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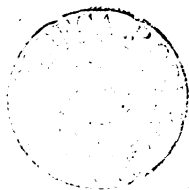


3 vols

147

101

2 vols
101





Published with a Life by J. Johnson, St. Pauls Church Yard, Nov. 25. 1791.

MEMOIRS

OF THE LATE

REV. JOHN WESLEY, A. M.

WITH A REVIEW OF HIS

LIFE AND WRITINGS,

AND A

HISTORY OF METHODISM,

From it's Commencement in 1729, to the present time.

By JOHN HAMPSON, A. B.

ὁ δε ἀρχαιότατος βίος, ἔ βίαιος ἀνοδῶντων. PLATO.

V O L. I.

SUNDERLAND:

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P R E F A C E.

THE subjects of which they treat, the characters of the principal agents, and the just claims of the public to be made acquainted with the actions and opinions of remarkable persons, are sufficient authorities for the appearance of these memoirs.

For some reasons, of which it is not necessary to inform our readers, as well as others, which it may be proper to mention, the author had long determined, at a fit opportunity, to write the life of Mr Wesley. It was more than probable, such a life would not be overlooked. Some one would be certain to undertake

it: and considering the colour of his most intimate connections, and the unlimited deference, with which, in this circle, it has been the fashion to regard him, a danger was apprehended, lest the public should be misinformed, either by the suppression of some important facts, or by a partial and inaccurate relation.

This apprehension was a powerful incentive to the present work; and occasioned an adventure not wholly destitute of difficulty or of danger. There must necessarily be a degree of difficulty in the delineation of characters replete with light and shade; distinguished by great virtues, and sullied by strange peculiarities: and there is always some danger, that is, some *critical* danger in the discussion of topics,

in which so many, from different principles, are interested.

To paint such portraits to the life, and yet generally to please, were too arduous a task. But nothing can be an excuse for misrepresentation. All that can, or ought to be done in such a case, is to draw a likeness, not flatteringly disgusting, nor exaggerated to deformity, but as nearly as possible, a just transcript of truth and nature. And this, with whatever success, is attempted in the following sheets.

It could answer no valuable purpose, to inform the public of the tedious labours of hunting for information through a variety of publications, in which a continual sameness of incidents, and consequently of sentiment and expres-

sion, and the necessity of tracing dates, thinly scattered through a multitude of pages, considerably increased the difficulty. It is of more importance to acquaint them, that the authorities referred to in the narrative, are Mr Wesley's writings in general, particularly the sermons, the journals, and his controversial pieces: and last, though not least, is a correspondence between the family of the Wesleys and others, from 1724 to 1739, which had lain neglected for many years, and was communicated by a grandchild of Mr Samuel Wesley to Mr Badcock, by him to a literary friend, and by this gentleman to a near relation of the Author; who begs leave to add, that all this had been insufficient for his purpose, had he not long cultivated

an acquaintance with the writings and principles of Mr Wesley and his associates. He also acknowledges his obligations for much information concerning the elder branches of the family, to the sprightly and entertaining remarks of a gentleman already mentioned, which were published some years ago in *Maty's Review*, and the *Westminster Magazine*.

The only circumstance which seems to demand an apology, is the publication of these memoirs during Mr Wesley's life. Was he a mere private gentleman, whatever might be his distinction in the republic of letters, such an apology might be necessary. But his case is peculiar. He has been for more than half a century, in the most ex-

tenfive import of the word, a public character. It is impoffible to make him more fo, than he has rendered himfelf.

There is yet another confideration. In the following pages, fome of his fingularities are difcuffed with a degree of freedom, but it is hoped alfo, with impartiality and candour. It may be questioned, whether there ever was a man of fenfe, even in his own connexion, who thought him incapable of misconduct or of error. If there be fuch, no one is obliged to follow his example. The Author of thefe memoirs certainly does not. He never was infenfible to the virtues of Mr Wesley; nor is he ignorant of his foibles. And fince years have not blunted his faculties*;

* See preface to fermons published in 1788.

Since the hand of time, in scattering his hoary honours upon his head, has in no respect impaired his understanding, these pages are submitted, with the greater confidence to his censure and the public inspection. Should they contain errors, if he will point them out, they shall be rescinded. Should there be any circumstance, in which his character is misrepresented, or the truth in any respect violated, it certainly has been occasioned, not by prejudice or malevolence, but involuntary misapprehension, which in some instances is but too much the portion of human nature. Whenever any thing of this kind shall be detected, an explicit acknowledgment and recantation shall be made. By this means, every mistake of any conse-

quence will be rectified ; the public will be in possession of more correct information ; and a precise view of his genius and transactions will be presented to posterity.

Such are the motives which gave rise to this publication. Of the validity of the one, and the execution of the other, the public will decide: and to that decision it is cheerfully submitted. A person, who with his usual *modesty*, chuses to stile himself a *friend* of Mr Wesley, is said to have demanded, who “ could have the audaciousness to write a life of Mr Wesley while he was yet alive ? ” If he will look into the title-page, that will inform him.

From what has been said, it will appear that these memoirs were intended for publication during Mr

Wesley's life. Since the former part of this preface was written, he is no more. But we see no reason to withhold them. Eminent characters ought to be delineated and examined: and we know nothing more useful or more important to mankind, than a faithful representation of the foibles and excellencies of public persons.

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M E M O I R S

OF THE

REV. JOHN WESLEY, A. M.

C H A P. I.

Miscellaneous Articles relative to the Family.

THE ardour for biographical information was perhaps never so great as in the present age. In such a period no apology can be deemed necessary, for attempting the history of a man, so eminent and distinguished as the subject of these memoirs. The singular manner in which he was first introduced to the notice of the public; the peculiarity of his character; and the authority he so

A

long maintained over a numerous and rapidly-increasing sect, must render an accurate review of such a life a valuable acquisition.

The author of these memoirs is afraid to flatter either his readers or himself with promises of absolute impartiality. He wishes indeed to arrive at this distinction, and is determined to attempt it: but such is the force of particular prepossessions, and so few writers of history or biography have succeeded in this most essential circumstance, that he trembles for himself, and is checked by a just anxiety, lest he should fall into a too general error, and become subject to the common condemnation.

The character of this gentleman is so eccentric, and so peculiarly has he been distinguished, by his situation, from the rest of mankind, that it is impossible ei-

ther to speak or to think of him, within the usual limits of moderation. As none ever judged of Luther or Calvin, or any head of a party, as they would of more private characters; so it must be with Mr Wesley. His friends and admirers will doubtless consider him as an apostle, and rank him with the most distinguished persons of the primitive times; while his enemies, who probably constitute the more numerous body, will not fail to regard him as a hypocrite, or an enthusiast. Some will perhaps go yet farther; and, by a strange combination, unite these characters together.

The family, from which he is descended, will be better known to posterity, from his own character, and from the sect, of which he is the founder, than from the genius and abilities of his ancestors. His grandfather, John Wesley,

was a minister among the Non-conformists; and in the reign of Charles II. became involved in the calamities of the times, and was ejected, by the act of uniformity, from a living, which he held, near Blandford in Dorsetshire. At the age of twenty-five, he officiated as a preacher, without ordination, having only an appointment to his office by a particular congregation; and it is most probable, that he never was ordained to a cure of souls. A curious dialogue, on this subject, between this gentleman and the then Bishop of Bristol, is preserved by Calamy, and is also inserted by Mr Wesley, in one of his Journals. It evinces considerable piety on his part, with no small degree of shrewdness; while the Bishop's candour and moderation certainly do him the highest honour.

The son of this Mr Wesley was called

Samuel. While his father lived, he was probably educated in the principles of non-conformity, and spent some time at one of their academies; but his father dying when he was very young, and not having had time to imbibe the sentiments of the party, he entered himself at Exeter College, Oxford, where he was admitted to his degrees in the usual course, and taking holy orders, was first presented to the living of Epworth, and afterwards to that of Wroote, in Lincolnshire.

Mr Samuel Wesley married the youngest daughter of Dr Samuel Annesley, who was a celebrated Non-conformist, and first cousin to the Earl of Anglesey. Dr Annesley was an excellent man, and in great esteem among his brethren; and was ejected from the living of St. Giles's, Cripplegate, in 1662.

Mr Wesley, during his residence at

Oxford, imbibed the strongest prejudices against Dissenters of every description; repeatedly lashed them from the pulpit and the press; and exerted every effort of ridicule and argument, to render them contemptible. His zeal exceeded his liberality: but in those days every thing was carried to an unwarrantable excess; and it is certain that, in the decline of life, he abated much of this warm and intolerant spirit, and piously applied himself to the duties of his profession.

The principles of non-conformity have been generally considered, by the members of the establishment, as unfavourable to monarchy. Many of the dissenters of those days were decidedly so; and this disposition, which had been long cultivated, by the political pamphlets, during the civil wars, and under the protectorate, was still cherished in private, by meet-

ings, in which politics were united with conviviality; and the enthusiasm of the moment frequently hurried the company into the utmost rage of indecency and extravagance. One of these was the Calve's Head Club. The name is sufficiently expressive of the intention of the meeting; while the toasts, which they drank, and the conversation, that took place on such occasions, were republican and daring in the highest degree. One of their songs, which was composed for the 30th of January, may be cited as a specimen, and perhaps not the worst that might be produced, both of the wit and the spirit of the party.

‘THE AXE IS LAID TO THE ROOT, &c.’

“ ’Twas an action great and daring,
 Nature smil'd at what they did;
 When our fathers, nothing fearing,
 Made the haughty tyrant bleed.

Priests and we, this day observing,
 Only differ in one thing;
 They are canting, whining, starving;
 We, in raptures, drink and sing.

Advance the emblem* of the action,
 Fill the calf-skin full of wine;
 Drinking ne'er was counted faction;
 Men and gods adore the vine."

These "hellish rhymes," as they have been justly called, breathe a spirit equally savage and vindictive. Whatever were the faults of Charles, they were more than compensated by his misfortunes. Educated, as he said to his parliament, at the feet of Gamaliel, it is no wonder that he fell into so absurd a conduct, or that such a conduct should produce so fatal a catastrophe. James, with much pedantry and affectation of learning, had a narrow and contracted mind, and was, in truth, neither a man nor a monarch. He uni-

* The axe.

ted the utmost contempt for the people with the highest possible idea of the divine right and prerogative of kings: so that his own want of resolution, and the spirit of the times, could alone prevent him from becoming a most furious tyrant. Under such a preceptor, his son imbibed those principles, which, if carried to their extent, must have overturned the constitution, and at last brought him to the block. But the insults offered to fallen majesty were unworthy a great and enlightened people. They were justly abhorred by the majority of the nation, and Mr Wesley's opposition to such proceedings, reflects no dishonour upon his memory.

It is remarkable, that this gentleman, in an early edition of the *Dunciad*, was involved in the same censure with Dr Watts; the former, a rigid churchman,

and the latter, the first name among the dissenters. But the injury was soon repaired, by a handsome and just compliment from the poet; for Mr Wesley and Dr Watts were, at least, as excellent characters as any in the kingdom.

The passage, here alluded to, is in the description of the library of the goddess, in the first book :

“ Here all his suff’ring brotherhood retire,
 “ And ’scape the martyrdom of jakes and fire ;
 “ A Gothic library—of Greece and Rome
 “ Well purg’d, and worthy Settle, Banks and
 Broome.”

These names are inserted instead of Wesley and Watts; and it is not improbable, that this alteration may be ascribed, among other reasons, to the friendship of the poet for the younger Mr Samuel Wesley, and to a mild, but spirited remonstrance of Dr Watts, who pointed

out to Pope the injustice of such unmerited satire.

This amiable Doctor sometimes suffered in his public, when he must have been beloved in his personal capacity; and several of the wits of that time, who would have spared the man, did not fail to lash the dissenter. In the Satires of Dr Young, there is a severe and most unjust reflection on his intimacy with Mrs Rowe :

“ Isaac, a brother of the canting strain,
 “ When he has knock’d at his own skull in vain,
 “ To beauteous Marcia often will repair,
 “ With a dark text, to light it at the fair.
 “ O how his pious soul exults, to find
 “ Such love for holy men in woman kind !
 “ Pleas’d with her learning, with what rapture he
 “ Hangs on her bloom, like an industrious bee,
 “ Hums round about her, and with all his power,
 “ Extracts sweet wisdom from so fair a flower.”

Thus it is, that even the best men, of different parties, tilt at one another. But

the satyrift should have recollected, that dullnefs had no part in Dr Watts; and that, though an amiable man might very properly cultivate the friendship of an accomplished woman, it is impoffible that he fhould learn divinity from Mrs Rowe; or from any woman in the world. This country has produced few characters fuperior to Dr Watts.

Mr Wesley was a voluminous writer. He was the author of a Latin Comment on Job; a work of much erudition, and perhaps, for that reason, but little read. But it is furely more worthy of perufal, than many publications, which the wittings of the day have extolled to the fkies. He alfo wrote the History of the Bible, and the Life of Chrift, in verfe, with feveral fmaller pieces. His larger poems were rather injurious, than advantageous to his reputation; and, in-

stead of increasing his estimation with the public, exposed him to the derision of the wits, and the censure of the critics. But none treated him with more severity, than the author of the Dispensary, in the following lines :

“ Had Wesley never aim’d in verse to please,
 “ We had not rank’d him with our Ogilvies;
 “ Still censures will on dull pretenders fall,
 “ A Codrus should expect a Juvenal.”

Mr Wesley was by no means insensible of the force of the satire; and there is still extant a copy of verses, in which he has retaliated upon Garth, with great spirit, for the compliment he so modestly pays himself. Two lines have been cited, which are full in point :

“ Who wonders, he should Wesley Codrus call,
 “ Who dares surname himself a Juvenal ?”

Garth seems indeed to have been upon excellent terms with himself, and does

not appear to have made the proper allowances, in Mr Wesley's case, for the difficulty of the undertaking. Of the many, who have written on extensive subjects from scripture, scarcely any have succeeded. Mr Wesley certainly did not; and I know but one that did. His son Samuel, who was really a poet, while he takes notice of his father's piety, acknowledges that he failed. He perished in too great an attempt :

“ He sung how God, the Saviour, deign'd t' expire,
 “ With Vida's piety, tho' not his fire.”

And it may be observed, without any reflection on the merit of Garth, that, had he written a life of Christ, he certainly had lost the fame, which he acquired by his Dispensary. One may go still farther : had he written equally well on each occasion, he would not have been equally successful, in the opinion of the critics. So

great is the difference in the subjects!

But, notwithstanding his want of success, in this species of composition, Mr Wesley was by no means a despicable poet. There are several of his smaller pieces, which are excellent; especially the Hymn of Eupolis to the Creator. Perhaps I may be singular; but it has always struck me as one of the best pieces, in this kind of measure, in the English language; and I could never read it, without such feelings as very few poems have been able to produce. That the reader may judge for himself, and, by way of compensation to the much injured memory of a worthy man, it is here inserted, as it stands in the first volume of the Arminian Magazine.

THE OCCASION.

PART OF A (NEW) DIALOGUE BETWEEN
PLATO AND EUPOLIS.

(THE REST NOT EXTANT.)

EUP. But is it not a little hard, that you should banish all our fraternity from your new commonwealth? What hurt has father Homer done, that you dismiss him among the rest?

PLATO. Certainly the blind old gentleman lyes with the best grace in the world. But a lye handsomely told, debauches the taste and morals of a people. Besides, his tales of the gods are intolerable, and derogate, in the highest degree, from the dignity of the divine nature.

EUP. But do you really think these faults inseparable from poetry? May not the one supreme be sung without any intermixture of them?

PLATO. I must own, I hardly ever saw any thing of that nature. But I shall be glad to see you, or any other, attempt and succeed in it. On that condition, I will gladly exempt you from the fate of your brother poets.

EUP. I am far from pretending to be a standard; but I will do the best I can.

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 Iao; 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;

B

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 it's firm basis plac'd,
And with circling waves embrac'd,
All-creating power confess,
All their mighty maker bless.
Thou shak'st all nature with thy nod;
Sea, earth, and air confess the God:
Yet does thy powerful hand sustain,
Both earth and heaven, both firm and main.

Scarce can our daring thoughts 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 bathe 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 strait,
 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.

Eirefione we'll no more,
 Imaginary power, adore ;
 Since oil and wool, and chearful wine,
 And life fultaining bread are thine.

Thy herbage, O great Pan, fultains
 The flocks, that graze our attic plains ;
 The olive, with fresh verdure crown'd,
 Rifcs, pregnant, from the ground ;
 At thy command, it fhoots and fprings,
 And a thoufand blessings brings.
 Minerva, only is thy mind,
 Wifdom and bounty to mankind.
 The fragrant thyme, the bloomy rofe,
 Herb, and flower, and fhrub, that grows
 On Theffalian Tempe's plain,
 Or where the rich Sabeans reign,
 That treat the tafte, or fmell, or fight,
 For food, for med'cine, or delight ;
 Planted by thy parent care,
 Spring, and fmile, and flourifh there.

O ye nurfes of foft dreams!
 Reedy brooks, and winding freams,
 Or murm'ring o'er the pebbles fheen,
 Or fliding through the meadows green,

Or where thro' matted sedge you creep,
 Trav'ling 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, it's trembling light ;
 You, whose roots descend as low,
 As high in air your branches grow,
 Your leafy arms to heav'n 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 various nature play,
 Or reinvers'd, thy will obey,
 And to rebel man declare,
 Famine, plague, and wasteful war.

Laugh, ye profane, who dare despise
 The threat'ning 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 power 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 ardour 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."

Such is the piece I have ventured to commend. It's beauties are numerous and striking ; and I am persuaded that no reader of taste and discernment will object to it's introduction : the less so, when it is considered, that though many

have heard of this gentleman's name in the *Dunciad* and the *Dispensary*, but few are acquainted with his claims to a more honourable distinction. Had all the imitators and translators of the ancients done them equal justice, they would have no reason to repine at being seen in an English dress. But Mr Wesley's talents as a writer are the least of his praise. He was not merely a man of learning and ability. His piety and integrity were striking and exemplary. He was given to hospitality; and in every respect a most excellent parish priest: and after a long and useful life, died at Epworth, in April, 1735. The truly Christian resignation, the fortitude and magnanimity which crowned the last moments of this valuable man, were so striking, and are so admirably described in a letter from his son, the late Mr Charles

Wesley, to his brother Samuel, that it were an injury to the public to omit it.

“ 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 I hope, shall never forget them. 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 death. To-morrow I would see you all with me round the table, that we may once more drink of the cup of blessing, before we ‘ drink it new in the kingdom of God.’ With desire have I desired to

eat this passover with you before I die.”

The morning he was to communicate, he was so 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 sensible alteration: he appeared full of peace and faith, which extended even to his body; for he was so much better, that we almost hoped he would recover. 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,

* A Latin commentary on that book.

“ Don't 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 of heaven.” On my asking him whether he did not find himself worse, he replied, “ Oh! 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 exhausted ; when, on my brother's asking him whether he was not near heaven, he answered distinctly, and with the most of hope and triumph that could be expressed in 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 past six. From this 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 the ceasing of all signs 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 entered his chamber, but she was carried out 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 in her being strengthened to bear it."

Such was the death of this venerable clergyman. And it is no exaggeration to say, that a better man, or a more vigilant and faithful pastor he certainly

did not leave behind him. He united the zeal and courage of a martyr with the simplicity and evangelical spirit of an apostle; and though he had no great cause to boast the munificence, he possessed the esteem of some of the first characters in the nation :

“ Her gracious smiles not pious Anne denied,
 “ And beauteous Mary blest him, when she died.”

The Dean of St. Patrick's, who was an acute discerner of merit, bore ample testimony to his worth. It is said, that he was strongly solicited, by the emissaries of James II. to countenance the measures of the court, in favour of popery; and that his complaisance to the monarch would have been acknowledged, by considerable preferment. But he absolutely refused to read the declaration; and, though surrounded by soldiers and informers, justified that refusal, by a bold

and pointed discourse from Daniel iii. 17. 18. " If it be so, our God, whom we serve, is able to deliver us from the burning, fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king! But if not, be it known unto thee, O king! that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image, which thou hast set up."

He was a laborious and useful preacher. His conversation was solid and entertaining, his carriage affable and courteous, and his beneficence much superior to his income. We need not however consider him as a faultless character. His undue warmth against the dissenters, in early life, has been already noticed; nor can it be concealed, that both he and several of the family were remarkable for such high notions of prerogative and authority, both in church and state, as seem scarcely compatible with the con-

stitution of this country. Yet it is certain that he was one of the first, if not the first writer in defence of the revolution; a circumstance which can scarcely be accounted for, but by supposing that whiggism was, in his opinion, more tolerable than popery; and that, to prevent the establishment of the latter, the former might be endured.

His wife, Mrs Susannah Wesley, was a lady of great merit and accomplishments; and united the graces of her own sex with the judgment and fortitude of the other. She brought him nineteen children; several of whom grew up to maturity, and were distinguished by their talents. It is said of one, who afterwards married a Mr Wright, that, at eight years of age, she was well acquainted with the Greek Testament, and could repeat a considerable part of it. This lady does

not appear to have been happy in her connections. Whatever was the cause, she seems to have fallen a prey to the severity of her fate; and, if we can credit the following epitaph, which she composed for herself, actually died of a broken heart :

“ Destin’d while living to sustain
 An equal share of grief and pain;
 All various ills of human race,
 Within this breast had once a place.
 Without complaint she learnt to bear
 A living death, a long despair.
 Till hard oppress’d by adverse fate,
 O’ercharg’d she sunk beneath it’s weight,
 And to this peaceful tomb retir’d,
 So much esteem’d, so long desir’d;
 The painful, mortal conflict’s o’er;
 A broken heart can bleed no more.

The simplicity and pathetic air of these lines is a sufficient proof, that her distress was not imaginary; and I believe she died at an early period. Several compositions,

by the same hand, have appeared in different publications; and though fadened by an air of tender melancholy, in general but too visible, discover an elegant and enlightened mind. I shall only add the following address to her dying infant :

“ Tender softness ! infant mild !
 Perfect, sweetest, loveliest child !
 Transient lustre ! beauteous clay !
 Smiling wonder of a day !
 Ere the last convulsive start
 Rends thy unresisting heart ;
 Ere the long enduring swoon
 Weigh thy precious eye-lids down ;
 Ah ! regard a mother’s moan ;
 Anguish deeper than thy own !

Fairest eyes, whose dawning light
 Late with rapture blest my sight ;
 Ere your orbs extinguish’d be,
 Bend their trembling beams on me.
 Drooping sweetness ! verdant flower !
 Blooming, with’ring in an hour !

C

Ere thy gentle breast sustains
 Latest, fiercest, mortal pains,
 Hear a suppliant ; let me be
 Partner in thy destiny."

Another sister was addressed by a clergyman, whose name was H*ll, and who was introduced to the family, by Mr John Wesley, in one of his excursions from the university to Epworth. It is a painful task, on some occasions, to speak what we know to be the truth; and it must always be so, to a man of feeling and benevolence, when it affects the moral character of those, who have lately quitted the theatre of human life. But as this gentleman's conduct was public and notorious, and more especially, as Mr Badcock, in the Westminster Magazine, and Mr Wesley, in several passages of his Journals, have given the public much in-

formation on this subject, it will scarcely be deemed uncharitable or impertinent, if I should take notice of the faults of a man, so intimately connected with the family. It seems too, that a distinction is to be observed. There are some foibles, which are to be ascribed to the infirmity of human nature. In such cases, censure must degenerate into detraction. But, in instances of actual vice, and those too of the most alarming and pernicious tendency, the rule, that we should not speak ill of the dead, can hardly be observed; and their faults ought to be censured, not merely, that we may form an accurate estimation of their real character, but as a proper admonition to others.

Mr H*ll paid his addresses to Miss Kezzy Wesley. It appears, from the intimations scattered up and down the

letters and other papers, in which he is mentioned, that, in person and understanding, and in every respect, but probity and virtue, he was formed to captivate the sex. The young lady, and the rest of the family, who considered the offer as highly advantageous, gave him a favourable reception; and, for some time, the consent of his mother was the only obstacle to the match. But it was not long before he deserted the younger, in favour of her elder sister; and, the better to accomplish his purpose, had recourse to the old subterfuge of hypocrisy, under the mask of piety, and pretended a revelation, that it was the will of heaven. The dictates of honour and conscience, the interposition of every branch of the family, and every thing that could be urged, was ineffectual. The marriage was celebrated; and Mr

Badcock says (what seems more wonderful than all the rest) that the lady he had deserted, attended him and her sister to his curacy in Wales.

After such a beginning, it will be no matter of surprise, that he presently grew dissatisfied with his wife, and, having embraced polygamy in principle, carried it as far as he could, into practice, and strongly recommended it in conversation and in his public discourses.

It seems rather remarkable, that the opportunity of intimate acquaintance and observation was not sufficient, to prevent John and Charles from being duped, by the artifices of this specious man. They regarded him, for a considerable time, as a Christian of the first order; and it appears, to the last moment of his life, to have been the opinion of Mr John Wesley, that, when he first knew him,

he was sincere in his religion. But his egregious hypocrisy, in some future scenes, renders this at least highly problematical : and it is much to be lamented, that a man, to whom nature had been so lavish of her favours, should so grossly have dishonoured himself, and done so much injury to others.

Mr Samuel Wesley, however, was not to be deceived by appearances. He was too acute an observer, too refined a student in men and manners, to give credit to his pretensions to superior sanctity ; and, in a letter to John, gave his judgment, concerning him, in these remarkable terms : “ I am sure, I may well say of that marriage, it will not, cannot come to good. I never liked the man, from the first time I saw him. His smoothness never suited my roughness. He appeared always to dread me as a wit and

a jester, like Rivington. This, with me, is a sure sign of guilt and hypocrisy. He never could meet my eye in full light. Conscious that there was something foul at bottom, he was afraid I should see it, if I looked keenly into his eye. Charles sends me a bad account indeed. If you will allow Kezzy what was proposed, I will take her with me. Thus she will be delivered from discontent, perhaps, or a worse passion."

But the intentions of this excellent brother were frustrated. The defection of a man, who had engaged her tenderest affections, was a shock, to her peace, too rude to be supported; and involved her in a melancholy, that preyed upon her constitution, and, in a little time, brought her to the grave. The unhappy man was, for many years, the sport of the most unruly passions: and his adven-

tures, in England and in foreign countries, were as various and eccentric, as was his own character. Sometimes he acted as a medical man, and sometimes as a clergyman; and, with equal ease, exhibited in canonicals, or figured away with his sword and cane, and scarlet cloak. At length, having deserted his wife, and run off with his maid; having played a thousand freaks, and escaped a thousand dangers, he returned home, and was seen officiating in a church in London, where, not long before his death, he delivered an extemporary discourse from the first verse of the 19th psalm, which a gentleman, who heard it, says, was inimitably elegant and pathetic. He was a man of great learning and ingenuity; and it is said that, in his latter end, he gave full proof of contrition, and died in peace.

C H A P. II.

Of SAMUEL WESLEY the Younger.

THIS gentleman was the eldest son of Samuel and Susannah Wesley, and was born, at Epworth, about the year 1690. He was educated at Westminster school, and from thence elected to Christ Church. In both these places, so deservedly eminent for polite learning, he distinguished himself by his compositions, and acquired the reputation of an excellent classic. His skill in the languages and sciences was accurate and extensive; and, having taken the degree of Master of Arts, he was sent for, to officiate

ate as an usher at Westminster. Not long after, under the auspices of the celebrated Dr Atterbury, then Dean of Westminster, he took orders; and was universally esteemed, as an able preacher and a judicious divine. A distinguished excellence of Mr Wesley, was his benevolence. He was humane and charitable, both by nature and from principle, and indefatigable in the service of the indigent. What he was incapable of alone, he frequently accomplished, by his influence upon others. Among other things of this kind, we are informed, that the first infirmary at Westminster was much forwarded, both in the design and execution, by his industrious charity.

He was held in high estimation, by some of the most distinguished characters of the day. Oxford, Atterbury, and

Pope were his particular friends ; and it appears by a letter from the last of these, that he procured him several subscribers to a volume of poems which he published. It is certain however, that he derived no solid advantage from these connections. On the contrary, they ruined his prospects in the church, and equally prevented his advancement in the school. Walpole became his most inveterate enemy : while he, provoked by the part this Palinurus took against him, retaliated, without mercy, on Sir Robert, and vented his indignation in a thousand jests and pasquinades ; which, though they stung the minister to the quick, did not fail, at the same time, to confirm him in his resolution, that Mr Wesley should never rise at Westminster. The animosity between them was mutual ; and yet, such was the filial piety of this high-spirited

man, that, in the latter end of his father's life, who was but in narrow circumstances, he even condescended, in his favour, to solicit a minister, he both hated and despised. The solicitation did not succeed.

The banishment of Atterbury made no difference in Mr Wesley's attachment. His integrity was inflexible. The Bishop of Rochester, whose political principles were congenial to his own, and whose talents were of the first order, he had always been accustomed to regard, with the most respectful veneration: and, under all the obloquy of attainder and deprivation, he did not discontinue his attentions. He made no distinction between the Prelate, in the heighth of honour and prosperity, and the same person arraigned before the lords, and sentenced to perpetual exile. He honoured the memory of his patron

with a pathetic elegy ; and he had paid the same tribute, on the death of his Lordship's daughter, Mrs Morrice. A circumstance with which the Bishop was so sensibly affected, as to declare, that if ever he returned home with honour, Mr Wesley should find it. But the Bishop did not return ; and his friend, after presiding a few years at a grammar school at Tiverton, in Devon, died in November, 1739, and in the forty-ninth year of his age.

He was the author of a volume of poems in quarto, on a variety of subjects ; some grave and religious ; some ludicrous and satyrical. But, in general, they have the best tendency, and are calculated, either to correct some vice, or to inculcate some branch of morality and virtue. They abound with marks of profound erudition, great observation and know-

ledge of mankind, with a most lively and vigorous imagination. His fire was however superior to his correctness. His verses, in many parts, possess not that harmony they might have acquired, had he taken more pains to polish and refine them. But they are masculine and nervous in the highest degree. Dean Swift greatly admired the *Battle of the Sexes*; which I think he republished in Dublin; and of which, for this reason, some supposed him to be the author. Some of his hymns are very fine. His tales, for the easy and agreeable humour they contain, merit a particular attention. He has very nearly approached, if he did not equal Prior, whom he took for his model. The satire of these ingenious pieces, though exquisitely pointed, is facetious and well-tempered: and they are full of admirable instructions, for the comfort

and regulation of life. But perhaps the very best, though one of the shortest of his compositions, is the following paraphrase on a verse of Isaiah :

“ The morning flowers display their sweets,
 And gay their filken leaves unfold ;
 As careless of the noon-day 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-liv'd beauties die away.

So blooms the human face divine,
 When youth it's pride of beauty shews ;
 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-liv'd 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, and death devour,
Since heav'n must recompense our pains ;
Perish the grafs, and fade the flower,
Since firm the word of God remains."

Among the papers Mr Wesley left behind him, is the following letter; which, while it shews the terms upon which he was with the Earl of Oxford, informs us also of his intention of publishing notes on Hudibras. It is dated from Dover-street, August 7. 1734, and is as follows:

“REV. SIR,

I am sorry and ashamed to say it; but the truth must come out, that I have a letter of your's, dated June the 8th; and this is the 7th of August, and I have but now set pen to paper, to answer it.

I assure you, that I was very glad to hear from you, and since, that you are much mended in your health. Change of air will certainly be of great service to you; and I hope you will use some other exercise, than that of the school. I hear you have had an increase of above forty boys, since you have been down there. I am very glad, for your sake, that you are so well approved of. I hope it will, in every respect, answer your expectation: if your health be established, I make no doubt, but those parts will be to your mind; which will be a great pleasure to me.

There is very little news stirring. They all agree, that the Bishop of Worcester is dying. They say Hoadley is to succeed him, and Potter Hoadley; but how farther I cannot tell; nor does the town pretend, which is a wonderful thing!

D

I am very glad you was induced to read over Hudibras three times, with care. I find you are perfectly of my mind, that it much wants notes; and that it will be a great work. Certainly it will be so, to do it as it should be. I do not know any one so capable of doing it as yourself. I speak this very sincerely. Lilly's life I have; and any books, that I have, you shall see, and have the perusal of them, and any other part, that I can assist. I own I am very fond of the work; and it would be of excellent use and entertainment.

The news you read in the papers, of a match between my daughter and the Duke of Portland, was completed at Marybone chapel. I think there is the greatest prospect of happiness to them both. I think it must be mutual. One part cannot be happy without the other.

Here is great harmony of temper, and a liking to each other; which is, I think, a true foundation for happiness. Compliments from all here attend you.

I am, Sir,

Your most affectionate

humble servant,

OXFORD.

P. S. The two boys are well. Pray, let me hear from you soon; and let me know, under your own hand, how you do."

His Lordship was certainly right. The genius of Mr Wesley; his knowledge of the transactions of those times; and, let me add too, his extreme aversion and contempt for the Oliverian fanatics, rendered him the fittest person in the world for a commentator on such a writer: and notwithstanding the industry and abi-

lity of Mr Grey, who is said to have had many of his notes, it is to be lamented, as a real loss to the republic of letters, that this proposal was not carried into execution.

The modesty of the poet was striking and uncommon. He informs the public, in an advertisement prefixed to his poems, that they were published, not from "any opinion of excellency in the verses themselves;" but merely on account of "the profit proposed by the subscription." There are not many writers, who, with equal talents, are possessed of equal diffidence; and after such a declaration, every one will be pleased to hear, that the subscription was such, as to make up a considerable part of a decent competency, which he left for the support of his widow and daughter. This daughter, who was his only child, mar-

ried Mr Earle, a furgeon, at Barnflaple, by whom ſhe had a daughter, who married a Mr Manfell of Dublin.

This article cannot be more properly cloſed, than by ſubjoining the inſcription on his tomb-ftone, in the church-yard, at Tiverton.

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 ſimplicity of his manners,
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 Uskers in Westminster school ;
afterwards, for seven years,
as Head-master of the free school, at Tiverton,
he resigned his soul to God,
Nov. 6. 1739, in the 49th year of his age.

C H A P. III.

OF CHARLES WESLEY, A. M.

CHARLES, the third son, was born at Epworth, in 1708. He received his education at Westminster, and was thence elected to Christ-church; where he proceeded A. M. It is said, that he was born in the seventh month of his mother's pregnancy; and though he did not enjoy the strength and firm constitution of his brothers, he lived to a good old age. He was an excellent scholar, and had he engaged in the higher walks of verse, would certainly have been esteemed a considerable poet. He confined himself chiefly however to hymn writing: and it is to be lamented

that he did so, though many of his pieces are, without dispute, among the best things in that species of composition. This gentleman was of a warm and lively disposition, of great frankness and integrity; and there was an honesty in his nature, which some would perhaps call precipitancy and imprudence; and which would not suffer him to pass over, or to bear with any thing his judgment disapproved. He had a great regard for men of principle in all persuasions; and, with all his heart, abhorred a hypocrite, and the whole tribe of sycophants and flatterers: nor could persons of such a character, be long in his presence with impunity. His conversation was pleasing and instructive, and often seasoned with wit and humour. His religion of the right sort; not gloomy and cynical; but cheertful and benevo-

lent : and whatever might have been the case in his youth, in his latter days he was certainly no enthusiast.

In April 1749, he married Miss Eleanor Gwynne, a most amiable lady, of Garth, in Brecknockshire, who brought him two sons and a daughter, now living. The sons are much known and admired for their musical talents. The younger, a few years ago, became a convert to popery ; and I am authorized to say, that this event was one of the greatest afflictions of Mr Wesley's life. The light, in which he considered it, cannot be better represented, than by observing, that one of the last reflections that fell from his lips, was a declaration, that he forgave the person, by whose means this conversion was brought about.

As Mr Charles was of a more retired temper than his brother, and less expo-

fed to public observation; and as he rather concurred with him in what he directed, than acted of himself, little can be said of him as a public character. In 1734 he wrote to his brother Samuel, informing him of the intended marriage, between one of his sisters and Mr H•ll. We have already seen, that this match was broken off; and that the gentleman in question married her elder sister. Some time previous to this marriage, and not long before his father's death, Charles wrote his sister Martha the following epistle; from which it appears, that the poet was as much mistaken in her, as he had been in her whimsical inamorato; and that the lady, though assisted by every consideration of piety and justice, and urged by so nervous and pathetic a representation, was not proof against the blandishments of an artful and accomplished man:

TO MISS MARTHA WESLEY.

When want and pain, and death besiege our gate,
 And every solemn moment teems with fate,
 While clouds and darkness fill the space between,
 Perplex th' event, and shade the folded scene,
 In humble silence wait th' unutter'd voice,
 Suspend thy will, and check thy forward choice;
 Yet wisely fearful, for th' event prepare,
 And learn the dictates of a brother's care.
 How fierce thy conflict, how severe thy flight!
 When hell assails the foremost sons of light!
 When he, who long in virtue's paths hath trod,
 Deaf to the voice of conscience and of God,
 Drops the fair mask, proves traitor to his vow,
 And thou the temptress, and the tempted thou!
 Prepare thee then to meet th' infernal war,
 And dare beyond what woman knows to dare;
 Guard each avenue to thy flutt'ring heart,
 And act the sister's and the Christian's part.
 Heav'n is the guard of virtue; scorn to yield,
 When screen'd by Heav'n's impenetrable shield:
 Secure in this, defy th' impending storm,
 Tho' Satan tempt thee in an angel's form.

And oh! I see the fiery trial near :
 I see the saint, in all his forms, appear !
 By nature, by religion taught to please,
 With conquest flush'd, and obstinate to press,
 He lifts his virtues in the cause of hell,
 Heav'n, with celestial arms, presumes t' assail,
 To veil, with semblance fair, the fiend within,
 And make his God subservient to his sin !
 Trembling, I hear his horrid vows renew'd,
 I see him come, by Delia's groans pursued ;
 Poor injur'd Delia ! all her groans are vain ;
 Or he denies, or list'ning, mocks her pain.
 What tho' her eyes with ceaseless tears o'erflow,
 Her bosom heave with agonizing woe !
 What tho' the horror of his falsehood near,
 Tear up her faith, and plunge her in despair !
 Yet, can he think (so blind to heav'ns decree,
 And the sure fate of curs'd apostacy)
 Soon as he tells the secret of his breast,
 And puts the angel off, and stands confess ;
 When love, and grief, and shame, and anguish meet,
 To make his crimes, and Delia's wrongs complete,
 That then the injur'd maid will cease to grieve,
 Behold him in a sister's arms—and live ?

• Mistaken wretch ! by thy unkindness hurl'd,
 From ease, from love, from thee, and from the world,
 Soon must she land on that immortal shore,
 Where falsehood never can torment her more ;
 There all her sufferings, all her sorrows cease,
 Nor fairs turn devils there, to vex her peace.
 Yet hope not then, all specious as thou art,
 To taint, with impious vows, her sister's heart ;
 With proffer'd worlds, her honest soul to move,
 Or tempt her virtue to incestuous love.
 No ! wert thou as thou wast ! did heav'n's first rays
 Beam on thy soul, and all the godhead blaze !
 Sooner shall sweet oblivion set us free
 From friendship, love, thy perfidy and thee :
 Sooner shall light in league with darkness join,
 Virtue and vice, and heav'n with hell combine, }
 Than her pure soul consent to mix with thine ; }
 To share thy sin, adopt thy perjury,
 And damn herself, to be reveng'd on thee ;
 To load her conscience with a sister's blood,
 The guilt of incest, and the curse of God !”

As this is one of his earliest productions, we may also pronounce it (some of his hymns excepted) considerably the

best. It is written *con amore*: and it is easy to see, that his whole heart was engaged in it. Many other pieces, such as the elegies on the death of Whitfield and Jones; the address to his brother John, and several more, which were composed hastily, and on particular occasions, are so much inferior to this little poem, that they scarcely appear to come from the same hand. It is perhaps not easy to assign the cause; but there seems a kind of fatality to attend poems on religious subjects: and whatever may be the reason, the fact is notorious, that not one in twenty is worth reading.

Mr Charles Wesley was subject, during his whole life, to a certain instinctive fear of dying, from an apprehension he could never conquer, that he must suffer something terrible in his last moments. This idea was frequently present

to his imagination, and had such an effect upon his mind, that, in his last illness, he constantly desired those, who visited him, to pray that God would grant him patience and an easy death. His fears were happily disappointed. The frame was fairly worn out; and, after a gradual and general decay, he departed with the utmost serenity and composure, and exchanged this life, for a better, in March 1788, and in the eightieth year of his age.

Notwithstanding his connection with Methodism, he was always attached to the church of England, and gave orders, on his death-bed, that his remains should be interred, not in his brother's burying ground at the City Road, because it was not consecrated; but in the church-yard at Mary bone, the parish in which he had spent the last years of his life. Some

will perhaps read this remark with a smile of disdain, while others will regard it with approbation: but let the former remember, that, if this was a weakness in Mr Wesley, it was at least a pardonable weakness; and had it's origin in some of the best principles of human nature. The writer of these pages had a great esteem for this amiable man; and with pleasure takes this opportunity of paying a tribute to a memory, which he will never cease to respect and to regret. He quits, with reluctance, a subject that will ever be pleasing to his recollection; but begs leave first to present the reader with a beautiful portrait of his humanity and benevolence, in a poetical comment on that much disputed passage, in which the spirit of Samuel predicts to Saul, "by this time to-morrow thou and thy sons shall be with me."

“ What can these solemn lines portend ?
Some gleam of hope, when life shall end.
Thou and thy sons, though slain, shall be
To-morrow in repose with me :
Not in a state of hellish pain,
If Saul with Samuel remain ;
Not in a state of damn'd despair,
If loving Jonathan be there.”

E

C H A P. IV.

OF JOHN WESLEY, A. M.

MR JOHN WESLEY, whose life and actions are the chief subject of these memoirs, was the second son of Samuel and Susannah Wesley; and was born at Epworth, in Lincolnshire, according to his own account on the 21st of June, 1703; though according to that of one of his parents, and of the person who was his nurse, in 1700. But there is the most positive proof that his own date is the true one. An incident of a particular nature took place in the family, which occasioned the absence of his father from home, and his separation from

Mrs Wesley for upwards of a year and a half. During this time, King William died, and Queen Anne came to the throne. On her accession, Mr Wesley returned to Epworth; and Mr John Wesley was the first child after that meeting.

The difference in these accounts arose from an event which happened when he was about six years old, and was very near proving fatal to him. The parsonage house at Epworth, by some accident, took fire, and was burnt to the ground; and with it the parish register. The memory of his escape, on this occasion, is preserved in one of the early prints of him; in which, under the head, is a representation of a house in flames, with a motto, "Is not this a brand plucked out of the burning?" There is also a letter from his mother, to a clergyman in the neighbourhood, containing a parti-

cular account of the whole transaction. The letter is as follows, and is dated August 24th, 1709.

“ On Wednesday night, February the 9th, between the hours of eleven and twelve, some sparks fell from the roof of our house, upon one of the children's (Hetty's) feet. She immediately ran to our chamber, and called us. Mr Wesley, hearing a cry of 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 bid 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 bid 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 staircase 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 through the windows, and 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 thro'

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."

[This child was John. The rest must be given in his own words.]

"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 not be time; but I have thought of another expedient. Here I will fix myself against the wall: lift a slight man, and set him on my shoulders.’ They did so, and he took me out of 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 those words were legible, "Vade; vende omnia quæ habes, et attolle crucem et sequere me." "Go; sell all that thou hast; and take up thy cross, and follow me!"

Mr Wesley, as well as the rest of the children, received the first rudiments of learning from his mother, who appears to have been well qualified for the instruction of youth, and whose success was almost without example. When any of the children were to learn their letters, she contrived, during that time, to have nothing else to do, and gave herself entirely to them. Samuel, who was the eldest, learnt his letters in a few hours. One or two of them, whom she thought very

dull, were almost three days before they were perfect : but, in general, they were masters of the alphabet in twenty-four hours, and in a few days could read a chapter in the Bible.

At an early age, John was removed to the Charter-house ; and from thence to Christ-church ; whence, having taken his first degree in arts, he was elected fellow of Lincoln in 1724, and proceeded to the degree of A. M. in 1726. His election to Lincoln seems to have been greatly promoted by his brother's interest in that society : at least this appears the most natural construction of some expressions in a letter, in which he says, " I should certainly have wrote you word of my success on Friday ; (all Thursday I was detained at Lincoln ;) but that I thought it more adviseable, since I had promised to send

some verses in a few days, to do both in the same letter. I am at the same time to ask pardon for letting any thing prevent my doing the first sooner, and to return you my sincere and hearty thanks, as well for the fresh instance of affection you now give me, in the pains you take to qualify me for the enjoyment of that success, which I owe chiefly, not to say wholly to your interest. I am the more ready to profess my gratitude now, because I may do it with less appearance of design than formerly; of any other design I hope, than of shewing myself sensible of the obligation, and that in this respect at least, I am not unworthy of it."

Mr Wesley was soon regarded at Oxford as a man of talents, and his compositions were always distinguished by peculiar excellence. He was a critic in the learned languages, and his logical

skill was eminently conspicuous. It is said, that at a very early period he puzzled every opponent by the fallacies of an art, of which he was greatly enamoured; and that with the gaiety, and perhaps a small mixture of the vanity of youth, he laughed at them for being so easily vanquished.

His whole time however was by no means taken up with the severer studies. He did not disdain to pay his court to the muses; and several juvenile compositions, which are as animated and sprightly, as they are classical and elegant, show that it was not altogether without success. Most of his pieces that we have seen are translations from the Latin. The subjects indeed are such as, in his latter years, he would certainly have disapproved: but though they show that he was not insensible to the fervour of youthful

passion, they will not discredit his memory. Those that follow are selected, because they appear in some original letters to his brother Samuel.

FROM THE LATIN.

As o'er fair Cloe's rosy cheek
 Careless a little vagrant past ;
 With artful hand around his waist,
 A slender chain the virgin cast.

As Juno near her throne above
 Her spangled birds delights to see ;
 As Venus has her fav'rite dove,
 Cloe shall have her fav'rite flea.

Pleas'd with his chains, with nimble steps
 He o'er her snowy bosom stray'd ;
 Now on her panting breast he leaps,
 Now hides between, his little head.

Leaving at length his old abode,
 He found, by thirst or fortune led,

Her swelling lips, that brighter glow'd
Than roses in their native bed.

Cloe, your artful bands undo,
Nor for your captive's safety fear ;
No artful bands are needful now,
To keep the willing vagrant here.

While on that heaven 'tis given to stay
(Who would not wish to be so blest ?)
No force can drive him once away,
Till death shall seize his destin'd breast !

IN IMITATION OF *QUIS DESIDERIO SIT PUDOR, &c.*
SENT TO A GENTLEMAN ON THE DEATH OF HIS
FATHER.

What shame shall stop our flowing tears ?
What end shall our just sorrows know ?
Since heaven, relentless to our prayers,
Has given the long destructive blow.

Ye muses, strike the sounding string,
In plaintive strains his loss deplore,

And teach an artless voice to sing
The great, the bounteous, now no more!

For him the wife and good shall mourn,
While late records his fame declare;
And oft as rolling years return,
Shall pay his tomb a grateful tear.

Ah! what avail their plaints to thee?
Ah! what avails his fame declar'd?
Thou blam'st alas! the just decree
Whence virtue meets it's full reward.

Tho' sweeter sounds adorn'd thy tongue
Than Thracian Orpheus whilom play'd,
When list'ning to the morning song,
Each tree bow'd down its leafy head:

Never, ah! never from the gloom
Of unrelenting Pluto's fway,
Could the thin shade again resume
It's ancient tenement of clay.

Indulgent patience, heav'n born guest!
Thy healing wings around display;

Thou gently calm'st the stormy breast,
And driv'st the tyrant grief away.

Corroding care and eating pain,
By just degrees thy influence own;
And lovely, lasting peace again
Resumes her long-deserted throne.

HORACE, LIB. I. ODE XIX.

The cruel queen of fierce desires,
While youth and wine assistants prove,
Renews my long-neglected fires,
And melts again my mind to love.

On blooming Glycera I gaze,
By too resistless force oppress'd!
With fond delight my eye surveys
The spotless marble of her breast.

In vain I strive to break my chain;
In vain I heave with anxious sighs:
Her pleasing coyness feeds my pain,
And keeps the conquests of her eyes.

Impetuous tides of joy and pain
By turns my lab'ring bosom tear ;
The queen of love, with all her train
Of hopes and fears, inhabits there.

No more the wand'ring Scythian's might,
From softer themes my lyre shall move ;
No more the Parthian's wily flight :
My lyre shall sing of nought but love.

Haste, grassy altars let us rear ;
Haste, wreaths of fragrant myrtle twine ;
With Arab sweets perfume the air,
And crown the whole with gen'rous wine.

While we the sacred rites prepare,
The cruel queen of fierce desires
Will pierce, propitious to my prayer,
Th' obdurate maid with equal fires.

O D E XXII.

Integrity needs no defence ;
The man who trusts to innocence,

Nor wants the darts Numidians throw,
Nor arrows of the Parthian bow.

Secure, o'er Lybia's sandy seas,
Or hoary Caucasus, he strays;
O'er regions scarcely known to fame,
Wash'd by Hydaspes' fabled stream.

While void of cares, of nought afraid,
Late in the Sabine woods I stray'd;
On Sylvia's lips, while pleas'd I sung,
How love and soft persuasion hung!

A rav'nous wolf, intent on food,
Rush'd from the covert of the wood;
Yet dar'd not violate the grove,
Secur'd by innocence and love.

Nor Mauritania's sultry plain,
So large a savage does contain:
Nor e'er so huge a monster treads
Warlike Apulia's beechen shades.

Place me where no revolving sun
Does o'er his radiant circle run;

Where clouds and damps alone appear,
And poison the unwholesome year :

Place me in that effulgent day,
Beneath the sun's directer ray ;
No change from it's fix'd place shall move
The basis of my lasting love.

There needs no panegyric of these fugitive pieces. Their intrinsic merit is a sufficient recommendation ; and considering that they are hasty productions, and that little time was employed in the composition, and still less in revising and correcting them, they may safely be pronounced excellent. In some of his letters, notice is taken of five or six other copies of verses, which he wrote about his twenty-first or twenty-second year. One of these was a translation of part of the second Georgic, and another was an imitation of the sixty-fifth Psalm,

If we can depend upon his own account, and there does not appear any reason to the contrary, Mr Wesley, who had a pious education, with the advantage of the best examples in the conduct of his parents, had an early disposition to religion. Soon after his admission at Lincoln, he became more serious than usual; and, in a letter to his brother Samuel, of the 24th of April 1726, intimates his dislike of that kind of poetry, which is so generally cultivated in youth. Speaking of some verses, which a gentleman of Exeter college had promised to write out for him, he says, "Yesterday I saw them, though not much to my satisfaction, as being all on very wrong subjects, and turning chiefly on romantic notions of love and gallantry." Of these the following are inserted as a specimen :

“ By a cool fountain’s flow’ry side
 The fair Celinda lay ;
 Her looks increas’d the summer’s pride,
 Her eyes the blaze of day.

Quick thro’ the air, to this retreat,
 A bee industrious flew ;
 Prepar’d to rifle ev’ry sweet,
 Under the balmy dew.

Drawn by the fragrance of her breath,
 Her rosy lips he found ;
 There, in full transport, suck’d in death,
 And dropt upon the ground !

Enjoy, blest bee, enjoy thy fate,
 Nor at thy fall repine ;
 Each God would quit his blissful state,
 To share a death like thine !”

In the same letter there is a translation of part of the 46th psalm ; but whether it is to be ascribed to this gentleman or to Mr Wesley, does not clearly appear.

PSALM XLVI.

On God supreme our hope depends,
 Whose omnipresent sight,
 Ev'n to the pathless realms extends.
 Of uncreated night.

Plung'd in th' abyss of deep distress,
 To him we raise our cry ;
 His mercy bids our sorrows cease,
 And fills our tongue with joy.

Tho' earth her ancient seat forsake,
 By pangs convulsive torn ;
 Tho' her self-balanced fabric shake,
 And ruin'd nature mourn ;

Tho' hills be in the ocean lost,
 with all their shaggy load :
 No fear shall e'er molest the just,
 Or shake his trust in God.

What tho' th' ungovern'd, wild abyss
 His fires tumultuous pours ?

What tho' the watry legions rise,
And lash th' affrighted shores ?

What tho' the trembling mountains nod,
Nor stand the rolling war ?
Sion secure enjoys the flood,
Loud echoing from afar.

The God most high on Sion's hill
Has fix'd high his abode ;
Nor dare th' impetuous floods assail
The city of our God.

Nations remote and realms unknown,
In vain reject his sway ;
For lo ! Jehovah's voice is shown,
And earth shall melt away.

Let war's devouring furies rise,
And rage on every side ;
The Lord of Hosts our refuge is,
And Jacob's God our guide.

In the first volume of the Arminian Magazine, there is a paraphrase, by Mr Wesley, of part of the civ. psalm; and such is it's excellence, that it would be wrong to omit it.

Upborn aloft on ventrous wing,
 While spurning earthly themes I soar,
 Thro' 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 said'st, Let there be light!
 Ætherial light thy call obey'd,
 Thro' the wide void her living waters pass,

Glad she left her native shade,
 Darkness turn'd his murmuring head,
 Resigned the reins, and trembling fled;
 The chrystal waves roll'd on, and fill'd the ambi-
 ent 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)
 Thro' the vast profound he drew,
 When, lo! sequacious to his fruitful hand,
 Heaven o'er th' uncoloured void, her azure cur-
 tain threw.

Lo! marching o'er the empty space,
 The fluid stores in order rise,
 With adamant 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-responding voice, his
 coming from afar.

Embryon earth the signal knew,
 And rear'd from night's dark womb her infant head;
 Tho' yet prevailing waves his 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 fix'd, 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 parch-
 ing 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 landscape glow,
 And gladden all the vale below.
 Along the mountain's craggy brow,
 Amiably dreadful now !
 See the clasping vine dispread
 Her gently rising, verdant head ;
 See the purple grape appear,
 Kind reliëf 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 cedars 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 thro' the vaulted sky.

After much enquiry, we are not absolutely certain at what time Mr Wesley entered into holy orders; all we know is, that he was ordained in the year 1725, by Dr Potter, afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury, and preached his first sermon at Southlye, not far from Oxford, where we find him again in 1771. There is extant a correspondence between several of the family on this subject. The

first letter in this correspondence is dated January 26th. It is addressed to him by his father, and is distinguished by some judicious reflections on the sacred and important nature of the ministerial office. He supposes, that to desire to get into such an office, like the sons of Eli, "to eat a piece of bread," though it be the lowest, is a motive not absolutely unwarrantable; that the desire and intention to lead a stricter life is a still better motive; but that the chief inducements, and to which every thing else ought to be subservient, are "the glory of God and the edification of our neighbour." Some men engage in the ministry, not only without any such intentions, but with an aversion to the office; and any one may perceive the propriety of his observation on this case; "if a man be unwilling and undesirous to enter into

orders, 'tis easy to guess, whether he say, so much as with common honesty, that he trusts he is moved to it by the Holy Ghost." To young men he particularly recommends the Polyglot and Grotius as the best comments on scripture, and concludes with an admonition equally pertinent and affecting. "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 thank God for them."

The second of these letters contains some excellent advice concerning moderation in youthful pleasures; and the third, which is dated the 19th of October 1725, and just previous to the time when his son is supposed to have taken orders, is intended to resolve some doubts with regard to the Athanasian creed, and dis-

covers, if we mistake not, equal moderation and ingenuity. But let the reader judge for himself.

“ You seem staggered at the severe words in the Athanasian creed. Consider, their point is levelled against, and only against obstinate heretics. A distinction is undoubtedly to be made, between what is wilful, and what is in some measure involuntary. God certainly will make a difference. We don't so well know it. We therefore must leave that to him, and keep to the rule, which he has given us.

As to the main of the cause, the best way to deal with our adversaries, is to turn the war and their own vaunted arms against them. From balancing the schemes, it will appear, that there are many irreconcilable absurdities and contradictions in theirs; but none such (tho' indeed some difficulties) in ours. To in-

stance in one of a side. They can never prove a contradiction in our Three and One; unless we affirm them to be so in the same respect, which every child knows we do not. But we can prove there is one, in a creature's being a creator, which they affirm of our Lord."

These letters, from the elder Mr Wesley, are evidently written in answer to his son's queries on the subject; and they show, on the one hand, such solid piety, with so much rational affection; and on the other, such conscientiousness and integrity, as reflect great honour on them both. It were indeed exceedingly to be wished, that every father, especially every clergyman, who intends his son for holy orders, were as capable of advising him, and every son disposed to be as commendably serious and inquisitive on so important a subject.

But, at the same time that we express our wishes, we must lament the impossibility of their accomplishment. While young men, at the different seminaries, study any thing but divinity, and read any books rather than the scriptures; while they regard nothing in the church but her emoluments, and enter into orders upon exactly the same principles, as they would enter into the army or the navy, so long conscientiousness and integrity, either in taking orders, or in performing the ecclesiastical duties, will be foreign to many of the candidates for the ministerial office. It is presumed, none will be displeas'd with this comparison. The intention is merely to intimate, that employments in the army or the navy are of a secular, but those in the church of a spiritual nature; and consequently, that none ought to engage in such an of-

vice, without a sincere intention to promote piety in himself and others: and no clergyman of real piety can be offended, because he certainly is not included in these reflections.

VOL. I.

G

C H A P. V.

OF THE ORIGIN OF METHODISM.

WE have seen the principles on which Mr Wesley entered into holy orders. As he was not ordained to any cure, but as a fellow of his college, he resided there till the year 1735, having several pupils, and officiating as Greek lecturer and moderator of both the classes. In this capacity, he discovered that love of strictness and discipline, by which he has ever since been distinguished. He was as vigilant over the morals of his pupils, as he was anxious for their improvement in literature; and he expected from them an obedience which,

we are authorized to say, was without a precedent in the university. He required that they should rise very early in the morning ; that they should read no books but such as he approved ; and that in their general conduct, and in every thing that respected their private studies, as well as the statutable exercises, they should implicitly submit to his directions.

It is said, and we are not disposed to doubt, that he was an excellent tutor. His discipline could scarcely be without it's use. The time of the young men would be well filled up, which, at an university, is a principal thing : and being totally excluded from gaming and hunting, and a variety of other amusements, not too friendly to learning, they could make the most of the advantages of that illustrious seminary.

Every one knows, that some of the first characters in the universe have been formed there; and that, with the previous education at school and a good capacity, whoever resides at college the usual time, must either be a man of learning or of invincible indolence.

During his residence at Lincoln, Mr Wesley became particularly serious and religious; and several of his friends and pupils, having the same dispositions, they formed into a kind of society, which at first, in November 1729, consisted of the two Mr Wesleys, Mr Morgan of Christchurch, and one more; into which were admitted, some time after, Mr Clayton of Brazen-nose, Mr Hervey, Mr Whitefield, and several others. At first, they read the classics every evening but Sunday, and on that day some book in divinity; but in a little time it is probable,

that their religious meetings were more frequent.

Mr Wesley ascribes his first religious impressions at Oxford to Bishop Taylor's Rules for holy Living and Dying, which fell in his way; and those impressions were confirmed and increased by reading Stanhope's Kempis, and the Serious Call and Christian Perfection of Mr Law. In reading these books, he tells us, that he found such comfort as he had never felt before; and that, meeting with a religious friend, he began to alter "the form of his conversation, and to set out in earnest upon a new life." He saw, as he observes, more and more of the value of time; shook off all his trifling acquaintance; applied himself more closely to study; watched against actual sins, and advised others to be religious, according to that scheme of religion by

which he modelled his own life. In a little time, says he, " I was convinced 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 best of my power, I was persuaded, that I should be accepted of him, and that I was even then in a state of salvation."

The society, with which he was connected, to an unusual strictness of deportment, and frequent meetings with each other, soon added a more diffusive scheme of utility. The principal and most active among them was Mr Morgan. By his advice and example,

they visited the sick and the prisoners in the castle; they instituted a fund for the relief of the poor, and were so diligent in the ordinances of religion, and so industrious in doing good, that they began to be taken notice of, and were presently distinguished by the name of Methodists, Sacramentarians, and the Godly Club.

The better to accomplish his benevolent designs, Mr Wesley abridged himself of all the superfluities, and of some things that are called the necessaries of life; and proposing their scheme for the relief of the poor to several gentlemen, they increased their fund to about eighty pounds a year. These things, added to their observance of the fasts of the ancient church, and their strict attention to every kind of religious duty, rendered them more and more obnoxious to cen-

ting them, had had the grace to imitate their example, it would have been much better both for the public and themselves.

Mr Wesley's father was not likely to give them any opposition; for, when an under-graduate at Oxford, he had observed a similar conduct, having frequently visited the prisoners at the Castle. His brother Samuel, who was never suspected of enthusiasm, was of the same mind; which he declares in the strongest terms that could be employed on such an occasion. "I cannot say (says he) I thought you always in every thing right; but I must now say, rather than you and Charles should give over your whole course, especially what relates to the Castle, I would chuse to follow either of you, nay both of you to your graves. I cannot advise you better, than in the words I proposed for a motto to a pamphlet, "Stand thou sted-

fast as a beaten anvil; for it is the part of a good champion to be flead alive and to conquer.”

Another clergyman, of known wisdom and integrity, was consulted on this occasion. His answer was to the same purpose; but there are some expressions in it so pointed and remarkable, that we must insert them. “As to my own sense of the matter, I confess, I cannot but heartily approve that serious and religious turn of mind that prompts you and your associates to those pious and charitable offices; and can have no notion of that man’s religion or concern for the honour of the university, that opposes you as far as your design respects the colleges. I should be loth to send a son of mine to any seminary, where his conversing with virtuous young men, whose profest design of meeting together, at

proper times, was to assist each other in forming good resolutions, and encouraging one another to execute them with constancy and steadiness, was inconsistent with any received maxims or rules of life among the members."

So far, it appears that they had conducted themselves with equal piety and prudence. Some time in 1730 the society sustained a severe loss in the decease of Mr Morgan, who was the first promoter of it, and appears, from all accounts, to have been, in the strictest sense of the word, a gentleman and a christian. His piety was as enlightened as it was ardent: and as it may safely be presumed, that he does not now repent of his unwearied assiduity and zeal; so, we can see no reason why he should be censured for them by others.

“ Who blames the stripling, for performing more
 Than doctors grave, and prelates of three score?
 Glad'ning the poor, where'er his steps he turn'd,
 Where pin'd the orphan, or the widow mourn'd;
 Where pris'ners sigh'd beneath guilt's horrid stain,
 The worst confinement and the heaviest chain!”

From Mr Wesley's first journal we learn, that the death of this young gentleman was charged to his and his brother's account; and it was said, that the rigorous abstinence which, by their advice, he had imposed on himself, had increased his illness, and hastened his dissolution. To vindicate himself from this charge, Mr Wesley wrote a long letter to Mr Morgan's father, in which some will think he has effectually wiped off the aspersion, by showing that, in 1730, Mr Morgan had left off fasting about a year and a half; whereas, at that time, Mr Wesley had practised it not quite half a year. An elegy on Mr Morgan's death

is among the poems of Mr Samuel Wesley.

In 1731, many reports, concerning Mr John Wesley and his party, having reached his brother at Westminster, a correspondence took place between them on the subject; and in a letter written about this time, is a defence and explanation of their conduct. In one expression, concerning his hair, there is an apparent obscurity. But this may be obviated, by observing, that Mrs Wesley wished him to cut off his hair, which he took particular care of, and wore remarkably long: and an acquaintance of his at Oxford says, that he was remarked in the university for appearing with it smartly dressed and powdered, which at that time was rather uncommon. He has taken notice of this in another letter. “ My mother’s reason for my cutting off my hair is, be-

cause the fancies it prejudices my health. As to my looks, it might doubtless mend my complexion to have it off, by letting me get a little more colour; and perhaps it might contribute to my making a more genteel appearance. But these, till ill health is added to them, I can't persuade myself to be sufficient grounds for losing two or three pounds a year. I am ill enough able to spare them."

This is undoubtedly a trifling subject; but it was necessary to mention it, by way of explaining what occurs in the following letter; as it will also serve to show how conscientious Mr Wesley was in the smallest circumstances. The letter to which we allude, is dated from Lincoln college, November 17. 1731, and is addressed to his brother Samuel.

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 now do in our premises. In most we agree already, especially as to rising, not keeping much company, and sitting by a fire; which I always do, if any in the room does, whether at home or abroad. But these are the things about which others will never agree with me. Had I given up these, or but one of them, rising early (though I never am sleepy now) and keeping little company; not one man in ten, of those that are offended with me, as it is, would ever open his mouth against any of the other particulars. For the sake of these, those are mentioned. The root of the matter lies here: would

I but employ a third of my money, and half of my time as others do, smaller matters would be overlooked. But I think, "nil tanti est." As to my hair, I am much more sure, that what this enables me to do, is according to the Scripture, than I am, that the length of it is contrary to it.

I have often thought of a saying of Dr Haywood's, 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 a Christian priest, ought, whether his hand be against every man or no, to expect that every man's hand should be against him." It is not strange, that every man, 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 so? 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 this business, very many even of those that travel the same ground, many of those who are before, as well as those behind him, will lay stumbling blocks in his way. One blames him for not going fast enough; another for having made no greater progress; another for going too far; which, strange as it is, is the more common charge of the two. For this comes from people of all sorts; not only infidels, not only half Christians, but some of the best men are apt to make this reflection; "he lays unnecessary burthens upon himself; he is too precise; he does what God has no where required to be done." True: he has no where required it of those who are perfect; and even of those who are not,

all men are not required to use all means; but every man is required to use those, which he finds most useful to himself. And who can tell better than himself, whether he finds them so or no? Who knows the things of a man better than the spirit of a man, that is in him?

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 think I ground all those practices, for which, as you would have seen, had you read that paper through, 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 I infer, that the more steadily I keep my eye upon the prize of my high calling, the better; and the more of my thoughts,

and words, and actions are directly pointed at the attainment of it.

2dly, As to the instituted means of attaining it, I likewise lay it down for a rule, that I am to use them every time that I may.

3dly, As to the prudential means, I believe the 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 who asks me, of every custom wherein I 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 prudence? To neither of which I am naturally disposed; and I greatly fear, my acquired stock of either will give me small assistance.

I have now but one thing to add, and that is as to my being formal. If by this be meant, that I am not easy and unaffected enough in my carriage, 'tis very true; but how can I help it? I cannot be genteely behaved by instinct; and if I am to try after it 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 and actions fit for all circumstances ? If you are to “ rejoice ever more,” 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 unto 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 that can, whoever he be, I allow to be a proper judge, whether I do well to be generally as serious as I am.

J. W.

This letter needs no comment. It speaks for itself, and is a lively portrait

of an ardent and susceptible mind, intently fixed upon its object, and devoted to the pursuit of those things, which to him appeared of the utmost importance. We are far from presuming, that Mr Wesley made no mistakes, or that he fell into no improprieties of sentiment or of conduct. But from this and all the other letters we have seen, it is evident that, from the first beginnings of Methodism, he was a man of singular integrity; and that the early imputations of finessè and selfishness were false and unfounded calumnies.

Some time after Mr Wesley's ordination, he assisted his father at Epworth, though we suppose he could only do it occasionally, as he seems to have resided chiefly at the university. The old gentleman, finding himself upon the decline,

and anxious that the living should remain in the family, wrote to his son, intreating him to make interest for the next presentation. The wishes of the people, the interest of the family, and we may add, it's very existence seemed to depend upon his acquiescence in this proposal. But it could not be brought about. He had conceived an invincible attachment to Oxford, and had formed, from his friends and advantages there, such expectations of religious improvement, as rendered him unalterably determined not to comply with their request.

This refusal was followed by several letters from the parties concerned. We subjoin an extract of the first of these, which is from Mr Wesley's father, dated November 20. 1734.

“ Your state of the question, and only argument is this; ‘ not whether I could

do more good to others, there or here; but whether I could do more good to myself: seeing wherever I can be most holy myself, there I can most promote holiness in others. But I can improve myself more at Oxford than at any other place.'

“ To this I answer, first, it is not dear self, but the glory of God, and the different degrees of promoting it, which should be our main consideration and direction in the choice of any course of life. Witness St. Paul and Moses.—
2. Suppose you could be more holy yourself at Oxford, how does it follow, that you could promote holiness more in others there than elsewhere? Have you found many instances of it, after so many years hard pains and labour? Further: I dare say, you are more modest and just, than to think there are no holier men than

you at Oxford : and yet it is possible they may not have promoted holiness more than you have done ; as I doubt not, but you might have done it much more, had you taken the right method ; for there is a particular turn of mind for these matters ; great prudence as well as fervour.

3. I cannot allow austerity or fasting, considered in themselves, to be proper acts of holiness ; nor am I for a solitary life. God made us for a social life. We must not bury our talent. We are to let our light shine before men ; and that, not barely through the chinks of a bushel, for fear the wind should blow it out. The design of lighting it was, that it might give light to all that went into the house of God : and to this academical studies are only preparatory.

4. You are sensible what figures those make, who stay in the university till they are superannuated. I cannot think drowiness promotes holiness. How commonly do they drone away their life, either in a college, or a country parsonage, where they can only give God the snuffs of them; having nothing of life or vigour left, to make them useful in the world.

5. We are not to fix our eye on one single point of duty; but to take in the complicated view of all the circumstances in every state of life that offers. Thus, in the case before us, put all the circumstances together. If you are not indifferent whether the labours of an aged father for above forty years, in God's vineyard, be lost, and the fence of it trodden down and destroyed; if you consider that Mr M—— must in all

probability succeed me, if you do not ; and that the prospect of that mighty Nimrod's coming hither, shocks my soul, and is in a fair way of bringing down my grey hairs with sorrow to the grave ; if you have any care for our family, which must be dismally shattered, as soon as I am dropt ; if you reflect on the dear love and longing of this poor people for you, whereby you will be enabled to do God the more service, and the plenteousness of the harvest, consisting of near two thousand souls, whereas you have not many more scholars in the university, you may perhaps alter your will, and bend your mind to him, who has promised, " if in all our ways we acknowledge him, he will direct our paths."

This pathetic letter was followed by another from his son Samuel. His bro-

ther's chief objection was, as we have seen already, that he could not leave Oxford, upon the principle of doing good, because he was convinced, that where he could reap the most benefit himself, he could more effectually promote the good of others. But, says he, " I am equally assured there is no place under heaven, so fit for my improvement as Oxford."

A passage in Samuel's letter, where he contrasts his own obedience to his father's injunctions, with the inflexible behaviour of his brother, gives a striking view of the opinion he had of his resolute and determined spirit. The expressions are very remarkable. " After this declaration, I believe no one can move your mind, but him that made it : much less do I think myself qualified for that purpose.

“ You may say, I have been too passive. I left Oxford, with all the opportunity of doing good, on a worldly account, at my father’s desire. I left my last settlement, by the same determination; and I should have thought I sinned both times, if I had not followed it.

“ You are not at liberty to resolve against undertaking a cure of souls. You are solemnly engaged to do it, before God, and his high priest, and his church. Are you not ordained? Did you not deliberately and openly promise to instruct, to admonish, to exhort those committed to your charge? Did you equivocate then, with so vile a reservation, as to propose in your heart, that you would never have any so committed? ’Tis not an university; ’tis not a college; ’tis the order of the church according to which you were called. Let Charles, if

He is silly enough, vow never to leave Oxford, and therefore avoid orders. Your faith is already plighted to the contrary. You have put your hand to the plough; to that plough!

“ I mention no less considerations, but restrain myself; though not a little surpris'd, that you seem to hint what never before entered the head of a Christian, that a parish priest cannot attain to the highest possible perfection on this side heaven.”

Mr Wesley's reply to these letters is address'd to his father, and contains so extensive a view of the subject, and so clear a detail of some of the most singular of his opinions, that it is with regret we omit it's insertion. But as it would take up too much room in these memoirs, we must endeavour to extract the substance of the arguments; referring the

reader, who may wish for more accurate information, to the third Journal, page 29 to 37 of the fifth edition, printed in 1775. It is however to be observed, that the letter published in that Journal, is only an abridgement of the original, and such an abridgement as has considerably defaced it, by the omission of some of it's most nervous and pointed expressions.

After allowing, in the beginning of the letter his father's position, " that the glory of God, and the different ways of promoting it, are to be our sole consideration and direction in the choice of any course of life," he observes " that course of life tends most to the glory of God, in which we can most promote holiness in ourselves and others;" and lays it down as incontrovertible, that " whatever state is best for an individual, must

be best for those who are to be instructed by him."

He then goes on to show, that Oxford must be best for him, and conduce most to his improvement, because there he enjoyed the conversation of his select friends, retirement, freedom from care and from unprofitable company, beside the advantages of public prayers twice a day, and weekly communion. Speaking of retirement, he introduces a reflection, which, were it not evident that he is perfectly serious, might be considered as a stroke of humour. "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 bu-

ness of importance to communicate to me, or I to him. And then, as soon as he has dispatched his business, he immediately takes his leave."

Without his present advantages, he contends, that it would not be possible for him to guard 'for one month' against intemperance in eating, drinking, and sleeping; against irregularity in study; against lukewarmness in his affections and remissness in his actions; and against softness and self-indulgence, which he insists, is "directly opposite to that discipline and hardship which become a soldier of Jesus Christ." From these considerations he supposes, that was he otherwise circumstanced, he must become "an easy prey to any impertinent company, to the cares of the world and the desire of other things, which would then roll back upon him with a full tide:" and

he therefore concludes, that his residence at Oxford was of absolute necessity and importance, and with him, related not merely to "the degrees of perfection, but to the very essence and existence" of his religious character;

Agitur de vitâ et sanguine Turni.

"The point is, whether I shall, or shall not work out my salvation; whether I shall serve Christ or Belial."

From these observations, with regard to himself, he proceeds to an acknowledgment, that "God has made us for a social life, to which academical studies are only preparatory;" and adds, 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 man; that a superlative degree of contempt is, on all accounts, due to a college-drone; a

wretch that hath received ten talents, and 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; and that it is impossible to say enough against the drowsy ingratitude, the lazy perjury of those, who are called harmless or good sort of men, a fair proportion of whom I must to our shame confess, are to be found in colleges.”

He does not however conclude his philippic without putting in an exception. “ This will not conclude against a college life in general. For the abuse 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.” Among other instances, he sup-

poses it may be so with himself; for, says he, " I can be holier here than any where else, if I faithfully use the blessings I enjoy. And to prove, that the holier any man is himself, the more he will promote holiness in others, there needs no more than this one postulatam; " the help which is done upon earth, God doth 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, that the more holy a man is, he will make use of him the more, because he is more willing to be 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, for employment and success therein, will

more severely pierce the clouds; because, the more his heart is enlarged, the wider sphere he may act in without 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."

Among other arguments, for which he concluded, that he ought to remain at Oxford, he adds what he calls "the plenteousness of the harvest;" or, in other words, the opportunity he had of doing good. "Here, says he, are poor families to be relieved; children to be educated; work-houses, in which both old and young 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; 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 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."

The argument employed by his father, when he tells him that Epworth was a "a large sphere of action, where he would have the charge of two thousand souls," he turns to his own purpose. "Two thousand souls! I see not how any man living can take care of one hundred; at least I could not; I know too well, 'quid valeant humeri.' Because the weight I

have already upon me is almost more than I am able to bear, ought I to increase it tenfold?

“imponere Pelio Offam
Scilicet, atq. Offæ frondosum involvere Olympum.”

To an objection, urged against his residence at Oxford, taken from the contempt and dislike, which he had acquired from his singularities, he gives an answer, that will surprize those who are not well acquainted with his manner of thinking on this subject. He not only denies that honour and reputation are necessary to usefulness in the world, but contends, that every “true Christian will be contemned; that till he is so, no man is in a state of salvation; and that contempt is absolutely necessary to his doing his full measure of good in the world.” To establish these positions, he adduces the example of Christ and his apostles,

who were despised by wicked men; and quotes these expressions of our Lord, "the servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you. Because ye are not of the world, therefore the world hateth you."

He concludes the whole in the following language, as animated as any we remember to have seen from his pen. "Where then is the scribe? 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 the heathen tongues of wisdom to scorn. It saith, that twelve despised followers of a despised master, all of whom

were of no reputation, who were esteemed as the filth and offscouring 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 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.’

“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 your-

self 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 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."

The reply to this is by Samuel Wesley, junior, and dated Devon, February 8. 1734-5.

"Your friends, retirement, frequent ordinances, and freedom from care, are great blessings. All, except the last, you may expect in a lower degree elsewhere. Sure all your labours are not come to

this, that more is absolutely necessary for you, for the very being of your Christian life, than for the salvation of all the parish priests in England! 'Tis very strange!

“ To the question, ‘ what good have you done at Oxford,’ you are not careful to answer; how comes it then, you are so careful about the good you might do at Epworth? ‘ The help that is done on earth, he doth it himself,’ is a full solution of that terrible difficulty.

“ The impossibility of return, the certainty of being disliked by them that now cry you up, and the small comparative good my father has done, are good prudential reasons; but, I think, can hardly extend to conscience. You ‘ can leave Oxford when you will.’ Not surely to such advantage. ‘ You have a probability of doing good there.’ Will that

good be wholly undone, if you leave it? Why should you not leaven another lump?

“ What you say of contempt is nothing to the purpose; for, if you will go to Epworth, I'll answer for it, you shall, in a competent time, be despised as much as your heart can wish. In your doctrine, you argue from a particular to a general. To be useful, a man must be esteemed, is as certain as any proposition in Euclid; and I defy all mankind to produce one instance of directly doing spiritual good without it, in the whole book of God.

“ You join to contempt, hatred and envy. But the first is very hardly consistent, the latter utterly incompatible with it; since none can envy another, but for something he esteems.

“ God, who provided for the flock

before, will do it after my father's death."

May he not suffer them to be what they once were, almost heathens? And may not this be prevented by your ministry?

"It could never enter into my head, that you could refuse on any other ground, than a general resolution against a cure of souls. I shall give no positive reason for it, till my first is answered. The order of the church stakes you down; and the more you struggle, will hold the faster. If there be such a thing as truth, I insist upon it, you must, when opportunity offers, either perform that promise, or repent of it: *utrum mavis?*"

This letter was answered as follows, on the 15th of the same month.

"Neither you nor I have any time to spare; so I must be as short as I can.

"There are two questions between

us, one relating to being good; the other to doing good. With regard to the former, you allow I enjoy more of friends, retirement, freedom from care, and divine ordinances than I could elsewhere; and I add, 1. I feel this to be but just enough. 2. I have always found less than this to be too little for me; and therefore, whatever others do, I could not throw up any part of it, without manifest hazard to my salvation.

“ As to the latter, I am not careful to answer what good I have done at Oxford, because I cannot think of it, without the utmost danger. I *am* careful about what good I may do at Epworth, first, because I can think of it without any danger at all; and secondly, because, as matters now stand, I cannot avoid thinking of it without sin.

“ Another can supply my place at Epworth, better than at Oxford : and the good done here is of a far more diffusive nature. It is a more extensive benefit, to sweeten the fountain, than to do the same to particular streams.

“ To the objection, ‘ you are despised at Oxford, therefore you can do no good there, I answer ; first, a Christian will be despised any where ; secondly, no one is a Christian, till he is despised ; thirdly, his being despised will not hinder his doing good, but much further it, by making him a better Christian. Without contradicting any of these propositions, I allow, that every one, to whom you do good directly, must esteem you first or last. N. B. A man may despise you for one thing ; hate you for a second ; and envy you for a third.

“ God may suffer Epworth to be worse than before.” But I may not prevent it, without hazard to my own soul.

“ Your last argument is *ignoratio elenchi*, or implies these two propositions ; first, “ you revolt against any parochial cure of souls ;” secondly, “ the priest who does not undertake the first parochial cure that offers, is perjured.” Let us add a third ; “ the tutor who, being in orders, never accepts a parish, is perjured :” and then I deny all three.”

The following answer is without a date, but we may suppose it was returned immediately.

“ You say, ‘ you have but just enough.’ Had ever man on earth more ? ‘ You have experienced less to be insufficient.’ Not in the course of the priesthood, to which you are called. In that way I am

persuaded, though ‘ he that gathereth much hath nothing over ; yet he that gathereth little, hath no lack.’

‘ There is danger in thinking of the good you have done ; but not of what you may.’ Vain glory lies both ways. But the latter was your duty ; so was the former ; unless you can compare two things, without thinking of one of them.

‘ The good at Oxford is more diffusive.’ ’Tis not that good you have promised. You deceive yourself, if you imagine you do not think of what you have done. ‘ Your want may be better supplied at Epworth.’ Not if my father is right in his successions.

‘ A Christian will be despised every where. No one is a Christian till he is so. It will further his doing good.’ If universal propositions, I deny them all. Esteem goes before the good done, as

well as follows after it. ‘ A man may both despise and envy.’ True. He may have both a hot and cold fit of ague. Contempt in general is no more compatible with, than necessary to benefiting others.

“ I said plainly, I thought you had made a general resolution. As to taking the first offer, I supposed an opportunity, a proper one; and now declare my judgment, should you live ever so long, in the ordinary course of providence, you can never meet another so proper.

‘ An ordained tutor, who accepts not a cure is perjured.’ Alter the term into, ‘ who resolves not to accept,’ and I’ll maintain it, unless you can prove either of these two; first, ‘ there is no obligation at taking orders;’ secondly, ‘ this obligation is dispensed with:’ both which I utterly deny.”

Such was the controversy on this important occasion. We do not scruple to call it important; for such it certainly was; and such must be every question, on the result of which shall depend the choice of that situation, which is to give it's colour to every future circumstance of life.

In one respect, the disputants seem to have been well suited to each other. There was on both sides the strictest probity, and the most unequivocal integrity: and it is obvious, that the conduct of Mr John Wesley was perfectly disinterested. At least it was decidedly free from any bias on the side of worldly interest. The rectory of Epworth must have been a situation full as respectable as a fellowship at Lincoln; and in all probability, considering the strict discipline of Mr Wesley, and the comparatively small

number of pupils he had under his tuition, more advantageous. Of the labour in either case, we shall say nothing. Whatever had been his situation, it would have made no difference with him. Such was the activity of his mind, and such his views of the necessity of laborious usefulness, that, whether he had accepted of a living, or retained his fellowship, he would equally have appeared, as he was for more than sixty years, the most diligent and industrious of mankind.

This concession, which the fullest conviction of his integrity has extorted, lays us under no necessity of entirely approving his conduct, or of adjudging him the victory in this debate. The judgment of most of our readers, will give the right side of the argument to the elder Mr Wesley: and there are several reasons to incline us to the same opi-

nion. The injunctions of a venerable, declining parent, the welfare of a numerous and dependent family, and the unanimous concurrence of a whole parish, are considerations of such moment, as to leave us no difficulty in supposing, that their voice was the voice of God. And on a review of his objections, we cannot help thinking, that several of these were frivolous, and imaginary; that his religion had in it too much bustle and business, with too deep a tincture of austerity; that, in some instances, he imposed, both on himself and others, a yoke not imposed in the Scriptures, and which human nature is little calculated to support; and that he conceived many things to be necessary, which we greatly doubt whether they were so, even in his case; but are certainly not necessary to mankind in general.

One exception we must make in his favour. Tho' we think it not in human nature to despise a good man, we are persuaded that there is, in all countries, a description of men, so naturally and so universally wicked and corrupt, as to have conceived an invincible aversion to every thing that is good. Perhaps we may go a step farther. They hate it as much, because it is good, as because it is contrary to their own character and pursuits: and like the Athenian, who was out of all patience with hearing so much of Aristides the Just, they are ever ready to show their malignity against superior merit. But we hope, for the credit of humanity, that this is not descriptive of a general character.

With this exception, we take the liberty of entering our caveat against one material part of Mr Wesley's argument.

His reasonings on the supposition, that contempt is necessary to success in the ministry, though ably and ingeniously supported, will scarcely be assented to. It appears indeed so contrary to nature and feeling, and is so evidently opposed by reason and observation, that we know not how to admit it. From the history of our Saviour and the Apostles, it does not appear that their chief usefulness was in those places where they were despised and opposed, but on the contrary, where they were most esteemed and cared for. The contempt which St. Paul found among the Jews, was the reason of his departure to the Gentiles : and we find it particularly noticed of one city, that our Lord could not do “ many mighty works there, because of their unbelief.” What is there understood by unbelief is

obvious. They rejected his mission, and treated him with contempt.

Another circumstance to be observed is, that Mr Wesley, as his brother takes notice, argues from a particular to a general. Because the Jews, in the infancy of Christianity, hated Jesus Christ and his Apostles; and because he had predicted, that they should be exposed in the course of their ministry to much persecution, he thence infers that, in the more advanced stages of Christianity, the same prejudices should remain, and every Christian be hated and despised by the majority of mankind. But it is by no means clear to us, that this reasoning will stand the test. It has been contradicted, in thousands of instances, by matter of fact. Many have there been in all ages of the most excellent characters, who not only did not suffer aversion and contempt,

but were universally beloved and esteemed. We give Addison as an example.

The case of the Apostles was peculiar. The downfall of superstitions almost coeval with the world, the destruction of polytheism, and the extirpation of a religion, which the laxity, as well as absurdity of its principles, and the impurities which it not only tolerated, but enjoined, had rendered peculiarly pleasing to the depraved and vicious taste of its votaries, were the avowed objects of their mission: so that the opposition they had to contend with, might naturally be expected. We admit particular exceptions. There may be exempt cases and peculiar occasions, when good men are not treated as they deserve. But in the present state of the world, we need not scruple to say, that where such persons meet with decided and general opposition, the fault must in a great

measure originate with themselves. There is a want of prudence or abilities, or some defect in their judgment or deportment, which has a tendency to create dislike, and to frustrate their good intentions. We say this with the more confidence, as we speak from observation; having often heard sentiments from the pulpit, disgustingly absurd and indefensible; and having been witnesses to improprieties and extravagancies in religious characters, which, though they did not amount to immorality, could not fail of the effect we have just mentioned.

It may be remarked, by the way, that there has been of late much false reasoning on these subjects, from an idea, that there must be an exact parallel between Christians of the present and apostolic age, and between the ministers of every subsequent period, and the apostles them-

selves. An idea, than which nothing can be more absurd. We might as well say, that every Christian minister must be as capable as they were of healing the sick or of raising the dead! That we ought to be as pious as the primitive Christians, and the present ministers of religion as anxious for the salvation of mankind as the apostles were, is indisputably true: but we deny, that similar piety must be necessarily productive of similar persecution. To suppose this, were to suppose, that to this moment, Christianity has done nothing for mankind; that the increase of religion does not check the spirit of intolerance and persecution; and that the world is, in this age, as corrupt and flagitious, as illiberal and uninformed as in the earliest ages. All which is absolutely false. Religious reformation, and the progress of

learning and science have long been in a certain degree proportioned to each other. The improvements in the arts of peace; the numerous institutions in almost all countries, for humane and charitable purposes; the more liberal manner in which war is conducted; with the comparatively small number who now fall a sacrifice to the thirst of power and the ambition of princes, are full and unequivocal demonstrations of the mild and pacific influence of the religion of Jesus.

This is not all. The judgment of any candid and dispassionate enquirer will at once decide upon these paradoxical positions; "to be useful, you must be despised. The being contemned is absolutely necessary to a Christian's doing his full measure of good in the world." How so? Do men then go for instruction to those they despise? Are we disposed to

submit to the decisions of those, whose principles we abhor, and whose talents we hold in contempt? It is impossible. We must of necessity esteem a man who is useful to us; and the esteem must be prior to the usefulness. That "God will employ those most, who are fittest to be employed; that those are fittest, who are most holy; and that, as contempt is a glorious means of advancing holiness, God will most employ those who are most despised," is an argument that reminds us of the famous deduction of Themistocles, by which he proved, that his little boy governed the world. The failure of one link destroys the chain. Should it even be granted, that contempt may advance holiness, which will require some proof (for we have no great idea of "Beelzebub casting out Beelzebub") we are yet to re-

member, that a man may be sufficiently in contempt, without the least capacity for public usefulness: and *that* contempt is no small presumption against him. And though it should be granted, that a bad man may hate his more excellent neighbour for his piety and his excellencies, it is not in his power to despise him. Hatred and contempt are scarcely consistent. Contempt and envy are totally incompatible. Nor does it at all mend the matter, to say, that “a man may despise you for one thing, hate you for a second, and envy you for a third.” We are now considering this despised person in one simple point of view, as a real Christian: and in this view, it is not possible that these contrary passions should be exercised upon the same object.

We have already hinted another objection, that struck us very forcibly;

and that is, that Mr Wesley was perhaps too positive, and depended too much on his own judgment. His father seems to have entertained the same idea, where he hints the necessity of "bending his mind to the will of God." When a man's own opinion is contrary to that of several of the most sensible people in the nation; when these persons are his nearest relations; and when their judgment so clearly concurs with the voice of a whole parish, it seems not improper to conclude, that there is in it something providential, and that he ought to doubt his own judgment, and to suspend his determinations.

And what friend of Mr Wesley's is there, so bigoted as to say, he could not be mistaken? It is very possible, he might conceive some things to be materially hurtful, which were not so dangerous as he apprehended; and that he

might suppose his salvation absolutely to depend upon the society, and other advantages he enjoyed at Oxford, when in reality it was not so. Add to this, that his reasonings on this subject seem to argue too much confidence in outward means, and too little in the grace of God : as if it were impossible he should be kept from evil in the same circumstances as other men ; and as if (to use the language of his brother) ‘ more were necessary to the very existence of his christian life, than to the salvation of every other clergyman in the kingdom.’ Strange indeed !

Thus, with the freedom of history, but without any intention of offence, have we hazarded our opinion on this occasion. And though we differ, and presume that most people will differ from Mr Wesley, and conceive that he saw

great difficulties, where in reality there were none but what his own imagination had created, it is impossible not to admire and give him the full credit of his conscientiousness and integrity. Perhaps in this case his judgment was erroneous and his reasonings inconclusive ; but it must at least be granted, that, as the subject presented itself to his mind, he could not, with a good conscience, have acted otherwise than he did.

C H A P. VI.

OF HIS MISSION TO AMERICA.

WHEN we first became acquainted with the subject of this chapter, it was not without some surprise. Having seen in how determined a manner Mr Wesley had opposed himself to the solicitations of his friends, with regard to Epworth, we naturally expected, that nothing less than stern necessity could have induced him to quit his beloved retirement. The contrary however was the fact. In one of his excursions to London, he met with a gentleman (Dr Burton) who was one of the trustees for the new colony at Georgia;

and was induced, by his folicitations, though with some reluctance, to give up his pupils, and to leave his native country.

Not long after the correspondence we have so particularly considered, we find him embarked. On the 14th of October 1735, accompanied by a Mr Ingham of Queen's College, Mr Delamotte, son of a merchant in London, and his brother Charles, he went on board the Simmonds, off Gravesend, bound for Georgia. In the same ship was Mr Oglethorpe, who was afterwards a general officer, and died a few years ago at a very advanced age. Mr Wesley's chief object was the mission to the Indians, whom, however, from the troubles that prevailed on the continent, he had little opportunity of instructing.

While the ship remained in the river,

he wrote to his brother Samuel, informing him, that he had presented his father's Comment on Job to the Queen, who rewarded him with many smiles and good words. In this letter he greatly objects to the usual mode of education; finds fault with many of the classics, especially Ovid, Virgil, and Terence's Eunu- chus, as being calculated to inflame the sensual appetites, and to cherish the love of grandeur and ambition; and as totally contrary to that purity of heart, which, he observes, is much more important than elegance of style. He tells him, that he, as well as himself, was called to the conversion of heathens; that his scholars were so many souls committed to his care, to prepare them for eternity; and that he therefore conjured him to banish the classics, with their poison, from his school, and introduce, instead of them, such christi-

an author as would work, together with him, in “ building up his flock in the knowledge and love of God.”

Here again we are constrained to enter our dissent; having no idea that the languages can be taught with any propriety, or to any degree of perfection, but by the classics. But in this instance, his opinion in 1735 and in 1777 was exactly contradictory. In the second volume of the *Arminian Magazine*, is a letter from a clergyman, who asks whether a religious schoolmaster may use the classics in his school; and he answers, “ doubtless he may.” We cite this as one proof, among others, that, in the latter part of life, he was less rigid than in his youth.

On Friday, the 17th of October, the ship being still in the river, he preached without notes, and administered the sacrament on the quarter deck. The first

time of his preaching in this manner was accidental. He had gone to Allhallows', in London, to hear Dr Heylin, who, at that time, was much followed. The Doctor not coming, Mr Wesley was requested to supply his place; and having no notes about him, he preached extempore.

By heavy gales and contrary winds, he was detained some time in the channel, and did not get out to sea till the 10th of December. Among the passengers were twenty-six Germans, who were going to settle in America: and here commenced his acquaintance with the Moravian brethren, which he cultivated for some time with great assiduity. He gives them an excellent character, and particularly commends their humble and christian deportment during the passage, and their calm and resolute

behaviour in the moment of danger.

Nitchman, the Moravian bishop, began to learn English, Mr Wesley German, and Mr Delamotte Greek. Mr Charles Wesley wrote sermons, and Mr Ingham instructed the children. To shew Mr Wesley's love of discipline, and and his fondness for doing every thing by rule, it will not be amiss to transcribe his account of the manner in which they spent the day. " We now began to be a little regular. From four in the morning till five, each of us used private prayer. From five to 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, learnt the languages, and instructed the children. At twelve we

met, to give an account to one another what we had done since our last meeting, and what we designed to do before our next. At 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 our 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 instruct and exhort 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."

None can say that the time was not well filled up: But we doubt whether so unremitting an attention and such a multiplicity of business is not too much for the human mind. We remember the observation "neque semper arcum tendit Apollo." If the bow be not sometimes unstrung, it will soon lose its elasticity. We suspect too, that rough weather, and the various changes incident to a passage by sea, must frequently have interrupted this œconomy.

On Thursday, the 15th of January, 1736, several were much exasperated

with Mr Wesley, for having complained to Mr Oglethorpe of the unequal distribution of water, which was put into better hands. From the 17th to the 25th they had violent storms; the sea going frequently over the ship, and breaking through the cabin windows. He observes that the "English were exceedingly frightened, while the Germans, men, women, and children were perfectly calm," which he ascribes to the power of religion. From the Germans, says he, "I went to their trembling neighbours, and pointed out the difference in the hour of trial, between him that serveth God, and him that serveth him not."

On the 29th they fell in with the skirts of a hurricane, which however did no damage; on the 4th of February they saw land; and on the 6th, after a stor-

my passage, first set foot on shore, on a small uninhabited island, near Tybee, where they kneeled down and returned God thanks. Mr Oglethorpe immediately set off for Savannah.

During this passage it was that Mr Wesley, "judging it might be helpful" to him, discontinued the use of flesh and wine, and confined himself to vegetables, chiefly rice and bisket. He also left off eating suppers; and his bed having been wet by the sea, he lay upon the floor, and slept sound till morning. He adds, "I believe, I shall not find it needful to go to bed, as it is called, any more."

While the ship lay off Tybee, several Indians came on board, shook hands, and welcomed them to America. They expressed a desire to be instructed, as soon as they were at liberty from the confusions of war; but added, "we

would not be made christians as the Spaniards make christians; we would be taught before we are baptized. "It is submitted to the judicious reader, how far Mr Wesley's reply to these Indians was just and seasonable. "There is but one, he that fitteth in heaven, who is able to teach man wisdom. Though we are come so far, we know not whether he will please to teach you by us or no. If he teaches you, you will learn wisdom; but we can do nothing." He describes them as being tall, well proportioned men, with a remarkable softness in their speech, and gentleness in their whole behaviour. From the conversations he and other Europeans had with the Indians, it appears that their notions of religion were very crude and imperfect; that they had some idea of the interposition of invisible beings, in the govern-

ment of the world; and some notion of the morality or immorality of certain actions. They thought it foolish in white men to build great houses, as if they were to live for ever; and condemned that practice, so common among the savages, of taking medicines to procure abortion.

At Savannah Mr Wesley became acquainted with Mr Spangenberg and other Germans, and attended at the consecration of a bishop; when he tells us, that the simplicity and solemnity of the occasion made him almost forget the seven-hundred years between, and imagine himself in one of those assemblies, 'where form and state were not; but Paul, the tentmaker, or Peter, the fisherman, presided; yet with the demonstration of the spirit and with power.'

By the direction of Mr Oglethorpe, a house was built for the missionaries, who, on their arrival at Savannah, were received with great cordiality. Mr Wesley entered upon his ministry, on Sunday, the 7th of March 1736, by preaching from the epistle for the day; and observes that, when he saw the number of people crowding into the church, the deep attention with which they received the word, and their seriousness afterwards, he "could not believe, that this serious, attentive people should afterwards trample under foot that word, and say all manner of evil falsely of him that spake it."

Colonists have generally been remarked as an obstinate and ungovernable people; but perhaps the fault was not wholly in the Georgians. The Americans are not to be managed, but by a delicate and

skilful hand. His father had observed to him, that, in order to do good to mankind, " a particular talent is necessary, great prudence as well as fervor." Mr Wesley's conduct (to say the least of it) was, on many occasions, capricious and fanciful: in some instances, absolute and despotic. He gave great offence by insisting upon baptizing their children by immersion, which, though provided for in the rubrick, was not at all necessary, and which no clergyman did but himself; while his experiments upon his own constitution, first, leaving off meat and wine; then giving up suppers, and lastly, confining himself to bread, in order to try " whether life might not be sustained by one sort, as well as by variety of food," were by no means calculated to impress his parishioners with the most favourable opinion of his judgment. It is not pre-

tended there could be any intrinsic evil in such experiments ; but they certainly were not judicious. They had at least a whimsical aspect, and induced in many who observed him, a suspicion, that he laid too great a stress on bodily austerities and trifling circumstances, which have nothing to do with a man's salvation, nor any necessary connection with his christian character. Mr Wesley was of the contrary opinion ; as will appear from his own words, written when he first entered upon his bread diet. " To the pure all things are pure. Every creature is good to them, and nothing to be rejected. But let them, who know and feel that they are not thus pure, use every help and remove every hindrance ; always remembering, he that despiseth little things, shall fall by little and little."

VOL. I.

M

During his residence on the continent, he frequently laboured, not only with his tongue, but with his hands ; and continued his custom of eating little, of sleeping less, and of leaving not a moment unemployed. In some respects he was admirably calculated for a missionary in a cold, inhospitable clime. For so small a person, he possessed great muscular strength, a sound and vigorous constitution, with a most ardent and indefatigable mind. He exposed himself, with the utmost indifference, to every change of season, and inclemency of weather. Snow and hail, storm and tempest had no effect on his iron body. He frequently lay down on the ground, and slept all night, with his hair frozen to the earth. He would swim over rivers, with his cloaths on, and travel till they were dry ; and all this without any apparent

injury to his health. He seems also to have possessed great presence of mind and intrepidity in danger. Going from Savannah to Frederica, the pettiawga, in which he was, came to an anchor. He wrapt himself up in a cloak, and went to sleep upon deck: but, in the course of the night, he rolled out of his cloak, and fell into the sea, so fast asleep, that he did not perceive where he was, till his mouth was full of water. He swam round to a boat, and got out.

On his arrival at Frederica, he found his brother exceeding weak, from the flux, with which he had been some time confined: but he recovered from the moment he saw him! The medical men would say, that the joy, occasioned by his arrival, had a sudden effect on his constitution, and gave an impulse to the system, favourable to convalescence. Mr

Wesley saw it in another point of view, and says, “ this hath God wrought ! ”

Returning to Savannah, they agreed to advise the people, those who were the most serious, to form themselves into a society, and to meet once or twice a week, in order to reprove, instruct, and exhort one another ; and, from these, to select a smaller number, for a more intimate union. With each of these divisions the two brothers frequently conversed, and met them all together, on Sundays, at Mr Wesley’s house. Here was the origin of the future œconomy of classes and bands.

On Sunday, the 9th of May 1736, he began to divide the public prayers into three services, in conformity to the original institution of the church. The morning service began at five ; the communion office and sermon at eleven ;

the evening service at three. Mr Oglethorpe, on his return from the south, gave orders against the profanation of the Lord's day, by fishing and fowling; and Mr Wesley summed up, at Frederica, what he had seen and heard among them, inconsistent with christianity.—“ Some were profited, and the rest deeply offended.”

From this time, the offence became general. Many of his friends grew shy. They considered his sermons as satires upon particular persons; and some determined they would hear him no more. He now observes that, during a violent thunder storm, he found he had not yet conquered the fear of death. Going for Charlestown with his brother, who was about to embark for Europe, they were in danger of oversetting in a boat. The mast fell, through the vio-

lence of the storm, but the sailors got it into the boat, and, by a vigorous exertion, rowed on shore.

On his return to Savannah, finding Mr Oglethorpe was gone, he stayed only one day; and leaving Mr Ingham and Mr Delamotte, set out once more for Frederica. In walking to Thunderbolt, he was excessively wet by the rain; and observes, that the general idea of the unwholesomeness of the rains and dews, in America, is a mere vulgar error; that he had frequently been wet with the rains, and had lain many nights exposed to the dew, without the least injury. And so, continues he, "might any one, if his constitution were not impaired by the softness of a genteel education!"

If the parishioners of Savannah and Frederica did not receive much benefit from his instructions, it certainly was not

for want of diligence on his part. He seems to have been fully employed, during his residence among them, as will appear from the account published in his history of methodism, which we insert in his own words. " On the Lord's day, the English service lasted from five to half past six. The Italian (with a few Vaudois) began at nine. The second service for the English, including the sermon and the holy communion, continued from half past ten till about half 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 joined with as many as my largest room would hold, in reading, prayer, and singing praise. And about six, the service of the Germans began, at which I was glad to be

present, not as a teacher, but as a learner.”

What immense labour was this! And what an idea must it give us of his industry and perseverance, if we consider, that, besides the French and Italian, which we know not whether he acquired here or at Oxford, he learnt German, that he might converse with the Moravians, and Spanish, for the sake of his Jewish parishioners!

We particularly notice a remark he makes about this time. He had been sent for to a person, who became a convert from popery. On this occasion he observes, that he had received many advices to beware of the increase of popery, but not one caution against the progress of infidelity; which, says he, is a little extraordinary; for, “in every place where I have yet been, the number of

converts to popery bore no proportion to that of the converts to infidelity." He adds, that as bad a religion as popery is, no religion is still worse; that the state of a deist is more dangerous than that of a papist; and that he had "known many of the latter reconverted, but not one of the former." There is undoubtedly much propriety in these remarks. It is certain however, that deists have sometimes been reconverted. Lord Rochester is a memorable instance: and, if we mistake not, Mr Wesley himself has had the pleasure, since that time, of seeing several examples of the same kind. But the good catholics will hardly thank him for the association; though many of our readers will perhaps join him in supposing, that to allow popery to be better than infidelity, is to say all that can be said upon it.

Of his usefulness in America, as we have little information; we can form no accurate conception. All that we can learn of it; must be from his own account, which is as follows: "All in Georgia have heard the word of God. Some have believed, and begun to run well. A few steps have been taken towards publishing the glad tidings, both to the African and American Heathens. Many children have learned how they ought to serve God, and to be useful to their neighbour. And those, whom it most concerns, have an opportunity of knowing the true state of their infant colony, and laying a firmer foundation of peace and happiness to many generations." By the African heathens, we suppose he means the slaves that were brought to the continent; and by the steps taken for the instruction of them

and the Indians, we are most likely to understand, the school, called Irene, erected for them, under the inspection of Mr Ingham. Of the success of it we have not heard.

That his situation abroad was, upon the whole, extremely unpleasant, we have no doubt. But the most unfortunate event that befel him, was his difference with Mr Causton, who was storekeeper and chief magistrate of Savannah. Not long before this happened, he complained, in a letter to a friend, that he could not conceive how he "could attain to the being crucified with Christ," being in a condition he neither desired nor expected in America, in ease, honour, and abundance. As for the ease and honour of his situation, we know nothing of it: but the abundance he complains of was certainly no great matter; for the ex-

pences of Mr Delamotte and himself, for one whole year, did not amount to forty-five pounds. The cause of complaint, so far at least as it related to ease and honour, was presently removed. The calm was succeeded by a storm. Meeting with Mr Spangenberg, on his way to Ebenezer, he mentioned his situation; and having consulted him, with regard to the conduct he should pursue, determined to follow his advice.

Mr Wesley informs us, that he had reproved Mrs Williamson, Mr Caulton's niece, for something in her behaviour, that he disapproved. The reproof was highly resented by the lady. Soon after he repelled her from the communion; in consequence of which, a warrant was served upon him, and he was brought before one of the bailiffs and the recorder. Refusing to acknowledge their au-

thority, in a matter purely ecclesiastical, he was ordered to appear at the next court held for Savannah. After some sharp words on the part of Mr Causton, Mr Wesley wrote to his niece, telling her, that if she offered herself at the table, on the next Sunday, he would inform her, as he had done before, wherein she had done wrong; and then, says he, “when you have openly declared yourself to have truly repented, I will administer to you the mysteries of God.”

This was judged rather an aggravation, than a reparation of the offence. Mr Causton then declared he would have satisfaction, and soon after told many persons, that Mr Wesley “had repelled Sophy from the communion, because she had rejected his proposals of marriage, and married Mr Williamson.” On this occasion he takes notice of the “graci-

ous providence of God, in the lessons for the week," which turned chiefly on encouragements to patience under sufferings. His chief fear seems to have been, lest this affair should have induced the people to absent themselves from the service: but his fears were disappointed. The congregation was more numerous than usual; and many, he informs us, took notice of 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."

It is said that, when the time of trial approached, a jury was packed by his antagonist, composed of a papist, a Frenchman, an infidel, and about twenty dissenters and others, who, having personal quarrels with Mr Wesley, had openly vowed revenge. A charge was given by Mr Causton, to beware of spiritual

tyranny, and to oppose the illegal authority that was usurped over their consciences; and a long list of grievances was found by the grand jury, though not without a protest from several of the jurors. Mr Wesley moved for an immediate hearing, which, on various pretences, was put off; when, having consulted several of his friends, and put up advertisements of his intentions to return to England, notwithstanding an order to detain him, on the 2d of December 1737, he "shook off the dust of his feet, for a testimony against them," and left Georgia, having preached the gospel there (to use his own words) not as he ought, but as he was able, one year and nearly nine months.

Such was the leave our missionary took of America, to which he never returned. This affair has been variously,

but we suspect, in no instance accurately, related. The editors of the Gospel Magazine say, that he left Savannah by night, and on foot, to elude the terrors of a court of justice. We follow the account, defective as it is, which he published in the Journals. But, on a review of the transaction, we are particularly struck with the contrast between the reception he met with, and the honour and popularity of Mr Whitefield, in every part of the continent. It is much to be lamented by Mr Wesley's friends, that, though his American enemies evidently acted in a most violent and unjust manner, his rectitude of conduct is not so clear as might be wished. He does not tell us of what nature was his complaint against Mrs Williamson: nor does he deny that he had made his addresses to this lady; which, if not true, he cer-

tainly ought to have contradicted in the most express terms ; for, on this circumstance, the public opinion must be necessarily suspended. If it was true, his behaviour will be naturally ascribed to the phrenzy of disappointed love. If not, some other reason must remain in reserve. But on this question it is impossible to decide. We may conjecture ; but we cannot speak with certainty.

His brother Charles finding the climate to disagree with his constitution, had sailed for England in July 1736. Mr Ingham left Savannah on the 26th of January 1737. How long Mr Delamotte remained, we are not informed.

Mr Wesley does not bid adieu to the continent, without relating some melancholy instances of the cruelty and villainies of the masters of ships, while the rage for emigration was so prevalent.

It is indisputable, that they used infinite art to induce farmers and tradesmen to embark for this land of promise; when, after borrowing their money, and plundering them of their property, they sold them to the planters. The consequence, in many instances, one of which is related by Mr Wesley, was distraction and suicide.

He also gives an account of the situation of Georgia, it's soil, produce, cultivation, and inhabitants. But we have some doubt of the correctness of the portrait. The colouring partakes rather too much of the *sombre*; and we perceive, whenever he has occasion to speak of America, certain traits of prejudice, that we can easily account for, but which are scarcely worthy a philosopher and a citizen of the world.

• He gives the following shocking cha-

raſter of the Georgian Indians: “ Every
 one does that which is right in his own
 eyes; and if it appears wrong to his
 neighbour, the perſon aggrieved, ſteals
 on the other unawares, and ſhoots him,
 ſcalps him, or cuts off his ears: having
 only two ſhort rules of proceeding, to
 do what he will, and what he can. They
 are all, except perhaps the Choctaws,
 gluttons, drunkards, thieves, diſſemblers,
 liars. They are implacable, unmerciful
 murderers of fathers, murderers of mo-
 thers, murderers of their own children;
 it being a common thing for a ſon to
 ſhoot his father or mother, becauſe they
 are old and paſt labour; and for a wo-
 man either to procure abortion, or to
 throw her child into the next river, be-
 cauſe ſhe will go with her huſband to the
 war. Indeed huſbands, ſtrictly ſpeak-
 ing, they have none; for any man leaves

his wife, so called, at pleasure; who frequently, in return, cuts the throats of all the children she has had by him. Whoredom they account no crime, and few instances appear of a young Indian woman's refusing any one. Nor have they any fixed punishment for adultery; only if the husband take his wife with another man, he will do what he can to both, unless speedily pacified by the present of a gun or a blanket." That this horrid picture has its originals in real life, we have no doubt, but we cannot admit it as an universal likeness. We know, on the contrary, that there are many exceptions; and that Europeans have often owed their lives to the clemency of Indians.

Mr Wesley, disappointed in the prime object of his mission, embarked for Europe, at Charlestown, on Thursday, the

22d of December, 1737, made the Lizard-point on the 29th of January, and after a pleasant passage, landed at Deal, on the 1st of February, 1738. Mr Whitefield failed through the channel for America, as he entered it, on his return. On the 3d he came to London, after an absence of two years and four months.

C H A P. VII.

HIS REFLECTIONS ON HIS ARRIVAL; HIS CONVERSION AND JOURNEY TO HERNHUTH AND MARIENBURN.

A BOUT this time he observes, that his mind was full of thought; and that he wrote down part of what occurred to him, as follows: "It is now two years and almost four months since I left my native country, to teach the Georgian Indians the nature of christianity: but what I have learned myself in the mean time? Why, what I least of all suspected, that I, who went to America, to convert others, was never myself converted to God. I am not mad, though I thus speak; but I 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." The remainder of this soliloquy, remarkable as it is, there is no need to transcribe. What we are now concerned with, is the tendency of it; and that is, to shew that, notwithstanding his zeal, his labours, his sincerity, his charity, and his punctual observance of the means of grace, he " was not a christian, because he had not faith." His notion of faith is, " a sure trust and confidence that a man hath, that, through the merits of Christ, his sins are forgiven, and he reconciled to the favour of God." So far he agrees with the church of England. How far his idea of the mode of communication will be deemed orthodox, is another question. He supposes, and we believe it is the doctrine of the Moravian bre-

thren, from whom it was derived to the first methodists, that this confidence is conveyed by an immediate influence of the Holy Spirit, who is supposed, by a strong persuasion, in some way or other, directly communicated to the mind, to reveal this important circumstance. This is called by some divines, “the faith of assurance:” and it is one of those peculiar doctrines, in which Mr Wesley is supposed to differ from most of the protestant churches. As we shall probably give this subject a more particular consideration in the sequel, we dismiss it for the present.

But we cannot pass over Mr Wesley’s reflections on his own state, without remarking a difficulty we are under. Of his own character he must be allowed to be the best judge. But how shall we reconcile him with himself? On his re-

turn from Georgia, in 1738, he says he was not a christian. The Journal in which this is said, was published in 1775: and yet, giving an account in this same Journal, of himself, and of what he judged to be his state in 1729, when he declared his persuasion, that he was "even then in a state of salvation," he adds, in a note at the bottom, "and I believe I was *." How these passages can be made to agree, we are at a loss to discover: since it is generally understood among the orthodox divines, that if a man has not faith, he is not a christian; and if not a christian, consequently, not in a state of salvation. There is indeed a distinction of his, which, if there were any thing in it, might possibly do something toward reconciling this contradic-

* See 1st Journal, page 68; and 2d Journal, page 26. Edition 1775.

tion. He says, in one place, that he
 “ *had the faith of a servant, but not of a
 son* *.” But we doubt the propriety of
 this distinction. Does he mean here,
 what is called in Scripture, a “servant
 of God,” or does he not? If not, he
 could have no true faith, and therefore
 could not be in a state of salvation. But
 if he does, then we say, that in this re-
 spect, the Scripture knows no difference
 between the phrases, “sons of God and
 servants of God;” consequently, here is
 a distinction without a difference.

During his residence at London, where
 he was detained several weeks by the
 trustees for Georgia, he informed his
 friends of some reasons, which hastened
 his return to England; and, being advised
 to relate them to the trustees, he waited

* See note, 2d Journal, page 17. Edition 1775.

twice on Mr. Oglethorpe, without having an opportunity to explain : but, attending soon after at the board, he gave them an account of the colony, so little flattering, and so contrary to that which had been given them by others, that he supposes some of them never forgave him.

It was at this time that he preached in many of the churches in town ; but such was the effect of his unfashionable doctrine, that after the first sermon in every church, he was generally informed, he must preach there no more. The doctrine, to which we particularly allude, is what he calls “ saving faith,” which, he informs us, he saw clearly on Monday March the 6th, 1733, and “ declared it without delay.” The consequence of this mode of preaching, he says, was, that God then began to work by his ministry, as he had never done before.

He now spent some time in visiting some of his friends and relations; met with Peter Böhler, Schulius Richter, and other Moravians just landed from Germany; in whose company and conversation he expresses a particular satisfaction. Soon after, going to Oxford to see his brother Charles, who was said to be dying, he found him recover from the pleurisy. Here he again met with Böhler, who thought him too philosophical, or too rational (for we cannot tell which) and laconically told him, “*mi frater, mi frater, philosophia ista tua excoquenda est.*” It was by him, he tells us, he was convinced of the want of that faith, whereby alone we are saved; and by his advice he began to preach “*salvation by faith alone.*” Peter’s words are remarkable: “*preach faith till you have it; and then, because you have it,*

you will preach faith." The first to whom he preached this doctrine, was a prisoner under sentence of death. The effect is not mentioned.

Much of this spring was spent in travelling with Mr Kinchin, a fellow of Corpus, to Manchester, Holms Chapel, Newcastle in Staffordshire, and several other towns, where they frequently preached and exhorted, either embracing or making occasions of speaking in public and private, in inns and stables, and wherever they came, on matters of religion, and with various success. Some stared in silent astonishment at their reproofs and exhortations; while others seemed thankful and willing to receive instruction. In some instances, prudence held their tongues, and prevented them from embracing opportunities of speaking to those who attended them at their inns,

and in other places; and Mr Wesley mentions some occasions, in which he supposes they were providentially rebuked for their negligence. Among others he gives the following instance: "The next day, March 11th, we dined at Birmingham, and soon after we left it, were reproved for our negligence there (in letting those, who attended us, go without either exhortation or instruction) by a severe shower of hail!"

In the latter end of March, or the beginning of April, he left off his custom of confining himself to a form of prayer. This change first took place at the Castle in Oxford, where he and Mr Kinchin went to visit a prisoner. They first prayed in several forms, and then in "such words as were given them in that hour." The man kneeled down in "great heaviness and confusion." After a short

space he rose up, and eagerly said, "I am now ready to die. I know Christ has taken away my sins, and there is no more condemnation for me." He adds, "the same composed cheerfulness he shewed, when carried to execution: and in his last moments he was the same, enjoying a perfect peace, in confidence, that he was *accepted in the Beloved.*"

Mr Wesley again observes, that, "on Monday, April 1st, being at Mr Fox's society, his heart was so full, that he could not confine himself to the usual forms; and that he did not propose to be confined to them any more, but to pray indifferently, with a form or without, as he should find suitable to particular occasions."

At this time, his mind having been warmed by the discourses of his Moravian friends, he was waiting in anxious

expectation for his own conversion. He says, that he had now no objection to what Böhler had said of the nature of faith, and of the holiness and happiness, which he described as the fruit of it. But he could not comprehend what he spoke of an instantaneous work. He 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.” To satisfy himself on this subject, he searched the Scriptures, particularly the Acts of the Apostles; and the result was, that, to his utter astonishment, he “found scarce any other instances there, than instantaneous conversions; scarce any so slow as that of St. Paul, who was three days in the pangs of the new birth.” The only retreat he

now had, was in the difference between the present and the primitive times. He was persuaded, that " God wrought thus in the first ages of christianity ;" but the times being changed, he was not certain that he would " work in the same manner now."

On Sunday, the 22d of April, he was driven out of this retreat, by " the concurring testimony of several living witnesses, who declared, that 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, says he, ended my disputing. I could only cry out, " Lord, help thou my unbelief."

His persuasion of the truth of this doctrine was increased, as he informs us, by " hearing the experiences of Mr Hut-

chins of Pembroke college, and Mrs. Fox; two living witnesses, that God can at least, if he does not always, give that faith, whereof cometh salvation, in a moment, as lightning falling from heaven."

The day from which Mr Wesley dates his conversion, is May 24th, 1738. He has introduced it with a studied solemnity, by an enumeration of the various circumstances we have recited, with many more of the same sort; and it is immediately prefaced by an account of himself, from his infancy, till that moment. It was on the evening of this day, that he went to a society in Aldersgate street, where some one was reading Luther's preface to the Epistle to the Romans. About a quarter before nine, says he, while he was describing the change that 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 my salvation: and an assurance was given me, that he had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death." He adds, that he immediately began to pray, particularly for his enemies and persecutors, and declared to all that were present what he now felt. With some intervals of doubt and fear, he continued in this situation, and went up and down preaching and labouring with all his might.

Various were the effects of those peculiar doctrines, which Mr Wesley had preached for some time before he professed to have experienced them himself. Many were offended, and among the rest, his brother Charles; who told him, he did not "know what mischief he had done, by talking in this manner:" and

he observes, that God did indeed from that time “kindle a fire,” which he hoped would never be extinguished. The influence of this was fierce and decisive. Many are represented as falling suddenly to the ground, in horror and agony not to be conceived, and rising again with equal expressions of peace and consolation. Their conversions were usually attended with these violent symptoms; and, for several years, few meetings occurred, where Mr Wesley presided, without one or more instances of the same kind.

It was not possible, that such transactions should pass without notice. The confusion that too often prevailed, the emotions of the persons affected, and the exultations of the rest, which were severely animadverted upon, gave great

and general offence. Many insisted, that it must either be occasioned by the heat of the rooms and the agitation of the animal spirits, under discourses of the most alarming nature; or that it was mere artifice and hypocrisy.

As these objections were constantly urged, Mr Wesley has taken much pains to refute them, producing in his journals an immense number of conversions, attended with the same symptoms; and some, even of the objectors themselves; who are said to have fallen to the ground, raving like the demoniacs in the Gospels, and crying out, that it was "the just judgment of God for their wickedness and unbelief." Among others he particularly instances in a quaker, who was much provoked with their dissimulation. But he also "suddenly dropt

down, as if thunderstruck. The agony he was in, was terrible to behold. We besought God not to lay folly to his charge. And he soon lifted up his head, and cried, now I know, thou art a prophet of the Lord." This happened while Mr Wesley was preaching at Baldwin-street, where the cries of the people were such, that scarcely could his voice be heard. The reader is referred, for further information, to the first and second journals. It may be observed here, that Mr Charles Wesley's objections to this new system were gradually removed. His conversion is dated from the 22d of May, 1738, two days before that of his brother.

An account of their proceedings was presently transmitted to Tiverton, by a Mrs Hutton of London, two of whose sons became converts to their opinions.

One of them is the person who is said to have been honoured some time ago with the notice of majesty. The lady, who found herself not a little aggrieved, wrote to Mr Samuel Wesley, informing him, that his brother John was become a wild enthusiast or fanatic, and was drawing her sons into the same notions. She tells him, that she thought him "not a quite right man," and begs that when he should next come to his house, he would "either confine or convert him." She was particularly displeas'd, that her son was about to publish an abridgement Mr Wesley had made of the life of Haliburton, a Scotch presbyterian. She had forbid him to print it; but observes, that if his brothers thought it would tend to the glory of God, they would soon convince her son, "that

God's glory was to be preferred to his parent's commands."

Mr Wesley, in his lively manner, answered Mrs Hutton, by combating their opinions. He thought it not unlikely, that intensesness of thought and want of sleep might have disordered his brother. He treats their general system as downright madness and delusion; and prays that God would "stop the progress of this lunacy."

It was in the month of May that the first methodist society was formed in London. Mr Wesley is particularly careful to distinguish the origin of methodism into three distinct periods. The first commenced at Oxford, in 1729; the second at Savannah in 1736, when twenty or thirty met at his house; and the last in London, on the first of May, 1738, when "about fifty agreed to meet toge-

ther once a week, in order to a free conversation, begun and ended with singing and prayer."

About this time his friend Böhler embarked for America. On this occasion he contemplates, in a kind of rapture, the happy effects of his arrival in England; such, says he, as will remain "when the heavens and the earth pass away." Mr Wesley was now much perplexed with doubts and fears, concerning his own state, and determined to retire for some time to Germany; hoping that the conversation he would meet with there, might be the means of establishing him more fully in the faith. Taking leave of his mother, he embarked on Tuesday, the 13th of June, 1738, and on Thursday landed at Rotterdam. He arrived at Marienburn on the 4th of July, and was introduced to

Count Zinzendorf. During his stay here, the Count took him to visit the Count de Solmes, where he "observed with pleasure the German frugality. Three of the young countesses, who were grown-up, were dressed in linen; the count and his son in plain cloth."

This observation reminds us of an anecdote we have heard of Mr Wesley, while in Germany. It is well known, that one of the first principles of moravianism, is simplicity; or in other words, tractability; a principle very proper to be inculcated by the head of a party. One day, the Count had ordered his pupil to go and dig in the garden. When Mr Wesley had been there some time, working in his shirt, and in a high perspiration, he called upon him to get into a carriage that was in waiting, to pay a visit to a German count: nor would he suffer him

either to wash his hands or to put on his coat. 'You must be simple, my brother,' was a full answer to all his remonstrances; and away he went, like a crazed man, in statu quo. This count we presume, was the Count de Solmes. The occasion of this extraordinary visit, which seems to have been intended merely as a lecture on simplicity, he has not taken notice of: but of the authenticity of the anecdote we have no doubt.

From Marienburn he went to Hernhuth. Here he found an American acquaintance; and attending the conferences and other meetings of the brethren, had frequent opportunities of hearing every thing explained, of which he wished to be informed. Above all, he was much comforted with regard to his own state, by hearing it strongly insisted upon, that the state of justification

is perfectly consistent with doubts and fears; and that there is a distinction between faith and the assurance of faith. This, if we understand him right, was one prime object of his journey: and such, if we mistake not, was the doctrine inculcated by the brethren. As he has published a particular account of the discipline of the brethren, we have no doubt, that he now looked forward, which he certainly did not in 1729, to his future labours in these kingdoms; and made himself immediately acquainted with their regulations, that he might form a code for his own societies.

Of the constitution of this church, it's officers, and it's discipline, with the infinity of springs and wheels in so complex a system, we shall not fatigue the reader with the relation. Our aversion

to this sort of manœuvre in christian societies, forbids us to enlarge on such a subject; and induces a wish, that both the Count, who was the projector, and Mr Wesley, who too closely imitated him, had been more mindful of the christian simplicity.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.





