entreat you all, my brethren, to exert yourselves to the utmost in this glorious work? There is but one privilege I know of, which we have above the saints in heaven. It consists in a capacity of being instrumental in the conversion of sinners to God. With what avidity should we improve it? An opportunity now presents itself: Embrace it without delay. I need not inform you that there is one way in which you may all promote it—*by your prayers*. Here let all unite. Whenever you enter into your closet, let there be one supplication for the blessing of God on the

missionary society. Remember it always in your family devotions: And let it never be forgotten in public worship. While it is not forgotten, see that you offer up the effectual fervent prayer of faith. It has been remarked by some, that in the intercessory part of prayer, the devotion of the assembly has been most relaxed: let us aim that the observation may no more have place; but that then the souls of the worshippers may burn with peculiar ardour. Your pecuniary aid I need not urge; when called upon, your generosity will be displayed. And if dire necessity should prevent any of you from performing this act of benevolence, it will, I am sure, fill you with regret to be obliged to withhold your hand in so good a cause. Cultivate a spirit of zeal for the prosperity of the kingdom of Christ in the world; and seek to have your souls enlarged in ardent desires for the salvation of precious souls. Recommend this glorious cause to others. Interest in it as many as you can: and strive to kindle in the breasts of all around you that ardour of zeal which you yourselves feel. Thus will it spread from soul to soul; and the number of those who pray and long for the conversion of the Heathen, be greatly increased. Consider this. I beseech you, for it is not considered by any of us as it ought: “one important idea conceived in the mind of an individual, and uttered with energy in conversation, will swiftly fly from man to man, till in the space of a year it has enlightened the understanding, warmed the hearts, and given a direction to the conduct of thousands: and it is still in a progressive state of extension. In process of time it may influence a nation, and a world.”

To find missionaries for the service of the heathen as it is a matter of the last consequence, so it is a thing in which all should give their aid. There are many whom modesty conceals from public view that would be good messengers of the gospel of

peace. The man who shall point out one of these will render us an essential service. Blessed are ye among men, women, who have children, that shall dedicate themselves to the service of the Lord Jesus among the idolatrous nations. Had I a son arrived at years of maturity who was qualified for the office, I should feel the most delicious sensations at seeing him offer himself as a missionary to the heathen, and embark for India, or some remote island in the most distant sea. I should think him better provided for, than if he went to Hindostan, under the most powerful patronage, with the fairest prospect of affluence and honours. And should he at some fitter time return for a season, and in giving you an account of his ministry be able to say to you, "There are hundreds of persons in the place from which I came, who have been converted by the ministry of the word; and whom God hath honoured me to turn from idols, to serve the living and true God, and to wait for his son, from heaven, even Jesus who delivereth us from the wrath to come," I should esteem it a greater honour to myself, and a greater happiness to him, than if he were to visit his native land with the princely treasures and the eastern splendour of a Hastings or a Clive. But how great will our obligations be to those who, having received from the god of providence and grace, the grand qualities of good missionaries, shall come forward and offer themselves for the work of the Lord. Honourable indeed, among men, honourable in the eyes of angels and of God will our first missionaries be. Hail ye blessed of the Lord, I I admire your choice: I feel a veneration for you, may the Lord go with you, and bless you; and what you lose in the pleasures of civilized society, may you find more than compensated in fellowship with God, and in seeing your labours crowned with abundant success. Delightful will it be to you to
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be furrounded with your converts, and to find in them fathers and mothers, sisters and brothers, sons and daughters, relatives and friends. Your place in heaven will be near to apostles, martyrs, and reformers; and your crowns shine with superior lustre. We who are merely stated pastors in churches already formed, look up to you as our superiors, and honour you as displaying that dignified temper and conduct which places you high in the scale of moral excellence.

Why should we be cast down at the prospect of difficulties in the way? Let our whole dependence be placed in the wisdom, power, and grace of the Lord Jesus Christ. He can exalt every valley, level every mountain and hill, make the way to places plain, and the crooked straight; and by removing every stumbling block, prepare the rough for his servants, and make the triumph of the cross, glorious in the eyes of the nations of the earth. To attempt is noble. To fail here is more honourable than to succeed in most other pursuits. Should we fail of success, while we may be grieved that the Heathen are still to remain in darkness, we shall have no reason to repent of our undertaking. Will the future part of our life roll on more unhappy or disreputable, because we attempted without effect to extend the boundaries of the kingdom of Jesus Christ? will it tinge our cheeks with shame, when we are laid upon a death bed, that we were strenuously engaged in an unsuccessful effort, to spread the knowledge of Christ among the Heathen? or will it cover us with blushes when we approach the throne of God at the judgment, to have it said by an attending spirit, "That man was an ardent supporter of an unsuccessful society, whose object was to bring the Heathen to seek salvation through the blood of the Redeemer's cross."

But I hope better things, even the success of our plan for the salvation of the Heathen, though I
thus

thus speak. Yet mistake me not, discouragements, many and great we may meet with, and perhaps want of success where our hopes are most sanguine. Nay Providence may seem to frown on our attempts, the ears of Jehovah to be shut against our prayers, and seasons roll on with little prospect of advantage. Be not cast down at this, nor surprized if scoffers laugh loud amidst their derision of our folly. Why that despondency? whence came that impious whisper: "we may now give up all for lost." Remember God seeth not as man seeth: He worketh not as man worketh, and he accomplishes his plans in a way peculiar to himself. In those designs which are most pleasing in his sight, and to which he has determined the most favourable issue, it frequently happens that it is not till after a trial of persevering faith and patience, that He gives success; and when He does give it, it is *where* and *when*, and in a manner we did not expect. Success in God's place, and time and way, I do look for on our efforts: we have every encouraging reason to build our hopes upon, and if we should succeed, O how delightful the prospect which rises to our view! Idolatrous Pagans changed into Christians who worship God in spirit and in truth. Churches formed of worshippers of stocks and stones; and prayers and praises ascending to God and to the Lamb in lands where the voice of Jehovah was never mentioned before. What joy must there be in heaven, when the saints and angels there look down and behold the glorious change! Who can express the delight that we shall feel to see our missionaries visit us after revolving years, accompanied by some of their converts, presenting the *Gods* of the Heathen, which their former worshippers have sent as symbols of the triumphs of the cross, and unequivocal evidences of their contempt for idolatry, and that they now treat with derision these things which were once deemed most sacred.

How

How sweet an employment to hear them recount the great things which God hath been pleased to do by their ministry, and expressing an anxious wish to return to their dear children in the Lord, animated with the most ardent desire to extend more widely the boundaries of the Mediator's kingdom; how reviving to receive accounts of encreasing success from year to year! And should we, through the mercy of God in Christ, reach the world of glory, what extacy shall we feel at seeing multitudes of converted Pagans enter heaven, of whom it is proclaimed, that they owe their knowledge of salvation to our present meeting. To conclude, this year will, I hope form an epoch in the history of man; and from this day by our exertions, and by the exertions of others whom we shall provoke to zeal, the kingdom of Jesus Christ, shall be considerably enlarged both at home and abroad, and continue to encrease "till the knowledge of God cover the earth as the waters cover the sea." When we left our homes, we expected to see a day of small things which it was our design not to despise, but to cherish with fond solicitude. But God has beyond measure exceeded our expectations: He has made a little one a thousand, and has inspired us with the most exalted hopes. Now we do not think ourselves in danger of being mistaken when we say that we shall account it through eternity a distinguished favour, and the highest honour conferred on us during our pilgrimage on earth, that we appeared here and gave in our names among the *Founders of the Missionary Society*, and the time will be ever remembered by us, and may it be celebrated by future ages, as the **ÆRA OF CHRISTIAN BENEVOLENCE.**

A

M E M O I R

ON THE MOST ELIGIBLE PART TO BEGIN

A MISSION,

AND

THE MOST PROBABLE MEANS OF ACCOMPLISHING IT:

BEING THE

SUBSTANCE OF A DISCOURSE

DELIVERED IN

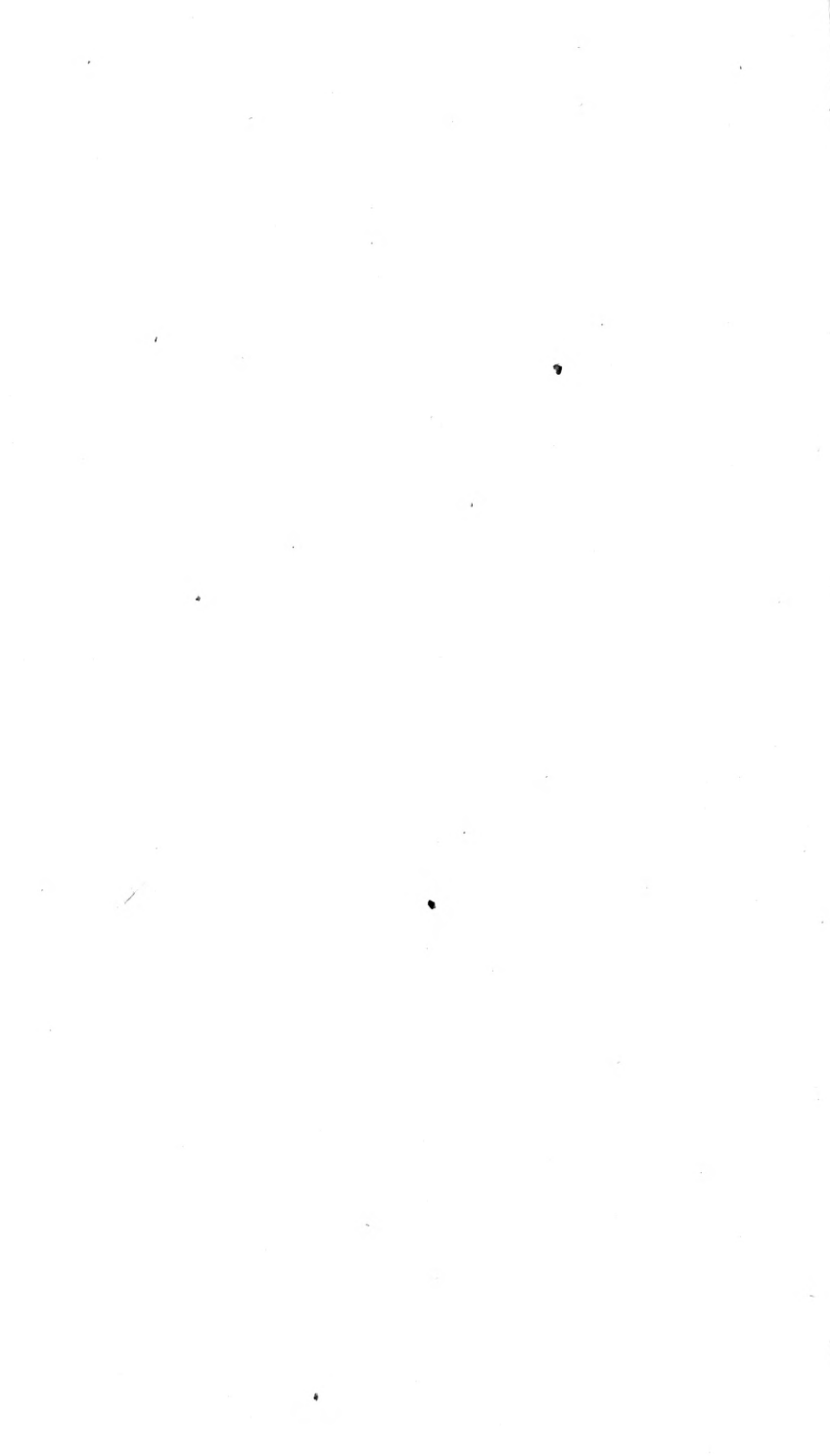
SURRY-STREET CHAPEL,

BEFORE THE MISSIONARY SOCIETY,

September 24, 1795,

By the Rev. T. HAWEIS, L. L. B.

RECTOR OF ALL-SAINTS, ALDWINKLE, AND CHAPLAIN
TO THE LATE COUNTESS OF HUNTINGDON.





A MEMOIR

ON THE MOST ELIGIBLE PART
TO BEGIN A MISSION, &c.

GLORY to God! Let unbelief be confounded. If he will work none can let it. Is it possible any longer to doubt, that this hath God done? How often hath it been suggested, if the Lord would make windows in Heaven, then might these things be. Lo! the windows in Heaven are opened, and the Angels of the Churches descend.

Who ever expected, which of the most sanguine dared to hope they should ever see such days as the present, and the preceding? When was ever such an assemblage of the ministers of Christ, collected in this land*? Every partition wall is broken down, and every heart big with expectation, that the time approaches, when the great Redeemer of lost souls will receive the Heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the world for his possession.

Methinks I see the great Angel of the covenant in the midst of us, pluming his wings, and ready to fly through the midst of Heaven, with his own everlasting Gospel, to every nation, and tribe, and tongue, and people. Rev. xiv. 6.

Yes, ye dear children of our common parent, too long neglected by us; black, though comely, beneath a more vertical Sun, the fumes of time is come; redeemed by the same price as ourselves to you shall the word of Salvation be sent: we stretch

* About two or three hundred ministers were supposed to be in the circle.

out our arms to embrace you, come share our mercies, in Jesus, and be blessed. *Break forth, into joy, sing together ye waste places, for the Lord hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all nations, and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.*

The moment of suspense is past, it is decided by you, that a mission to the Heathen shall be attempted. The desirableness, the necessity, the practicability, of such a mission, you have heard from our brethren, who have spoken in the name of the Lord. Their luminous views presented to us, powerful, impressive as various, like different rays converging to a focus, have kindled in every heart, "*the spirit of burning**." The glory of the Lord is gone up over the sanctuary,—the camp is in motion,—the Levites bear the vessels,—the great commander saith, "GO FORWARD." When the pillar and the cloud thus guide our steps, there shall be a highway in the desert, and the bosom of the great deep again open a way for the ransomed to pass over.

It would be presumption to suppose, I can add any thing to the force of my brethren's discourses. The time is come, a mission is determined; at present it only devolves on me to suggest to your consideration, what I had hinted before.

1. Where the most promising opening appears for a beginning.

2. What means are to be employed.

I wish some one of my abler brethren were in my place, but I obey their commands, for their wishes at present must command obedience, assured that their wisdom will mature, their prudence correct, their courage execute, and their patient perseverance perfect, all that shall be necessary to so noble, yet so vast an undertaking.

* Isa. iv. 4.

The field before us is immense. O that we could enter at a thousand gates: that every limb were a tongue, and every tongue a trumpet to spread the joyful sound! where so very considerable a part of the habitable globe on every side calls for our efforts, and like the man of Macedonia cries, “Come over and help us;” it is not a little difficult to decide at what point to begin.

I. Then, WHERE SHALL WE COMMENCE A MISSION.

Two things naturally will come into consideration:

1. Where the difficulties are least. And 2. Where the prospect of success is greatest.

We shall by many probably be regarded as men highly enthusiastic, and our design ridiculed, as Utopian, but gentlemen, were I merely to present you to their notice, such an assemblage of wise, as well as good men, ought to check the daring imputations of ridicule or censure. It will be seen I hope, that whilst we acknowledge our dependance entirely on the spirit of God for success, we are exercising every faculty of our understanding, to plan with judgment, and execute with prudence. Nor has the object been the hasty ebullition of zeal without knowledge, but the deliberate determination of minds, that have long weighed the necessity of the undertaking, and deeply considered the steps which humanly speaking, may be judged by every man of reason and religion, as practicable, as, they must be admitted to be desirable.

I. WHERE THE DIFFICULTIES ARE LEAST.

What are the grand difficulties to a mission among the Heathens?

I. AN INHOSPITABLE CLIMATE. Whether from humidity---intense heat or cold--each alike unfriendly to constitutions, that have not been inured to such great and sudden changes: and the preservation of a missionary's life is of the last importance to our success.

Such

Such climates also are often as unfriendly to the *means of subsistence*, the easy acquisition of which is of material consequence, as *the time* of a missionary, as far as possible, should neither be engrossed with labour, nor his attention distracted, and his anxiety exercised about his own or his family's provision. I do not say, that true missionary patience and perseverance may not vanquish these, and every other difficulty; we have seen it done by our brethren the Moravians in the most horrid regions of the earth. But whilst I never can speak sufficiently high of their zeal, it becomes us, who have the world before us, to chuse our points of attempt, where, as much as possible, neither unnecessary difficulties may be encountered, nor unnecessary danger incurred. Enough of both will attach to every commencement, sufficient to discourage any heart, that is not full of faith, and truly resting on the rock, which is higher than we. Such men indeed, we may confidently hope, whatever the danger or difficulty may be, will boldly say in the words of the prophet, "Who art thou, O great mountain, before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain."

2. ABSOLUTE GOVERNMENTS. The intrusion of strangers naturally awakens the fears of established governments, and the intrigues of priestcraft, even among Heathens, are in many places as dangerous, and fiercely carried on, as in the church of Rome. They fear for their Foe, and Amida*, as much as these for their Pope, and idols. A missionary could not enter some countries, without a moral certainty of being murdered. I mention China, and Japan, because the immense population of both these countries makes them desirable objects for a mission: Many others are in the same predicament.

* Idols worshipped in China and Japan.

It is known, that though christians have access to both, they are guarded with the most scrupulous attention. A little island near Nangasacki in Japan is allotted the Dutch, from which, on pain of death, no creature dares to move; when the annual ship arrives, a few are admitted under a guard into the city, till the short traffic being compleated they are again prisoners for the sake of gain, till the returning year. He is a dead man, that steps over the limits. It is the same at Canton in China; though the prison is not quite so strait, it is as effectual, and to transgress the bounds of either would alike be fatal; besides the inutility even of the attempt, without a previous knowledge of these strange and difficult languages. I agree with those, who think a missionary is not fit for his work, if he cannot truly say, I count not my life dear unto myself, but it is no more correspondent with christian principles, than human prudence, to tempt God, where we are called only to trust him in the path of duty. It is presumption, not zeal, that would take the bull by the horns.

3. ESTABLISHED PREJUDICES of false religion. Nothing shall, I am confident, ultimately stand before the standard of the cross: I believe with Ezekiel, that God will "overturn, overturn, overturn, them all, when HE shall come whose right it is." Ezek. xxi. 27. and the Lord hasten it in his time! but in the commencement of an infant work; (too long indeed, and shamefully hath it been neglected) in the commencement of an infant work, where we can embrace but a few objects, we should chuse the least unfavourable.

Where civilization hath long obtained,--where false religions are deeply rooted--formed into casts--and plead immemorial antiquity--these present a wall of brass around the people. Such is particularly the case among the Hindoos. Mahometans, also, if they should be supposed to be included under

under the name of Heathen, though professing to worship only one God, have a seven fold barrier of prejudices against us. Would it not appear to be wisdom, for a while at least, to wait till some progress be made in a field more cultivable, and equally vast? Success in this, would afford encouragements to proceed; and perhaps with the very people we may have formed; and those nearer at hand, for the work.

I will only give a slight sketch of Hindostan. There no danger would attend a mission,—there a missionary would have the company and support of his countrymen who govern,—and if he should faint, might always return to England, in the vessels that crowd the Ganges.

If I think it calls for a less portion of a missionary spirit to embrace such a station, and if I err in my apprehension of the prospect of success; no man more cordially embraces the brethren embarked in the attempt, or more heartily will rejoice to find myself mistaken.

Hindostan is chiefly composed of two sorts of people, the native inhabitants, the Hindoos, and their former conquerors, the Tartars,—the latter are Mahometans, the former idolaters, each hath a different language, besides a vast diversity of dialect. There is also a third language, the Persian, which, like the French in Europe, is the genteel language of the superior ranks, and also of the men of letters.

Respecting the Mahometans I shall say nothing, they not being the immediate object of our mission, but of the Hindoos, I would observe, that they are divided into four grand casts, in each of which there are restrictions of such a peculiar nature, respecting food, and Sacrifices, as well as descent, as render it equally impossible for a native to pass into another cast, as for a stranger to be admitted into either of them. If a man, by transgressing
against

against the known, and rigidly enforced rules, loses his cast, he becomes an outcast from society, the wife of his bosom, and his own children reject him with abhorrence, and he is compelled, in order not to be isolated in the midst of society, to form a new connection, which in Bengal hath been generally done by becoming Mahometan. They will as readily become Christian; but I apprehend no denomination of Christians wishes for converts on such a principle. With regard to the rest, even to the lowest cast, the Bise, they are as tenacious of their cast, as the Bramin himself, and feel with equal horror the idea of losing it.

No person who has not been in Hindostan, or who is not intimately acquainted with the state of the country, can have an adequate idea of the difficulties attending a mission there, respecting its success, for other difficulties there are little or none. All things we know, are possible with God.

Our brethren the Baptists have at present prevented our wishes; and though there is room for a thousand missionaries, the engagements on our hands will, I presume, lead us to hope for further intelligence from that quarter, and by the time that arrives, I wish we may be ready with a numerous host for that or any other part of the earth.

4. THE ACQUIREMENT OF LANGUAGES. As we have no reason to expect the gift of tongues, the consideration of the difficulties of this kind comes necessarily into our consideration. On the coast of Africa, the different nations and tongues are so multiplied, near the coast, that in every few leagues of a voyage, a new Government, and a new language present themselves. In the interior, the nations are more extensive, and the language, of whatever difficulty of acquirement, more diffusively understood. Three languages or more should be known in India, by a missionary. The Chinese language presents difficulties nearly insuperable, from

the amazing number of its characters, besides the vigilance, and severity of its government respecting foreigners; these seem at present to forbid the attempt among them. I might enlarge on the subject, but sufficient has been said respecting difficulties to be surmounted.

Secondly. **WHAT FIELD OF GREATEST USEFULNESS** seems to present the fewest?

This is the next consideration.

Of all the regions of the earth which are yet in heathen darkness, the South sea Islands appear to combine the greatest prospects of success, with the least difficulties to be necessarily surmounted.

1. **THE CLIMATE** is sufficiently known. I am afraid to speak, what is recorded, least some should think I were painting a fairy land, a new garden of the Hesperides. Suffice it, therefore, to say, what is universally admitted, that the cold of winter is never known; the trees, I believe, hardly ever lose their leaves, through the constant succession of vegetation, and the greatest part of the year, bear fruit; the heat, though a tropical country, is always alleviated by alternate breezes, whilst they sit under the shade of groves, odoriferous, as loaded with abundance; the sky serene, the nights beautiful, and the sea ever offering its inexhaustible source of food, an easy and pleasing conveyance, and a sight generally admired.

Diseases that ravage us are there unknown: we have indeed added fearfully to their number, yet health, and longevity mark the inhabitants in general, without the knowledge of medicines or physicians. If the frozen regions of the north, or the sultry humid soil of Africa, be compared with these Islands, the difference of danger is immense, and a missionary's life, abundantly more likely to be preserved in the one, than in the other.

Dependent on climate is **THE EASINESS OF PROVISION**. How readily that can be supplied in these islands,

islands, you need only read the concurring testimony of all who have written on the subject, and if they want our luxuries, the real necessaries of life, will there neither much engage a missionary's time or care. With the science he carries, and the arts he practises, there is little apprehension to be entertained, that he will not, with any prudent attention, have enough and to spare.

And this is as advantageous for *the work* as for themselves. The natives not harrassed by labour for daily bread, or as slaves, worked under the lash of the whip, are always sure to have abundant time for instruction. We have not, as our brethren the Moravians, to follow them into the lonely wilds of a desert in their hunting, or over the fields of ice in winter, few at best, and dispersed. Here every man sitting under his cocoa, or bread-fruit tree, is at hand, and the very sound of a hammer, a saw, or a smith's bellows, will hardly ever fail to attract an audience. Two hundred thousand inhabitants are reckoned in the little island of Otaheite alone; all ranged around its beautiful shores, and accessible by a thousand canoes in every part, with a facility that no other road, ever can afford. I need not say *the multitude of the isles will be glad thereof*. Their amount hath never yet been ascertained. We have discovered many, but probably much greater numbers are still unknown, which spot the bosom of the pacific ocean, on either side the line, from New South Wales to the coasts of Peru. But I am only giving a sketch, not a history.

I hardly know how to mention the GOVERNMENT, with which we are not perhaps perfectly acquainted. It seems monarchical, but of the mildest nature, with little authority, controuled as it appears by powerful vassals, each in his own distinct supreme, but with no written law, nor the use of letters, and presents a sort of patriarchal state: where the disorders seem so few, that the arm of authority is

but seldom exerted. Here, so far from having any thing to fear, or any danger of abiding, some have attempted at the hazard of their lives to obtain a retreat by swimming naked from our ships, and some determined to make their future home, by a conspiracy, I was assured by the worthy captain who suffered, brought on by no disgust or dislike to him, or the service, but merely by the fascinations of beauty, and the allurements of the country.

I speak not this to invite or to diminish the dangers, there will be no doubt many, which I have not been able to discover, and there is one, perhaps, as hard to endure as a fiery ordeal. But the same God that enabled the three children to face the burning furnace, strengthened Joseph to escape from the equally dangerous solicitations of his mistress. But this is a point I need not farther touch, whoever goes from us will be as fully apprized of, as guarded against their dangers. If God be with them, the struggle against flesh and blood will be as victorious, as over principalities, and powers, and the rulers of the darkness of this world.

In the uncivilized state, in which the inhabitants of Otaheite and the neighbouring islands live, our superiority, in knowledge, and what they will at first be more struck with, in the mechanic arts, we bring; these, will gain us probably such respect, that without receiving a sacrifice, as to the Eatoa, such as was offered to Cook, we shall enjoy sufficient importance with the highest as well as the lowest of that people, and (in my conscience, I speak) we have more to apprehend from being caressed and exalted, than from being insulted and oppressed. It is a beautiful French proverb, the force of which will be felt in this case by every reflecting mind; *Dans la pais des aveugles, les borgnes font rois.**

* In the regions of the blind, he who hath but one eye, will be monarch.

3. Respecting their RELIGIOUS PREJUDICES. No nation of the earth, I believe, will be found without some traces of traditionary revelation. Every guilty creature feels the necessity of atonement in some shape or form. They have their victims, and their Gods: we are yet but little acquainted with these; but the little that we do know, affords the strongest evidence, that their priests, if there are such, are not invested with any persecuting power, nor can the people be averse to hear us on a religious subject, whom they reverence as their superiors almost in every other. And the very slight traces, which we have obtained of the service at their Morais, seem strongly to imply the supposition of a future existence, and the necessity of placating as well as pleasing an offended God.

I cannot here expatiate on this subject, the missionaries shall always have my sentiments at large for their information.

Respecting LANGUAGE. I have a vocabulary, formed of all the words dispersed through the voyages which have been published, and if I judge from its vocal structure, it is of no difficult attainment. I am assured a corporal of Marines, after three months stay on the island, spoke it fluently. If any Englishman be there, or in the adjacent islands, they must by this time be perfectly acquainted with it. (Oh that we may bring them to repentance!) such may become our instructors, or interpreters, and with a little application, I hope, our missionaries will need neither.

The VAST EXTENT OF THE SAME LANGUAGE, is also an important article in our favour: through the immense field of these scattered islands the same language with little variation prevails; at least the radical part is so much the same, that Tupia, who sailed with Cooke, and died at Batavia, was always able to converse with the natives at the different islands, at which they touched, and I think it was
said

said in one history, that the difference of dialects appeared no greater than exists in the several counties of so small a country as England.

I shall suggest but one advantage more, among a multitude, that might be produced, that we shall here have no *false* Christianity to oppose its life and spirit; and none I hope of those disputes, which among *real* Christians, tend greatly to obstruct the work of God. We have a field wholly uncultivated, but the soil is fit for seed, and the climate genial, and coming first, we have every thing in our favour, and may, without dispute or opposition, inculcate the true knowledge of God our Saviour. From the king on the throne, to the infant of a year old, I should not be surprized to see our schools thronged, and our worship attended. We know that he who made the heart can only renew it. We are sure that the residue of the spirit is with him: and he hath promised to be with us always even to the end of the world. With such divine encouragements what may we not hope for?

2. The means.

1. THE MISSIONARIES. This is generally supposed to be the great desideratum, but I had confidence, and it is confirmed by every appearance, that we shall have such a number offer, that the difficulty will be rather, whom we shall refuse, than who shall be received. They will pass the ordeal of men judged most capable of such examination, taken from a body of ministers and others, such as this century hath, I think, never seen associated, and those selected for missionaries will assuredly be the choice of the flock, and bearing the genuine stamp of God upon them.

1. Respecting THEIR CONDITION. Whether the single or married brethren should be preferred, is to be matter of much consideration. We seem hitherto to have preferred bachelors, but we wish also now to join married men, and their wives, if on
further

further enquiries, white women will be found not to endanger the mission. I think they will greatly advance it.

2. Respecting *their ability*. It appears desirable to have the best informed we can find. We hope to obtain some, who are not destitute of letters, and education, but the greater number we expect from the inferior classes of life. Men expert in their several professions--who shall be found endowed with good, or strong natural parts--who have given evidence of their christian walk and conversation for some considerable time past--attested by their minister, or some respectable members of the congregation, with which they have been in communion--who have diligently read their bibles--and are able to give a clear and satisfactory account of the great leading doctrines--and if they have been in the habit of exhorting--and appear apt to teach--their call will be the more evident: vital godliness is the first qualification we require--a measure of knowledge sufficient to be useful in the way of teaching follows--this we hope also to improve--a clear devotedness of heart to the work--and a temper not hasty, but mild, patient, and conciliating, both to maintain undisturbed union with their brethren, and to gain influence among the Heathen--these appear to be the desirable missionary qualities, and will be found more at large in the discourses delivered by the associated brethren.

3. THE MODES OF CONVEYANCE. These seem reducible to three.

1. A small ship belonging to the society, solely employed in the service of the mission, to pass to and fro, and to be employed in no traffic whatever, if her burden is small, except the natural curiosities of the countries, and added to them, (a noble idea suggested by one of our brethren) their idols, now cast to the moles, and to the bats. But probably from these things, the return would be insignificant

cant and a heavy expence attach to the society: though no more perhaps than can easily be borne.

Some kind of traffic even for a ship of small tonnage also might be found, whether in conveying necessary supplies to port Jackson, or bringing from some ports a cargo home, that might diminish the expence of such a vessel, and enable us to pursue the same track with other missionaries at no greater expence than we must incur, if we paid for their passage in a ship sent to the south sea whale fishery.

2. A ship provided by others, either in or out of the missionary society, of considerable size--500 tons, or upwards, to be engaged on contract. (1.) To government, to convey stores, or convicts to Port Jackson, or Norfolk island. The unspeakable advantages of which to government itself, and to the miserable convicts are easily demonstrable; and I am ready to attempt a memoir on this subject, wherein I might expose, to the fullest conviction, these advantages--with regard to the safety of conveyance--tender care of the convicts--with every necessary restraint--submitted to with cheerfulness--from gratitude, that would tame a lion--and strict discipline, that, whilst it sets an example of proper conduct, ensures the fidelity of the mariners themselves against any cabals with the convicts,--and giving a moral certainty of the discovery of every plot which could be attempted--the probability that the care of the missionaries, as well as the conduct of the captain and crew would land the convicts better men than they found them--and if it pleases God to bless the missionaries labours to a few, if only to one, the benefit of that man, or woman to the colony and their fellows is incalculable; real christianity will do more, than those who have never known its true influence, can entertain any conception of; even an infidel must acknowledge the experiment is worth attempting; it

it can do no harm—it may do an immensity of good to the nation itself.

From Port Jackson, or Norfolk Island, the ship would sail for Otaheite, only distant from the latter a fortnight or three weeks sail—There land the missionaries and stay as long, as may be judged necessary to settle with the inhabitants an abode for the mission, and erect wooden or cane houses for them. How long their stay, must be ascertained on the spot, but the time to be fixed not to exceed a certain number of weeks, that the rest of the voyage may be completed. For this the missionary directors shall agree with the ship owners, according to the fair price due for such conveyance, and demurrage, as may be fixed by any indifferent mercantile men in the city of London.

I cannot but observe of how astonishing a kind must be the arrival of such a ship, and how conducive to the purposes of the mission. How rejoiced the islanders will be to find a body of men come to settle among them from England, purely to be a blessing to their country—to behold a captain and crew so far from contaminating them with their vices, setting an example of the most unimpeached purity, sobriety, and temperance—reverencing the missionaries they bring—attending on daily worship, prayer, and praise—whether on shipboard, or on shore, and giving a happy specimen of what is shewn before their eyes to be the effects of the truths which we come to bring to them, and the conduct we mean to pursue, and invite them to practise—I cannot enlarge on a subject that must strike every man with its suitableness, and astonishingly promising consequences.

From the society islands, a continuance of the voyage may be made to Nootka Sound, for Peltry, --or a return immediate by China or Bengal, if the India company shall be pleased to indulge us with a freight of tea, or sugar, the latter of which our captain,

captain, who has long resided in Bengal, advises; and when proper application is made, we flatter ourselves will not be refused. Thus the voyage may be compleated, if the Lord of winds and seas smile upon the attempt, in the course of a year and a half, and within a second year a repetition of it made to maintain a communication with the missionaries,--increase their number,--and supply their wants.

Many have started at these ideas as Utopian, but they are not out of the leadings of Providence, or inconsistent with the reasonable expectations of a wise and cool observer; indeed what seemed the hardest part is obviated in a moment, in a way that seems to manifest in a striking view, the good hand of our God over us for good.

Where shall we find such a captain? He is found. I am almost afraid to mention particulars, lest the adversaries of our design should malign it, as invention; but I may confidently say some of the most sensible, as well as most serious men of the kingdom have seen and conversed with him. He has allowed me to use his name, but in this stage of the business it may not be needful for the public, yet his kind and noble offers deserve to be had in remembrance, and recorded for the approbation and imitation of times to come, when they may awaken similar zeal and fidelity.

He was mentioned to me by one of my brethren to whose congregation he belongs, and it struck me immediately that he was the very man calculated for the great work of conveying our missionaries to the place of their destination. I was informed he had been twenty years in India, had commanded a vessel eleven years, had made a competent fortune, and returned to old England to enjoy it; there a gracious Lord found him, and brought him to the knowledge of that salvation, which is better than thousands of gold and silver. His enjoyments
were

were now all heightened by a sense of the divine favour, and a life spent in the love and service of him whose presence constitutes the blessedness of angels: on this subject I could enlarge, with delight. Suffice it to say, that after some years of uninterrupted enjoyment of the comforts around him; the Evangelical Magazine communicating some embrio views of a mission to the South Seas, fell into his hands. He was greatly struck with the desirableness and practicability of the attempt, and felt a suggestion rising instantly in his mind, should my help be needful for the execution of the design, am I willing to sacrifice the comforts I enjoy, and without the prospect of any addition to my fortune, which I neither seek nor want, once more to embark upon the stormy ocean?

A matter of this kind was so singular, that at first he hesitated, and he mentioned it, as a very remarkable circumstance, though he had never in his life, during the whole time of his command, known what the sensation of fear was, he no sooner began to feel this subject impressed on his mind, than an apprehension of the sea came upon him that he had never known before; but the more he was led to consider the subject, the more he felt his mind determined, if in the leadings of Providence he should be called to the service, that he could not refuse. The minister, under whose labours he had received the happy views of redemption through the blood of the covenant, was one of those engaged by his congregation, and neighbourhood, to attend the first meeting of the Missionary Society. He communicated to him what had passed in his own mind, and was invited by him, or offered (I forget which) to accompany him to London, and hear what was going forward. The sight, the discourses; the conferences held on the subject; all confirmed him, that the work was of God. He empowered the brother, his friend, to say to me, if

I can be of any service in the execution of the plan, I dare not refuse: I do indeed wish to be excused, and shall be unspeakably happy, if you can find another more adequate for your purpose: I hope, such a man may be found, and in that case, I trust you will release me from my engagement. We met, I reported to the general board our conference, and a committee was appointed to wait on him, to confer with him further on the subject. He very obligingly gave us the meeting, and in conversation confirmed all that he had before hinted, adding still earnestly, excuse me if you can; none of you will rejoice so much as myself in finding a better man for your purpose, but if you cannot, here am I.—He gave us every information in his power, of the nature of the ship—size—expence—outfit, &c. and added, if I am called to your command, I shall have no objection to an interest in the vessel. Let it be in shares, a ship's husband appointed in town, and the gentlemen, that please, in the society, or out of it, provide the funds as soon as the missionaries are found, and probably all difficulties will be more easily surmounted than at first was thought probable.

I may speak with confidence, where my brethren are all so unanimous in opinion, that a man more highly qualified for the work could not be hoped, if we had the choice of the whole land. In all his manners, a gentleman,—a man that is commanding,—an age, yet in the prime of vigour, with the maturity of experience,—and with all, an amiability of disposition of offering himself, that seemed only conquerable by the calls of the mission, and the deep impressions resting on his own heart. I confess, I have been so struck with the circumstance, and many other particulars, I could mention, that I know not where to close; but one anecdote I must add. When in India, he was taken prisoner by Hyder Ally. He escaped from prison

prison--and in his flight, the vast Coleroon obstructed his passage, he plunged into the waters, as no moment remained for deliberation, and swam to the other side, totally unacquainted with the dangers of that river: full of alligators, and never thus passed by human being, or the possibility of it supposed. Insensible of the danger he had escaped, he continued his flight, but was soon seized by Hyder's Peons, and carried prisoner to Seringapatam. The troops that had seized him, demanded how he had come thither, and he informed them of his flight, and that he had swam the Coleroon; in the rudeness of their dialect, (he repeated the words in their tongue, which I have forgotten.) they bluntly said that must be a lie; no mortal had ever swam over that river, for if but the tip of a finger was dipped into it, an alligator snapped at it. His firm assurances staggered them; they made farther enquiry--became convinced of the fact,--looked at him with wonder,--and a Turk cried out, this is *God's man*.

With him we hope, and have scarcely a doubt on the subject, that we shall find mates and mariners of a like mind, who will feel themselves happy to trim the sails, which waft the everlasting gospel to the ends of the earth. It is not now a hope too sanguine to be realized, that we shall shortly see a vessel on the bosom of the deep, such as perhaps it hath never borne from the day of its creation, where every officer and mariner shall be men fearing God, and solemnly devoted to his work--where never a word, profane, impure, improper, shall be heard--where intemperance will be held in abhorrence, —and where, if the most delicious beverage were broached, aversion to intoxication would be a mightier restraint than the strongest arm of authority,--where obedience will be ready as cheerful--where, with men of God standing up in the midst of them, the voice of prayer and

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praise

praise will be daily wafted to heaven--the bible open in the cabin, and on the quarter deck--and every leisure hour devoted to spiritual improvement and religious exercises--unbelieving fear! Is any thing impossible with God? from such a voyage, what blessings may not be expected?

But the expence of such a vessel with its apparatus is great: Admitted. But what a trifle to a thousand commercial adventures that leave the shores of Britain, where the object will never come into competition respecting greatness, and even upon the very principles of advantage to the undertakers, no risk could ever be less, all circumstances considered, or more probable advantages secured. I am unwilling to enter into a detail of particulars, it is sufficient to demonstrate my fullest conviction of the truth, that I am willing heartily to embark in any part of the expence I can afford; the captain offers himself, as owner in one share, a friend of mine, the moment he heard it, desired me to say he was ready, if wanted, for another, and I doubt not the moment the proposal is made, and the plan formed, the subscription will be filled in a very few days, and the ship ready with all the speed, that so great an undertaking admits. Indeed where the heart is so interested in the enterprize, every hand labours with his might to accomplish it.

But there is yet another method equally practicable, which is the well known Southern Fishery, out of the track of which, our object lies no very considerable way. This may be tried, if we cannot get a freight from India, or even alone would, I am informed, alike effect our purpose, and cover the owners from loss; or rather give them exactly the same career to run of profit and loss, with those already engaged in the trade, and with equal prospects of advantages, besides the additional one of conveying the Mission.

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But should there not be found sufficient funds to procure so desirable a mode of conveying the missionaries as I have proposed, and which I hope, on many accounts, will be effected, it yet remains to enquire for some ship engaged in the Southern Fishery, who will contract to land the missionaries at their place of destination, with all the necessaries for their use, till we can send them a second cargo. This I apprehend would be matter of no great difficulty, and except that many other great ends would be defeated, respecting the conveyance, it might effectually answer our purpose. I confess I should hope every true friend to the cause of God and truth would vigorously exert themselves in the execution of the nobler object, and I cannot but indulge the strongest confidence, that God will abundantly bless us, and that what we thus lent to the Lord should be paid us again with rich interest, even in this world; and in the world to come, be remembered among the works of faith, and labours of love, which will procure us a reward, beyond the present possession of millions of gold and silver.

I have also to add, that exactly thus, but on a lower scale, do the Moravian Brethren maintain a communication with their Mission, on the Coast of Labradore, their ship is divided, I am told, into shares of ten pounds only. With the supply intended for the brethren, articles are sent for traffic with the natives, enabling them to bring back cargoes that have afforded often, if not always, a dividend of more than the interest of the capital employed. And if we engaged in the Southern fishery, our returns would be similar to theirs, blubber, whale-oil, seal-skins, &c. What others have done, why cannot we do, with equal wisdom, diligence, and perseverance? We have the same Lord to bless, and guide us, and looking up to him are emboldened to hope that he will strengthen us with the right-hand of his righteousness, and do exceeding

ceeding abundantly for us beyond all that we can ask or think.

I have in some measure already answered the last question, where 3dly *the funds* are to be found? Those appropriated for the mission, are already formed, great, in three days, beyond the expectations or hopes, of the most sanguine friends. It hath been astonishing as pleasing to see the people offering willingly, eagerly, the gold and the silver, that the Lord's house might be built, and an enlargement of its foundations instantly be laid. Some thousand pounds, I apprehend, are already lodged for present use; more than a thousand annually subscribed for. The zeal that hath been manifested when the work is but in embryo, gives the most confident expectations that nothing of this sort will be wanting to carry it immediately into effect, and to support it powerfully in its progress, multitudes probably are waiting, the result of our present meeting, who are startled at the magnitude of the undertaking, and doubt of its practicability, whose hearts are as cordially engaged in it as our own, and will come forward with every help we can need or desire. Men, (if men of such importance are required) higher in the line of influence, wealth, and I may add, wisdom, than ourselves; whom the spirit of our God, if he pleases, will constrain, and turn their hearts towards the service, as the rivers in the south; with a body of wealth like their waters, and with force like these mighty streams to bear down every, obstacle in the way. Not that we depend on an arm of flesh, whilst we shall be happy to devolve the work on abler heads than our own. We know the stone hewn without hands from the mountain's side, can smite the image of jealousy, which rears its hated front, and lay it low, even in the dust.* We acknowledge the

* Dan. ii. 34.

work must be begun, continued, and ended, not by might nor by power, but by my spirit faith the Lord.

The gracious God hasten it in his time. *Amen,*

P. S. Since this memoir was in substance delivered at Surry chapel, and afterwards composed for the press, the Directors have been led to call before them a person who sailed with Captain Cooke, was two months at Otaheite, and able to talk with the natives sufficiently to be understood; he has confirmed every tittle above advanced on the subject.

The beauty of the place, and every local advantage, though a plain man, he described in the most convincing manner; and as a proof how much it dwelt on his own mind, he assured us he would earnestly have staid behind, but the captain would not suffer it; and that the greatest favour the society could now do him, would be to-morrow to convey him and his wife and family to the Society Islands.

We questioned him about his wife's danger; he said, no more, he thought, than here. The marriage state was there equally respected; and they were as good wives and mothers, as in any other country.

He added, that chastity was not indeed held in the same estimation among the unmarried; but that women were not the tempters. That the rage for our iron overcame all restraint of honesty or modesty; but that no young man, he was fully sure, would ever meet there any temptation, or solicitation from a woman, equal to those he must pass every day in the streets of London.

As to danger or difficulties they are certainly less than I have represented them, rather than more; every missionary will have enough to try his faith and patience, when he quits his relations here, and goeth forth, he knoweth not whither: But I

see no use in raising terrific ideas, as if we must make what we do not find. There is but one solid question. What is the truth? To pretend dangers, that do not exist, would be to depart from the simplicity of truth, and to do evil that good may come.

As the society proceeds in the execution of the plan it hath formed, the public will be acquainted with the particulars.

Such gentlemen and ladies who are disposed to favour this undertaking by present donations, or annual subscriptions, may forward them to the Treasurer, or any of the directors, to either of the secretaries, or to the following banking-houses: Messrs. Down, Thornton, and Co.; Hankey, and Co.; Welch, Rogers, and Co.; and Fuller, Son, and Co.; Birch, Chambers, and Hobbs, No. 152 Bond Street.

Should they be inclined to remember the institution in their Will, the following is A PROPER FORM OF A DONATION TO THE MISSIONARY SOCIETY BY WILL.

Item, I A. B. do hereby give and bequeath the sum of _____ unto the Treasurer, for the time being, of a voluntary society, commonly called, or known by the name of, THE MISSIONARY SOCIETY, established in London, in the year 1795; the same to be paid within _____ months next after my decease, out of my personal estate, in trust, to be applied to the uses and purposes of that society.

FINIS.



