

W⁶ William Wright.

Goxhill 1794

Joseph ^W Wright

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May ¹⁸¹³ 1852



THE REV. JOHN WESLEY, A.M.

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T H E

L I F E

O F T H E

Rev. JOHN WESLEY, A. M.

INCLUDING AN ACCOUNT OF THE

GREAT REVIVAL OF RELIGION,

In EUROPE and AMERICA,

O F W H I C H

He was the FIRST and CHIEF INSTRUMENT.

By Dr. COKE and Mr. MOORE.

*Circumcision is that of the Heart, in the Spirit, and not in the Letter; whose
praise is not of Men, but of God.* St. PAUL.

Ne quid Falsi dicere audeamus. Ne quid Veri non audeamus.

CICERO.

L O N D O N :

Printed by G. PARAMORE, NORTH-GREEN, *Worship-Street*;
And sold by G. Whitfield, at the Chapel in the City-Road; and at all the
Methodist Preaching-Houses in Town and Country. 1792.

[PRICE FIVE SHILLINGS IN BOARDS.]

THE UNIVERSITY
OF TEXAS
AT AUSTIN

The D E D I C A T I O N.

T O

The PREACHERS of the Gospel, late in connection with the Rev. JOHN WESLEY.

FATHERS and BRETHERN,

TO whom can we, with such propriety, present this History of our venerable Father, as to *you*, who were his companions in labour, and witnesses also of the things we record?

Our aim in compiling this account of the Life of our honoured Friend, and of that great revival of religion, in which he was so eminently engaged for more than half a century, has been, first, That mankind at large may know what he was, and what he did, or rather what God has done by him. And, secondly, That all those who are his sons in the Gospel, may have continually before them, how faithfully, zealously and prudently he laboured: and may thereby be more abundantly stimulated to be followers of him, as he was of Christ.

Some of you were acquainted with him, almost from the beginning. You know his re-

solite and patient adherence to the plain, yet powerful, religion of the Bible. In matters also of discipline and regulation, you know how closely he pursued the light which beamed upon him from time to time; and how, by his wisely following the word and providence of God, not only

—————“ Order from disorder sprung:”

but religion has obtained that stability, the want of which in former revivals has been so justly lamented.

In the following pages we have given, what we hope will be found, a faithful narrative in both these respects. Those on whom the labour and care of *this great work*, so happily begun by him, shall hereafter devolve, will not, we trust, verify the remark of Mr. *Locke*: travelling easily and swiftly, they will not applaud their own vigour, without considering what they owe to those, who drained the bogs, cleared the woods, and built the bridges, not only at the expence of ease and worldly comfort, but often at the hazard, and sometimes even the loss, of life.

The god of this world has hitherto triumphed over every revival of true religion. Yet the gates of hell have never wholly prevailed.

The

The Lord has raised up another holy temple out of the scattered lively stones of the once beautiful building. And this he will do again, if those who now serve him, “leave their first love.” On you it chiefly rests, whether the present revival shall continue, and keep its rank in that universal spread of righteousness, which we expect from the *sure word of prophecy*, when *the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord*.

“God has given the word, and great is the company of the Preachers. I will send by whom I will send,” is his unalienable prerogative. And certainly *the gifts and calling of God are without repentance* on his part. He will be with you, while the same active zeal for the good of mankind, with the same purity of intention, which shone in his most honoured instrument, is also found in you.

That you may still be “Vessels unto honour, sanctified and meet for the Master’s use, and prepared unto every good work,” is the prayer of,

Fathers and Brethren,

Your affectionate Fellow-Labourers

In the Gospel of our common Lord,

LONDON,

THOMAS COKE,

March 1, 1792.

HENRY MOORE.

The

The P R E F A C E.

MR. WESLEY is universally allowed to have been an extraordinary man. His long life, spent in great and uninterrupted labours, and his great success as a Minister of the Gospel in this and other countries, mark him out as a highly distinguished Character.

However, like all eminent men, he paid to the Public the usual tax of censure. Many were his enemies, and many the aspersions thrown out against him. But he rose above them all: so that the general voice at length confessed, that he was free from vice, and that he was a man of real virtue and piety. His death put an end even to that favourite accusation, that he was amassing riches by his influence over his Societies: he died worth nothing but his Books, and left even these burdened with a large debt. It is therefore reasonable to suppose, that a History of the Life and Labours of this great and good man will be acceptable to the Public, and especially to the truly religious of every denomination.

Some who have been acquainted with Mr. WESLEY, and have read his Journals, may perhaps think that no other account of him is needful: that his own writings are abundantly sufficient to enable the Public, to form a just estimation, both of the man, and of the great work in which he was so eminently engaged.

But

But, though we should grant that *these* persons need no further information, it will not follow that no other account is necessary. Many thousands in these kingdoms, know nothing of Mr. WESLEY, but by report. Many also who knew and loved him, are not able to purchase the Journals, though the price is not considerable. And many of those who have read them, wish nevertheless to have a more concise, yet full, view of the Man and of the Work.

Such a view we now present to our readers, chiefly taken out of his Journals and other authentic papers in print and manuscript; hoping it may serve as a Focus, uniting the scattered rays of this burning and shining Light.

We scruple not to say, There is nothing material respecting him, that is not given in this Volume. All his private papers were open to our inspection for several years. He himself also informed us of many important passages of his Life, which he never inserted in his Journals, and are known to few but ourselves. Some of these it would have been dangerous or uncharitable for him to have published to the world. But we are under no such difficulty. The persons concerned, are now in eternity, and their characters very little known to the present generation.

We are sensible that History is a narrative of facts, properly connected and elucidated. Such we trust the following will be found. Mr. WESLEY needs no Panegyrist.

gyrist. *His works shall praise him in the gates.* We have therefore stated those facts *as they arose*, judging this to be the clearest and most satisfactory way. To this end we have divided our Work into three Books. In the first, we treat of his Relatives, and of his own History till his full conversion to God: in the second, of his labours in *England*, including an account of the Societies raised from time to time, and of the rules of discipline observed in them: and in the third, we give a relation of the labours both of himself and of those connected with him, in *Ireland, Scotland, the British Isles, the Continent of America, and the West Indies.* We conclude with a review of his Writings; with an account of several incidents in the three last years of his Life, and of his last Illness, Death and Character; and with a short retrospect of the great Revival of Religion, in which he was the first and chief instrument. In the course of the History we have also given our readers a sketch of the state of Christianity in those different parts of the world, in which he, or the Preachers in connection with him, have laboured.

Our materials are so abundant, that we might have easily swelled the Work into two or ten Volumes. But this would have answered no truly valuable end. We have no desire to raise the price, or weaken the force of our History, by unimportant anecdotes, or tedious dissertations. Our wish and aim has been to do good to *all men*: yet, we flatter ourselves, that even those in the higher circles, whose minds are best informed, will not consider the present Work as dishonourable to the venerable Subject of it.

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The **L I F E** of the
Reverend **J O H N W E S L E Y**.

B O O K the **F I R S T**.

Containing an Account of the progress of Religion in England, from the Reformation to the year 1738, and of the Family, Birth, Youth, Education, Residence at Oxford, Mission to Georgia, and Return to England of Mr. Wesley.

I N T R O D U C T I O N.

Containing an account of the progress of Religion in England from the Reformation to the year 1738.

WE have not been favoured with any authentic accounts of the introduction of Religion into *England*; but that ignorance and superstition of the deepest dye covered the whole land till the time of the Reformation, is evident from the united testimony of Historians. A variety of divine Providences con-
B curred

curred, to favour that glorious Æra. The noble exertions of *Wickliffe* and his followers prepared the way. The union of the houses of *York* and *Lancaster* in the person of *Henry* the eighth, put a final conclusion to the unhappy discords, which rent this Nation asunder for many ages. And even the vices of that wicked Prince, over-ruled by Him who delights to bring good out of evil, became the instruments of furthering the cause of Religion. All these concurrent events opened a wide door for the reception of that light and truth, which at this time shone so brightly on the right hand and the left throughout the *German* Empire.

The God of Nature and of Grace raised up a constellation of worthies at this period, who were as shining ornaments of human nature, as any country could boast of, perhaps, since the apostolic times. *Cranmer*, *Latimer*, *Ridley*, and the rest of the Reformers of our land, were formed for the great work in which they were engaged; and under their fostering care, the seed of divine grace, watered by the dews of heaven, brought forth a plentiful harvest.

That admirable youth *Edward* the sixth, on the death of *Henry*, ascended the throne. He was a Christian indeed, wise and good beyond his years, a living picture of the truths that were taught by those men of God. One might now have expected that true Religion would have flourished in *England*: but it was far otherwise. Antinomianism spread her baneful influence, and checked the growing plant of holiness. *Latimer* bore a faithful testimony against those

those

those who pleaded for freedom from the commandments of Christ as well as from those of the Pope. *Cranmer* preached before the Court upon a day appointed for fasting and humiliation, and faithfully told the chief men of the nation, that they were no better than the Papists; and warned them, as if inspired with a prophetic spirit, that God would enter into judgment with them. He did so. He took their fainted King to heaven, and thus permitted the hopes of the Protestants to fall to the ground. The bloody *Mary* stepped into the throne, and caused the holiest men in the land to pass through ordeal flames to their eternal reward.

But the Lord had mercy on his people, and turned their captivity. He removed this bloody Queen, and fixed *Elizabeth* in her place. *Elizabeth* was a zealous Protestant, and though by no means a possessor of true Religion herself, encouraged it in others. The beginning of her reign was favourable to the gospel, but she soon convinced the world that persecution is not confined to any sect or party. She severely punished some of the most righteous men in the nation, because they differed from the established church in respect to uniformity; and those who pleaded for the rights of private judgment, were looked upon as dangerous to the State. But the Puritans, for such was their general appellation, increased in proportion to their oppression. However the great spirit of *Elizabeth*, and the wisdom of her administration, kept them within proper bounds.

During the weak and feeble reign of *James* the First, the Puritans felt their strength increasing more and more. And too many of them, forgetting that word of God, "Vengeance is mine," encouraged a vindictive spirit, which broke forth with ungovernable fury on the unhappy *Charles*, and overturned both the Church and State. Thus "God ordaineth his arrows against the persecutors."

The usurper *Cromwell* with all his vices, was endued with many excellencies. He filled, in general, the vacated Churches with the best men he could find. But alas! the cause of vital Religion had received a fatal wound by the troubles and civil broils which preceded the present period. Politics had too much absorbed the true spirit of the gospel; so that the great and good *Dr. Owen* himself laments in the most plaintive terms, the great decay of vital godliness. However, it must be acknowledged, that a considerable measure of pure religion still continued in the land, as an occurrence which happened soon after the restoration of the Second *Charles*, evidently demonstrated.

That wicked King, who filled *Scotland* with the blood of the holiest men of that kingdom, and *England* with debauchery and profaneness, was determined to lay the axe to the root of all Religion, and at a single blow to cut off from the established Church every Minister of honesty and conscience. By the act of uniformity he expelled two thousand Gospel-Ministers. Every Clergyman was obliged to declare his solemn assent in the face of his congregation on

an appointed day to the truth of things he had never seen, or be driven from his benefice and cure of souls into poverty and disgrace. Every Minister of real piety preferred every sacrifice to that of his conscience. By this method that atrocious Government blotted out of the Establishment every faithful Pastor. "O," cried out one of them, the great and pious Mr. *Baxter*, in the grief of his soul, "that we had but the gift of tongues, to enable us to proclaim the gospel in other lands, for then I should be satisfied!"

Pains and penalties, confiscations and imprisonments, were enacted and executed to prevent the ejected Ministers from the exercise of their holy function. Ungodliness of every species overflowed the whole land, and it became the very fashion of the day to imitate the most corrupt of Courts in all its vices. So sudden an overthrow of all that is righteous and good, is not to be paralleled in the History of any Nation under heaven. In all other instances the people have moved by progressive means from good to evil, or from evil to good. But here it was otherwise. Religion in a moment hid her beautiful face, and was confined to a few destitute followers of Christ, who met on the mountains, or in cellars underground, and were even there pursued and discovered by those human beasts or devils, the abettors of persecution. These were the most unhappy days this Nation ever knew with respect to religion. Never had there been such a general contempt of God, such barefaced and shameless impiety. Ungodliness and unrighteousness of every kind prevailed as they had

never done before. Even the very form of Religion was hooted out of the Nation. In short they seemed to strive on every hand, that the name of God might be entirely forgotten.

The bigotry of *James* the Second who was educated in all the fooleries of Popery, soon brought things to a crisis. Aiming to restore the Papal power, he lost his crown. His successor *William*, as he owed much to the Puritan party, secured to them the inestimable blessing of liberty of conscience, by the act of toleration. From this time Religion began again to lift up her head. The Archbishops *Tillotson* and *Sharpe*, with other respectable characters their cotemporaries, did much for the reformation of the land. The wars which followed with *Lewis* the Fourteenth of *France*, damped the sacred fire. That wonderful General, the Duke of *Marlborough* was the God of the people. Nothing was spoke of, nothing was hardly thought of, but the amazing and uninterrupted victories which he gained. When peace was established, "the plant of God's own planting" again put forth her buds. It is certain that the mild reign of *Anne* and of the *Hanoverian* family, assisted much to prepare the way for the great revival of Religion, in which God was pleased so eminently to use that great man, who is the subject of our present History. The Societies for the Reformation of manners, which received the support of the Government, and the private Societies formed throughout the kingdom by the zeal and strong recommendations of the pious Doctor *Herneck* and others, undoubtedly gave a check to that

dissipation

dissipation of spirit, that practical Atheism, and that perfect looseness of Morals, which had so entirely pervaded the whole land. Many of these Societies remained in being in the year 1738, and received Mr. *Wesley* with open arms, when he entered on his most extensive sphere of action.

Yet, notwithstanding these fair appearances, true Religion was little known in *England*. The great leading truths of the Gospel, the justification of the sinner by faith alone in the merits of Christ, communion with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ, the assurance of the favour of God, and even the Doctrine of Original Sin, were not credited, or at least not enforced, by the Clergy of the establishment in general. The great Mr. *Law* was an exception indeed. Though a Non-juror, and deprived on that account of the exercise of his public Ministry, he enforced by his excellent pen that essential Doctrine of the Gospel, the necessity of the inspiration of the Holy Ghost; which was at that time almost buried in oblivion, or at least held in deep contempt in the Church of *England*; notwithstanding the many express testimonies borne in favour of it in the Common-Prayer Book. This considerable writer was the great forerunner of the Revival which followed, and did more to promote it than any other individual whatsoever; yea, more perhaps than the rest of the nation collectively taken.

Nor were the Dissenters in general in a better situation. The piety, the zeal, the readiness to do and suffer the will of God, which shone forth so eminently in the lives of multitudes of the ancient Puritans,

tans, had almost disappeared. Arianism and Socinianism gained ground upon them with hasty strides. Few of their Ministers pressed home on the consciences of their hearers the grand truths of Religion. None of them held forth the assurance of faith as the privilege of all believers, though some of them allowed it to be the privilege of a few. Communion with God and crucifixion to the world were parts of Religion hardly thought of in those days.

Such was the state of Christianity in this nation, when the Grace and Providence of God called forth *Mr. Wesley* into his great field of action. But his Family, Birth, Education, &c. are first to be considered.

C H A P. I.

Of Mr. W E S L E Y ' s Relations.

THE Grand-Father of *Mr. John Wesley*, by his Father's side, was a Nonconformist. He had involved himself in the affairs of the Civil War during the Reign of *Charles the First*, and was ejected under the following Reign from the living of *Blandford* in *Dorsetshire* by the Act of Uniformity. There is a Dialogue between this Gentleman and the then Bishop of *Bristol*, given us by *Dr. Calamy*. As it displays the character of the man in a much clearer view than we can place it by any thing we are able to say, and as it reflects much honour upon the Bishop, considering the darkness of the times, we give it at large.

Bishop.

Bishop. What is your name?

Wesley. John Wesley.

B. There are many great matters charged upon you.

W. May it please your Lordship, Mr. *Horlock* was at my house on Tuesday last, and acquainted me that it was your Lordship's desire I should come to you: and on that account I am here to wait on you.

B. By whom were you ordained? Or are you ordained?

W. I am sent to preach the Gospel.

B. By whom were you sent?

W. By a Church of Jesus Christ.

B. What Church is that?

W. The Church of Christ at *Melcomb*.

B. That factious and heretical Church!

W. May it please you, Sir, I know no faction or heresy that Church is guilty of.

B. No! Did not you preach such things as tend to faction and heresy?

W. I am not conscious to myself of any such preaching.

B. I am informed by sufficient men, Gentlemen of honour of this county, viz. Sir *Gerrard Napper*, Mr. *Freak*, and Mr. *Tregonnel* of your doings. What say you?

W. Those honoured gentlemen I have been with; who being by others misinformed proceeded with some heat against me.

B. There are oaths of several honest men, and shall we take your word for it, that all is but misinformation?

W. There

W. There was no oath given or taken. Besides, if it be enough to accuse, who shall be innocent?— I can appeal to the determination of the great *Day of Judgment*, that the large catalogue of matters laid to me, are either things invented or mistaken.

B. Did not you ride with your sword, in the time of the *committee of safety*, and engage with them.

W. Whatever imprudences in civil matters you may be informed I am guilty of, I shall crave leave to acquaint your lordship, that his Majesty having pardoned them fully, I shall wave any other answer.

B. In what manner did the church you spake of, send you to preach? At this rate every body might preach.

W. Not every one. Every body has not preaching gifts and preaching graces. Besides, that is not all I have to offer to your lordship to justify my preaching.

B. If you preach, it must be according to order, the order of the *Church of England*, upon ordination.

W. What does your Lordship mean by ordination?

B. Do not you know what I mean?

W. If you mean that sending spoken of Rom. x. I had it.

B. I mean that; What mission had you?

W. I had a mission from God and man.

B. You must have it according to law, and the order of the *Church of England*.

W. I am not satisfied in my spirit therein.

B. Not satisfied in your spirit! You have more
new.

new-coined phrases than ever were heard of! You mean your conscience, do you not?

W. Spirit is no new phrase. We read of being sanctified in soul, body, and spirit.

B. By spirit there we are to understand the upper region of the soul.

W. Some think we are to take it for the conscience: but if your lordship like it not so, then I say, I am not satisfied in conscience, as touching the ordination you speak of.

B. Conscience argues science, science supposes judgment, and judgment reason. What reason have you that you will not be thus ordained?

W. I came not this day to dispute with your lordship; my own inability would forbid me so to do.

B. No, no; but give me your reason.

W. I am not called to that office; and therefore cannot be ordained.

B. Why have you then preached all this while?

W. I was called to the work of the ministry; though not the office. There is as we believe, *Vocatio ad epus*, & *ad munus*.

B. Why may you not have the office of the ministry?

W. May it please your lordship, because they are not a people who are fit subjects for me to exercise office-work among them.

B. You mean a gathered church: but we must have no gathered churches in *England*; and you will see it so. For there must be a unity without divisions among us: and there can be no unity without uniformity.---

formity.----Well then, we must send you to your church, that they may dispose of you, if you were ordained by them.

W. I have been informed by my cousin *Pitfield* and others concerning your lordship, that you have a disposition inclined against morosity. However you may be prepossessed by some bitter enemies to my person: yet, there are others, who can and will give you another character of me. Mr. *Gliffon* hath done it. And Sir *Francis Tulford* desired me to present his service to you, and being my hearer is ready to acquaint you concerning me.

B. I asked Sir *Francis Tulford* whether the presentation to *Whitchurch* was his: Whose is it? He told me it was not his.

W. There was none presented to it these sixty years. Mr. *Walton* lived there. At his departure the people desired me to preach to them; and when there was a way of settlement appointed, I was by the trustees appointed, and by the triers approved.

B. They would approve any, who would come to them and close with them. I know they approved those who could not read twelve lines of *English*.

W. All that they did I know not: but I was examined touching gifts and graces.

B. I question not your gifts, Mr. *Wesley*; I will do you any good I can: but you will not long be suffered to preach, unless you will do it according to order.

W. I shall submit to any trial you shall please to make. I shall present your lordship with a confession
of

of my faith, or take what other way you please to insist on.

B. No, we are not come to that yet.

W. I shall desire those severals to be laid together, which I look on as justifying my preaching.

1. I was devoted to the service from mine infancy.

2. I was educated in order thereto at school, and in the Univerfity of *Oxford*.

B. What age are you ?

W. Twenty-five.

B. No fure, you are not !

W. 3. As a fon of the prophets, after I had taken my Degree, I preached in the country, being approved of by judicious able Christians, Minifters and others.

4. It pleased God to feal my labour with fuccefs, in the apparent converfion of many fouls.

B. Yea, that is it may be to your way.

W. Yea, to the power of godlinefs, from ignorance and profanenefs. If it please your lordfhip to lay down any evidences of godlinefs, agreeing with Scripture, and that are not found in thofe perfons intended, I am content to be difcharged the Miniftry. I will ftand or fall on the iffue thereof.

B. You talk of the power of godlinefs ; fuch as you fancy.

W. Yea, to the reality of religion. Let us appeal to any common-place-book for evidences of graces, and they are found in and upon them.

B. How many are there of them ?

W. I number not the people.

B. Where are they ?

W. Wherever

W. Wherever I have been called to preach. At Radpole, Melcomb, Turnwood, Whitchurch, and at sea. I shall add another ingredient of my Mission.

5. When the church saw the presence of God going along with me, they did, by fasting and prayer, on a day set apart for that end, seek an abundant blessing on my endeavours.

B. A particular church?

W. Yes, my Lord, I am not ashamed to own myself a member of one.

B. Why you may mistake the Apostles' intent. They went about to convert Heathens. You have no warrant for your particular churches.

W. We have a plain, full and sufficient rule for gospel-worship in the *New Testament*, recorded in the *Acts of the Apostles*, and in the *Epistles*.

B. We have not.

W. The practice of the Apostles is a standing rule in those cases which were not extraordinary.

B. Not their practice, but their precepts.

W. Both precepts and practice. Our duty is not delivered to us in scripture only by precepts, but by precedents; by promises, and by threatnings mixed. We are to follow them as they followed Christ.

B. But the Apostle said, "This speak I, not the Lord:" that is by revelation.

W. Some interpret that place, "This speak I now by revelation from the Lord," not the Lord in that text before instanced concerning divorces. May it please your lordship, we believe that "*Cultus non institutus, est indebitus.*"

B. It

B. It is false.

W. The second commandment speaks the same. Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven image.

B. That is, forms of your own invention.

W. Bishop *Andrews* taking notice of “*non facias tibi,*” satisfied me that we may not worship God, but as commanded.

B. Well then you will justify your preaching, will you, without ordination according to law?

W. All these things, laid together, are satisfactory to me, for my procedure therein.

B. They are not enough.

W. There has been more written in proof of preaching of gifted persons, with such approbation, than has been answered yet by any one.

B. Have you any thing more to say to me, Mr. *Wesley*.

W. Nothing: your lordship sent for me.

B. I am glad to hear this from your mouth, you will stand to your principles you say?

W. I intend it through the grace of God; and to be faithful to the King's majesty, however you deal with me.

B. I will not meddle with you.

W. Farewel to you, Sir.

B. Farewel, good Mr. *Wesley*.

His son, Mr. *Samuel Wesley*, was designed by his father for the Ministry among the Dissenters, and was accordingly sent to one of their Academies. While he resided there, his sentiments were so entirely changed, that he left the Academy without consulting

consulting any of his relations, and entered as a Student of *Exeter College, Oxford*. He took his Degrees in the usual way, and being ordained, was appointed Chaplain of a Man of War. After this he was presented to the Living of *Epworth*, and also to that of *Wroote*, both in the County of *Lincoln*.

Mr. *Samuel Wesley* married the youngest daughter of Dr. *Samuel Annesley*, a celebrated Nonconformist, and first Cousin to the Earl of *Anglesey*. Dr. *Annesley* was a man of great learning and piety. The gross irreligion of the royal party in the time of the Civil War, attached him (as it did many other good men, who lamented those unhappy discords) to the side of the Parliament. He was one of the Preachers at *Whitehall*. But after the death of the King, he would have nothing to do with those in power; but applied himself solely to his pastoral charge. He was ejected from the Living of *St. Giles, Cripplegate*, in *London*, in the year 1662. Several excellent Tracts were written by him: among which a Sermon on Universal Conscientiousness has been deservedly esteemed.

His daughter, Mrs. *Wesley*, was remarkable, not only for the graces of her own sex, but also for the wisdom and fortitude of the other. She was indeed a help meet for her pious and laborious husband. She bore him nineteen children: and though she charged herself with the early education of them all, and was, most of the time, in very straitened circumstances, yet several of her letters abundantly prove that she did not neglect the improvement of her mind. It may be profitable as well as entertaining to our Readers, if we give them a few extracts of her Epistles.

In a letter to her son, Mr. *John Wesley*, dated at *Wroote*, June 8, 1725, she makes the following observations :

“It is stupid to say, nothing is an affliction to a good man. That is an affliction, which God makes an affliction, either to good or bad. Nor do I understand, how any man can thank God for present misery ; yet do I very well know what it is to rejoice in the midst of deep afflictions : not in the affliction itself, for then it would necessarily cease to be one ; but in this we may rejoice, that we are in the hand of a God, who never did, nor ever can exert his power in any act of injustice, oppression, or cruelty. In the power of that superior wisdom which disposes all events, and has promised, that “all things shall work together for good” (for the spiritual and eternal good) “of those that love him,” we may rejoice in hope, that Almighty Goodness “will not suffer us to be tempted above what we are able, but will with the temptation make a way to escape, that we may be able to bear it.” In a word, we may and ought to rejoice, that God has assured us, he will never leave us, nor forsake us ; but if we continue faithful to him, he will take care to conduct us safely through all the changes and chances of this mortal life, to those blessed regions of joy and immortality, where sin and sorrow can never enter.”

In another, dated February 14, 1735, she observes :

“Since God is altogether inaccessible to us but by Jesus Christ, and since none ever was, or ever will be saved but by Him, is it not absolutely necessary for

all people, young and old, to be grounded in the knowledge and faith of Jesus Christ. By faith I do not mean, an assent only to the truths of the Gospel concerning him, but such an assent as influences our practice, as makes us heartily and thankfully accept him for our God and Saviour upon his own conditions. No faith below this can be saving."

In a third, dated *Gainsborough*, November 27, 1735, she writes :

"God is Being itself; the I AM! And therefore must necessarily be the Supreme Good. He is so infinitely blessed, that every perception of his blissful presence imparts a vital gladness to the heart. Every degree of approach toward him, is in the same proportion a degree of happiness. And I often think, that were he always present to our minds, as we are present to him, there could be no pain or sense of misery. I have long since chose him for my only good; my all, my pleasure, my happiness in this world, as well as in the world to come. And although I have not been so faithful to his grace, as I ought to have been, yet I feel my spirit adheres to its choice, and aims daily at cleaving stedfastly unto God. Yet one thing often troubles me, that notwithstanding I know, while we are present with the body, we are absent from the Lord; notwithstanding I have no taste, no relish left for any thing the world calls pleasure; yet I do not long to go home as in reason I ought. This often shocks me: and as I constantly pray (almost without ceasing) for thee, my son, so I
beg

beg you likewise to pray for me, that God would make me better, and take me at the best."

Some years before her death, she received such manifestations of the grace and love of God, as delivered her from every doubt and every fear, and enabled her to rejoice continually in the Lord. But of these particulars, with the circumstances of her death, we shall give a full account in the course of the history.

These few extracts out of a great variety which might be produced, are sufficient to shew the strength of her understanding, and the excellence of her spirit. There are also some Meditations written by her in the manner of Mrs. Rowe, which evidence the piety of her mind in a strong and pleasing light.

But to return. Mr. *Samuel Wesley*, her husband, was a man of considerable learning and great integrity. He was also of eminent usefulness as the minister of a large parish, the inhabitants of which in general neither feared God nor regarded man, when he came to reside among them. His Paraphrase of the Book of Job incontestably proves the extent and depth of his erudition.* He wrote also many things in verse,

"With *Vida's* piety, though not his fire,"

as his eldest son remarks. His poetry indeed is not generally admired. Yet there is one performance which abundantly compensated for all those in which he failed. It may be doubted if there be in

* Mr. *Pope* in a letter to Dr. *Swift*, in which he requests the Dean to get subscriptions for that work, observes, "I call him what he is, a learned man, though you know I do not admire his poetry."

the English language any thing more excellent in its kind, than his translation of *Eupolis'* hymn to the Creator.

And therefore, though we are sensible that this hymn is in the hands of several of our readers, we cannot refrain from presenting it to the public, not only as a proof of the talents of this good man, but as being one of the finest pictures extant of *Gentile* piety.

T H E H Y M N.

AUTHOR of Being, Source of Light,
 With unfading beauties bright,
 Fulness, Goodness, rolling round
 Thy own fair orb without a bound :
 Whether thee thy suppliants call,
 Truth, or Good, or One, or All,
Ei, or *Jao* ; Thee we hail
 Essence that can never fail,
Grecian or *Barbaric* name,
 Thy steadfast Being still the same.
 Thee when morning greets the skies :
 With rosy cheeks and humid eyes ;
 Thee, when sweet declining day
 Sinks in purple waves away ;
 Thee will I sing, O Parent *Jove*,
 And teach the world to praise and love

Yonder azure vault on high,
 Yonder blue, low, liquid sky,
 Earth on its firm basis plac'd,
 And with circling waves embrac'd,
 All creating pow'r confess,
 All their mighty Maker bless,

Thou shak'st all nature with thy nod,
 Sea, earth and air confess the God.
 Yet does thy pow'ful hand sustain
 Both earth and heaven, both firm and main.

Scarce can our daring thought arise
 To thy pavilion in the skies :
 Nor can *Plato's* self declare
 The bliss, the joy, the rapture there.
 Barren above thou dost not reign,
 But circled with a glorious train,
 The sons of God, the sons of light,
 Ever joying in thy sight :
 (For thee their silver harps are strung,)
 Ever beauteous, ever young,
 Angelic forms their voices raise,
 And through heav'n's arch resound thy praise.

The feather'd souls that swim the air,
 And ba'he in liquid ether there,
 The lark, precentor of their choir,
 Leading them higher still and higher,
 Listen and learn ; th' angelic notes
 Repeating in their warbling throats :
 And ere to soft repose they go,
 Teach them to their Lords below :
 On the green turf, their mossy nest,
 The evening anthem swells their breast.
 Thus like thy golden chain from high,
 Thy praise unites the earth and sky.

Source of light, Thou bidst the sun
 On his burning axles run :
 The stars like dust around him fly,
 And strew the area of the sky.

He drives so swift his race above,
 Mortals can't perceive him move :
 So smooth his course, oblique or straight,
Olympus shakes not with his weight,
 As the queen of solemn night
 Fills at his vase her orb of light,
 Imparted lustre ; thus we see,
 The solar virtue shines by thee.

Eiresione we'll no more,
 Imaginary pow'r, adore ;
 Since oil, and wool, and cheerful wine,
 And life-sustaining bread are thine.

Thy herbage, O great *Pan*, sustains
 The flocks that graze our *Attic* plains ;
 The Olive, with fresh verdure crown'd,
 Rises pregnant from the ground :
 At thy command it shoots and springs,
 And a thousand blessings brings.
Minerva only is thy mind,
 Wisdom, and bounty to mankind.
 The fragrant thyme, the bloomy rose,
 Herb, and flow'r, and shrub that grows
 On *Thesalian Tempe's* plain,
 Or where the rich *Sabaans* reign,
 That treat the taste, or smell, or sight,
 For food, for med'cine, or delight ;
 Planted by thy parent care,
 Spring, and smile, and flourish there,

O ye nurses of soft dreams,
 Reedy brooks, and winding streams,
 Or murn'ring o'er the pebbles there,
 Or sliding thro' the meadows green.

Or where thro' matted sedge you creep,
 Travelling to your parent deep :
 Sound his praise, by whom you rose,
 That Sea, which neither ebbs nor flows.

O ye immortal woods and groves,
 Which the enamour'd Student loves ;
 Beneath whose venerable shade,
 For thought and friendly converse made,
 Fam'd *Hecadem*, old hero, lies,
 Whose shrine is shaded from the skies,
 And thro' the gloom of silent night
 Projects from far its trembling light :
 You, whose roots descend as low,
 As high in air your branches grow :
 Your leafy arms to heaven extend,
 Bend your heads, in homage bend ;
 Cedars, and pines that wave above,
 And the Oak belov'd of *Jove*.

Omen, Monster, Prodigy,
 Or nothing are, or, *Jove*, from thee ?
 Whether varied nature play,
 Or re-invers'd thy will obey,
 And to rebel man declare
 Famine, plague, or wasteful war.
 Laugh, ye profane, who dare despise
 The threatening vengeance of the skies !
 Whilst the pious, on his guard,
 Undismay'd is still prepar'd :
 Life or death, his mind's at rest,
 Since what thou send'st must needs be best.

No evil can from thee proceed :
 'Tis only suffer'd, not decreed.

Darkness is not from the sun,
 Nor mount the shades 'till he is gone ;
 Then does night obscene arise
 From Erebus, and fill the skies ;
 Fantastic forms the air invade,
 Daughters of nothing and of shade.

Can we forget thy guardian care,
 Slow to punish, prone to spare !
 Thou brak'st the haughty *Persian's* pride,
 That dar'd old ocean's pow'r deride ;
 Their shipwrecks strew'd th' *Eubean* wave,
 At Marathon they found a grave.
 O ye blest *Greeks*, who there expir'd,
 For *Greece* with pious ardor fir'd :
 What shrines or altars shall we raise
 To secure your endless praise ?
 Or need we monuments supply,
 To rescue what can never die !

And yet a greater hero far
 (Unless great *Socrates* could err)
 Shall rise to bless some future day,
 And teach to live, and teach to pray.
 Come, unknown Instructor, come !
 Our leaping hearts shall make thee room ;
 Thou with *Jove* our vows shalt share,
 Of *Jove* and thee we are the care.

O Father, King, whose heav'nly face
 Shines serene on all thy race,
 We thy magnificence adore,
 And thy well known aid implore :

Nor vainly for thy help we call;
Nor can we want: for Thou art All! *

We cannot omit observing that the famous speech which was delivered by Dr. *Sacheverel* before the House of Lords, in the reign of Queen *Anne*, was composed by Mr. *Samuel Wesley*: as his son Mr. *John Wesley* informs us in his *History of England*.

The death of this pious man, though not accompanied with that clearness of faith, or that triumphant joy, which many have been favoured with, who have lived in a brighter day, is nevertheless a strong proof that he walked in all good conscience before God. It is thus described by the late Mr. *Charles Wesley* in a Letter to his brother *Samuel*.

Epworth, April 30, 1735.

Dear Brother,

“AFTER all your desire of seeing my father alive, you are at last assured you must see his face no more till he is raised in incorruption. You have reason to envy us, who could attend him in the last stage of his illness. The few words he could utter I saved, and hope never to forget. Some of them were, “Nothing too much to suffer for heaven. The weaker I am in body, the stronger and more sensible support I feel from God. There is but a step between me and

* This Hymn may throw light on that passage of *St. Paul* respecting the Heathen, *Rom. i. 21, &c.* “When they knew God, they glorified him not as God.—Wherefore God gave them up, &c.” Their Polytheism was a punishment consequent upon their apostasy from the true God,

death;

death; to-morrow I would see you all with me round this table, that we may once more drink of the cup of blessing, before we drink of it new in the kingdom of God. With desire have I desired to eat this pass-over with you before I die." The morning he was to communicate, he was so exceeding weak and full of pain, that he could not without the utmost difficulty receive the elements, often repeating, "Thou shakest me, thou shakest me;" but immediately after receiving, there followed the most visible alteration. He appeared full of faith and peace, which extended even to his body; for he was so much better, that we almost hoped he would have recovered. The fear of death he had entirely conquered, and at last gave up his latest human desires of finishing *Job*, paying his debts, and seeing you. He often laid his hand upon my head, and said, "Be steady. The christian faith will surely revive in this kingdom; you shall see it, though I shall not." To my sister *Emily*, he said, "Do not be concerned at my death, God will then begin to manifest himself to my family." When we were met about him, his usual expression was, "Now let me hear you talk about heaven." On my asking him, whether he did not find himself worse, he replied, "O my *Charles*, I feel a great deal; God chastens me with strong pain, but I praise him for it, I thank him for it, I love him for it." On the 25th, his voice failed him, and nature seemed entirely spent, when, on my brother's asking, "Whether he was not near heaven," he answered distinctly, and with the most of hope and triumph that could be expressed in
sounds,

sounds, "Yes, I am." He spoke once more just after my brother had used the commendatory prayer; his last words were, "Now you have done all!" This was about half an hour after six, from which time till sun-set, he made signs of offering up himself, till my brother, having again used the prayer, the very moment it was finished he expired. His passage was so smooth and insensible, that notwithstanding the stopping of his pulse, and ceasing of all sign of life and motion, we continued over him a considerable time, in doubt whether the soul was departed or no. My mother (who for several days before he died, hardly ever went into his chamber but she was carried out again in a fit) was far less shocked at the news than we expected, and told us that now she was heard, in his having so easy a death, and her being strengthened so to bear it."

His eldest son, *Samuel*, was born at *Epworth*, in the year 1690. Concerning the childhood of this Gentleman, there is something very remarkable. He did not speak at all, till he was more than four years old; and was thought to be deficient in understanding. But he one day answered a question, which was proposed to another concerning him, in such a way as greatly surpris'd all that were present: and from that time spoke without any difficulty. He was educated at *Westminster* School, and afterwards took the Degree of Master of Arts at *Christ-Church* College, *Oxford*. He was allow'd by all that knew him, and were judges, to possess a very fine Classical taste, and a very considerable knowledge in the Sciences. From *Oxford* he returned

returned to *Westminster* to officiate as an Usher. On vacancy in the place of second Master, it was thought by many of his friends, that no person should be preferred before him. But his intimacy with the Earl of *Oxford*, Bishop *Atterbury*, and Mr. *Pope*, and the frequent exertions of his wit against Sir *Robert Walpole*, the Minister of that day, prevented his advancement. The ostensible reason given, was *his being married*, which occasioned him to send an elegant Poetical Compliment to his wife, glorying in his fault, and refusing to repent.

He possessed the fear of God and much benevolence but was unhappily prejudiced against some of the highest truths of the Gospel. Many of the Dissenters insisted on those great truths: but he having been educated in the highest Church-principles, imbibed a dislike to those very truths themselves, because they were so zealously enforced out of the pale of the Church, although they are so plainly taught in the Articles and Homilies of the Church of *England*. Some of his Letters to his brother *John* are still extant, and evidence a most determined disapprobation of the *new Faith*, as he is pleased to term “the Knowledge of Salvation by the remission of our sins.” He published a Quarto Volume of Poems, some of which were of considerable merit. The battle of the sexes which was suggested to him by a paper in the *Guardian* has been much admired. We will give specimens of his abilities for *English* and *Latin* poetry.

A H Y M N.

THE morning-flowers display their sweets,
And gay their silken leaves unfold,
As careles of the noon-tide heats,
And fearless of the evening cold.

Nipt by the wind's unkindly blast,
Parch'd by the sun's directer ray,
The momentary glories waste,
The short-lived beauties die away.

So blooms the human face divine,
When youth its pride of beauty shows:
Fairer than spring the colours shine,
And sweeter than the virgin-rose.

Or worn by slowly-rolling years,
Or broke by sickness in a day,
The fading glory disappears,
The short-lived beauties die away.

Yet these, new rising from the tomb,
With lustre brighter far shall shine;
Revive with ever-during bloom,
Safe from diseases and decline.

Let sickness blast, let death devour,
If heaven must recompense our pains;
Perish the grass, and fade the flower,
If firm the word of God remains.

On DR. ALDRICH, Dean of Christ-Church, Oxon

Cum subit illius lætissima frontis imago,
 Quem nostri toties explicuere sales :
 Cum subit & canum caput, & vigor acer ocelli,
 Et digna mistus cum gravitate lepos :
 Solvimur in lachrymas, & inania munera versus
 Ad tumulum sparsis fert Elegia cornus.
 Aldricio, debent cui munera tanta Camænæ,
 Hoc tribuisse parum est, non tribuisse scelus.

The following translation may give some faint idea of the original, though it falls far short of it.

That cheerful aspect when we call to mind,
 So often smiling at our artless verse ;
 That mirth with serious dignity combin'd,
 That vivid piercing eye, the silver hairs :
 We melt in tears, and pensively bestow
 (Vain presents !) all we have, our grateful lays,
 Small to give this to whom so much we owe !
 Yet sin it were this trophy not to raise.

*His EPITAPH well expresses his CHARACTER, and
 believe does not exceed the truth.*

Here lie, interred,
 The Remains of the Rev. *Samuel Wesley*, A. M.
 Sometime Student of Christ-church, Oxon :
 A man, for his uncommon wit and learning,
 For the benevolence of his temper,
 And the simplicity of his manners,

Deservedly

Deservedly beloved and esteemed by all.

An excellent Preacher :

But whose best sermon

Was the constant example of an edifying life.

So continually and zealously employed

In acts of beneficence and charity,

'That he truly followed

His blessed Master's example,

In going about, doing good,

Of such scrupulous integrity,

That he declined occasions of advancement in the world
Thro' fear of being involved in dangerous compliances,

And avoided the usual ways to preferment

As studiously as many others seek them.

Therefore, after a life spent

In the laborious employment of teaching youth,

First, for near twenty years,

As one of the Ushers in Westminster-school:

Afterwards, for seven years,

As head-master of the free-school, at Tiverton,

He resigned his soul to God,

November 6. 1739. in the 49th year of his age.

Mr. *Charles Wesley*, the third son, was born at *Epworth* in 1708. He received part of his education at *Westminster*. and was afterwards admitted as a student of *Christ-Church College, Oxford*, where he took the degree of *Master of Arts*. He was a good scholar : and at a very early age began to display those poetic talents, which afterwards shone with such peculiar lustre. It is concerning his compositions, that Mr. *John Wesley* writes

writes such strong encomiums in his preface to his large Hymn-book. "In these hymns, (says he) there is no doggerel, no betches, nothing put in to patch up the rhyme: no feeble expletives. Here is nothing turgid or bombast, on the one hand, or low and creeping on the other. Here are no cant expressions, no words without meaning. Here are (allow me to say) both the purity, the strength and the elegance of the *English* language, and at the same time the utmost simplicity and plainness, suited to every capacity."

Mr. *Charles Wesley* wrote short hymns on most of the remarkable passages of the Old and New Testament, and very largely on some parts of both. His Hymns and sacred Poems are an invaluable treasure. There is not a point of divinity, doctrinal, experimental, or practical, which he has not illustrated in *Verse*, which for purity, and often for sublimity, may vie with any thing in the *English* language. But they especially evidence that the mind of the Writer was deeply impressed with his subject, and fully acquainted with the religion of the heart.

As a Preacher he was mighty in the scriptures, and possessed a remarkable talent of uttering the most striking truths with simplicity, force and brevity. For some years after he left the University, he chiefly travelled with his brother, and shared in all his labours and dangers. He then married Miss *Sarah Gwynne*, a lady of a considerable family in the county of *Brecon* in *South Wales*. After his marriage he divided his ministry almost entirely between *London* and *Bristol*, and was rendered useful in the conversion and spiritual profit

profit of many souls in those cities. The circumstances of his death are related by his daughter *Sarah* in a letter to her uncle Mr. *John Wesley*, as follows :

Dear and honoured Uncle,

“ WE were all present, when my dear respected father departed this life. His end was what he particularly desired it might be, Peace !

“ For some months past he seemed totally detached from earth ; he spoke very little, nor wished to hear any thing read, but the Scriptures. He took a solemn leave of all his friends. I once asked, if he had any presages that he should die ? he said, “ No : but his weakness was such, that he thought it impossible he should live through March.” He kindly bade me remember him : and seemed to have no doubt, but I should meet him in heaven.

“ All his prayer was, “ Patience and an easy death !” He bade every one who visited him, to supplicate for these, often repeating, “ an easy death !”

“ He told my mother, the week before he departed, that no fiend was permitted to approach him ; and said to us all. “ I have a good hope !”

“ When we asked if he wanted any thing, he frequently answered, “ Nothing but Christ.” Some person observed, that the valley of the shadow of death was hard to be passed. “ Not with Christ,” replied he.

“ On March the 27th (after a most uneasy night) he prayed as in an agony, that he might not have many such nights. “ O my God,” said he, “ not many !” It was with great difficulty he seemed to speak. About

ten days before, on my brother *Samuel's* entering the room, he took hold of his hand, and pronounced, with a voice of faith, "I shall bless God to all eternity, that ever you were born: I am persuaded I shall!"

"My brother *Charles* also seemed much upon his mind: "That dear boy, said he, God bless him!" He spoke less to me than to the rest, which has since given me some pain. However, he bade me trust in God, and never forsake him, and then, he assured me, he never would forsake me!

"The 28th my mother asked if he had any thing to say to us; raising his eyes, he said, "Only thanks! Love! Blessing!"

"Tuesday and Wednesday he was not entirely sensible. He slept much, without refreshment, and had the restlessness of death for I think the whole week.

"He was eager to depart, and if we moved him, or spoke to him, he answered, "Let me die! let me die!"

"A fortnight before, he prayed with many tears for all his enemies, naming Miss ——. "I beseech thee, O Lord, by thine agony and bloody sweat," said he, "that she may never feel the pangs of eternal death!"

"When your kind letter to my brother came, (in which you affectionately tell him, that you will be a father to him and my brother *Samuel*.) I read it to our father; "He will be kind to you," said he, "when I am gone: I am certain, your uncle will be kind to all of you."

"The

“ The last morning (which was the 29th of March) being unable to speak, my mother intreated him to press her hand, if he knew her, which he feebly did.

“ His last words which I could hear, were, “ Lord—my heart—my God!” He then drew his breath short, and the last so gently, that we knew not exactly the moment in which his happy spirit fled.

“ His dear hand was in mine for five minutes before, and at the awful period of his dissolution.

“ It often had been his desire that we should attend him to the grave ; and though he did not mention it again (as he did the place of his burial) during this illness, we all mean to fulfil his wish ; trusting we shall be supported, as we have been hitherto, in our afflicting situations. I am, your afflicted and dutiful Niece,

S. WESLEY.”

Chesterfield-Street,

April 4, 1788.

We know not any thing remarkable of Mr. *Wesley's* sisters, except of one who married a Mr. *Wright*. She is said to have been a person of remarkable understanding and taste, and of some knowledge in the Greek and Latin tongues. It is certain she possessed considerable poetic talents, which the following specimen will abundantly prove.

A FAREWELL to the WORLD.

WHILE sickness rends this tenement of clay,
 Th' approaching change with pleasure I survey.
 O'erjoy'd to reach the goal with eager pace,
 E'er my slow life has measur'd half its race.
 No longer shall I bear, my friends to please,
 The hard constraint of seeming much at ease,
 Wearing an outward smile, a look serene,
 While piercing racks and tortures lurk within,
 Yet let me not, ungrateful to my God,
 Record the evil, and forget the good.
 For both I humble adoration pay,
 And bless the Power, who gives, and takes away.
 Long shall my faithful memory retain,
 And oft recall each interval of pain.
 Nay, to high heaven for greater gifts I bend :
 Health I've enjoy'd, and I had once a friend,
 Our labour sweet, if labour it might seem,
 Allow'd the sportive and instructive scene :
 Yet here no lewd or useless wit was found ;
 We poiz'd the wavering sail with ballast sound.
 Learning here plac'd her richer stores in view,
 Or wing'd with love, the minutes gaily flew.

Nay, yet sublimer joys our bosoms prov'd,
 Divine benevolence, by heaven belov'd :
 Wan, meagre forms, torn from impending death,
 Exulting, blest us with reviving breath.
 The shivering wretch we cloath'd, the mourner cheer'd,
 And sickness ceas'd to groan, when we appear'd.
 Unask'd, our care assists with tender art
 Their bodies, nor neglects th' immortal part.

Sometimes in shades, unpierc'd by *Cynthia's* beam,
 Whose lustre glimmer'd on the dimpled stream,
 We wander'd innocent through *Sylvan* scenes,
 Or tripp'd, like fairies, o'er the level greens.
 From fragrant herbage deck'd with pearly dew,
 And flowrets of a thousand different hues,
 By wafting gales, the mingling odours fly,
 And round our heads in whispering breezes sigh.
 Whole nature seems to heighten and improve
 The holier hours of innocence and love :
 Youth, wit, good-nature, candour, sense, combin'd,
 To serve, delight, and civilize mankind ;
 In wisdom's lore we every heart engage,
 And triumph to restore the golden age.

Now close the blissful scene, exhausted muse,
 The latest blissful scene, that thou shalt chuse ;
 Sate with life, what joys for me remain,
 Save one dear wish, to balance every pain ;
 To bow my head, with grief and toil oppress'd,
 Till borne by angel-bands to everlasting rest.

Mr. *John Wesley* subjoins to this Poem the following note : “ It is but justice to her memory to observe, that she was at rest, before she went hence : being for some years a witness of that rest, which remains even here for the people of God.”

Mrs. *Hall*, her sister, was a woman of sense and piety. She long survived her unhappy husband, whose apostacy, and consequent misfortunes, have already been sufficiently published. She enjoyed for several years the company and friendship of her

brothers; and surviving them both, died in *London* in July 1791.

C H A P. II.

*Of the Birth, Education, and Residence at Oxford, of
Mr. W E S L E Y.*

MR. *John Wesley*, the second son of the Rev. *Samuel Wesley*, the grand subject of our History, was born June 17th, (old style) 1703. Of his mere childhood nothing very material has reached us, except a remarkable deliverance from fire, when he was about six years of age. What so nearly concerned the life of so great a man, cannot be unpleasing, or uninteresting, to relate. By accident, as all that have written concerning it have supposed, but according to his own account, by the wickedness of some of his father's parishioners, who could not bear the plain dealing of so faithful and resolute a pastor, the parsonage-house was set on fire. But the following letter from Mrs. *Susannah Wesley*, to a neighbouring Clergyman, with Mr. *John Wesley's* additions, will afford full information concerning the whole transaction.

Epworth, Aug. 24, 1709.

“ ON Wednesday night, February the ninth, between the hours of eleven and twelve, some sparks fell from the roof of our house, upon one of the children's (*Kitty's*) feet. She immediately ran to our chamber, and called us. Mr. *Wesley*, hearing a cry of
fire

fire in the street, started up: (as I was very ill, he lay in a separate room from me:) and opening his door, found the fire was in his own house. He immediately came to my room, and bade me and my two eldest daughters rise quickly and shift for ourselves. Then he ran, and burst open the Nursery-door, and called to the maid, to bring out the children. The two little ones lay in the bed with her; the three others, in another bed. She snatched up the youngest, and bade the rest follow; which the three elder did. When we were got into the hall, and were surrounded with flames, Mr. *Wesley* found he had left the keys of the doors above stairs. He ran up, and recovered them, a minute before the stair-case took fire. When we opened the street-door, the strong North East wind drove the flames in with such violence, that none could stand against them. But some of our children got out through the windows, the rest through a little door into the garden. I was not in a condition to climb up to the windows; neither could I get to the garden-door. I endeavoured three times to force my passage through the street-door, but was as often beat back by the fury of the flames. In this distress, I besought our blessed Saviour for help, and then waded through the fire, naked as I was, which did me no farther harm, than a little scorching my hands and my face.

When Mr. *Wesley* had seen the other children safe, he heard the child in the nursery cry. He attempted to go up the stairs, but they were all on fire, and would not bear his weight. Finding it impossible to

give any help, he kneeled down in the hall, and recommended the soul of the child to God."

Mr. *John Wesley* adds,

"I believe, it was just at that time I waked: for I did not cry as they imagined, unless it was afterwards. I remember all the circumstances as distinctly, as though it were but yesterday. Seeing the room was very light, I called to the maid to take me up. But none answering, I put my head out of the curtains, and saw streaks of fire on the top of the room. I got up, and ran to the door, but could get no farther, all the floor beyond it being in a blaze. I then climbed up on a chest, which stood near the window: one in the yard saw me, and proposed running to fetch a ladder. Another answered, "There will be no time: but I have thought of another expedient. Here, I will fix myself against the wall: lift a light man, and set him on my shoulders." They did so, and he took me out at the window. Just then the whole roof fell in: but it fell inward, or we had all been crushed at once. When they brought me into the house, where my father was, he cried out, "Come, neighbours! Let us kneel down: let us give thanks to God! He has given me all my eight children: let the house go: I am rich enough!"

"The next day, as he was walking in the garden, and surveying the ruins of the house, he picked up part of a leaf of his polyglot-bible, on which just these words were legible, *Vade; vende omnia quæ habes,*

Et attolle

Et attolle crucem Et sequere me. Go; sell all that thou hast: and take up thy cross and follow me."

We must not here omit to remark, that the incendiaries had twice before attempted to burn the house.

The memory of Mr. *John Wesley's* escape is still preserved in one of his early prints. Under his portrait, there is a house in flames, with this inscription, "Is not this a brand plucked out of the burning?" He remembered this remarkable event ever after with the most lively gratitude, and more than once has introduced it in his writings.

He seems to have been impressed with sentiments of religion at a very early age: and partook of the Lord's-Supper when he was only eight years old. From all that he himself has related to us, we have reason to believe that he never lost those serious impressions. He was placed when very young at the Charter-House in *London*, under that eminent scholar, *Dr. Walker*, with whom he soon became a favourite on account of his sobriety and application. Ever after he retained a remarkable predilection for that place, and was accustomed to walk through it once a year during his annual visit in *London*. He had some reasons however to complain of the usage he received at the Charter-house. Discipline was so exceedingly relaxed, that the boys of the higher forms were suffered to eat up, not only their own portions of animal food, but those also which were allowed the lesser boys. By this means he was limited for a considerable part of the time he remained at that school, to a small daily portion of bread as his only solid food. One thing he observed, as contributing among others to his general

general flow of health, and to the establishment of his constitution, was his invariable attention to a strict command of his father, that he should run round the Charter-house garden, which was of considerable extent, three times every morning.

From the Charter-house he was removed to Christ-Church College, *Oxford*, where he took his degree of Bachelor of Arts. In the year 1724, he was elected Fellow of *Lincoln* College, and two years after this he took his degree of Master of Arts.

He now became conspicuous as a scholar. Nor was he barely acquainted with the learned languages; he read them as a critic, and relished all their beauties.

He conversed fluently in Latin, which he spoke and wrote with remarkable purity and elegance. Those who were judges of the classic writers, and were frequently in his company, were surpris'd at the readiness with which he quoted the Greek and Latin poets, even to his latest days. The Greek Testament was as familiar to him as the *English*. His skill in logic is so well known, that it is almost proverbial. It has been said indeed that "he delighted to puzzle his opponents by the fallacies of that art." But he has often declared that he never in his life in any disputation, either in jest or earnest, designedly took the wrong side of the question; and lest he should be brought insensibly to this, he always avoided being opponent in the public disputations at the University. His own words in answer to Mr. *Badcock* are as follows. "It has been my first care for many years, to see that my cause was
good,

good, and never, either in jest or earnest, to defend the wrong side of a question. And shame on me, if I cannot defend the right, after so much practice; and after having been so early accustomed to separate truth from falsehood, how artfully soever they were twisted together."

His Poetic abilities were not inconsiderable, but he did not cultivate them much after he left the University. He looked upon himself as called to higher work; and he was soon so fully employed therein, that he was obliged wholly to give up the writing of Poetry. Nevertheless, the pieces he has published abundantly prove the strength and elegance of his genius in this respect. We shall select one of them as a specimen.

Part of the 104th PSALM paraphrased.

UPBORNE aloft on ventrous wing,
 While spurning earthly themes I soar,
 Through paths untrod before,
 What God, what seraph, shall I sing?
 Whom but thee should I proclaim,
 Author of this wondrous frame?

Eternal, uncreated Lord,
 Enshrin'd in glory's radiant blaze!

At whose prolific voice, whose potent word,
 Commanded nothing swift retir'd, and worlds began their race,

Thou, brooding o'er the realms of night,
 Th' unbottom'd, infinite abyss,
 Bad'st the deep her rage surcease,
 And saidst, let there be light!

Æthereal

Æthereal light thy call obey'd,
 Through the wide void her living waters past,
 Glad she left her native shade,
 Darkness turn'd his murmuring head,
 Resign'd the reins, and trembling fled ;
 The chrystal waves roll'd on, and fill'd the ambient waste,
 In light, effulgent robe, array'd
 Thou left'st the beauteous realms of day ;
 The golden towers inclin'd their head,
 As their Sovereign took his way.
 The all-incircling bounds (a shining train,
 Ministering flames, around him flew,
 Through the vast profound he drew,
 When, lo! sequacious to his fruitful hand,
 Heaven o'er th' uncolour'd void, her azure curtain threw,
 Lo! marching o'er the empty space,
 The fluid stores in order rise
 With adamantine chains of liquid glass,
 To bind the new-born fabric of the skies.
 Downward th' Almighty Builder rode,
 Old *Chaos* groan'd beneath the God,
 Sable clouds his pompous car,
 Harneſt winds before him ran,
 Proud to wear their Maker's chain,
 And told with hoarse-reefounding voice his coming from afar,
 Embryon earth the signal knew,
 And rear'd from night's dark womb her infant head :
 Though yet prevailing waves her hills o'erspread,
 And stain'd their sickly face with pallid hue.
 But when loud thunders the pursuit began,
 Back the affrighted spoilers ran :
 In vain aspiring hills oppos'd their race,
 O'er hills and vales with equal haste
 The flying squadrons past,

Till safe within the walls of their appointed place :
 There firmly fixt, their sure enclosures stand,
 Unconquerable bounds of ever-during sand !
 He spake : from the tall mountain's wounded side,
 Fresh springs roll'd down their silver-tide :

O'er the glad vales, the shining wanderers stray,
 Soft murmuring as they flow,
 While in their cooling wave inclining low,
 The untaught natives of the field their parching thirst allay.
 High seated on the dancing sprays,
 Checquering with varied light their parent streams,
 The feather'd quires attune their artless lays,
 Safe from the dreaded heat of solar beams.

Genial showers at his command,
 Pour plenty o'er the barren land :
 Labouring with parent throes,
 See! The teeming hills disclose
 A new birth : see chearful green,
 Transitory, pleasing scene,
 O'er the smiling landskip glow,
 And gladden all the vale below.
 Along the mountain's craggy brow,
 Amiably dreadful now ;
 See the clasping vine dispread
 Her genty-rising, verdant head :
 See the purple grape appear,
 Kind relief of human care !

Instinct with circling life, thy skill
 Uprear'd the olive's loaded bough :
 What time on *Lebanon's* proud hill
 Slow rose the stately cedar's brow.
 Nor less rejoice the lowly plains,
 Of useful corn the fertile bed,
 Than when the lordly cedar reigns,
 A beauteous, but a barren shade.

While in his arms the painted train,
 Warbling to the vocal grove,
 Sweetly tell their pleasing pain,
 Willing slaves to genial love:
 While the wild goats, an active throng,
 From rock to rock light-bounding fly,
 Jehovah's praise in solemn song
 Shall echo through the vaulted sky.

The Hymn on the attributes of God, which he published in his large Hymn-Book, and was composed by himself, is one of the most excellent of the kind in our Language. All the Hymns in his various publications, that were borrowed from the *German* (which are many) were translated by him. But he has frequently urged, as another reason for silencing his muse, that the superiour poetic genius of his brother rendered it unnecessary.

About the time of his removal to *Lincoln College*, he was deeply impressed with the thoughts of eternity, and has often mentioned his election to his Fellowship as a most happy event. It enabled him, he said, to cast off all those of his acquaintance, whose conversation he found injurious to him with respect to religion. On this occasion, he new-modelled his whole life, regulated his time, his studies, and his expences, and chose with great caution his future companions. In short, he acted in every respect as a man, who enquired, like *Job*, "Where is the place of wisdom?" And came to the same conclusion, that "the fear of the Lord is wisdom, and to depart from evil is understanding."

Being thus in some measure prepared for the ministry, for which he had from the beginning been designed by his father, he was ordained in the year 1725, by Dr. *Potter*, afterwards Archbishop of *Canterbury*, and preached his first sermon at *South Lye*, near *Oxford*. There is a letter of his father's now extant relating to this awful event, which cannot be unpleasing or unprofitable to the serious reader.

Wroote, Jan. 26, 1725.

Dear Son,

“ AS to what you mention of entering into Holy Orders, it is indeed a great work. I am pleased to find, you think it so: as well as that you do not admire a callow clergyman any more than I do. As to the motives, if it is no harm to desire getting into that office, even as *Eli's* sons, to eat a piece of bread: yet certainly a desire and intention to lead a stricter life, and a belief one should do so, is a better reason: though this should by all means be begun before, or ten to one, it will deceive us afterwards. But if a man be unwilling and undesirous to enter into orders, it is easy to guess, whether he say, so much as with common honesty, that he trusts he is “moved to it by the Holy Ghost.” But the principal spring and motive, to which all others should be only secondary, must undoubtedly be the glory of God, and the edification of our neighbour. And woe to him, who, with any meaner leading view, attempts so sacred a work. For this he should take all the care he possibly can,

can,

can, with the advice of wiser and older men, (especially imploring the direction and assistance of Almighty God, with all humility, sincerity, and intention of mind,) to qualify himself. The knowledge of the languages is a considerable help in this matter, which I thank God all my three sons have. But then this must be prosecuted to the thorough understanding the original text of the Holy Scriptures, by conversing with them long and constantly. You ask me, "Which is the best comment on *the Bible*?" I answer, the Bible itself. For the several paraphrases and translations of it in the polyglot, compared with the original, and with one another, are, in my opinion, to an honest, devout, industrious, and humble man, infinitely preferable to any comment I ever saw. But Grotius is the best, for the most part: especially on the New Testament. By all this you see, I am not for your going too hastily into orders. When I am for your taking them, you shall know: and it is not impossible, I may then be with you, if God so long spare the life and health of your affectionate father,

SAMUEL WESLEY.

P. S. Work and write while you can! You see, time has shaken me by the hand, and death is but a little behind him. My eyes and heart are now almost all I have left. And I bless God for them!"

Some time after his election to a Fellowship, he was appointed Greek Lecturer, and Moderator of the Classes.

He always regarded this last appointment, as a very gracious providence. It gave him a complete knowledge of that important branch of learning, by which he was afterwards enabled during his whole life to defend the truth against all opponents. "For several years," says he himself, "I was moderator in the disputations which were held six times a week at *Lincoln College* in *Oxford*. I could not avoid acquiring hereby some degree of expertness in arguing: and especially in discerning and pointing out well-covered and plausible fallacies. I have since found abundant reason to praise God for giving me this honest art. By this when men have hedged me in, by what they called demonstrations, I have been many times able to dash them in pieces: in spite of all its covers, to touch the very point where the fallacy lay: and it flew open in a moment."†

He was now fully employed between his public offices, and his pupils. Of the latter he took the greatest care, accounting himself not only responsible for them to their parents and the community, but to God. He laboured not only to make them scholars, but Christians also, and to that end wrote a form of prayers for them (which is still extant) for every day in the week.

His own address to the Tutors of the University, will clearly evidence the spirit in which he acted himself.

"Ye venerable men," says he, "who are more especially called to form the tender minds of youth,

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to

† See his works, vol. 17. page 79.

to dispel thence the shades of ignorance and error, and train them up to be wise unto salvation, Are you filled with the Holy Ghost? With all those fruits of the Spirit, which your important office so indispensably requires? Is your heart whole with God? Full of love and zeal to set up his kingdom on earth? Do you continually remind those under your care, that the one rational end of all our studies, is to know, love, and serve the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent? Do you inculcate upon them, day by day, that love alone never faileth? (Whereas, whether there be tongues, they shall fail, or philosophical knowledge, it shall vanish away :) and that without love, all learning is but splendid ignorance, pompous folly, vexation of spirit? Has all you teach an actual tendency to the love of God, and all mankind for his sake? Have you an eye to this end in whatsoever you prescribe, touching the kind, the manner, and the measure of their studies: desiring and labouring, that wherever the lot of these young soldiers of Christ is cast, they may be so many burning and shining lights, adorning the gospel of Christ in all things? And permit me to ask, Do you put forth all your strength in the vast work you have undertaken? Do you labour herein with all your might? Exerting every faculty of your soul? Using every talent which God hath lent you, and that to the uttermost of your power? Let it not be said, that I speak here, as if all under your care were intended to be clergymen. Not so: I only speak as if they were all intended to be Christians.”*

Mr. Wesley's

* His works, vol. 1. p. 86.

Mr. *Wesley's* labours as a tutor, were not in vain. The late Rev. Mr. *Hervey* was one of his pupils, and thus speaks of him with reference to the advantages he had received under his tuition at *Oxford*, in a letter dated, *Oxon*, Sept. 2, 1736.

“ AS for me, I am still a most weak, corrupt creature. But, blessed be the unmerited mercy of God, and thanks be to your never to be forgotten example, “That I am what I am.” And again,

“ Do you, dear Sir, put up your prayers, and Oh! let the mighty God set to his seal, that it may be unto me according to my heart's desire. Then will I invite you (my father, shall I call you, or my friend? For indeed you have been both unto me,) to meet me among the spirits of just men made perfect: since I am not like to see your face in the flesh any more for ever! § Then will I bid you welcome, yea, I will tell of your love, before the universal assembly, at the tremendous tribunal.”

In the postscript he adds,

“ I heartily thank you, as for all other favours, so especially for teaching me *Hebrew*. I have cultivated (according to your advice) this study, and am (blessed be God, the giver of knowledge) somewhat improved in this language.”

In another letter, dated *Weston*, near *Northampton*, Dec. 30, 1747, he observes, “ Assure yourself, dear Sir, that I can never forget that tender-hearted and generous Fellow of *Lincoln*, who condescended to

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§ Mr. *Wesley* was just going to sail for *Georgia* at this time.

take such compassionate notice of a poor undergraduate: whom almost every body condemned; and no man cared for his soul."

Mr. *Wesley's* own account of his religious views and impressions while at *Oxford*, is so worthy of observation, that we give it without any alteration.

"IN the year 1725, being in the twenty-third year of my age, I met with Bishop *Taylor's* "Rules and exercises of holy living and dying." In reading several parts of this book, I was exceedingly affected: that part in particular which relates to *purity of intention*. Instantly I resolved to dedicate *all my life* to God: *all my thoughts, and words, and actions*: being thoroughly convinced, there was no medium: but that *every part* of my life, (not *some only*) must either be a sacrifice to God, or myself, that is, in effect, to the devil.

"In the year 1726, I met with *Kempis's Christian Pattern*. The nature and extent of *Inward Religion*, the religion of the heart, now appeared to me in a stronger light than ever it had done before. I saw, that giving even *all my life* to God (supposing it possible to do this and go no farther) would profit me nothing, unless I gave *my heart, yea, all my heart*, to him. I saw that "Simplicity of intention and purity of affection," *one design* in all we speak or do, and *one desire*, ruling all our tempers, are indeed "The wings of the soul," without which she can never ascend to the mount of God.

"A year or two after, Mr. *Law's* "Christian Perfection" and "Serious Call" were put into my hands.

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These convinced me more than ever, of the absolute impossibility of being *half a Christian*. And I determined, through his grace, (the absolute necessity of which I was deeply sensible of,) to be *all-devoted* to God, to give him *all* my soul, my body, and my substance.

“ In the year 1729, I began not only to read, but to *study* the Bible as the one, the only standard of truth, and the only model of pure religion. Hence I saw, in a clearer and clearer light, the indispensable necessity of having *the mind which was in Christ*, and of *walking as Christ also walked*: even of having, not *some part* only, but *all the mind* which was in him, and of walking as he walked, not only in *many* or in *most* respects, but in *all* things. And this was the light wherein at this time, I generally considered religion, as an *uniform* following of Christ, an *entire* inward and outward conformity to our Master. Nor was I afraid of any thing more, than of *bending* this rule to the experience of myself, or of other men: of allowing myself in any *the least* disconformity to our grand Exemplar.”*

About this time a serious man, whom he had travelled many miles to see, said to him, “ Sir, you wish to serve God and go to heaven. Remember you cannot serve him alone. You must therefore *find* companions, or *make* them: the Bible knows nothing of solitary Religion.” He never forgot this. Therefore on his return to the University, he first spoke to his brother, the late Mr. *Charles Wesley*, and afterwards

* His works, vol. 24. p. 4, &c.

to Mr. *Morgan*, Mr. *Hervey*, Mr. *Whitfield*, and others. When they first began to meet, they read Divinity on the Sunday evenings, and on other nights the Greek and Latin classics. The summer following they began to visit the prisoners in the castle, and the sick poor in the town.

Their meetings now began to be more directly religious: they read and considered the Greek Testament on the week evenings, and conversed closely and deeply on the things of God. They now likewise observed the Fasts of the ancient Church every Wednesday and Friday, and communicated once a week. "We were now," says he, "about fifteen in number," *all of one heart and of one mind.*"

The spirit of this little association cannot be exemplified more fully, than by giving at large the *Scheme of Self-Examination* which was agreed upon and used by them.

LOVE OF GOD AND SIMPLICITY: *means of which are*
Prayer and Meditation.

HAVE I been simple and recollected in every thing I said or did? Have I 1. Been *simple* in every thing, i. e. looked upon God, as my Good, my Pattern, my One Desire, my Disposer, Parent of Good; acted wholly for him; bounded my views with the present action or hour? 2. *Recollected*? i. e. Has this simple view been distinct and uninterrupted? Have I done any thing without a previous perception of its being the will of God? Or without a perception of its
being

being an exercise or a means of the virtue of the day? Have I said any thing without it?

2. Have I prayed with fervour? At going in and out of Church? In the Church? Morning and evening in private? Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, with my friends? At rising? Before lying down? On Saturday noon? All the time I was engaged in exterior work? In private? Before I went into the place of public or private prayer, for help therein? Have I wherever I was, gone to Church morning and evening, unless for necessary mercy? And spent from one hour to three in private? Have I in private prayer frequently stopt short, and observed what fervour? Have I repeated it over and over, till I adverted to every word? Have I at the beginning of every prayer or paragraph owned I cannot pray? Have I paused before I concluded in his name, and adverted to *my Saviour* now interceding for me at the right hand of God, and offering up these prayers?

3. Have I daily used ejaculations? i. e. Have I every hour prayed for humility, faith, hope, love, and the particular virtue of the day? Considered, with *whom* I was the last hour, *what* I did, and *how*? With regard to recollection, love of man, humility, self-denial, resignation and thankfulness? Considered the next hour in the same respects, offered up all I do to my Redeemer, begged his assistance in every particular, and commended my soul to his keeping? Have I done this deliberately, (not in haste,) seriously, (not doing any thing else the while,) and fervently as I could?

4. Have I duly prayed for the virtue of the day?
i. e. Have I prayed for it at going out and coming in? Deliberately, seriously, fervently?

5. Have I used a Collect at nine, twelve and three? And Grace before and after eating? (aloud at my own room,) deliberately, seriously, fervently?

6. Have I duly meditated? Every day, unless for necessary mercy? 1. From six, &c. to prayers? 2. From four to five, (What was particular in the providence of this day?) How ought the virtue of the day to have been exerted upon it? How did it fall short? (Here faults.) 3. On Sunday, from six to seven, with *Kempis*? From three to four on redemption, or God's attributes? Wednesday and Friday from twelve to one on the passion? After ending a book, on what I had marked in it?

L O V E O F M A N .

1st. HAVE I been zealous to do, and active in doing good? i. e. 1. Have I embraced every probable opportunity of doing good, and preventing, removing, or lessening evil?

2. Have I pursued it with my might?

3. Have I thought any thing too dear to part with, to serve my neighbour?

4. Have I spent an hour at least every day in speaking to some one or other?

5. Have I given any one up, till he *expressly* renounced me?

6. Have

6. Have I, before I spoke to any, learned as far as I could, his temper, way of thinking, past life, and peculiar hindrances, internal and external? Fixed the point to be aimed at? Then the means to it?

7. Have I in speaking, proposed the motives, then the difficulties, then balanced them. then exhorted him to consider both calmly and deeply, and to pray earnestly for help?

8. Have I, in speaking to a stranger, explained what Religion is not, (not negative, not external) and what it is, (a recovery of the image of God,) searched at what step in it he stops, and what makes him stop there? Exhorted and directed him?

9. Have I persuaded all I could, to attend public prayers, sermons and sacraments? And in general, to obey the laws of the Church Universal, the Church of *England*, the State, the University, and their respective Colleges?

10. Have I, when taxed with any act of obedience, avowed it, and turned the attack with sweetness and firmness?

11. Have I disputed upon any practical point, unless it was to be practised just then?

12. Have I in disputing, (1.) Desired my opponent, to define the terms of the question: to limit it: what he grants, what denies: (2.) Delayed speaking my opinion; let him explain and prove his: then insinuated and pressed objections?

13. Have I after every visit, asked him who went with me, Did I say any thing wrong?

14. Have

14. Have I when any one asked advice, directed and exhorted him with all my power?

2dly. Have I rejoiced with and for my neighbour in virtue or pleasure? Grieved with him in pain, for him in sin?

3dly. Have I received his infirmities with pity, not anger?

4thly. Have I thought or spoke unkindly of or to him? Have I revealed any evil of any one, unless it was necessary to some particular good I had in view? Have I then done it with all the tenderness of phrase and manner, consistent with that end? Have I any way appeared to approve them that did otherwise?

5thly. Has good-will been, and appeared to be, the spring of all my actions toward others?

6thly. Have I duly used intercession? 1. Before, 2. After speaking to any? 3. For my friends on Sunday? 4. For my pupils on Monday? 5. For those who have particularly desired it, on Wednesday and Friday? 6. For the family in which I am, every day?"

We may here see the great sincerity and earnestness of Mr. *Wesley* and his friends. But the darkness of their minds, as to Gospel-truths, is very evident to those who are favoured with true, evangelical views. They faithfully improved all the religious knowledge they possessed or could acquire: and the Lord led them, or at least most of them, in due time, into greater light.

Being so strict in their deportment, so constant in the means of grace, and zealous of good works, they soon began to be noticed and ridiculed by the young gentlemen

gentlemen of the University, under the appellations of *Sacramentarians*, and *the Godly Club*, and afterwards of *Methodists*. This last title was given them in the first instance by a Fellow of *Merton-College*, in allusion to an ancient College of Physicians at *Rome*, who were remarkable for putting their patients under regimen, and were therefore called *Methodicæ*.

The sneers of the young men they little regarded. But when some of the Seniors of the University were offended, Mr. *Wesley* wrote to his father, and to some other gentlemen of piety and learning, for advice: and the answers were favourable. Part of two Letters from his father we subjoin.

1. "AND now as to your designs and employments, what can I say less of them than *Valde probo* :* and that I have the highest reason to bless God, that he has given me two sons together at *Oxford*, to whom he has given grace and courage to turn the war against the world and the devil, which is the best way to conquer them. They have but one more enemy to combat with, the flesh; which if they take care to subdue by fasting and prayer, there will be no more for them to do, but to proceed steadily in the same course, and expect the crown which fadeth not away. You have reason to bless God as I do, that you have so fast a friend as Mr. *Morgan*, who I see in the most difficult service is ready to break the ice for you. I think I must adopt Mr. *Morgan* to be my son, together with you and your brother *Charles*: and when I have such a Ternion to prosecute that war, wherein I am now

* *I greatly approve.*

Miles Emeritus, † I shall not be ashamed, when they speak with their enemies in the gate.

“ I am afraid lest the main objection you make against your going on in the business with the prisoners may secretly proceed from flesh and blood. For what can harm you, if you are followers of that which is so good? and which will be one of the marks by which the Shepherd of *Israel* will know his sheep at the last day?—Though if it were possible for you to suffer a little in the cause, you would have a Confessor's reward. You own none but such as are out of their senses would be prejudiced against your acting in this manner; but say, “ These are they that need a Physician.” But what if they will not accept of one who will be welcome to the poor prisoners? Go on then in God's name in the path which your Saviour has directed you, and that track wherein your father has gone before you! For when I was an Undergraduate at *Oxford*, I visited those in the Castle there and reflect on it with great satisfaction to this day. Walk as prudently as you can, though not fearfully, and my heart and prayers are with you.

“ Your first regular step is to consult with him (if any such there be) who has a jurisdiction over the prisoners, and the next is, to obtain the direction and approbation of your Bishop. This is Monday morning, at which time I shall never forget you. If it be possible I should be glad to see you all three here at the fine end of the summer. But if I cannot have that satisfaction, I am sure I can reach you every day

† *A worn-out Soldier.*

though you were beyond the *Indies*. Accordingly, to Him, who is every where, I now heartily commit you, as being your most affectionate and joyful father."

2. "THIS day I received both yours, and this evening in our course of reading, I thought I found an answer that would be more proper than any I myself could dictate; though since it will not be easily translated, I send it in the original. 2 Cor. vii. 4. Πολλή μοι Καύχησις ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν. περιέπλησαι τὸ πνεῦμα σου ὑπερπεραιοῦμαι τῇ χαρᾷ. * What would ye be? Would you be angels? I question whether a mortal can arrive to a greater degree of perfection, than steadily to do good, and for that very reason patiently and meekly to suffer evil: for my part, on the present view of your actions and designs, my daily prayers are, that God would keep you humble; and then I am sure, if you continue *to suffer for righteousness sake*, though it be but in a lower degree, *the Spirit of God and of glory* will in some good measure *rest upon you*. Be never weary of well-doing: never look back, for you know the prize and the crown are before you: though I can scarce think so meanly of you, as that you would be discouraged with *the crackling of thorns under a pot*. Be not high-minded, but fear; preserve an equal temper of mind under whatever treatment you meet with from a not very just or well-natured world. Bear no more sail than is necessary, but steer steady. The less you value yourselves for these unfashionable duties, (as there is no such thing as works of supererogation,) the more all good and wise men will value

* Great is my glorying of you. I am filled with comfort. I am exceeding joyful.

you,

you, if they see your actions are of a piece ; or, which is infinitely more, He by whom actions and intentions are weighed, will both accept, esteem and reward you."

About this time Mr. *Samuel Wesley*, jun. wrote the following copy of verses to his Brother *Charles* on the same subject.

THOUGH neither are o'erstock'd with precious time,
 If I can write it, you may read my rhyme :
 And find an hour to answer, I suppose,
 In verse harmonious, or in humble prose ;
 What I when late at Oxford could not say,
 My friends so num'rous, and so short my stay.

Say, does your christian purpose still proceed
 T' assist in ev'ry shape the wretches' need ?
 To free the prisoner from his anxious jail,
 When friends forsake him, and relations fail ?
 Or yet with nobler charity conspire
 To snatch the guilty from eternal fire ?
 Has your small squadron firm in trial flood,
 Without preciseness, singularly good ?
 Safe march they on 'twixt dangerous extremes
 Of mad profaneness and enthusiast dreams ?
 Constant in pray'r, while God approves their pains,
 His Spirit cheers them, and his Blood sustains !
 Unmov'd by pride or anger, can they hear
 The foolish laughter, or the envious sneer ?
 No wonder wicked men blaspheme their care,
 The devil always dreads offensive war,
 Where heav'nly zeal the sons of night pursues,
 Likely to gain, and certain not to lose,

The sleeping conscience wakes by dangers near,
And pours the light in, they so greatly fear.

One or two questions more before I end,
That much concern a brother and a friend.
Does *John* seem bent beyond his strength to go,
To his frail carcase literally foe?
Lavish of health, as if in haste to die,
And shorten time t' ensure eternity?

The Bishop of *Oxford*, and the Minister at the Castle, being also consulted, greatly approved of their proceedings. But the outcry daily increasing, they proposed both to their friends and opponents the following questions:

I. Whether it does not concern all men of all conditions, to imitate Him as much as they can, “who went about doing good?”

Whether all Christians are not concerned in that command; “While we have time let us do good to all men?”

Whether we shall not be more happy hereafter, the more good we do now?

Whether we can be happy at all hereafter, unless we have, according to our power, fed the hungry, cloathed the naked, visited those that are sick and in prison, and made all these actions subservient to a higher purpose, even the saving of souls from death?

Whether it be not our bounden duty always to remember, that He did more for us, than we can do for him, who assures us, “*Inasmuch as ye have done it*
unto

unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me ?”

II. Whether upon these considerations we may not try to do good to our acquaintance? Particularly, whether we may not try to convince them of the necessity of being Christians?

Whether of the consequent necessity of being scholars?

Whether of the necessity of method and industry in order to either learning or virtue?

Whether we may not try to persuade them to confirm and increase their industry, by communicating as often as they can?

Whether we may not mention to them the Authors whom we conceive to have wrote best on those subjects?

Whether we may not assist them as we are able from time to time, to form resolutions upon what they read in those Authors, and to execute them with steadiness and perseverance.

III. Whether upon the considerations above-mentioned, we may not try to do good to those that are hungry, naked, or sick? In particular, whether if we know any necessitous family, we may not give them a little food, cloaths, or phyfic, as they want?

Whether we may not give them, if they can read, a Bible, Common-prayer Book, or Whole Duty of Man?

Whether we may not now and then inquire how they have used them; explain what they do not understand, and enforce what they do?

Whether

Whether we may not enforce upon them more especially the necessity of private prayer, and of frequenting the Church and Sacrament ?

Whether we may not contribute what little we are able toward having their children cloathed and taught to read ?

Whether we may not take care that they be taught their catechism, and short prayers for morning and evening ?

IV. *Lastly*, Whether upon the considerations above-mentioned we may not try to do good to those that are in prison ? In particular, whether we may not release such well-disposed persons as remain in prison for small sums ?

Whether we may not lend smaller sums to those that are of any trade, that they may procure themselves tools and materials to work with ?

Whether we may not give to them who appear to want it most, a little money, or cloaths, or phyfic ?

Whether we may not supply as many as are serious enough to read, with a Bible, and Whole Duty of Man ?

• Whether we may not, as we have opportunity, explain and enforce these upon them, especially with respect to public and private prayer, and the blessed Sacrament ?”

As no person answered these questions in the negative, they went on their way rejoicing. But soon after this they suffered a severe loss in the death of Mr. *Morgan*. This gentleman's character is well drawn up by Mr. *Samuel Wesley*, jun. in the following poetic tribute to his memory.

We Fools counted his Life Madness.

IF ought beneath them happy souls attend,
 Let *Morgan* hear the triumph of a friend,
 And hear well-pleas'd. Let *Libertines* so gay
 With careless indolence despise the lay ;
 Let critic wits, and fools for laughter born,
 Their verdict pass with supercilious scorn ;
 Let jovial crowds, by wine their senses drown'd,
 Stammer out censure in their frantic round :
 Let yawning sluggards faint dislike display,
 Who, while they trust to-morrow, lose to-day ;
 Let such as these the sacred strains condemn :
 For 'tis true glory to be hiss'd by them.

Wise in his prime, he wait ed not for noon,
 Convinc'd, that mortal never liv'd too soon.
 As if foreboding here his little stay,
 He made his morning bear the heat of day :
 Fix'd, while unfading glory he pursues,
 No ill to hazard, and no good to lose.
 No fair occasion glides unheeded by ;
 Snatching the golden moments as they fly,
 He by few fleeting hours ensures eternity.

Friendship's warm beams his artless breast inspire,
 And tend'rest rev'ence for a much lov'd Sire.
 He dar'd for heav'n this flatt'ring world forego,
 Ardent to teach, as diligent to know :
 Unwarp'd by sensual views, or vulgar aims,
 By idle riches, or by idler names :
 Fearful of sin in every close disguise,
 Unmov'd by threat'ning, or by glozing lies.
 Seldom indeed the wicked came so far,
 Forc'd by his piety to defensive war ;

Whose zeal for other men's salvation shown,
 Beyond the reach of hell secur'd his own :
 Glad'ning the poor, where'er his steps he turn'd,
 Where pin'd the orphan, or the widow mourn'd ;
 Where prisoners sigh'd beneath guilt's horrid stain,
 The worst confinement and the heaviest chain,
 Where death's sad shade the uninstructed sight
 Veil'd with thick darkness in the land of light.
 Our Saviour thus fulfill'd his great design,
 (If human we may liken to divine)
 Heal'd each disease that bodies frail endure,
 And preach'd th' unhop'd-for Gospel to the poor.

To means of grace the last respect he shew'd,
 Nor sought new paths, as wiser than his God :
 Their sacred strength preserv'd him from extremes
 Of empty outside or enthusiast dreams.

He knew that works our faith must here employ,
 And that 'tis heaven's great business to enjoy.
 Fix'd on that heav'n, he death's approaches saw,
 Nor vainly murmur'd at our nature's law :
 Repin'd not that his youth so soon should go,
 Nor griev'd for fleeing pleasures here below.
 Of sharpest anguish scorning to complain,
 He fills with mirth the intervals of pain :
 Not only unappall'd, but joyful sees
 The dark, cold passage that must lead to peace :
 Strong with immortal bloom secure to rise,
 The tears for ever banish'd from his eyes.

Who now regrets his early youth would spend
 The life so nobly that so soon should end ?
 Who blames the stripling for performing more
 Than doctors grave, and prelates of threescore ?

Who now esteems his fervour indiscreet,
 His prayers too frequent, or his alms too great ?
 Who thinks, where blest he reigns beyond the sky,
 His crown too radiant, or his throne too high ?
 Who but the fiend, who once his course withstood,
 And whisper'd——“ Stay 'till fifty to be good ?”
 Sure, if believ'd, t' obtain his hellish aim,
 Adjourning to the time that never came.

A short time after this Mr. *John Wesley* wrote the following letter to his brother *Samuel* at *Westminster*, who appears to have too readily received some unfavourable reports concerning him and his friends at *Oxford*.

Lincoln College, Nov. 17, 1731.

Dear Brother,

“ CONSIDERING the changes that I remember in myself, I shall not at all wonder if the time comes, when we differ as little in our conclusions as we do now in our premises. In most we seem to agree already ; especially as to rising, not keeping much company, and sitting by a fire which I always do, if any one in the room does, whether at home or abroad. But these are the very things about which others will never agree with me. Had I given up these, or but one of them, *rising early*, which implies going to bed early (though I never am sleepy now) and keeping so little company, not one man in ten of those that are offended at me, as it is, would ever open their mouth against any of the other particulars. For
 the

the sake of these those are mentioned. The root of the matter lies here. Would I but employ a third of my money, and about half of my time, as other folks do, smaller matters would be easily overlooked. But I think "*Nil tanti est.*" *Nothing is of so much importance.*

"I have often thought of a saying of Dr. *Hayward*, when he examined me for priest's orders; "Do you know what you are about? You are bidding defiance to all mankind. He that would live as a christian priest, ought to know that, whether his hand be against every man or no, he must expect every man's hand should be against him." It is not strange that every man's hand who is not a christian, should be against him that endeavours to be so. But is it not hard, that even those that are with us should be against us; that a man's enemies (in some degree) should be those of the same household of faith? Yet so it is. From the time that a man sets himself to his business, very many, even of those who travel the same road, many of those who are before, as well as behind him, will lay stumbling-blocks in his way. One blames him for not going fast enough, or for having made no greater progress; another for going too far, which perhaps, strange as it is, is the more common charge of the two.

"This being a point of no common concern, I desire to explain myself upon it once for all, and to tell you freely, and clearly those general positions, on which I ground (I think) all those practices, for which I am generally accused of singularity. 1st. As to the end of my being I lay it down for a rule, that I cannot

be too happy, or therefore too holy, and thence infer that the more steadily I keep my eye upon the prize of our high calling, the better, and the more of my thoughts, and words, and actions, are directly pointed at the attainment of it. 2d. As to the instituted means of attaining it, I likewise lay it down for a rule, that I am to use them every time I may. 3d. As to prudential means, I believe this rule holds, of things indifferent in themselves; whatever I know to do me hurt, that to me is not indifferent, but resolutely to be abstained from; whatever I know to do me good, that to me is not indifferent, but resolutely to be embraced.

“ But ” it will be said, “ I am whimsical.” True, and what then? If by *whimsical* be meant simply *singular*, I own it; if singular without any reason, I deny it with both my hands, and am ready to give a reason to any that asks me, of every custom wherein I wilfully differ from the world. I grant, in many single actions, I differ unreasonably from others; but not wilfully; no, I shall extremely thank any one who will teach me to help it. But can I totally help it, till I have more breeding, or more prudence, to neither of which I am much disposed naturally; and I greatly fear my acquired flock of either will give me small assistance?

“ I have but one thing to add, and that is, as to my being *formal*. If by that be meant, that I am not easy and unaffected enough in my carriage, it is very true; but how shall I help it? I cannot be gently behaved by instinct; and if I am to try after it

by

by experience and observation of others, that is not the work of a month, but of years. If by formal be meant that I am serious, this too is very true; but why should I help it? Mirth, I grant, is fit for you; but does it follow that it is fit for me? Are the same tempers, any more than the same words or actions, fit for all circumstances? If you are to "rejoice evermore," because you have put your enemies to flight, am I to do the same, while they continually assault me? You are glad, because you are *passed from death to life*: well; but let him be afraid who knows not whether he is to live or die. Whether this be my condition or no, who can tell better than myself? Him who can, whoever he be, I allow to be a proper judge, whether I do well to be generally as serious as I can. I am, dear brother, your's, and my sister's, affectionate brother,

JOHN WESLEY."

To the Rev. Mr. *Wesley*,
Great *Dean's-yard*, *Westminster*.

During the latter part of Mr. *Wesley's* residence at *Oxford*, both he and his brother *Charles* kept up a close intimacy with Mr. *Law*. Twice or thrice in the year, they travelled about sixty miles *on foot* (that they might save the more money for the poor) in order to visit him: and his conversation was undoubtedly rendered very useful to them. One time Mr. *Law* observed to Mr. *John Wesley*, "You would have a philosophical religion, but there can be no such thing. Religion is the most plain, simple thing in the world.

It is only *We love him, because he first loved us.* This remark, as Mr. *Wesley* often observed, he never afterwards forgot. Another time Mr. *Law* perceiving Mr. *Wesley* much dejected, inquired the reason. "Because," said he, "I see so little fruit of all my labours." "My dear friend," replied Mr. *Law*, "You reverse matters from their proper order. You are to follow the divine light, wherever it leads you, in all your conduct. It is God alone that gives the blessing. I pray you, always mind your own work, and go on with cheerfulness: and God, you may depend upon it, will take care of his. Besides, Sir, I perceive you would fain convert the world. But you must wait God's own time. Nay, if after all he is pleased to use you only as *a hewer of wood or a drawer of water*, you should submit, yea, you should be thankful to him that he has honoured you so far." This advice also, as Mr. *Wesley* repeatedly acknowledged, "was rendered very profitable to him."

Mr. *Wesley* having occasionally assisted his father at *Epworth*, the old gentleman finding his health on the decline, and wishing that his son should succeed him, pressed him with great earnestness to make interest for the next presentation. But he was then so wedded to a College-life, and to the advantages he enjoyed in his retirement and chosen companions at *Oxford*, that he could not be persuaded to consent. His answer to his father, (a copy of which he also sent to his eldest brother, who had earnestly pressed him on the same subject,) is so weighty, and shews so clearly the state of his mind at this period,

that

that we shall give it entire, notwithstanding its length : for indeed we cannot without it have a full view of his sentiments, at this time, or of the reasons which induced him to decline applying for the Rectory of *Epworth*.

Dear SIR,

1st. “THE authority of a parent, and the call of providence, are things of so sacred a nature, that a question in which these are any ways concerned, deserves the most serious consideration. I am therefore greatly obliged to you for the pains you have taken to set ours in a clear light ; which I now intend to consider more at large, with the utmost attention of which I am capable. And I shall the more cheerfully do it, as being assured of your joining with me in earnestly imploring his guidance, who will not suffer those that bend their wills to his, to seek death in the error of their life.

2d. “I entirely agree, that “the glory of God, and the different degrees of promoting it, are to be our sole consideration and direction in the choice of any course of life ;” and consequently, that it must wholly turn upon this single point, whether I am to prefer a college-life, or that of a rector of a parish. I do not say the glory of God is to be my first, or my principal consideration, but my only one ; since all that are not implied in this, are absolutely of no weight ; in presence of this, they all vanish away, they are less than the small dust of the balance.

3d. “And,

3d. “And, indeed, till all other considerations were set aside, I could never come to any clear determination; till my eye was single, my whole mind was full of darkness. Every consideration distinct from this, threw a shadow over all the objects I had in view, and was such a cloud as no light could penetrate. Whereas, so long as I can keep my eye single, and steadily fixed on the glory of God, I have no more doubt of the way wherein I should go, than of the shining of the sun at noon-day.

4th. “That course of life tends most to the glory of God, wherein we can most promote holiness in ourselves and others. I say in ourselves and others, as being fully persuaded that these can never be put asunder. For how is it possible that the good God should make our interest inconsistent with our neighbour’s? That he should make our being in one state best for ourselves, and our being in another best for the Church? This would be making a strange schism in his body; such as surely never was from the beginning of the world. And if not, then whatever state is best on either of these accounts, is so on the other likewise. If it be best for others, then it is so for us; if for us, then for them.

5th. “However, when two ways of life are proposed, I should chuse to begin with that part of the question, which of these have I rational ground to believe will conduce most to my own improvement. And that not only because it is every physician’s concern to heal himself first, but because it seems we may judge with more ease, and perhaps certainty

oo, in which state we can most promote holiness in ourselves, than in which we can in others.

6th. "By holiness, I mean not fasting, or bodily austerities, or any other external means of improvement, but the inward temper, to which all these are subservient, a renewal of the soul in the image of God. I mean a complex habit of lowliness, meekness, purity, faith, hope, and the love of God and man. And I therefore believe, that in the state wherein I am, I can most promote this holiness in myself, because I now enjoy several advantages, which are almost peculiar to it.

7th. "The first of these, is daily converse with my friends. I know no other place under heaven where I can have always at hand half a dozen persons nearly of my own judgment, and engaged in the same studies: persons who are awakened into a full and lively conviction, that they have only one work to do upon earth; who are in some measure enlightened so as to see, though at a distance, what that one work is, viz. the recovery of that single intention and pure affection which were in Christ Jesus; who, in order to this, have according to their power renounced themselves, and wholly and absolutely devoted themselves to God: and who suitably thereto deny themselves, and take up their cross daily. To have such a number of such friends constantly watching over my soul, and according to the variety of occasions, administering reproof, advice, or exhortation, with all plainness, and all gentleness, is a blessing I have not yet found any christians to enjoy in any other part of the kingdom. And such a blessing it is, so conducive, if faithfully used, to the increase of all holiness,

ness, as I defy any one to know the full value of, till he receives his full measure of glory.

8th. "Another invaluable blessing which I enjoy here in a greater degree than I could any where else, is retirement. I have not only as much, but as little company as I please. I have no such thing as a trifling visitant, except about an hour in a month, when I invite some of the Fellows to breakfast. Unless at that one time, no one ever takes it into his head to set foot within my door, except he has some business of importance to communicate to me, or I to him. And even then, as soon as he has dispatched his business, he immediately takes his leave.

9th. "Both these blessings, the continual presence of useful, and uninterrupted freedom from trifling acquaintance, are exceedingly endeared to me, whenever I have spent but one week out of this place. The far greatest part of the conversation I meet with abroad, even among those whom I believe to be real Christians, turns on points that are absolutely wide of my purpose, that no way forward me in the business of life. Now, though they may have time to spare, I have none; it is absolutely necessary for such a one as me to follow with all possible care and vigilance; that excellent advice of Mr. *Herbert*,

Still let thy mind be bent, still plotting where,
And when, and how, the business may be done.

And this, I bless God, I can in some measure do, so long as I avoid that bane of piety, the company of good
fort

sort of men, lukewarm Christians (as they are called,) persons that have a great concern for, but no sense of religion. But these undermine insensibly all my resolutions, and quite steal from me the little fervour I have; and I never come from among these *Saints of the world* (as *John Valdesse* calls them) faint, dissipated, and shorn of all my strength, but I say, “God deliver me from a half-christian.”

10th. “Freedom from care I take to be the next greatest advantage to freedom from useless, and therefore hurtful company. And this too I enjoy in greater perfection here than I can ever expect to do any where else. I hear of such a thing as *the cares of this world*, and I read of them, but I know them not. My income is ready for me on so many stated days, and all I have to do is to count and carry it home. The grand article of my expence is food, and this too is provided without any care of mine. I have nothing to do, but at such an hour to take and eat what is prepared for me. My Laundress, Barber, &c. are always ready at Quarter-day, so I have no trouble on account of those expences. And for what I occasionally need, I can be supplied from time to time without any expence of thought. Now to convince me what a help to holiness this is (were not my experience abundantly sufficient) I should need no better authority than *St. Paul’s*, “I would have you be without carefulness. This I speak for your own profit, that ye may attend upon the Lord without distraction.” Happy is he “that careth only for the things of the Lord, how he may please the Lord.”

He

He may be holy both in body and spirit, after the Apostle's judgment, and I think that he had the Spirit of God.

11th. "To quicken me in making a thankful and diligent use of all the other advantages of this place, I have the opportunity of public prayer twice a day, and of weekly communicating. It would be easy to mention many more, and likewise to shew many disadvantages, which a person of greater courage and skill than I, could scarce separate from a country-life. But whatever one of experience and resolution might do, I am very sensible I should not be able to turn aside one of the thousand temptations that would immediately rush upon me. I could not stand my ground, no, not for one month, against intemperance in sleeping, eating and drinking; against irregularity in study, against a general lukewarmness in my affections, and remissness in my actions; against softness and self-indulgence, directly opposite to that discipline and hardship which become a soldier of Jesus Christ. And then when my spirit was thus dissolved, I should be an easy prey to whatever impertinent company came in my way. Then would the cares of the world, and the desire of other things, roll back with a full tide upon me. It would be no wonder, if, while I preached to others, I myself should be cast-away. I cannot therefore but observe, that the question does not relate barely to degrees of perfection, but to the very essence and being of it. *Agitur de vita & sanguine Turni.** The point is, whether I

* *My very life is at stake.*

shall, or shall not, work out my salvation, whether I shall serve Christ, or *Belial*.

12th. "What still heightens my fear of this untried state is, that when I am once entered into it, be the inconveniencies of it found more or less—*vestigia nulla retrorsum*—"When I am there, there I must stay." If my present way of life should ever prove less advantageous, I have almost continual opportunities of quitting it; but whatever difficulties occur in that, whether foreseen or unforeseen, there is no returning, any more than from the grave. When I have once launched out into that unknown sea, there is no recovering my harbour; I must on among whatever whirlpools, or rocks, or sands, though all the waves and storms go over me.

13th. "Thus much as to myself. But you justly observe, that we are not to consider ourselves alone; since God made us all for a social life, to which academical studies are only preparatory. I allow too that he will take an exact account of every talent which he has lent us, not to bury them, but to employ every mite we have received in diffusing holiness all around us. I cannot deny that every follower of Christ is, in his proportion, the light of the world, that whoever is such can no more be concealed than the sun in the midst of heaven; that being set as a light in a dark place, his shining out must be the more conspicuous; that to this very end was his light given, that it might shine at least to all that look towards him; and indeed that there is one only way of hiding it, which is, to put it out. Neither can I deny
that

that it is the indispensable duty of every christian to impart both light and heat to all who are willing to receive it. I am obliged likewise, unless I lie against the truth, to grant that there is not so contemptible an animal upon earth, as one that drones away life, without ever labouring to promote the glory of God, and the good of men; and that, whether he be young or old, learned or unlearned, in a College or out of it. Yet granting the superlative degree of contempt to be on all accounts due to a College-drone; a wretch that hath received ten talents, and yet employs none; that is not only promised a reward by his gracious master, but is paid before hand for his work by his generous founder, and yet works not at all; allowing all this, and whatever else can be said (for I own it is impossible to say enough) against the drowsy ingratitude, the lazy perjury of those who are commonly called harmless or good sort of men (a fair proportion of whom I must to our shame confess are to be found in Colleges) allowing this, I say, I do not apprehend it will conclude against a College-life in general. For the abuse of it does not destroy the use; though there are some here who are the lumber of the creation, it does not follow that others may not be of more service to the world in this station, than they could in any other.

14th. "That I in particular could, might, it seems, be inferred from what has been proved already, viz. That I could be holier here myself than any where else, if I faithfully used the blessings I enjoy; for to prove, that the holier any man is himself, the more
shall

shall he promote holiness in others, there needs no more than this one *postulatum*, the help which is done on earth, God does it himself. If so, if God be the sole agent in healing souls, and man only the instrument in his hand, there can no doubt be made, but that the more holy a man is, he will make use of him the more. Because he is more willing to be so used; because the more pure he is, he is the fitter instrument for the God of purity; because he will pray more, and more earnestly that he may be employed, and that his service may tend to his Master's glory; because all his prayers both for employment and success therein will the more surely pierce the clouds; because the more his heart is enlarged, the wider sphere he may act in without carefulness or distraction. And lastly, because the more his heart is renewed in the image of God, the more God can renew it in others by him, without destroying him by pride or vanity.

15th. "But for the proof of every one of these weighty truths, experience is worth a thousand reasons. I see, I feel them every day. Sometimes I cannot do good to others, because I am unwilling to do it; shame or pain is in the way; and I do not desire to serve God at so dear a rate. Sometimes I cannot do the good I desire to do, because I am in other respects too unholy. I know within myself, were I fit to be so employed, God would employ me in this work. But my heart is too unclean for such mighty works to be wrought by my hands. Sometimes I cannot accomplish the good I am employed in, because I do not pray more, and more fervently;

and sometimes even when I do pray, and that instantly, because I am not worthy that my prayer should be heard. Sometimes I dare not attempt to assist my neighbour, because I know the narrowness of my heart, that it cannot attend to many things, without utter confusion, and dissipation of thought. And a thousand times have I been mercifully withheld from success in the things I have attempted; because were one so proud and vain enabled to gain others, he would lose his own soul.

16th. “From all this I conclude, that where I am most holy myself, there I could most promote holiness in others; and, consequently, that I could more promote it here, than in any place under heaven. But I have likewise other reasons besides this to think so; and the first is, the plenteousness of the harvest. Here is indeed a large scene of various action. Here is room for charity in all its forms. There is scarce any way of doing good to our fellow-creatures, for which here is not daily occasion. I can now only touch on the several heads. Here are poor families to be relieved; here are children to be educated: here are work-houses wherein both young and old want, and gladly receive the word of exhortation; here are prisons to be visited, wherein alone is a complication of all human wants; and, lastly, here are the schools of the prophets; here are tender minds to be formed and strengthened, and babes in Christ to be instructed, and perfected in all useful learning. Of these in particular we must observe, that he who gains only one, does thereby as much service

service to the world as he could do in a parish in his whole life, for his name is *legion*; in him are contained all those who shall be converted by him. He is not a single drop of the dew of heaven; but *a river to make glad the city of God.*

17th. “ But *Epworth* is yet a larger sphere of action than this; there I should have the care of two thousand souls. Two thousand souls! I see not how any man living can take care of an hundred. * At least I could not; I know too well *Quid valeant humeri.* † Because the weight that I have already upon me, is almost more than I am able to bear, ought I to increase it ten-fold ?

—————*imponere Pelio Ossam*

Scilicet, atque Ossa frondosum involvere Olympum. ‡

Would this be the way to help either myself or my brethren, up to heaven? Nay, but the mountains I reared would only crush my own soul, and so make me utterly useless to others.

18th. “ I need but just glance upon several other reasons, why I am more likely to be useful here than any where else. As, because I have the joint advice of many friends in any difficulty, and their joint encouragement in any dangers. Because the good

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bishop

* How greatly did God enlarge his heart as well as his labours in process of time!

† How much I can bear.

‡ To heap mountains upon mountains like the ancient giants, in order to scale heaven.

bishop and vice-chancellor are at hand to supply (as need is) their want of experience ; because we have the eyes of multitudes upon us, who, even without designing it, perform the most substantial office of friendship, apprizing us where we have already fallen, and guarding us from falling again: lastly, because we have here a constant fund (which I believe this year will amount to near eighty pounds) to supply the bodily wants of the poor, and thereby prepare their souls to receive instruction.

19th. “ If it be said that the love of the people at *Epworth* balances all these advantages here ; I ask how long will it last ? Only till I come to tell them plainly that their deeds are evil, and to make a particular application of that general sentence, to say to each, *Thou art the man !* Alas, Sir, do I not know, what love they had for you at first ? And how have they used you since ? Why, just as every one will be used, whose business it is to bring light to them that love to sit in darkness.

20th. “ Notwithstanding, therefore, their present prejudice in my favour, I cannot quit my first conclusion, that I am not likely to do that good any where, not even at *Epworth*, which I may do at *Oxford*. And yet one terrible objection lies in the way ; “ Have you found it so in fact ? What have you done there in so many years ? Nay, have not the very attempts to do good, for want either of a particular turn of mind for the business you engaged in, or of prudence to direct you in the right method of doing it, not only been unsuccessful, but brought such con-

tempt upon you, as has in great measure disqualified you for any future success? And are there not men in *Oxford*, who are not only better and holier than you, but who having preserved their reputation, who being universally esteemed, are every way fitter to promote the glory of God in that place?"

21st. "I am not careful to answer in this matter. It is not my part to say whether God has done any good by my hands; whether I have a particular turn of mind for this or not; or whether the want of success in my past attempts, was owing to want of prudence, to ignorance of the right method of acting, or to some other cause. But the latter part of the objection, that he who is despised can do no good, that without reputation a man cannot be useful in the world, being the strong-hold of all the unbelieving, the vain-glorious, and the cowardly christians (so called) I will by the grace of God, see what reason *that* has thus continually to exalt itself against the knowledge of Christ.

22d. "With regard to contempt then (under which term I include all the passions that border upon it, as hatred, envy, &c. and all the fruits that flow from them, such as calumny, reproach, and persecution in any of its forms) my first position, in defiance of worldly wisdom, is this, "Every true christian is contemned wherever he lives, by all who are not so, and who know him to be such, i. e. in effect, by all with whom he converses; since it is impossible for light not to shine." This position I prove both from the example of our Lord, and from his express asser-

tons. First, from his example, if the disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his Lord, then, as our master was despised and rejected of men, so will every one of his true disciples. But the disciple is not above his master, and therefore the consequence will not fail him a hair's-breadth. Secondly, from his own express assertions of this consequence, "*If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more them of his household?*" (Matt. x. 25.) "*Remember*" (*ye that would fain forget, or evade it*) "*The word that I said unto you, the Servant is not greater than his Lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you.*" And as for that vain hope, that this belongs only to the first followers of Christ, hear ye him, "*All these things will they do to you, because they know not him that sent me.*" And again, "*Because ye are not of the world, therefore the world hateth you.*" (John xv. 19.) Both the persons who are hated, and the persons who hate them, and the cause of their hating them, are here clearly determined. The *hated* are all that are not of this world, that are born again in the knowledge and love of God; the *haters* are all that are of this world, that know not God, so as to love him with all their strength: the cause of their hatred is, the entire irreconcilable differences between their desires, judgments, and affections; because these know not God, and those are determined to know and pursue nothing besides him; because these esteem and love the world, and those count it dung and dross, and singly desire that love of Christ.

23d. " My

23d. “ My next position is this, “ Until he be thus contemned, no man is in a state of salvation.” And this is no more than a plain inference from the former ; for if all that are not of the world are therefore contemned by those that are, then till a man is so contemned, he is of the world, i. e. Out of a state of salvation. Nor is it possible for all the trimmers between God and the world, for all the dodgers in religion, to elude this consequence, which God has established, and not man, unless they could prove that a man may be of the world, i. e. void both of the knowledge and love of God, and yet be in a state of salvation. I must therefore, with or without leave of these, keep close to my Saviour’s judgment, and maintain that contempt is a part of that cross which every man must bear if he will follow him ; that it is the badge of his discipleship, the stamp of his profession, the constant seal of his calling ; inasmuch that, though a man may be despised without being saved, yet he cannot be saved without being despised.

24th. “ I should not spend any more words about this great truth, but that it seems at present quite voted out of the world ; the masters in *Israel*, learned men, men of renown, seem absolutely to have forgotten it ; nay, censure those who have not forgotten the words of their Lord, as setters forth of strange doctrines. And hence it is commonly asked, *how can these things be ?* How can contempt be necessary to salvation ? I answer, as it is a necessary means of purifying souls for heaven ; as it is a blessed instrument of cleansing them from pride, which else would turn

their very graces into poison; as it is a glorious antidote against vanity, which would otherwise pollute and destroy all their labours; as it is an excellent medicine to heal the anger and impatience of spirit, apt to insinuate into their best employments; and, in a word, as it is one of the choicest remedies in the whole Magazine of God against love of the world, in which whosoever liveth is counted dead before him.

25th. “And hence (as a full answer to the preceding objection) I infer one position more: that our being contemned is absolutely necessary to our doing good in the world: if not to our doing some good (for God may work by *Judas*) yet to our doing so much as we otherwise should. For since God will employ those instruments most, who are fittest to be employed; since the holier a man is, the fitter instrument he is for the God of holiness; and since contempt is so glorious a means of advancing holiness in him that is exercised thereby: nay, since no man can be holy at all without it, who can keep off the consequence? The being contemned is absolutely necessary to a Christian’s doing his full measure of good in the world. Where then is the Scribe? Where is the wise? Where is the disputer of this world? Where is the replier against God, with his sage maxims. “He that is despised, can do no good in the world; to be useful, a man must be esteemed; to advance the glory of God, you must have a fair reputation.” Saith the world so? But what saith the Scripture? Why, that God hath laughed all this Heathen wisdom to scorn! It saith, that twelve de-
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spised followers of a despised Master, all of whom were of no reputation, who were esteemed as the luth and off-scouring of the world, did more good in it than all the tribes of *Israel*. It saith, that the despised master of these despised followers left a standing direction to us, and to our children, "Blessed are ye" (not accursed with the heavy curse of doing no good, of being useless in the world) "when men shall revile you and persecute you, and say all manner of evil of you falsely for my name's sake. Rejoice and be exceeding glad, for great is your reward in heaven."

26th. "These are part of my reasons for chusing to abide (till I am better informed) in the station wherein God has placed me. As for the flock committed to your care, whom for many years you have diligently fed with the sincere milk of the word, I trust in God your labour shall not be in vain, either to yourself or them. Many of them the great Shepherd has by your hand delivered from the hand of the destroyer, some of whom are already entered into peace, and some remain unto this day. For yourself, I doubt not, but when your warfare is accomplished, when you are made perfect through sufferings, you shall come to your grave, not with sorrow, but as a ripe shock of corn, full of years and victories. And he that took care of the poor sheep before you was born, will not forget them when you are dead."

His brother replied, and combated his arguments upon the ground of filial duty and the probability of his being much more useful, (notwithstanding all he
had

had said to the contrary,) at *Epworth* than at *Oxford*: and urged upon him his clerical engagements. Mr. *Wesley's* reply to this, produced still further expostulations: and there is much display of logical skill on both sides. The contest was at last given up by *Samuel*, as he saw that “none,” to use his own words, “could move his mind, but he that made it.” Such was the view which his brother, (well qualified to judge,) had of his resolute and determined spirit. An ingenious Writer of the present day, upon a view of this his invincible resolution in every thing which appeared to him to concern religion, has declared, “he wanted only *rational principles* of religion, to be one of the first of human characters.” Had he had only what *that writer* calls rational principles of religion, he might have gone the usual rounds of Parochial duty at *Epworth*, and, it may be, might have succeeded to what is called *a better living*. But however he might be admired as a scholar and a man, he certainly never would have been ranked with the Reformers or Apostles: nor would the present, not to say future generations, rise up, as that Writer says they will, and call him blessed.

C H A P. III.

Of Mr. WESLEY'S Mission to America.

WE are now come to a more important period of Mr. *Wesley's* Life than any we have already considered. A gentleman

A gentleman who has written his Life, expresses no small surprize, when he comes to treat of his Mission to Georgia, at what appears to him a strange and unaccountable change of mind in one who had just before evinced such unshaken firmness. "We imagined," says he, "that nothing less than stern necessity, could have induced him to quit his beloved retirement." Had this gentleman enjoyed that intimacy with Mr. Wesley which we have been favoured with, he would have been able easily to account for it.

From what has been said, it will appear that Mr. Wesley's mind was deeply impressed with religious sentiments. He had devoted himself entirely to God. It has appeared also from his own words, how exceedingly painful all commerce with the world was to him: and that he had deeply imbibed even that undue love of retirement, which all good men have felt more or less, from the Egyptian Hermits of the second century, down to the elegant and pious Cowley. But this was not all. He was at that time an admirer of the *Mystic* writers: and though he had not embraced the peculiar sentiments of those who were grossly unscriptural (from the time that he was *Homo unius Libri*, as he himself terms it, a man of one Book, valuing none comparatively but the Bible:) yet he still believed, many of the *Mystic* writers were, to use his own words, "the best explainers of the Gospel of Christ." And every one knows, as he has remarked, how continually those that are supposed to be the purest of them, cry out, "To the desert: to the desert!" What wonder then, if *at this time*, when

having

having only attained to what *St. Paul* calls *the spirit of bondage unto fear*: at this time when he found every company and almost every person discompose his mind: when he found all his senses ready to betray him into sin, upon every exercise of them: and that all within him, as well as every creature he conversed with, tended to extort that cry, “*O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me?*” What wonder, I say, that he should close in with a proposal, which seemed at one stroke to cut him off from both the smiling and frowning world, and to enable him to be dead to the world and crucified with Christ, which he then thought could only be thus attained. This is the account which he himself has given us of his views and motives at this period. It will appear therefore, that when he consented to go as a Missionary to Georgia, he only manifested a continuation and higher exercise of that determined resolution of being separate from the world, which he had evinced in his refusal to solicit the Living of *Epworth*. But that he did not hastily agree to leave his pupils, friends and country, is to be inferred from his own Journals, and has been fully explained to us by himself in several conversations.

In the Spring of 1735, he was called to attend his dying father, who desired him to present to Queen *Caroline* a book he had just finished. Soon after his return to *Oxford*, he went to *London* on this account, where he was strongly solicited by *Dr. Burton*, one of the Trustees for the new Colony at Georgia, to go there to preach to the *Indians*. This he at first peremptorily

peremptorily refused: but many providential incidents afterwards concurred, which at length constrained him to alter his resolution. The chief of these respected his mother. When many objections which he made were answered, and some difficulties which he started were removed, he mentioned the grief it might give his mother. "I am," says he, "the staff of her age, her chief support and comfort." It was asked in reply, "Will you go, if your mother's consent can be obtained?" This he thought impossible: however he permitted the trial, settling it in his heart that if she was willing, he would receive it as the call of God. Her answer was worthy of the mother and the son. "Had I," said she, "twenty sons, I should rejoice that they were all so employed, though I should never see them more." His way was now plain, and therefore he delayed not to fulfil what he believed to be the will of God concerning him.

Before we enter upon the narrative of his voyage and mission, it will be needful to state a few particulars. We have already seen his full determination, evinced in many instances, to be not almost, but altogether a christian. His predilection also in favour of those Writers who explain the gospel in a way of ascetic mortification, has been mentioned. A mind like his, impressed from his childhood with the fear of God, and a body unshackled by sloth, intemperance, or even delicacy of any kind, admirably fitted him to bear all the severities, into which his sentiments naturally led him. Thus prepared, "to tread the world beneath his feet," he issued from the retirement

ment of a College, to embrace whatever he might meet with in the new and untried scenes which lay before him.

That he was, as every real Minister of Christ is, in some sense and degree, led into the wilderness to be tempted, will appear in the following sheets: and indeed he always considered his mission in that point of view. Speaking in one of his Appeals of his ministry in America, he adds, "*where God humbled me, and proved me, and shewed me what was in my heart.*"

But he was not suffered to depart without many earnest remonstrances from his friends. One, who he knew did not believe the Christian revelation, said to him, "What is this, Sir? Are you turned Quixote too. Will nothing serve you but to encounter wind-mills?" He calmly replied, "Sir, If the Bible be not true, I am as very a fool and madman as you can conceive. But if it be of God, I am sober-minded. For he has declared, "*There is no man that hath left house, or friends, or brethren, for the kingdom of God's sake, who shall not receive manifold more in the present time, and in the world to come everlasting life.*"

To a friend who expostulated with him, he wrote his reasons at large. The substance of them has already been given. Speaking of his hope of doing good to the poor heathen, he remarks, that he should then have the advantage of preaching to a people not yet *beguiled by philosophy and vain deceit*: and of enforcing the plain truth of God, without its being softened and rendered useless by the comments of men.

On Tuesday, October 14, 1735, he set off from London, for *Gravesend*, accompanied by Mr. *Ingham*, Mr. *Delamotte*, and his Brother *Charles*, in order to embark for *Georgia*. “Our end,” says he, “in leaving our native country, was not to avoid want (God having given us plenty of temporal blessings) nor to gain the dung and dross of riches and honour: but singly this, to save our souls: to live wholly to the glory of God.” Accordingly the two following days, which they spent, partly on board, and partly on shore, they employed in exhorting one another, *to shake off every weight, and to run with patience the race set before them!* There were six and twenty *Germans* on board, members of the *Moravian Church*. Mr. *Wesley* was much struck with their christian deportment, and immediately set himself to learn the German language, in order to converse with them. The *Moravian Bishop* also and two others of his society, began to learn English, for the same laudable motive, we have reason to believe, of enjoying christian fellowship with those who so manifestly appeared to be walking in the same way. He now began to preach *extempore*, which he afterwards made his constant practice during his life.

“Believing” says he, “the denying ourselves in the smallest instance, might, by the blessing of God, be helpful to us, we wholly left off the use of flesh and wine, and confined ourselves to vegetable food, chiefly rice and bisket.” “We now,” continues he, “began to be a little regular. Our common way of living was this. From four in the morning till five we were engaged in private prayer. From five to
seven

seven we read the Bible together, carefully comparing it (that we might not lean to our own understandings) with the writings of the earliest ages. At seven we breakfasted. At eight were the public prayers. From nine to twelve I usually learned *German*, and Mr. *Delamotte*, *Greek*. My Brother wrote Sermons, and Mr. *Ingham* instructed the children. At twelve we assembled together to give an account to each other of what we had done since our last meeting, and what we designed to do before our next. About one we dined. The time from dinner to four, we spent in reading to those of whom each of us had taken charge, or in speaking to them severally, as need required. At four were the evening prayers: when either the second Lesson was explained, (as it always was in the morning) or the children were catechised, and instructed before the congregation. From five to six we again used private prayer. From six to seven, I read in my cabin to two or three of the passengers, (of whom there were about eighty *English* on board,) and each of my brethren to a few more in theirs. At seven I joined with the *Germans* in their public service; while Mr. *Ingham* was reading between the decks, to as many as desired to hear. At eight we met again, to exhort and instruct one another. Between nine and ten we went to bed, where neither the roaring of the sea, nor the motion of the ship, could take away the refreshing sleep which God gave us."

We have given this account at large, as a specimen of his exactness in redeeming the time. Those who
have

have not been intimately acquainted with Mr. *Wesley*, will be surpris'd at our declaring, what we are persuaded is the truth, that it would be difficult to fix upon a single day in the fifty three years which followed, that was not divided with as great exactness. The employments might vary ; but not the exact attention to the filling up of every hour !

That the time he spent with the passengers was not wholly lost upon them, we also learn from several passages in his Journals. Many were deeply awakened : others were instructed in the first principles of the christian religion, who were before entirely ignorant ; and some were prevailed upon to attend the public ordinances of the Gospel, who had lived for years in a constant neglect of them, by the indefatigable labours of himself and his co-adjutors.

But though his eye was single ; though his life was not only harmless, but exemplary ; though he gave all his goods to feed the poor, and sacrificed ease and honour, and every other temporal gratification, that he might follow Christ : yet it is certain he was still very little acquainted with true experimental religion. This the Lord began now to shew him, first, by the fear of death, which notwithstanding all his efforts brought him into bondage, whenever danger was apparent. " At those times," he remarks, " I plainly felt I was unfit, because I was unwilling to die." But, secondly, the lively victorious faith he evidently perceived in some of his fellow-passengers, still more convinced him, that he possessed not the power of religion.

Speaking of the *Germans* , he remarks, “ I had long before observed, the great seriousness of their behaviour. Of their humility they had given a continual proof, by performing those servile offices for the other passengers, which none of the *English* would undertake; for which they desired, and would receive no pay, saying, “ It was good for their proud hearts,” and “ Their loving Saviour had done more for them.” And every day had given them occasion of shewing a meekness, which no injury could move. If they were pushed, struck, or thrown down, they rose again and went away; but no complaint was found in their mouth. There was now an opportunity of trying, whether they were delivered from the spirit of fear, as well as from that of pride, anger and revenge. In the midst of the psalm wherewith their service began, the sea broke over, split the main-sail in pieces, covered the ship, and poured in between the decks, as if the great deep had already swallowed us up. A terrible screaming began among the *English* . The *Germans* calmly sung on. I asked one of them afterwards, “ Was you not afraid ?” He answered, “ I thank God, No.” I asked, “ But were not your women and children afraid ?” He replied mildly, “ No; our women and children are not afraid to die.”

A circumstance occurred in the course of his voyage, which is not unworthy of notice. Mr. *Wesley* hearing an unusual noise in the cabin of General *Oglethorpe* , (the Governor of *Georgia* , with whom he sailed,) stepped in to inquire the cause of it: on which the General immediately addressed him, “ Mr. *Wesley* , you
must

must excuse me, I have met with a provocation too great for man to bear. You know, the only wine I drink, is Cyprus wine, as it agrees with me the best of any. I therefore provided myself with several dozens of it, and this villain *Grimaldi*" (his foreign servant, who was present, and almost dead with fear,) "has drank up the whole of it. But I will be revenged of him. I have ordered him to be tied hand and foot, and to be carried to the man of war which sails with us. The rascal should have taken care how he used me so, for *I never forgive.*" "Then, I hope, Sir," (said Mr. *Wesley*, looking calmly at him,) "*You never sin.*" The General was quite confounded at the reproof: and putting his hand into his pocket, took out a bunch of keys, which he threw at *Grimaldi*, saying "There, villain, take my keys, and behave better for the future."

Thursday, February 5. They arrived in *Savannah-River* in *Georgia*, and about eight the next morning landed on a small uninhabited Island. General *Oglethorpe* led them to a rising ground, where they kneeled down to give thanks. He then took boat for *Savannah*. When the rest of the people came on shore, they also joined together in prayer. Upon this occasion Mr. *Wesley* observes that the Second Lesson, Mark vi. seemed to him peculiarly suitable.

On February the 7th. the General returned with Mr. *Spangenberg*, one of the pastors of the *Germans*. The same piety which Mr. *Wesley* had observed in those on board the ship, was also visible in this gentleman. "I therefore," says he, "asked his advice with regard to my own conduct." He said, "my bro-

ther, I must first ask you one or two questions. Have you the witness in yourself? Does the Spirit of God bear witness with your spirit that you are a child of God?" I was surprised and knew not what to answer. He observed it, and asked, "do you know Jesus Christ?" I paused, and said, I know he is the Saviour of the world. "True," replied he: "But do you know he has saved *you*?" I answered, "I hope, he has died to save me." He only added, "do you know yourself?" I said, I do. But I fear, they were vain words."

The house in which they were to reside not being ready, they took up their lodging with the *Germans*. "We had now," says Mr. *Wesley*, "an opportunity, day by day, of observing their whole behaviour. For we were in one room with them from morning to night, unless for the little time I spent in walking. They were always employed, always cheerful themselves, and in good humour with one another. They had put away all anger, and strife, and wrath, and bitterness, and clamour, and evil-speaking. They walked worthy of the vocation wherewith they were called, and adorned the Gospel of our Lord in all things."

He proceeds, "Saturday, Feb. 28. They met to consult concerning the affairs of their church, Mr. *Spangenberg* being shortly to go to *Pennsylvania*, and Bishop *Nitschman* to return to *Germany*. After several hours spent in conference and prayer, they proceeded to the election and ordination of a Bishop. The great simplicity as well as solemnity of the whole, almost made me forget the seventeen hundred years between, and imagine myself in one of those assemblies, where *Rome* and *state* were not; but *Paul* the tent-maker or
Peter

Peter the fisherman presided; yet with the demonstration of the Spirit and of power."

Sunday, March 7. He entered on his ministry at *Savannah*, by preaching on the Epistle for the day, being the xiiith of the first of *Corinthians*. In the second Lesson, *Luke xviii.* was our Lord's prediction of the treatment which he himself (and consequently his followers) was to meet with from the world; and his gracious promise to those who are content *Nudum Christum sequi* :* *Verily I say unto you, there is no man that hath left house or parents or brethren or wife, or children for the kingdom of God's sake, who shall not receive manifold more in this present time, and in the world to come everlasting life.*

"Yet" says he, "notwithstanding these plain declarations of our Lord, notwithstanding my own repeated experience, notwithstanding the experience of all the sincere followers of Christ, whom I have ever talked with, read, or heard of; nay, and the reason of the thing, evincing it to a demonstration, that all who love not the light must hate him, who is continually labouring to pour it in upon them: I do here bear witness against myself, that when I saw the number of people crowding into the Church, the deep attention with which they received the word, and the seriousness that afterwards sat on all their faces; I could scarce refrain from giving the lie, to experience and reason, and scripture all together. I could hardly believe that the greater, the far greater part of this

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attentive,

* *Nakedly to follow a naked Christ.*

attentive, serious people, would hereafter trample under foot that word, and say all manner of evil falsely of him that spake it. O, who can believe, what their heart abhors? Jesus, master, have mercy on us! Let us love thy cross! Then shall we believe, *If we suffer with Thee, we shall also reign with Thee!*"

But he did not confine himself to *Savannah*. He gave *Frederica* also a portion of his labours. In going there he was in imminent danger of being drowned. His own account of it presents us with a striking picture of his presence of mind.

"Sunday, April 4, About four in the afternoon, I set out for *Frederica*, in a pettiawga (a sort of flat-bottomed barge.) The next evening we anchored near *Skidoway* Island, where the water at flood was twelve or fourteen feet deep. I wrapt myself up from head to foot in a large cloak, to keep off the sand-flies, and lay down on the quarter-deck. Between one and two I waked under water, being so fast asleep that I did not find where I was till my mouth was full of it. Having left my cloak, I know not how upon deck, I swam round to the other side of the pettiawga, where a boat was tied, and climbed up by the rope, without any hurt, more than wetting my cloaths. Thou art the God of whom cometh salvation: thou art the Lord by whom we escape death!"

Not finding any open door for the prosecution of the grand design which induced him to visit *America*, the conversion of the Indians, he and his two companions considered, in what manner they might be most useful to the little flock at *Savannah*. And they
 agreed,

agreed, 1st. To advise the more serious among them, to form themselves into a sort of little Society, and to meet once or twice a week, in order to improve, instruct and exhort one another. 2. To select out of these a smaller number for a more intimate union with each other, which might be forwarded, partly by their conversing singly with each, and partly by inviting them all together to their house; and this accordingly they determined to do every Sunday in the afternoon.

Their general method of private instruction, was as follows: Mr. *Delamotte* taught between thirty and forty children to read, write, and cast accompts. Before school in the morning, and after school in the afternoon, he catechised the lowest class, and endeavoured to fix something of what was said, in their understandings as well as their memories. In the evening he instructed the larger children. On Saturday in the afternoon Mr. *Wesley* catechised them all. The same he did on Sunday before the evening service. And in the Church, immediately after the second Lesson, a select number of them having repeated the catechism and being examined in some part of it, he endeavoured to explain at large, and to enforce that part, both on them and the congregation.

Some time after the evening service, as many of the parishioners as desired it, met at Mr. *Wesley's* house, (as they did also on Wednesday evening) and spent about an hour in prayer, singing and mutual exhortation. A smaller number (mostly those who designed to communicate the next day) met there on Saturday evening; and a few of these came to him on the

other evenings, and passed half an hour in the same employment.

About this time he wrote the Trustees for *Georgia* an account of the last year's expence from March 1, 1736, to March 1, 1737. Which, deducting extraordinary expences (such as repairing the Parsonage-house, and journeys to *Frederica*) amounted for Mr. *Delamotte* and himself to 44*l.* 4*s.* 4*d.*

He had now another proof of the power of gospel-faith. One of the *Moravians* being ill of a consumption, he informed Bishop *Nitschman* of it. "He will soon be well," said he, "He is ready for the Bridegroom." Calling to see him afterwards, and asking how he did, "My departure (said he) I hope is at hand." Mr. *Wesley* then asked, "Are you troubled at that?" He replied, "O no; to depart and to be with Christ, is far better. I desire no more of this bad world. My hope and my joy and my love are there." The next time he saw him, the poor man said, "I desire nothing more, than for God to forgive my many and great sins. I would be humble. I would be the humblest creature living. My heart is humble and broken for my sins. Tell me, teach me, what I shall do to please God. I would fain do whatever is his will." Mr. *Wesley* said, "It is his will, you should suffer." He answered, "Then I *will* suffer. I will gladly suffer whatever pleases him." Monday 7. Finding him weaker, he asked, "Do you still desire to die?" He said, "Yes; but I dare not pray for it, for fear I should displease my heavenly Father. His will be done. Let him work his will, in my life, or in my death."

But

But concerning himself, he observes, "This evening we had such a storm of thunder and lightning, as I never saw before even in *Georgia*. This voice of God too, told me I was not fit to die; since I was afraid, rather than desirous of it! O when shall I wish to be dissolved and to be with Christ! When I love him with all my heart."

Some time before this, a few of the Indians had made him a visit, and seemed desirous of hearing *the great word*, as they called the preaching of the gospel. About twenty of them were now at *Savannah*. Five of the principal of them came to him with an Interpreter: and the following interesting conversation passed between them.

Q. Do you believe there is one above, who is over all things?

Paustoobee, one of their chiefs, answered. We believe there are four beloved things above: the clouds, the sun, the clear sky, and He that lives in the clear sky.

Q. Do you believe, there is but one that lives in the clear sky?

A. We believe there are two with him, three in all.

Q. Do you think, he made the sun, and the other beloved things?

A. We cannot tell. Who hath seen?

Q. Do you think, he made you?

A. We think, he made all men at first.

Q. How did he make them at first?

A. Out of the ground.

Q. Do you believe, he loves you?

A. I do not know, I cannot see him.

Q. But

Q. But has he not often saved your life ?

A. He has. Many bullets have gone on this side, and many on that side, but he would never let them hurt me. And many bullets have gone into these young men ; and yet they are alive !

Q. Then, cannot he save you from your enemies now ?

A. Yes ; but we know not, if he will. We have now so many enemies round about us, that I think of nothing but death. And if I am to die, I shall die, and I will die like a man. But if he will have me to live, I shall live. Though I had ever so many enemies, he can destroy them all.

Q. How do you know that ?

A. From what I have seen. When our enemies came against us before, then the beloved clouds came for us. And often much rain, and sometimes hail has come upon them, and that in a very hot day. And I saw, when many *French* and *Choctaws* and other nations came against one of our towns. And the ground made a noise under them, and the beloved ones in the air behind them. And they were afraid, and went away, and left their meat and drink and their guns. I tell no lie. All these saw it too.

Q. Have you heard such noises at other times ?

A. Yes, often : before and after almost every battle.

Q. What sort of noises were they ?

A. Like the noise of drums and guns and shouting.

Q. Have you heard any such lately ?

A. Yes : four days after our last battle with the *French*.

Q. Then

Q. Then you heard nothing before it ?

A. The night before, I dreamed I heard many drums p there, and many trumpets there, and much stamping of feet and shouting. Till then I thought we should all die. But then I thought the beloved Ones were come to help us. And the next day I heard above a hundred guns go off, before the fight began. And I said, "when the sun is there, the Beloved Ones will help us ; and we shall conquer our enemies." And we did so.

Q. Do you often think and talk of the beloved Ones ?

A. We think of them always, wherever we are. We talk of them and to them, at home and abroad ; in peace, in war, before and after we fight ; and indeed whenever and wherever we meet together.

Q. Where do you think your souls go after death ?

A. We believe the souls of red men walk up and down near the place where they died, or where their bodies lie. For we have often heard cries and noises near the place, where any prisoners had been burnt.

Q. Where do the souls of white men go after death ?

A. We cannot tell. We have not seen.

Q. Our belief is, that the souls of bad men only walk up and down ; but the souls of good men go up.

A. I believe so too. But I told you the talk of the nation.

(Mr. *Andrews*, the interpreter.) They said at the burying, (which Mr. *Wesley* had attended shortly before) "They knew what you was doing. You was speaking to the beloved Ones above to take up the soul of the young woman.")

Q. We

Q. We have a Book that tells us many things of the beloved Ones above. Would you be glad to know them?

A. We have no time now, but to fight. If we should ever be at peace, we should be glad to know.

Q. Do you expect ever to know what the white men know?

(Mr. Andrews. They told Mr. Oglethorpe, They believed the time will come, when the red and white men will be one.)

Q. What do the *French* teach you?

A. The *French Black * Kings* never go out. We see you go about. We like that. That is good.

Q. How came your nation by the knowledge they have?

A. As soon as ever the ground was found, and fit to stand upon, it came to us, and has been with us ever since. But we are young men. Our old men know more. But all of them do not know. There are but a few, whom the beloved One chuses from a child, and is in them, and takes care of them, and reaches them. They know these things: and our old men practise; therefore they know: but I do not practise. Therefore I know little.

He was now in hopes that a door was opened, for going up immediately to the *Choctaws*, the least polished, i. e. the least corrupted of all the *Indian* nations. But upon his informing the General of their design, he objected, not only the danger of being intercepted, or killed by the *French* there; but much more,

* So they call the Priests,

more, the inexpediency of leaving *Savannah* destitute of a Minister. These objections he related to his friends in the evening, who were all of opinion, "That they ought not to go yet."

Thursday, July 1. The *Indians* had an audience, and another on Saturday, when *Chicali*, their head man, dined with the General. "After dinner," says Mr. *Wesley*, "I asked the grey-headed old man, What he thought he was made for?" He said, "He that is above, knows what he made us for. We know nothing. We are in the dark. But white men know much. And yet white men build great houses, as if they were to live for ever. But white men cannot live for ever. In a little time white men will be dust as well as I." I told him, "If red men will learn the good Book, they may know as much as white men. But neither we nor you can understand that Book, unless we are taught by Him that is above: and he will not teach, unless you avoid what you already know is not good." He answered, "I believe that he will not teach us, while our hearts are not white. And our men do what they know is not good. They kill their own children. And our women do what they know is not good. They kill the child before it is born. Therefore, He that is above, does not send us the good Book."

The opinion of Mr. *Wesley* concerning the gods whom these poor Heathens worshipped, is worthy of our notice. "Meeting," says he, "with a *Frenchman* of *New Orleans* on the *Mississippi*, who had lived several months among the *Chicasaws*, he gave us a full and particular

particular account of many things which had been variously related. And hence we could not but remark, what is the religion of nature, properly so called; or, that religion which flows from natural reason, unassisted by Revelation: and that, even in those who have the knowledge of many truths; and who converse with their beloved Ones day and night. But too plainly does it appear by the fruits, *That the Gods of these Heathens too are but Devils.*

The substance of his account was this: "Some years past the *Chicasaws* and *French* were friends. The *French* were then mingled with the *Nautchee Indians*, whom they used as slaves; till the *Nautchees* made a general rising, and took many of the *French* prisoners. But soon after, a *French* army set upon them, killed many, and carried away the rest. Among those that were killed were some *Chicasaws*, whose death the *Chicasaw* nation resented: and soon after, as a *French* boat was going through their country, they fired into it, and killed all the men but two. The *French* resolved on revenge, and orders were given for many *Indians* and several parties of white men, to rendezvous on the 26th of March, 1736. near one of the *Chicasaw* towns. The first party, consisting of fifty men, came thither some days before the time. They staid there till the 24th, but none came to join them. On the 25th, they were attacked by two hundred *Chicasaws*. The *French* attempted to force their way through them. Five or six and twenty did so; the rest were taken prisoners. The prisoners were sent two or three to a town to be burnt. Only the commanding officer and

one or two more were put to death on the place of the engagement.

“I (said he) and one more, were saved by the Warrior who took us. The manner of burning the rest was, holding lighted canes to their arms and legs, and several parts of their bodies for some time, and then for a while taking them away. They likewise stuck burning pieces of wood into their flesh all round, in which condition they kept them from morning till evening. But they commonly beat them before they burn them. I saw the Priest that was with us carried to be burnt; and from head to foot, he was as black as your coat, with the blows which they had given him.”

Mr. *Wesley* asked him, What was their manner of life? He said, “They do nothing but eat and drink and smok from morning till night, and in a manner from night till morning. For they rise at any hour of the night when they wake; and after eating and drinking as much as they can, go to sleep again.” See *The Religion of Nature truly delineated!*

But to return. Few would perhaps expect that a person so abundant in labours, would entertain such an opinion of himself as he expresses in a letter to a friend. “How to attain to the being crucified with Christ, I find not, being *in a condition* I neither desired, nor expected in *America*, in ease and honour and abundance. A strange school for him who has but one business, *Γυμνάζειν σεαυτὸν πρὸς εὐσεβείαν.* *

Alas!

* *To exercise himself unto godliness.*

Alas! Few, we doubt, would have envied *the condition*, in which he was placed. The inconveniencies and dangers which he embraced, that he might preach the Gospel and do good of every kind to all that would receive it at his hands: the exposing of himself to every change of season, and inclemency of weather, in the prosecution of his work, were *conditions*, which few but himself would have submitted to. He frequently slept on the ground, as he journeyed through the woods, covered with the nightly dews, and with his cloaths and hair frozen by the morning to the earth. He would wade through swamps, or swim over rivers, and then travel till his cloaths were dry. His health in the mean time, strange as it may seem, was almost uninterrupted. Much may be laid to the account of his "Iron body," as his brother *Samuel* terms it, but we think every pious mind will rather impute both his health and preservation to Him who *numbers the hairs of our head*, and whose guardian care is especially over those, who aim to *walk worthy of him unto all pleasing*.

But the honour and respect he then enjoyed, small as it must have been, soon drew to an end. He now began to experience more fully than ever, the truth of that Scripture, *If any man will live godly in Christ Jesus, he shall suffer persecution*. Previous to the present period, some dislike began to appear in several persons to his rigid attachment to all the parts of the Rubrick of the Church of *England*. *High Church principles*, as they are termed, continually influenced his conduct: an instance of which was, his refusing to admit one of the holiest men in the province to the Lord's
supper;

supper, (though he earnestly desired it) because he was a Dissenter, unless he would submit to be re-baptized! But this appeared to him his duty: and in that case, till God taught him better, it was vain to attempt to move him. Reflecting on this zeal at a future period, he remarks, "Have I not been finely beaten with my own staff?"

All things at this period grew more and more unfavourable to his continuance in *America*. Observing a coldness in the behaviour of a friend, he asked him the reason. He answered, "I like nothing you do: all your sermons are satires upon particular persons. Therefore I will never hear you more. And all the people are of my mind. For we will not hear ourselves abused.

"Beside, they say, they are Protestants. But as for you, they cannot tell what religion you are of. They never heard of such a religion before. They do not know what to make of it. And then, your private behaviour—All the quarrels that have been here since you came, have been owing to you. Indeed there is neither man nor woman in the town, who minds a word you say. And so you may preach long enough; but no body will come to hear you."

The dread of reproof seems now to have ripened to aversion: when an event took place, which ultimately obliged him to leave *America*. There is a silence observed in Mr. *Wesley's* Journal in respect to some parts of this event, which it is possible has caused even friendly readers, to hesitate concerning the propriety of his conduct; or at least concerning *that* pro-

priety which they might be led to expect from so great a character. But what has hitherto been defective, we are happy in being able to supply. The actors in this scene, are now, we may hope, in a better world: the last of them died but a few years since. We are not therefore bound, as Mr. *Wesley* thought himself, when he published the account, to let a veil be thrown over this transaction: rather we are bound to let *his innocency appear as the light, and his just dealing as the noon-day.*

General *Oglethorpe* was, what is called, an excellent judge of human nature. He was also a man of courage and enterprise. He had enlarged views of what might be done with proper instruments on the wide continent of *America*. He had heard much of Mr. *Wesley* before he engaged himself as a Missionary, having been intimate with his eldest brother. But he saw, during the voyage, that *the half was not told him*. He saw here a man of great ability, a man superiour to every thing that usually captivates human nature. He saw a man, as he thought, fit for his purpose. But Mr. *Wesley's* religion, or, as he termed it, his enthusiasm, the General lamented, as standing in the way. On their arrival therefore in *Georgia*, he resolved to try, if that obstacle was not to be surmounted.

Mr. *Causton*, the Store-keeper, and chief Magistrate of *Savannah*, (in which station he was placed by the General,) had a young lady in his house, his niece, of an improved understanding, and elegant person and manners. The General thought he had found

in her a proper bait for this soaring religionist. And as some of the greatest men that are recorded even in the oracles of God, have fallen by this snare, he had some ground to hope for success. But in order to this, it was absolutely needful to detain him for some considerable time at *Savannah*. Whenever therefore he mentioned his uneasiness at being obstructed in his main design, that of preaching to the *Indians*, he was answered, "You cannot leave *Savannah* without a Minister." To this indeed, observes Mr. *Wesley*, my plain answer was, "I know not that I was under any obligation to the contrary. I never promised to stay here one month. I openly declared both *before, at, and ever since* my coming hither, that I neither would nor could take charge of the *English* any longer than till I could go among the *Indians*." If it was said, "But did not the Trustees of *Georgia* appoint you to be Minister of *Savannah*?" I replied, "They did; but it was not done by my solicitation: it was done without either my desire or knowledge. Therefore I cannot conceive that appointment to lay me under any obligation of continuing here, any longer than till a door is opened to the *Heathens*: and this I expressly declared, at the time I consented to accept of that appointment."

The young lady mentioned above, was introduced to him as a person who had severely felt the anguish of a *wounded spirit*, and now was a sincere inquirer after the way of eternal life. After some time he observed, that she took every possible opportunity of being in his company. She also desired a greater intimacy,

timacy, but modestly veiled her real motive, under a request, that he would assist her in attaining a perfect knowledge of the *French* tongue.

Soon after this, the General called upon him, and requested him to dine with him: adding, “Mr. *Wesley*, there are some here who have a wrong idea of your abstemiousness. They think that you hold the eating animal food, and drinking wine, to be unlawful. I beg that you will convince them of the contrary.” He resolved to do so. At table he took a little of both, but a fever was the consequence, which confined him for five days.

Now was the time to try if indeed “His heart was made of penetrable stuff.” Notwithstanding an extreme reluctance on his part, (who would hardly suffer even Mr. *Delamotte* to do any thing for him,) she attended him night and day. She even consulted the General what dress would be most agreeable to Mr. *Wesley*, and therefore came always to him dressed in white, “*Simplex Munditiis*,” neatly, simply elegant. Those who have known Mr. *Wesley*, will forestal our judgment here: they well know what impression all this was likely to make. He was indeed, as our great Poet observes,

— “Of a constant, loving, noble nature;
That thinks men honest, if they seem but so.”

How then must this appearance of strong affection, from a woman of sense and elegance, nay, and as it should seem, of piety too, affect him! Especially con-
sidering

considering, (it is his own account,) that he had never before familiarly conversed with any woman, except his near relations. We hardly need to add, that upon his recovery, he entertained his fair pupil with more than ordinary complacency.

But Mr. *Delamotte* had not learned, (to use a common expression of Mr. *Wesley's*) to “defy suspicion.” He thought he saw

“Semblance of worth, not substance.”

He therefore embraced an opportunity of expostulating with Mr. *Wesley*: and asked him if he designed to marry Miss *Causton*? At the same time he set forth in a strong light, *her* art and *his* simplicity. Though pleased with the attention of his fair friend, Mr. *Wesley* had not allowed himself to determine upon marriage, Mr. *Delamotte's* question therefore not a little puzzled him. He waved an answer at that time: and perceiving the prejudice of Mr. *Delamotte's* mind against the Lady, he called on Bishop *Nitschman*, and consulted him. His answer was short. “Marriage,” said he, “you know is not unlawful. Whether it is now expedient for you, and whether this Lady is a proper wife for you, ought to be maturely weighed.” Finding his perplexity increase, he determined to propose his doubts to the Elders of the Moravian Church. When he entered into the house, where they were met together, he found Mr. *Delamotte* sitting among them. On his proposing the business, the Bishop replied, “We have considered your case. Will you abide by our decision?” He answered, “I will.” Then said the Bishop, “We advise you to proceed no further

further in this business." He replied, "The will of the Lord be done." From this time, he cautiously avoided every thing that tended to continue the intimacy. He also politely declined receiving her visits at his house, though he easily perceived what pain this change in his conduct gave her.

Soon after this, a young gentlewoman, who had been some time before married to the Surgeon of the Colony, and had sailed with the General from Europe, sent for him, and related to him, under a promise of secrecy, what we have now declared concerning the hitherto mysterious part of this event: adding these words, "Sir, I had no rest till I resolved to tell you the whole affair. I have myself been urged to that behaviour towards you, which I am now ashamed to mention. Both Miss *Sophia* and myself were ordered, if we could but succeed, even to *deny you nothing.*"

Mr. *Wesley* kept his word, and cautiously avoided and concealed every thing, which could bring any inconvenience on this gentlewoman. He could not however behave to the General, as he had formerly done. One day he dropped some expressions which made the General change his colour, and discover much agitation of mind. However, recovering himself the General replied, in a very significant manner, "You observed yesterday the company of Indians that came into town. The fellow that marched at their head, with his face marked with red paint, will shoot any man in this Colony for a bottle of rum!" Mr. *Wesley* did not think it proper to reply: but to
shew

shew how little he regarded the menace, he took a book out of his pocket, and beginning to read, walked slowly towards his own house.

The next morning, as he was reading with his back to the window, he suddenly found his light obstructed; and turning round, he perceived the Indian standing at the window. He immediately stepped to the door, invited him to walk in, and spread before him the best food that the house afforded. And as he had learned some words of the Indian language, he cheerfully invited him to eat. The Indian for some time surveyed him from head to foot with great attention: then throwing down his gun, he seized him in his arms, and kissed him for several seconds with the greatest eagerness. He then eat heartily, and departed after another warm embrace, and with every appearance of the highest satisfaction.†

The General soon after this sailed for Europe. But one of the last charges which he gave, and that in the presence of several persons, was “*Causton*, whatever you do, take heed, if you regard my favour, that you do not quarrel with Mr. *Wesley*.” §

Miss *Causton* was now addressed by a Mr. *Williamson*; and as he was a man of substance, and her uncle

I 4

and

† Was the Indian sent only to intimidate him? We are inclined to think so.

§ Many years after this, General *Oglethorpe* met Mr. *Wesley* at the house of his brother *Charles* in *London*. And as soon as he entered the room, the General, in the presence of a very numerous company, advanced, kneeled down, and kissed his hand!

and aunt warmly recommended him, she consented to receive him as her husband, though not without the appearance at least of great reluctance, and first of all endeavouring to renew her acquaintance with Mr. *Wesley*. But he would only see her and speak to her as her Pastor; which he continued to do, while any appearance of seriousness remained in her. At last she sent him word “that Mr. *Williamson* had desired she should wholly refrain from conversing with him.”

About this time he saw it to be his duty to repel Mrs. *Williamson* from the holy communion: but first of all he mentioned to her those things which he thought reprobable in her behaviour. At this she appeared extremely angry, saying she did not expect such usage from him. He also consulted his friend Mr. *Spangenberg*, to whom he engaged, that God being his helper, he would behave to all, rich or poor, friends or enemies, without respect of persons. He also wrote the following letter to Mrs. *Williamson*.

“AT Mr. *Causton*'s request, I write once more. The rules whereby I proceed are these: *So many as intend to be partakers of the holy communion, shall signify their names to the Curate, at least some time the day before. This you did not do.*

“*And if any of these—have done any wrong to his neighbour by word or deed, so that the congregation be thereby offended, the Curate shall advertise him, that in any wise he presume not to come to the Lord's table, until he hath openly declared himself to have truly repented.*

“ If you offer yourself at the Lord’s table *on Sunday*, I will advertise you (as I have done more than once) wherein you *have done wrong*. And when you *have openly declared yourself to have truly repented*, I will administer to you the mysteries of God.

Aug. 11, 1737.

JOHN WESLEY.”

A warrant was now issued to apprehend him, Mr. *Causton* having declared, “ It is I that am insulted. I have drawn the sword, and I will never sheath it, till I have satisfaction.”

Mr. *Wesley’s* chief fear at this time was concerning those who were weak, lest they should be *turned out of the way*. “ But God,” says he, “ took care of this also. So that on Sunday the 14th, more were present at the morning prayers, than had been for some months before. Many of them observed those words in the first lesson, *Set Naboth on high among the people: and set two men, sons of Belial, before him, to bear witness against him.*”

Nor did he relax in his labour during the whole of this contention, as appears from his own account, “ Saturday, Oct. 15. Being,” says he, “ at *Highgate*, a village five miles from *Savannah*, consisting of (all but one) *French* families, who, I found, knew but little of the *English* tongue, I offered to read prayers there in *French*, every Saturday in the afternoon. They embraced the offer gladly. On Saturday the twenty-second, I read prayers in *German* likewise, to the *German* villagers of *Hampstead*: and so continued to do, once a week. We began the service (both at *Highgate* and *Hampstead*) with singing a psalm. Then

I read

I read and explained a chapter in the *French* or *German* Testament, and concluded with prayers and another psalm."

He proceeds, "Saturday, Oct. 9. Some of the *French* of *Savannah* were present at the prayers at *Highgate*. The next day I received a message from them all: "that as I read prayers to the *French* of *Highgate*, who were but few, they hoped I would do the same to those of *Savannah*, where there was a large number who did not understand *English*." Sunday 30, I began so to do: and now I had full employment for that holy day. The first *English* prayers lasted from five till half an hour past six. The *Italian* (which I read to a few *Vandois*) began at nine. The second service for the *English* (including the sermon and the holy communion) continued from half an hour past ten, till about half an hour past twelve. The *French* service began at one. At two I catechised the children. About three began the *English* service. After this was ended, I had the happiness of joining with as many as my largest room would hold, in reading, prayer, and singing praise. And about six the service of the *Moravians* began: at which I was glad to be present, not as a teacher, but a learner."

Mr. *Causton* being determined to present a bill against him before the Grand Jury of the Colony, Mrs. *Williamson* swore to and signed an affidavit, insinuating much more than it asserted: but asserting, "That Mr. *Wesley* had many times proposed marriage to her, all which proposals she had rejected." Of this he desired a copy: Mr. *Causton* replied, "Sir, You
may

may have one from any of the News-papers in America."

On Thursday and Friday was delivered out a list of twenty-six men, who were to meet as a Grand Jury, on Monday the twenty-second. But this list was called in the next day, and twenty-four names added to it. Of this Grand Jury (forty-four of whom only met) one was a *Frenchman*, who did not understand *English*, one a *Papist*, one a *professed Infidel*, three *Baptists*, sixteen or seventeen others, *Dissenters*, and several others who had personal quarrels against Mr. *Wesley*, and had openly vowed revenge.

To *this* Grand Jury, on Monday the twenty-second, Mr. *Causton* gave a long and earnest charge, *to beware of spiritual tyranny, and to oppose the new, illegal authority which was usurped over their consciences.* Then Mrs. *Williamson's* affidavit was read: after which Mr. *Causton* delivered to the Grand Jury, a paper entitled,

"A List of Grievances, presented by the Grand Jury for *Savannah*, this day of Aug. 1737."

This the majority of the Grand Jury altered in some particulars, and on Thursday, Sept. 1, delivered it again to the Court, under the form of two presentments, containing ten bills, which were then read to the people.

Herein they asserted, upon oath, "That *John Wesley*, Clerk, had broken the laws of the Realm, contrary to the peace of our Sovereign Lord the King, his crown and dignity.

"1. By speaking and writing to Mrs. *Williamson*, against her husband's consent:

"2. By

“ 2. By repelling her from the holy communion :

“ 3. By not declaring his adherence to the Church of *England* :

“ 4. By dividing the morning-service on *Sundays* :

“ 5. By refusing to baptise Mr. *Parker's* child otherwise than by dipping, except the parents would certify it was weak, and not able to bear it :

“ 6. By repelling *William Gough* from the holy communion :

“ 7. By refusing to read the burial-service over the body of *Nathaniel Polhill* :

“ 8. By calling himself *Ordinary* of *Savannah* :

“ 9. By refusing to receive *William Aglionby* as a godfather, only because he was not a communicant :

“ 10. By refusing *Jacob Matthews* for the same reason ; and baptizing an *Indian* trader's child with only two sponsors.”*

At the third Court, which was held on this business, Mr. *Wesley* moved for an immediate hearing on the first bill, being the only one of a civil nature : but it was refused. He made the same motion in the afternoon : but was put off till the next court-day.

On the next court-day he appeared again : as also at the two Courts following : but could not be heard, because (the Judge said) Mr. *Williamson* was gone out of town.

The sense of the minority of the grand jurors themselves (for they were by no means unanimous) concerning these presentments, may appear from the

* How exceedingly were they at a loss for any real matter wherewith to criminate him !

following

following paper, which they transmitted to the Trustees:

To the Honourable the Trustees for Georgia.

“ Whereas two presentments have been made, the one of August 23, the other of August 31, by the Grand Jury for the town and county of *Savannah* in *Georgia*, against *John Wesley*, Clerk.

“ We whose names are underwritten, being members of the said Grand Jury, do humbly beg leave to signify our dislike of the said presentments; being by many and divers circumstances thoroughly persuaded in ourselves, that the whole charge against Mr. *Wesley*, is an artifice of *Mt. Causton's*, designed rather to blacken the character of Mr. *Wesley*, than to free the colony from religious tyranny, as he was pleased in his charge to us to term it. But as these circumstances will be too tedious to trouble your honours with, we shall only beg leave to give the reasons of our dissent from the particular bills.

“ With regard to the first bill, we do not apprehend, that Mr. *Wesley* acted against any law, by writing or speaking to Mrs. *Williamson*, since it does not appear to us that the said Mr. *Wesley* has either spoke in private, or wrote to the said Mrs. *Williamson*, since March 12, (the day of her marriage,) except one letter of July the 5th, which he wrote at the request of her Aunt, as a Pastor to exhort and reprove her.

“ The second we do not apprehend to be a true bill, because we humbly conceive Mr. *Wesley* did not assume to himself any authority contrary to law: for we understand, *Every person intending to communicate, should “ signify his name to the Curate, at least some time*
the

the day before," which Mrs. *Williamson* did not do; although Mr. *Wesley* had often in full congregation declared, he did insist on a compliance with that Rubrick, and *had before repelled divers persons, for non-compliance therewith.*

" The third we do not think a true bill, because several of *us* have been his hearers, when he has declared his adherence to the *Church of England*, in a stronger manner than by a formal declaration; by explaining and defending the *Apostles'*, the *Nicene* and the *Athanasian Creeds*, the *thirty-nine articles*, the whole book of *Common Prayer*, and the *Homilies* of the said church: and because we think a formal declaration is not required, but from those who have received institution and induction.

" The fact alledged in the fourth bill we cannot apprehend to be contrary to any law in being.

" The fifth we do not think a true bill, because we conceive Mr. *Wesley* is justified by the rubrick, viz. *If they (the parents) certify that the child is weak, it shall suffice to pour water upon it.* Intimating (as we humbly suppose) it shall not suffice, if they do not certify.

" The sixth cannot be a true bill, because the said *William Gough*, being one of our members, was surpris'd to hear himself named, without his knowledge or privity; and did publicly declare, *It was no grievance to him, because the said John Wesley had given him reasons with which he was satisfied.*

" The seventh we do not apprehend to be a true bill, for *Nathaniel Polhill* was an *Anabaptist*, and desired
in

in his life-time, that he might not be interred with the office of the *Church of England*. And farther, we have good reason to believe, that Mr. Wesley was at *Fredærica*, or on his return thence, when *Pollard* was buried.

“As to the eighth bill we are in doubt, as not well knowing the meaning of the word *Ordinary*. But for the ninth and tenth, we think Mr. Wesley is sufficiently justified by the Canons of the Church; which forbid any person to be admitted Godfather or Godmother to any child, before the said person has received the holy communion; whereas *William Aglierby* and *Jacob Matthews* had never certified Mr. Wesley, that they had received it.”

This was signed by twelve of the grand Jurors, of whom three were Constables, and six more, Tythingmen: who consequently would have made a majority, had the Jury consisted, as it regularly should have done, of only fifteen members, viz. the four Constables and eleven Tythingmen.

He now consulted his friends, whether God did not call him to return to *England*? “The reason,” he observes, “for which I left it had now no force: there being no possibility as yet of instructing the *Indians*: neither had I as yet found or heard of any *Indians* on the continent of *America*, who had the least desire of being instructed. And as to *Savannah*, having never engaged myself, either by word or letter, to stay there a day longer than I should judge convenient, nor even take charge of the people any otherwise, than as in my passage to the *Heathens*, I looked upon myself to be fully discharged therefrom, by the vacating of that design. Besides, there was a probability of doing
more

more service to that unhappy people in *England* than I could do in *Georgia*, by representing without fear or favour to the Trustees, the real state the Colony was in." His friends, after deeply considering these things, were unanimous, *That he ought to go. But not yet.* So he laid the thoughts of it aside for the present: being persuaded, that when the time was come, God would *make the way plain before his face.*

In consequence of this resolution he attended the Court again: at which time Mr. *Causton* desired to speak with him. He then read to him some affidavits which had been made on the 15th of September. In one of which it was affirmed, "That he then abused Mr. *Causton* in his own house, calling him liar, villain, and so on." It was now likewise repeated before several persons, "That he had been reprimanded at the last Court, for an enemy to, and hinderer of the public peace."

On this he consulted his friends again, who agreed with him, that the time he looked for was now come. Accordingly the next morning, calling on Mr. *Causton*, he informed him, that he designed to set out for *England* immediately. He also set up an advertisement in the great square to the same effect, and quietly prepared for his journey.

On Friday, Dec. 2, he proposed to set out for *Carolina* about noon, the tide then serving. But about ten the Magistrates sent for him, and told him that he should not go out of the province: for he had not yet answered the allegations laid against him. He replied, "I have appeared at six or seven Courts successively, in
order

order to answer them. *But I was not suffered so to do, when I desired it time after time.*" They then said, "However, you must not go, unless you give security to answer those allegations at our Court." He asked, "What security?" After consulting together about two hours, the Recorder shewed him a kind of bond, engaging him, under a penalty of fifty pounds, to appear at their Court when he should be required. He added, "But Mr. Williamson too has desired of us, that you should give bail to answer his action." Mr. Wesley then told him plainly, *Sir, you use me very ill, and so you do the Trustees. I will give neither any bond, nor any bail at all. You know your business, and I know mine.*

In the afternoon the Magistrates published an order requiring all the officers and centinels, to prevent his going out of the province; and forbidding any person to assist him so to do. Being now a prisoner at large, in the place where he knew by experience, every day would give fresh opportunity to procure evidence, of words he never said, and actions he never did: he saw clearly the hour was come for leaving that place; and as soon as evening-prayers were over, about eight o'clock, the tide then serving, he shook the dust off his feet, and left *Georgia*, after having preached the gospel there, ("not," says he, "as I ought, but as I was able") one year, and nearly nine months.

"Such was the leave," says a writer of Mr. Wesley's Life, "which *our Missionary*, (how respectful in a man who owes much, if not his all to him!) took of *America.*" We scruple not to say, (and we think that every reader who candidly considers the whole ac-

count, will say,) such was the treatment that a man of God received from those, whose best interests he endeavoured to promote. But though *clouds and darknesses are around his throne*, who governs the world, Yet *righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his seat*. Such a burning and shining light was not to be hid in the then uncultivated wilds of *Georgia*. He who had sold all for God and his truth, and who was fitted to defend that truth against all the deceivableness of the carnal mind, with all its additional weapons of vain philosophy or worldly prudence : though permitted by the only wise God our Saviour, to be sifted as wheat, and tried in the furnace of adversity, he was preserved and brought forth as gold, which

“ Returns more pure, and brings forth all its weight.”

Divine Providence was about to lead him into a field of action, in which every gift that God had given him, was tried to the uttermost, and *was found unto praise, and honour, and glory*.

C H A P. IV.

Of Mr. WESLEY'S return to England, and of his Conversion.

THE account of his journey to *Charleston*, from which place he embarked for *England*, contains such a striking and suitable close to his labours and dangers

dangers in *America*, that we think ourselves justified in giving it in his own words.

“ Saturday, Dec. 3. We came to *Purrysburg* early in the morning, and endeavoured to procure a Guide for *Port-Royal*. But none being to be had, we set out without one, an hour before sun-rise. After walking two or three hours, we met with an old man, who led us into a small path, near which was a line of *blazed* trees, (i. e. marked by cutting off part of the bark) by following which, he said, we might easily come to *Port-Royal* in five or six hours.

“ We were four in all; one of whom intended to go for *England* with me; the other two to settle in *Carolina*. About eleven we came into a large swamp, where we wandered about till near two. We then found another *blaze*, and pursued it, till it divided into two; one of these we followed through an almost impassable thicket, a mile beyond which it ended. We made through the thicket again, and traced the other *blaze*, till that ended too. It now grew toward sunset, so we sat down, faint and weary, having had no food all day, except a ginger-bread cake, which I had taken in my pocket. A third of this we had divided among us at noon; another third we took now; the rest we reserved for the morning; but we had met with no water all the day. Thrusting a stick into the ground, and finding the end of it moist, two of our company fell a digging with their hands, and at about three feet depth, found water. We thanked God, drank, and were refreshed. The night was sharp; however there was no complaining among us;

but after having commended ourselves to God, we lay down close together, and (I at least) slept till near six in the morning.

“ Sunday, Dec. 4. God renewing our strength, we arose neither faint nor weary, and resolved to make one trial more, to find a path to *Port-Royal*. We steered due East; but finding neither path nor blaze, and the woods growing thicker and thicker, we judged it would be our best course to return, if we could, by the way we came. The day before, in the thickest part of the woods, I had broke many young trees, I knew not why, as we walked along: these we found a great help in several places, where no path was to be seen; and between one and two God brought us safe to *Benjamin Arien's* house, the old man we left the day before.

“ In the evening I read *French* prayers to a numerous family, a mile from *Arien's*; one of whom undertook to guide us to *Port-Royal*. In the morning we set out. About sun-set, we asked our Guide, If he knew where he was? Who frankly answered, No. However we pushed on, till about seven we came to a plantation, and the next evening (after many difficulties and delays) we landed on *Port-Royal* Island.

“ Wednesday 7. We walked to *Beaufort*; where Mr. Jones (the Minister of *Beaufort*) with whom I lodged during my short stay here, gave me a lively idea of the old *English* hospitality. On Thursday Mr. *Delamotte* came; with whom, on Friday 9th, I took boat for *Charleston*: After a slow passage by reason of contrary wind, and some conflict (our provisions

falling

falling short) with hunger as well as cold, we came thither early in the morning, on Tuesday the 13th."

He here parted with his faithful friend Mr. *Dela-*
motte, from whom he had been but a few days separate since their departure from *England*.†

On board the ship he had leisure to enter into a close examination of himself, and to *search out his spirit* in the light which those late remarkable providences afforded him. The Lord had now given him abundant means of self-knowledge, and they were not lost upon him. He more than ever felt what he had subscribed to at his ordination, that he was "far gone from original righteousness," and *had fallen short of the glory of God*, that glorious image of God, in which man was at first created. He had felt much of this in the late trials through which he passed. He had weighed himself in the balance of the sanctuary, the word of God; and had attentively marked the lively victorious faith of more experienced christians. "And now," says he, "it is upwards of two years since I left my native country, in order to teach the *Georgia* Indians the nature of christianity; but what have I learned myself in the mean time? Why (what I least of all suspected) that I who went to *America*, to convert others, was never converted myself. *I am not mad*, though I thus speak: but *speak the words of truth and soberness*; if haply some of those who still dream may awake, and see, that as I am, so are they.

† Mr. *Charles Wesley*, finding the climate did not agree with him, had returned home in July, 1737.

“ Are they read in *philosophy*? So was I. In ancient or modern *tongues*? So was I also. Are they versed in the *Science of Divinity*? I have studied it many years. Can they talk fluently upon spiritual things? The very same could I do. Are they plenteous in *alms*? Behold, I gave all my goods to feed the poor.

“ Do they give of their labour as well as their substance? I have laboured more abundantly than they all. Are they willing to *suffer* for their brethren? I have thrown up my friends, reputation, ease, country; I have put my life in my hand, wandering into strange lands; I have given my body to be devoured by the deep, parched up with heat, consumed by toil and weariness, or whatsoever God shall please to bring upon me. But does all this (be it more or less, it matters not) make me acceptable to God? Does all I ever did or can, *know, say, give, do or suffer*, justify me in his sight? Yea, or the constant use of all the *means of grace*? (which nevertheless is meet, right, and our bounden duty) or that *I know nothing of myself*, that I am as touching outward, moral righteousness blameless? Or, (to come closer yet) the having a *rational conviction* of all the truths of christianity? Does all this give a claim to the holy, heavenly, divine character of a *Christian*? By no means. If the oracles of God are true, if we are still to abide by *the law and the testimony*; all these things, though when ennobled by faith in Christ, they are holy, and just and good, yet without it are *dung and dross*.

“ This

“ This then have I learned in the ends of the earth, that I am *fallen short of the glory of God*; that my whole heart is *altogether corrupt and abominable*, and consequently my whole life (seeing it cannot be, that *an evil tree should bring forth good fruit* :) that my own works, my own sufferings, my own righteousness, are so far from reconciling me to an offended God, so far from making any atonement for the least of those sins, which *are more in number than the hairs of my head*, that the most specious of them need an atonement themselves, or they cannot abide his righteous judgment: that *having the sentence of death in my heart*, and having nothing *in or of myself*, to plead, I have no hope, but that of being justified freely, *through the redemption that is in Jesus*; I have no hope, but that if I seek I shall find the Christ, and *be found in him*, not having my own righteousness, but that which is through the *faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith*.

“ If it be said, that I have faith (for many such things have I heard, from many miserable comforters) I answer so have the Devils,—— *a sort of faith*; but still they are strangers to the covenant of promise. So the Apostles had even at *Cana in Galilee*, when Jesus first *manifested forth his glory*; even then they, in a sort, *believed on him*; but they had not then *the faith that overcometh the world*. The faith I want is, *A sure trust and confidence in God, that through the merits of Christ, my sins are forgiven, and I reconciled to the favour of God*. I want that faith which St. Paul recommends to all the world, especially in his Epistle to the *Romans*: that faith which enables every one that hath it to cry out,

I live not ; but Christ liveth in me : and the life which I now live, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me. I want that faith which none has without knowing that he hath it (though many imagine they have it, who have it not.) for whoever hath it, is freed from sin, the whole body of sin is destroyed in him : he is freed from fear, having peace with God through Christ, and rejoicing in hope of the glory of God. And he is freed from doubt, having the love of God shed abroad in his heart, through the Holy Ghost which is given unto him ; which Spirit itself beareth witness with his spirit, that he is a child of God."

On Wednesday, Feb. 1, 1738, between four and five in the morning, he landed at *Deal* ; and was soon informed that Mr. *Whitefield* had sailed for *America* the day before, in order to assist him. He read prayers and expounded a portion of Scripture at the Inn, as he did also at other places on the road ; and on Friday the third arrived in *London*.

After waiting on General *Oglethorpe*, and on the Trustees of *Georgia*, he was invited to preach in several of the churches. He now began to be popular, appearing in a new character, as a Missionary lately returned from preaching the Gospel to the *Indians* in *America*. The churches where he preached, were crowded. This soon produced a complaint, that there was no room "for the best in the parish:" and that objection, united to the offence which was given by his plain heart-searching sermons, produced in each place at last the following repulsion, "Sir, you must preach here no more."

About this time he received a letter from a friend in *Lincolnshire*, intreating him to serve the church of a Mr. *Hume*, sometime before deceased, during its vacancy. The occasion of this letter, with all the circumstances connected with it, is so very extraordinary, that we doubt not but we shall be pardoned if we relate the whole.

When Mr. *Samuel Wesley's* Parsonage-house was burnt at *Epworth*, as formerly related, many of the neighbouring gentry, who held Mr. *Wesley* in very high esteem, opened their houses to him and his family. One gentleman received Mr. and Mrs. *Wesley*, another one of the children: and thus the whole family was disposed of. Mr. *John Wesley*, who was then only six years old, was received into the house of Mr. *Hume*, a neighbouring Clergyman. There he continued for a year, till his father's house was rebuilt: and has confessed that he loved that family, while he resided among them, as well as ever he did his own. Mr. *Hume* had four sons and one daughter. Three of the sons were educated at *Oxford*, and entered into holy Orders: the other went into the Guinea-trade, and settled on the Coast of *Africa*.

Mr. *Wesley* reading the letter above-mentioned enquired of one of his *Lincolnshire* friends, whether Mr. *Hume* was dead. "Have you not been informed of the calamities of that family," replied his friend? "I have not," said Mr. *Wesley*. "I will then," said he, "relate them to you."

“ About

“ About nine months ago Mr. *Hume* was riding out; and watering his horse at a large pond, the unruly beast plunged out of his depth; by which Mr. *Hume* was so wetted, that he caught a violent cold, which was followed by a fever that caused his death. Lord —— the Patron of Mr. *Hume*'s Living, was determined it should remain in the family as long as possible; and therefore gave the eldest son a presentation of it. Mr. *Hume*, the father, had just rebuilt the Parsonage-house before he died: the son took possession before it was dry, and the dampness of it occasioned his speedy death. The second son was then presented to the Living; and he died also a few weeks after his induction. The third son (his brother dying suddenly) set off from *Oxford* to receive the presentation. In his way he lay at the house of an old acquaintance of his father. The gentleman of the house had a beautiful daughter, with whom young Mr. *Hume* immediately fell in love: he therefore, before he departed, begged permission to return, and make proposals; to which the father consented. Mr. *Hume*, after his induction to his Living, returned according to his engagement, and in a few days the marriage was completed. But in six weeks after the nuptials the Lady was brought to bed; and Mr. *Hume* soon afterwards died with grief.

“ Now, Sir,” said the *Lincolnshire* gentleman, “ You may have a Living and a wife: for Lord —— has declared that if Miss *Hume* is married to a Clergyman within six months from the death of her Brother, the Living shall be part of her fortune; and Miss *Hume*

has

has consented with much apparent satisfaction, that you should be invited to supply the Church." But Mr. *Wesley* was too much impressed with the thoughts of eternity, to pay any attention to this proposal.

The conclusion of this mournful Episode should not be omitted. Mrs. *Hume*, soon after the death of her third son, received a letter from the only remaining one, informing her he was just going to sail from *Africa* to *England* with a fortune sufficient to make the whole family comfortable : and in a few days after, she received a letter from the Captain of a swift-sailing vessel, who had been hailed by the ship in which her son sailed ; by whom she was informed that her son had died on his passage of a disorder which then raged in the ship. Mrs. *Hume*, sinking under the weight of such a complication of misfortunes, soon died of a broken heart. Miss *Hume*, about a month after the death of her mother, was in company with a Physician, who looking steadfastly at her observed, "Madam, you take opium : I know it by your eyes ; and I am afraid you have put it out of my power to recover you." She confessed that the misfortunes of the family had so entirely deprived her of rest, that she had taken laudanum, to obtain a little repose. The Physician prescribed. In a fortnight she recovered her appetite, her colour, and in a good measure her health. The Physician then advised her to take a table-spoonful of a Julap he had prescribed for her, whenever she found herself inclined to be sick. A few days after this she desired the servant to bring her a spoonful of the Julap. The

The servant mistaking the bottle of Laudanum for the Julap, brought her a spoonful of the Laudanum, which she drank : and soon afterwards she fell asleep, and awoke no more.

When Mr. *Wesley* received information of the death of the last of the family, he recollected a remarkable observation made to him by his mother many years before. He had been commending to her in very strong terms Mr. *Hume* and his amiable family. “*John,*” replied Mrs. *Wesley*, “depend upon it, that family will come to an untimely end.” Mrs. *Wesley* was a woman so far from being given to censure, that Mr. *Wesley* asked with some surprize, “Madam, why do you speak so severely of so lovely a family?” “*John,*” said she, “I will tell you why. I have observed in various instances in the course of my life, that where persons have grossly violated the fifth commandment, and afterwards have been brought to the fear of God, the Lord has reversed the promise, and punished them for their transgression with temporal death. Mr. *Hume* and his family lie under this censure. I remember the time when his mother lived under his roof. He used her cruelly. He grudged every bit of meat she put into her mouth, and the whole family partook of his spirit. And, depend upon it, God will remember them for this.”

To return. On Tuesday the 7th. (“a day,” observes Mr. *Wesley*, “much to be remembered”) He met *Peter Bohler* and two other persons belonging to the Moravian church, who were just landed from *Germany*. Having been already acquainted with some
of

of the excellent of the earth, in that church, he received them with the greatest cordiality, and soon after went with *Peter Bohler* to *Oxford*.

He was now well prepared to hear what could be said upon the *nature and fruits of christian faith*. But though he was a sincere inquirer after truth, and therefore said both to God and man “What I know not, teach thou me,” yet in a point of such importance, he would,

“Not to Man, but God submit :”

And therefore he made continual objections, which caused his friend to reply more than once. *Mi frater, Mi frater, excoquenda est ista tua Philolophia*: “My Brother, my Brother, that philosophy of yours must be purged away.” The reproach which formerly he endured at *Oxford*, now again revived: and even as he walked through the squares of the Colleges, he was mocked and laughed at. Upon one of those occasions, the stranger perceiving that *Mr. Wesley* was troubled at it chiefly for his sake, said with a smile, *Mi frater; non adhæret vestibus*. “My Brother, it does not even stick to our cloaths.”

He now went to see his brother *Samuel* and some other friends, and afterwards took a longer journey. At this time he renewed and wrote down the following resolutions, with respect to his own behaviour.

1. To use absolute openness and unreserve, with all he should converse with.

2. To

2. To labour after continual seriousness, not willingly indulging himself in any the least levity of behaviour, or in laughter, no, not for a moment.

3. To speak no word which did not tend to the glory of God; in particular, not a tittle of worldly things. "Others may," said he, "nay, must. But what is that to me?" And

4. To take no pleasure which did not tend to the glory of God; thanking God every moment for all he took, and therefore rejecting every sort and degree of it which he felt he could not so thank him *in and for*.

His brother *Charles* being dangerously ill, he returned to *Oxford*. Here he again largely conversed with *Peter Bohler*, and "by him," said he, ("in the hand of the great God) I was clearly convinced of the want of *that faith, whereby alone we are saved*."

Immediately, he felt an inclination to leave off preaching. "How," thought he, "can I preach to others, who have not faith myself?" He asked his friend, whether he should leave it off or not. "By no means," said he, "Preach faith 'till you have it; and then *because* you have it, you *will* preach faith."

But a difficulty still remained. How is this faith given? He had now no objection to what his friend said of the *nature* of christian faith; that it is (to use the words of the Church of England) *a sure trust and confidence which a man hath in God, that through the merits of Christ his sins are forgiven, and he reconciled to the favour of God*. "Neither" said he, "could I deny

deny either the happiness or holiness which he described, as fruits of this living faith. Those passages of Scripture, *The Spirit itself beareth witness with our Spirit, that we are the children of God: And, He that believeth hath the witness in himself,* fully convinced me of the former: as, *Whosoever is born of God, doth not commit sin; and Whosoever believeth is born of God,* did of the latter. But I could not comprehend what he spoke of an *instantaneous work*. I could not understand, how this faith should be given in a moment; how a man could *at once* be thus turned from darkness to light, from sin and misery to righteousness and joy in the Holy Ghost. I searched the scriptures again, touching this very thing, particularly the *Acts of the Apostles*: but, to my utter astonishment, found scarce any instances there of other than *instantaneous conversions*; scarce any other so slow as that of *St. Paul* who was three days in the pangs of the new birth. I had but *one* retreat left; viz. “*Thus, I grant God wrought in the first ages of christianity: but the times are changed. What reason have I to believe he works in the same manner now?*”

“*But,*” proceeds he, “*I was beat out of this retreat too, by the concurring evidence of several living witnesses: who testified God had thus wrought in themselves; giving them in a moment, such a faith in the blood of his Son, as translated them out of darkness into light, out of sin and fear into holiness and happiness. Here ended my disputing. I could now only cry out, ‘Lord, help thou my unbelief!’*”

He proceeds, "I asked *P. Bohler* again, Whether I ought not to refrain from teaching others?" He said, "No; do not hide in the earth the talent God hath given you." Accordingly I spoke clearly and fully at *Blendon* to Mr. *Delamotte's* family, of the nature and fruits of christian faith. Mr. *Broughton* and my Brother were there. Mr. *Broughton's* great objection was, He could never think that I had not faith, who had done and suffered such things. My Brother was very angry, and told me, I did not know what mischief I had done by talking thus. And indeed it did please God then to kindle a fire, which I trust shall never be extinguished."

He now declared every where *the faith as it is in Jesus*: "a strange doctrine," says he, "which some, who did not care to contradict (for indeed how could they, without denying both the Bible and the Church of *England*) yet knew not what to make of. But some who were thoroughly bruised by sin, willingly heard, and received it gladly."

His friend *Bohler* soon after sailed for *America*. Upon this occasion, he remarks in the fulness of his heart, "O what a work hath God begun since his coming into *England*: such a one as shall never come to an end, till heaven and earth shall pass away!" There were now indeed several witnesses to the truth which he had spoken, whose testimony mightily encouraged others to come to the throne of grace, that they also might "be partakers of like precious faith."

They

They now began to form themselves into a little Society, as he and his pious companions had before done in *Oxford*, and afterward in *Georgia*. They then agreed, in obedience to the word of God, given by *St. James*, (ch. v. 16.)

1. That they would meet together once a week to *confess their faults one to another, and pray one for another, that they might be healed* :

2. That the persons so meeting should be divided into several *Bands*, or little companies, none of them consisting of fewer than five, or more than ten persons.

3. That every one in order should speak as freely, plainly and concisely as he could, the real state of his heart, with his several temptations and deliverances, since the last time of meeting.

4. That all the *Bands* should have a conference at eight every Wednesday evening, begun and ended with singing and prayer.

5. That any who desired to be admitted into this Society should be asked, What are your reasons for desiring this? Will you be entirely open, using no kind of reserve? Have you any objection to any of our orders? (which may then be read.)

6. That when any new member was proposed, every one present should speak clearly and freely whatever objection he might have to him.

7. That those against whom no reasonable objection appeared, should be, in order for their trial, formed into one, or more distinct *Bands*, and some person agreed on to assist them.

8. That after two months trial, if no objection then appeared, they should be admitted into the Society.

9. That every fourth Saturday should be observed as a day of general intercession.

10. That on the Sunday seven-night following, there should be a general love-feast, from seven till ten in the evening.

11. That no particular member should be allowed to act in any thing, contrary to any order of the Society: and that if any persons, after being thrice admonished, should not conform thereto, they should no longer be esteemed as members.

About this time he was invited to preach in some of the churches. But, as before, many (particularly of the chief persons in his congregations) would not endure his plain, heart-searching discourses. He was soon told at each of these also, "Sir, you must preach here no more." "So true," says he, "did I find the words of a friend in a letter to my Brother at this time;" which were as follows:

"I have seen upon this occasion, more than ever I could have imagined, how intolerable the doctrine of faith is to the mind of man; and how peculiarly intolerable to *religious* men. One may say the most unchristian things, even down to Deism; the most enthusiastic things, so they proceed but upon mental raptures, lights and unions; the most severe things, even the whole rigour of ascetic mortification: and all this will be forgiven. But if you speak of faith in such a manner as makes Christ a Saviour to the utmost, a most universal help and refuge; in such a manner

manner as takes away glorying, but adds happiness to wretched man; as discovers a greater pollution in the best of us, than we could before acknowledge, but brings a greater deliverance from it than we could before expect: if any one offers to talk at this rate, he shall be heard with the same abhorrence, as if he was going to rob mankind of their salvation, their Mediator, or their hopes of forgiveness. I am persuaded that a *Montanist* or a *Novatian*, who from the height of his purity should look down with contempt upon poor sinners, and exclude them from all mercy, would not be thought such an overthrower of the Gospel, as he who should learn from the author of it, to be a friend of publicans and sinners, and to sit down upon a level with them as soon as they begin to repent.

“ But this is not to be wondered at. For all *religious* people have such a quantity of righteousness, acquired by much painful exercise, and formed at last into current habits; which is their wealth, both for this world and the next. Now all other schemes of religion are either so complaisant, as to tell them, they are very rich and have enough to triumph in: or else only a little rough, but friendly in the main, by telling them, their riches are not yet sufficient, but by such arts of self-denial, and mental refinement, they may enlarge the stock. But the doctrine of faith is a downright robber. It takes away all this wealth, and only tells us, it is deposited for us with somebody else, upon whose bounty we must live like mere beggars. Indeed they that are truly beggars, vile and filthy sinners 'till very lately, may stoop to live in

this dependent condition: it suits them well enough. But they who have long distinguished themselves from the herd of vicious wretches, or have even gone beyond *moral* men; for them to be told, that they are either not so well, or but the same needy, impotent, insignificant vessels of mercy with the others: this is more shocking to reason than transubstantiation. For reason had rather resign its pretensions to judge what is bread or flesh, than have this honour wrested from it, to be the architect of virtue and righteousness. But *where am I running? My design was only to give you warning, that wherever you go, this foolishness of preaching will alienate hearts from you, and open mouths against you.*"

He was now brought to the birth. His soul truly waited upon God, knowing that from him cometh our salvation. But so much the more did he abhor himself, and repent as in dust and ashes. As he now expected that Christ given for him, would be manifested in him, he also felt that compunction, that deep self-abasement, which must ever precede true living faith in the Son of God. His state of mind at this time he thus pathetically expresses in the following letter to a friend:

"O why is it, that so great, so wise, so holy a God, will use such an instrument as me! Lord, *let the dead bury their dead!* But wilt thou send the dead to raise the dead? Yea, thou sendest whom thou wilt send, and shewest mercy by whom thou wilt shew mercy!

mercy ! Amen ! Be it then according to thy will ! If thou speak the word, *Judas* shall cast out devils.---

“ I feel what you say (though not enough) for I am under the same condemnation. I see that the whole law of God is holy, just and good. I know every thought, every temper of my soul ought to bear God’s image and superscription. But how am I fallen from the glory of God ! I feel, that I *am sold under sin*. I know, that I too deserve nothing but wrath, being full of all abominations, and having no good thing in me, to atone for them, or to remove the wrath of God. All my works, my righteousness, my prayers need an atonement for themselves. So that my mouth is stopped. I have nothing to plead. God is holy, I am unholy. God is a consuming fire. I am altogether a sinner, meet to be consumed.

“ Yet I hear a voice, (and is it not the voice of God ?) saying *Believe, and thou shalt be saved. He that believeth, is passed from death unto life. God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son that whosoever believeth on him, should not perish, but have everlasting life.*

“ O let no one deceive us by vain words, as if we had already attained this faith ! By its fruits we shall know. Do we already feel *peace with God, and joy in the Holy Ghost* ? Does his *Spirit bear witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God* ? Alas ! with mine he does not. Nor, I fear with your’s. O thou Saviour of men, save us from trusting in any thing but *Thee* ! Draw us after *Thee* ! Let us be emptied of ourselves, and then fill us with all peace and joy

in believing, and let nothing separate us from thy love, in time or in eternity!"

The account which immediately follows, is of such deep importance, that we are constrained to give it entire in his own words. Nor need we apologize for the length of it, when it is considered that the *conversion* of Mr. *Wesley* is a point of the utmost magnitude, not only to himself, but to others. For it was not till after this, that God was pleased to own him in such a remarkable manner in the salvation of souls, as was evidenced in his future labours.

“ What occurred on Wednesday, May 24. I think best to relate at large, after premising what may make it the better understood. Let him that cannot receive it, ask of the Father of lights, that he would give more light to him and me.

“ I believe, till I was about ten years old, I had not finned away that *washing of the Holy Ghost* which was given me in baptism, having been strictly educated and carefully taught, that I could only be saved by *universal obedience, by keeping all the commandments of God*; in the meaning of which I was diligently instructed. And those instructions so far as they respected outward duties and sins, I gladly received and often thought of. But all that was said to me of inward obedience, or holiness, I neither understood nor remembered. So that I was indeed as ignorant of the true meaning of the law, as I as of the Gospel of *Christ*.

“ The

“ The next six or seven years were spent at school : where outward restraints being removed, I was much more negligent than before even of outward duties, and almost continually guilty of outward sins, which I knew to be such, though they were not scandalous in the eye of the world. However I still read the Scriptures, and said my prayers, morning and evening. And what I now hoped to be saved by, was, 1. *Not being so bad as other people.* 2. *Having still a kindness for religion.* And 3. *Reading the Bible, going to Church, and saying my prayers.*

“ Being removed to the University, for five years I still said my prayers both in public and in private, and read with the Scriptures several other books of religion, especially comments on the New Testament. Yet I had not all this while so much as a notion of inward holiness ; nay, went on habitually and (for the most part) very contentedly, in some or other known sin : indeed with some intermissions and short struggles, especially before and after the holy communion, which I was obliged to receive thrice a year. I cannot well tell, what I hoped to be saved by now, when I was continually sinning against that little light I had : unless by those transient fits of what many divines taught me to call *repentance.*

“ When I was about twenty two, my father pressed me to enter into holy orders. At the same time the providence of God directing me to *Kempis's Christian Pattern*, I began to see, that true religion was seated in the heart, and that God's law extended to all our thoughts as well as words and actions. I was how-

ever very angry at *Kempis*, for being *too strict*, though I read him only in Dean *Stanhope's* translation. Yet I had frequently much sensible comfort in reading him, such as I was an utter stranger to before: and meeting likewise with a religious friend, which I had never had 'till now, I began to alter the whole form of my conversation, and to set in earnest upon *a new life*. I set apart an hour or two a day for religious retirement. I communicated every week. I watched against all sin, whether in word or deed. I began to aim at and pray for inward holiness. So that now, *doing so much, and living so good a life*, I doubted not but I was a good christian.

“ Removing soon after to another College, I executed a resolution, which I was before convinced was of the utmost importance, shaking off at once all my trifling acquaintance. I began to see more and more the value of time. I applied myself closer to study. I watched more carefully against actual sins: I advised others to be religious, according to that scheme of religion, by which I modelled my own life. But meeting now with Mr. *Law's Christian Perfection and Serious Call* (although I was much offended at many parts of both, yet) they convinced me more than ever, of the exceeding height and breadth and depth of the law of God. The light flowed in so mightily upon my soul, that every thing appeared in a new view. I cried to God for help, and resolved not to prolong the time of obeying him, as I had never done before. And by my continued *endeavour to keep his whole law*, inward and outward, *to the utmost of my power*, I was persuaded,

suaded, that I should be accepted of him, and that I was even then in a state of salvation.

“ In 1730, I began visiting the prisons, assisting the poor and sick in town, and doing what other good I could by my presence or my little fortune to the bodies and souls of all men. To this end I abridged myself of all superfluities, and many that are called necessaries of life. I soon became *a by-word* for so doing, and I rejoiced that *my name was cast out as evil*. The next spring I began observing the Wednesday and Friday Fasts, commonly observed in the antient Church; taking no food till three in the afternoon. And now I knew not how to go any farther. I diligently strove against all sin. I omitted no sort of self-denial which I thought lawful: I carefully used, both in public and in private, all the means of grace at all opportunities. I omitted no occasion of doing good. I for that reason suffered evil. And all this I knew to be nothing, unless as it was directed toward inward holiness. Accordingly this, the image of God, was what I aimed at in all, by doing his will, not my own. Yet when after continuing some years in this course, I apprehended myself to be near death, I could not find that all this gave me any comfort, or any assurance of acceptance with God. At this I was then not a little surprized; not imagining I had been all this time building on the sand, nor considering that *other foundation can no man lay, than that which is laid by God, even Christ Jesus*.

“ Soon after, a contemplative man convinced me still more than I was convinced before, that outward

works

works are nothing, being alone: and in several conversations instructed me, how to pursue inward holiness, or a union of the soul with God. But even of his instructions (though I then received them as the words of God) I cannot but now observe, 1. That he spoke so incautiously against *trusting* in *outward works*, that he discouraged me from *doing* them at all. 2. That he recommended (as it were, to supply what was wanting in them) *mental prayer*, and the like exercises, as the most effectual means of purifying the soul, and uniting it with God. Now these were in truth, as much *my own works* as visiting the sick or cloathing the naked, and the *union with God* thus pursued, was as really *my own righteousness*, as any I had before pursued, under another name.

“ In this *refined way* of trusting to my own works and my own righteousness (so zealously inculcated by the *Mystick* writers,) I dragged on heavily, finding no comfort or help therein, till the time of my leaving *England*. On ship-board however I was again active in outward works: where it pleased God of his free mercy, to give me twenty-six of the *Moravian* brethren for companions, who endeavoured to shew me a more excellent way. But I understood it not at first. I was too learned and too wise. So that it seemed foolishness unto me. And I continued preaching and following after and trusting in that righteousness, whereby no flesh can be justified.

“ All the time I was at *Savannah*, I was thus *beating the air*. Being ignorant of the righteousness of Christ which by a living faith in him bringeth salvation

*to every one that believeth, I fought to establish my own righteousness, and so laboured in the fire all my days. I was now, properly under the Law; I knew that the Law of God was spiritual; I consented to it, that it was good. Yea, I delighted in it, after the inner man. Yet was I carnal, sold under sin. Every day was I constrained to cry out. What I do, I allow not; for what I would, I do not, but what I hate, that I do. To will is indeed present with me; but how to perform that which is good, I find not. For the good which I would, I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do. I find a Law, that when I would do good, evil is present with me: even the law in my members warring against the law of my mind, and still bringing me into captivity to the law of sin.**

“ In this state, I was indeed fighting continually, but not conquering. Before, I had willingly served sin; now it was unwillingly, but still I served it. I fell and rose, and fell again. Sometimes I was overcome, and in heaviness: sometimes I overcame, and was in joy. For as in the former state, I had some foretastes of the terrors of the law, so had I in this, of the comforts of the Gospel. During this whole struggle between nature and grace (which had now continued above ten years) I had many remarkable returns to prayer, especially when I was in trouble: I had many sensible comforts, which are indeed no other than short anticipations of the life of faith. But I was still *under the law, not under grace* (the state which most who are called Christians, are content to live and die in.)

* Rom. vii.

in.) For I was only *striving with*, not *freed from sin*: neither had I *the witness of the Spirit with my spirit*: and indeed could not; for *I sought it not by faith, but (as it were) by the works of the law*.

“ In my return to *England*, January 1738, being in imminent danger of death, and very uneasy on that account, I was strongly convinced, that the cause of that uneasiness was unbelief, and that the gaining a true, living faith, was the *one thing needful* for me. But still I fixed not this faith on its right object: I meant only faith in God, not faith in or through Christ. Again, I knew not that I was *wholly void of this faith*; but only thought, *I had not enough* of it. So that when *Peter Bohler*, whom God prepared for me as soon as I came to *London*, affirmed of true faith in Christ (which is but one) that it had those two fruits inseparably attending it, “ *Dominion over sin, and constant peace from a sense of forgiveness,*” I was quite amazed, and looked upon it as a new Gospel. If this was so, it was clear, I had not faith. But I was not willing to be convinced of this. Therefore I disputed with all my might, and laboured to prove, that faith might be where these were not; especially where the sense of forgiveness was not: for all the Scriptures relating to this, I had been long since taught to construe away, and to call all *Presbyterians* who spoke otherwise. Besides, I well saw, no one could (in the nature of things) have such a sense of forgiveness, and not *feel* it. But I felt it not. If then there was no faith without this, all my pretensions to faith dropped at once.

“ When

“ When I met *Peter Bohler* again, he consented to put the dispute upon the issue which I desired, viz. Scripture and Experience. I first consulted the Scripture. But when I set aside the glosses of men, and simply considered the words of God, comparing them together, endeavouring to illustrate the obscure by the plainer passages, I found they all made against me, and was forced to retreat to my last hold, “ That experience would never agree with the *literal interpretation* of those Scriptures. Nor could I therefore allow it to be the true, till I found some living witnesses of it.” He replied, “ He could shew me such at any time; if I desired it, the next day.” And accordingly the next day, he came again with three others, all of whom testified of their own personal experience, that a true living faith in Christ is inseparable from a sense of pardon for all past, and freedom from all present sins. They added with one mouth, that this faith was the gift, the free gift of God, and that he would surely bestow it upon every soul, who earnestly and perseveringly sought it. I was now thoroughly convinced; and, by the grace of God, I resolved to seek it unto the end, 1. By absolutely renouncing all dependence, in whole or in part, upon *my own* works or righteousness, on which I had really grounded my hope of salvation, though I knew it not, from my youth up. 2. By adding to *the constant use of all the other means of grace*, continual prayer for this very thing, justifying, saving faith, a full reliance on the blood of Christ shed for *me*; a

trust

trust in him, as *my Christ*, as *my sole justification, sanctification and redemption.*

“ I continued thus to seek it (though with strange indifference, dulness and coldness, and unusually frequent relapses into sin) till Wednesday, May 24. I think it was about five this morning, that I opened my Testament on those words, *Τὰ μέγιστα ἠρῶν καὶ τίμια ἐπαγγελματα δεδώρηται, ἵνα διὰ τούτων γένησθε θείας κοινωνοὶ φύσεως.* *There are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, 2 Pet. i. 4.* Just as I went out, I opened it again on those words, *Thou art not far from the kingdom of God.* In the afternoon I was asked to go to *St. Paul's.* The Anthem was, *Out of the deep have I called unto Thee, O Lord: Lord, hear my voice. O let thine ears consider well the voice of my complaint. If thou, Lord, wilt be extreme to mark what is done amiss, O Lord, who may abide it? But there is mercy with thee; therefore thou shalt be feared. O Israel, trust in the Lord: for with the Lord there is mercy, and with him is plentiful redemption. And he shall redeem Israel from all his sins.*

“ In the evening I went very unwillingly to a Society in *Aldersgate-Street*, where one was reading *Luther's Preface to the Epistle to the Romans.* About a quarter before nine, while he was describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ, *I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone for salvation: and an assurance was given me, That he had taken away*
my

my sons, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death.†"

His soul now magnified the Lord, and his spirit rejoiced in God his Saviour. Because he was a son, God sent forth the Spirit of his Son into his heart, crying, Abba Father: the Spirit itself bearing witness with his spirit that he was a child of God. The love of God was shed abroad in his heart, by the Holy Ghost given unto him. And he rejoiced in God, by whom he had now received the atonement.

Now that he was a child of God, he brought forth the fruit of the Spirit: as soon as he was thus enabled to love God, he loved every child of man. "Immediately," says he, "I began to pray with all my might for those who had in a more especial manner despitefully used me and persecuted me!" And in this thankful, loving, happy frame of mind he continued, believing in God, and zealous of good works.

His heart was now enlarged to declare, as he never had before, the loving-kindness of the Lord. *It was his meat and drink to do his holy and acceptable will. The word of God dwelt richly in him, and was in his mouth as a sharp two-edged sword to the wicked, but to those who felt the anguish of a wounded spirit, who had*
turned

† Mr. Wesley acknowledged, many years after this, that some of his expressions in the above account concerning his state under the law, were too strong: that he was then in a state of salvation as a servant, but not as a child, of God: and that he had a measure of faith, but not the proper christian faith.

turned at God's reproof, he was an able Minister of the New Testament, holding forth the word of life, that they also might rejoice in God their Saviour.

But he also experienced what it was to be weak in this faith, as well as afterwards to be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might. He was often in heaviness through manifold temptations. Sometimes fear came suddenly upon him; fear that he had deceived himself, and stopped short of that grace of God which he had fought for. At other times letters which he received from injudicious persons concerning the new birth, and the fruits of christian faith, exceedingly troubled him. Few helped, and many strove (most of them ignorantly) to hinder him: to cause him to cast *away that confidence which hath great recompence of reward.*

But the Lord, who had brought him up out of the horrible pit of guilt and unbelief, suffered not his tender new-born spirit to faint before him. He often lifted up his head with joy, and girded him with strength.

Under these various exercises of mind, he determined to retire for a short time to *Germany*. "I had fully purposed," says he, "before I left *Georgia* so to do, if it should please God to bring me back to Europe. And I now clearly saw the time was come. My weak mind could not bear to be thus sawn asunder. And I hoped the conversing with those holy men, who were themselves living witnesses of the full power of faith, and yet able to bear with those that are weak, would be a means, under God,
of

of so establishing my soul, that I might go on from faith to faith, and from strength to strength."

Accordingly, having taken leave of his mother, he embarked at *Gravesend*, accompanied by Mr. *Ingham*, and on Thursday morning, June 15th. landed at *Rotterdam*.

On his journey through *Holland* and *Germany* he conversed with, and was hospitably entertained by many, who were happy partakers of the faith of the Gospel: especially at *Maricnbourn*, where he first conversed with Count *Zinzendorf*, Count *de Solmes*, and other eminent persons; and with a large company of witnesses of the power of true religion. From this place he wrote a letter to his Brother *Samuel*, of which the following is an extract:

"GOD has given me at length the desire of my heart. I am with a church whose conversation is in heaven, in whom is the mind that was in Christ, and who so walk as he walked. As they have all one Lord and one faith, so they are all partakers of one spirit, the spirit of meekness and love, which uniformly and continually animates all their conversation. O how high and holy a thing christianity is! And how widely distant from that---I know not what---which is so called, though it neither purifies the heart, nor renews the life, after the image of our blessed Redeemer."

In their way to *Hernhuth*, he and his company were stopped at the city of *Weymar* a considerable time, and

and at last brought before the late King of *Prussia*, then Prince Royal, (as Mr. *Wesley* was afterwards informed.) The Prince among other inquiries asked him, "What are you going so far as *Hernhuth* for?" Mr. *Wesley* answered, "To see the place where the christians live." The Prince then looked hard at them, and let them go.

On Tuesday the first of August, they arrived at *Hernhuth*, a settlement of the Moravians, in upper *Lusatia*. The inhabitants of this place were, at least in the general, truly pious persons, who came there from many parts of Europe, to escape the pollutions of the world, and live wholly to God. No immorality was allowed among them: and every thing that tended to genuine religion was introduced, and earnestly enforced. In this place, Mr. *Wesley* conversed with several persons, that were deeply experienced in the ways of God. He also heard some of them preach, and was thereby abundantly strengthened in the grace of God. He speaks particularly of the benefit he received by the conversation of *Michael Linner* the chief Elder of the church, and *Christian David*, who was, under God, the first planter of it. Of the latter he thus speaks,

"Four times I enjoyed the blessing of hearing him preach, during the few days I spent here; and every time he chose the very subject which I should have desired, had I spoken to him before. Thrice he described the state of those who are *weak in faith*, who are justified, but have not yet a new, clean heart; who have received forgiveness through the blood of
Christ,

Christ, but have not received the indwelling of the Holy Ghost. This state he explained once, from *Blessed are the poor in spirit: for their's is the kingdom of heaven*: when he shewed at large from various scriptures, that many are children of God and heirs of the promises, long before their hearts are softened by holy mourning, before they are comforted by the abiding witness of the spirit, melting their souls into all gentleness and meekness; and much more, before they are renewed in all that righteousness, which they hungered and thirsted after, before they are pure in heart from all self and sin, and merciful as their Father which is in heaven is merciful.

“ A second time he pointed out this state from those words, *Who shall deliver me from the body of this death! I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. There is therefore no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus.* Hence also he at large both proved the existence, and shewed the nature of that intermediate state, which most experience between that bondage which is described in the 7th chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, and the full glorious liberty of the children of God, described in the eighth chapter and in many other parts of Scripture.

“ This he yet again explained from the Scriptures which describe the state the Apostles were in, from our Lord's death (and indeed for some time before) till the descent of the Holy Ghost at the day of Pentecost. They were then clean, as Christ himself had borne them witness, by the word which he had spoken unto them. They then had faith, otherwise he could not have prayed

for them, that their *faith* might not fail. Yet they were not properly *converted*; they were not *delivered from* the spirit of fear; they had not *new hearts*; neither had they received *the gift of the Holy Ghost*.

“The fourth sermon which he preached, concerning the ground of our faith, made such an impression upon me, that when I went home, I could not but write down the substance of it, which was as follows:

“The word of reconciliation which the Apostles preached, as the foundation of all they taught, was that *we are reconciled to God, not by our own works, nor by our own righteousness, but wholly and solely by the blood of Christ*.

“But you will say, must I not grieve and mourn for my sins? Must I not humble myself before God? Is not this just and right? And must I not first do this before I can expect God to be reconciled to me? I answer, it is just and right. You must be humbled before God. You must have a broken and contrite heart. But then observe, this is not your own work. Do you grieve that you are a sinner? This is the work of the Holy Ghost. Are you contrite? Are you humbled before God? Do you indeed mourn, and is your heart broken within you? All this worketh the self-same Spirit.

“Observe again, this is not the foundation. It is not this by which you are justified. This is not the righteousness, this is no part of the righteousness, by which you are reconciled unto God. You grieve for your sins. You are deeply humble. Your heart is broken. Well. But all this is nothing to your justification.

fication. The remission of your sins is not owing to this cause, either in whole or in part. Nay, observe farther, that it *may* hinder justification, that is, if you build any thing upon it; if you think, I must be *so* or *so* contrite: I must grieve *more*, before I can be justified. Understand this well. To think you must be *more* contrite, *more* humble, *more* grieved, *more* sensible of the weight of sin, before you can be justified; is, to lay your contrition, your grief, your humiliation for the foundation of your being justified; at least for a part of the foundation. Therefore it hinders your justification; and a hindrance it is which must be removed, before you can lay the right foundation. The right foundation is, not *your* contrition (though that is not *your own*) not *your* righteousness, nothing of *your own*: nothing that is wrought *in you* by the Holy Ghost; but it is something *without you*, viz. the righteousness and the blood of *Christ*.

“ For this is the word, *To him that believeth on God that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.* See ye not, that nothing *in us* is the foundation? There is no connexion between God and the ungodly. There is no tie to unite them. They are altogether separate from each other. They have nothing in common. There is nothing less or more in the ungodly, to join them to God. Works, righteousness, contrition? No. Ungodliness only. This then do, if you will lay a right foundation. Go straight to *Christ* with all your ungodliness. Tell him, “ Thou whose eyes are as a flame of fire searching

my heart, feelest that I am ungodly. I plead nothing else. I do not say, I am humble or contrite ; but I am ungodly. Therefore bring me to him that justifieth the ungodly. Let thy blood be the propitiation for me. For there is nothing in me but ungodliness."

" Here is a mystery. Here the wise men of the world are lost, are taken in their own craftiness. This the learned of the world cannot comprehend. It is foolishness unto them : sin is the only thing which divides men from God. Sin (let him that heareth understand) is the only thing which unites them to God, i. e. the only thing which moves the Lamb of God to have compassion upon, and by his blood, to give them access to the Father.

" This is the *word of reconciliation* which we preach. This is the foundation which never can be moved. By faith we are built upon this foundation : and this faith also is the gift of God. It is his free gift, which he now and ever giveth to every one that is willing to receive it. And when they have received this gift of God, then their hearts will melt for sorrow that they have offended him. But this gift of God lives in the heart, not in the head. The faith of the head, learned from men or books, is nothing worth. It brings neither remission of sins, nor peace with God. Labour then to believe with your whole heart. So shall you have redemption through the blood of *Christ*. - So shall you be cleansed from all sin. So shall ye go on from strength to strength, being renewed day by day in righteousness and all true holiness."

He was also much strengthened by the religious experience of several holy men, with whom he conversed during his stay in this truly christian place. One of these, *Arvid Gradin* gave him at his request a definition in writing of the *πληροφορία πίστεως*, *the full assurance of faith*, in the following words, “*Requies in sanguine Christi; firma fiducia in Deum, et persuasio de gratia divina; tranquillitas mentis summa, atque serenitas et pax; cum absentia omnis desiderii carnalis, et cessatione peccatorum etiam internorum.*” He added, (testifying at the same time it was his own experience,) “*Verbo, cor quod antea instar maris turbulenti agitabatur, in summa fuit requie, instar maris sereni et tranquillii.*” *Rest in the blood of Christ: a firm confidence in God, and persuasion of his favour: serene peace and stedfast tranquillity of mind, with a deliverance from fleshly (unholy) desire, and from every outward and inward sin. In a word, the heart which before was tost like a troubled sea, was still and quiet, and in a sweet calm.*

This was the first account Mr. Wesley had heard from any living man *as his own experience*, of what he had before learned from the oracles of God. And as by the former testimonies, he was encouraged to hold fast the beginning of his confidence, so by this he was stimulated to press forwards after all the privileges of his high calling, that his joy might be full.

“Gladly,” says he, “would I have spent my life here, but my Master calling me to labour in another part of his vineyard, on Monday August 14, I was constrained to take my leave of this happy place.” On his departure he makes this reflection, “O when

shall *this* christianity cover the earth, as the waters cover the sea!" After visiting *Professor Franck* at *Halle*, (son of the great *Professor Franck*) and viewing the schools at *Fena* founded by *Buddæus*. he arrived at *Rotterdam*, where he took ship, and sailed for *England*. He was now strengthened to do and suffer, whatever the wise and holy God, whom he served with his spirit in the Gospel of his Son, should permit to come upon him in the prosecution of his great design, of spending his life in testifying the Gospel of the grace of God.

The LIFE of the
Reverend JOHN WESLEY.

BOOK the SECOND.

Containing an ACCOUNT of his LABOURS in ENGLAND.

INTRODUCTION.

WE have now followed the great man who is the subject of our History through his youth and part of his manhood: and are come to that important period, from which he became, first the contempt and afterwards the wonder of these kingdoms and *America.*

We may easily perceive the same benevolent spirit, the same burning zeal for doing good, and the same fixed unalterable determination of mind, *in their infant seeds*, during his residence at *Oxford*, which afterwards bore him up under every difficulty, temptation, opposition, and persecution which he met with, through the whole course of his Life.

His great abstemiousness of living in *Georgia*, the sudden changes of heat and cold, his fatigues and dangers in travelling through the vast woods of *America,*

America, all served to prepare him for the unremitting labours and close trials which he afterwards endured with the greatest fortitude, yea, with alacrity and cheerfulness.

The Providence of God, through the whole of his life to this remarkable æra of his History, seemed to be pointing out his way to the great work which we now come with pleasure to relate. Even to those who are most acquainted with his Journals, and the various accounts of his labours that have been already published, it must still be a delight, under a new disposition of them, to read of his great success in the salvation of mankind, and of his various exertions for the accomplishment of this end. "Their minds" can hardly too often "be stirred up to remembrance" on so useful a theme. A thousand profitable ideas will associate themselves with the accounts which they read. And while they are treading his steps in his various rounds of duty, they will themselves catch the sacred flame, and in their respective spheres of action will with the aid of divine grace follow him as he followed Christ, but *haud passibus æquis*. * And to those who are unacquainted with his history, we are certain the following sheets, though written with all the candour and sincerity in our power, without the intentional exaggeration of any circumstance, must be surprising in a high degree. And we flatter ourselves with the hope, that this History will serve to remove the prejudices of many pious minds, that have received all their information from the reports of persons,

* *Not with equal steps.*

sons, who have been influenced by bigotry or by a spirit of party.

We shall in the following book confine ourselves to his labours and success in *England*: because a view of the work in which he was engaged in every kingdom, country and island, considered distinctly and separately, will furnish a more complete, and less confused, prospect of the whole, than could be given in the way of Journal, by following him continually from nation to nation.

We shall no longer detain our reader from the History itself; but pray that “the Father of lights and giver of every good and perfect gift” may accompany him in his perusal with his gracious benediction.

C H A P. I.

Containing Mr. WESLEY'S introduction of ITINERANT and FIELD-PREACHING, and his first formation of SOCIETIES.

ON Saturday, September 17, 1738, he arrived in London. It was still his desire to preach in a church, rather than any other place. But this he seldom could do. The same obstructions were in the way that had before shut the doors of so many churches against him. Rather the offence was now increased: the people flocked to hear him more than ever. Salvation by Faith, which he now preached every

every

every where with zeal, though a principal doctrine of the Church of *England*, was little understood and less approved. But as he had the will, so the Providence of God gave him the means of testifying the Gospel. His own little Society was now increased to thirty-two persons: and many other religious Communities in various parts of the town received him gladly. *New-gate* was not yet shut against him. He made excursions into the country also, visited *Oxford*, and preached to the prisoners in the *Castle*. Being thus, to use *St. Paul's* words, *Instant, in season, and out of season*; embracing every opportunity that offered, of publicly declaring the truth, and of enforcing it also, in every company, and to every individual with whom he conversed: it could not be, but many reports would be spread concerning him, in every place. The effect as of old was, "*Some said, he is a good man; and others said, nay; but he deceiveth the people: and the multitude was divided.*"

The points he chiefly insisted on, were four: first, that *orthodoxy* (or *right opinions*) is, at best, but a very slender *part* of religion, if it can be allowed to be any part of it at all: that neither does religion consist in *negatives*, in bare harmlessness of any kind; nor merely in *externals*, doing good, or using the means of grace, in works of piety (so called) or of charity: that it is nothing short of, or different from, *The mind that was in Christ*, the *image of God* stamp'd upon the heart, inward *righteousness*, attended with the *peace of God*, and *joy in the Holy Ghost*. Secondly, That the only way under heaven to this religion, is to *repent and believe*

believe the Gospel, or (as the Apostle words it) Repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. Thirdly, That by this faith, He that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, is justified freely by his grace through the redemption which is in Jesus Christ. And lastly : That being justified by faith, we taste of the heaven to which we are going : we are holy and happy : we tread down sin and fear, and sit in heavenly places with Christ Jesus.

Many of those who heard this, began to cry out, that he brought *strange things to their ears* : that this was a doctrine which they never heard before, or, at least, never regarded. “ They searched the scriptures, whether these things were so ;” and acknowledged “ the truth as it is in Jesus.” Their hearts also were influenced as well as their understandings, and they determined to follow Jesus Christ, *and him crucified.*

But while he thus strove to be a worker together with God, to

“ Catch the brands out of the fire :
To snatch them from the verge of hell :”

he did not neglect himself. Receiving a letter from a friend concerning the marks of true conversion, he determined more closely to *examine himself, whether he was in the faith.*

“ The surest test,” says he, “ whereby we can examine ourselves, whether we be indeed in the faith, is that given by St. Paul. *If any man be in Christ, he*

is a new creature. Old things are past away. Behold, all things are become new.

“ First. His judgments are new : his judgment of himself, of happiness, of holiness.

“ He judges himself to be altogether fallen short of the glorious image of God. To have no good thing abiding in him ; but all that is corrupt and abominable : in a word, to be wholly earthly, sensual, and devilish : a motley mixture of beast and devil.

“ Thus, by the grace of God in Christ, I judge of myself. Therefore I am, in this respect, a new creature.

“ Again. His judgment concerning happiness is new. He would as soon expect to dig it out of the earth, as to find it in riches, honour, pleasure (so called) or indeed in the enjoyment of any creature. He knows there can be no happiness on earth, but in the enjoyment of God, and in the foretaste of those *rivers of pleasure which flow at his right hand for evermore.*

“ Thus, by the grace of God in Christ, I judge of happiness. Therefore I am, in this respect, a new creature.

“ Yet again, his judgment concerning holiness is new. He no longer judges it to be an outward thing : to consist either in doing no harm, in doing good, or in using the ordinances of God. He sees it is, the life of God in the soul ; the image of God fresh stamped on the heart : an entire renewal of the mind in every temper and thought, after the likeness of him that created it.

Thus,

“ Thus, by the grace of God in Christ, I judge of holiness. Therefore I am in this respect a new creature.

“ Secondly, His designs are new. It is the design of his life, not to heap up treasures upon earth, not to gain the praise of men, not to indulge the desire of the flesh, the desire of the eye, or the pride of life; but to regain the image of God; to have the life of God again planted in his soul; and to be renewed after his likeness, in righteousness and all true holiness.

“ This, by the grace of God in Christ, is the design of my life. Therefore I am, in this respect, a new creature.

“ Thirdly. His desires are new, and indeed the whole train of his passions and inclinations. They are no longer fixed on earthly things. They are now set on the things of heaven. His love and joy and hope, his sorrow and fear, have all respect to things above. They all point heavenward. Where his treasure is, there is his heart also.

“ I dare not say I am a new creature in this respect. For other desires often arise in my heart. But they do not reign. I put them all under my feet “ through Christ which strengtheneth me.” Therefore I believe he is creating me anew in this also, and that he has begun, though not finished his work.

“ Fourthly, His conversation is new. It is *always seasoned with salt, and fit to minister grace to the hearers.*

So

“So is mine by the grace of God in Christ. Therefore, in this respect, I am a new creature.

“Fifthly, His actions are new. The tenor of his life singly points at the glory of God. All his substance and time are devoted thereto. *Whether he eats or drinks or whatever he does*, it either springs from, or leads to the love of God and man.

“Such, by the grace of God in Christ, is the tenor of my life. Therefore, in this respect, I am a new creature.”

Hearing Mr. *Whitefield* was returned from *Georgia*, he hastened to *London* to meet him, and they once more took sweet counsel together. A few other Clergymen now united with them, being convinced that the *New Doctrine*, vulgarly called *Methodism*, was indeed the old doctrine of the Bible, and of the Church of England.

An instance of the fervency of this little band of christian soldiers, will not perhaps be unpleasing. Being assembled together with several others on the 1st. of January, 1739, they continued in prayer till the night was far spent. “About three in the morning,” says he, “the power of God came mightily upon us, insomuch that many cried out for exceeding joy, and many fell to the ground. As soon as we were recovered a little from that awe and amazement at the presence of his Majesty, we broke out with one voice, *We praise thee, O God; we acknowledge Thee to be the Lord.*”

To awaken a drowsy, careless world, sunk in sin and sensuality, the Lord at this time was pleased to work in

an extraordinary manner. In several places while Mr. *Wesley* was expounding the Scriptures, many persons trembled and fell down before him. Some cried aloud, and others appeared convulsed, as in the agonies of death. Many of these were afterwards eminent possessors of the holiness and happiness of religion; and declared, that they had at the time above mentioned such a deep sense of the dreadful nature of sin, and of the just wages of it, that they were constrained to cry aloud for the disquietude of their heart. In others the change which the Scripture speaks of, as evidencing a true conversion, was not so apparent: while in some, neither godly sorrow for sin, peace or joy in believing, nor any real change of heart and life, followed the impressions which were then made upon them.

Mr. *Wesley* at this time maturely compared these appearances of things with the word of God, and especially with the work of the Spirit of God on the souls of men as described in the word. He thereby clearly saw, that every religious pang, every enthusiastic conceit, must not be taken for true conversion. At the same time he perceived, from several passages both of the Old and New Testament, that the operations of the Spirit of God have occasionally produced such lively and powerful actings of the passions of fear, sorrow, joy, and love, as must necessarily have caused at the time considerable agitations of the body. He also knew that several of the fathers of the church

in the three first centuries, speak often of such a work among the people.*

Nor was he ignorant, that in our own land, since the reformation, when the violations of the laws of God, the atonement of Christ, and the remission of sins have been preached with *the demonstration of the Spirit and of power*, such impressions have been made thereby, in innumerable instances, that even the body seemed to fail before them.†

Yet it is certain, that throughout the whole of his life he wished that all things should be done, even in the opinion of men, *decently and in order*. But he had one only design, which was to bring men to that knowledge and love of God, which makes them holy and happy : useful in their lives, and peaceful in their death. He therefore thankfully acquiesced in every means which the Lord was pleased to use for the accomplishment of this great end. And when he saw those

* The words of the great *John Chrysostom* are remarkable. Comment on Romans viii. 15. “Ye have received the Spirit of adoption, by which we cry, *Abba, Father!*” “This is the first word we utter,” says he, “μετὰ τὰς θαυμασὰς ὠδῖνας ἐκεῖνας, καὶ τοῦ ξένου παράδοξου λόχενματων νόμον :” *after those amazing throes, (or birth-pangs,) and that strange and wonderful manner of bringing forth.*”

† The instance of that learned, laborious and successful Minister of the Church of England, *Mr. Bolton*, is well known. He was awakened by the preaching of the celebrated *Mr. Perkins* in the University of *Cambridge* : and was affected with such terrors, as caused him to throw himself on the ground, and roar with inexpressible anguish ; yea, sometimes he lay pale and senseless like one that was dead.

those extraordinary effects accompanied by a godly sorrow for sin, and earnest desires to be delivered from it: when he saw men deeply convinced of the want of a Saviour, and this conviction followed by humble loving faith in the Son of God, enabling them to walk worthy of the Lord who had called them to his kingdom and glory, he therein rejoiced: nor could the imprudent zeal of a few, or the noise and confusion which sometimes attended this extraordinary work, cause him to relax in his efforts to turn men *from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God.*

The reasoning of a Writer of that day, by no means prejudiced in his favour, is well worthy of consideration. “What influence,” says he, “sudden and sharp awakenings may have upon the body, I pretend not to explain. But I make no question Satan, so far as he gets power, may exert himself on such occasions, partly to hinder the good work in the persons who are thus touched with the sharp arrows of conviction, and partly to disparage the work of God, as if it tended to lead people to distraction.”

After preaching in many places, he was earnestly entreated by Mr. *Whitfield* and another person to come to *Bristol*. It appears that he complied with this invitation with great reluctance: and not till he had used every means he could, to know what was the will of the Lord concerning him. His Brother *Charles* was extremely averse to his going there, which seems to have been one cause of his hesitation. Another he himself has often mentioned. He thought much of death: and as his constitution seemed to him not likely

likely to support itself long under the great and continual labours he was engaged in, he judged it probable that his course was nearly finished. At this time, those fine words of his friend Mr. *Gambold* were almost continually in his mind :

Ere long when Sov'reign wisdom wills,
 My soul an unknown path shall tread,
 And strangely leave, who strangely fails
 This frame, and waft me to the dead :
 O what is death !—'tis life's last shore,
 Where vanities are vain no more :
 Where all pursuits their goal obtain,
 And life is all re-touch'd again :
 Where in their bright result shall rise
 Thoughts, virtues, friendships, griefs, and joys.

He did not therefore dare to waste a moment, or undertake any employment which he had reason to believe, was not agreeable to the will of God. However he was at last prevailed on to go, and for this he had cause to praise the Wise Disposer of all things.

Mr. *Whitefield* had a little before, begun to preach in the fields and high-ways near *Bristol* ; the religious Societies which first received him, not being able to provide room for a tenth part of the people that crowded to hear him. When Mr. *Wesley* arrived, he also began to expound in one of the Society-rooms. But being encouraged by considering the example of our Lord, who preached upon a mountain, and having no place that would contain the multitudes that

flocked

flocked together, “I submitted,” says he, “to be yet more vile, and proclaimed in the high-ways the glad tidings of salvation, speaking from a little eminence in a ground adjoining to the city, to about three thousand people. The Scripture on which I spoke was this, (is it possible, any one should be ignorant, that it is fulfilled in every true minister of Christ?) *The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor. He hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted; to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind: to set at liberty them that are bruised, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.*”

It appears, that his adopting this way of preaching the Gospel to the poor, was not of choice. “When,” says he, “I was told, I must preach no more, in this, and this, and another church, so much the more those who could not hear me there, flocked together when I was at any of the Societies: where I spoke more or less, though with much inconvenience, to as many as the room I was in would contain. But after a time, finding those rooms could not contain a tenth part of the people that were earnest to hear, I determined to do the same thing in *England*, which I had often done in a warmer climate: namely, when the house would not contain the congregation, to preach in the open air. This I accordingly did, first in *Bristol*, where the society-rooms were exceeding small; and at *Kingswood*, where we had no room at all; afterwards in or near *London*.

“ And I cannot say, I have ever seen a more awful sight, than when on *Rose-Green*, or on the top of *Hanham-Mount*, some thousands of people were joined together in solemn waiting upon God, while

“ They stood, and under open air ador'd
The God who made both air, earth, heaven, and sky.”

And whether they were listening to his word, with attention still as night : or were lifting up their voice in praise, as the sound of many waters : many a time have I been constrained to say in my heart, *How dreadful is this place! This also is no other than the house of God ! This is the gate of heaven !*

“ Be pleas'd to observe, 1. That I was forbidden, as by a general consent, to preach in any church (though not by any judicial sentence) *for preaching such doctrine.* This was the open, avowed cause : there was at that time no other, either real or pretended, (except that the people crowded so.) 2. That I had no desire or design to preach in the open air, till after this prohibition. 3. That when I did, as it was no matter of choice, so neither of premeditation. There was no scheme at all previously formed, which was to be supported thereby : nor had I any other end in view than this, to save as many souls as I could. 4. *Field-preaching* was therefore a sudden expedient, a thing submitted to, rather than chosen ; and therefore submitted to, because I thought preaching even *thus* better than *not* preaching *at all* : First, in regard to my own soul, because *a dispensation of the Gospel being committed*

committed to me, I did not dare, not to preach the Gospel: Secondly, in regard to the souls of others, whom I every where saw, seeking death in the error of their life."

He still continued to expound in the Society-rooms; but it was in the open air that the Lord chiefly wrought by his ministry. Many thousands now attended the word. In the suburbs of *Bristol*, at *Bath*, in *Kingswood*, on *Hanham-Mount* and *Rose-Green*, many who had set all laws, human and divine, at defiance, and were utterly without God in the world, now fell before the Majesty of heaven, and joyfully acknowledged that a prophet was sent among them. Cries and tears on every hand frequently drowned his voice, while many exclaimed in the bitterness of their soul, *What shall I do to be saved?* Not a few of these were soon (and frequently while he was declaring the willingness of Christ to receive them) filled with peace and joy in believing, and evidenced that the work was really of God, by holy, happy, and unblamable walking before him. Blasphemies were now turned to praise, and the voice of joy and gladness was found, where wickedness and misery reigned before.

A few here also in the first instance, and then a greater number, agreed to meet together to edify and strengthen each other according to the example of the Society in *London*. Some of these were desirous of building a room large enough to contain not only the Society, but such also as might desire to be present with them when the Scripture was expounded. And on Saturday the 12th. of May, 1739, the first

stone was laid with the voice of praise and thanksgiving.

As this was the first preaching-house that was erected, Mr. *Wesley* has been particular in the relation of some circumstances concerning it. "I had not, at first," says he, "the least apprehension or design of being personally engaged, either in the expence of this work, or in the direction of it: having appointed eleven Feoffees, on whom I supposed these burthens would fall of course. But I quickly found my mistake: first with regard to the expence: for the whole undertaking must have stood still, had not I immediately taken upon myself the payment of all the workmen; so that before I knew where I was, I had contracted a debt of more than a hundred and fifty pounds. And this I was to discharge how I could; the subscriptions of both Societies not amounting to one quarter of the sum. And as to the direction of the work, I presently received letters from my friends in *London*, Mr. *Whitefield* in particular, backed with a message by one just come from thence, that neither he nor they would have any thing to do with the building, neither contribute any thing towards it, unless I would instantly discharge all Feoffees, and do every thing in my own name. Many reasons they gave for this; but one was enough, viz. "That such Feoffees always would have it in their power, to controul me, and if I preached not as they liked, to turn me out of the room I had built." I accordingly yielded to their advice, and calling all the Feoffees together, cancelled (no man opposing) the instruments
made

made before, and took the whole management into my own hands. Money, it is true, I had not, nor any human prospect or probability of procuring it. But I knew *the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof*, and in his name set out, nothing doubting."

His ordinary employment (in public) was now as follows: every morning he read prayers and preached at Newgate. Every evening he expounded a portion of Scripture, at one, or more of the Society-rooms. On Monday in the afternoon he preached abroad near *Bristol*; on Tuesday at *Bath* and *Two Mile-Hill* alternately. On Wednesday at *Baptist-Mills*. Every other Thursday near *Pensford*. Every other Friday in another part of *Kingswood*. On Saturday in the afternoon and Sunday morning in the *Bowling-Green* (which lies near the middle of the city.) On Sunday at eleven near *Hanham-Mount*. At two at *Clifton*, and at five on *Rose-Green*. "And hitherto," says he, "*as my day is, so my strength hath been.*"

In the city, in the suburbs, and in Newgate, sinners were daily humbled under the mighty hand of God, and made, by his grace, new creatures in Christ Jesus. Besides the general blessing which accompanied his labours, the Lord gave special *times of refreshing from his presence*. "Seeing," observes Mr. Wesley, "many of the rich at *Clifton* church, my heart was much pained for them, and I was earnestly desirous that some even of them might *enter into the kingdom of heaven*. But full as I was, I knew not where to begin, in warning them to flee from the wrath to come, till my Testament opened on these words, *I came not to call the righteous,*

righteous, but sinners to repentance: in applying which, my soul was so enlarged, that methought I could have cried out (in another sense than poor, vain *Archimedes*) “Give me where to stand, and I will shake the earth.” God’s sending forth lightning with the rain, did not hinder about fifteen hundred from staying at *Rose-Green*. Our Scripture was, *It is the glorious God that maketh the thunder. The voice of the Lord is mighty in operation, the voice of the Lord is a glorious voice.* In the evening, I spoke to three whose souls were all storm and tempest, and immediately there was a great calm.”

During this whole time, he was almost continually asked, either by those who purposely came to *Bristol*, to enquire concerning this strange work, or by his old or new correspondents, *How can these things be?* And innumerable cautions were given him (generally grounded on gross misrepresentations of things) “Not to regard visions or dreams; or to fancy people had remission of sins, because of their cries or tears, or bare outward professions.” His Brother *Samuel* having written to him on this head, the sum of his answer was as follows:

“The question between us turns chiefly, if not wholly, on matter of fact. You deny, that God does now work these effects: at least, that he works them in this manner. I affirm both; because I have heard these things with my own ears, and seen them with my eyes. I have seen (as far as a thing of this kind can be seen) very many persons changed in a moment, from the spirit of fear, horror, despair, to the spirit of love,

love,

love, joy and peace ; and from sinful desire, till then reigning over them, to a pure desire of doing the will of God. These are matters of fact, whereof I have been, and almost daily am, an eye or ear-witness. What I have to say, touching visions or dreams, is this : I know several persons in whom this great change was wrought, in a dream, or during a strong representation to the eye of their mind, of Christ either on the cross or in glory. This is the fact : let any judge of it as they please. And that such a change was then wrought, appears (not from their shedding tears only, or falling into fits, or crying out : these are not the fruits, as you seem to suppose, whereby I judge, but) from the whole tenor of their life, till then many ways wicked ; from that time, holy, just and good.

“ I will shew you him that was a lion till then, and is now a lamb ; him that was a drunkard, and is now exemplarily sober : the whoremonger that was, who now abhors the very garment spotted by the flesh. These are my living arguments for what I assert, viz. *That God does now, as aforesaid, give remission of sins, and the gift of the Holy Ghost, even to us and to our children : yea, and that always suddenly, as far as I have known, and often in dreams or in the visions of God. If it be not so, I am found a false witness before God. For these things I do, and by his grace, will testify.*”

But some said, “ These were purely natural effects ; the people fainted away, only because of the heat and closeness of the rooms.” And others were sure, “ It was all a cheat : they might help it, if they would.

Else

Else why were these things only in their private Societies? Why were they not done in the face of the sun?" However, on Monday May the twenty-first, the Lord answered for himself. For while Mr. Wesley was enforcing these words, *Be still, and know that I am God,* the Lord began to make bare his arm, not in a close room, neither in private, but in the open air, and before more than two thousand witnesses. One and another and another were struck to the earth, trembling exceedingly at the presence of his power. Others cried, with a loud and bitter cry, *What must we do to be saved?* And in less than an hour, seven persons, wholly unknown to Mr. Wesley till that time, were rejoicing and singing, and with all their might giving thanks to the God of their salvation.

In the evening, he was interrupted at *Nicholas-Street*, almost as soon as he had begun to speak, by the cries of one who was pricked to the heart, and strongly groaned for pardon and peace. Yet he went on to declare what God had already done, in proof of that important truth, *That he is not willing any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.* Another dropped down, close to one who was a strong asserter of the contrary doctrine. While he stood astonished at the sight, a little boy near him was seized in the same manner. A young man who stood behind, fixed his eyes on him, and sunk down himself as one dead: but soon began to roar out and beat himself against the ground, so that six men could scarcely hold him. His name was *Thomas Maxfield*. In the mean while many others began to cry out to
the