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BIOGRAPHY.

MEMOIR OF THE REV. J. B. DEWHURST.

To the Editor.

Bristol, Dec. 2, 1842.

Sir,

I cannot perform my promise of offering you the following Memoir, without acknowledging my obligations to those gentlemen who have furnished me with its principal and most interesting passages. Should I have introduced their communications with any success I shall be amply recompensed for the anxiety with which I have made the attempt. The honour of connecting my name with that of the late Mr. Dewhurst, I cannot esteem lightly. The recollection of having known him with the intimacy which very opposite engagements in life would permit, and of having lost him so soon, will often revive in my mind that mixed sensation of pleasure and regret, commonly experienced when we contemplate the character of a man who died, according to common estimate, prematurely. Just when their highly cultivated talents and extended virtues, had distinguished them as most worthy of being lived.

Yours faithfully,
J. T. RUTLEDGE

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While events, at which humanity shudders, are daily arresting the public attention, it seems also good to the infinite Wisdom, often unsearchable, yet always unerring, to interrupt even the pure and rational enjoyments of private life. Thus are taken away, in the midst of their days, those who were full of wisdom, and who knew to speak of excellent things. Such a reflection was naturally excited on the late sudden decease of one endeared to his friends by moral and intellectual qualities, and who cannot be soon forgotten by those whom he had wisely and successfully conducted into the paths of knowledge.

Plants of his hand, and children of his care.

A just regard to the improvement of society, forbids that such a man should be numbered with the dead, without a memorial, however inadequate, among the living. Nor can this tribute of esteem and friendship be offered any where with so much propriety as on the pages of a work which proposes, like the subject of this Memoir in the last and favourite purpose of his life, to engage literature in its noblest office, the defence and illustration of scriptural theology.

Yours faithfully,
J. T. RUTLEDGE

Dewhurst, was born October 1, 1776, at Cottingham, in the county of York. His birth was unattended by the advantages of fortune. He was destined to possess more *durable riches*, for, as Bishop Wilkins concludes one of his curious philosophical speculations, "whatever the world may think, yet it is not a vast estate, a noble birth, an eminent place, that can add any thing to our true real worth; but it must be the degrees of that which makes us *men*, that must make us *better men*, the endowments of our soul, the enlargement of our reason."

The father of J. B. Dewhurst was a Protestant Dissenting minister, of the persuasion commonly, though no longer correctly, denominated *Presbyterian*. He was a native of Lancashire, and, when rather of advanced age for a student, was recommended to Coward's academy at Daventry, then under the superintendence of the Rev. Dr. Ashworth. He settled as a minister, first at Oswestry, then at Cottingham, near Hull, where he died about 1784. His widow, whose family name was *Bickerton*, survived her husband many years, and passed the closing scenes of life in the house of her second son at Enfield, where she died in 1811, aged 82.

A few of the elder Mr. Dewhurst's fellow-students yet survive. Two of them were his intimate friends. On their respectable authority, he is said "to have been so much distinguished by modesty and a reluctance to meet the public eye, as his son, though as a preacher, he possessed no mean qualifications." His prayers and exhortations were peculiarly calculated to fix attention "by their intrinsic excellence." The regard which he had conciliated in his neighbourhood, appears "from the following fact," communicated by a correct and intelligent friend, that it may "be known in honour of the memory of both the parties concerned." It happily justifies that maxim so encouraging to laudable exertion, "The father's virtues shall befriend his child."

"Although Mr. Milner, master of the Grammar-school at Hull, was a zealous Calvinist, he had so much regard to Mr. Dewhurst, a reputed, and, if human formularies are consulted, a real heretic, as spontaneously to undertake the instruction of his son." The Rev. Joseph Milner was a clergyman of the Church of England, and brother of the present learned Dean of Carlisle. He has been justly celebrated by the *Calvinists*, as, from talents and piety, a distinguished ornament of their communion. It may be added, on the authority of the pupil, and, in his opinion, to the credit of the tutor's consistency, that he took every fair occasion, in going through the Greek Testament, to point out, what appeared to him, proofs or illustrations of his peculiar sentiments.

His pupil declined to adopt this respectable tutor's theology, yet largely imbibed his literature. From himself, the late Mr. Dewhurst's proficiency at school had never been discovered, except by its effects. It is related by a beloved companion of his youth, and, through life, however their paths diverged, an esteemed and esteeming friend. The Rev. W.

Dealtry, Professor and Dean of the classical writers that he had Hertford College, has very obligingly communicated some highly interesting recollections of his school-fellow's uncommon attainments and peculiar habits. His account, happy to avail ourselves of such authority, we take the liberty of transcribing entire.

The love of literature must have been planted in Mr. Dewhurst's mind at a very early period; and the progress which he had made at the age of thirteen, both in classical and in general knowledge, proved him to possess no ordinary talents. About that time it was the custom of his class—the highest class in the school—to separate into two divisions, while preparing the lessons of the day, and to ask one person to construe for each, the rest undertaking to examine the dictionary when farther explanation was required. Mr. Dewhurst was invariably requested to construe for one division of the class. He was not tall of his years; and a stranger would have been surprised to see him sitting like an oracle among his class-fellows, themselves not defective in talent, but in general much older and taller than he was. He combined, in an eminent degree, quickness of comprehension with a matured understanding; and his intimate companions had frequent occasion to remark with what facility he entered into the spirit of the authors whom he perused, and with what happiness he could apply the information derived from them. His memory was even then very retentive; when he had reached the age of sixteen, it would have been difficult to cite a passage from any of the classical writers that he had read (and these comprized at least all the ordinary classics) without his recollecting the place and its connection.

“In addition to the usual engagements of the school, it was his custom to read at home eight sections of Livy, with a certain portion of Cicero, and of some Greek writer, every day; and on the afternoons of Thursday and Saturday, he generally went into the fields with one of his class-fellows, where they read *sub dio*. The favourite subjects of their field-reading were *Æchines contra Ctesiphontem* and *Demosthenes de Corona*: these they read through under the hedges again and again. Few persons could employ their time to better advantage than he did, and few can have a higher relish for intellectual gratification.

“His excellent master, the Rev. Joseph Milner, well knew how to appreciate the talents of his pupil; and the very extensive researches of that eminent scholar in the historical department, often led to inquiries which showed that even at the age of thirteen or fourteen, Mr. Dewhurst was an historian of no mean attainments. His class-fellows were frequently surprised both at the diversity and the accuracy of his knowledge; his accuracy indeed was almost proverbial, and they relied upon his historical facts with the same perfect confidence which they reposed in his judgment and his taste.

“His compositions at that period, so far as the imperfect recollection of an friend may be trusted, were distinguished rather by their neatness and simplicity, than by the most elaborate of

school-boy genius. They partook exactly of the character of his mind, and exhibited plain, manly sense in a simple and modest dress. Never was there a youth of the same age possessed of manners more mild, and inoffensive, and engaging.

"From a certain constitutional indolence with respect to corporal exertion, he rarely joined in the plays and amusements of his school-fellows. The chief exercise which he took, was a quiet walk with his favourite companion after school in the morning; but, even on these occasions, they frequently employed themselves, as they paced the Humber-bank, in demonstrating the Elements of Euclid, by recollection of the figures, in recitation from the English, and Greek, and Latin poets, or in repeating, so far as their memories would allow, what they had read that day in the Greek Testament or Hebrew Bible; for with a portion of one of these their morning invariably commenced. On one occasion, and on one only, was he prevailed upon to attempt a ditch: he stipulated that his companion should take him by the hand, and that they should run and leap together: the experiment failed: they found themselves plunged deep in one of the worst receptacles of mud, which the vicinity of Hull supplies, and in the bitterness of a cold December day."

It is scarcely possible to read this account of the mental occupations, and composed habits of young Dewhurst, without recollecting those lines of Milton:

When I was yet a child, no childish play
To me was pleasing, all my mind was set
Tudious to learn and know.—P. R. i. 201.

The Rev. J. Milner was too much attached to the interests of learning and religion in his own church, not to desire the accession of such a scholar. He advised his pupil to study at the University and become a clergyman in the Establishment. Finding his persuasions ineffectual he took him by the hand, and said, *My young friend, above all things, avoid the errors of the Socinians.* Yet to the Socinians, as Unitarians are still sometimes inaccurately denominated, he was designed to do no inconsiderable honour.

J. B. Dewhurst now determined to pursue his studies with a view to the Christian ministry among the Nonconformists. He became a student at the Dissenters' Academy founded by Mr. Coward, and then settled at Northampton, over which the Rev. John Horsey presided. The tutor "formed no common regard for his pupil, and was always spoken of by him with a marked affection and esteem." Mr. Dewhurst was one of several students, who published in 1799 (*M. Mag.* vii. 17), their grateful testimony to the *faithfulness and impartiality* of Mr. Horsey's conduct, in his theological department, in reply to some insinuations most ungenerously reported against that gentleman.

It was not surprising that young Dewhurst should carry with him, from Hull to Northampton, "a testimonial of his master's warm approbation of his diligence and attainments." How he continued to justify Mr. Milner's opinion, till he became a scholar, and a ripe and good one, cannot be told so well as by his respectable tutor, Mr. Horsey, who, in answer to our enquiries, has very kindly and

promptly favoured us with the following communication.

"In 1792, Mr. Dewhurst entered the academy, at Northampton, endowed with qualifications far superior to what many possess when they leave such institutions. His distinguished abilities were soon perceived and admired; and his talents vigorously applied, for five years, to a regular course of study, preparatory to the Christian ministry. His accurate and increasing knowledge of the different subjects which came under examination, gave the highest delight and satisfaction to those who were most interested in his improvement; and, by the whole academical family, he was deservedly esteemed and loved. The only difficulty I find, Sir, in complying with your request, is, in selecting any peculiar and discriminating qualities, where all were in so much order and proportion. Truth and justice demand my testimony to *uniform and general excellence of character*. Under this impression, I have frequently said, in the hour of free converse, concerning our friend, that I was not able to recollect any thing he ever said or did, during the time of his residence at Northampton, that I could wish had not been said or done. To be, however, a little more particular, — considered as a *scholar*, Mr. Dewhurst's attainments were certainly of a superior order. His progress was so rapid, and his attainments so elevated, under the able and well-directed superintendence of Mr. Forsaith, the classical tutor, as to obtain, I well know, his frequent and unqualified approbation. And though, during the period of Mr. Dewhurst's studies, we had several eminent

linguists in the house, they all admitted and readily acknowledged, the superiority of his critical acumen and taste.

"The same talents which qualified him for a classical scholar, shone conspicuously, in every department of science; though he appeared to be particularly inclined to indulge himself in classical pursuits.

"No subjects of study, I am happy to add, diverted him from cultivating a *religious temper*. A valuable quality, which many have found it difficult to preserve, amidst the miscellaneous engagements of an academical life. Our respected friend, however, happily succeeded in this. — Never any thing frivolous or unsuitable appeared, in the exercises of Christian worship, whatever might be the temptation. And his own religious services, in the family and in public, while they were eminent for correctness and propriety of expression, became strongly impressive and interesting to others, from a spirit of rational and animated devotion.

"The leading defect, I had almost said the only one, in the character of this excellent man, was a want of *proper confidence* in his own powers and attainments. What all others saw and admired, he could scarcely be induced to believe existed. But, notwithstanding the veil of modesty and diffidence, in which his talents and virtues were shrouded, his superior excellence could not be entirely concealed: and his inflexible integrity, his simplicity and purity of manners, his benign and placid spirit, towards his associates and fellow students, together with his gratitude to his instructors, and reverence for his Maker, will leave

an indelible impression on the hearts of all who enjoyed and valued his acquaintance and friendship."

On quitting the academy in 1797, Mr. Dewhurst preached at Halifax, during a few months. He also occasionally supplied some congregations in the Midland Counties. It is probable, however, that the defect regretted by his tutor, "a want of proper confidence in his own powers and attainments," would render the duties of the pulpit too often oppressive to his feelings. No one can have joined public associations, formed for whatever purpose, without frequently lamenting the scarcely pardonable silence of individuals, eminently furnished with knowledge and counsel above many who have cultivated the arts of popular address. Those arts, we know from himself, Mr. Dewhurst considered as, by him, unattainable; nor, we believe, did he ever attempt upon any occasion an extemporaneous address. Even *preaching* from written papers, as too generally practised in his communion, during his latter years, he appears to have declined. Yet though thus shrinking from publicity, he could not neglect the talents intrusted to his occupation. He was, indeed, well prepared to fill the offices of private tuition, and to instruct and entertain through the medium of the press.

In 1797, Mr. Dewhurst accepted an invitation from Mr. Macmurdo, then resident at Old Ford, near Hackney, to become a tutor in that gentleman's family, by every part of which he was regarded, through life, with justly merited esteem. They attended

his fatal illness with anxious solicitude, and lamented him, in his death, as a friend uniformly devoted to the highest interests of those intrusted to his care. In this neighbourhood, Mr. Dewhurst passed the remainder of his life, occupying the leisure which the duties of a tutor allowed, in augmenting his own stores of classical and general knowledge, and contributing, by his writings, to the public taste and information.

The earliest work, in which he is known to have become a writer, was the *Annual Review*, which commenced in 1803. By our friends, Mr. Arthur Aikin and the Rev. Thomas Rees, the successive editors of that work, we are favoured with some account of his contributions. Through the first six volumes, comprehending Mr. Aikin's editorship, according to that gentleman's information, "Mr. Dewhurst undertook the entire department of classical literature and bibliography." Mr. Aikin having very obligingly characterized to us a few articles in that department, we shall take the liberty of copying his communication.

"The introduction to chap. vi. in the first vol. is a very equitable though brief summary of the advantages derived by the moderns from the study of the ancient classical writers, of the services rendered by the early editors and critics, from the revival of letters to the end of the seventeenth century, and of the distinguishing characters of that modern school of criticism of which Bentley may be considered as the founder.

The longest and most elaborate article which he furnished, is the

review of Heyne's Homer; it also contains a good deal of original matter, especially with regard to the *Cæura* and the *Æolic Digammas*. Northmore's *Tryphiodorus* and Taylor's translation of *Plato*, give occasion to two good articles: in the latter, he shows, incontestably, that the translator has, on several occasions, neglected the original Greek for the Latin version.

"The review of Preston's translation of the *Argonautics of Apollonius Rhodius* is introduced by a very satisfactory account of the original author, and a critique on the merits of the poem. Steuart's translation of the works of *Sallust*, forms also a very interesting article."

It may be here added, on other good authority, that the review of *Cowper's Homer* was characterized by the late Professor Porson, as one of the neatest pieces of criticism he had ever read.

The Rev. Thomas Rees, who edited the seventh and last volume of the *Annual Review*, and had some concern in the sixth, has obliged us with the following communication, respecting some articles by Mr. Dewhurst in those volumes.

"In the sixth volume (p. 208.) his first article is a review of Dr. Gillies's continuation of his *Greek History*, a subject for the discussion of which our friend, by his intimate acquaintance with the original historians, was eminently qualified.

"The fourth chapter (pages 366-374) is entirely by him. It contains no article of importance, but it was impossible for him to touch on this theme without displaying his thorough knowledge of the languages of Greece and Rome,

and his acquaintance with the works of the critics who have elucidated the writings of the ancients. Not to specify other articles, his review of Kidd's *Opuscula Rhuneniana*, affords abundant illustration of this remark.

"Besides these, there are a few biographical articles by him; viz. the Lives of Blair, Hume and Lord Kaimes, and Dr. Cogan's work on the Passions, (p. 615.) is also from his pen;—an article which exhibits his mind in a different character, but with undiminished advantage. In the seventh volume, his first criticism is Mitford's *Greece* (p. 85.); there is much in this article that is very interesting. It discusses briefly, but very ably, the controversy respecting the study of ancient and particularly of Greek history. His next criticism, in point of importance is (p. 286) on Griesbach's *Greek Testament*, which exhibits a sketch of the nature and extent, and an illustration of the importance, of his labours.

"Most of the tenth chapter was drawn up by him; but you will observe the works are, for the greater part, of the elementary kind. In some of these, however, he evinces, by a touch or two, as in the review of Grant's *Grammar*, Cary's *Prosody*, and Pickburne's *Metrical Pauses*, his mastery in the subjects they discuss."

Another work which was aided by Mr. Dewhurst's pen was the *Athenæum*, which commenced in 1807. Our respected friend, Dr. Aikin, who edited that work, has kindly informed us that "Mr. Dewhurst's contributions to the *Athenæum*, consist of one paper in each number relative to Greek authors, a letter respecting Mr.

Wakefield's intended Greek Lexicon, No. xiv. p. 203, and a letter, stating a singular literary blunder, No. xvii. p. 412."

These papers in the *Athenæum*, were given under the head of *Classical Disquisitions*, commencing with a "Sketch of the Literary History of Greece," as "an introduction to an account of its principal writers." The design, as further described, (Ath. x. 148,) was, "to treat, in succession, of the great writers of Greece, and to give a summary account of their lives and writings, and the principal editions and manuscripts of their works." This design had been carried on from Homer to Thucydides, when interrupted by the cessation of the *Athenæum*, in June, 1809.

Only a few weeks before his death, Mr. Dewhurst had formed the intention of completing his original plan, respecting the *Classical Disquisitions*. This appears from the following letter, with which we have been favoured by the gentleman to whom it was addressed.

To the Editor of the Classical Journal.

"Sir,

"I beg leave to return you my sincere thanks for the last Number of the *Classical Journal*, which I have had the honour of receiving from you. I have seen most or all of the preceding Numbers, and have derived great entertainment and instruction from them, and it will give me much satisfaction to contribute any thing in my power to so respectable a work. It was always my intention to continue at some period the series of papers commenced

in the *Athenæum*, but the want of an immediate motive to composition, since the cessation of that work, has hitherto prevented me from proceeding in the execution of my plan. The request of the proprietors of the *Classical Journal*, which you have had the goodness to communicate, will induce me to resume it, and to bestow such labour on it as my leisure may permit. You may depend on an article either for the next or the succeeding number, and afterwards I hope in pretty regular succession. With respect to the next Number I speak doubtfully, as it is possible that in the interval I may be absent from home.

I beg at the same time to return you my thanks for your kind offer of service in town, of which should an opportunity occur I will thankfully avail myself.

I remain, very respectfully, Sir,
Your obedient servant,

JOHN DEWHURST.

Hackney, July 17, 1812.

B. S. I am not aware that I am in possession of any tract which, from their scarcity and value, are deserving of republication in the *Classical Journal*."

To the *Monthly Repository*, Mr. Dewhurst contributed (Vol. iii. p. 582) a *Literary Memoir of Professor Parsons*, and (iii. 336) a *Review of Clarke's Succession of Sacred Literature*. He had designed to begin, with the next year, in the same work, a series of papers, Biographical, Critical, and Theological, in chronological order, on the Greek and Latin Fathers. His assistance towards the republication and enlargement of Mr. Wakefield's *Memoirs* in 1804, cannot be omitted in this enumeration of his literary avoca-

tions. Of his friendly attentions, those concerned in that work have a lively recollection. Mr. Wakefield lived long enough in the same society with Mr. Dewhurst to know and esteem him, but they were too soon separated, or from similarity of tastes and occupations, they could scarcely have failed to become very intimate.

In 1807, there had been published among the literary notices in the *Athenæum* (ii. 512), a proposal for "a British Biography, arranged in chronological order, and so classed as to bring into one point of view the several descriptions of eminent persons who have lived at the same period." This work was committed to the able direction of our friend Dr. Malkin, who has obligingly informed us that he engaged the assistance of Mr. Dewhurst till by his important occupations on his election to the mastership of Bury School, he was himself obliged to decline the undertaking. The following extract from Dr. Malkin's letter, written in immediate reply to our inquiry, will, we are persuaded, be interesting, not only to the friends of Mr. Dewhurst but to all who are concerned for the promotion of English literature.

"When I relinquished the work, a large proportion of the lives, to be contained in the first volume, which was to come down to the Conquest, were written and ready for the press. Of these lives about one-third were written by Mr. D. At that early period you are sensible that the provinces of history and biography are scarcely, if at all, distinguishable; indeed, that biography is history. Professions and occupations in life not being then subdivided as they are now, the classes were

few; kings would class both as warriors and statesmen; ecclesiastics both as statesmen and men of learning, and learning was nearly, if not quite, confined to ecclesiastics. In each of these classes there were several articles from our friend's hand, some of them copious; and I shall be much disappointed if they do not appear before the public in the form in which I received them. Our friend's uncommon modesty made him pertinacious in requesting that I would add, alter, or expunge; and my responsibility fully entitled me to add, or expunge; perhaps rejection would have been preferable to alteration, at least in any case where either principle or matter of fact was involved. But I had no intention, with respect to the articles in question, to have exercised the right of a conductor; and I think that if ever they appear in print, they will place Mr. D.'s character high with the public in a line in which he was utterly unknown, as an historian. With respect to the department he was to have filled, had we continued to act together, he desired, in a tone and temper which you would at once recognize, that he might have such articles as I could not satisfactorily procure from other quarters; but he did not wish so to engross any department, as to shut out any contribution from names more imposing with the public. This was friendly, as well as modest, and I latterly depended on him as a main prop of the work, in a much greater degree than when I first proposed the engagement. I was first induced to select him in consequence of his acknowledged learning and sound judgment; which had been prin-

cipally led in a different channel, but which, I was certain, would accompany him whithersoever he might deviate. I did, however, before I had any personal experience of his qualifications, fear that there might be a coldness and a dryness not unusual in the compositions of those who are scholars rather than men of the world. In this respect, I had very agreeably deceived myself; for the articles of which I speak had a sufficiently agreeable variety of light and shade; and he seemed always, for which at first I should not have given him credit, to prefer an anecdote to an argument. In a word, there was much more of the man of the world in his writings as a biographer, than could be expected from his manners and way of life; and far more of the British and Saxon scholar, and of the antiquary, than could be looked for in one of the first scholars of the day, in the dead languages. As a classical scholar, he was among the first, and exclusively as such is he generally known; but those who confine him within those limits, knew him very imperfectly; he had a memory exceeded, perhaps, only by that of Porson, and was the most universal man whom I ever had the pleasure of knowing intimately."

Such were Mr. Dewhurst's occupations as a writer, in which, as his contributions were always anonymous, he was scarcely known, except to literary associates and very intimate friends. Yet, had his life been preserved, it is probable he might have overcome his diffidence, and appeared before the public professedly as an author. Dr. Malkin has remarked to us that "with respect

to classical literature Mr. Dewhurst had several projects." Of these few, if any, traces are found among his papers. He probably depended, like Mr. Wakefield, on his tenacious memory, to bring together his materials whenever he should require them.

The year of which he was destined not to witness the close, was begun by him with a truly grand design of moral and intellectual improvement. When the competitors for wealth or power expire, *big with life's futurities*, we feel only the vanity of human expectations. A sudden interruption of wisdom and virtue, in their progress towards perfection, excites other emotions. Such were those with which we examined a manuscript found among Mr. Dewhurst's papers, and certainly intended for no inspection besides his own. It is dated, "Hackney, January 9, 1812," and entitled *Ratio studiorum*.

This manuscript, an outline never filled up, and therefore unfit for publication, contains, with a large enumeration of authors in various languages, a plan of study comprehending the circle of the sciences, and what can now be attained of learning, sacred and profane. The languages named, as, no doubt, to be acquired, or the knowledge of them improved, are "Hebrew, Greek, Modern Greek, Latin, English, Italian, French, Spanish, German." Distinct days of the week appear to have been designed for peculiar studies. Only Friday, Saturday, and Sunday are appropriated to the following pursuits: "Fr. Biography; Sat. Math. and Mod. Languages; Sun. Theology." Towards the close of this manu-

script, Mr. Dewhurst thus expressed his purpose, accompanied by that submission to the divine will, which was, with him, not a mere customary phraseology, but a language exactly suited to the devout habit of his mind. "To be completed (*Deo volente*) in about eight years, 1812—1819, when I shall be 43 years of age: strict self-government meanwhile to be observed." By another entry he appears to have indulged the hope of one day attaining "a complete knowledge of about 1000 volumes, a general knowledge of 20,000."

The concluding division is entitled, "Subjects of Essays." On the last page of the manuscript is the following entry, which probably describes the subjects on which he designed to write. "Es. I. On the periods into which the literary history of this country may be divided, and characteristics of each. Ancient; Henry VIII. Elizabeth, &c. Period of Dryden; of Pope; of Johnson; after Johnson; 1200—1500; 1500—1560; 1560—1660; 1660—1700; 1700—1745; 1745—1780; 1780—1812.

"Es. ii. On the literary attainments of persons destitute of the advantages of education; in mathematics, Ferguson, Hutton, Simpson, Vince, &c.; in poetry, Bloomfield, Burns, Blackett. Trace the causes of such attainments; and estimate the degree of merit and talent which it implies.

"Es. iii. On the affinity of Hebrew and Egyptian customs. Marsham.

"Es. iv. On the literary character; its advantages and disadvantages, good and bad qualities."

It will scarcely be a digression if we here transcribe a letter writ-

ten during the present year by Mr. Dewhurst, immediately on receiving an inquiry from a friend on a very interesting subject. This letter displays the writer's unostentatious manner of telling what he knew, and at the same time discovers his information on important questions, yet not immediately connected with his critical and classical pursuits.

"DEAR SIR,

"I send you Tacitus, whom I have only in this small Paris edition. The general fact, I suppose, of the great inferiority of the condition of women in the most polished nations of antiquity, to their present state, cannot be disputed, and it seems equally certain, that their improved situation in modern European society, is partly owing to the influence of Christianity, partly to the customs and feelings transmitted from our German ancestors, refined through the medium of chivalry. An engagement which I am under the necessity of fulfilling, in the course of next week, has for some days occupied, and continues to occupy, all my leisure hours. I should have been happy had time allowed, to have searched further into the subject, though I do not know that I should have met with any thing worthy of notice. As it is, I shall put down a few references to common books, which occur to me at the moment, with most of which you have in all probability already met. Gibbon i. 241, 360. In the note on the former of these passages, he refers to the story of Metellus Numidicus, told by Aulus Gellius, and mentioned also in the Epitome of Livy, L. 59. It will, in all probability, be given at length in Hooke. Gibbon viii. 57, on the condition of women according to

the civil law, where there are many references to various authors. Some remarks in Hume, in connection with the divorce of Catharine, queen of Henry VIII. Juvenal, Sat. vi. on women, where many descriptions occur, without doubt, horribly exaggerated. Barthelemy, *Voyage du jeune Anacharsis*. A chapter on women in Potter's *Grecian Antiquities*. There is not much, I believe, in Adam. Probably in Robertson's introductory volume to Charles V. which I have not at hand. On the whole, the condition of women seems to have been much less subject to restriction among the Romans than among the Greeks, and their intellectual character to have been proportionably superior. Many Roman ladies of high rank, appear, from Cicero (*Brut.* 58.), to have been well educated. The common story of Cornelia is to the honour of the Roman Matrons. There is a work, professedly on the subject of women, in English, but I forget the author and do not know its merit. A work was lately published at Paris, which I suppose is one of reputation, of which the following is the title, *Les Femmes—leur Condition et leur Influence dans l'Ordre Social, chez differens Peuples, Anciens et Modernes*, par J. A. de Segur. 3 vols. 12mo. Paris, 1803. I have not seen it. Probably some memoirs on the state of ancient women, may be found in the *Memoirs of the French Academy of Inscriptions and B. L.* There is something on the subject in Lord Kaimes's *Sketches*.

"P. S. I have most of the books mentioned above, with the exception of Aulus Gellius. You may find him at the Institution."

There was a project which engaged many of Mr. Dewhurst's last thoughts, and cannot be here unnoticed with justice to its importance, or the ardour with which he entertained it. The institution formed in 1806, under the name of the *Unitarian Fund*, can scarcely be unknown to any Unitarians, and has attracted some attention from Christians of other persuasions. The design of that institution, as expressed by its founders, was for promoting *Unitarianism by means of popular preaching*. The growing success of the design, rendered highly expedient, if not indispensable, another object. This was a provision for a course of study, accessible to those who desired to become popular preachers, upon the plan of the *Unitarian Fund*, such as might assist them to acquire a knowledge of the scriptures, and fit them for the offices of familiar instruction, without attempting to form critical scholars, or accomplished writers. For this purpose was projected, during the last year, the *Unitarian Academy*.

In providing the literary aid for such a design, it is no wonder that application should be made to Mr. Dewhurst. Without disparaging the talents yet spared to the Unitarian cause, another could not have been easily found, who excelled, if he equalled him, in extent of literary attainments or ability to impart them. He was eminently apt to teach, and knowing, beyond most scholars of his time, what could be discovered by literary research, he was well fit-

Dear Sir,

Very sincerely yours,

J. DEWHURST.

ted to guide the inexperienced to the most prompt acquisition of their limited but important object. The office of assisting the serious and sensible, but partially instructed youth, to make scriptural, rather than classical attainments, or, to speak more correctly, to employ the last in subservience to the former, could have no charms for a mere scholar. Such an one, accommodated to his utmost inclination, on *th' aionian mount*, has no *delight* in *Sion hill*,

*Or Siloa's brook, that flow'd
Fast by the oracle of God.*

Mr. Dewhurst, on the contrary, appeared to have imbibed that old and excellent maxim, *Make every kind of study pay its contribution to the oracles of God*. He accepted, and prepared to commence, the office of classical tutor to the Unitarian Academy, with the ardour of a Christian, happy in a colleague, for the theological department, who augured every thing agreeable to himself and successful to the undertaking, from such a promising connexion.

That Mr. Dewhurst lived only to afford the Unitarian Academy the advantage, by no means inconsiderable, of his public approbation of the design, is an event which we cannot but regard among the most mysterious ways of the Divine Providence. It was an affecting coincidence, that this excellent man should be in the agonies of death, just as a public advertisement announced his acceptance of an office, which he contemplated as one of the most important occupations of his future years.

Of the disorder, which closed this valuable and highly promising life, no person could so properly

give an account as our friend Dr. Pett, one of Mr. Dewhurst's intimate associates, who had, and we need not say well discharged, the distressing duty of attending him *professionally*. These papers we communicated to our friend, to have the benefit of his judgment, and with a request that he would supply that account. He has favoured us with the following reply, and we ask his excuse for adding to this interesting communication the sanction of his name.

"Clapton, Dec. 1, 1812."

"My dear Sir,

"I have received a sincere, though very mournful, gratification from the perusal of your Memoir of our deceased friend. It is, in every respect, deeply interesting, and admirably suited to convey a just estimate of the extraordinary merits of the individual whom it commemorates. The communications which have been transmitted to you, from persons eminently qualified, from coincidence of tastes and acquirements, and from intimate connexion and intercourse with him, during the several periods of his life, to form a correct judgment of the powers of his mind, of his accomplishments as a scholar, and of the copious, varied, accurate and profound stores of erudition, criticism and general knowledge, with which it was enriched, although written by the hands of friends, contain no exaggerated representations of his high worth. Every one who had the happiness of frequent intercourse with Mr. Dewhurst, and of being well acquainted with him, will bear testimony to the fidelity of these delineations of his temper, manners and endowments. But I am wandering from my purpose,

and exceeding your wish, which is merely, that I should state very briefly, the circumstances of his last illness, previously to which I had been prevented from seeing him for several weeks.

The first intimation I received that his health was at all interrupted, was on Monday, Sep. 28, when, in a short note, he informed me, that he was too much indisposed to meet on that day a few of our common friends, at my house. I called upon him, in consequence, on the following morning, when I was much shocked by his altered appearance. I soon found that he was labouring under symptoms of severe illness. I learned that his health had been deranged for some weeks, that he had been gradually getting worse, but that, notwithstanding, he had, until the preceding day, pursued, almost with his accustomed regularity and diligence, his usual studies and occupations. On that day, his bodily powers were subdued by his ordinary exertions, which in the existing state of his health must have been toilsome and exhausting, and he was suddenly seized with faintness, at the house of a distinguished physician, who had in consequence prescribed for him. It cannot be desirable that you should receive a medical detail of the course of his illness. It was but too evident at my first visit, that the most important functions were in a greatly disordered state, and I could not but entertain the strongest apprehensions for his safety. On the following day he was manifestly worse, and it was deemed necessary, both by my judicious friend, Mr. Hacon (who attended him throughout his illness, with the most friendly assiduity,) and myself to employ powerful measures, to arrest, if possible, the progress of diseased action in the head, of which the symptoms were now but too unequivocal. During the four succeeding days I do not recollect that any very alarming aggravation occurred, nor could it be said that there was any material abatement of the more menacing appearances. The faculties of his mind, and his bodily strength, gradually yielded to the continuance of the disorder. We did not, however, altogether despair of his recovery, until Monday, Oct. 5th, during the former part of which day he was suddenly seized with violent convulsions, accompanied with complete insensibility:—this attack left him in a state nearly approaching to stupor. A less forcible recurrence of a similar seizure took place in the afternoon, and he expired about eight o'clock at night.

It is deeply to be deplored, that he had neglected, in a much earlier stage of his illness, to consult some medical friend respecting the state of his health, which had certainly been declining for some weeks; for although it would be presumption to assert that the fatal issue might have been averted, yet there can be no question, that the growth of disease was encouraged by his unremitting and laborious exertions, in executing his frequent, and often distant engagements;—in fact, he seems to have worn out his energies, to have pursued his course until his exhausted strength could no longer support him,—to have toiled onwards, until he sunk under the continually increasing pressure of disease and infirmity.

"It would be rash in me to attempt to make any addition to the large, interesting, and satisfactory illustrations of the character, habits and accomplishments of our deceased friend, which you have received from individuals of such incontestable authority and judgment. It is however but doing justice to his memory to state, that during the trying and often most painful scenes of his last illness, the whole of his behaviour was in strict conformity to the general tenor and spirit of his life.

"He implicitly obeyed the instructions of his medical friends. From the first he was sensible that the powers of his mind were considerably impaired. He distinctly stated to me that for some time he had been conscious of existing and increasing difficulty in applying his mind to subjects with which he was perfectly familiar; and he strongly expressed to me the apprehensions which were excited by his having recently observed that he could not with his usual facility pursue the process of mathematical demonstration. During his illness he was occasionally tortured with acute pain, but neither this nor any other circumstance forced from him any expressions of discontent or impatience; nothing hasty, peevish, or querulous escaped from him; he preserved, throughout, that mildness, composure and equanimity, for which when in full health he seemed peculiarly distinguished. He was uniformly engaged and grateful for the attentions and assistance which he received, and although perfectly aware of his danger he was calm and resigned.

He was, however, distressingly sen-

sible of the weakness and confusion of his intellects, and especially of the failure of his memory, a faculty in which he almost surpassed any one I ever knew for precision, extent, and promptitude. The consciousness of the bewildered state of his mind appeared to have been the only real cause of anxiety.

"The degree to which this dread of approaching mental incapacity predominated over every other impression, I once most distressingly witnessed in the early part of his illness, when being called to him in the night by the just alarm of his attendants, I found him suffering under acute bodily anguish, and greatly harrassed and exhausted; yet even under these circumstances the sense of pain and the expectation of almost immediate death were overpowered by the apprehension of losing his mental powers, and he exclaimed with impassioned emphasis, 'Oh, this is nothing—this, and more I can bear; but my reason! my reason!'

"Indeed I am persuaded that the dread of this calamity was exclusively the source of real solicitude, for although he willingly and gratefully listened to the consoling assurances of his friends, yet his fears soon revived, and it became necessary, almost to the last, again and again to soothe and quiet these alarms; which, however, seemed best tranquilized by those exercises of devotion in which he was so often distinguished. He was uniformly engaged and grateful for the attentions and assistance which he received, and although perfectly aware of his danger he was calm and resigned.

That the death of such a man, so suddenly snatched from the society of his friends, should call

forth expressions of deep regret believe, his favourite objects, may be easily imagined. One instance shall be given. It is the extract of a letter from a friend whose authority we have used in an early part of this memoir. The letter was written a few days after the death of Mr. Dewhurst.

"The thought of my dear, departed friend has hardly been absent from my mind, ever since you communicated to me the sad information; and it was only on Friday last that I wrote respecting him, to a correspondent, in terms strongly expressive of my sense of his superior accomplishments and worth.

"We lived, for many months, under the same roof; and I had some of the fairest opportunities of witnessing and admiring his various excellencies. Not a day passed, in which I was not instructed by his conversation, and charmed by his amiable temper, and gentle, unassuming manners. At a comparatively early age, he had made great attainments in literature and science: these, too, were accompanied with an intellect, the several faculties of which were cultivated, not simply with care and success, but in what I may call the nicest mutual proportion; and, to crown the whole, the abilities and treasures of his mind were adorned by all the qualities which sound religion and morality enforce; by the strictest self-government, enlightened, habitual devotion, and an earnest desire of doing good. His knowledge was extensive, accurate, and, as you must have had frequent occasions of perceiving, so long and happily connected, completely at his command. Mr. Dewhurst had assisted several Classical studies and history, young persons in their classical both ancient and modern, were, in pursuit. One gentleman, now

But no branch of useful or ornamental learning was indifferent to him. It was a proof of the correctness of his judgment, and of the strength of his understanding, that he did not despise those departments of literature which had not immediately engaged his attention. At school, and at the academy, he made considerable proficiency in mathematics, and particularly, I have reason to think, in geometry: to the long calculations required in many algebraical processes, I have heard him express some repugnance; yet I imagine that he was skilful even in these, and could easily have raised a large superstructure on the good foundation which he had laid first at Hull, and afterwards at Northampton. It is my opinion, yet I am sensible that opinion ought not to have much weight, that the Dissenters have seldom, if ever, had among them so universal, and, at the same time, so substantial a scholar. Or if there should occur to you any name which should dispute the encomium with Mr. Dewhurst's, I must request you to consider that our friend is cut off at the age of 36! His memory, his taste, his sagacity, his quickness of apprehension, yet patience of investigation and soundness of decision, his simple and copious style, you have enjoyed still more and better advantages than I have of adequately appreciating.

Besides his offices of tuition in the family with which he was so long and happily connected, Mr. Dewhurst had assisted several young persons in their classical both ancient and modern, were, in pursuit. One gentleman, now

of Trinity College, Cambridge, much neglected, of the dark ages, has very obligingly gratified our from the fifth to the fifteenth century & I think that this was his inquiry with the following ac- count, which contains some interesting traits of character, and supplies a description of Mr. Dewhurst's method as a tutor.

"My acquaintance with Mr. Dewhurst began in 1807, when he spent one hour each day with me at Hackney; but in the following year our time for reading was much increased, he became my private tutor, spent part of each week with me at Enfield, but attending also the family of Mr. Macmurdo. He was an excellent mathematician of the French school, but as we both much preferred the classics, we confined ourselves almost entirely to them. The course he prescribed was, Herodotus, with Rannet's Geography, Thucydides, and afterwards the Greek orators, taking at the same time, on alternate days, the tragedies, and afterwards Aristophanes; and a similar course with the Latin classics, beginning with the Augustan age. In metaphysics, Locke, Hartley, and Belsham's excellent Treatise on the Philosophy of the Human Mind. He was a very good modern linguist, and understood grammatically, French, Italian, Spanish, and German: it had been disputed whether there was any grammar of the Basque language; he procured one, and gave it to the London Institution. During my illness, he read to me a great part of the Orlando Furioso, which he said had given him more pleasure than any other poem, ancient or modern. His accuracy in history and chronology was astonishing, and few have attended more to that period generally so

of the castle at Rochester, and spent two days at Canterbury. His knowledge of antiquities and architecture, and his conversation during that journey, were truly invaluable, and he might be justly called a walking library.

"His religious opinions appeared to have been formed by the most serious study and deliberation; perfectly free from every species of bigotry, he spoke of those from whom he most differed with candour and respect. He was sincerely attached to the great general principles of civil and religious liberty; though he never appeared warmly interested in the petty politics of the day, never speaking upon them but when requested, and then always with dignified composure: his sentiments were always listened to with respect by those who differed from him most, whilst a violent opposition would only have excited disgust.

This gentleman has also favoured us with the perusal of a prayer, used by Mr. Dewhurst in the families which he visited. It combines views of religion truly rational, with an ardent spirit of devotion; a belief in the necessity of virtuous exertion, with the most edifying acknowledgments of human dependence.

The qualifications of a scholar's mind, it becomes a scholar to describe. The following sketch has been obligingly communicated for the purpose of this memoir, by a gentleman, whose name is all authority, on any literary subject.

“Being requested to furnish some account of the late Mr. Dewhurst, as a classical scholar, I readily take up my pen to pay what I conceive to be a just tribute to the memory of my much lamented friend. His virtues as a man and a Christian, much as it might gratify my feelings to bear my testimony to them, do not fall within my province; and to estimate the vast stores of his information in the various departments of literature and science, were it required from me, would be far beyond my power. I shall therefore confine myself solely to his acquirements in classical knowledge.

“Mr. Dewhurst was truly an excellent scholar, a character which through partiality or ignorance is frequently given to those who have no pretensions to scholarship, and the sum of whose attainments consists in the ability to read Latin and Greek with tolerable ease. But Mr. Dewhurst had not only read the ancient authors to a great extent, and by favour of a most tenacious memory retained much of them in mind, but was studiously attentive to the minutiae of philology and criticism, and was well versed in the writings of those illustrious scholars, to whose successive labours we are indebted for the present state of Greek literature in particular. What class of authors were his favourites, it may not now be possible to determine, and indeed literature in every form had such charms for him as almost to exclude a predilection for any particular object; but from his great acquaintance with ancient history, it may perhaps be safely inferred that he read the his-

torians with peculiar interest. The poets, however, occupied a considerable share of his attention; and these he diligently perused in the best editions which have been published in England and on the continent and with the aid of those critical works which have contributed to the illustration of them. The observations of Valckenaer, Ruhnen, Dawes, Markland, Porson, Herman, &c. were familiar to him; nor was he inattentive to the productions of those living scholars in our own country, who have recently employed themselves, with such vigour and effect, in restoring the remains of the Attic Theatre, to their primitive purity. But while no one knew better from what sources the most important information was to be derived, while he well understood the qualifications of an accomplished critic, and viewed a Valckenaer, a Ruhnen and a Porson, with just admiration, he did not disdain the labours of any scholar from whom useful knowledge was to be gained, nor denied to any man the praise that was his due, because he might sometimes handle matters of which he was ignorant. Upon the temerity of an editor who should attempt to correct depraved passages of a poet, without knowing the principles of the metre in which he wrote, he would pass censure only with a good-humoured smile.

“As our conversation, when I had the good fortune to meet him, frequently turned upon the Greek poets, I am able to state what may, in some measure shew the accuracy of his acquaintance with them. I scarcely recollect a single instance, in which

I spoke to him of a passage in any respect peculiar, or of a critical remark upon such passage, without finding it as distinctly impressed upon his memory, as if it had been the last thing which he had read. It ought not to be omitted that Mr. Porson frequently communicated to him his conjectures, in Mr. Dewhurst's estimation not at all inferior to those which rendered the late Professor the wonder of the age. These he would not have been eager to communicate to the public, lest he should appear forward to enrol himself among the literary friends of so great a man.

Whether he made much trial of his own strength, in conjectural criticism, I am not able to say; but, perhaps, the habit of his mind rendered him more anxious to know what was to be known, than desirous to do what, had he pleased, he might have done. Upon the conjectures of others, however, he decided with great justice, and nothing pleased him more than a happy emendation, which when he had once read he never forgot. But not to dwell longer upon particulars, I know no man in whose opinion of a classical work I should have been disposed to place a more implicit confidence. With a great fund of learning, he possessed a most exact judgment, and an eminent share of that candour which is essential to a just estimate of literary productions.

"In a few words, there were combined in him the most important requisites for the critical scholar; a mind capable of the nicest discrimination, a memory uncommonly retentive, a most patient spirit of investigation, an unwearied assiduity in study, and

an anxious curiosity in examining editions and manuscripts—so that, had he devoted himself as exclusively as many have done, to classical studies, and had chosen to communicate the result of his researches to the public, he could scarcely have failed to secure himself a place among those names which the lovers of ancient literature will ever revere.

E. COGAN."

The funeral of Mr. Dewhurst took place on Monday, October 12, at Bunhill Fields. He was buried in the family-vault belonging to Mr. Macmurdo, by that gentleman's particular desire, as a last testimony of his regard. The oration at the grave was delivered by the Rev. R. Aspland. Some of its passages we shall here quote, as still further illustrating the character of the deceased.

"He was no common character.—His modesty, indeed, concealed his great worth and his extraordinary acquirements from casual observers, and his premature death has cut off the hopes which his friends and the friends of literature and religious truth had fondly entertained, that his great talents and rare acquisitions would be employed for the lasting benefit of the public.—He was possessed of an eager thirst after knowledge; in pursuit of it was a pattern of regular industry; and was distinguished by a retentive, capacious, well-ordered and serviceable memory. His learning was deep and solid. His knowledge was more wonderful than his learning, for there were few subjects on which he was not thoroughly informed: yet no man was more free from pedantry and

all kind of ostentation. His contributions to various literary works are marked by accuracy, judgment, simplicity and perspicuity of style; qualities which might eventually, if such had been the will of Providence, have elevated him to the rank of the best and best known writers of his age and country. To his honour be it mentioned, that, though employed occasionally in anonymous criticism, he never took advantage of that tempting opportunity of indulging in personal reflections, nor made a single remark under cover of secrecy, which he was not ready to own and able to defend.

"The same traits that characterized him as an author distinguished him as a man—sound judgment, simplicity, candour. His manners were so amiable that there were few that knew him that were not his friends. Enemies, I believe, he had none, nor was it possible that he should have had any. Unobtrusive, quiet and retired in his habits, he might appear sometimes reserved; but his real affability made him easy of access, and no one, but through his own fault, could long enjoy his conversation without both pleasure and profit.

"From his strong understanding, his extensive learning, his habit of patient research, and his freedom from all professional judge of the evidences in behalf of revealed religion; and his decision was such as every well-informed inquirer would expect, and every Christian would wish; and his belief in Christianity seemed to be of growing importance to him. But he distin-

guished between the Christianity of the New Testament and the Christianity of popular profession, and held a system of truth which he had drawn for himself from the original sources of divine knowledge.

"With enlightened zeal he united great candour. He could not admire and approve indiscriminately, but he was a gentle censor; in this and all points, conforming himself to the standard of whatsoever things are just and true and pure, lovely and of good report. He was prudent in his affairs, temperate in his enjoyments, of uniform goodness and habitual piety. In a word, he was *a disciple whom Jesus loved*.

"On his death-bed he reaped the fruits of his virtues: gratitude for his instructions, esteem of his character, friendship, and anxiety for the interests of learning and religion, surrounded him with willing, eager and faithful attendants. All that professional skill, and all that the generous kindness of friends, and the tender assiduities of relatives could do to arrest disease, or to alleviate its pressure, was done; and now there mingle in his grave as sincere tears as ever bedewed a corpse."

At the New Gravel-Pit Meeting, Hackney, where Mr. D. had been a constant attendant, a Sermon was preached by Mr. Aspland, on the occasion of his death. The text was most appropriate. 2 Cor. iv. 7. *We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of us.* By these words the preacher was naturally led to "Reflections on the constitution of things, according to

which the mind of man is lodged thus exemplified the meekness of in a body, frail and tending to wisdom, are only suspended to be decay, resumed at the resurrection of the

Thus short, yet exemplary, just! This was indeed thy Christian was the life; thus loved and ho- noured the memory of John Bick- erton Dewhurst, one of those pages are now affectionately de- highly favoured among the sons voted! Poor were the expectations of men, who, in the language of of the studious, the modest, and eastern wisdom, being made per- the good, if the reward of their fect, in a short time fulfilled a long labours were only to be expected time. Of the numerous scholars from man. While others with thy whose purposes were thus broken talents were tormented with ambi- off by an early death, few proba- tion, with vain-glory, with envy, bly had made such various and with emulation, how well didst thou valuable attainments. Fewer turn thy mind to its own improve- still had so well united a courte- ment in things out of the power of ous readiness to communicate fortune! How silent thy passage, knowledge, with a marked indiffe- how private thy journey, how rence to its display. Surely the glorious thy end.* pursuits of such a mind, which J. T. R.

MISCELLANEOUS COMMUNICATIONS.

Book-Worm.—No. V. by the death of an uncle, who died without male-issue, he spent his life afterwards in a single estate. But before he left Oxford he wrote and published, *Historical Reflec- tions on the Bishop of Rome, chiefly discovering those events of human Affairs which most advance the Papal Usurpation.* Oxon, 1660, 4to. After he had left the university he wrote and published *The Question of Witchcraft debated, &c.* 1669. But an answer coming out against the said book, entitled, *The opinion of Witchcraft vindicated*, London, 1670, 8vo, written by R. T. and reflections made upon it by Dr. Casaubon, in his *Book of Credits and Incredulity*, our author, Wagstaffe, came out with a second edition and additions therein, London, 1671, 8vo. For the

SIR, Nov. 3, 1812. Soon after I sent you my last Number, I observed, in a cata- logue of the Royal Institution, a second edition of the anonymous work of J. W. attributed to John Wagstaffe. His name I could not find in any biographical collection till I looked into *Wood's Athen. Oxon*, ii. 587), whose account may gratify those of your readers who have been interested by *The Question of Witchcraft debated*. John Wagstaffe, son of John Wagstaffe, citizen of London, descended from those of his name of Hasland Hall, in Derbyshire, was born in Chipping, became a commoner of Oriel College, Oxford, in 1649, took the degrees in arts, and applied himself to the study of poli- tics and other learning. At length being called from an academical life to the inheritance of Hasland

writing of which book he was laughed at by the wags of the university, because, as they said, he himself looked like a little wizard, being a little crooked man and of despicable presence.

He died in his lodgings, opposite the end of Chancery Lane, in Holborn, September 2, 1677, aged 44, or thereabouts, and was buried in Guildhall chapel." Wood adds, without giving any authority besides his assertion, and he has been charged with a propensity to evil-speaking, "This person died in a manner distracted, occasioned by a deep conceit of his own parts, and by a continual bibbing of strong and high-tasted liquors."

To Wagstaffe was attributed; as Wood believes unjustly, what he calls, "a libellous pamphlet, entitled, *Sundry Things from several hands, concerning the University of Oxford, 1659.*" Among these things, is *A Model for a College Reformation.*

Of Wagstaffe's two opponents, mentioned in this account, the name of R. T. is quite unknown to me. Dr. Meric Casaubon, son of the celebrated Isaac Casaubon, was a native of Geneva, and accompanied his father to England in 1610. He was educated at Oxford, and became a beneficed clergyman. He died in 1671, in his seventy-second year. This work of Meric Casaubon, published in 1670, according to Biog. Brit. iii. 309, was entitled, *Of Credulity and Incredulity in things Divine and Spiritual: wherein (among other things) a true and faithful Account is given of the Platonic Philosophy, as it hath reference to Christianity: as also the Business of Witches and Witch-*

craft, against a late Writer, fully argued and disputed. Wagstaffe appears to have been more read than his learned opponent, for Dr. Casaubon's book lying dead on the bookseller's hands, he printed, in 1672, a new title, running thus, *A Treatise, proving Spirits, Witches and supernatural Operations, by pregnant Instances and Evidences.*"

It is remarkable that Meric Casaubon should have advocated the vulgar notions of witchcraft, as he had published in 1655, "A Treatise concerning Enthusiasm, as it is an effect of Nature; but is mistaken by many for either Divine Inspiration or Diabolical Possession." Sir W. Temple in his *Essay on Poetry*, first published about 1686, applauds this treatise and regrets that the author had not added in a second part, an "Account of Fascination, which," he says, "might, perhaps, prevent many public disorders and save the lives of many innocent, deluded, or deluding people, who suffer so frequently upon account of witches and wizards." He adds, "I have seen many miserable examples of this kind, in my youth, at home, and though the humour or fashion be a good deal worn out of the world, within thirty or forty years past, yet it still remains in several remote parts of Germany, Sweden and some other countries." Dr. Kippis, in his additions to Casaubon's Life, notices Sir W. Temple's judgment of that author, and adds, "However well qualified Meric Casaubon was to treat concerning Enthusiasm, it is certain that his mind was not sufficiently enlarged to discuss rationally the subject of fascination; since it is plain, from his writings on cre-

dubity and incredulity, that he was a zealous asserter of the reality of apparitions and witchcraft." B. B. iii. 609.

Of *The Doctrine of Devils*, mentioned at the close of the last number, I cannot give even a tolerable account within the limits of your present volume. It is therefore reserved for the service of your next, *Deo volente*; a condition most seasonable, when I observe in your last obituary (p. 644,) his unexpected decease, of whom it were no compliment to say,

To him the wit of Greece and Rome was known,

And every author's merit but his own.

I had once hoped, alas! how vainly, to have occasionally availed myself of my truly learned friend's ability and readiness to impart information, for rendering these papers more worthy of your acceptance.

VERMICULUS.

Messrs. Bogue and Bennett's Judgment on the Spectator.

SIR, Dec. 1, 1812.

You have properly exposed the presumption and folly of Messrs. Bogue and Bennett, in their critical judgment on the Spectator. Is it possible that these writers should ever have read that inimitable work, one of the most durable monuments of British genius, or even have mixed with any persons of competent taste, that had formed an opinion of it from actual perusal? Such a censure does not call for a vindication of the work, against which it is vainly levelled, but it furnishes not an unfit occasion of reviving critiques, formerly made by adequate judges, upon the writings of our early essayists; of which it were to be

wished, that neither want of taste, as in the case of "the pair of biographers," nor a depraved taste, as in the case of the customers to our circulating libraries, more pernicious to public morals than our liquor-shops, had ever prevented the study. To the sentence of Dr. Watts, contained in the letter of *Otiosus*, (p. 679,) permit me to add a more extended judgment, pronounced by the same amiable writer, in his *Improvement of the Mind*, P. I. ch. iv. § 15. I will lengthen this letter no further than by asking of some one of your correspondents, an account of the *Occasional Papers*, of which Dr. Watts speaks very highly, both here and elsewhere?

CRITO.

"Among these writings of the latter kind, we may justly reckon short miscellaneous essays, on all manner of subjects; such as the *Occasional Papers*, the *Tatlers*, the *Spectators*, and some other books that have been compiled out of the weekly or daily products of the press, wherein are contained a great number of bright thoughts, ingenious remarks, and admirable observations, which have had a considerable share in furnishing the present age with knowledge and politeness.

"I wish every paper among these writings could have been recommended, both as innocent and useful. I wish every unseemly idea and wanton expression had been banished from amongst them, and every trifling page had been excluded from the company of the rest, when they had been bound up in volumes: but it is not to be expected, in so imperfect a state, that every page or piece of such mixed public papers should be en-

tirely blameless and laudable. Yet in the main, it must be confessed, there is so much virtue, prudence, ingenuity and goodness in them, especially in eight volumes of Spectators, there is such a reverence of things sacred, so many valuable remarks for our conduct in life, that they are not improper to lie in parlours, or summer houses, or places of usual residence, to entertain our thoughts in any moments of leisure, or vacant hours that occur. There is such a discovery of the follies, iniquities and fashionable vices of mankind contained in them, that we may learn much of the humours and madnesses of the age, and the public world, in our own solitary confinement, without the danger of frequenting vicious company, or receiving the mortal infection.

From the Rev. F. Stone.

30, Garden Row, London Road,
Southwark, Nov. 26, 1812.

SIR,

I thank you for your kind gratuitous accommodation of me with a copy of your instructive Repository for October, and for the like in future, in consequence of being compelled, in the year 1810, to discontinue the purchase of it, by the *deficiente crumena*, occasioned by the severe sentence of the Spiritual Court, in depriving me of my rectory of Cold Norton, on account of my Visitation Sermon. In this sermon, in conformity to the sixth scriptural article of the church, and to my scriptural ordination engagements, with that bishop who ordained me priest, I acted up to a sense of my duty, and especially, in the instance of

vindicating the sole exclusive worship, due to our infinitely great, wise and good Creator, "the One only living and true God," whom "our Lord and Master, the one Mediator between God and man, the man, Christ Jesus, the Son of Joseph, of the seed of David," expressly acknowledges, in his charge to Mary Magdalene,—"Go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend to my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God," and who is repeatedly declared in Christian scripture, to be "the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." I glory in my inflexible adherence to this grand fundamental truth, as well of natural as of the revealed religion of the gospel, and "count it all joy," that my God has judged me worthy to "suffer" worldly "shame," and poignant distress "for his name." In consequence of the great deduction of revenue, incurred by the deprivation of my rectory, I have been so reduced in my finances, as unavoidably to contract debts, which, from my inability to discharge them, have plunged me, now in the seventy-fifth year of my age, with a wife and eight children, in a state of imprisonment in the rules of the King's Bench, for two years and upwards, without the prospect of enlargement. I regret that, from the same cause, the *res angusta domi* has pressed so hard upon me, notwithstanding the pecuniary beneficence I experienced from you and other friends, both churchmen and Dissenters, that I have been obliged to drop also the Monthly Review, after becoming a regular purchaser of that valuable body of criticism, upwards of forty years.

I recollect that, in one of your numbers, you expressed a wish, that such of your correspondents, as had been acquainted with the late Rev. Henry Taylor, rector of Crawley and vicar of Portsmouth, Hants, as also with the late Rev. William Hopkins, rector of Balney, Sussex, would give you some information concerning them. Having now re-commenced a correspondence with you, Mr. Editor, as I was well known to both, but in particular, to that learned adept in theology, Mr. Taylor, the celebrated Benjamin Ben-Mordecai, I propose, Sir, in a future epistle, to communicate to you, such anecdotes respecting them, as came within my personal knowledge.—For the present, I have the honour to subscribe myself, disdaining all anonymous or pseudonymous signatures,

Your obliged, obedient,

Humble servant,

FRANCIS STONE.

Irish Unitarians.

(In answer to the inquiry, p. 617.)

There are four Unitarian ministers in Dublin; all excellent preachers, men of great respectability, erudition, unaffected piety towards God, and universal benevolence towards men: the Rev. Dr. Moody and the Rev. Mr. Armstrong, in Strand Street, a large and rich congregation, an organ in their meeting-house; and the Rev. Mr. Taylor, and the Rev. Mr. Joseph Hutton, in Eustace Street, the congregation genteel and respectable, but not so numerous as Strand Street. In winter, Mr. Hutton lectures, in a most instructive manner, on the Old and New Testament, from the beginning of both, regularly, first in the Old, and then in the New, in the same

exercise. His oldest son was just beginning to preach last July, his studies not quite finished. Both Strand Street and Eustace Street have a charity-school for boys, to whom, besides the other school education, they take great pains to give as critical a knowledge of the Bible, as their education and youth are capable of. There are two Unitarian meetings in Belfast. Dr. Bruce, the writer has heard with much edification, in Strand Street. Unitarians are supposed more numerous in the North, than in any other part of Ireland. There is a Unitarian minister in Cork, the Rev. Mr. Hincks, who published an excellent defence of Christianity, in an address to the inhabitants of Cork, in answer to Mr. Paine's Age of Reason. There is also an Unitarian congregation in Clonmell. The Unitarians have an Annual Association. It was in Dublin last July; an excellent sermon was preached in Eustace Street. The minister's name the writer cannot recollect at present. The writer's family is in Dublin, and go to Strand Street; he goes to Eustace Street, and receives the Lord's Supper in it. He left Dublin July last, 14th, with a view to visit his native country before his death, has preached in Kilwinning, Paisley, Glasgow, Edinburgh, Kirkcaldy and Dundee, and has reason to believe, could he continue the same rounds, and any others in his reach, that his labours would be, in some degree, useful to the great and our common cause.

An old Unitarian Minister, or
J. SEREPHON.

Answer to Metaphysical Queries.
SIR, Aug. 18, 1812.

In answer to the Theological

Queries in your last, permit me to observe, that I see not how it can reasonably be denied, by any one who believes in the moral government of the Deity, that permitting and appointing are precisely the same with God, and that all events take place, in conformity to the plan which he originally formed and fixed. To refer to one instance only,—that most atrocious act, the murder of the Holy and Just One, is represented (Acts iv. 28.) as what the hand and counsel of God had before determined to be done; and Jesus is said to have been delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, at the same time that his murderers are addressed in the language of warm indignation, as “wicked” persons (iii. 23). But your correspondent enquires, “If these things are so, what becomes of free agency?” To such a question it has often been answered;—Mankind are undoubtedly *voluntary* agents; what they do they choose to do, and actually do it for themselves; and no one, properly speaking, either chooses or acts for another. But then, is it possible that the volitions of dependent beings should be so far free, as not to be subject to the control of their Maker? Can he have endowed them with a power of forming at pleasure in any given circumstances, either the one or the other of two directly contrary volitions, no circumstance existing which should incline them to determine one way rather than the other? or, can any one, his outward situation and inward dispositions being precisely the same, resolve indifferently on either of two directly contrary actions? If so, how could the Deity foreknow

or foretell the actions of any one; and how could he pursue any particular line of conduct, though dictated by unerring wisdom, without having his designs interrupted, opposed, and often defeated? If these things, then, are so, can we avoid acknowledging, that all his creatures, though often influenced by bad dispositions, and doing what is morally wrong, are yet, (on the whole) performing the very part he intended for them; inasmuch as their outward circumstances are ordered by him, and their volitions are influenced and directed by a train of causes and effects, which he himself hath laid, in order to the accomplishment of his own wise and benevolent, but at present, unsearchable purposes? Can there be any medium between this absolute dependence upon God and complete, uncontrollable independence? To these arguments, however, it is objected, “What then is become of human responsibility?” But to this question it may be answered,—Whether mankind are actually possessed of unlimited independent freedom of will or not, they imagine that they have it, and speak and act on the supposition of their having it; and therefore they must be accountable for the use they make of a power, which they believe themselves to have, and must be punishable if they abuse it. If this reply be not thought sufficient, it still be said (in the language of the objector, Rom. ix. 19.) “Why doth he find fault? for who hath resisted his will?” may not the answer of the Apostle be very properly alleged, “Nay, but, O man! who art thou that repliest against God? shall the thing formed, say unto him that formed

it, Why hast thou made me thus?" Let it once be allowed (as seems most consistent with reason, and with scripture well interpreted), that a Being of infinite power and wisdom and benevolence, cannot reasonably be supposed to have brought into existence countless millions of creatures, with the design that they should be vicious and miserable for ever, but rather with a determination of forming them all to rectitude and goodness, and of making them all finally and everlastingly happy:—and then, we may feel ourselves on firm ground, when adding, —Hath he not a right, to observe a variety in his moral as well as his providential dealings with them and to conduct some or very many of them to their final happiness, by methods, which at present seem indirect and intricate? Do we not evidently perceive, that the crimes of the wicked may, in many instances, be the means of displaying, yea, of improving and perfecting the excellencies of the good: and that they themselves may, in the end, be more thoroughly attached to rectitude of conduct, by the experience they have had of a necessary connection between vice and misery, than they would otherwise have been? If then the plan of moral government, which God is actually pursuing, is even at present attended with important advantages, which could not otherwise have been secured; and if there is reason to believe that all the evil which now make a part of it, are to be finally brought to an end; and made to issue in a degree of happiness which could not otherwise have been produced; ought we not to acquiesce in it, and patiently to wait the period of its

full and glorious and happy accomplishment; for a resolution of all the difficulties at present attending it? At the same time, no one can certainly know what are the divine purposes respecting himself, till the event shall have manifested them; will it not be the part of wisdom, to attend to the declared will of God, by serious meditation, to give a preponderating influence to those great motives which recommend a pious and virtuous conduct, and fervently to pray unto him, who knoweth the human frame, that he would impress these motives on the mind, with a power which shall cause them to overbalance every other influence?

To the attentive consideration of your correspondent and of all who feel themselves pressed with doubts like his, I submit these observations; and am, Sir,

Yours sincerely,

J. T. E.

An old Daventry Pupil on Mr. Belsham's Letter.

SIR, Dec. 10.

I do not feel myself disposed to occupy many lines in your Repository, by replying to Mr. Belsham's sarcastic remarks on my letter. The subject, I allow, is of no great importance; yet, if the facts which Mr. B. introduced were worthy of a place in his Memoirs, it appeared to me desirable that they should be correctly stated. Whether Mr. B. has proved my statement to be incorrect, I leave any impartial reader to judge, who will think it worth his while to review my former letter. I have only to add, that several persons, who read the Repository, are of opinion

that Mr. B. would have done well if he had written only the first paragraph in his letter. So I think, who am, respectfully yours,

AN OLD DAVENTRY PUPIL.

Arithmetical Prodigy; from the Philosophical Transactions.

[Vol. xxii. No. 272. p. 893.]

SIR, Nov. 30th, 1812.

I observed in your number for September last, (p. 550) an interesting account of that American prodigy, Zerah Colburn, of whose wonderful arithmetical powers I have been a frequent witness. A friend has since communicated to me an account, of a similar kind, extracted from the Philosophical Transactions, which, from its extraordinary nature, must be thought worthy of a place in the same volume. Nothing can be farther from my intention, than to make a disparaging comparison between the powers of a boy of eight years and one of seventeen.

"An Account of a Person who could neither Read nor Write, yet could reckon Sums to great exactness. — Communicated by Mr. Locke, dated Rotterdam, March 25, 1701.

"Yesterday I had here a young lad of seventeen years old, that can neither read nor write, yet by his head will reckon any of the most difficult sums you can give him, even to the utmost fractions. I gave him an average to make of a ship run ashore to save ship and goods, were worth 13079, 14, the charges on the salvage 2931, 10; I asked him how much that was per cent? He told me, after a little talking to himself, that it was 21 guild, 9 st. and a small fraction. I asked him what 4948.3, 2848. 4, 2244. 7, 544. 19, 351.

18, and 52, 16, must pay respectively, — and he told me exactly to so many stivers, and

$\frac{270}{1000}$

"I asked him how he came by that knowledge; he said by selling sea-snails and muscles, for which he received nothing but doits, but never could tell how much money they amounted to, till he asked his father how many doits made a guilder, and being 160, then he reckoned how many in 10 and 100 g. and so from one thing to another.

"He has a table of multiplication in his head, of half-a-yard long or more, I tried him by a table I have and he answered me as readily as you can, upon the ordinary table of multiplication, and he divides almost with as much ease as he multiplies, and reduces things to the least denomination in fractions. He wanders from town to town, to see who has any thing to cypher, and so gets some money, but he would fain learn to read and write. This I mention because it is so prodigious; I have a great mind, could I be assured of his fidelity, to take him into my house, and teach him to read, write and cypher."

To the extract the following note is subjoined:—

"It does not appear that this was the great Locke, as, according to the accounts of his life, Mr. Locke never was in Holland after the revolution in 1689, and besides, the style and writing of this paper seem not like Locke's." Among Locke's Familiar Letters, the last to Limborch, is from Rotterdam, dated 16th Feb. 1689. The next, to the same correspondent, is from London, 12th of March, the same year. We find him, afterwards, residing at Oates,

in Essex, the seat of Lady Masham, till the time of his death, and what is remarkable, in this year, 1701, dating some of his letters from that place. This sufficiently proves that the author of the above extract must have been another person of the same name.

IGNOTA.

Dissenters' Estate at Kirkstead.

SIR, Nov. 17, 1812.

I understand that an attempt which has been made, to get the estate at Kirkstead, out of the hands of the Dissenters, was frustrated at the last Lincoln Assizes. I think the facts relating to this business should be put upon record in the Repository, as they must be interesting to the Dissenters in general, and they would derive an additional interest, from the circumstance of Dr. John Taylor having been the minister of the place previous to his removal to Norwich. I believe that Mr. Meadows Taylor, a grandson of the Doctor's was present at the trial; perhaps he would furnish what particulars come within his knowledge, which would much oblige

Your humble servant,

A NON CON.

School Premiums.

SIR,

In one of the National Schools not far from London, the following premiums were offered to the children. I copy them from the paper which was stuck up in the school, and as several clergymen are members of the Committee, it may be hoped that they will be circulated, but still, I wish them to have a place in your Repository, and remain,

AN ENQUIRER.

Search the Scriptures.

Five Guineas Reward.

Five golden guineas will be given in the following prizes.

To the boy who first points out the chapter and verse in the Bible, wherein is found the phrase

God the Son :

see the Catechism :—

Two Guineas.

To the boy who first produces the chapter and verse in the Bible, wherein is found the phrase

God the Holy Ghost :

see the Catechism :—

Two Guineas.

To the boy who first produces the chapter and verse wherein is found the word

Trinity,

or the phrase

Holy blessed and glorious Trinity :

see the Liturgy :—

One Guinea.

N. B. The parents of the children are permitted to assist them in the search.

Illustrations of Scripture.

[From an Interleaved Bible.]

Daniel viii. 3.

[The following paragraph should have followed that under the same title, in p. 701.]

The people of *Bijore* had like-

wise a high idea of Alexander's ex-

tensive authority, and they too de-

nominated him the *Two Horned*,

agreeably to the striking emblem

of power, in all the Eastern lan-

guages. *Aycen Akbery*, xi. 194.

Many instances of this emblem

being used, will occur to every

person accustomed to read the

sacred scriptures. — *Robertson's*

Hist. Disq. concerning India, 8vo.

Notes and Illustrations, Note 8.

p. 348—350.

TOLERATION ACT.

Resolutions of the Deputies, Aug. 11, 1812.

At a General Meeting of the Deputies appointed for the Protection of the Civil Rights of the Three Denominations of Protestant Dissenters, held at the King's Head Tavern, in the Poultry, London, the 11th of August, 1812.

EBENEZER MAITLAND, Esq. in the Chair.

The following Resolutions were unanimously agreed to, viz.

"That it is the natural right of all men to worship God agreeably to the dictates of their own consciences."

"That all human laws, which restrict them in the exercise of this right, are unjust in their principle, and in their tendency and operation highly injurious to the best interests of religion."

"That we regard, with deep concern, the existence of several laws of this description," but trust that the time is not distant when laws so repugnant to the spirit of Christianity and so hostile to the welfare of society, will be completely abrogated, and *Toleration* be superseded by *Religious Liberty*.

That we receive the act which has lately passed, intitled, "*An Act to repeal certain Acts and amend other Acts relating to Religious Worship and Assemblies and Persons preaching or teaching therein*," with feelings of pleasure and gratitude, as an instance of increasing liberality in the legislature, and of just confidence in the *Protestant Dissenters*, as

an important amelioration of their condition and as an advance towards the repeal of all penal laws which infringe on *Religious Freedom*.

That the thanks of this Deputation be presented to the Right Honourable the Earl of Liverpool, First Lord of the Treasury, for the politeness and attention which their Committee experienced in the communications with which he honoured them, for the kindness and conciliation which he manifested in all the intercourse that took place, and for the effectual support which he gave to the said act.

That the thanks of this Deputation be presented to the Right Honourable Lord Castlereagh, the Right Honourable Nicolas Vansittart, and the other Members of Administration, for the support which they gave to the said act.

That the thanks of this Deputation be presented to the Most Noble the Marquis of Lansdown, the Right Honourable Earl Grey, the Right Honourable Lord Holland, and the Right Honourable Lord Erskine, for the essential services which they have rendered on this and on every occasion to the cause of Religious Liberty.

That the thanks of this Deputation be given to Samuel Whitbread, Esq. M. P. for the able support which he gave to the said act, and particularly for the promptness and zeal with which he stood forward, unsolicited, to relieve the Protestant Dissenters, when the security, which they had long enjoyed under former acts of

Toleration, was endangered by novel and injurious constructions.

That our Chairman, William Smith, Esq. M. P. by the ardent zeal for and indefatigable attention to the interest of *Religious Liberty* which he has manifested in the various communications which have taken place with his Majesty's Ministers relative to the repeal of the *Five Mile and Conventicle Acts*, and the amendment of the *Toleration Laws*; by his able support in parliament of the act which has lately passed, and by his unremitting attention to the affairs of this Deputation, has entitled himself to the warmest gratitude of the *Protestant Dissenters*.

That the thanks of this Deputation are peculiarly due to our Deputy Chairman, John Gurney, Esq. for the great services which he has rendered to the cause of *Religious Liberty* in the late proceedings, and for his constant and zealous attention to the important objects of this Deputation.

That the thanks of this Deputation be given to our Treasurer, Joseph Gutteridge, Esq. and the other members of the Sub-Committee, for the great attention they have bestowed on the important subject of their late deliberations and proceedings.

That the thanks of this Deputation be given to the Committee, for its valuable services in the late proceedings.

That the Secretary do communicate the Resolutions of this Meeting to the respective parties.

That the above Resolutions be printed in such public papers and monthly journals as the Committee may think proper.

EBENEZER MAITLAND, Chairman.

That the thanks of this Deputation be given to Ebenezer Maitland, Esq. the Chairman of this day, for his attendance.

Circular from the Protestant Society to Protestant Dissenting Ministers.

London, July 30, 1812.

DEAR SIR,

We again execute the directions of the Committee of "The Protestant Society for the Protection of Religious Liberty," and address you with sincere delight.

The same good Providence, which before enabled us to invite your heartfelt praise to a gracious God for the success with which he rewarded our resistance to measures calculated to diminish the limited toleration which we enjoyed, has again produced effects which must renovate our gratitude, and at which every friend to the progress of piety, to religious freedom, and to the welfare of posterity, must rejoice.

That you may perfectly partake the satisfaction which we feel, we must recal to your recollection the laws which existed inconsistent with religious liberty, and therefore incompatible with the honour and happiness of mankind. We will not indeed detail the history of the Dissenters—the Test and Corporation Acts—or the Penal Laws which, from the Reformation to the Revolution, during the reigns of the successive monarchs from Elizabeth to James II. were enacted to prevent nonconformity, and to punish those who were compelled by their consciences to dissent. But we must remind you, that, as to the dissenting laity, by the Statutes 1 Eliz. c. 2.

23 Eliz. c. 1. 29 Eliz. c. 6. 35 Eliz. c. 1. and 3 James, c. 4. those who neglected to attend at church on Sunday were liable to the censures of the church, and fineable 1s. for each offence, 20l. per month for continued personal absence, and 10l. per month for the nonattendance of their servants—that these fines were recoverable by very summary proceedings—that the lands of the person offending were seizable by the crown—and that persons who neglected to conform might be committed to prison, or must abjure the realm; and on their refusal or return incurred the guilt of felony without benefit of clergy, and the punishment of death:—and that by the Conventicle Act, 22 Charles II. c. 1. additional, and most severe restrictions were imposed. 2d, That, as to *the ministers of the Protestant Dissenters* (besides being liable to all the statutes we have enumerated) they were by the Act of Uniformity (13 and 14 Charles II. c. 4.) subject to a penalty of 100l. for administering the Lord's Supper: by the Five Mile Act (17 Charles II. c. 2.) they were prohibited, under a penalty of 40l. from coming within five miles of any city, town corporate, or borough: and by the Conventicle Act they forfeited 20l. for the first offence, and for the second offence 40l. if they preached in any place “at which there should be five or more besides those of the household.” And 3d, That under the operation of these laws (according to historical relations) from the Restoration to the Revolution, during the short period of 26 years, informers acquired opulence by prosecutions: 60,000 persons suf-

fered for dissent; several thousand persons expired in prisons: and during three years, property was extorted from the Dissenters exceeding two millions sterling.

Laws so exceptionable and punishments so unmerited, for worshipping their Creator, according to the dictates of their consciences, necessarily induced the Dissenters to hail that Revolution with delight, which they considerably assisted to effect. Gratitude for that assistance, and attachment to the same civil and religious principles which they maintained, induced the illustrious William III. to make every possible effort for their relief. The counteracting influence which then prevailed, prevented the complete accomplishment of his designs. The repeal of the former penal laws he could not obtain; neither could he obliterate even the Five Mile and Conventicle Acts from the pages of the Statutes. Religious liberty could not be asserted, and restricted toleration was all that he could confer. Under these circumstances passed the Act (1 William and Mary, c. 18.) which, whilst it conditionally exempted Protestant Dissenters from the statutes to which we have alluded, conferred on the appointed teachers of separate congregations various immunities, and afforded to their worship partial security, compelled all dissenting laity to take the oaths of allegiance and supremacy, &c. at the Sessions, however remote, and objectionably required their ministers additionally to declare their approbation of several of the Thirty-nine Articles of the established church. One practical inconvenience resulting from an

omission in the Act of Toleration was, however, obviated by an Act passed in the 10th year of Queen Anne, c. 2. which exempted ministers from punishment for officiating in other countries than those at whose Sessions they had taken the stipulated oaths. The just objections made by many pious and enlightened men to subscribe the Articles of the established church, produced, during the present reign, an Act (19 Geo. III. c. 44.) for their further relief, which enabled them to substitute a Declaration that they were Protestants and Christians, for a subscription to Articles which they conscientiously disapproved. But the right of such substitution, and the benefits of this only act passed, during one hundred and twenty years, for the protection of religious liberty, were, probably from inadvertence, inaccurately limited to those ministers who might actually be the appointed teachers of a separate congregation.

The known and acknowledged imperfection of those laws was however rendered unimportant by the spirit which prevailed; and which practically extended their beneficial provisions with a liberal hand. For the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts, which imposed civil disabilities on Protestant Dissenters, repeated and unsuccessful efforts were made; but the penal laws, continuing to slumber unawakened, were almost forgotten—nor did religious worship experience legal interruptions. The social and national advantages of this practical freedom were abundantly evinced. Piety was promoted. Districts almost barbarous were civilized. The rudest

hamlets profited by gratuitous instruction, and multitudes who sat in darkness and the shadow of death were irradiated and animated by heavenly beams.

The rapid increase of the professors of evangelical religion, and the numerous edifices for their worship, which every where gladdened the heart of the pious traveller, excited however jealousy and opposition. Persecution awoke. The penal statutes were unexpectedly revived. Prosecutions under the Conventicle Act commenced. Punishments were inflicted for non-attendance at the parish church. The laws for toleration received at several Sessions unprecedented expositions: and at length emboldened by the unresisting acquiescence, or encouraged by the private approbation of those who were considered as the guardians of the rights of conscience, and on whose vigilance multitudes improperly relied, a measure was last year submitted to Parliament, which declared all these innovations to be correct, and which would have additionally—injuriously—and perhaps fatally and for ever, have extended religious despotism, or have again filled the prisons of England with the most useful and excellent of men.

The prodigious, the unprecedented efforts which were made to resist that attempt, and the success which crowned those exertions we need not relate. They demonstrated that the spirit of the venerable Reformers and the pious Puritans yet survived. They indicated the number, the resources, the intellectual and moral importance of the friends to religious liberty. They proved that the

distinctions which separated Dissenters were but as chaff. They displayed a zeal and afforded an example which our friends, our enemies, our children, and future historians can never forget.

Our Committee who first stimulated these exertions, perceived however that many dangers and difficulties yet remained. Taught by experience the benefit of universal co-operation, and the necessity which existed for the formation of some institution, which might embody the talents, the energies and the protection of all friends to Religious Liberty, they proclaimed their opinion to you. They invited the formation of the Society for whom we act: and the propriety of their opinions must be abundantly and unanswerably evinced by the congratulations we have now the pleasure to present.

The general proceedings which they have adopted, you have probably learnt from the statement made at the Annual Meeting, contained in the Evangelical Magazine for June last, to which we refer. And it might, perhaps, be sufficient to announce, that they *yesterday* succeeded to obtain the Act for which, at that meeting, they were recommended to apply; and by which the Five Mile and Conventicle Acts are repealed; the former practice under the most liberal constructions of the Acts for Toleration is legalized; and Religious Liberty is additionally secured; and that being anxious for your information, they have enclosed a copy, not only of that Act, but of all the preceding Acts relating to Religious Toleration, with copies of the Oaths and Declaration, and

a form of a Notice for certifying any places of worship, which they request you to communicate to your congregation, and in the vestry carefully to suspend and to preserve.

But as they desire you to understand the principles of their proceedings, and the nature of the advantages which you have obtained; we shall take the liberty to supply some additional information which we hope it will be agreeable for you to receive.

Aware that extraordinary constructions might occur as to the Acts of Toleration, they determined to avail themselves of the advantages which had been gained by the resistance to the Bill introduced to Parliament, and to endeavour to place their religious freedom on a foundation less doubtful and more secure. For the attainment of this object, they considered the political situation of the country as peculiarly propitious; and they therefore resolved to make the attempt without delay. They, however, proceeded to ascertain, by legal proceedings, the construction which would be given to the Acts of Toleration in the superior courts: being convinced that in proportion as such constructions innovated on ancient practice and unalienable rights, their exertions to obtain more efficacious protection, would procure general concurrence and eventual success. Results more injurious than those which must have followed the opinions expressed by the Court of King's Bench could not occur. The doctrine there delivered exposed to prosecution every person, who preached, taught, or exhorted any persons exceeding five in

number, who was not the settled minister of a separate congregation; would have rendered ten thousand ministers liable to penalties and imprisonment; and would have enabled any inimical individual or mercenary informer to subject Dissenters and Methodists to penalties amounting to, at least, thirty millions sterling per annum. Fortified in their resolutions to apply to Parliament, by this decision, they also determined not to agitate the subject as a party or political question, or to render themselves dependent upon any political party; but to rely on the merits of their case and invite universal support, primarily appealing to the liberality and justice of any administration which might be appointed to conduct public affairs. Although equally impatient with any honourable minds, at the civil disabilities to which Dissenters are exposed, by the Test and Corporation Acts, they considered the rights of **FREE RELIGIOUS WORSHIP** as of paramount importance: and being convinced that they might prevent the greater benefit by asserting the minor claim, they also determined during this Session, and principally, to contend for the extension of their Religious Liberty, and to postpone any other application until a more auspicious moment should arrive.

For the correctness of these resolutions we may confidently appeal to the result. The justice of their application overwhelmed prejudice and opposition: their frankness and independence conciliated government and obtained respect; and all parties, convinced of their integrity and influence,

were solicitous to secure their approbation and esteem.

The measure desired was, however, too repugnant to the interests and prejudices of many persons, not to excite much private opposition; which, having been overcome, we will neither perpetuate nor revive. Numerous obstructions occurred. The legal proceedings, and the lamented death of Mr. Perceval, protracted the introduction of the measure, to a very advanced period of the parliamentary Sessions, and prevented many desirable improvements, which, until a future period, were therefore unavoidably postponed. We hope that it cannot be necessary to detail all the difficulties which occurred; and especially as it must impose on us the painful task of lamenting the inactivity and misguided opinions of those whose assistance we expected, and who, interested in the same result, should have stimulated our zeal, supported our application, and contributed to our common success. We shall prefer to enumerate those friends, whose assistance we must applaud, and to invite for them your generous esteem. The polite attention and persevering patronage of Lord Liverpool, as the head of the present Administration, who devoted many days to the consideration of our claims, merit our peculiar commendation and acknowledgement. Earl Stanhope and Lord Holland, we cannot adequately praise. Uninfluenced by party motives, and impelled by attachment to the principles which we maintain, they afforded that cordial assistance which we shall always remember, and are

most happy, to announce. In the Commons House of Parliament, Mr. Stephen and Mr. Wilberforce manifested that anxiety for our cause, which might be expected from men, who personally know the benefits which religion alone can afford; and Mr. Whitbread entitled himself to our gratitude, equally, by the promptitude with which he prepared to advocate our rights, and by the liberality with which he conceded to government the popularity of introducing a measure, at which so many must exult. With unmingled satisfaction we must also acknowledge the co-operation of "The Committee for guarding the privileges of the Methodist Society, late in connection with the Rev. John Wesley," for they have been faithful companions in our labours, and are justly entitled to partake your commendation and our joy.

As to the Act which has been thus obtained, you will perceive that the principles are simple, and the provisions few. The repeal of the Five Mile and Conventicle Acts, contained in the first section, removes the principal punishments to which Dissenters and persons who do not worship according to the Established Church were hitherto exposed.—Government have therefore required, in the 2d and 11th sections, that all places, wherein more than 20 persons assemble for worship, shall be notified as heretofore to the Clerk of the Peace of the County, or to the Registrar of the Archdeacon, or Bishop, within whose jurisdiction such places shall be situated—and that during worship their

doors shall be unbarred.—It is also provided in section 5, that all persons who are *teachers* at such places shall, if required by a magistrate, take the oaths of allegiance and supremacy, and sign the declaration that they are Protestants and Christians, inserted in the Act of 19 Geo. III. But such requisition must be in writing—no person who has once taken the oaths, and made the declaration under this Act, or the 19 Geo. III. will be subject to a second requisition—nor can any fee be then demanded by the magistrate, who must gratuitously supply a certificate to the person who has so complied with the requisition which he made.—All the other provisions tend to increase our advantages, and to strengthen the security of religious worship.—The exemption from parochial offices and military duties, is extended to all students and persons, who preach at one or more congregations, if they do not follow a secular employment, provided they take the oaths, and make the declaration prescribed: power is therefore conferred on them to require any one magistrate, on payment of 2s. 6d., to administer such oaths—to attest such declaration—and to certify such proceedings as evidence that the person claiming the exemption is entitled to the exemption which he claims. The advantages obtained by this Act, over not only the dreadful evils which must have been consequent on the recent decision of a superior court but, even over the most liberal construction of the former Acts of Toleration, cannot escape your regard. The former Acts were confined only to persons being

Protestant Dissenters, and did not afford protection to the numerous bodies of Methodists who object rather to some of the preachers in the Establishment, than to the discipline or doctrines of the Established Church, whilst the comprehensive language of this Act includes every person of every denomination who is a Protestant and Christian.—The penalties of the Conventicle Act extended, notwithstanding the former Acts of Toleration, to every assembly for religious worship, in an unregistered place, where more than five persons were assembled—but this Act supersedes the necessity of any registration where the number assembled does not exceed twenty.—From the laity as well as from the ministers of religion, the former Acts required, previous to their becoming entitled to the relief of toleration, an expensive and inconvenient attendance at the sessions of the peace, and such attendance was a *preliminary* requisition to their presuming to deliver a private exhortation, or a public address. Whilst this act compleatly removes this onerous and absurd demand, it enables every person to attend at such places of religious worship as he approves without being liable to any future requisition to take any oaths—and to preach, teach and exhort, without *previously* attending at a sessions for permission to discharge the duties which his conscience may suggest. The immunities and exemptions bestowed on preachers by the former Acts, and which were restricted to the appointed ministers of separate congregations, are more widely and beneficially diffused. The

judicial and discretionary power which was before asserted by magistrates is entirely swept away—and they must accommodate even the humblest religious instructor, whenever his own convenience shall induce him to take the oaths, and sign the declaration as pledges of his belief in the Holy Scriptures, and of his fidelity to the state. As another advantage we must not omit that under the Toleration Act, no persons were liable to penalties for disturbing a congregation, unless they entered the place where the congregation was assembled, but this Act will enable you to punish with equal certainty, those who are guilty of *external* clamor and disturbance, as those who may internally interrupt your devotion.

Perceiving that all important legal impediments to the progress of religious instruction are thus happily removed, we hope that you will partake the pleasure which we expressed, and be stimulated, by your additional security, to additional labours to promote the salvation of men. But whilst we express this unaffected satisfaction, we do not intend to intimate that the provisions do not admit improvement,—that future and progressive efforts are superfluous,—or that we should relapse into a state of tranquil unconcern. We regret that under any circumstances the notification of places of religious worship should be required, that any oaths should be from religious instructors peculiarly and exclusively demandable, and that civil disabilities, imposed by the Test and Corporation Acts, improperly exclude conscientious and de-

would men from offices, which they would occupy with honour to themselves and with advantage to the state. All these objects our Committee are not unsolicitous to obtain, and, as the sun of religious liberty has risen so high above the horizon, they hope that we shall survive to hail its meridian and unsetting splendour with delight.

Whilst we have endeavoured to explain the advantages we have acquired, and offered our tribute of praise to the human instruments who have assisted their attainment, we would endeavour to impress our own minds with that devotional gratitude, which is due only unto HIM in whose hands are the hearts of men, and without whose blessing our ablest and our kindest friends would have laboured but in vain.

By this sentiment we would restrain ourselves from improper exultation, and, by avoiding all triumphant language, we would prevent alarm to our watchful enemies, and prepare the path for further advantage. We would also advise all persons immediately to notify all uncertified places of stated or occasional worship, and thus relieve anxiety and insure protection. With all requisitions from magistrates to preachers to take the oaths we recommend prompt and cheerful compliance, as the renewal of their applications will be thereby most probably prevented. As the power to require magistrates to administer oaths, &c. is valuable to us, and may be offensive to them, we also recommend that such power should be cautiously exerted, and should never be enforced unless the election of a

preacher to any civil or military office should require its exercise. And if any proceedings should take place, by which any of the penalties may be improperly imposed, and an appeal against a conviction can be successfully prosecuted, we additionally remind you that a notice of the intention to appeal must be given within eight days from the time of conviction, or the person injured will be prevented from the benefit of an appeal.

As however experience will present the best criteria of the act which has been obtained, and will effectually discover any practical defects which no ingenuity can foresee, we shall always receive with interest the communications you may transmit of any measures which may be attempted, calculated to infringe the provisions it contains, or to restrict that religious liberty which we are associated to defend, as well as to afford you any advice or protection which the emergency of circumstances may require. As the Committee desire that the benefits of an institution so obviously requisite, as long as any obstructions prevent the complete enjoyment of Religious Liberty, should be universally extended, they regret that many subscriptions for the current year have been from forgetfulness withheld, and have determined to extend the period until Sept. 30, within which the subscription (amounting at least to two pounds from congregations in England, and to one pound from congregations in Wales,) may be remitted to Robert Steven, Esq. the Treasurer, No. 101, Upper Thames Street, London:

and we are persuaded that no congregation will refrain from future punctuality in the payment of their amount (which ought to be annually sent in the months of March, April, or May, and which must be universally contributed) to enable the Committee to act with liberality and promptitude, and to discharge the great expences which they unavoidably incur. At the same time we request you to send the name of some lay member of your congregation, who will, jointly with yourself, belong to our Committee, to whom, on particular occasions, we can apply, and the benefit of whose attendance at the general meetings of the Committee on the last Tuesday in every month, at half past six o'clock in the eve-

ning, at the New London Tavern, Cheapside, we shall be always most happy to receive.

But whilst we respectfully intimate the expedience of pecuniary support, we cannot conclude without more urgent intreaties, that your congregation, when they partake our gratitude, will not forget us in their prayers—that by their fervent and reiterated supplications for divine aid, they will best invigorate our minds, and most effectually assist the attainment of every object we are associated to promote. We have the honour to be,

Dear Sir,

Your most obedient,

humble Servants,

THOMAS PELLATT,
JOHN WILKS, Secretaries.

INTELLIGENCE.

Extracts from the Report of the Unitarian Fund. 1812.

[Concluded from p. 727.]

Your Committee now proceed to relate the history of their proceedings in a new field of exertion, which was unexpectedly opened to them, and which promises to yield abundant satisfaction.

In the end of autumn, a messenger was sent to the Secretary, from a number of persons at READING, in Berkshire, entreating him to send down to them a preacher, for a few Sundays, to make the experiment, whether preaching of a liberal and rational cast would not succeed, in that populous town. The application was made under the following circumstances. A minister in one of the Calvinistic places of worship, had lately attracted much popularity, by insisting from the pulpit on the right of private judgment, the sufficiency of scripture, and other kindred topics. Several parties, supposed to be somewhat tainted with reputed heresy, seemed disposed to unite

under his ministry: but in the same proportion that he won over strangers, he scandalized his friends; a division took place in his church, and he was, in consequence, about to leave the town. There were two parties, principally, that had been interested by his preaching;—the disciples of a teacher of the name of Cudworth, and from him called Cudworthians; and the Universalists; both of whom had places of worship in the town, but no regular ministers. These, joined by one or two Unitarians, and some other individuals, agreed to invite the minister referred to, to preach to them for a time; which, however, he declined. They then resolved to look abroad; and it was proposed to them to apply to the Secretary of the Unitarian Fund, known to the proposer, officially, by means of the Monthly Repository. Unacquainted with Unitarianism, almost by name, they consented, provided there was a likelihood, of their obtaining such another preacher as the one that had gathered them together. They

had the Cudworthian place of worship at their command, and they formed a small fund, for defraying the expenses and providing for the entertainment of a preacher.

Such was the nature of the application made to the Secretary, who communicated with the Treasurer upon it: singular and unpromising as the case was, they judged that the opening ought not to be neglected, and they immediately consulted Mr. Vidler, who, with his usual readiness to serve the Fund, and thereby the cause of truth, consented to go down to Reading, for a longer or shorter time, as might be found expedient. Within a few days of the application being made, he had arrived at his station: the progress of his labours will be best described in a series of extracts from his successive letters.

1811, Nov. 3.

I found that the news of my coming had preceded me, and had excited considerable attention.

The meeting-house is in an obscure part, with a very bad passage to it. Perhaps it may hold, with the vestry, 250 persons with tolerable ease. I have preached three times to day. In the morning from Jude 21. The house was decently filled.

In the afternoon from 1 Pet. ii. 9. I endeavoured to shew that God had chosen some part of mankind, to privileges and office for the good of the whole, and confirmed this by the scriptural history of election. The house was crowded.

In the evening, I went to the meeting-house before the appointed time of worship, meaning to sit a while in the vestry, to give opportunity for any persons to speak to me, who wished so to do; but in this I was disappointed, for the meeting-house, aisle, vestry and yard were so crowded that I had a difficulty to get to the pulpit, and while I was preaching I saw people climbing up the windows on the outside, to hear. Many, I am informed, went away, not being able to get near the house. My text was Heb. x. 22.

Thus far it is well, but still that I stand on slippery ground, nor should I be surprised if this sudden popularity should as suddenly cease, and even be followed with reproach.

From the heterogeneous mass of unconnected persons in this town, I perceive it will be difficult, indeed, to form

any regular body. I never felt myself more ardently engaged in any thing, than in my desire to raise an Unitarian cause in this place, but I never was placed in circumstances of greater perplexity. How I shall carry my cup even I know not. I have announced, however, that I seek neither to please nor displease any man, but that I will walk at liberty, for I seek the precepts of God.

Nov. 11.

The orthodox, after I had preached the first Sunday, filled the town with alarm, by the cry of heresy. The chief topics which they insisted on were, that I counted Jesus Christ an idol, that I totally denied his atonement, and that I destroyed all moral restraint by holding universal salvation.

The few Unitarians in Reading were unmoved by these rumours. The Universalists were perplexed, and some of them terrified at the two first. I have succeeded with most of them, by distinguishing between the divinity of Christ's person, and the divinity of his mission, insisting upon the latter, and denying the former. As for atonement, I have had more difficulty on that subject than on any other, but by distinguishing it into three views, I have done pretty well with them: 1st, satisfaction, which I totally deny. 2nd, That the death of Christ was a valuable consideration, paid to the justice of God for sin, on account of which sin is forgiven, this I oppose to satisfaction, calling it a composition of, perhaps, five shillings in the pound, and stating satisfaction itself as twenty shillings, or the full demand of justice. Both these I utterly reject as inconsistent with the glorious doctrine of free grace, and then turning the tables upon the orthodox, I call them bought grace preachers, and claim the popular title of free grace preachers for the Unitarians, which I maintain by the third view of the doctrine of atonement, namely, that of the reconciliation of a repentant sinner to God, in Christ Jesus.

As for universal salvation, I deny it, and substitute universal restoration in the room of it, maintaining that there will be a righteous recompence of reward to all men, and consequently, every sinner will be punished according to his works, but that the end of punishment is the good of the sinner, and that God, who is

loving, can punish from no other motive. This account of the manner of my

warfare, will convey no new ideas to you, or to any other of my friends in London, but it will shew the peculiar character of my method of procedure.

Towards the conclusion of last week, I found that my continuance at the Cudworthian meeting house was precarious, for though the place was always crowded when I preached, yet intimations were conveyed to me, that the Calvinists were using every effort to get the doors shut against me. On Monday, the 4th instant, as I have since learned, there was a private meeting of the orthodox ministers in and about Reading, to consult of the proper methods to prevent the growth of the Universal and Unitarian doctrines. Nothing particular has transpired concerning their determinations, but some warm Calvinists said, that I should soon be driven out of the town. The proprietor of the Cudworthian place heard me on the first Sunday three times, and also on the following Wednesday. He publicly declared, that I preached, as far as he had heard me, *nothing but pure gospel*. But he trembled to find that I was a Unitarian, which indeed I had avowed to him and to all others who had asked me. In fine, there is no more access to that place. The proprietor has much grieved and offended most of his own religious friends. I am informed that only himself and one or two more were on the negative side. The rest, who with two or three exceptions, are poor, pleaded hard for my continuing to preach.—I preached three times last Sunday, and notwithstanding the reports of the Calvinists to frighten the people, the house was still as full as on the first Sunday.—I have also every day met parties, more or less numerous in which most of the Unitarian doctrines have been calmly debated among serious and enquiring persons, with apparent satisfaction, and growing conviction of their truth; so that, generally from ten in the morning till about twelve at night, I have been in continual conversation.—I have no words by which to describe the heart-felt pleasure which I feel in this labour of love.—After being shut out of the Cudworthian place, it seems, the Calvinists thought that I would take myself off in despair of making any further attempt for the introduction of Unitarianism at Reading; but though I foresee great opposition before me, yet circumstances justify the prolongation of my

visit. The few Unitarians here (I have not found more than twelve) met on Monday evening to consult what was best to be done in present circumstances. There was present the proprietor of a small meeting house, which he lets to a Calvinistic congregation, who are tenants at will. He offered to request the loan of that place, at such times as they did not use it. He has done so; but they have sent a written negative, pleading conscience for their refusal. Application has been made to the Quakers, but the spirit of liberality does not move them.—My host, formerly a Cudworthian, but who has not for years past been into a place of worship, till I came to Reading, means to try his influence with the proprietor of the Cudworthian meeting house, to open his place again; but neither himself nor others think there is much hope of success.—These efforts shew that zeal is not wanting in the friends of rational Christianity at Reading.—There is no large room in the town that could be hired or borrowed. The town hall and the Lancasterian schools would either of them do well; but such is the influence of Calvinism, both in church and meeting-house, that neither of them can be obtained. There is, however, a theatre that will contain about 500 persons. It is used only in September and October. It has been proposed, and if it could be procured I have no doubt but that it would be well filled.

I know not that I shall have any place to preach in next Sunday, but, if possible, I mean to preach, at least in the evening, in the theatre.—At any rate, I will not return till next week, if I even do so then; for though I do not preach, yet I am employed, I humbly hope, to some good purpose, in conversation.

—Nov 30.

“Finding my associates of this motley character, (alluding to their great variety of sentiments,) I meant to proceed with great caution, and to urge nothing, but to watch the opening of their minds, and proceed gently as I thought they could bear it. This prudent plan has been utterly frustrated. The ardency of one, the cool inquisitiveness of another, the boldness and stoutness of a third, the open manly candour of a fourth, with the fear, and even terror, of others, when in company together, which has frequently happened, have not permitted me to leave any part of rational Christianity untouched. The existence of the

devil, the miraculous conception, the plenary inspiration of the scriptures, and even materialism and necessity have been brought forward. I had no other choice, thus circumstanced, than an open avowal of all my sentiments. I have, therefore, frankly made it. The consequence has been such as I expected. The whole town is moved by it. Every place of worship rings with the cry of heresy: cautions, warnings, threats, prayers, tears and outcries are used to stop the dreadful evil. Even the learned archdeacon, incumbent of St. Mary's—no evangelical man himself—has joined the evangelical alarm, and honoured me expressly with a cautionary sermon to his genteel audience.

Afraid of incurring expences which, from the unsettled state of things here, might ultimately fall on the Fund, nothing decisive had been done concerning the theatre, when your last letter arrived. On receiving it, I felt myself encouraged to request a meeting with some of the friends to confer about procuring the theatre: but, happily, this was rendered unnecessary, for Mr. S. shewed me a large workshop of his,—he is a carpenter,—which, if I thought it would do, he should be glad to hear me preach in. I accepted it immediately. Another person, a boat builder, who had heard me, but never spoken to me, sent to offer a boat-house, which he said he would make as convenient as possible. Thus I had choice. The carpenter's shop is best situated and largest, fifty feet long, twenty-three wide, open to the roof, with a counting-house, which I call the vestry, opening into it. With his work-benches, tool-chests, deals, &c. he fitted it up in great taste:—A branch drawing up and down in the middle—Sconces, candlesticks, and table for singers, stools, chairs, and an excellent pulpit of rough wood. This place I knew not of till Friday evening. There was only Saturday to circulate notice of my preaching, and this was done so effectually, though only verbally, by my friends, that on Sunday morning we had a larger congregation than I have had on any Sunday morning since I have been at Reading. I preached on Acts xiv. 14. "After the way which they call heresy so," &c. I described heresy in its innocent andnoxious senses,—proved that no sincere man can be, in the bad sense, a heretic; shewed that Unitarians believe and

reverence the scriptures,—and that by the right of private judgment they were justified in interpreting them differently from others. The audience was more respectable in appearance than any I had yet had.

In the evening our place was so crowded that I had again difficulty to get to the pulpit. The stairs, pretty large and wide, were also filled. The counting-house was likewise occupied by many. Above thirty went away, not being able to get within hearing. I preached on Mat. ix. 13. "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." It is thought that 400 persons were present. I described repentance as a practical thing, turning from sin to righteousness—proved that sinners and righteous persons were distinct characters in scripture—that Christ came to call the former to repentance, as 1st, idolaters; 2d, ignorant and openly immoral Jews; 3d, hypocritical pharisees, all the worse for their religion—that the gospel was intended for the same purpose now—that the righteous were moral persons, who feared God and worked righteousness, and as doing this were accepted of him—Christ did not call these to repentance, they did not need it. But he called such to the full knowledge of God's favour by his gospel, and to the rich hope of eternal life.

The most deep and profound attention prevailed in the audience, most of whom consisted of persons who seldom attend any place of worship."

" Dec. 13.

"In order that the Committee may form a correct idea for themselves, it is necessary that I take a retrospective view of circumstances, and also state present appearances at this populous town.

1st. The original design of Mr. S. or those who acted with him, was to unite the Cudworthians, the Universalists, the Arminians, for there are some few such, and other semi-orthodox non-descript characters, together on a broad and liberal plan, so far as to preach on general subjects in which they all agreed, but by no means disavowing or even in the least trenching upon the grand Unitarian doctrines. This method continued while I used the Cudworthian meeting, where I preached seven sermons that gave the most entire satisfaction to all the above parties, and

even some Calvinists who attended were as much pleased as any others. For ought that I can see I might have preached seventy times seven discourses in the same manner, and with the same success; but the genius of Calvinism exerted itself to prevent so good a work. The heads of all the above parties, and many of the individuals among them were visited, and their prejudices, and their fears, and their ignorance, were all wrought upon, till they were terrified exceedingly about my principles. They were told that I denied Christ, that I called him an idol, that I had declared I would destroy him; that I denied the inspiration of the scriptures; that I did not believe man had a soul; that I denied all future punishment, did not believe there was any hell, totally denied the being of the devil, and that it was doubtful if I admitted that there was either a God or a heaven. These fearful reports worked some days in secret, and it is even but lately that I have understood their number and extensive operation. Their effect, however, on the minds of ignorant religionists, you may well conceive of without a description.

2d. The consequence of these reports was that I was excluded from the Cudworthian meeting: the owner of it saying, that he fully approved of every thing which he had heard me deliver there, but as I did not believe the Deity of Christ and the doctrine of atonement, I must preach there no more; refusing at the same time to discuss these points with me, because, so he said, "I was too weighty for him in argument." About the same time most of the Cudworthians, Universalists, and Arminians, &c. forsook me, after giving me a sum to pay travelling expenses. Except Mr. S. and Mr. D. I had hardly a religionist left to encourage me. But three days before I was dismissed from the Cudworthian meeting, Mr. W. C. my present kind and generous host, had invited me to take up my dwelling in his house, else I believe I must have returned home immediately; which was what the orthodox intended when they threatened to drive me out of Reading.

3d. Thus circumstanced I looked about me, and found that ten or twelve poor Unitarians and a great number of sceptical persons, some of them of good character, had attended my preaching, and my conversation parties. I found

also that my ejection had roused the attention of the non-professing part of the town. I was therefore determined to preach somewhere. Several places were offered. I chose, as most convenient, the large shop of Mr. S. a carpenter, in London Street. Here I have preached four Sundays, and though the weather has been cold, and, last Sunday, very wet, yet the congregation has continued to increase, and, in the evening, the place is greatly crowded indeed, though perhaps not twenty religionists attend in the whole congregation.

4th. As I had no place in which to give a lecture on a week evening, I delivered lectures to different classes of persons, two, three, &c. and once even four times in the week, in private houses. I began with about twenty persons in a company. The numbers have increased to thirty, forty, and even fifty, yet still select and respectable. I read most part of all these lectures, and all of some of them. A few orthodox or semi-orthodox at first attended them, but have now left me, except two or three, for they say, "I am capable of deceiving, if it were possible, the very elect." Consequently I have gotten quite a new school. My method is this: I neither sing nor pray, but begin by a short address on the rights of conscience, or on the use of reason in religion, or on the sources, nature, and effects of deism, or on the excellency of revelation, &c. &c. I state my subject, and read the whole, or enlarge extempore on particular parts. After I have done, conversation follows. Objections are made, or questions are asked, or some other interesting subject is discussed. Here are persons who some of them tell me that they have not been to any place of worship, except on a public occasion, for five, or seven, or ten, or fifteen years. A few of these have been in the habit of reading their Bibles attentively, others not at all. One of them told me, after a lecture last week, that he had not opened his Bible for eight years past till since I came to Reading, and he believed he never should have opened it again had I not come.

Among my present public hearers, and attendants on my private lectures, are also some steady respectable churchmen, tradesmen, with families. These have never concerned themselves further about religion than to go to church and

preserve their moral character. About six or eight of them now search the scriptures with great attention: four of them tell me that they neither knew nor cared any thing about religion further than to preserve their credit in society: that they never could understand any thing about Christianity, it was to them mystery and darkness, but they were content that the parson knew all about it, or at least, that he said he did so, although they often doubted whether he knew more than themselves. These are not yet weaned from the church. They have character and interest at stake, they say that I have spoiled all that holy lethargy which they used to enjoy at church; for they can no longer worship any but the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. I have good hope of these, because of their steady and virtuous habits.

There is also another interesting class of persons who now begin to attend me. These are young men, some of whom possess considerable intelligence. A few of them have some literary attainments. Where intelligence and attainments unite, I find a strong inclination to deism is predominant in them. This is the natural effect of the stupefying absurdities of orthodoxy. I hope I have been so happy as to reverse a state of incipient deism in two of them with whom I have freely conversed, and as they are both virtuous, sensible, and rather learned also, I have the best expectations of them.

From the above account you will see both what has been, and what is, the state of Unitarianism at Reading.

The congregation in the morning is from 100 to about 130 persons. In the evening as full as the place can crowd. I think it can hold 300, but every avenue is filled, so that there is, probably, nearer 400, among whom I have scarcely more than one who has been under a religious profession.

The friends have concluded on consideration of your letter,

1st. That they will continue to meet in Mr. S.'s shop. He has generously offered it gratis, on Sundays only, for two years, or until they can get a better place.

2d. That there shall be a boarding-house appointed for the ministers who may succeed me, the expense of which they will jointly defray, together with expense of candles, and other incidents.

3d. That they will bear the travelling expenses of the ministers. This they mean to do by way of trial for one year.

They are desirous of putting the Fund to no expense; but if the new converts should drop off, and the few hearty friends should feel themselves oppressed, they then hope that some assistance will be afforded by the Fund.

In this state Mr. Vidler left Reading, after staying several weeks. He was soon succeeded by Mr. Wright, who spent four Sundays there. During this time he had the happiness of superintending the formation of an Unitarian congregational library; towards which many books were contributed by your committee. In March, Mr. Bennett also devoted a month to this infant cause, most acceptably and successfully employed. Within these few weeks, Mr. Vidler has paid a second visit to Reading, and the following is the brief statement of things as he found them after some months absence, and as they are now.

“ May 11, 1812.

“ In my late visit to Reading I made the following observations.

1. That the morning congregation which is composed chiefly of the most steady friends of Unitarianism, consisted on an average of about a hundred persons.

2. That the evening congregation, among which are many inquiring persons, as well as many curious and idle ones, consisted on an average of at least two hundred. The number of the evening congregation is not so large at this season of the year as during the winter months.

3. That of about thirty families with whom I was acquainted in my first visit, and with whom I had more or less conversed upon various topics of Christian doctrine, and of whom I had formed a hope of their perseverance in truth, there is not one family which has drawn back, but several have been added by the labours of the brethren who have succeeded me.

4. That these families, with a number of others, individuals, have made very considerable progress in the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus, not all indeed in the same degree, but all in

such a degree as to justify the conclusion that there are, at least, an hundred persons in Reading who are prepared to form the foundation of an Unitarian cause in that populous, and, heretofore, orthodox town.

5. These persons, in general, are now in the habit of seriously reading the Scriptures, and paying the utmost deference to their authority; which is the more to be wondered at as, a few of them only excepted, they had long given up any particular attention to them, because having taken modern corruptions of Christianity for scriptural doctrine, they had strongly doubted the truth of revelation.

6. They have, under the direction of Mr. Wright, established a chapel library, which is increasing both in number of subscribers and in books. This institution promises great utility in promoting the progress of Christian knowledge and virtue, especially among the younger part of them. I observed also that many persons in the middle, and some even in the decline of life, were inquiring after the knowledge of God and of Christ with all the avidity of youth.

7. They make no enthusiastic pretensions to what is usually called religious experience; but they have thus far attained in Christianity that having believed the doctrines of the gospel, they are persuaded that obedience to its precepts will insure to them eternal life without enduring the pains of the second death.

8. Their general character is a pleasing union of candour and simplicity, in receiving and obeying every doctrine and precept which comes to them recommended by the authority of the New Testament. Their first and leading desire being to become Bible Christians in doctrine, in temper, and in practice.

9. They have the prospect of procuring a convenient place of worship, in a good situation, in about twelve months time; meanwhile they continue to use the building with which the benevolent zeal of one of their friends has furnished them. Nor do they think it dishonourable that the religion of the carpenter's son is preached to them in a carpenter's shop.

If an intelligent, active, and pious Unitarian minister could be induced to settle among them, I am persuaded that he would soon collect one of the most

numerous and respectable congregations that any provincial town in England contains."

It remains only to add that your indefatigable missionary, Mr. Wright, spent the last Sunday at Reading, and that the intervals between the visits heretofore described were filled up by Messrs. Eaton, Marsom, and B. Flower, to whom the Society is much indebted for their ready and acceptable services.

Many reflections occur to your Committee upon reviewing the occurrences of the last few months at Reading; but they must content themselves with remarking that this is probably an example of what might be done by similar means in many populous towns, and that no case could more fully shew the urgent necessity for a Society like yours, authorized and prepared to seize promptly every opportunity for spreading the knowledge of the pure gospel.

We must, though unwillingly, conclude our extracts, with one quotation from Mr. Wright's Journal of a tour to the north in the autumn of last year.

" Newcastle upon Tyne.

" Here I preached twice; one evening in the Hanover Square Meeting-house, where we had a pretty large congregation, considering that the people are not used to week evening lectures. We had some Calvinists and Methodists for hearers. The other evening I preached in Mr. Campbell's place, which was pretty well filled, some of the Hanover Square people attending, as well as some Calvinists and Methodists.

Of Mr. Campbell I must give some account. He was of late a preacher of Mr. Haldane's, and his renunciation of reputed orthodoxy is quite recent. A Baptist congregation at Kendal was in Haldane's connection, until of late the minister and people became Unitarians; Haldane and his people at Edinburgh being informed of this change, wrote a curious letter to Mr. Cave, the minister, and his people at Kendal, informing them that they could have no more connection nor intercourse with them, but that they would pray for them. Cave and his friends wrote in reply, that as they did not see that prayer could be of any use further than it led those who prayed to use all the means in their power to accomplish that for which they prayed, they thought their prayers would do them no good, and

could dispense with them. Some time after, Mr. B. one of the Kendal people, happened to be in Newcastle, and knowing of the Baptist society there in Haldane's connection, he went among them, and it was agreed for several of Mr. Campbell's people to meet Mr. B. at the house of the former, for conversation, after the morning service on the Sunday. When they met there Mr. C. was so unwell that he could not participate in the conversation, but he laid on a bed near enough to hear the debate. In answer to the arguments for the inferiority of Christ to God, which Mr. B. urged, his opponent said, this related simply to the economy in which he had taken an inferior station, and acted in an inferior capacity. Mr. B. immediately quoted and urged 1 Cor. xv. 24—28, to shew that when the economy terminated, Christ would still be inferior and subject. This made a deep impression on Mr. C.—he thought Mr. B. must omit something in the passage. The first leisure he had he resolved to re-examine the passage and subject: this he accordingly did, and things soon appeared to him in a new light. He said to himself, "If our views be right the passage ought to read, *then shall the Son be EQUAL with him that put all things under him.*" He now entered upon the examination of Trinitarianism with that ardour and perseverance which belongs to a Scotchman (of which nation he is), when inspired by a love of truth and a spirit of free inquiry. The result is, that having fully satisfied himself, a few weeks since he openly declared to his congregation that he was become a Unitarian. Many of his people left him, a part remain, some seem to be disposed to return; in the mean time he goes on preaching, and doing all he can to promote what he believes to be the truth."

Police.

MARLBOROUGH STREET.

G. Kitchener and — Dimond, apprentices, were charged with disturbing Mr. Wildey, a licensed preacher, at his room in Howland Mews, Tottenham Court-road, whilst preaching to his congregation. It appeared that Kitchener, in particular, had disturbed the congregation for the last six months. On Wednesday se'nnight he repaired again to the meeting-house,

and disturbed the place by unnatural coughing, &c. when the preceptor left the desk and turned him down stairs. The defendant, by his conduct at the door, in challenging Mr. W. to fight, swearing, &c. prevented the congregation from being quiet, and made a promise to send some *rowing* lads on the next Sunday. On the day promised a gang of hackney coachmen made their appearance, and after forcing the door-keeper from his station, they proceeded up stairs, upset the stools, struck at the preacher, and threw the place into the utmost confusion by singing flash songs and swearing. The defendant, Kitchener, was ordered to find bail, but the prosecutor liberally consented to his release, on condition that the constable should hold the warrant to apprehend him again if required. There was no case against Dimond.

The Examiner, Nov. 8th, 1812.

House of Lords.

Thursday, Dec. 17. The Bishop of Chester presented a petition from the clergy and certain inhabitants of Manchester and Salford, against the Catholic claims. His lordship stated that the petition was signed, in addition to the clergy, by a thousand respectable inhabitants, and several Dissenting Ministers.

No Popery.

This abominable cry is again about to be set up, for the purpose of bolstering up a crazy ministry. It is intended, we believe, to play off the Methodists against the Catholics. Some ministers of the former persuasion have already learned their lesson and begun to practise intolerance. The pulpits of the Tabernacle and Tottenham Court Road Chapel have resounded with *No Popery*, and the pious attendants have been exhorted, by their love of the gospel, to support the government against the wicked Papists. Where will this end? Ought not the better principled part of the Methodists and Calvinistic Dissenters to interfere and stop the march of bigotry; or, at least, to set the public right, and prevent the factious cries of a few unenlightened individuals being taken for the sense of the community, who, we verily believe, are wiser than the teachers referred to, and better know the Lord of conscience.