

The Christian Recorder

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October 1820

No. 8

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THE
CHRISTIAN RECORDER.

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OCTOBER, 1820.

No. 8.

ON RELIGIOUS ESTABLISHMENTS.

SIR,

AMONG the political problems resolved by the American Revolution, the great utility of religious establishments is one of the most important. I believe there are very few persons who have witnessed the general absence of Christianity in this rising republic, who will not approve of some general form of worship. In theory, many objections may be raised against any mode that could be adopted; but herein lies the fallacy—they point only to the mode, and not to the thing itself. It is not my intention to enter deeply into the question of religious establishments, a full discussion better becomes your pen, Mr. Editor, but having seen the baneful effects of the want of such an establishment, in a State containing seven millions of inhabitants, I cannot abstain from making a few cursory remarks. It has been said, that a Religious Establishment was neither consistent with the true interests of religion, nor the peace of society—that it was a most violent infringement of the right of private judgment—and always turned into a political engine to support the State. These are plausible objections, and abstractedly considered, they seem to have some force; but when examined by the test of experience, their strength vanishes away. There is no rational being, who has ever taken the trouble to reflect, who feels not the propriety of worshipping God in some way or other; on this there can be no difference of opinion: but shall the State supply the means of religious instruction and a form of public worship, or leave it to every one to worship or not as he pleases? Or, in other words, shall the State encourage what is allowed on all hands to be useful, or stand an indifferent spectator? I must acknowledge, that to me this question affords no difficulty: if an oath be required, either for allegiance, or the discharge of the duties of any office—if promises are to be believed and

performed, then is religion necessary for without religion they have no basis. Had not Christianity been revealed, then every person would have been left to his own wicked imagination; but as the Supreme Being has set limits to our liberty by this revelation, which confines it to this religion and to it only, I cannot think it any infringement of the general liberty to imitate this example, by affording the means of acquiring a true knowledge of what has been revealed. It has been farther stated, that no Government, pretending to be free, has the power of establishing a public form of worship. This objection has been in a great measure anticipated; but it may be farther observed, that no form of government is capable of promoting the general benefit, unless it have the power to restrain evil and to promote good. This may be done in two ways—by measures of force, which command obedience, or by encouragement and persuasion. As to measures of force, they consist of the laws of the land, which can only go a very little way; there must, therefore, be another law, which shall take cognizance of the internal man—a law not to be obtained in books, not to be engraven on tablets of brass, a law which always subsists, which is every moment observed, and which condemns every species of wrong. Now as this internal law is of infinitely more consequence than the general ordinances of any country, it surely behoves Government to lend it their countenance and protection, as far as they can. If they are able, by encouragement and persuasion, to give it force and energy, to prevent its corruption and ensure its proper direction, they are certainly acting favourably to the freedom and happiness of the people: for every thing that promotes virtue and religion, promotes happiness and freedom. Now, it appears to me, that this may be materially effected by a liberal religious establishment. Ah! say many, this would be to assume authority over the minds of the people, and Government has business only with actions. Yet, this authority must be assumed in almost all cases by Government to render it useful; the objection, therefore, if it mean any thing, goes too far; it would preclude all interference in education, by which the mind is termed. Indeed, the very ideas of the people gradually take a bias from the public laws and institutions so that, if we wish to deprive Government of all power, directly or indirectly, over the minds of the people, we must deprive them of the power of making regulations of any sort. Religious opinions ought indeed to be free, and so ought all our opinions; but a general system of education gives force to this freedom, because it enlightens the mind, and makes it capable of judging with accuracy. And what is a Religious Establishment, but a branch of public education? I am, therefore, of opinion, that it is the duty of every Government to form a Religious Establishment for the State, as soon as they can ascertain that a majority of the citizens are agreed upon some points of

Religious Union. It is true, the minority will clamour, as minorities always do, and it must clamour, the longer, and more success, as religious disputes are interesting and easily darkened. The points of union ought certainly to be most plain and simple, so that, if it were possible, all might be satisfied. But they can never be so composed as to obviate every difficulty. The simple question—are you a Christian? would meet with opposition. Some would say, the word Christian is ambiguous; if a definition were attempted, it would only serve to multiply objections. It is vain, therefore, to look for a form of worship, any more than a measure of policy, that will please all; but one may easily be found, that shall promote true morality and purity of life, which shall keep piety warm without being enthusiastic, become the mother of good works, encouraging not excusing our duties, the guides and sweetener of life, the cordial of disease, the conqueror of death. But if the question of Religious Establishments has been hitherto doubtful, it can be so no longer. The Americans, by a general toleration without any establishment, will soon arrive at the lowest sink of human corruption—for the greater part of the country is left without the administration of any religion at all. Nor is this to much wondered at, when we consider that, even in England, the higher ranks withdraw themselves from the public ordinances of religion, or attend them with indifference. So that, were there no provision made for the religious instruction of the people, there is no reason to suppose, that such provision would be supplied by the wealthy. Consequently, religion would gradually disappear; in some districts, those religiously inclined would be too few and too poor to support a Minister—and in others, quarrels and dissensions would produce the same effect.—Such is exactly the case in America; in many places the public worship of God is unknown, no regard is paid to the first day of the week, and the people, with some crude knowledge, chiefly of a political nature, are last approaching to infidelity. In States possessing a Religious Establishment, the country is divided into small portions, and a religious Teacher placed in each, by which means all the people have access to religious instruction: but I never would allow the Establishment any other exclusive right than the support of its Clergy, all other denominations should be equally free, every body should have it in his power to adopt that form of worship which pleased him better. The Magistrate should only say, I do not force you to attend the Established Church—I have established for you the best form of Christianity that I know, but if you are not satisfied, and can do better, I shall be glad—I wish you to be religious, and any form of Christianity is better than infidelity. Even placing a man of piety and education in each parish is of very great use, in keeping up in the people a reverence for what is pure and holy; for independent of his instructions from the pulpit, he holds free

intercourse with all classes of his parishioners—he is the friend and adviser of the poor as well as of the rich—he is the composer of differences, the promoter of peace and contentment, the catechiser of children, the encourager of industry, sobriety, and all the virtues that make man prosperous and happy. Had a regular establishment no other advantage than this of placing a man, in every small circle, whose life is devoted to purposes so useful, it would be sufficient to prove its excellence. Where a regular clergyman is settled, one good example will commonly be found, and all the advantages of the Sabbath fully enjoyed: in fine, a sense of religion will be kept up even among those who do not attend any place of public worship. It is vain to expect that, without a liberal establishment, the people will procure for themselves religious instruction. It is well known that wherever the people pay their Clergy, there is a continual succession of disputes, and the Minister's usefulness is destroyed. In America, with a very few exceptions, the Ministers are kept in a state of poverty and dependance, by which their exertions are cramped or rendered useless. The people are accustomed to change them, like any other servant, at the end of a few months, and to throw them on the world to combat poverty and contempt. The Congregations make and unmake their Pastors at pleasure, who must preach so as to please, on pain of losing their situations; in this way the very end of preaching is lost and destroyed. Are the people vicious, the Clergyman must be blind to their faults; is he conscientious, they withdraw their support, and he must march or starve. Instances are found of Clergymen forsaken in their old age, by the people among whom they had laboured in their youth. As soon as they were found unable to do the duties of their office from age, they were deserted, their former services forgotten, and their gray hairs brought with sorrow, poverty, and anguish, to the grave. Let all the enemies of Establishments in England and Scotland march through the United States, and then let them decide. So useful is a standing Ministry, that it has been held by many, and not without reason, a proof of the truth of Christianity; no other religion could have suggested an idea so grand and affecting as to place a public Teacher in every small Society through the world.



ON THE DUTIES AND ADVANTAGES OF A PARISH PRIEST.

The following excellent summary of the duties and advantages of a Parish Priest, is extracted from the Monthly Magazine, for January, 1811, and proves the great advantage of a Religious Establishment.

I. The institution of Parochial Instructors of the people in the duties of morality, and in the doctrines of Revelation, is so eminently wise and beneficial, that it may be adduced as a collateral evidence of the divine origin of that Religion by which it was formed and established.

II. It is an institution so essential to a due moral and spiritual influence over the people, and it gives so permanent and universal an effect to vital religion, that Parish Priests and those authorities which appoint and superintend them, become necessary and important branches of the Church of Christ.

III. Every Parish Priest is, therefore, an integral part of God's visible Church on earth; hence arises the evangelical character of the priesthood; hence the respect which it claims of society; and hence all the obligations of personal duty and example.

IV. The Parish Priest is bound by the nature of his functions, and the object of his office, to reside among the souls whom it is his duty to instruct by his precept and conduct, and whom it should be his constant labour to prepare for the immortality announced in the Gospel.

V. He is the moral guardian of his flock, and consequently bound to preserve them in unity, in mutual love, and in good offices towards one another. He should be their impartial umpire in all matters of dispute, should allay their violent and selfish passions, and preserve the social affections among kindred. He ought, however, never to become a party in disputes; but to avoid being treated as a meddler, should evince a common affection for the disputants, exhorting the implacable by the doctrines of Christ, and honouring mutual forgiveness, in the same manner as on the repentance of sinners, rejoicings are made in Heaven.

VI. He should constantly advise and assist the overseers of the poor in the discharge of their delicate and interesting duties; and should draw strong distinctions between the virtuous and the vicious poor, taking care to reclaim the latter by gentle means, by forbearance and charity, and by extending the rewards of virtue to them, as soon as they afford indications of amendment.

VII. As ignorance is the parent of vice, as knowledge is the parent of civilization, and as the unlettered can have little conception of the evidences

and doctrines of that Gospel which they are unable to read or of the nature of moral obligation, it is his duty to establish and maintain, by his influence and example, all institutions which have for their object, the direct education of the children of the poor.

VIII. Whatever be his income, he should live within it, and become a pattern of moderation, temperance, and contentment, to those who are expected to curb their own passions, by his example, and who will be likely to respect his precepts, so far only as their efficacy is demonstrated by their influence on his own conduct.

IX. He should know enough of the art of medicine to be able to administer relief in cases which do not admit of delay; and he should be provided with a small stock of simple galenicals, the effect of which, in particular disorders, has been well ascertained.

X. He should apply his superior education to remove vulgar errors, and superstition of all kinds; he should promote intellectual improvement among those who desire it: he should lend books, and give advice in the choice of others; he should also recommend the adoption of all improvements in the arts of life, which are consequent on the labours of men of science.

XI. He should prove the value of his own tenets, by exhibiting in his own example their happy results; and he should bear with charity the occasional heresies, or variances of opinion which, owing to the freedom of thought, may sometimes be honestly and conscientiously cherished by some of his parishioners. If they cannot be corrected by gentle means, they will be confirmed in their errors, should violence or denunciation be resorted to. Above all things, he should be tolerant towards sectaries, and forbearing towards enthusiasts and visionaries.

XII. He should be punctual in the hours of public service, and should perform all the rites of religion with devotional feeling and unvarying solemnity. Nothing in his conduct should be indifferent; and even at a feast, he should remember that he is looked upon as the Minister of a holy religion, and that his levities or sensualities will sanction greater vices in those who reverence his character, and quote him as their example.

XIII. He will find little difficulty in collecting his dues and tythes, if he has succeeded in impressing his parishioners with a well formed respect for his office and personal character; but in all cases of dispute, he should convince them before he attempts to force them; he should appeal to arbitration rather than to law; and he should endeavour to bring over the refractory by the influence of the liberal and well disposed.

XIV. He should render himself the organ of the benevolence of his parishioners, by recommending frequent collections for particular objects of compassion, and by superintending their distribution. He should, in performing this duty, increase the comfort and the number of cottages; encourage habits of cleanliness, sobriety, humanity, and industry; promote marriages and the settlement of young persons; countenance moderate hilarity on festive days; distribute periodical public rewards to those who afford instances of peculiar good conduct; create provisions for the sick and aged; and signalize eminent industry and domestic virtue in the humblest stations, even after death.

XV. Being considered by the great as a constant seeker for preferment, he should be scrupulously modest and delicate in his advances to them, or he will expose himself to their ridicule, and defeat his purpose, besides degrading the religion of self-denial and humility.

XVI. He should never meddle with the political parties of the state; and in elections, or local questions of a mere political tendency, he should avoid committing the infallibility of his sacred character, by joining in the errors and passionate ebullitions of partizans. He ought in such matters to withhold his interference, except in favour of those only who are eminent for their personal virtues: and he ought never to become a partizan, except when evident virtue is opposed to or oppressed by notorious vice. His only criterion of decision should be the balance of vice or virtue in the objects.

XVII. His station, character, and independent provision, whether it be great or small, render him an object of envy to other classes of society, and eminently qualify him to pass through life with respect, usefulness, and happiness; and whatever may be the outward pomp and shew of other stations of the community, there is no social condition which unites so much placid enjoyment, and so many objects for the gratification of those passions which lead to self-satisfaction, with so permanent a prospect of competency and comfort, and so great a certainty of preserving health, and attaining long life and future felicity, as that of the Parish Priest.

COMMON SENSE.

**REVIEW OF HARFORD'S LIFE AND PRINCIPLES
OF THOMAS PAINE.**

(From the Christian Observer.)

MR. Harford merits the acknowledgements of his country, and of the church, for his effort to counteract the mischievous tendency of Paine's writings. The account he has given us of this unhappy person is principally derived from Cheetham's *Life of Paine*—a work which bears strong marks of authenticity. The main facts are briefly these:—Paine was born at Thetford, in Norfolk, in January, 1737, and was educated at the free school of that place. In 1759 he settled at Sandwich as a stay-maker, to which trade he had been brought up, and married Mary Lambert, who died the following year, it is alleged by some in consequence of a premature birth caused by his ill usage. In 1761, he obtained a place in the excise at Thetford, from which he was dismissed for some irregularity, but was subsequently restored. In 1768, he was acting as an exciseman at Lewes, where he lived with one Samuel Olive, a grocer, who soon after died. In 1771, he married Olive's daughter, Elizabeth. In 1774, he was again dismissed from his office, on a charge of fraud, and all his efforts to regain his situation proved ineffectual. His affairs soon fell into such disorder, that his property was sold to pay his debts. In May, of the same year, he and his wife, whose life he is said to have rendered miserable by neglect and unkindness, separated by mutual agreement. He went to London; but not obtaining suitable employment there, probably in consequence of the loss of his character, he resolved to try America. He arrived at Philadelphia, in April, 1775. Here he became a violent partizan of the colonial cause, and commenced his career as a political writer. One of his publications, entitled "*Common Sense*," was marked by a singular degree of natural acuteness; and, being well adapted to the state of feeling which then prevailed in America, it gained him much celebrity, and produced an extensive and powerful effect, in deciding the public mind in favor of independence.

Paine now rose into consequence. His writings were rewarded by Congress with a sum of money; and in 1777, he was appointed secretary to the committee for foreign affairs. Here he was soon found guilty of a breach of trust, and was ignominiously expelled from his office. After a time, however, he succeeded in procuring the inferior employment of clerk of the House of Assembly of the State of Pennsylvania. When the war ended, he sunk into obscurity; and for five years little is known of him, except that, from a letter he wrote to general Green, he appears to have been very desirous of coming to England, in order to excite disturbances there. It was not however, until 1787, that he revisited this country. At first, the state in which he found men's minds afforded him little prospect of success. But as

the French Revolution proceeded, the unusual ferment which it caused, not only in France but throughout Europe, greatly raised his hopes. In 1789, he had been arrested for a debt of 700*l.*, but having been released from prison by the intervention of the American House of Claggett & Co. he went over to Paris, to take a nearer view of the scenes which were then acting there. Animated by the spectacle, he returned to London, where he became extremely active in spreading revolutionary principles.

In 1791, Paine published the First Part of “The Rights of Man,” which was followed in 1792 by the Second Part, both containing direct and very powerful excitements to rebellion and revolution, supported by a style of reasoning well calculated to delude the ignorant, and to swell the ranks of the turbulent and disaffected. The good sense of the country at large, however, was not to be thus imposed upon; and instead of producing its designed effect, this work appeared to serve the purpose only of rousing the loyal spirit of the people, and rallying them around the throne and the altar. A prosecution was instituted against Paine; but, afraid of the issue, he quitted the kingdom, and repaired to France, having narrowly escaped arrest at Dover. He had previously been elected by the department of Calais, a member of the National Convention, and he palliated his evasion by alleging the necessity he was under of attending his duty at Paris. He was tried before Lord Kenyon, and found guilty by the jury without a moment’s hesitation. The Attorney General read in court a letter from Paine, addressed to him. It was filled with gross insults on the king; and it denounced vengeance on the judge and jury, should he be found guilty. Not surrendering to meet the award of court, sentence of outlawry was passed upon him.

But though the writings of Paine were thus justly condemned and proscribed, the mischief which they caused was considerable. They gave currency to the scheme of universal suffrage, annual parliaments, and election by ballot, which still continue the favourite watchwords of the radical reformers; and they produced the same necessity, which has now again arisen from a similar source, of passing acts of Parliament to preserve the constitution from overthrow, and the country from blood.

Paine did not long fill his seat in the French Legislature. Having been in some measure identified with the Brissoline faction, he shared its fate, and, in December, 1793, was thrown into prison, where he was seized with a fever, brought on as it is said by intemperance, and thus narrowly escaped the guillotine. He was released from prison on the death of Robespierre, and invited to resume his seat in the Convention, but all his attempts to attract public regard in France proved abortive. He turned his attention, therefore,

once more to England; and perceiving that the chief obstacle to revolution in this country arose from the influence of Christianity, his efforts were now directed to the object of bringing the Scriptures into contempt. With this view he composed and published "The Age of Reason," the First Part of which appeared in 1795, and the Second in 1796. Paine himself was beyond the reach of our courts of justice, but the publisher of the libel was prosecuted and convicted. Mr. Erskine, now lord Erskine, conducted the prosecution; and his speech on the occasion ranks deservedly high among the most splendid effusions of forensic eloquence.

After his liberation from prison, Paine had been received into the house of Mr. Monroe, then the American Ambassador at Paris, now the President of the United States. But his habits of intoxication rendered him a very uncomfortable inmate. He continued to reside in France for some years longer, neglected and contemned. But in 1802, having received an invitation from President Jefferson, he repaired to America, where he spent the remainder of his days. He was accompanied by a Madame Bonneville and her two sons. This woman he had seduced from her husband, in whose house he had lived, and whose hospitality he thus repaid. In June, 1809, this unhappy man died at New York.

It is during this period of his residence in the United States, that we have the most authentic accounts of the private life of Paine: and little more seems necessary to convince us of the real source of his infidelity, than the perusal of these details: "for every one that doeth evil hateth the light, lest his deeds should be reprov'd." A few extracts from this part of Mr. Harford's interesting work, from which we have chiefly collected the preceding details, may not be unacceptable to our readers. He lodged for a time with a Mrs. Dean.

"Mrs. Dean," says Mr. Cheetham, "with whom I have conversed, tells me that he was daily drunk at their house; and that in his few sober moments he was always quarrelling with her, and disturbing the peace of the family. She represents him as deliberately and disgustingly filthy.^[1] It is not surprising, therefore, that she importuned her husband to turn him out of the house; but owing to Mr. Dean's predilections for his political writings; her importunities were for several weeks, unavailing. Constant domestic disquiet very naturally ensued, which was increased by Paine's peevishness and violence. One day he ran after Miss Dean, a girl of fifteen, with a chair whip in his hand, to whip her, and would have done so, but for the interposition of her mother. The enraged Mrs. Dean, to use her own language, 'flew at him.' Paine retreated up stairs into his private room, and

was swiftly pursued by his antagonist. The little drunken old man owed his safety to the bolts of his door. In the fall of the year, Mrs. Dean prevailed with her husband to keep him in the house no longer,” p. 57.

He then went to live on his farm.

“Being now alone, except in the company of the Bonneviles, of whom he took but little notice, he engaged an old black woman, of the name of Betty, to do his house work. Betty lived with him but three weeks. She seems to have been as intemperate as himself. Like her master, she was every day intoxicated. Paine would accuse her of stealing his New-England rum, and Betty would retort by calling him an old drunkard. Often, Mrs. Dean informs me, would they both lie prostrate on the same floor, dead-drunk, sprawling and swearing, and threatening to fight, but incapable of approaching each other to combat. Nothing but inability prevented the battle.” p. 58.

He afterwards removed to different families; but in all of them he appears to have acted not only in the most disgusting and offensive, but in the most unprincipled manner, paying the debts which he contracted for his board and lodging only when compelled to do so. He lived five months with a Mr. Jarvis, a portrait painter.

“At this place he was not so constantly intoxicated as formerly; and though frequently falling into violent passions, Mr. Jarvis appears to have successfully studied the means of calming his rage. Still he was only comparatively improved, and would, occasionally, sit up at night tipping, till he fell from his chair.” p. 67.

In this posture and plight he would talk about the immortality of the soul.

“One day, as he was sitting with a volume of the Age of Reason before him, a maid servant took it up and began to read it: Mr. Jarvis instantly seized the book out of her hand; upon which Paine rose up angrily, and asked why he did so. Jarvis professed his fear that the girl, whose character was then excellent, would become corrupted in her principles by that book; in which case, he added, she may cheat me, rob me, and be undone. They had now reached the window, and Jarvis pointed out a black man to Paine, as a striking instance of the efficacy of Christianity to enlighten and to reclaim the ignorant and immoral. This man, it appears, had been a notoriously bad fellow, without any sense of religion, or even of common moral feeling; but he had since been truly converted, and had gained the character of a sincere Christian, by his upright and excellent conduct. Paine

had no answer whatever to make, but ‘Pshaw—I had not thought you were such a man.’ He saw, added Jarvis, the fact, and it was unanswerable.” p. 68.

We now come to his last hours, when it will evidently appear “notwithstanding his vain boasts,” that “he met death with terror and consternation.”

“He was nursed in his last illness by Mrs. Hedden, a very worthy and pious woman, who did her best to serve him, not only as a kind attendant, but also as a spiritual counsellor. During the first three or four days, his conduct was tolerable, except that he grew outrageous whenever Madame Bonneville entered the room. About the fifth day, his language to Mrs. Hedden was so bad, that she resolved immediately to quit the house; but sensible how necessary she was to his comfort, he made concessions which induced her to remain.” pp. 71, 72.

“Often he would, for a long time together, exclaim, ‘Oh, Lord help me! Oh, Christ help me! Oh, Christ help me!’

“About a fortnight before his death he was visited by Mr. Milledoler, a Presbyterian clergyman, who exhorted him to repentance; but Paine grew angry, desired that he might not be disturbed by popish stuff, and ordered him to quit the room.

“Sometimes Mrs. Hedden read the Bible to him for hours together, and he appeared to listen attentively.” p. 72.

He was attended by Dr. Manley, a respectable physician, who furnished the following particulars of Paine’s behaviour on his death-bed.

“Cleanliness appeared to make no part of his comfort; he seemed to have a singular aversion to soap and water: he would never ask to be washed, and, when he was, he would always make objections; and it was not unusual to wash and to dress him clean, very much against his inclination. In this deplorable state, with confirmed dropsy, attended with frequent cough, vomiting, and hiccough, he continued growing from bad to worse, till the morning of the 8th of June, when he died.” p. 73.

“Mr. Paine professed to be above the fear of death; and a great part of his conversation was principally directed to give the impression, that he was perfectly willing to leave this world, and yet some parts of his conduct are with difficulty reconcileable with this belief. In the first stages of his illness he was satisfied to be left alone during the day; but he required some person to be with him at night, urging as his reason, that he was afraid that he should die when unattended: and at this period his deportment and his

principles seemed to be consistent; so much so, that a stranger would judge, from some of the remarks he would make, that he was an infidel.

“During the latter part of his life, though his conversation was equivocal, his conduct was singular; he would not be left alone, night or day; he not only required to have some person with him, but he must see that he or she was there, and would not allow his curtain to be closed at any time; and if, as it would sometimes unavoidably happen, he was left alone, he would scream and holla, until some person came to him. When relief from pain would admit, he seemed thoughtful and contemplative, his eyes being generally closed, and his hands folded upon his breast, although he never slept without the assistance of an anodyne. There was something remarkable in his conduct about this period, (which comprises about two weeks immediately preceding his death) particularly when we reflect, that Thomas Paine was author of the *Age of Reason*. He would call out, during his paroxysms of distress, without intermission, ‘O Lord help me, God help me, Jesus Christ help me, O Lord help me,’ &c. repeating the same expressions, without the least variation, in a tone of voice that would alarm the house. It was this conduct which induced me to think that he had abandoned his former opinions; and I was more inclined to that belief, when I understood from his nurse, (who is a very serious, and, I believe, pious woman) that he would occasionally inquire, when he saw her engaged with a book, what she was reading; and being answered, and at the same time asked whether she should read aloud,^[2] he assented, & would appear to give particular attention.”

“On the 6th of June, Dr. Manley, struck by these expressions, which he so frequently repeated, and seeing that he was in great distress of mind, put the following questions to him:—

“Mr. Paine, what must we think of your present conduct? Why do you call upon Jesus Christ to help you? Do you believe that he can help you? Do you believe in the divinity of Jesus Christ? Come now, answer me honestly; I want an answer as from the lips of a dying man, for I verily believe that you will not live twenty-four hours.’ I waited some time at the end of every question; he did not answer, but ceased to exclaim in the above manner. Again I addressed him. ‘Mr. Paine, you have not answered my question; will you answer them? Allow me to ask again—Do you believe? or let me qualify the question—do you wish to believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God?’ After a pause of some minutes, he answered, ‘I have no wish to believe on that subject.’ I then left him, and know not whether he afterwards

spoke to any person, on any subject, though he lived, as I before observed, till the morning of the 8th.” pp. 73-75.

The following fact seems to attest, still more strongly, his distrust of the infidel principles which he had professed. A gentleman of the neighbourhood occasionally furnished him with refreshments from his own table, of which a respectable female of the family was the bearer.

“She frequently found him engaged in writing, and believes from what she saw and heard, that when permitted by his pain, he was mostly so engaged, or in prayer; in the attitude of which she more than once saw him when he thought himself alone. In one of the interviews thus introduced, he inquired whether she had ever read his ‘Age of Reason?’ And on being answered in the affirmative, he desired to know her opinion of that book. She replied, that she was but a child when she read it, and that he probably would not like to hear what she had thought of it. On this he said, if she was old enough to read it, she was capable of forming some opinion concerning it; and that from her he expected a candid statement of what that opinion had been. Thus encouraged, she told him, that she thought it the most dangerous book she had ever seen; that the more she read the more she found her mind estranged from all good; and that, from a conviction of its evil tendency, she had burnt it without knowing to whom it belonged. To this Paine replied, that he wished all its readers had been as wise as she; and added, ‘If ever the devil had an agent on earth, I have been one.’ At another time, when she and the benevolent neighbour before alluded to were with him, one of his former companions came in; but on seeing them went hastily out, drawing the door after him with violence, and saying, ‘Mr. P. you have lived like a man, I hope you will die like one.’ On this, Paine turning to the elder of his visitors, said ‘You see, sir, what miserable comforters I have.’ Mrs. Bonneville, the unhappy female who had accompanied him from France, lamented to his neighbour her sad case; observing ‘For this man I have given up my family and friends, my property and my religion; judge then of my distress, when he tells me that the principles which he has taught me, will not bear me out!’ ”

And here we close the curtain^[3] round the death-bed of a man who “being dead yet speaketh” by those pestiferous publications which still pollute our atmosphere, and by the unhappy effects which, in common with the writings of German and French Philosophists, they have assisted in producing throughout the civilized world. In one respect, Paine seems to have deserved the highest seat in this “bad eminence;” for while most of his infidel predecessors and compeers were directing their weapons against the

higher and average classes of intellect, this leader in the campaign of sedition and blasphemy knew how to enlist the populace under his banners. What Addison effected in polite literature, Paine performed in the department of infidel sophistry; he brought it down from the schools of a perverted erudition, to the level of the shop-board and the manufactory. He introduced a sort of “universal suffrage” into the ranks of literature, by which those who could not reason might rail, and thus vote down, by the invectives of popular clamour, what is venerated by the wise as an undoubted revelation from Heaven, and loved by the good as the foundation of all that is virtuous in human conduct, and the only sure guide to temporal or eternal felicity.

Are we then afraid, it may be asked, that the objections alleged against Christianity should be presented to the world? Do we tremble for its safety, and fear lest it should not be able to stand the shock of contending champions?—We do not scruple to reply, that there is one respect in which we are afraid; we are afraid on the same grounds on which we should be unwilling for a secular question of intricacy and importance to be tried before a similar jury. We should object, because uninstructed minds are more open to declamation than to argument, to the insinuating eloquence and *ex-parte* statements of a popular pleader, than to the solid reasoning of an unbiassed judge. It is so much easier to comprehend objections than solutions; so much more gratifying to human pride and the love of display, to attack what is revered and established, than to be contented with quietly defending it; so much more congenial to our fallen nature to wish to discard a system which enjoins humility, and watchfulness, and self-denial, than submissively to obey its dictates; that we should not always think it safe for the less intellectual class of the community to be initiated into the objections of infidels; even supposing those objections to be presented in the tone of candid argument, instead of being conveyed, as they are in the writings of Paine and his followers, in the language of irony, satire, and contempt. It is not every man who is conscious of the goodness of his cause that knows how to withstand these irritating weapons which goad even where they do not wound, and frequently make the opponent begin to suspect himself to be ridiculous even when he may be certain he is right. But if such be too often the effect, even where there is a consciousness of the goodness of the cause and the rectitude of the argument, how much more when these poisoned arrows fall on the mind unguarded by such a buckler—a mind unfortified by truth and open to every objection! And who can deny that such is too often the case with the poor and uneducated in every country? Is it to be supposed, for example, in our own manufacturing districts where the poor are busily

engaged in mechanical labour from their early infancy—where the churches are insufficient even for their richer neighbours, and where, in consequence, thousands live and die almost, if not altogether, without private or public instruction, untaught in infancy, uncatechised in youth, ignorant of the Scriptures, and unprepared by devoutness of feeling for studying them to advantage—that persons thus thrown on the world should be able to weigh arguments and sift objections, even if those arguments and objections were presented in a fair and unimpassioned manner? How much less then, when, as in the writings of Paine, they are obtruded with an effrontery which passes among the illiterate for honest boldness; and are mixed up with railing and sarcasms, and appeals to the passions, the prejudices, and the very appetites and favourite indulgences of the reader!

Now we certainly are not afraid that the arguments for and against the divine inspiration of the Gospel, should be discussed by those who are in a situation for arriving at the truth. But is this the case with the great majority of the readers of Paine and Carlile? It is true, they may possess that “common sense” to which these writers make appeal; but we do not scruple to say, that common sense alone is not sufficient for determining the question which these men have seen fit to raise. Suppose that Paine had chosen to assert that the New Testament was written in Kamschatkan instead of Greek, would mere common sense have determined the question? Will common sense decide what is the state law of England on any subject involving much professional research and ancient learning? Will common sense determine the dispute at issue between Mr. Bellamy, Mr. Todd, Sir B. Burgess, and others relative to the accuracy of the authorised translation of the Scriptures? And if not, why suppose that mere common sense is sufficient to decide upon points which have employed the learning and sagacity of successive ages, which require a knowledge of ancient languages and customs, an acquaintance with history, and an extent of research and correctness of argumentation, which by no means fall to the lot of the great body of mankind? It is to little purpose that common sense can comprehend the ten arguments alleged against the Gospel, if it cannot also take in the ninety in its favour.

What then says the admirers of Paine, are the poor to do; for learning they have none, and common sense, it appears, will not by itself settle the questions at issue? We reply that common sense *will* settle the only question which *ought* to be at issue; and that the unfairness of Paine and his colleagues is conspicuous in bringing questions to be decided by common sense, which do not come under the province of this useful endowment. Common sense would tell the poor man, that he is not a competent judge of

the greater part of Paine's arguments, and that those who are reject them. Common sense would tell the poor, that what is admitted by the wise and good as a Divine Revelation, ought not to be treated with jests and buffoonery; but deserves veneration and calm inquiry, and comes with a presumptive evidence in its favour which ought not to be lightly rejected. Common sense would leave to the learned the examination of points beyond its ordinary researches, and would take *their* evidence as *data* on which to form its own conclusions. Common sense would honestly weigh the character of such men as the unhappy being whom our author has portrayed and would ask how far it is probable that those who were honest and disinterested in nothing else, should be so in undermining the basis of ecclesiastical policy; and how far a notoriously vicious man was likely to be exclusive proprietor of the key of moral and theological knowledge^[4]? Common sense would lead men to believe Christianity, were there no other reason, from its internal evidence; its adaptation to the wants and wishes of mankind; its development of the human heart, and all its broadly marked characteristics, as a revelation from God. Common sense would reject sarcasms, obscenity, and levity, as unworthy of the cause of Truth; and judging by the plain facts of the case, would decide, that a system possessing such testimonies as Christianity must be allowed to possess, and producing such virtues as it undeniably produces, could not be the work of an impostor.

It is, in fact, no slight presumptive proof in favour of the Gospel, that it possesses that very sort of evidence which the case required. It makes its appeal to the great body of mankind, trusting chiefly (of course under the unseen protection of its Divine Author) to the ordinary arguments which sway the uneducated of all countries, who are in the habit of admitting, as true and indisputable, many things which they firmly believe, and which habitually influence their conduct. The argument of *authority*, in its various forms, is that which chiefly decides the opinions of the illiterate: the followers of Paine himself can, generally speaking, have no other argument for their "no creed" than the *assertions* of their leader; for it surely will not be pretended that they are complete masters of his subject, and can judge how far his arguments rest on true propositions, and are cast in a truly logical mould. Now this argument of authority is abundantly in favour of the Gospel; and by means of it, that dispensation is usually believed in our early years. But as the nature of revelation is better known, new and higher arguments are discovered; and should the mind expand, so as to grasp the question in an *intellectual* point of view, the evidence will amount to the very highest kind of moral demonstration. The illiterate have not this

argument, it is true; but they do not want it; they do not seek for it in other things, and they show their common sense by forming their principles, and regulating their conduct, in a mode more congenial with their habits and powers of mind. But for the intellectual there are arguments in abundance; and arguments of such cogency, that it would be difficult to find an inquirer who entered honestly upon the investigation, and returned unconvinced.

One remark more, and we have done. How do men argue and act in analogous cases? Would it be thought right even by those who contend for the unrestricted dissemination of infidel abuse and blasphemy, that books and tracts affirming the duty and the delight of sensual indulgences, and supporting that licentious theory by arguments, and statements, and exhibitions, calculated to inflame the depraved, and to corrupt the hitherto undebauched imagination, should be freely circulated among our youth of both sexes? Would they contend, in this instance, that if the doctrine promulgated were false, it might be refused, by fair argument, and the evil be thus prevented? Would they not rather feel that such writings were not to be tolerated for one moment; that they must be suppressed, as *contra bonos mores*, as poisoning the very springs of human conduct? What good could be hoped for, in such a case, from the tardy deductions of reason, or the authoritative declarations of experience? The poison had been already administered, and would be likely in a vast majority of instances, to operate with a force and rapidity which would render useless any remedies that could be applied. And yet can any man doubt that the arguments in favour of purity of conduct would exceedingly outweigh, in the estimation of cool and sober reason, those which it could be possible to adduce in favour of a life of licentiousness? Nevertheless, who is there that would choose to expose his own sons and daughters, or the boys and girls of the next village school to the hazardous experiment of an unrestrained discussion of such a subject?

[1] “Mr. Cheetham states that all the particulars related to him by Mrs. Dean have been corroborated by the testimony of her husband, whom he represents as a sensible man, and a justice of the peace for the county.”

[2] “The book she usually read was Mr. Hobart’s Companion for the Altar.”

[3] “And here” said the honest chronicler of the meek and pious Hooker, “I draw his curtain, till with the most glorious company of the patriarchs and apostles, the most noble army of martyrs and confessors, this most learned, most humble, holy man shall also awake to receive an

eternal tranquillity.” What a contrast to the life and death of the unhappy subject of Mr. Harford’s narrative!

[4] For a sketch of the character of other of these “oracles that set the world on fire,” we would refer our readers to an interesting sermon recently published, on “The State of the Country,” by the Rev. J. W. Cunningham.

DISSERTATIONS ON THE CHRISTIAN DOCTRINES.

No. 9.

THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST.

(Continued from page 463, Vol. I.)

THE friends of Christianity have been often accused of acting too much upon the defensive and remaining satisfied with the negative advantage of securing their own borders. If this be not a species of Treachery, it is certainly near akin to the Neutrality which our Saviour rejects, and greatly impedes the dissemination of those principles which Christians ought strenuously to promote. But the truth of the accusation may be justly doubted as there is scarcely any subject to which the attention of mankind is more frequently solicited than to the proofs of Christianity, and none more deserving of serious consideration.

If Christians be really convinced that the principles of their religion are not only worthy of God but the best calculated for the improvement of human nature and promoting the welfare and true happiness of Society. If they have seen them triumphing over the wisdom and policy, the force and malice of the world, and all this by such methods as human reason would have pronounced the most foolish and absurd; they will feel too much interested to conceal their opinions or to decline combating the enemies of their Faith. Bearing always in their minds that it was not with coldness and indifference that the Gospel was propagated in the primitive ages, but with a zeal enlightened and sustained by the power of God, they will be still found willing to spend and to be spent in the same glorious cause.

And it is pleasing to remark, that the spirit of the Apostolic age seems actually returning. The truths of Christianity are more clearly stated, and more ably vindicated than in former times, and that false philosophy which had bewildered and seduced so many thousands, begins to be despised, and its baleful influence to disappear. It is no longer thought fashionable to sneer at Christianity, nor are men now considered wise, in proportion as they condemn the truths which it teaches. This happy change offers much encouragement to the believers in the Gospel, to come forward with the boldness it ought to inspire, and by stating its evidences in all the various forms of which they are susceptible, to carry conviction home to every mind.

Nor will this be so difficult, as many suppose; for in the exact accomplishment of express and unquestionable prophecies concerning the most remarkable events in the world, we have a solemn appeal to all reasonable persons, that the Gospel revelation is truly divine, and in the miracles performed by our Blessed Lord, we have the clearest evidence of the deep interest which heaven takes in the successful propagation of our religion. Instead, therefore, of standing on the defensive with such proofs in our hands—instead of looking for the attack and trembling behind our ramparts, we ought to imitate the conduct of the intrepid St. Paul, and march boldly into the ranks of infidelity. Making use of the vantage ground, we should compel their understanding to surrender to the force of our arguments, or brand them with the name of ignorant and irrational.

In proving the truth of the Resurrection of Our Lord, which has been justly denominated the key stone of Christianity, we remarked that the evidence was presumptive and direct. The former, we have already discussed, and so much of the latter as rests upon the testimony of the Apostles. We now proceed to that of the Holy Spirit:

Of all the miraculous testimonies given by God to our Saviour, there is none to which he so frequently appealed, and upon which, he laid so much stress, as that of his own resurrection from the dead. When the Jews demanded a sign, he bade them destroy the temple, and in three days I will raise it again; and when the Pharisees desired some proof that he was the Messiah, he tells them that no other sign should be given them, but only the sign of the Prophet Jonas; for as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly, so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the Earth: which necessarily implies that after his death he should rise again, and accordingly, we find that after his ascension and the descent of the Holy Ghost, the Apostles publicly proclaimed his resurrection from

the dead. They declared that the Person whom the Jews had executed as a vile malefactor, had received the most conspicuous mark of divine favor, in having been raised from the grave and made the conqueror of death. This testimony appears to have been the principal business of the Apostles, and this was the argument which they most frequently used in proving the truth of their doctrines. Thus St. Paul, from the resurrection of Christ, proves the general resurrection. St. Peter declares it to be necessary that a disciple should be chosen an Apostle in the place of Judas, that he might witness with them of Christ's resurrection; and we are informed in Acts iv. 33, that with great Power the Apostles gave witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. St. Peter makes Christ's resurrection from the dead, the great motive for believing, by which God hath begotten them into a lively hope of future happiness—and St. Paul proves that God hath appointed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom he hath ordained, namely Jesus Christ, whereof he hath given assurance unto all men in that he hath raised him from the dead.

The Apostles went through cities and kingdoms announcing the resurrection of our blessed Redeemer, and confirming the truth of this wonderful event by the mighty works which they did. Had their testimony been false, they durst not thus have appealed to God, and copied the words of their divine master—if ye believe not us, believe for the works' sake. Had no answer been vouchsafed, such an appeal would not only have been impious but futile and absurd, and must have exposed them to ridicule and contempt; but they appealed not in vain—it was sanctioned in Heaven and approved on earth by the many miracles they were enabled to perform. How indeed was it possible for twelve poor men, totally unacquainted with the deceitful ways of the world, who knew at first no language but their own, and possessed none of the advantages which power rank and education bestow, to have obtained a hearing had not their recommendations been supernatural?

We come, they might say to the heathen, to preach unto you the kingdom of heaven, in the name of Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among the Jews—who taught that the present life is only the beginning of our existence—that we shall live for ever and enjoy perfect felicity if we repent of our sins, believe in him as our Saviour and imitate his holy and blameless life. So far they might have been heard with indifference or neglect; but when they came to relate that the Person in whom they trusted and believed had been put to an ignominious death as a criminal—that he had risen from the dead and ascended up into heaven, they would not have been heard with the same tranquillity.

You tell us, the heathen might have answered, things hard to believe, but what authority have you or your Master to impose laws and conditions upon us? How can we revere a person condemned by the tribunals of his own country and of whom we have heard nothing good except from those interested in his favour? If you are sent from heaven, produce your credentials—we cannot believe your assertions without a warrant, and heaven would never send a revelation without accompanying it with sufficient evidence. To this the Apostles could have made no reply had they not been filled with the Holy Ghost and enabled by his power to work miracles. But conscious of the divine aid and of the truth of their mission, they went forward boldly performing works which convinced the reasonable of their integrity and arrested the most careless. Wherever they came, the testimony of the Spirit carried conviction to the breasts of thousands who heard and saw them, and who from that time became sincere believers and followers of Christ. And how could they hesitate when they beheld the Apostles casting out devils in the name of Jesus, healing the sick and speaking with tongues. It was these wonderful manifestations of the Holy Spirit which converted nations to the light—which persuaded them to discard their own religion—to quit the worship and rites which they had received from their forefathers—renounce all the evil customs and manners in which they had so long indulged—to worship and expect salvation from one who had been condemned by his own nation. They turned men from the power of Satan unto God—overthrew kingdoms—stopped the mouths of oracles—destroyed his temples and his worship, and made his kingdom fall like lightning. A mouth of wisdom was given the disciples, which all their adversaries could not gainsay, and they had no need, when they were before princes and rulers, to premeditate, because the Holy Ghost taught them in that hour what to say.

In fine, the power of doing mighty miracles, and of exercising and distributing the gifts of the Holy Ghost confirmed the testimony of the Apostles, and brought conviction on their hearers. They beheld the mighty signs and wonders, the gifts and graces of the Spirit operating before them who thus became as it were a living witness that Jesus arose from the dead.

We noticed, in the beginning of this dissertation, the great importance of proving the truth of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus; for if Christ be not risen, saith St. Paul, then is our preaching vain and your faith vain. For this was the great miracle in the accomplishment of which our Lord rested the truth of his revelation, and if this had failed his whole doctrine must have fallen; but he did rise from the dead, and therefore his doctrine is true; and since his resurrection could only be effected by the immediate power of

God, we may be convinced that he is what he asserted himself to be, the Messiah—the Saviour of the world. In proving the truth of our Lord's resurrection, therefore, we have proved the truth of our holy religion, and as our Blessed Saviour was the first fruits of them that slept, he is the pledge and earnest of our resurrection. We shall be changed from humble and base into bright and glorious bodies, for our Saviour tells us the righteous shall shine forth as the Sun in the kingdom of their Father. Our bodies shall be thoroughly purged of all their corruptible parts, they shall be refined and exalted into a bright and lucid substance which shall glitter like the sun, and cast forth rays of glory around them, which the Apostle calls the inheritance of the saints of light. Do we perceive the power which the soul has at present over the body—how it confers upon it superior lustre and beauty, illuminating the eyes and shining through the whole countenance, how much more powerful will its effect be over our purified bodies when this corruptible puts on incorruption and this mortal puts on immortality.

STATE OF RELIGION IN CANADA.

SIR,

You favoured us in your first Number with the history and present state of Religion in Upper Canada, drawn up I believe with great correctness, and accounting very satisfactorily for the slow progress of our religious institutions. A similar article ought to have been given respecting Lower Canada; as both combined, would have furnished answer to the frequent notices of the deplorable state of Christianity in this country, which from time to time appear in the Reports of Societies and periodical journals. This your readers still expect, and in the mean time I take the liberty of transmitting you a few of the accounts which have been already published, for insertion in the Recorder, as matter of future curiosity.

In July, 1797, a Mr. McLean, writing from Elizabethtown, says “Our greatest want here is the want of the Gospel.—We have made several attempts to get a Minister of the Gospel among us, but Ministers of the genuine stamp are so very scarce where we made application, that all our endeavours have as yet proved abortive.” Next year, September 13, 1798, he writes, “As to the account you desire me to give you, respecting the encouragement and support we would give a Minister, I am indeed at a great

loss what to write, on account that the people here are divided and distracted with a variety of opinions—Presbyterians, Episcopalians, Methodists, Anabaptists of several kinds, Quakers, and Deists, constitute the inhabitants of this country. The people here in general are indeed so lifeless, and languid in their desires and efforts respecting religion, and so strongly tainted with Arminianism, that I am afraid that it will not be very soon that a genuine Minister of the Gospel is settled among us.” The same gentleman in September, 1799, writes “I am very sorry still to inform you, that our situation with respect to the Gospel, presents a scene that calls for lamentation. There are Preachers in this country, but we do not go to hear them, as they preach pure Arminian doctrine, without reserve.”—Edin. Miss. Mag. for Jan. 1800.

In August, 1805, Mr. Dick writes from Quebec “This place, as far as I can learn, is in a most deplorable state in respect to religion. The great body of the people are drowned in wickedness and superstition; and those in general who make some profession of religion, appear to have received it not from the Scriptures of truth, but, as it were by tradition from their fathers: and here they can mould it according to the customs of the world. I trust however that there are a few here, who have received the love of the truth, but stand in need of being instructed in the way of the Lord more perfectly.”—Evangelic Mag. 1806.

As this letter was written soon after his arrival in Quebec, it might be supposed that Mr. Dick did not then know that the most ample provision had been made for the religious instruction of the English part of the population, and that the Rector of the parish as well as the Minister of the Presbyterian congregation, were not only gentlemen of ability but of the most amiable dispositions and devout habits, and worthy of the primitive times. But no extenuation appears in his favor, for in August, 1806, he writes in much the same strain, and must therefore be set down as a base calumniator.

A letter from the Eastern District in Upper Canada, published in the Edinburgh Missionary Magazine for April, 1806, and dated September 2, 1805, runs thus “O poor miserable Canada, miserable in the greatest latitude of the word, however rich you may be in silver and gold, in wheat and in corn, for the want of the pure unadulterated Gospel, for the want of Evangelical preaching, for the want of regenerating grace, you are poor indeed. Imagine to yourselves a district of forty thousand square miles or more, that twenty years ago was a perfect wilderness, and now is inhabited, a few places here and there excepted, with a mixture of various people out of every nation in Europe and State in America. Protestants of various

denominations, Lutherans, and Calvinists, Papists and *Jesuits*, Jews, Indians and Negroes. Every year new Emigrants come to settle in Upper Canada, and there is perhaps a hundred born to one that dies.” &c. &c. &c.

Will it be believed that the writer of this extravagant and absurd letter, was at this time a parishioner sitting under the Ministry of the Rev. John Bethune, whose excellent character you have given in the first Number of your Journal.

Lest this article should extend beyond any reasonable limits, I pass to the Wesleyan Missionary Report for 1816, as it appeared in the Montreal Herald, 26th Dec. 1818.

“The report of the Executive Committee for the management of Missions, first commenced by the Rev. John Wesley, the Rev. Dr. Coke, and others, and now carried on under the direction of the Methodist Conference.

“Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Canada, and Newfoundland.

“The mission to the British Colonies in North America, comprising various stations in Canada, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Newfoundland, employs 24 Missionaries, and contains 20 stations; and as each of those stations is connected with a circuit, in which every Missionary itinerates, the gospel is by this means extensively administered to numbers of the scattered inhabitants of those countries, who but for such a plan of Missionary labour, would be wholly deprived of the ordinances of Christianity.

“The still destitute condition of the settlers, many of them our fellow countrymen, and all our fellow subjects, has not, however, been sufficiently understood. The case of Canada is very affecting, Protestants are constantly attaching themselves to the Roman Catholics, not from choice but because they have no access to a Protestant Ministry: while still greater numbers live without the forms of religion.

“From an excellent letter written by a respectable mercantile gentleman who lately spent some time in Canada, with which the Committee has been favored, it appears that the poorer classes in Lower Canada are chiefly Catholics, sunk through the influence of the Priests into the grossest ignorance, among some of them, however, a strong desire exists to read the Scriptures, and to possess what is scarcely to be found, a French Bible. These sentiments have prevailed more since the war with America, in several instances large sums had been offered for

Bibles, accompanied with an expression of determination that the Priests should not take them away. 'In Montreal,' continues the writer, 'the Chapel occupied by the Methodist Missionary, was quite crowded with hearers—some of the most respectable inhabitants attending, as it is the only place of worship where the gospel is preached among a population of near 20,000 inhabitants, and many of the old Royalists, who had left the States at the revolution, expressed to me their earnest desire, that the conference would send out preachers of talents and piety with their families, and they would gladly support them.' After various other statements, tending to shew the state of religious destitution in which the major part of the two Canadas is now in, the writer concludes by earnestly recommending an additional number of Missionaries, not merely to preach in large towns, but in the populous villages where there are neither Catholic nor Protestant churches, and where the inhabitants are verging towards complete heathenism. This representation of the destitute condition of the Canadas, is confirmed by the communications of the Missionaries who have been there employed. Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Newfoundland are in similar circumstances; in Newfoundland in particular, there are not less than 20,000 persons without religious instruction, and the old people among the settlers who remember this 'land of Bibles and ordinances,' often weep that the year rolls over them without sabbaths, without public worship and the ministry of the word. The committee have lately voted the appointment of six additional Missionaries to meet in part this pressing want; but even this supply is greatly inadequate, and they earnestly hope that greater efforts will be generally made in this country to raise up altars to God, where there are so many Christians without temples, without sacrifices, and without a priesthood, and where so many thousands of Protestants are placed in the alternative of living entirely without religion, or yielding to the proselyting zeal of Romish Priests; and where so many others are sinking into a state of heathenism itself. This latter circumstance is a sufficient answer to those who think that Missions to the British Colonies in America are lower in their character and object, than those whose direct object is the conversion of the heathen. They are at least useful to prevent what is more affecting to a reflecting mind than even the continuance of a Pagan in his darkness and superstition—to prevent Christians from becoming heathens; and the committee think that no appeal more forcible than this can be made to the feelings of British Christians. They will not suffer those Missions to languish, without which the descendants of persons born in the same country with themselves, and baptized into the same name must remain uninstructed,

and unconverted, losing gradually the knowledge of Christianity, till a total obliteration shall take place of all those glorious truths on which alone human happiness and hope can be erected.”

The above extract is copied from the report of the Executive Committee page 24-25-26, and dated London Nov. 25th 1816, and signed by the members of the Missionary Committee of examination and Finance.

(Signed) J. BULMER.
T. MARRIOT.
W. MARIOTT.
J. HULLET.
S. JENNINGS.”

This account of the state of religion in Canada, excited, as might have been anticipated, much indignation, and likewise a discussion in the newspapers, by Eusebius condemning the Report, and Flagellator in its defence. It was a cause of grief to every one possessed of true Christian feeling, to behold an attempt made to justify the gross calumnies which it contains. An attempt which might well have justified Eusebius in some warmth of expression; but, on the whole, he was moderate; being sensible that neither angry nor reproachful language is necessary to vindicate the truth; nor could it escape his observation, that the very signature of the champion of the Report, proved him a stranger to charity.

It is to be lamented that the Wesleyan Missionary Society did not, in a subsequent Report, acknowledge their error; but this, in as far as I can learn, has not been done; and yet, till it be done, their Reports must be read with growing suspicion.

Good frequently springs out of evil. An admirable paper, signed A Watchman, appeared in the Herald, exposing, in the language of a scholar, and in the temper of a Christian, the misrepresentations of the Report, and containing many interesting and eloquent remarks on the progress of our Establishment, and the incessant exertions of the Bishop to increase the number of his Clergy, and to spread by means of Bibles and Prayer-books and Tracts, the light of the Gospel through the Diocese. A wretched answer to the Watchman was attempted by Methodicus—it was the rat assailing the lion.

It might have been expected that the state of religion in the Canadas, was now too well known to admit of misrepresentations; but that they continue still to be made, appears from the following article, extracted from the Christian Remembrancer for last June:—

“*State of Religion in Canada.*

“A public meeting was held yesterday at the City of London Tavern, respecting the state of religion in the two Canadas, *where 160,000 persons are without religious instruction.* At one o’clock the Rev. Dr. Waugh took the chair in the absence of Charles Grant, Esq. The chairman was supported by the Rev. Mr. Easton, of Montreal, the Rev. Mr. Maddox, and other gentlemen.

“The chairman called the attention of the meeting to the vast importance of the object in view, which was to send *evangelical* ministers to that immense tract of country, the two Canadas, *without distinction of sect or denomination.*

“The Rev. Mr. Easton, who has lately arrived from Montreal, addressed the meeting at some length on the present state of the two Canadas. He *stated* that the Canadas with the extent of 1000 miles, *had only thirty-eight ministers*; that the people were warmly attached to their religion, but *that the Gospel was scarcely any where preached,* AND PUBLIC WORSHIP WAS THERE UNKNOWN. The Rev. gentleman further stated, that Upper Canada was chiefly a Protestant country, but that not one out of ten received religious instruction, and expatiated on the utility of sending out ministers to rescue them *from approaching paganism,* and keeping (keep?) alive their affection for the mother country. Funds would be wanted to forward Missionaries thither, and he had no doubt that the inhabitants would soon take upon themselves the expence of supporting the persons sent for that object.

“The Rev. Dr. Maddox, the Rev. Mr. M’Leod, and other gentlemen, warmly espoused the object of the meeting, and a series of resolutions were unanimously passed in furtherance of this desirable object.’

“This *statement,* Sir, will unquestionably go to Canada, and will meet, from the pen of ‘a Watchman,’ the correction it merits. In the mean time we may be permitted to inform those who know little or nothing of our American colonies, that this highly varnished picture is not sketched from nature, but drawn from the zealous imaginations of the reverend orators at the London Tavern. Nearly thirty years ago, Sir, the Episcopal Church of England sent out a Bishop to Quebec, by whose unwearied zeal churches

have been built, and regular clergymen established in every part of Canada where the Protestant Religion prevails. The government of this country, the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, and a noble subscription set on foot in England under the sanction of the Bishop, by the Hon. and Rev. Dr. Stewart, one of the clergy of Lower Canada, have supplied the funds for these objects. Regular episcopal visitations extend to the remotest settlements; and schoolmasters of various classes (some on the Madras system) have been appointed and sent out from England at the expence of government, and of the Society. *Frequent* ordinations take place at Quebec, and several clergy have gone out from England every year. It is however still a fact that more clergy are wanted in the townships, and no pains nor expence are spared to induce properly qualified persons to undertake those laborious situations; but it is rather too much to assert that the Canadas, where there is a Bishop, a most respectable body of Clergy, numerous schoolmasters, and abundance of books, “are *without religious instruction*,” even if we could suppose that Dr. Waugh and his associates are so *bigoted* as to reckon for nothing the vast number of Romish priests, and the still more countless *swarms* of sectarian teachers of *every denomination*, who overrun the country. Still less can it be tolerated that a man, *just arrived from the spot*, should tell us that “*public worship is there UNKNOWN*^[5].” That gentleman must have seen *two* cathedral Churches at Quebec, he must have seen half a dozen places of public worship open every Sunday at Montreal, he must have heard of Diocesan Committees of the Society for promoting Christian knowledge, and District Committees of the National Society, in every part of the Canadas, and he must have known that Mr. Shadgett, Master of the Central School at Quebec, is organizing the Madras system throughout the Diocese.

“I forbear to enlarge further on this subject at present, and will only add that you, Sir, are perfectly at liberty to make your own use of these observations with or without the name of your very obedient servant.”

I intended to have concluded this catalogue of misrepresentations, with some extracts on the state of Religion in Upper Canada, from a book lately published, entitled “The Emigrant’s Guide” but they breathe a spirit so totally different from that of Christianity, that they would have soiled your pages. This author chooses for his motto “Deliberate, Decide and Dare,” but, forgetting the first word “Deliberate,” he has decided and dared with singular temerity. He sets himself against almost all the institutions of the Province—civil as well as religious,—but fortunately his decisions are founded on ignorance so deplorable, as cannot fail of proving, to most of his readers, a sufficient antidote to the poison he scatters.

[5] Where he himself *consistently* acknowledges that there are “*thirty-eight ministers.*”

SERMON BY THE LORD BISHOP OF CALCUTTA.

(From the Missionary Register.)

ON Saturday, May, 8, 1819, his Lordship held a confirmation, in St. George’s Church, at Pulo Penang, or Prince of Wales Island; and on Sunday, the 16th, addresses to the inhabitants, from the pulpit of the same Church, the most salutary counsel from Phil. I. 27. *Only let your conversation be as becometh the Gospel of Christ; that, whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, striving together for the faith of the Gospel.*

His Lordship applies this passage to the situation of Christians in India:

“Different as are the circumstances of the Christian world in modern times, especially in countries where our religion is fully established, it is yet difficult for us to read such passages as my text, and many others in the writings of the Apostles, without some application of them to the condition of the Church in India. We are here, for the most part, small societies dispersed through a territory of vast extent; the Christian Churches already existing in the lifetime of St. Paul, probably did not occupy so wide a field as do our English Churches in this quarter of the globe; there is, indeed, one point of difference, which is sufficiently obvious; the primitive Churches arose and subsisted under every discouragement, and were exposed to hostility and persecution; while we have nothing to dread from the heathen around us, but are ourselves the ruling power. This difference, however, though in other points of view it carries with it important considerations, affects not the application of my text to you, at this moment, as it was then to the Philippians, every clause of it may be suitably addressed. Prosperity and independence have their trials, as well as adversity and depression: and I may fitly exhort you to *let your conversation be as become the Gospel of*

Christ, so that I may hear of your standing fast in one spirit, and with one mind striving together for the faith of the Gospel."

The distinguishing principle of a Christian community, is thus most truly stated:—

“The basis of all Christian society must be faith in Christ. The heart must be sensible of its weakness and its wants, and of the utter insufficiency of man to his own well-being. The conscious need of a Saviour, and a thankful acceptance of pardon and peace as offered in the Gospel, are indispensable to the general Christian character; and, of course, to qualify and dispose men to be members of a really Christian community.”

On another important topic his Lordship speaks with great discrimination and force:—

“Let me caution you against the easy mistake, that you are *standing fast in one spirit*, if in truth you are sunk into indifference: men are apt to believe that they agree in religion and even take credit to themselves for the agreement, when the subject does not sufficiently interest them to afford any cause of discussion. Unity is, indeed, precious in the sight of God, and lovely in the eyes of men: but remember, that religious unity supposes that we are really religious; in no other case does it deserve the name: and in candour I must admit, that better are differences when all are in earnest, than the mere semblance of Christian agreement, when the great and vital doctrines, of the Gospel are little regarded.”

Of the change which has been already effected in the settlement at Pulo Penang, we quote an animated description:—

“What was this island only a few years since, but a blank in the moral creation? Its hills and its forests served only to exhibit to the mariner a scene of wild and cheerless grandeur, as he passed the inhospitable shore. No associations dear to the mind were awakened at the approach: the charities and the arts of civilized life were here unknown, here man, even in his rudest state, had as yet no fixed abode. How altered is now the scene! A numerous and increasing population—an active and beneficent government—streets resounding with the occupation of industry—cultivated fields and thriving plantations—residences bespeaking comfort and opulence—our arts, our language, and our laws introduced into this remote corner of the east! these surprising changes invite reflection, and cannot be contemplated with indifference.

“But, what it is even more to my purpose to remark, and without which all else were unsubstantial, our holy faith is here established; to guide those, who know the truth, in the way of salvation; and to be a light to lighten the Gentiles around, if haply they may be turned from their vanities to the living God.”

The National System of Education has been introduced into the settlement. On this subject his Lordship remarks:

“From an institution which is still in infancy, and has been subject to local difficulties, very much perhaps was not yet to be expected. Some good has assuredly been done, and more is in progress; and I know not of any permanent impediment to its exhibiting hereafter all the improvements, the arrangement, the facility, the precision, and the benign moral effects on the minds of the scholars, which are so conspicuous in the National System, as now practised in England.

“I commend, then, this institution to your continued patronage and care. Let it be an object of your warmest zeal. It is not easy to estimate its eventual importance; at any rate great blessings will assuredly be imparted to the children themselves; but its influence may be of wider extent. This island is an advanced post of civilization to the eastward: from this little seminary it may be the purpose of the Almighty, in his own good time, to send forth those who shall disseminate a knowledge of his attributes, and of the way of salvation. We presume not, indeed, to fathom his counsels; but we humbly hope for his blessing, while we employ the appointed means, leaving to his wisdom the issue.”

His Lordship’s concluding remarks demand the serious consideration of the different Christian communities throughout the extensive diocese of India:—

“All Christian graces and virtues; all, indeed, which belongs to faith, to piety, to order, and to peace, must work together in forming a Christian community which shall do honor to the Gospel of Christ. To all these beseech the Being, ‘without whom nothing is strong, nothing is holy,’ to incline your hearts; and that he will ‘nourish you with all goodness, and of his great mercy keep you in the same.’

“Vast as is the extent of this diocese, and various as are the duties imposed on me, I must not hope, even if life be spared for years to come, to be an eye witness of your progress; but, though absent, I shall endeavour to *hear of your affairs*: and, I trust, that what I shall hear will afford me satisfaction and comfort; that so my visit to this place may be associated in

my mind with something even more gratifying than your personal attention and kindness—I mean, your advancement as a Christian community; and the probable extension through your means, of the kingdom of Christ.”

MONTREAL DISTRICT SOCIETY FOR PROMOTING CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE.

At a Meeting held, pursuant to Advertisement, in the Protestant Parish Church of Montreal, on Monday the 31st day of May, 1819, Stephen Sewell, Esq. in the Chair, the following Resolutions were unanimously agreed to.

RESOLVED,

1.—The Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, having for more century extensively, zealously, and successfully, contributed to the diffusion and maintenance of the knowledge and practice of the Christian Religion, is justly entitled to general gratitude and support; and that with a view to increase the means of its exertions, and to co-operate in the prosecution of its objects, a District Committee be now established in this City, in correspondence with the Diocesan Committee at Quebec, which shall be open to every member of the Society, who shall find it convenient to attend, and of which every person, subscribing Half a Guinea annually shall be a member.

2.—That a general meeting of this Committee take place on Whit Monday in every year, to receive a report of the proceedings, to audit the Treasurer’s accounts, and to transact such other business as may arise, and to consider the best means of still further promoting the exertions and usefulness of the institution.

3d.—That the Officers of the Committee do consist of a President, Two Vice Presidents, a Treasurer and a Secretary, being members of this society.

4th.—That Isaac Winslow Clarke, Esq. be requested to accept the office of President.

5th.—That the Rev. John Bethune and Stephen Sewell, Esq. be requested to accept the office of Vice Presidents.

6th.—That George Moffat, Esq. be requested to accept the office of Treasurer.

7th.—That Alexander Skakel, Esq. be requested to accept the office of Secretary.

8th.—That the Secretary do transmit, at least once in every year, the minutes of the Proceedings of this Committee to the Diocesan Committee at Quebec.

9th.—That the President, Vice Presidents, Treasurer, and Secretary, together with five other members constitute a select committee for the purpose of transacting the business of the General Committee, and that they meet once, within seven days previous, and once, within the same interval subsequent to every general meeting, as well as at such other times as they shall judge expedient, and that they have power to call a special General Meeting, when it shall seem fit to them; and that two members of this Committee, with the President, or Vice Presidents, or any one of them, and the Secretary, be competent to transact the business of the Society.

10th.—That the Rev. George Jenkins, David Ross, Esq. Robert Gillespie, Esq. Thomas Busby, Esq. and James Woolrich, Esq. with the President, Vice Presidents, the Treasurer and Secretary, be the Committee mentioned in the preceding Resolution.

11th.—That one third of the amount of all contributions to the fund, in the hands of the Treasurer, and all subsequent augmentations of it, by sale of books or otherwise, be remitted through the Diocesan Committee to the Office of the Parent Society in London, as a benefaction in aid of their general designs, and that the remaining two thirds be appropriated from time to time to the special purposes of this committee, more particularly to the formation of a local deposit of Books, to be procured from the Diocesan Committee, and to be placed at the disposal of this Committee.

12th.—That a subscription be now opened for the purpose of ascertaining the Members, and to constitute a fund he applied immediately to the designs of this Committee.

13th.—That the Members of the Committee be requested to obtain additional Subscribers to this Institution.

14th.—That the proceedings of this Meeting be published in the Montreal Courant and Herald.

15th.—That the thanks of this Meeting be given to the Chairman, Stephen Sewell, Esquire.

AL. SKAKEL,
Sec'y.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE
MONTREAL DISTRICT
COMMITTEE.

The Montreal District Committee in Correspondence with the Quebec Diocesan Committee, in laying before the Public the first Annual Report of its proceedings, must express its sense of the Readiness with which all classes, notwithstanding the many other calls, that, during the lastly year, have been made upon their charity, have come forward in support of the design. From a view of its incipient state, it is humbly hoped, that in its progress, it will be attended with the divine blessing, and the cordial support of those, who believe, that the diffusion of Christian Knowledge, and the means of moral and religious instruction, are intimately connected with the true interests of man.

It was by the institution of the Diocesan Committee at Quebec, formed in compliance with directions received from the Lord Bishop of the Diocese, that the attention of the Public was called to the formation of the Montreal District Committee. It is worthy of being remarked, that at its institution, every one who attended the Meeting, called for that purpose, declared his willingness to contribute in aid of the designs of the Society. The number of those who have contributed amounts now to 101.

The first step taken by the Committee after its formation, was the establishment of a Sunday school for the religious instruction of children of both sexes, gratis. To give support to this institution, and to see that the intention of the society was carried into effect, a Sub-committee of gentlemen, Members of the Society, was appointed, and an equal number of Ladies was requested to visit the School in rotation every Sunday. It was also ordered, that the Children admitted to the School should attend, along with the Teacher, the morning and evening service in Church. The number of Pupils of both sexes, that have been received into the School, since it was opened in September last, is 81.

The Committee wishing to extend the means of instruction still farther, and to the utmost that its funds would permit, next resolved, that, instead of a Sunday School, it should take under its protection, and support from its funds, the School known by the name of the Montreal Free School established about fourteen months before, by the Rev. John Bethune, Rector

of the Parish, for the instruction of Children on the Madras or National System. To this School His Grace the Duke of Richmond, the late Governor in Chief, was pleased to appropriate a salary of £50 per annum attached to an appointment at that time vacated by death. Children are admitted on paying a fee of *not more* than three shillings and four pence per month, or gratis, on being recommended by two Members of the District Committee. The School is under the superintendance of a Sub-committee, that visit it in rotation. The Children are ordered to attend, along with the Master, the morning and evening Service in Church, and to assemble in School every Sunday morning for religious instruction.

Though the Committee is duly sensible of the inestimable advantages to be derived from the distribution of the Society's books gratis, and the sale of them at reduced prices, it has not hitherto been able, from the deposit of the Society's books at Quebec being exhausted, to avail itself of this great aid in the diffusion of Christian Knowledge. This temporary inconvenience will be removed on the arrival of a new supply from Great Britain. It anticipates, then, the most beneficial effects from the dispersion of the Word of God, accompanied with our most excellent Liturgy, and the numerous tracts of the Society, so admirably calculated to enforce the obligations of pure, and practical religion: and it humbly hopes, that, through the Divine blessing, a knowledge of the Gospel will progressively make its way, with silent but sure steps, until it pervade all ranks of the community.

The Committee cannot conclude this report, without recommending the designs of the Parent Society, and the branch of it established here, to the zealous co-operation, the liberal support, and the earnest prayers of those who believe that the Moral and Religious instruction of the Poor, and the diffusion of Christian Knowledge, are the best promoters of not only the temporal, but the eternal welfare of man.

By Order of the Committee.

AL. SKAKEL,
Secretary.

Montreal, May 22d, 1820.

THE SISTERS.

(continued from page 280 [Vol. 2, Issue 7].)

“WHAT says my little Becky?—must we send the baby away?”—“Pray do not, daddy,” she said; “I will give her some of my breakfast; I have always to spare, you know: I often give part of the milk to the kitten.”

The worthy creatures felt happy when they had formed this generous determination. Their industry had always supplied them with wholesome food; their temperance preserved their health; and for themselves they feared not want.

The overseer of the parish, to whom they applied, consented to bury the stranger, and Walter and his wife followed her to the grave. After the last duties that humanity demanded were paid, and they had given a farewell look upon the poor object whose penitence and forlorn state had touched their hearts, they were met by Mr. Stubbings, the overseer, who inquired of them who was to take care of the child that he found belonged to the woman they had received? The consequence he attached to his office gave him great importance with himself; and there was no one he loved to hear so well; from this circumstance he was prevented the knowledge of their benevolent intentions. Not waiting for their answer, he continued—“The parish, I suppose? which is greatly obliged to you for taking in trampers to die! You should have sent to me; what am I in office for? I should have carted them off to the next town, that might as well have had the cost as we.” This hardness of heart struck the worthy people dumb; and the man of importance proceeded to say, “Well, as it is your own doing, I think you ought to nurse the brat yourselves—and for something less than the common price that we pay for our own poor. It is my duty, being in office, to save the parish money.”—Rebecca looked at her husband: their charitable hearts had expected no assistance; but to this the man “in office” was a stranger, and had not the remotest idea of their previous intentions. They were not in a situation to reject the offer, and agreed to accept whatever he pleased to allow them towards the maintenance of the child, which they would take care of; Each party was satisfied; and Rebecca returned from the churchyard determined to be a mother to “the dear Maria.”

For several years did these worthy creatures bring up the two little girls as though their claims were the same. The gold clasps were carefully preserved, though they had not the least expectation Maria would ever be restored to her friends: their own inexperience of the world, their situation, and their ignorance of the constant intercourse that the remotest corners of the kingdom hold with the south (from whence they remembered the infant was taken,) prevented those rewards from coming to their knowledge, that for twelve months were offered for the lost child.

Little Maria grew apace, and Rebecca loved her with a sister's love. When the elder was twelve years old, and the other nine, Walter Jones removed his family from their native village. Though his daily occupation had been labour in the fields, yet he possessed great mechanical knowledge which he had often exercised to the advantage of the owner of a small cotton-factory in the neighbourhood. His occasional employer, Mr. Forrester, had entered into partnership with the proprietors of a large concern of the same nature in the county of Derby; and Walter was engaged to accompany him, and superintend the machinery of the extensive cotton mill he was now connected with. The steady worth of the man, added to the ingenuity of his talents, made him a valuable acquisition to his employers; they allowed him a salary that would maintain his family with comfort and respect, and fixed him in a neat little cottage in one of the most romantic dales of Derbyshire. For many miles around their habitation, the country was wild and mountainous: hills rising above each other, in savage grandeur; not a tree or house met the eye; and but for the excellent roads that intersected each other, there was not a vestige of the works of man: the voice of the shepherd calling his dog, and the answering bark of the faithful animal, the only sounds that met the ear. This scene, so solitary, was enlivened by the sudden opening of the mountains that enclosed the sylvan dale where our cottagers found their home. The descent to it on all sides was precipitous, and only one side passable; but the rocks that enclosed it were beautifully fringed with hazel and slender oaklings, and the mountain-ash grew amidst their clefts: points of grey rock started from the foliage, like village spires, marking, for many miles, amidst the wilds of the surrounding country, where this sequestered vale was hid. At its bottom wound the clear and lovely Wye, that mountain-river, whose banks here were smiling meadows, luxuriant beyond imagination; their boundary, on one side, the water; on the other, the almost perpendicular rock.

This valley wound among the hills for several miles, and in a little collateral glen their cottage was situated: a small trout stream murmured past their door, divided from it by their useful garden, crowded with herbs and vegetables, pinks, lavender, and mary-golds; and which, increased by other mountain-rills, paid its never-failing tribute to the lucid Wye; on the banks of which was built the cotton mill where Walter worked: it then terminated in an open country, which presented little hamlets and clusters of cottages, possessing all the population this part of Derbyshire had to boast.

This removal caused every circumstance of Maria's history to remain unknown to all but her foster parents; Rebecca knew not but that she was her sister; for the recollection of those incidents that had thrown her on the

charity of her parents, were obliterated. Here in happy industry they lived—a family of love! Rebecca was a stout young woman; and at fourteen had the appearance of being two years older. Maria, in defiance of all Mrs. Jones's care and nursing, was delicate; and though she sought to take her share of the labours of the house, the garden, and the field, with willingness, yet the fatigue which she suffered caused her kind protectress to exclaim, with a frequent sigh, "Ah well a-day! *she* was not born to work!" Walter's situation was improved by his removal: he now possessed a cow, which, added to his garden, and the produce of a little field, almost supported his family. The two children were brought up in the strictest habits of economy and industry, and received some of the advantages of education: Maria attending school, where she made up the linen the two Rebeccas spun; her sister, whose health and activity enabled her to assist her mother, was only sent on Sundays, but received from her father, after his day's employment was at an end, what instruction he was able to give. Thus passed their lives, in such contended happiness, that they thought themselves favoured by heaven with every earthly blessing.

A circumstance, that took place when Maria was eleven years old, promised to compensate in some degree the injustice of fortune, by a wakening and improving those latent seeds of genius and fancy that lay hid in her mind, and which her situation had obscured, but not extinguished. In the romantic and beautiful village of Eyam, that stretches its little street, intersected with clumps of verdure, on natural terrace along the side of high and sheltering mountains, and presiding over its venerable church, that, shaded by aged yew trees, and surrounded with the memorials of mortality, evinced the piety of its inhabitants, resided Mr. Courtenay, the clergyman of its parish and the curate of its venerable and esteemed rector. He was an accomplished gentleman, an elegant poet, a sensible divine. Those who could judge of his talents and attainments, would pronounce him placed in a situation unworthy of him; but his value was not unappreciated, by his unlettered bearers: ignorant or uninformed as they might appear to the inhabitants of cities, yet many of them possessed minds of no common endowments. Traits of genius, and deep powers of research, often characterize the natives of mountainous countries; the soul appears to keep pace with the grandeur of the surrounding objects;—nothing is puerile that meets the eye; the mind expands amidst the great wonders of nature; and when she descends from the sublime, all that she presents is beautiful. The names of Brindley, Flamstead, and many others, natives of this Alpine county, will evince that it is not to refinement alone man owes his dignity. Even the lighter graces of Mr. Courtenay's mind lost not their charm; never

was there a brother, a sister, or tender relative interred in the rural churchyard of Eyam, without an application to Mr. Courtenay for “a pretty verse,” to be put on their humble tomb-stone. Excepting an intercourse with one or two families, which lay several miles apart, he was almost shut out from society; and as he was seldom engaged in his parish duties but on Sunday, he would ramble several days together over the hills and amongst the dales of this interesting country; the rustic inhabitants of which were always glad to offer him refreshment, or accommodate him with a bed. The sylvan beauties of our little valley had always peculiar attraction for him; *and it was here, one sultry summer’s noon, that he overtook Maria returning with the empty basket that had contained her father’s dinner; the child was loitering on the banks of the stream, reading the simple ballad of the “Children in the Wood,” that one of the cotton-spinners had lent to her.* Mr. Courtenay loved children and was intimately acquainted with those of the surrounding country; and it was impossible he should overlook such a one as Maria; her coarse straw hat hung at the back of her head; her dark brown hair curled in clusters round her face, which was fair and delicate, and unlike the peasantry of the country, yet her little scanty coat and striped linen frock bespoke her one of them. “What is your name, my child?” said he, taking her hand, “Maria,” she replied, making her rustic courtesy; “My father is Walter Jones; he lives a little higher up the dale—you cannot see the house for the turning of the road; but as soon as we have gone round that rock, we shall be there; and if you are tired, you may rest yourself.” The little hand still remained in his, and they walked on together. Maria was a prattler, and she continued to talk, without the bashfulness that children often possess.

(*To be continued.*)

TRANSCRIBER NOTES

Misspelled words and printer errors have been corrected. Where multiple spellings occur, majority use has been employed.

Punctuation has been maintained except where obvious printer errors occur.

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[The end of *The Christian Recorder Vol. 2, Issue 8 (1820-October)* by Various]