

more spiritual manner to visit my people—to preach to them more spiritually and experimentally—to study the practical and experimental parts of scripture more closely and apply it more conscientiously. Jesus, grant it!”

“ March 11, 1771. I have been reading a large part of the Life of the excellent Dr. Doddridge. O! that I did but more imitate so admirable an example! Lord, thou knowest it is my desire to serve thee with a perfect heart. I praise thy great name, I trust, thou dost give me more power over worldly thoughts than I experienced for a while after beginning in worldly business; which, I hope, I began with an eye to thy glory.”

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## CHAPTER SECOND.

FROM THE FORMATION OF THE NEW CONNECTION TO THE  
TIME WHEN MR. TAYLOR LEFT YORKSHIRE.

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### SECTION I. *The Transactions of that Period.*

HAVING given these Extracts from Mr. Taylor's private Diary, which may be considered as furnishing the *History of his Religious Experience and Mental Exercises*, during the first ten years of his ministry, we now resume the Narrative.

1770. This year was distinguished by much labour and many important transactions, which had a considerable influence on his future life: of these the formation of the New Connection of General Baptists occupied his principal attention. We have already noticed the difference of sentiment on some fundamental points of christianity which had always existed between Mr. T. and his Lincolnshire brethren. He thought that the great and essential doctrines of the gospel were neglected, if not opposed, by too many of the ministers of that Connection. These doctrines he considered it his duty and his privilege to maintain in the most explicit and earnest manner, and to endeavour to induce

his friends to act the same manly part. So early as December 10, 1763, he thus addressed his fellow-labourer, Mr. Thompson: "I preached at Lincoln last Lord's day, three times, to a very great crowd of rude people. The friends there are very desirous that you would come and preach to them; and I am ready to desire the same. I think it might be of use. I believe there are some good people there, though I cannot take in their notions. I thought things were bad, in those respects, when I saw you; but I have since had abundant reason to think so. The many strange notions that some of our friends have imbibed, have almost astonished me. And, alas! what makes the case more deplorable, I doubt these destructive principles get ground. O! how every lover of the Lord Jesus Christ should fight against them with all his might. Let me, as a brother, intreat you to deal faithfully with them. O how easy is it to be led into a method of man-pleasing. Let us beware of it, and remember that we are the servants of God. Come, my brother, let us not fear man; but speak freely. Our souls, and the souls committed to us, are at stake. Let us never forget that, as things now are, the law should be considered as a covenant of works under which we all are by nature, and as a rule of life to believers. Let us endeavour to pull down the pride and rouse the spirits of degenerate man, by discovering its inflexibility and proving that it cannot admit of the least failure. This, I suppose, will teach sinners the necessity of coming to Jesus Christ for righteousness. Let us oppose, as much as the scripture does, if it may be, that master-piece of all the schemes that ever were hatched in hell—'that God will accept sincere, though imperfect obedience, and accept us on account of it.' A scheme which, while it pours the utmost dishonour upon the merits of the blessed Jesus, is attended with the most pernicious consequences to poor souls." Such was the decided tone in which Mr. T. addressed his associate, soon after their first acquaintance; and longer observation confirmed him in his views of the importance of these disputed doctrines. His correspondent shared his sentiments, and though of a temper less intrepid than his friend, was equally sincere in his opposition to the tenets against which he exclaimed, and earnest in his efforts to maintain what both esteemed to be the great truths of christianity.

The discussions to which this important difference of opinion

naturally led, had a most unhappy tendency to render the meetings of the ministers discordant and unprofitable. At the period of which we now treat, the associations and conference had indeed become scenes of heat and contention; and it appeared to every judicious observer, that a separation was the only practicable mode of restoring peace. Though Messrs. Taylor and Thompson were strongly attached to several of the Lincolnshire brethren, and very reluctant to leave them; yet, after having for several years endeavoured, without success, to bring the majority to their sentiments, they felt it necessary, in order to preserve themselves from the contagion of what they esteemed dangerous heresy, and to evince a consistent regard to truth, to act with decision. They therefore resolved to withdraw themselves entirely from the Lincolnshire Association, and the London General Assembly; and to establish a New Connection of such as could cordially unite in supporting the same truths, and preaching the same gospel. These intentions were communicated to the midland churches, with an invitation to assist in concerting means for carrying their designs into effect. As several ministers in Lincolnshire professed themselves of Mr. T.'s sentiments on the points in debate, they also were invited to co-operate in this attempt; but, either through fear of the evils of division, or attachment to those with whom they had long been united, they declined the proposal. A provisional meeting was however held at Lincoln, about Michaelmas, 1769, which was adjourned to May, 1770, when Messrs. Taylor and Thompson met at the same town, and were joined by nine ministers from the churches in Leicestershire and the adjoining counties. The meeting was harmonious, and a plan was formed and cordially adopted for carrying into effect the proposed union, in London, at the ensuing Whitsuntide.

Their old friends were not unconcerned spectators of this defection, nor inactive in endeavours to prevent it: being extremely unwilling to lose such useful associates. Mr. Boyce, as messenger of the churches, was more particularly concerned, and felt much interested on the occasion. He had treated Mr. T. with great friendship, entertained a high opinion of his abilities and a great respect for his character; and was therefore very desirous of preserving his co-operation. Every method was adopted by this worthy minister to produce satisfaction in

the mind of his young friend respecting the subjects in dispute. Several stated conferences had been held for the express purpose of discussing them, and every opportunity of occasional conversation seized with avidity. Finding that all these means had not produced the desired effect, Mr. Boyce now commenced a laboured investigation by letter; and, in the former part of this year, four or five long epistles were written by each party. In these letters, Mr. B. did not rest his cause wholly on the strength of his arguments; but availed himself of every topic of persuasion to induce Mr. T. to lay aside his design of separating. He extenuated the points in which they differed, magnified the subjects on which they agreed, painted in glowing colours the probable mischiefs that would be the effect of division, and the great advantages of continuing to act in concert; and used every art to interest the feelings in his favour. One of the letters concludes in these soothing terms: "Do, my brother, carefully weigh and seriously consider the vast importance of peace and unity, and whether there be a sufficient reason for the separation now in agitation. I have so much confidence in your honesty, uprightness and integrity, that, I am persuaded, you will not encourage or abet the least thing that has the least appearance of, or tendency to hurt and divide the churches, dishonour our glorious Lord and Head, and wound and grieve the minds of many who are upright in heart. If once we begin to divide and separate, away fly love and christian affection; shyness, indifferency, and evil-surmisings enter in and make way, not to bring us nearer, but to keep us at a greater distance one from another. O heaven! can we come there? How can it be? How unprepared for that community! We all pretend we contend here for truth. What is truth? A most interesting and important question. O Lord, direct us in thy truth. Guide us in the paths of peace. Grace be with you, and peace be multiplied among all the brethren in Christ Jesus. I remain, your friendly, peaceable and loving brother in the Lord, G. BOYCE." To another epistle, the good man subjoins this affectionate postscript. "You do not tell me whether you intend to come to the next association. Pray, come. I desire you to come; and bring with you a heart full of love and peace; and may the God of love and peace be with you, and remain with you, and with us all for ever. Remember you are appointed to preach.

And if God be pleased to bring you among us, pray do you bring with you a true gospel, conciliating sermon."

But though Mr. T. had then a respect for Mr. Boyce which bordered on veneration, and felt "his heart full and pained" at doing any thing that might grieve him; yet he remained unmoved. He conceived that the honour of his Redeemer, and the prosperity of his cause, were involved in the event; and therefore laid aside all personal considerations. To all the affectionate appeals of his esteemed correspondent he calmly answered: "I am not able to apprehend the pertinency of all you have said on the subject of separation; unless it can be proved that a separation from a connection with others argues a want of love in those who withdraw towards those they withdraw from. To join with any one in such a connection as that we now discourse of, because we love him; or to withdraw from him for the contrary, is a low and carnal manner of acting, and quite unworthy of a minister of Christ." He then frankly stated his reason for withdrawing. "It is not to be doubted, if we regard the Bible, that some of the vilest errors are, in this age, maintained by some of the General Baptists, with as much warmth as they have ever been by any party of men in former ages. It behoves us therefore to take the alarm; and, with all the little might we have, to militate against those pernicious tenets which our forefathers so much abhorred, and the word of God so expressly condemns." Hence it is evident, that a deep sense of duty to God, and a sincere attachment to what he esteemed his truth, induced this conscientious minister to leave a connection, to many members of which he was affectionately attached, and with whom he continued long afterwards to cultivate a friendly intercourse.

At Whitsuntide, Mr. T. took the proposed journey to London, and met his friends, on June 6, at Mr. Brittain's Meeting-house. In prosecuting the object of their meeting, a great part of the labour devolved on him. He was delegated, with two others, to wait on the General Assembly, which was then sitting, in order to explain the reasons of their secession, and take a friendly leave. On the following morning, he delivered a discourse to his new associates, from 2 *Tim* i. 8. "Be not thou ashamed of the testimony of our Lord." In the afternoon, they proceeded to business, and Mr. Taylor was called to the chair,

an honour which was conferred on him by every succeeding annual association, with one exception, to the year of his decease. A number of Articles of Faith, which, at the request of his brethren, he had prepared, were read and approved; and various regulations were adopted for conducting the proposed union. Thus was completed a design which had for some time engrossed his chief attention, and laid near his heart; and in the accomplishing of which he was, under Providence, the principal instrument. And throughout his future life, he always stood ready to devote his labour, his influence, his talents and his property, to the promotion of the prosperity of the *New Connection of General Baptists*.

When Mr. Boyce and his friends saw the separation which they had so warmly opposed carried into effect, they took offence; and said that Mr. T. ought to have waited longer out of gratitude, for the countenance which he had received from the Lincolnshire Association. This insinuation touched his generous soul; and in a letter to Mr. Thompson, he thus warmly repels it. "Have they some separate interest to maintain opposite to that of God? If they have, I have received more, infinitely more favours from God than from them. If their's is only the Lord's interest, and if I am serving the Lord still, wherein am I ungrateful to them? I am ready to own my obligations to them on all proper occasions; but, as I am so infinitely obliged to my heavenly Friend, I ought more especially to manifest my gratitude to him for his love to me, by contending earnestly for the faith which he has once delivered to the saints. This, it is evident, I could not do, either peaceably or consistently, in the Lincolnshire Connection. I hope I shall always be ready, according to my ability, to make suitable returns and manifest unfeigned gratitude to Mr. Boyce and to all the Lincolnshire ministers and churches; and perhaps wish as heartily to see a happy union, well founded and established, among all the General Baptists, and shall be as ready to contribute to it, as any other."

Mr. T. was at this time very popular as a preacher, especially in the midland counties. On his return from London, this year, notice had been given that he would preach one evening at Loughborough; but being unacquainted with it, he did not arrive till Mr. Donisthorpe had nearly finished the service. A vast

crowd which had collected to hear him, were greatly disappointed, and insisted on his preaching the next morning, at eight o'clock, when a large congregation assembled, though the hour was so early and the notice so short. In the evening, he preached at Castle Donington to great multitudes: people walking with eagerness ten or sixteen miles to hear him. He was not indeed backward to gratify them; but yielded readily to their entreaties. In another journey this year, he preached at Diseworth on the Lord's day morning, at Kegworth in the afternoon, and at Packington in the evening; on Tuesday evening, at Hinckley; on Wednesday, at Longford; on Thursday, at Barton; on Friday, at Hugglescote; on Saturday, at Hallum and Smalley; on Lord's day at Quorndon, Loughborough and Leak; and on Monday, at Kirkby Woodhouse. This is a fair specimen of his usual rate of labour, when on his preaching excursions, which generally took place thrice, if not four times, in the course of a year.

The cause of religion at Wadsworth appears to have gained ground this year. In the beginning of April, four persons were baptized; amongst whom was his brother John. It afforded him great pleasure to see this brother, for whom he had always shewn a particular affection, become, to use his own expression, "a serious General Baptist." And as this convert soon was called forth to exercise his gifts in preaching, it strengthened the hands of the pastor, and greatly encouraged him in his incessant exertions to spread the gospel. These exertions, indeed, took him so often from his own congregation, that some of them began to murmur. But previous to his leaving them, on his journey to London, he gave them an exhortation on the subject, which appears to have produced good effect. They met together on the Lord's day; when none of the members, and not above two or three of the usual hearers, were out of their places. A letter was read from their affectionate pastor, and Mr. Parker and Mr. J. Taylor conducted the service so much to the satisfaction of the friends, that they assured Mr. T. on his return, they should not again be so much afraid of his leaving them on the Lord's day. Encouraged by this circumstance, and anxious to seize every opportunity of promoting the cause of religion, he formed a meeting among a few of his younger friends, for the exercise of ministerial gifts. Several persons met weekly for prayer and expounding the scriptures, and once a month they

had an interview with their pastor for advice and instruction. These means produced happy effects, and several young ministers were, in a short time, called to the sacred work.

1771. In this year, Mr. T. pursued his great work among his own people with diligence and success. In a letter to Mr. B. dated August 20, he gives this account of his engagements, "You little know how busy I am in caring for a numerous, increasing and scattered people, some of them above sixteen miles distant; and a family with three small children. I often preach seven, eight, or nine times a week; and, blessed be God! I have good evidence that it is not in vain. I have baptized five since I saw you, and some others are about offering themselves." Soon afterward these enquirers came forward, and in October, six of them were received into fellowship.

The poverty of his congregation and the augmented demands of his family, made it necessary for him to seek for some means of improving his income. With the advice of his friends, he opened a shop, in addition to his school. This increased his cares and occupied his time; but it does not appear that it added much to his income. His attention was too much engrossed with the religious and literary concerns in which he was constantly engaged, to be at leisure for the details of trade; and his own unsuspecting honesty and openness of disposition, exposed him to the petty impositions of the unprincipled.

About this time he appears to have been very busy in literary pursuits. He read many voluminous works with great attention; and collected a Hymn Book for the use of the New Connection, which he published the following year. His abilities and character were now so highly esteemed amongst his friends, that he was considered as the champion of the common cause against every attack. About this time, Mr. B. Dobell, the pastor of the church at Cranbrook, in Kent, published a pamphlet, intitled, "The Scriptural Plan of Salvation by Jesus Christ," in which he advanced the opinions respecting faith, justification, &c. against which Mr. T. and his friends had deemed it their duty to protest. This pamphlet was put into the hands of our author, who immediately drew up Remarks on it, in a letter to a friend, under the signature of *Philaletes*. These Remarks fill eight closely written folio pages; and exhibit that accuracy of thought,



and knowledge of the scriptures which are so conspicuous in his other controversial writings. They were never printed; but through the kindness of Mr. B. we have been favoured with the original copy, in Mr. T.'s hand writing, and shall probably preserve a specimen of its contents in the Extracts subjoined to this chapter. He also wrote a long letter to Mr. Newton, who had published a "Review of Ecclesiastical History;" consisting of hints and encouragements. This year too he laid the plan and made some progress in composing his "Fundamentals of Religion in Faith and Practice."

In addition to all these avocations at home, Mr. T. took several journeys in the course of this year. In the depth of winter, the close of January and beginning of February, he visited the midland churches, and preached amongst them with his usual frequency and acceptance. In May, he presided at the Association in London, by which he was requested to draw up an explanation and defence of the articles adopted at the first Association, in reply to some objections made against them by Mr. Boyce and his friends. This he accordingly performed, and sent to the Lincolnshire Association. In September, he had the pleasure of entertaining five of the midland ministers and his dear friend Mr. Thompson, at Wadsworth, where a conference was held. This interview afforded him much satisfaction and encouragement.

The resolute stand which Mr. T. thought it to be his duty, at this time, to make against what he esteemed dangerous and fatal errors, and in defence of what appeared to him essential truths, exposed him, not only to the reflections of those whom he opposed, but sometimes drew on him the admonitions of his friends. He had not unfrequently to defend himself from charges of too much stiffness about indifferent things. The following extracts from exculpatory letters, exhibit sufficiently the principles on which he acted, in the arduous struggle in which he was engaged. He observes, in a letter to Mr. Thompson, dated July 27, 1771: "Do not be offended my dear brother, if I humbly note some things contained in yours to me. Be assured I love you dearly. There might be, as you say, 'too much stiffness discovered at London,' &c. This was a fault if it was so. But I think it was not about 'indifferent things.' If you refer to brother F.'s case, surely it is not indifferent whether

believers or unbelievers are baptized and admitted into church fellowship. What can be more important? Besides, you know we must agree in something; and we made our articles a test of agreement. Now, besides many expressions in them which I cannot reconcile with brother F.'s sentiments, you will allow that it is absolutely contrary to the whole tenor and design of the sixth article. How then could we with safety admit of it?" "I think some things which might be thought trifles at London may lay a foundation for important consequences. As the truth of the gospel is the instrument of converting sinners, we should be careful to keep it clear. If trouble sometimes attends this, we should endeavour to be patient of labour in it. Perhaps what is *sweetest* for the present is not always of most *profit*. Meanwhile I pray that God may enable us to see eye to eye! and remember, good brother, a foundation is now laid."

In another letter to the same correspondent, dated September 4, 1771. he observes, "I assure you, dear brother, you do not seem too catholic for me in what you say about Messrs. Watts, Doddridge, Hervey, Venn, Whitfield, &c. &c. &c. I pray God give you and myself a large increase of *christian candour*. Yet there is need to beware lest we forget not only the certainty but the *importance* of the leading truths of the gospel; as well as that uprightness of mind which will assuredly be the effect of genuine faith. But, blessed be God! the time is coming—is coming fast, when we shall know even as we are known. O blessed day indeed! when darkness shall be expelled for ever."

1772. In the former part of this year, Mr. T.'s health was, as he expresses it, "feeble," yet his exertions in his sacred work were unabated. In addition to his usual avocations, he this year engaged in two important debates. The Socinians were then very busily disseminating their doctrines in the West Riding of Yorkshire. In a letter under date of March 20, 1772, Mr. T. informs his friend Mr. B.—"The opposition now made to the doctrines of the gospel, in these parts, is very dreadful; especially by Dr. Priestley, of Leeds, and Mr. Graham, of Halifax; two of the most learned and artful men in our country. Dr. Priestley is the person addressed in my verses under the name of *Clemens*. He has published several small pieces, which, with unparalleled contrivance, he has caused to be spread

over, I believe, most parts of England." This zeal in the one party roused their opponents to action. The same methods were adopted to defend the truths of christianity that were used in attacking them; and various penny and two-penny tracts were printed and circulated in defence of the Divinity and Atonement of Christ. Mr. T. was too warmly interested in the subjects of debate to remain long an unconcerned spectator of the combat. Fearing lest, in the heat of the controversy, the practical importance of the doctrines should be overlooked, he published, under the assumed name of *Philagathus*, "A Practical Improvement of the Divinity and Atonement of Jesus, attempted in verse; humbly offered as a *Supplement* to the Tracts lately published by Mr. Cayley, the Rev. Mr. Morgan, Verus and *Biblicus*." The short Preface describes the nature and design of the work so justly, that we transcribe it. "The author of the following lines neither designed that they should be, nor pretends that they are, properly argumentative. The proof of the glorious doctrines of the Divinity and Atonement of our blessed Lord, at least as far as is necessary for the unlearned and the poor, may be found in the tracts mentioned in the title page. It is only designed here to point out, in some faint manner, the importance and excellency of these doctrines; lest they should be, as they too often are, esteemed matters of little weight, and only speculative notions; whereas they yield the richest consolation to the believer, and should be esteemed by him, more valuable than all the treasures of the Indies—than all worlds. The author pretends to little skill in poetry, as it is a subject on which he seldom employs a single thought. Therefore let nothing here be expected to please the critic. He has paid little attention to method; but has put down his thoughts as they occurred. If any pleasing impression be made on the mind of the simple honest reader, that he love the truth more ardently and abide by it more firmly, to his own edification, and the praise of the dear, dear IMMANUEL, it will be a cause of joy and pleasure to  
*PHILAGATHUS.*"

Notwithstanding this modest account, there are some passages in the tract which, for warmth of thought and sublime simplicity of language exceed any other production of the author that has fallen under our notice. The humble, affectionate and fervent worshipper of the Lamb that was slain, appears in every line;

and this well-timed publication must, we think, have had a very salutary effect. The subject is opened thus:

"Immortal Spirit! breathe, a worm implores:  
 Assist to sing the Name that heaven adores!  
 The dear *Immanuel's* name, who on the tree  
 Suffer'd and bled for wretched worms like me;  
 I sing his names, his works, his power, his love,  
 Extoll'd by all the radiant host above.  
*Jehovah* is his name—the source of life,  
 Let all that live join in a sacred strife.  
 Let holy emulation fire our souls,  
 To spread his fame far as the distant poles:  
 Let all in heav'n and earth as one conspire;  
 Infants shall lisp, and Gabriel tune his lyre.  
 Our tongues he form'd: our tongues shall speak his praise.  
 Our breath he gives: let each his honour raise.  
 O! were we skill'd in more harmonious lays."

This however was rather observing the manœuvres of the combatants, than actually joining in the contest; but it was not long before our author became more directly engaged. Mr. Graham, of Halifax, preached before the "dissenting clergy" at Leeds, September 18, 1771; and took that opportunity of attacking the opinions generally denominated orthodox, and their abettors, with considerable warmth, and too much bitterness. He afterwards published the discourse under the title of "Repentance the only Condition of final Acceptance." This sermon was put into the hands of Mr. T. soon after it was published, and he thought it his duty to notice it. Accordingly in the ensuing February, he published "The Scriptural Account of the Way of Salvation. In two Parts:" a pamphlet containing more than 100 pages 12mo. It consisted of an *Appeal* to the conscience of every reader respecting some important doctrines of scripture; and a free *examination* of Mr. Graham's Sermon in a letter addressed to that gentleman. The former, with fidelity and affection, presses on the consideration of every rational creature, the condemned state of man by nature—his utter inability to deliver himself from that state—the divinity of Jesus, the only Saviour—the atonement which he has made for the sins of all mankind—and the manner in which the sinner may become interested in this Saviour. In the Letter to Mr. Graham, our author animadverts very freely, but very res-

pectfully, on the dangerous tendency of some of that gentleman's sentiments—the insufficiency of the arguments by which they are defended—and the unjust and illiberal manner in which he treats those who oppose him.

Though Dr. Priestley and his followers had not then perhaps assumed the modest designation of “Rational Christians,” yet they valued themselves highly on the rationality of their system of divinity. Mr. Graham had boldly asserted, that “the scheme of justification by faith carried so much absurdity upon the face of it, as an honest man, and indeed a man of common sense, would be ashamed to father upon the christian religion.” This heavy charge Mr. T. examines at considerable length; and though he disapproved of settling religious disputes by reason, which he thought should rather be decided by the authority of Revelation; yet, unwilling that any of his sentiments should be represented as repugnant to common sense, he meets his antagonist on his own ground; and discusses, by way of query, the true use of reason in matters of religion, and its application to the points in debate. This part of the work exhibits the author in a new character. On former occasions, he had shewn himself a scribe well instructed in the word of God, and had successfully wielded that sword of the Spirit; but here he appears an able logician and acute metaphysician. The whole discussion is peculiarly interesting, and well worthy of being preserved; but its length forbids its insertion in these memoirs; and it cannot be abridged without injury. We therefore transcribe a short passage from another part, as a specimen of the spirit and style of the work.

“Your remark, in the same page, on our Saviour's conference with the woman of Samaria, *John iv.* seems very notable. Under the metaphor of water, you say, ‘and its aptness to quench thirst, our Lord recommends religious character as what alone can gratify man's nobler powers, and prepare him for that endless life which he brought to light.’ *Religious character, Sir!*—gratify man's powers?—his nobler powers?—this alone gratify them?—this prepare him for endless life?—this alone prepare him? What! the Father, nothing? the Son, nothing? the Holy Ghost, nothing? ‘Grace’—‘blood’—‘ransom’—‘propitiation,’—‘sacrifice’—‘bearing our sins’—‘suffering for our sins’—‘redemption through his blood’—‘complete in him’—‘made a curse for us’—‘made sin for us,’ &c. &c. &c. all nothing?

neither gratify man's nobler powers, nor prepare him for endless life? What! do no part of either? *religious character ALONE* do both? Well, Sir, I remember that you are my superior; and it is perhaps, at present, as well that you are. Yet give me leave to ask, Do you really think, that all which the sacred writers have recorded concerning 'rejoicing in the Lord,' 'being made glad with the light of his countenance'—'rejoicing in his mercy'—'his righteousness'—'his salvation,' &c. must all be included in being gratified with religious character? Does all they say about 'joy and peace in believing'—'Christ dwelling in the heart by faith'—'the Spirit dwelling in them'—'the love of God shed abroad in their hearts'—'tasting that the Lord is gracious'—'rejoicing in Christ Jesus and having no confidence in the flesh;' with almost numberless expressions of the like kind; does all this extend to nothing more than gratification by religious character? Does not the apostle assure us that 'God makes us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light'—'that he who works in us for this self-same thing is God?' *Col. i. 12, 2 Cor. v, 5.* And shall we so metamorphose words and things, as to make God and religious character the same? I ask again, Where does our Lord recommend religious character in the light you speak of? Surely the passage you refer to, in *John iv.* contains nothing like it. Religious character, if I understand the words, (though I own, in the connection in which you have placed them they appear to me a little uncouth) must either mean something we possess or perform, or by which we are distinguished. Must we then drink this water which Jesus speaks of out of ourselves? Does he not call it 'the water that I shall give him?' And would it not have been more just to have referred us to the parallel place, *John vii. 3—9,* where we are told, that the water which Christ gives is the Spirit; that is, the Holy Ghost, which every believer receives from him to comfort, refresh and support his mind, as water does the animal frame? It would be no hard matter, I believe, to shew what kind of *nobler powers* are gratified by religious character, and by that *ALONE*; but that I at present waive."

Mr. G. had asserted that "the doctrine of the atonement" was not known nor believed in the world till many hundred years after our Lord and his apostles had left it." To this Mr. T. replies by transcribing the testimonies of Barnabas, Clemens of

Rome, Ignatius, Polycarp, Justin Martyr, Irenæus, Clemens of Alexandria, Origen, and other ancient fathers, full to the point; and concludes the argument thus: "I am quite confident that this doctrine has, in the substance of it, been maintained in all ages of christianity, and will be to the end of time."—"As I pretend not to any considerable knowledge of the ancients, perhaps others more acquainted with these writings, may think of passages much more pertinent. The import of these yourself, Sir, and the reader will consider at your leisure." What he has produced however is fully sufficient for the purpose; and proves his acquaintance with those authors to have been, considering his circumstances, very extensive.

The other controversy in which Mr. T. engaged this year, was on the subject of mixed communion. Messrs. Turner, of Abingdon, and Ryland, of Northampton, had published "Reasons" in favour of this practice, under the signatures of *Candidus* and *Pacificus*. These Reasons, Mr. Birley had sent to Mr. T. with a request that he would favour him with some observations on them. After repeated solicitations, our author sent a number of remarks, which his friend soon after published in a neat pamphlet, entitled "Candidus examined with Candor, &c. by *Philalethes*." When some of these tracts were sent to the author, he thus addressed the publisher, in a letter, dated Nov. 17, 1772. "Yesterday I received your parcel. It is no wonder that the work is incorrect. I only gave you a rough draught of my first thoughts on the subject; nor did I so much as transcribe the copy. I merely designed it as a few leading thoughts, which, if you pleased, you might further pursue; and expunge, retrench, enlarge or destroy, at your pleasure; but not in anywise as fit for the press as it was. However, printed it is! may it do some service. Leisure for accurate thought I have not. I find patience and submission very necessary; yet I have much to be thankful for. Lord! help me. I am indeed a poor helpless creature, and much of my life of little use."

A work, published under such circumstances, is privileged from criticism. Though it possesses little of that display which has rendered some recent works on the same subject very popular; yet, it is presumed, that to the honest christian, who wishes to make his Bible the guide of his conduct, it will be satisfactory. The author assumes, that our only rule for admit-

ting persons to the privilege of church members, is the New Testament; in which he contends there is neither precept nor example in favour of unbaptized persons being admitted to communion at the Lord's table. On this principle he defends the practice of the strict baptists; and answers the objections of those who blame their consistency.

Mr. T. presided at the Annual Association, at Loughborough, June 3 & 4, and preached from *Dan.* xii. 13. It was thought advisable that a circular letter should be addressed from this meeting to the churches; and the chairman was requested to prepare one, during the continuance of the assembly. This he accomplished with his usual promptitude; and his performance received the sanction of his brethren. From Loughborough he went to Bessell's Green, in Kent, whither a few of the southern churches had sent their representatives, on the 10th and 11th of the same month. Here also he read his circular, and it was approved. It was soon afterwards printed and dispersed. In this epistle, the brethren were earnestly and affectionately exhorted to look to and depend on Christ—to attend diligently to his ordinances—to frequent and faithful examination—to peace, unity and order—to a circumspect walk and conversation—to avoid the love of the world, &c.

Towards the close of this year, Mr. T. took another journey, which occupied him three weeks, and returned to his friends again about the middle of November. He likewise continued his exertions to spread the gospel in his own neighbourhood. At this time he had pushed his attempts to a considerable distance on several sides. He had, for some time, preached occasionally at Queenshead, a wild and uncultivated place, nearly destitute of religion, eleven miles eastward of Birchcliff, and had made such a progress as encouraged him, in conjunction with his brother John, to establish regular preaching there in November this year. His brother preached at Queenshead three Lord's days in the month, and Mr. D. Taylor the fourth; when the former supplied for him at Birchcliff. "Mr. D. T.'s labours," in the expressive words of his coadjutor, "to found the general baptist cause at Queenshead are not to be described, and almost incredible; he rejoiced and laboured surprisingly to accomplish this object." Nor did he confine his attempts to this station; but seized with avidity, and occupied



with indefatigable diligence, every opening which Providence presented to him to prosecute his grand design, and to spread the good news of salvation into every dark corner of that then benighted country.

No sooner had Mr. J. Taylor begun to be regularly engaged in the work of preaching, than he and his brother appointed stated interviews for mutual conference, advice and prayer, respecting their ministerial labours and duties. This laid the foundation of what was afterwards called the "Preacher's Meeting;" and has lately been denominated the "Yorkshire Conference:" an institution which has materially assisted in supporting and regulating the General Baptist interest in that district.

These persevering endeavours at home, and his frequent journeys to distant parts, obliged him often to leave his own flock to be supplied by the young preachers. Many of his friends, participating in his views and rejoicing in his success, submitted to this privation with cheerfulness. A few, however, were dissatisfied; yet, hoping that their pastor would at length tire himself out, and confine his labours to his own charge, they suppressed their complaints. But observing no symptoms of languor in this active minister, and finding that every year his views extended, they concluded that the prospect of any suspension of his exertions, as long as his health and strength continued, was visionary, and broke out, about this period, into open murmurs. The peace of the church was, for a time, interrupted; but a few of the most discontented withdrawing, an end was put to the opposition, and Mr. T. left to pursue his favourite object without controul.

1773. The service at Queenshead was continued on the the original plan for several months; and Mr. D. T. persevered, with unabated zeal, in his labours to promote this interest. To his efforts principally the friends in that place owed the erection of a meeting-house in the course of the summer of 1773. In order to promote the necessary funds, he took a journey, in July, through the midland churches. He left home on the 9th; on the 11th preached at Melbourn, Packington, and Measham; on the 12th, at Harbury; 13th, at Longford; 14th, at Hinckley; 15th, at Barton; 16th, at Hugglescote; 18th, at Quorndon, Leake, and Loughborough; 19th, at Diseworth; 20th, at

Castle-Donington; 21st, at Kegworth; 22nd, at Smalley and Hallam; and on the 23rd, at Kirby Woodhouse: whence he returned the next day to Wadsworth. In this busy journey, he collected upwards of £65, besides his travelling expences; which probably were trifling, as he was much in the habit of walking.

September 29, Mr. T. preached at the opening of the building, for which he had made such extraordinary exertions, from 1 *Kings*, ix. 3. On the following day, his brother John was ordained to the pastoral office over the friends in that place, who had been previously formed into a separate society. On this solemn, and to Mr. D. T. very pleasing, occasion, he delivered an introductory discourse, proposed the questions to the minister and the people, offered the ordination prayer, and addressed the newly-ordained pastor, from 2 *Tim.* ii. 15. This charge was distinguished for affection, solemnity, and length; containing, as Mr. Thompson who heard it asserted, six hundred particulars. Well might the young man to whom it was addressed, describe it as "a long and heavy charge." This was the first time, as far as we have been able to learn, that Mr. T. was engaged in the interesting service of ordination; but we shall find, as we proceed, that he was afterwards frequently called to this sacred part of the ministerial work, and was peculiarly acceptable in it.

In the beginning of the ensuing month, he took a journey into Lincolnshire; and was engaged, October 3d, in the ordination of Mr. Hannath, at Killingholm, when he addressed the people. He arrived at home, October 10th, and resumed his labours with renewed vigour.

In the beginning of June this year, Mr. T. attended the annual association at Melbourn, when his friend, Mr. Thompson, presided, and he acted as moderator. What was the reason why he was not in the chair, on this occasion, might not be easy now to ascertain: probably he waived it in compliment to his bosom friend and fellow labourer. But this was the only instance, in the whole forty-six years that he lived after the formation of the New Connection, in which he did not occupy the chair at the annual association.

1774. We have but little information respecting the subject of this volume during this year. The annual association being

at Wadsworth, he had no occasion to leave home in order to attend it: and we have no traces of any other journey. About Midsummer he sold off his shop goods, and hired a farm, named Hirst. He took this step with a view to accommodate a few boarders; judging that a boarding school might be a source of profit more congenial to his feelings than trade, for which both his disposition and habits disqualified him. This attempt therefore to increase his finances had been unsuccessful: and, for a time, he was involved in considerable difficulties to raise the necessary supplies for the stocking of his farm, &c. The kindness of his landlord, to whose son he had been made useful when on a bed of death, and his own exertions, crowned with the blessing of heaven, carried him through his embarrassments. He pursued this new engagement, as he did every thing which he undertook, with all his might. He rose early and laboured hard; and the house and grounds soon assumed a very improved appearance. But, amidst all the bustle and engagement of this new scene, he did not forget, that his great work was to understand and teach the truths of christianity. He fitted up a room for his books, of which he had now a good store; and felt most completely at home when retired to his study.

1775. January 9, Mr. T. was engaged at Great Yarmouth, in the ordination of Mr. B. Worship, over the General Baptist Church at that place. He gave the charge to the minister, from 1 *Tim.* iv. 1, 2; and Mr. Thompson addressed the people from 1 *Thes.* v 12. Both the discourses were published a few months afterward, in one pamphlet, entitled, "The respective Duties of Ministers and People briefly explained and enforced." Mr. T.'s charge, which occupies two-thirds of the book, consists of plain and faithful descriptions of the duties of a christian pastor, affectionate and practical advice, animating motives to diligence and zeal, and encouraging supports under the difficulties to which that high station exposes its possessor. It need not be added, that this charge is adapted for usefulness: on this subject, Mr. T. could not deliver an useless discourse.

Mr. T. proposed to attend the Lincolnshire Association at Coningsby, in compliance with the request of the ministers who composed it; but his various avocations prevented him from taking that journey. He wrote them a letter, which was read at

that meeting, and caused a considerable sensation. It probably expatiated freely on the mischievous tendency of some of the sentiments which several of the members countenanced; and this appears to have excited improper resentment. "Mr. T.'s letter," says the venerable Mr. Boyce, in a note on the minutes of this association, "occasioned much disorder, and hindered us from carrying on the business of the day as we should have done; and, at present, has made the breach wider than it was before; having filled our minds with trouble and sorrow, instead of joy and peace."

June 7 & 8, Mr. T. attended the Annual Association of the New Connection, at Hinckley, and returned home about the 20th. Soon after his return, fourteen boys were sent from Leicestershire, to be boarded and educated at Hirst. At this time, he had from twenty to thirty day scholars. These, with his family, his farm and his church, must have claimed all his time and attention. We do not, therefore, find him taking any other long journey this year. But he persevered in his exertions to spread the gospel in his own district; and, about this time, preached very frequently at Halifax, where he was very desirous of raising a General Baptist interest. His frequent absence from his own people gave umbrage again to some of the Wadsworth friends, and caused a contention, which retarded the prosperity of religion. The congregations, however, were larger than they had ever been known; and, on the whole, the cause at Wadsworth gained ground.

The increase of his school probably turned his thoughts to the subject of a catechism; as we find him, at this time, repeatedly urging his friend Mr. Thompson to write a good, plain catechism, for the instruction of children and youth. As his friend seems never to have attempted the task, Mr. T. was induced some years afterwards to compose one himself.

This appears to have been a time of peculiar labour. "I am amazingly busy this seed-time," he informs Mr. W. Thompson, March 28. "I have often to labour all day, preach or attend meetings in the evenings, and write in the nights. Last night I was up till near three o'clock this morning making an Errata and a Table of Contents." "We are in the midst of harvest," he tells Mr. B. August 31. "My family is large, my school pretty full, and my only assistant has neither that authority nor

care that I could wish." To Mr. Thompson he writes in these terms, August 10th, " I have fourteen boarders come to hand, with a pretty numerous family besides, and sometime to take up with Mr. Ingham, my young assistant, and my son; and the hay harvest having been just at the same time, and above twenty day scholars, sometimes nearly thirty, with every thing to provide for my boarders, and much concern for two pretty large and widely-extended churches, besides the new interest raising at Halifax, must, you will grant, have considerably thronged me. You can hardly think how I have been employed since I saw you; and have had many letters to write to correspondents whom I could not deny." Perhaps the confusion and incoherency in the style of this extract, furnish the best illustration and proof of the truth of its contents.

This year our author published his principal work, which appears to have cost him much thought and labour. He had, in a course of fifty sermons to his own congregation, gone through a sort of system of divinity, and handled the principal subjects of revealed religion. The idea of publishing the substance of these discourses naturally suggested itself to the author, and was encouraged by his hearers, and his friend Mr. Thompson. The first hint of this design which we have discovered, is in a letter to Mr. B. dated October 5, 1771, " A Treatise," he observes, " on some principal subjects in divinity is in some likelihood of being some time published, if ever poor, poor D. T. is able to prepare it for the press. Brother Thompson is, I suppose, procuring subscriptions for the printing of it, who has taken a copy of the contents into Lincolnshire. But alas! little of it is yet in proper order, and whether ever it will be, God only knows." In the beginning of the year following the proposals for printing it by subscription were published, at the close of his " Scriptural Account of the Way of Salvation." But his other engagements caused the work to proceed slowly, and it was not till towards the close of 1774, that the manuscript was completed. He was anxious to submit his production to some competent judge, and to avail himself of his advice and corrections. With this view, he sent the copy to Dr. Stennett, who, for some years had expressed a high regard for our author. But his expectations from that gentleman were totally disappointed. " My manuscript returned from Dr. Stennett yester-

day," he writes to Mr. Thompson, November 16, 1774, "but, to my great surprise and grief, though he has had it three months, and stopped the press several weeks, I find not one remark made by him of any kind whatever. Thus, it appears, I must publish again, without the assistance and inspection of any one friend, except the general advices which you were kind enough to give me at first. This is very discouraging indeed, and greatly oppresses my spirits. Lord, direct me for thine own honour."

It was at last published; and in a Dedication, dated March 4, 1775, inscribed "to his dear brethren in Wadsworth, as a small token of that sincere and undissembled affection which his heart felt and his relation and office demanded towards them all." In this dedication he apologizes thus for the delay in publishing. "Through a great number of unforeseen incidents, and by reason of the multiplicity and variety of concerns to which my situation and connections oblige me to attend, and with which *you* are not wholly unacquainted, this work has been delayed much longer than I at first intended, or many of my friends would expect. For this I am heartily sorry, and I here entreat their excuse and pardon. I believe those who best know me, will not be forward to accuse me of allowed indolence; and those who candidly consider the uncertainty of all human affairs, and the importance of writing for the public, will perhaps be inclined to construe this delay in the most favourable light."

The Table of Contents, inserted in the margin,\* will afford the reader sufficient information respecting the important subjects

\* CONTENTS. *Chap. I.* The Character and Perfections of God. *Chap. II.* The State of Man before Sin entered into the World. *Chap. III.* Of the Moral Law, and its suitableness to the primitive State of Man. *Chap. IV.* On the Fall of Man, and his natural Propensity, as fallen, to deviate from the Moral Law and his Inability to keep it. *Chap. V.* The Sinner arraigned and condemned by the Law of God. *Chap. VI.* This condemned State proved to be the State of all Men by Nature. *Chap. VII.* An Inquiry concerning several Ways of obtaining Salvation which Men often propose to themselves. *Chap. VIII.* The Way of Salvation illustrated:—1. God's Love to the World in sending his Son: 2. The Divinity and Atonement of Christ: 3. The Fulness and Freeness of Salvation: 4. The Language and Manner of Expression by which the Scriptures exhibit Salvation to Mankind: 5. The Way in which Sinners come to the Enjoyment of this Salvation. *Chap. IX.* The Scripture Account of Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. *Chap. X.* The genuine Effects of Faith in Jesus Christ. *Chap. XI.*

discussed in this volume: and the author himself, in the Dedication, has clearly, though briefly described the manner in which he has endeavoured to treat them.

"As I have kept in view, especially the advantage of the illiterate and persons of inferior capacities, I have made it my great concern to write with plainness and simplicity. Had I been ever so much master of a learned style, or could I have adorned my page ever so richly with the figures and tropes of oratory, or with nice criticisms and learned disquisitions, I should have thought these very improper on the present occasion. These have therefore been avoided as much as I thought consistent with doing justice to the truths of God. If it appeared necessary to suggest any hints which might rise above the capacity of the meanest reader, it is generally thrown into the margin; so that he need not perplex himself with it. I hope it will appear throughout, that I have laboured to make every truth I have treated, clear to the understanding, accompanied with its own native evidence from the oracles of infallible truth."

The author has, in a laudable degree, accomplished his design, and treated these important subjects with plainness and perspicuity, and, at the same time, with a serious earnestness. The language is natural, manly and chaste; wholly unadorned, but often very impressive. But what principally distinguishes this performance, is the implicit and reverential regard paid to the dictates of Revelation, in discussing these momentous, awful and sometimes mysterious subjects. No conjectures are indulged, no mere reasoning employed, either to establish or illustrate any position. The whole is built on the oracles of truth, and affords a beautiful and instructive exemplification of the excellent advice which the author addressed to Mr. Worship. "Always give full scripture proof of what you assert; and let all you urge as matter of duty be accompanied with the sanction of divine authority. Let 'thus saith the Lord' be your sole and

The Nature, Extent, Means of, and Motives to, Evangelical Holiness. *Chap. XII.* The Christian's Treasure opened. *Chap. XIII.* Encouragements and Advices to true Christians. *Chap. XIV.* A short View of Death, Judgment, Heaven, and Hell. *Chap. XV.* An Address to the careless Sinner, the awakened Sinner, the self-righteous Person, the mere notional Professor, the lukewarm Professor, and the real Believer.

your constant warrant in every part of faith and practice. 'I assert;' 'it is my opinion;' 'it must be allowed;' 'it is commonly supposed;' &c. are too slender and feeble arguments where souls and immortality are in question. You will rather faithfully study and diligently adhere to your Bible; consider that as a rich storehouse of sacred intelligence; and continually refer to it, as sufficient authority for all you advance."

Nearly three hundred subscribers to this work were obtained before its publication; almost one half of whom were from the Lincolnshire churches. The whole impression was sold off in a few years, and it continued for a long time out of print.

1776. This year appears to have been in a peculiar degree occupied at home. His farm, his church and especially his school, employed much of his time. He attended, indeed, the Annual Association at Boston, May 29 & 30, and was appointed one of a committee to prepare some proposals to the Lincolnshire Association, for promoting a re-union. It does not appear that he undertook any other distant journey this year. About Michaelmas, Mr. Thompson pressed him to visit Lincolnshire, to which he replied, September 18. "I have hardly time to inform you that I do not see how to make it suit to come into Lincolnshire at present. The concerns of religion, my family, farm and school, seem to require my abiding at Wadsworth."

1777. The education of the youth committed to his care, was viewed by Mr. T. as it will be by every one who conscientiously undertakes it, as a momentous charge. Though so busily engaged in very important religious and literary pursuits, he employed much thought on the proper means of improving their minds and affecting their hearts. He frequently requested his correspondents, who were engaged in the same employment, to give him advice, with an earnestness that evinced his anxious desire to receive it. And his diary contains frequent instances of earnest supplications to the Father of lights, for wisdom and prudence in the discharge of his duty to his pupils. About this period, he compiled and printed several small pieces for their instruction. One was a half sheet intitled, "A Looking-Glass for Youth:" containing a short but animating account of the efforts made to obtain excellence, in their respective pursuits,



by Demothenes, Virgil and Dr. Doddridge; with the astonishing success which crowned their industry and perseverance: and concluding with an exhortation to similar ardour and diligence. Another tract, intended to assist in the religious improvement of the youthful mind, was also published this year; under the title of "Entertainment and Profit united: or, Easy Verses on some of the chief Subjects of Christianity, for the Use of Children and Youth." These verses, like most of the author's other works, are remarkable for simplicity, plainness and scrupulous adherence to scripture: being little more than paraphrases on important texts, with a hint or two of application. They were well received by the public; and a second edition was called for in a few months. As the *Preface* to the first edition of this tract has been omitted in subsequent impressions, the following extract from it is inserted here, as containing some useful hints on an important and difficult part of education, and exhibiting, probably, the author's own method of conveying religious instruction. "Several passages of scripture are placed at the head of every lesson, which contain and illustrate the leading thoughts of it. The author's advice to parents or teachers is, that the child read over carefully, once or twice, the verses themselves under each head; then turn to the passages in his Bible, prefixed to the verses, and get those passages intirely by heart. Then let the child get the verses under each head by heart also; and let the parent or teacher refer the child to the particular text, or part of text on which each part of the lesson is founded, and explain to him, both the texts of scripture and the verses. Thus, by a very little labour daily, the child will become acquainted with his Bible, in the letter and doctrine of it at once. When the text and doctrine are thus learnt, the teacher may propose such questions to the child, as may occur to his mind under every head; and let the child answer in the very words of scripture, or the words of the verse, or words of the child's own inventing, as the teacher pleases, or, as may suit the child's fancy or capacity. This, I think, is a good method of improving the judgment and memory of children, and of bringing them to a fixed knowledge and lasting remembrance of divine things. And the tender affection which every serious teacher must feel for the children entrusted with him, will certainly dictate to him what improvement and application he ought to make of every subject."

It was probably about this time also that he printed a copy of verses for Christmas-day, which he caused his scholars to commit to memory and repeat, for a small prize, before proper judges. We have not been able to recover a copy of them, but they commenced thus:

"I hear 'tis matter of learned contention  
 At what time our Saviour appear'd;  
 And when, as a pattern of great condescension,  
 His weeping in Bethlehem was heard.  
 But let me not puzzle my head with enquiring  
 The date of this wonder of love;  
 But let my whole soul be employ'd in admiring  
 What brought my dear Lord from above."

The controversy respecting baptism was this year revived. Mr. Addington, an independent minister, then settled at Market Harborough, Leicestershire, had, some time previous to this date, published a vindication of pædo-baptism, under the title of "A Christian Minister's Reasons for baptizing Infants, and for administering the Ordinance by sprinkling or pouring." This work had been put into Mr. T.'s hand soon after its appearance, with an earnest request that he would reply to it; but he declined the task, through want of leisure and inclination. Dr. Stennett, however, took up the subject, and published an answer. Both these works were large and elaborate; and adapted chiefly to the learned. Mr. Addington, however, printed, soon afterwards, a small tract, which he called "A Summary of a Christian Minister's Reasons for, &c." As this was likely to find its way into the hands of the poor and illiterate, Mr. T. thought that it required an antidote. He therefore seized the occasion, and reprinted his Humble Essay on Christian Baptism, to which he now subjoined two Letters to Mr. Addington, containing "Strictures on his Summary of a Christian Minister's Reasons," &c. The Essay had been several years out of print, and had become so scarce, that it was with difficulty the author himself now obtained a copy. To this edition he prefixed his name, and an advertisement expressing his wishes, that the controversy, if pursued, might be conducted in a christian spirit. His object is sufficiently explained in a few words in the commencement of the first letter to Mr. A. After mentioning, in terms of approbation, Dr. Stennett's Reply to "the Christian Minister's

Reasons," he adds, "If the Humble Essay, with the few following remarks, should be thought in any degree worthy to supply his lack of service for the lowest of the people, to prevent those pernicious consequences which I am persuaded your late publications are calculated to produce, I shall think myself happy in having presented them to the world."

The Strictures are written with the confidence of a man who feels conscious that he stands on firm ground: and some of his remarks are so closely urged, that their weight and edge must have been felt by the gentleman on whom he animadverts. He lays aside that respectful distance and acknowledged inferiority which marked his address to Mr. Graham, and treats Mr. A. with the freedom of a brother minister. After running over what appeared to him to require observation in the "Summary," he concludes with the following friendly and honest advice to the author; which we transcribe, because it may be of great service to all religious disputants, whether by the tongue or the pen.

"I ask your pardon, Sir, if I presume so far as to offer you a word or two of advice, which, if attended to, will, I think, be of service to yourself and your readers; should you think proper to resume this controversy, or to take up any other. I give it, as far as I know, with due respect to your person and character."

"I advise you then, my dear Sir, to read the passages of scripture carefully over, which relate to the subject you are upon; and try to be impartial and divest yourself of prejudice. Consider yourself in the sight of that God who trieth the reins and hearts, and to whom we must quickly give an account of all our thoughts, words and works."

"Do not be positive in asserting without evidence, nor take things for granted without proof; especially things which you know are denied by your opponents. This unnecessarily prolongs the debate, and excites a disposition not the most happy or most honourable to the christian character; and is, in short, unfair, and unworthy of a minister of Christ."

"Do not lead your readers to imagine that your opponents say such things as you know they do not say; nor represent your adversaries knowingly in an unjust light. Make *Matt. vii. 12.* your rule in your treatment of others. This is honourable, and like a man."

“Do not confound the argument and darken the judgment by noise and declamation, or far-fetched remarks; nor put off your readers with possibilities or even probabilities, in the place of certainty and positive evidence; nor impose upon the ignorant with unmeaning or equivocal phrases; but let the world see that you are willing to be thoroughly known, and esteem it an honour to be set right if you are wrong.”

“You see, my good Sir, I use the same familiarity I would do, if I had the honour and the great pleasure of your company in my own parlour. I have imagined, however, that these advices were needful while I have run over your Summary; though to avoid offence, I have seldom seemed to observe it.”

In the spring of this year, Mr. T. was in Lincolnshire, assisting at the ordination of Mr. H. Poole, and the opening of a new meeting-house at Maltby, where he baptized seven persons, April 16. The other occurrences may therefore be placed within a few days of that date.

In May, our minister attended the Annual Association at Castle-Donington; and was requested to draw up a circular letter on the nature and obligations of church fellowship. At this assembly, certain queries were received from the Lincolnshire ministers, intended to open the way for a re-union. Much discussion ensued, and at length Mr. Taylor was requested to prepare answers to them; and he, with Messrs. Grimley, N. Pickering and Tarratt, were appointed to meet the deputies from the Lincolnshire churches. They accordingly had a conference, at Gosberton, May 27th, with Messrs. Boyce, Proud, Anderson and Thornally: when Mr. T. being chosen chairman, two days were spent in fruitless attempts to adjust the differences between them. On the evening of the first day, Mr. T. preached to a numerous audience.

During this year, Mr. T. was peculiarly engaged in promoting the General Baptist cause in Yorkshire. Anxious to succeed in the attempt at Halifax, he exerted himself strenuously in promoting the building of a new meeting house near that town. He and two others made themselves responsible for all the expences; and were sometimes driven to considerable difficulties. He, however, took several journeys to collect for it; and by his activity and perseverance, the object was accomplished. The place was opened, September 3, 1777; when his brother John

preached in the morning; and he in the afternoon, from *Hag.* ii. 9.

Another meeting-house was erected about the same time, in this district, by the exertions of this indefatigable minister. Very soon after he settled in Wadsworth, he carried the news of salvation to a wild, uncultivated and obscure place, seven miles from Birchcliff, called *Shore*; and, many years before the present date, a few persons had joined themselves to his church from that neighbourhood. When he was the only General Baptist preacher in the country, he frequently traversed the rocks, the bogs and the mire, to preach the gospel at this extremity of the desert; and when others were called to assist in the sacred work, their visits became more frequent. The success of these persevering efforts was as great as could, from circumstances, be expected; and encouraged Mr. T. and his friends to attempt to build a place for public worship. By their exertions, a small edifice was completed, and opened a few weeks before the meeting-house at Halifax, by the same ministers. Thus, in about twelve years, this zealous servant of God had the satisfaction of seeing, as the fruits of his labour, four places erected in his own neighbourhood, by the General Baptists, for the preaching of the gospel. And, what must have greatly heightened his pleasure, the cause at Birchcliff continued to prosper, notwithstanding his various engagements at other places. Fifteen were this year added to the church by baptism; and five restored who had fallen back to the world. The church was harmonious, congregations numerous, and many were soon expected to offer themselves for fellowship.

1778. This year, Mr. T. was deeply involved in pecuniary difficulties. The stocking of his farm and supplying necessary accommodations for his boarders, had called for funds which he had no means of providing. These embarrassments were increased by the expences incurred in building the meeting-houses, especially that at Halifax, for which he was responsible. Sometimes he was ready to sink under the pressure; but, like David, he encouraged himself in the Lord his God! After mentioning some of his difficulties to Mr. B. November 22d he adds, "I believe the Lord will help me through, though my case be dark. If he see proper to correct me, I rejoice in the assurance that

his rod will be the rod of a father; and he will not chastise me above measure. He knows what we are able to bear. This is my comfort."

His exertions to remove these burdens were great. In the course of this year, he took seven journeys to collect for Halifax case. In January, he spent three weeks from home on this business. In February, he employed about the same time in Lincolnshire. In May, he visited the Isle of Axholme, and in four days preached seven times. In June, he attended the Annual Association at St. Ives; and from thence proceeded to London to collect; returning home June 27, after an absence of four weeks. In July and September he paid two other visits to the Isle of Axholme: and in November he went to Maltby; where he assisted at the ordination of Mr. Ingham, on the 4th, to whom he gave a charge from Prov. xxiii. 5, 6.

At the Association, he read the circular letter which, at the request of the preceding meeting, he had prepared, on "the Nature and Obligations of Church Fellowship;" which, after some corrections, was adopted and ordered to be printed. While he abode in London, which was only five days, he transcribed this epistle, had it printed, and sent it off to the different churches.

Notwithstanding his frequent absence from his charge, yet the cause at Birchcliff continued to advance. During this year eleven were admitted to communion, and no more than one excluded. It appears, from Mr. T.'s journal, that, besides all his other labours, he preached, in this year, at least two hundred and ninety times.

Neither toils, embarrassments, nor discouragements, abated his zeal in the cause in which he was embarked. After his return from London, he thus addresses his friend, Mr. Thompson, July 4, "I hope you arrived safe at Boston, hearty and happy; and animated with fresh life and vigour to pursue the great and good work of our God and Saviour. I bless God, I trust I can say, that it is in some measure the effect of my journey with respect to myself. Time is short. Eternity is at hand. A rest remains. Now is the time for labouring. God help us that we may duly improve our precious golden opportunities. May we be eminent in the work of God here; and, though utterly unworthy, high in the kingdom of God hereafter." Such were

the principles on which this worthy minister acted, and which supported him in the most painful anxieties, and through almost incredible labours. "He had respect to the recompence of reward."

1779. Previous to the Association this year, Mr. T. went three journeys to visit the churches. In May he presided at the Association, at Longford; and preached from *Acts* xxviii. 28. At this meeting he read the circular which, at the desire of the preceding Association, he had prepared, "On the Advantages of Associations." This is an excellent performance; but it is presumed that, in one or two passages, the author uses language more unguarded than he would have done in later periods of his life. It was, however, approved and ordered to be printed. At this assembly he was earnestly requested to compose a catechism for the instruction of children in the principles of religion: which he undertook, and some time afterwards accomplished.

September 15, he visited Barton and Hugglescote, at the earnest request of the friends there; and gave the charge, from *1 Pet.* v. 2, 3, 4, to Mr. Samuel Deacon, Jun. who was then ordained pastor over that church. On the same day, several deacons were set apart to their office, whom Mr. T. addressed from *1 Tim.* iii. 13.

Unaffected by the difficulties he had already experienced, he still continued his exertions to introduce the gospel, and found churches in benighted places. For several years he had preached occasionally at Worsthorn, a village near Burnley, a considerable town in Lancashire, eleven miles from Wadsworth. To this town it was now resolved to remove the service. Under date, October 29, 1779, he informs Mr. Thompson: "A few weeks ago, I have ventured to hire a house in the market-place of Burnley, a town of some note in Lancashire, to preach in. The town is a wretched place; no religion in, or near it, that we know of. The Methodists have made several attempts there, I am told, but have always been beaten out. The Quarter Sessions at Preston being far distant, I wrote to the Bishop of Chester's court for a licence, and received one a month since: so that I went to open the place on the 10th instant, and intend being there again on the 31st. Brethren Sutcliff and Folds have each been once; and we intend to preach there once every

Lord's day. The room is filled, and the prospect encouraging. I am particularly familiar with a physician and an attorney in the town; which, I think, will be of some advantage." To Mr. Birley he observes: "I have lately hired a house in Burnley to preach in. It is a wretched place. This will increase my expences and labours; but the Lord will help me through."

About this period, Mr. T. was anxious that some provision might be made in the new connection, for the instruction of young men who had been called to the ministry. The idea appears to have been first started, several years previously, in a conversation between him and a poor blind member of his church. The more he thought on the subject, he felt it of greater importance; and was induced to bring it forwards at various associations. The proposal was at first but little regarded; but gradually gained considerable attention. He drew up a plan for the accomplishment of his object; and read it to the ministers at the association, who generally approved of the design; and though it did not receive the sanction of the association, yet several friends entered warmly into his views, and a small subscription was raised. His whole heart appears to have been engaged in this attempt; and he endeavoured to inflame his correspondents with similar ardour. "The fund for the assistance of young ministers," he tells Mr. B. August 6, 1779, "is very likely to increase much. I believe there is ten pounds subscribed, at, and since the association, chiefly in Barton church. I hope you will promote it so far as you are able. The good Lord help us to do the little we can for our precious Saviour, while we live, in this poor dark wicked world."

This year, Mr. Dossey, from Gamston, who had some thoughts of the ministry, spent several months with Mr. T. for the improvement of his abilities. It appears, from Mr. T.'s correspondence, that he was anxiously concerned to promote the knowledge and graces of this young man.

The cause of God at Wadsworth still maintained its prosperity. He informs his friend, Mr. B. August 6: "Things appear to go on well in our congregation—thanks to God. We had never more hearers: I think never so many: and many seem to receive the word heartily; though on this account we are not without complaint. We expect the admission of some soon." Thus it pleased the great Head of the church to suc-



ceed the arduous labours of this indefatigable minister, who, as appears from his journal, delivered more than three hundred and fifty public discourses in the year 1779.

1780. This year Mr. T: was, as usual, actively employed in spreading and defending the truths of the gospel. In the spring he twice visited Lincolnshire; and May 10th. ordained two deacons at Kirton. The Association was at Halifax, at Whitsuntide, but unhappily the minutes of that meeting are lost. In November, he again visited Boston, Kirton, &c. and preached frequently. These hints contain all the information which we have obtained of his active occupation, in 1780.

But his publications prove that he was still busy in his Master's work. The Catechism which, at the request of a former Association, he had undertaken was completed in the beginning of this year, and sent to the ministers, &c. in the midland counties for their perusal. After detaining it sixteen weeks, they returned with the following approbation, which was prefixed to several of the early editions: "We desire leave to recommend the following pages to the careful perusal of all parents, tutors and guardians, under our pastoral care, and of all other parents, tutors and guardians, with whom we have any influence; and advise them to teach the children and youth under their eye the contents of them; and we earnestly pray that the blessing of Almighty God may attend them to the present and future advantage of the rising generation." Signed, "N. Pickering, S. Deacon, Sen. F. Smith, J. Grimley, T. Perkins, G. Hickling, and S. Deacon, Jun." It was published in the summer of this year, and has been well received. This work is too well known in the General Baptist churches to render any account of it necessary for them; but, as its sentiments confine it to their use, for the information of others, we insert the *contents* in the margin,\* and just hint, that the answers are

\* CONTENTS. *Sect. I.* Concerning the Holy Scriptures. *II.* God the Creator and Preserver of all things. *III.* The Perfections of God. *IV.* The Purity of Man in his primitive State. *V.* The Fall of Man. *VI.* The Depravity of Man in consequence of the Fall. *VII.* The Sinfulness of Sin, and the various kinds of Sin. *VIII.* The Necessity and Worth of Forgiveness. *IX.* The Nature and Necessity of Regeneration. *X.* The Helplessness of Man, and his Inability to recover himself from the Fall. *XI.* The Certainty of eternal Misery to those who die unrecovered from their fallen and sinful

generally given in the words of scripture. It has already run through eleven editions.

At the association at Longford, 1779, a case was presented from the church at Kegworth, respecting the sense of our Lord's prohibition, *Matt.* vi. 19—21. "Lay not up for yourselves treasures on earth," &c. After much conversation, Mr. T. and two other ministers, were requested to write their thoughts on the passage, and bring them to the next association. With this request, our author complied. His friend Mr. B. who was not present, requested Mr. T. to favour him with his thoughts on the text; and in compliance with the wishes of his friend, he sent him, in the autumn of this year, three long letters, which were afterwards published under the title of "An Essay on the right Use of Earthly Treasure." In this little piece, the author frankly states, and earnestly defends his opinion, that our Saviour forbids his followers to lay up treasures *for themselves*; that is, as he insists, "in order that they may have a store of treasure of their own, which they are not willing to apply to any purpose for the good of their fellow creatures, or the promotion of religion, when there appears a necessity for it, or it seems to be required in the course of divine providence." He illustrates this proposition from scripture and reason; and endeavours to shew that laying up treasures for *ourselves* is equally inconsistent with the spirit of christianity and the dictates of sound reason. Whatever others may think of his views on this delicate subject, it is certain that they influenced his conduct through life. He spared neither labour nor expence to promote what he esteemed to be the cause of truth: and, on many occasions, sacrificed his worldly interest to the prosecution of this object. His strength, his abilities, his influence and his property, were all devoted to the service of his heavenly Master, and he stood ready, on every occasion, to spend them all for his glory. The expensive, and sometimes distressing exertions, which he made for the building of meeting-houses, and hiring rooms for preaching; his frequent journeys,

State. XII. The Willingness of the blessed God to save poor Sinners. XIII. The glorious Provision which God has made for poor Sinners. XIV. The Freeness of Salvation. XV. The Way to be made partakers of this Salvation. XVI. The Happiness of those who partake of Salvation. XVII. The Misery of unconverted Sinners. XVIII. The Duty of converted Persons. XIX. Baptism and the Lord's Supper. XX. A Scriptural Representation of Death, Judgment, Heaven and Hell.

usually at his own expence; and his amazing bodily exertion, all proved the zeal and sincerity with which he laboured to exemplify his principles by his practice.

As we proceed we shall find him making still greater sacrifices to serve the cause in which he was engaged; but it may be noticed here, that, as an author, he acted on the same disinterested plan. He sold his publications at so low a price as to leave very slender profits, had the whole impressions been sold; and he frequently sustained great loss by many copies remaining on hand. The Essay on the right use of Earthly Treasure may itself be mentioned as an instance of the disposition we have ascribed to him. It contains twenty-four closely-printed duodecimo pages: much more letter-press than various modern two shilling pamphlets; and was sold for *two pence*. His aim was to do good, to propagate the truth, or check the progress of error; not to lay up treasure for himself.

This year the controversy respecting the extent of the object of the death of Christ, was revived in those parts, with considerable acrimony. It originated between the Independents and the Wesleyan Methodists; and several pamphlets were published on both sides, which, as Mr. T. thought, disgraced the cause by their scurrility. "He was," he informs his friend, "greatly affected with much of the matter contained in them, but more especially with the manner and spirit in which they were written. Does christianity, does natural religion teach us to render evil for evil, and railing for railing? Can the language of Billingsgate ornament their page, or give cogency to their arguments? Can they not state and vindicate the truths of God, unless they adopt the method of Satan, the accuser of the brethren?" Feeling for the honour of religion, which was thus disgraced by her friends, he wished to check the torrent, and "introduce a discussion of the subject in a natural, easy and instructive manner." He therefore sent to the printers of the Leeds Intelligencer, a provincial newspaper much read in those parts, the following letter, which was inserted, August 15, 1780.

"Sirs,—I beg leave, through the channel of your valuable paper, to propose one Query to your ingenious correspondents, viz. What christian writer first maintained, that Jesus Christ, the blessed Son of God, did not lay down his life for the sins of all mankind? I have read the scriptures more than once; but I

cannot find it asserted there: and though I do not profess myself an antiquarian, yet, I think, I can venture to affirm, that we have no evidence of a writer in the first centuries abetting this strange opinion. If any of your learned acquaintance will give an answer to the above query, in your paper, they will much oblige, Sirs, your constant reader,

SCRUTATOR."

This Query excited attention, and September 5th, a reply appeared in the same paper, signed *Responsor*. The writer insisted, that the first christian writers who asserted the strange opinion, as *Scrutator* termed it, were the apostles of Christ; and that that they had learned it of the Old Testament writers, and even of their blessed Master himself. In support of this position, he cited several passages, as *Psalm xxxiv. 22. John x. 11. Acts xx. 28. Rev. v. 9, & xiv. 3, 4.* After repeating these texts, and shortly commenting on them, he concludes with, "Here, I hope, Mr. *Scrutator* has his query answered." *Scrutator*, however, did not feel satisfied with this answer; and in a rejoinder, inserted September 19, made his objections to the assertions and conclusions of *Responsor*: at the same time, expressing his wish for a full answer to his first query. In the following paper, a third party entered the lists, who called himself *Observer*, and roundly told both the parties that he thought their letters were not calculated for much usefulness; advising them, if they chose to continue the debate, to state the question more clearly, that they might instruct and not confuse their readers. To this polite intruder, *Scrutator* replied; and sent his reply for insertion in the next number, but the publishers thought proper to lay it aside. Probably *Observer's* remarks had been introduced only to put an end to a controversy, which they thought uninteresting to many of their readers.

Mr. T. who had neither expected nor desired that the subject should be thoroughly discussed in a newspaper, soon after republished, in a penny tract, the whole correspondence, together with his letter to *Observer*, and an introductory letter, explaining the occasion of the Query, addressed to a friend, under the assumed name of *Æquus*. Some time afterwards *Responsor* printed Remarks on *Scrutator's* Rejoinder. To this Mr. T. in the middle of the following year, replied, in a twopenny pamphlet, entitled "*Scrutator to Responsor: or an Introduction to a farther Proof (if need be) that Jesus Christ, the blessed Son*

of God, laid down his life for the sins of all mankind;—in two Letters to *Responsor*: with a short letter to *Considerator*.” In the first of these letters, after praising the temper, abilities, and candour of his opponent, he examines the proofs, which he had produced in favour of his proposition, that the sacred writers assert the limited extent of the atonement made by Christ; and having, as he supposes, shewn that they contain no such doctrine, he concludes thus: “I have twice declared, both to you and the public, that I could not find the doctrine in my Bible. I now declare it a third time. I am persuaded a human writer was the author of it, and not a very ancient one. But the laws of disputation oblige no man to prove a negative. The Bible is open; the writings of all ages are open. If any of the sacred writers, or any ancient ecclesiastical writer, have asserted it, let any man shew the *place* where it is asserted, and I give up the point.”

*Responsor* it seems, in his animadversions, had challenged *Scrutator* to prove from scripture, that Christ died for the sins of all mankind. *Scrutator* very willingly accepted this challenge; and, in his second letter, undertook the task. Though this doctrine appeared to him “like a golden thread interwoven throughout a great part of scripture;” and therefore many passages afforded evidence equally full and clear, yet he fixed on that remarkable text, 1 *John* ii. 2. “He is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.” On this he rested the merits of his cause, and shewed at large, that it necessarily contained the truth for which he contended; and that it was contrary to every rule of interpretation and to every dictate of common sense, to give it any other meaning. This pamphlet, we believe, closed the debate.

Previous to this publication, a third person had ventured to interfere in the dispute, and assumed the title of *Considerator*. His work being handed to Mr. T. he addressed a short note to him, at the close of the publication we have just noticed. As it exhibits an instance of the pointed manner in which he could repel officiousness and silence ignorance, it may be worth preserving. It ran thus:

“Sir,—When I had nearly prepared my letters to *Responsor* for the press, your’s was brought to my hand; and I do assure you, it gave me no little concern to find that one of my

fellow-creatures should have so little regard to his reputation, his time, his conscience, and his Bible, as to be capable of taking so much pains to make himself perfectly contemptible. I would not willingly expose you more than may be for your real advantage, and shall therefore avoid making any remarks on your pamphlet. Instead of this, I beg your acceptance of the following advice, viz.—As you are evidently unqualified for polemic writing, I advise you to lay aside the thoughts of it, and to desire your friends no more to abuse you and your cause by putting it upon it. Instead of it, employ your time in reading the plain, practical parts of scripture with simplicity, and prayer for divine illumination; and reduce what you read to those practical purposes which it is designed and calculated to subserve. Should you never be able to defend the truth by the arts of controversy, as it is probable you never will, you may be hereby prepared, under the blessing of God, to honour it by a holy conversation. This is more noble, and will prove much more profitable. That you may, by these methods, be brought to a better temper, and a better judgment, and that you may at last, through the blood of the Lamb, be brought to the regions of everlasting truth and felicity, is the prayer of

Your sincere well-wisher,

SCRUTATOR."

This year Mr. D. Taylor preached two hundred and seventy-eight times.

1781. We have little account of Mr. T.'s engagement during this year; but there can be no doubt that he continued actively employed in promoting the interest of religion. We find him presiding at the Association, at Loughborough, June 6 & 7, when a circular letter, drawn up by him, was read, approved and ordered to be printed. As we have not seen this letter, we are ignorant of its merits.

At this period, Mr. T. was looked up to throughout the New Connection with the greatest deference, and his opinion was considered almost as an oracle. He was consulted on difficult cases, and frequently invited to distant places to settle disputes. At this Association, the church at Longford having proposed some questions respecting marrying with unbelievers, the meeting requested Mr. T. to write an answer to them. And some

time afterwards, the church at Kegworth being thrown into confusion, sent for him to their assistance.

As we have been favoured with a detailed account of this visit, by persons who were present at all the proceedings, we shall insert the leading particulars, as a specimen of the high esteem in which Mr. T. was then held in the churches, and the laudable use which he made of his influence.

Mr. W.— had been for some time an esteemed preacher in the church at Kegworth; of a respectable character and unsullied morals. His natural talents were of a superior order; and he had cultivated them with all the care that his circumstances permitted. He was a man of calm passions, a close reasoner, and remarkably cool in conducting a discussion. When he began to preach, it was understood that he maintained what are usually termed orthodox tenets; but after some time it appeared that, if he had not abjured the doctrines of the depravity of human nature and the divinity and atonement of Christ, he was unwilling to produce them explicitly in his public discourses. This led the more observant of his hearers to fear that his creed had undergone some important change, and their minds became uneasy. Candidly hoping that they had entertained an unfounded suspicion, and being unwilling to give Mr. W. pain, they concealed their fears, till that gentleman himself drew aside the veil, by addressing certain queries to the Leicestershire conference. From these it was evident, that the writer had imbibed the errors of Socinianism; and a general alarm was excited. The worthy men who had founded the General Baptist interest in those parts, considered the doctrines which Mr. W. questioned as the fundamentals of the gospel, and the only ground of hope for sinners. Their feelings were roused, and the conferences, which were then holden monthly, were chiefly occupied with discussions on these topics. A great sensation was produced in the church at Kegworth; and the harmony of the society interrupted. The debates which were caused by this difference of opinion did indeed confirm some in their former faith, and induce them to esteem the great doctrines still more important and precious: but the views of Mr. W. evidently grew more decidedly hostile to them, and the minds of a few of the private members seemed unsettled. Those whom experience and scripture had taught the baneful tendency of these speculations, exerted themselves

to check the growing defection. Four or five of the neighbouring ministers were invited; and it was agreed that they and Mr. W. should publicly debate the important subjects. On the day appointed, which had been eagerly anticipated, Messrs. Grimley, Hickling, Austin, and S. Deacon, Jun. attended at the place of meeting; at which the members had assembled in great numbers, and with impatient anxiety. Mr. W.'s adroitness and ability were well known; and, on this occasion, he displayed them to peculiar advantage. The good men who were opposed to him, conscious of their ignorance of the arts of controversy, and fearing to injure a good cause by their unskilfulness, stood solely on the defensive, or, at the utmost, ventured only on distant and indirect attacks; and after much desultory discourse, the conference was closed with exhortations to peace and the cultivation of mutual forbearance.

The effects of such a conclusion may be easily anticipated. Those who favoured Mr. W.'s views were strengthened and encouraged by the weak and timid manner in which he was opposed, and others became unsettled in their minds: while the steady friends of the gospel were discouraged and greatly perplexed. As a last effort, they proposed to send for Mr. Taylor; and Mr. W. and his adherents, elated probably with the advantage they had already obtained, cheerfully agreed to the proposal. The invitation was forwarded immediately, and accepted without hesitation. Mr. T. soon arrived in Leicestershire; and the preliminaries for the contest were arranged. The meeting-house at Castle Donington, the appointed place of discussion, was crowded to excess by the members of Kegworth and the adjacent churches, and by many of the neighbouring ministers. The conference began at ten in the morning, and lasted, with an hour's intermission, till near eight in the evening. After prayer, Mr. T. inquired of the church what was their special design in sending for him. This brought forward the queries of Mr. W. respecting the fall and the atonement; which Mr. T. took down in writing, and after modifying them till they were perfectly satisfactory to his opponent, adhered to them, as the subject of debate, throughout the day. Mr. W. then proceeded, at considerable length, to state the reasons of his doubts respecting the depravity of human nature; adducing the common objections urged by the Socinians, and endeavouring to invalidate the arguments



usually employed against them. When he had concluded this part of the subject, Mr. T. replied to his exceptions, in a very perspicuous manner; and then established the doctrine of human depravity—from the scripture testimony—the awful state of the whole world in all ages—and the early propensities to evil observable in all the race of man. On these and other topics, he expatiated with peculiar felicity, and the most perfect good humour. They then discussed, in the same manner, the subject of the atonement; against which Mr. W. urged the usual arguments; and Mr. T. in reply, shewed from the nature of the sufferings of Christ—the phraseology of scripture—the Jewish sacrifices of atonement—and the authority of the greatest divines and most eminent lawyers, that the word punishment was properly applied to the sufferings of Christ; and that they were penal and vicarious. On this subject he dwelt with great force and a most happy effect. He was evidently master of the question; and Mr. W. declined the debate. Throughout the conference, Mr. T. obtained as great credit from the modesty, gentleness and good temper with which he conducted it, as by the force and pertinency of his arguments.

“After this dispute,” continues our informant, “Mr. T. preached many sermons previous to his return to Yorkshire, all bearing on the important doctrines which he had advocated with so much ability. They were delivered with singular energy and fervour; and produced the most salutary effects. The church became settled, the wavering were fixed in their attachment to the gospel, and those who had been the steady friends of truth were much confirmed and greatly encouraged. In one day, the dismal cloud which had settled over that church, and which had not only threatened to effect its ruin, but also to reach other churches, was dispelled. Mr. W. and a few who adhered to him, separated from their friends; and, for a short time, carried on preaching; but they soon dwindled away. Permit me, my good friend, to say, that, in my opinion, the occurrence above stated was one of the most important events in the life of your venerable relative. But for *him*, at that time, the withering system of Socinus would probably have spread rapidly in the midland churches;—but he so grasped and strangled the monster, that it has not, since that time, been able to lift up its head with any degree of confidence.” Such are the sentiments of an intelligent

observer, respecting the services rendered to the cause of truth by Mr. T. on this occasion: and such the impression left on his mind of the ability, discretion and piety displayed by that minister in conducting this delicate business; an impression which the lapse of nearly forty years has not weakened.

1782. The General Baptists at Halifax had hitherto continued members of the church at Queenshead; but they became a distinct society in the beginning of this year. As Halifax was the most populous town in the neighbourhood, it was natural for the friends of the General Baptist cause to wish to see it flourish in that town. Mr. T. in particular, was very anxious for this, and had laboured much to promote it. As he was acknowledged to be the best qualified preacher in those churches, it was, thought by many, both members and others, that the common interest required that he should be stationed at the principal town. He was likewise highly esteemed by all the denominations of Christians in the place, and his occasional labours excited more attention, and drew more hearers, than those of any of his brethren. These considerations induced the friends at Halifax to attempt the removal of Mr. T. from the church at Wadsworth to them. This was no easy enterprize. The sincere attachment that subsisted between him and his friends at Wadsworth, rendered them decidedly averse to the proposal. The removal of a pastor from a church over which he had been ordained, unless in cases of apostacy or heresy, was very uncommon among the General Baptists in their best days; and we believe no instance of such a removal had previously occurred in the New Connection. These circumstances certainly were discouraging; but the friends of the measure persevered, and brought the business before the Annual Association this year, at Melbourn: requesting its advice respecting Mr. D. Taylor's removal to Halifax. The reply was, "We advise Birchcliff church to let brother T. go; and we further advise Halifax church to encourage him." This advice did not put an end to the discussion; the matter was referred to several conferences; till at length it was agreed by both parties, to refer the subject to the decision of Providence, by Mr. T. labouring for six months at Halifax, while his place at Birchcliff should be supplied by Mr. J. Sutcliff, a young man of respectable character