

*Thur. 17.*—One spent the evening with us who is accounted both a sensible and a religious man. What a proof of the fall! Even with all the advantages of a liberal education, this person, I will be bold to say, knows just as much of heart-religion, of scriptural Christianity, the religion of love, as a child three years old of Algebra. How much then may we suppose a Turk or Heathen to know? Hardly more; perhaps just as much.

*Tues. 22.*—To oblige a friendly gentlewoman, I was a witness to her will, wherein she bequeathed part of her estate to charitable uses; and part, during his natural life, to her dog Toby. I suppose, though she should die within the year, her legacy to Toby may stand good; but that to the poor is null and void, by the statute of Mortmain!

*Sun. 27.*—I buried the body of Ephraim B——, once a pattern to all that believed. But from the time he left off fasting and universal self-denial, in which none was more exemplary for some years, he sunk lower and lower, till he had neither the power, nor the form of religion left. In the beginning of his illness he was in black despair. But much prayer was made for him. Toward the close of it, it pleased God to restore to him the light of his countenance. So, I trust, his backsliding only cost him his life; and he may yet live with God for ever.

I was much affected about this time by a letter sent from a gentleman in Virginia. Part of it runs thus:—

“The poor Negro slaves here never heard of Jesus, or his religion, till they arrived at the land of their slavery in America; whom their masters generally neglect, as though immortality was not the privilege of their souls, in common with their own. These poor Africans are the principal objects of my compassion; and, I think, the most proper subject of your charity.

“The inhabitants of Virginia are computed to be about three hundred thousand; and the one half of them are supposed to be Negroes. The number of these who attend on my ministry, at particular times, is uncertain; but I think there are about three hundred who give a stated attendance. And never have I been so much struck with the appearance of an assembly, as when I have glanced my eye on one part of the House, adorned (so it has appeared to me) with so many black countenances, eagerly attentive to every word they heard, and some of them covered with tears. A considerable number of them, about an hundred, have been baptized, after they had been

fully instructed in the great truths of religion, and had evidenced their sense of them by a life of the strictest virtue. As they are not sufficiently polished to dissemble with a good grace, they express the sensations of their hearts so much in the language of simple nature, and with such genuine indications of artless sincerity, that it is impossible to suspect their professions, especially when attended with a suitable behaviour.

“Mr. Todd, Minister of the next congregation, has near the same number under his care; and several of them also, he informs me, discover the same seriousness. Indeed there are multitudes of them in various parts, who are eagerly desirous of instruction. They have generally very little help to read; and yet, to my agreeable surprise, sundry of them, by dint of application, in their very few leisure hours, have made such a progress, that they are able to read their Bible, or a plain author, very intelligibly. But few of their masters will be at the expense of furnishing them with books. I have supplied them to the utmost of my ability. They are exceedingly delighted with Watts’s Songs: And I cannot but observe that the Negroes, above all of the human species I ever knew, have the nicest ear for music. They have a kind of ecstatic delight in psalmody: Nor are there any books they so soon learn, or take so much pleasure in, as those used in that heavenly part of divine worship.”

*Sun.* AUGUST 3.—I dined with one who lived for many years with one of the most celebrated beauties in Europe. She was also proud, vain, and nice to a very uncommon degree. But see the end! After a painful and nauseous disease, she rotted away above ground; and was so offensive for many days before she died, that scarce any could bear to stay in the room.

*Mon.* 4.—Hearing my old friend, Mr. H——s, was now a beggar, and forsaken of all, I called (after a separation of sixteen years) at his lodgings, to offer him any service in my power. I was pleasingly surprised to find him reading the Bible! But still I am afraid all is not right; for the hand of God seems to be upon him still, and his mind is so hurried, he can settle to nothing. O what a pattern of holiness and stability of mind was this very man, till he was stolen away by the men whose “words are smother than oil.” But were they not to him very swords?

*Wed.* 6.—I mentioned to the congregation another means of