

this strain of preaching prevails the grand, the distinguishing doctrines of the gospel are glossed over, or lightly touched upon; its glory is obscured, and it is scarcely distinguishable from a system of mere ethics. It is evident that sermons of the above description could not be calculated to alarm the conscience; the necessity of an atonement was in a great measure kept out of sight, and a kind of intermediate system held forth, concealing the dreadful, the fatal disease, and lulling the mind into security under the idea that *imperfect services* would be accepted, and that in performing them, as far as the frailty of human nature would permit, there would be no doubt of their ensuring the Divine favour, and making their peace with God. This kind of preaching was adapted to the taste of the fashionable world; it did not run counter to their prejudices and proud imaginations; so that the *offence of the cross ceased*.—With respect to the lower classes, they either could not comprehend what was advanced, or, if they paid any attention, their feelings and passions were not interested, so that what they heard passed away like a ‘tale that is told.’ In how many instances, alas! is this the case still, where the same method is continued, both within and without the pale of the church! What a contrast do we observe in them to the apostolical labours of a Whitefield, a Wesley, a Grimshaw, and a Venn! What zeal, what steady perseverance, did these men evidence in promoting the all-important objects they had in view, being willing to spend and be spent for the sake of Christ! It is acknowledged that, on some occasions, their zeal bordered too much on enthusiasm; that they sometimes used expressions which were neither justifiable nor prudent, of which

they themselves afterwards with regret saw the impropriety; but allowance must be made for the times in which they lived, with the difficulties and opposition they had to encounter; and the same objections are equally applicable to their venerable precursors in calling the attention of mankind to personal, vital Christianity—the intrepid Luther on the Continent, with Latimer, Knox, and others, in our own country.

The impression made by the preaching of Whitefield on the mind of him who is the subject of this narrative was indescribably great, and remained unabated to the close of life. He preserved his portrait in his study, and the very mention of his name inspired the warmest emotions of grateful remembrance. For natural, unaffected eloquence, he considered him as superior to any person he ever heard. His whole soul was in the work; his words fell from his lips with majesty and power; and he had such command over the passions of his audience, that thousands were melted into tears at once. His voice was amazingly powerful, so as to be heard distinctly to a great distance; it was, notwithstanding, full of harmony and grace. It was customary with him to introduce his discourses by some striking passage from the energetic writings of the prophets, or from some part of our Saviour's discourses. He often roused the attention of his audience by such expressions as the following: 'O earth, earth, earth! hear the word of the Lord!'—'If any man have ears to hear, let him hear.'

The first time our young disciple saw and heard this eminent man of God was at Bradford, in an open part of the town, near the water-side. No place of worship could contain the concourse of people assembled on that

occasion. The text was John iii. 14. 'As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness,' &c. His own language will best describe what his sensations were on that interesting occasion: "As long as life remains, I shall remember both the text and the sermon." He admired, he was astonished with almost every sentence, both in the devotional exercises and the sermon.

Though he had read much, and been regular in his attendance on public ordinances, yet from early prepossession, and the general strain of the sermons he heard, he was far from having clear conceptions as to the ground of a sinner's acceptance with God: 'he saw men as trees walking;' but this Apollos, who was 'mighty in the Scriptures,' even by one sermon showed him the 'way of God more perfectly' than he had ever seen it before. The glimpses he had before enjoyed suddenly became clearer, and gospel light beamed upon his soul with resplendent rays. The mode of address was quite new to him, and brighter scenes were disclosed to view—a God reconciled through the atonement of a suffering Saviour, with the free and gracious proclamations exhibited from the Divine Word, at once dispelled his unbelieving fears, and filled him with 'joy unspeakable' and 'full of glory.'

Mr. Whitefield preaching again in the evening, he requested leave of his master to go and hear him, which was granted, though with some hesitation. He evinced a degree of displeasure at his eagerness, and inquired who had put it into his mind to follow this strange preacher; to which he replied, that he believed it was the Almighty. At the evening service the same truths were held forth which he had heard in the morning, from that striking passage, 'For this pur-

pose was the Son of God manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil." The preacher showed what those works of the devil were,—some evident before the eyes of man in the idolatry and profaneness which prevailed in the world; others in the minds even of those who were more regular; namely, prejudices against the truth, self-righteousness, &c.; and he then proceeded to set forth the ability of Christ to destroy these works, and the manner in which he effects it.

It appears by the following extract from his diary that he had then entered upon his sixteenth year. "In the sixteenth year of my age, it pleased God graciously, and more particularly than ever before, to work upon my mind, and to give me a deeper sense of my lost condition by nature. I think it was about the month of September, 1755." This corresponds with the time of Mr. Whitefield's journey into the north, as related in his journal, about the end of August and the beginning of September, 1755, when he visited Northampton, Liverpool, Bolton, Manchester, Leeds, and Bradford.

From this time he began to make a more public profession of religion, and connected himself with those who were known by the general denomination of Methodists, a term at first by no means exclusively appropriated, as at present in these parts, to the followers of the Rev. John Wesley, but common to all who were earnest in their inquiries respecting the salvation of their souls, who imbibed this *new doctrine*, as it was considered by their opponents, and who were strict in their deportment. He attended their private meetings as often as he was allowed: these were sometimes protracted to an unseasonable hour, so that being too late to gain admittance into his master's house, who was in

the habit of retiring early to rest, he not unfrequently spent the remainder of the night in the open fields or under sheds.

Whenever Mr. Whitefield came into the North he eagerly embraced the opportunity of attending his ministry. His next visit to Bradford was in the year following. Mr. Whitefield, in one of his letters, dated August 24, 1756, says, "It is now a fortnight since I came to Leeds, in and about which I preached eight days successively, three times almost every day, to thronged and affected auditors. On Sunday last, at Bradford, in the morning the audience consisted of above ten thousand; at noon, and in the evening, at Birstall, of nearly double that number. Though hoarse, I was able to speak so that they all heard." These religious opportunities were often mentioned by the subject of this memoir, as having produced an uncommon and lasting effect upon his mind. After having heard him at Bradford in the morning, he followed him to Birstall, where a platform was erected at the foot of a hill adjoining the town, whence Mr. Whitefield had to address an immense concourse of people, not fewer, as was supposed, than twenty thousand, who were ranged before him on the declivity of a hill in the form of an amphitheatre. Much as he was in the habit of public speaking and preaching to large and promiscuous multitudes, when he cast his eyes around him on the vast assemblage, and was about to mount the temporary stage, he expressed to his surrounding friends a considerable degree of intimidation; but when he began to speak, an unusual solemnity pervaded the assembly, and thousands in the course of the sermon, as was often the case, vented their emotions by

tears and groans. Fools who came to mock, began to pray, and to cry out, "What must we do to be saved."

Haworth was another of the places which he occasionally visited. He was there received with the greatest cordiality by the Rev. Mr. Grimshaw, while the pulpits in many parts were shut against him; but that had little or no tendency to interrupt his labours, for, had they been offered, the churches could not possibly have contained the crowds that followed him from all parts. When he was at Haworth, the Lord's Supper was frequently administered, not only to the stated communicants, but to hundreds from other quarters, who resorted thither on these solemn occasions, esteeming them, in a peculiar sense, as 'days of the Son of Man,' such in many respects as had never been witnessed since the first promulgation of Christianity, when the spirit was, in so eminent a degree, 'poured out from on high.' For these occasional itinerant visits Mr. Whitefield's talents were admirably adapted. His manner, his voice, his action, as before described, and above all, his solemnity and fervour, commanded and riveted the attention beyond any thing that modern times have exhibited. He frequently preached in the church-yard at Haworth. On one occasion, while addressing the congregation, he expressed a hope that the greater part of those who had been induced to come from far, and who, by following him from place to place, showed so much interest, were Christians and Israelites indeed. Mr. Grimshaw, who was standing near him, in the warmth of his heart, and from a sudden impulse, rose up to contradict what he apprehended to be a mistaken idea, and urged him to deal plainly and faithfully with them, as perishing sinners.

In the commencement of that revival of religion, which it is part of our plan to relate, there were, if the writer's information is correct, but two clergymen resident in this part of the kingdom who avowedly embraced, and preached the sentiments generally termed evangelical; namely, the Rev. Mr. Grimshaw, and the Rev. Mr. Venn, of Huddersfield. The memory of these men of God will ever be held in veneration; and as they will be frequently mentioned in the course of the ensuing narrative, it may not be improper here to give a brief statement of the leading events in their lives, and of their ministerial labours. Mr. Grimshaw was admirably suited for the sphere in which he moved; placed in a mountainous region among people remarkably rough and uncivilized, he adapted his habits of life and his mode of address to them. Like a Boanerges, he thundered against them the awful threatenings of the law, and explained the absolute necessity of repentance and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. He reproved them sharply for their vices, followed them to their haunts of dissipation, and used every method he could devise to induce them to come under the sound of the gospel. He was instant in season and out of season; without much previous study or preparation, except such as habitual devotion and intercourse with God furnished, he frequently preached from twenty to thirty times in a week. He also visited his flock from house to house. It was his regular practice to call upon the poorest as well as those that were in more easy circumstances, and after having relieved their temporal wants, in which he regularly expended a considerable part of his income, so as to be often in straits himself, he talked with them in the most affectionate, familiar

manner, and having desired them to put aside their implements of industry for a few moments, he prayed with them, gave them a short exhortation, and then proceeded without delay to other places. His language in the pulpit was sometimes coarse and undigested, such as would be offensive to the more refined taste of the present day, but he was an instrument of great good in his day; an industrious, enterprising pioneer, who was raised up to prepare the way for other persons, who afterwards entered into his labours.

This excellent man was born at Brindle, near Preston in Lancashire, in the year 1708. After having received the rudiments of his education at Blackburn and Heskin, in the same county, he was admitted a member of Christ's College, Cambridge, in his eighteenth year. During his continuance there some early and transient impressions which he had when a school boy, began to wear off; nor, even after he assumed the clerical office, did he evidence any serious regard for the interests of religion until some time subsequent to his settlement at Todmorden, a chapelry in the parish of Rochdale. So far was he from reproving the vices and sinful courses of his hearers, that he became, in the worst sense of the word, a 'partaker of their sins.' But in the year 1734 it pleased God to bring him to a serious concern about his own salvation, and consequently about the welfare of those whom, as he now saw, he had awfully neglected. For many years after this he remained a stranger to those eminent men, who were so useful in the revival of religion; but God was teaching him by his Holy Spirit, and he met with a few books, particularly one by Dr. Owen, which proved of great service to him. The writer of these pages has

recently looked over part of Mr. Grimshaw's library; and from the dates, in his own hand writing, it appears that most of those which he had in his possession before this time were in the legal strain. Some of them were presented to him by the Rev. Dr. Dunster, vicar of Rochdale. Several early specimens of Mr. Grimshaw's composition show that he was a good scholar, and had a taste for polite learning, particularly for poetry; but his whole soul seemed, after the change above referred to, to be swallowed up in the service of his Divine Master.

In the month of May, 1742, he removed to Haworth, near Bradford, which, as has already been related, was the principal sphere or centre of his public ministrations.

The circuit which he took on week days extended to many miles from his own habitation. Among other places he frequently went over the hills to Ewood, in the parish of Halifax, where his son resided. He often preached there in the barn, and other out-buildings. On one occasion he was accompanied by Mr. Whitefield to this place. Intelligence of their coming having been announced in the neighbourhood, an immense concourse was assembled. A temporary booth was erected in a field, near the house, for Mr. Whitefield and the other ministers. Not only the field, but the woody land above it, covered with crowds collected from different parts. An unusual solemnity pervaded this vast multitude; and at the close of the service the 100th Psalm was sung, and concluded with Mr. Grimshaw's favourite doxology, "Praise God from whom all blessings flow," &c. The volume of sound produced by the united voices of thousands, while it

re-echoed through the vale below, is said to have had such an effect as no language can describe.

The animosities and differences which prevailed among professing Christians often distressed his feeling mind; and he was so far from encouraging a party spirit among Christians, that it was the great business of his life to bring them into close contact, and to lead them to drink deeper into the love of God. He used to say, "I love Christians, true Christians of all parties; I do love them, I will love them, and none shall make me do otherwise." He died of a fever, April 7, 1763, in the fifty-fifth year of his age, and the twenty-first of extensive usefulness in the church of God.

By his own desire his remains were brought to Ewood, the farm-house before mentioned, and from thence they were followed to Luddenden chapel, near Halifax, by great numbers, who with intermingled sighs and tears sang, at his dying request, all the way from the house to the chapel. They lie near the communion table, without any monumental record, except his name, &c. on the stone which covers his grave. The Rev. Mr. Venn, and the Rev. Mr. Romaine, preached funeral sermons on the occasion of his decease; the former in the church-yard at Luddenden, the church itself not being sufficiently large to hold the congregation; the latter in London. They both fixed upon a text which had been peculiarly precious to him, and of which his life had been a bright illustration. 'To me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.'

Though their religious sentiments did not, in some points of doctrine, exactly correspond with his, they entertained the highest opinion of him as a Christian, and as a minister. Mr. Romaine says, "He was the most

laborious and indefatigable minister of Christ I ever knew. For the good of souls, he rejected all hopes of affluent fortune; and for the love of Christ cheerfully underwent difficulties, dangers, and tribulation. When some of his friends pressed him to spare himself, he replied, "Let me labour now, I shall have rest by-and-by; I cannot do enough for Christ, who has done so much for me." He was also no less eminent for his humility than for his zeal and fervour. He caught the malignant fever, of which he died by visiting the poor of his flock. His last words were, "Here goes an unprofitable servant."

The Rev. Mr. Venn was born at Barnes, near Richmond, Surry, in the year 1725. His father was a clergyman of considerable eminence; and the son being at an early age intended for the same profession, he went through his academic studies with great reputation, and was elected fellow of Queen's College, Cambridge. Some time after his ordination he met with Law's "Serious Call," which he read with great attention. The effect produced on his mind by this writer's arguments in favour of a holy life, was strong and lasting. He eagerly perused his other publications, but found in them a degree of mysticism and obscurity relative to some of the important truths of Christianity, which by no means afforded him equal satisfaction.

Removing from a retired situation to Clapham, near London, he became acquainted with many religious characters, from whose society, and from perusing the writings of the Rev. Mr. Walker of Truro, he derived great advantage. With the more enlarged views he now had of the gospel system, his zeal and assiduity increased; so that his labours, while curate of Clapham,

were blessed to many. Through the interest of Lord Dartmouth, or of the munificent John Thornton, Esq. the vicarage of Huddersfield was presented to Mr. Venn, about the year 1759.* The situation in which

* A short time after Mr. Venn's removal to Huddersfield, namely, July 2, 1760, he preached a sermon at the Visitation of the Clergy held at Wakefield, on the duty of a parish priest, from Col. iv. 17: 'And say to Archippus, Take heed to the ministry,' &c. At the request of many of the hearers, he published this sermon, and prefixed a dedication to the people of his charge at Huddersfield. The following passages occur in the dedication. "It is needful for us as ministers to show our people that we are not at liberty to consult our natural inclinations, with regard either to preaching or practice, but must do the work of God diligently in the way he has appointed.—With a view therefore to teach you what I am to do for your souls, I have been prevailed upon to make this sermon public. Besides, I was willing to put into your hands a testimony of this kind, that I myself for fear of being condemned by my own open acknowledgment may be excited to an increasing concern for your immortal interests. But as all our most solemn engagements, like the zealous protestations of Peter, will soon be falsified, unless power is continually given us from above, let me intreat your prayers, both for myself and all who are ordained to our holy function, that we may find an everlasting spring within, which may make us always fruitful and abundant in the work of the Lord, that whilst we live we may be serviceable to God's glory and the good of souls: that no discouragements may make us faint, nor our own corruptions prevail over us: that when our work is done we may be able to give up our accounts as stewards, who with conscience and integrity have served the great Shepherd and Bishop of our souls."

Every part of this publication shows the principles on which Mr. Venn entered upon his labours at Huddersfield, which he publicly and boldly declared in the presence both of friends and opponents. Keeping in mind the grand original design of visitation sermons, he considers, 1. What is essential to the fulfilling of the ministry: 2. The obligations to be found always thus employed: 3. The incomparable happiness of a life devoted to this work. On each of these heads he enlarges with great earnestness, showing the infinite

he was now placed, was in almost every respect a contrast to that he had left. To use the expression of a highly respected minister, who was not only an eye witness of what then passed, but was one of the happy subjects of the change produced, "When Mr. Venn came to his parish he found it, and all the country round, in worse than Egyptian darkness, dead in trespasses and sins; yet the difficulties he had to encounter were so far from restraining his exertions, that they inspired him with renewed ardour and zeal. His language and address were dignified, masculine, and energetic.—He prophesied over the dry bones with the solemnity of a messenger from heaven. His preaching was exceedingly alarming;—hundreds, and I may even say thousands, flocked to hear. Many were pricked to the heart, and were constrained by the power of Divine grace to flee from the wrath to come: so great a change in a short time was perhaps never witnessed in modern times. The minister laboured day and night, in season and out of season, redeeming every opportunity for sowing the blessed seed of the word among his hearers:—he indeed 'travailed as in birth to have Christ formed in them.' It is impossible for me

importance of preaching Christ, and of being instant in season and out of season, to declare the whole counsel of God. He observes, "The world well knows what our holy profession requires from us, and the eye of libertinism itself can see our guilt when we do not fulfil our ministry." Even a Dryden could thus reproach the slothful clergyman:

"The province of the soul is large enough
To fill up every cranny of thy time,
And leave thee much to answer for,
If but *one* wretch is damn'd through thy neglect."

while I retain my memory ever to forget, and by any language half to express, what I have seen and felt under his commanding voice. His exhibitions of the purity, spirituality, and extent of the Divine law; the exceeding sinfulness of sin; the glories of the person; the boundless fulness and unsearchable riches of Jesus the Saviour; the work of the Holy Spirit upon the heart; and the methods of grace in perfecting the saints unto glory; were striking and impressive beyond description. During the space of more than four years, I had the privilege to hear him expatiate on these and other subjects with increasing delight. He was the means of introducing many valuable clergymen into his parish and neighbourhood, among whom may be mentioned the late Rev. Mr. Burnett, Mr. Powley, Mr. Wilson, and Mr. Ryland, who were all successively curates in his parish, though most of them afterwards removed to other important situations."—During Mr. Venn's continuance at Huddersfield, he published a volume of sermons which he dedicated to the worthy gentlemen at Clapham, to whom he felt himself under great obligations. But the most popular and useful of his publications was "The Complete Duty of Man." This work greatly contributed to the diffusion of Divine truth through every part of the kingdom, and, in a great measure, superseded the circulation of one under a similar title, inculcating very different doctrine, and which, as before observed, had formed a part of almost every library.

Mr. Venn remained for about eleven years at Huddersfield; but his incessant labours produced such an effect upon his bodily health, perceptible not only to himself but to his friends, that he thought it advisable, when in the height of his usefulness and popularity,

(though to the regret of thousands), to quit the important station for one more retired, and better suited to his declining years. This was in the year 1770, when he removed to Yelling in Huntingdonshire.

Perhaps no parish minister was ever honoured with greater success than Mr. Venn, during his residence at Huddersfield.—He might without impropriety be termed the apostle of the extensive sphere in which he moved. The aged who yet survive speak of him with rapture; and while they consider him as their spiritual father, they are waiting for the period when they hope to meet him again, as the children whom God hath given him.

Mr. Venn, like his friend Mr. Grimshaw, appeared to have one great object in view, to make men Christians; ‘to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God.’ He was eminently distinguished by a catholic spirit, with respect to other denominations of professing Christians. The image of Christ and the spirit of Christianity were dear to him, wherever he saw the traces of them. It is well known that by the recommendation he prefixed to the “Reign of Grace,” he was the means of bringing Mr. Abraham Booth, the writer of it, till then in an obscure situation, to public notice. After his removal to Yelling, he occasionally visited his late charge; and he could not witness with indifference the efforts they made to perpetuate the good work he had begun, and their determination to hear elsewhere, when they could not do it to their satisfaction from the pulpit he once occupied, that blessed Gospel which had been the power of God to the salvation of their souls.*

* In a letter still preserved, which he addressed to them some time after his removal, he gives them, as professing Christians, ad-

Great numbers of young persons were among the fruits of Mr. Venn's ministry ; and of these at least thirteen, many of whom went through a course of preparatory studies with the Rev. Mr. Scott of Heckmondwike, near Wakefield, became useful, and some of them very eminent ministers, chiefly in the independent connexion—several of them yet survive.

Mr. Venn's residence and ministry at Huddersfield were not only productive of important results in a religious point of view, but in promoting civilization and laudable exertions for the temporal welfare of the neighbourhood. The truth of Scripture has in all ages been verified : ' Righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people.' ' Godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.' True religion while it purifies the soul, elevates the mind above degrading, licentious indulgencies, and directs its energies into an useful channel. To all human appearance the parish of Huddersfield, even in a commercial point of view, would never have been what it is, but for the spirit of

vice and direction with the greatest candour and faithfulness. " I am mindful," he says, " every day of the spiritual relation which subsists between us. You, I have every reason to believe, are living members of Christ ; I am the unworthy instrument who was sent from far to preach to you the glad tidings of great joy. Never can I forget, whilst my recollection remains, our many solemn meetings, when light, life, and power from God, made the place of his feet glorious. I am persuaded you are still under the influence of principles truly religious. It is your high value for the sum and substance of the Christian faith as it has been taught you by us, and the efficacy of which you have experienced, which stimulates your exertions, and as such you have reason to expect the presence of God amongst you."

inquiry which was excited at the period now referred to:—for though our holy religion principally directs the attention to those things which are not seen and eternal, it inculcates principles which are the best bond of civil society, and enjoins such an *use of* the world, as will lead to every proper exertion for our own temporal good, and the welfare of all around us.

THE writer of these pages has considered some account of these two distinguished characters as essentially necessary to form an idea of the state of religion in this part of the kingdom at the period now referred to. Every inquiry which he has been able to make has produced increasing evidence of the success which attended their own personal labours, and the happy consequences which flowed from their exertions in stirring up others in their respective spheres. The subject of this narrative had the highest respect for Mr. Venn, though on account of the distance he could not have many opportunities of hearing him, or of personal intercourse with him. From the subsequent part of this account it will appear that he was, when he became a minister, intimately connected with many who received their first religious impressions under Mr. Venn's ministry.

He had frequent opportunities, along with his religious companions, of hearing Mr. Grimshaw at Haworth—the distance from Bradford is about ten miles:—so long as he continued in society with the Methodists, which was about two years, he generally re-

paired to Haworth Church on those Sabbaths when the Lord's supper was administered.

The time was now approaching when he was induced, by a variety of circumstances, to withdraw from that church in which he had been brought up from his earliest years. He, however, through life retained a sincere veneration for it,* and was happy in maintaining a friendly and cordial correspondence with many of its members. There is no reason to conclude, either from his MS. papers, or from any thing he suggested in conversation, that he was at that early period much conversant with the controversies which have agitated the Protestant church, respecting forms of worship or modes of discipline. The prevailing motive by which he appears to have been actuated was a desire to attend where he could hear those truths which were dearer to him than life itself; his opinions on matters of minor importance were afterwards gradually formed by a close and diligent perusal of the Holy Scriptures. The decided opposition which Mr. Whitefield and other evangelical ministers met with from the great body of the clergy must have had a tendency to weaken his early attachments. It may likewise be remarked that, so long as Mr. Whitefield and Mr. Wesley acted in concert, their respective followers, who were united in society together, considered themselves still as members of the Church

* As evidential of this, it will no doubt be recollected by many who attended his public ministry, that he was in the frequent practice of introducing in the devotional exercises and in his sermons, passages from the church service, which were familiarized to him by early associations, and endeared by their own intrinsic excellence.

of England ; but some discussions having taken place respecting the points controverted between Calvinists and Arminians, both among the preachers and people, those who were particularly attached to Mr. Whitefield, and embraced the former system, discontinued their connexion with Mr. Wesley's societies, and, of course, were no longer subject to the rules established by him, which positively enjoined an adherence to the Church of England. Mr. Wesley directed a considerable part of his attention to the organization of his plans, so as to secure their permanency and extension ; but Mr. Whitefield's talents lay more in preaching the gospel than in making arrangements for perpetuating the great work which he had been so wonderfully instrumental in commencing. ' To preach Christ and him crucified,' was his grand object. Disregarding the distinctions which prevail in the Christian church, he laboured to promote a revival, not only in the establishment, but among the presbyterians in Scotland and America, and among the different denominations in South Britain, imitating the example of the Apostle Paul, ' To the Jews I became a Jew ; to them that were without law as without law ; I became all things to all men that I might gain some.' Wherever he met with those who loved our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, he embraced them as brethren, though in some respects they followed not with him.

Several large places under the denomination of tabernacles were erected in the south of England for the accommodation of Mr. Whitefield's followers, some of them under the patronage of Lady Huntingdon, who expended nearly the whole of her income in building places of worship, and the support of ministers. Mr. Whitefield himself preached in these tabernacles as often

as his other itinerant engagements permitted, and during his absence they were supplied, and are still supplied, by ministers who had received episcopal ordination, or by popular preachers from among the dissenters. As Mr. Whitefield* was cut off in the midst of his labours, these plans were never carried into effect in the more distant parts of the kingdom, where his occasional ministrations had been so acceptable and successful. Many who received their first religious impressions under his sermons were as 'sheep without a shepherd;' and while they retained the greatest veneration for him, they were led by necessity, as well as by conscience and duty, to connect themselves with the dissenters of different denominations, among whom the same truths were preached.

That mighty impulse which Mr. Whitefield and his coadjutors had given to the professing world, was the means of exciting a general spirit of inquiry on religious subjects, and of bringing forward to notice talents which might otherwise have lain dormant. Considerable numbers of those who were afterwards the most distinguished pastors of dissenting churches, dated their conversion from attending the ministry, or perusing the writings, of these apostolic men; and to this revival many of those congregations, which have continued to flourish and increase to the present day, owe their rise. The mantle of Elijah dropped upon many Elishas; and a portion of that spirit which actuated Mr. Whitefield not only rested upon his immediate followers, but, blessed be God, the sweet savour of it still remains. By this spirit the

* Mr. W. was born in the year 1714, and died in America in the year 1771.

Protestant church in Great Britain is distinguished from the professors of the same faith on the European continent, who have long been in a declining state. Notwithstanding the awful judgments with which God has lately visited them, many, alas! yet remain in an awful state of stupor, 'having left their first love,' and lost the zeal and fervour of their ancestors. This spirit has been the life and soul of those missionary exertions which have so much distinguished modern times, and we have reason to believe that it will spread and prevail till that glorious period, 'when all the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our God and of his Christ.'

From the whole of this account, what powerful arguments may be drawn for mutual forbearance among professing Christians! It is evident that, in the dispensation of his special favours, the Almighty is 'no respecter of persons,' or of the denominations by which the professors of Christianity are known among men. The page of ecclesiastical history, if attentively read, will be an antidote to all those high pretensions which our vanity and self-sufficiency may lead us to indulge. It clearly shows that revivals in religion, which are the result of Divine influence, have not been confined to any particular religious societies. They have sometimes commenced in one denomination, and have extended their most beneficial effects to others unconnected with them. The candlestick is removed from one part of the church militant to another. There has been in all ages, and will continue to be, a diversity of sentiments on matters of inferior importance, among the professors of Christianity. This, though a partial evil, may be an universal good: it affords exercise for

Christian graces, particularly that 'charity which is the bond of perfectness.' Its tendency is to promote inquiry after Divine truth, to humble the pride of man, and to check that self-conceit which would lead us to say, 'We are the men, and wisdom shall die with us.' There is, however, one kind of uniformity which good men cannot too strenuously seek after, namely, the 'unity of the spirit in the bond of peace.' They are all partakers of the 'same heavenly calling,' speak the same language, have the same difficulties to encounter, pursue the same objects, are supported by the same promises, and animated by the same prospects. Hence we need not wonder, that a Leighton and a Henry, a Hervey and a Watts, were kindred souls, however different as to outward matters, and in the eyes of men.

The letter which is here subjoined may serve strikingly to illustrate these remarks. It was written by the Rev. Mr. Whitefield to the subject of this narrative. He placed great value upon it, on account of its intrinsic excellence, and as coming from one for whom he had so much regard. The date shows that it was not received till some years after the events we are now relating; but as a more suitable opportunity for introducing it may not occur, it is hoped the reader will excuse its insertion here.

"DEAR SIR,

"London, Sept. 1, 1766.

"I have been so often imposed upon by letters from strangers that it is high time to be a little more cautious; besides, bodily weakness prevents my writing as formerly; but your letters seem to evidence simplicity of heart. If truly called to the glorious work of the mi-

nistry, of which I can be no judge at this distance, I wish you much prosperity in the name of the Lord. The language of my soul is, 'Would to God that all the Lord's servants were prophets!' A clear head, and an honest, upright, disinterested, warm heart, with a good elocution, and a moderate degree of learning, will carry you through all, and enable you to do wonders. You will not fail to pray for a decayed, but, thanks be to God, not a disbanded soldier. Oh that the last glimmerings of an expiring taper may be blessed to guide some wandering souls to Jesus Christ! As yet 'the shout of a king is heard amongst us.' Whether I shall ever visit Yorkshire again, is only known to him 'who holdeth the stars in his right hand.' Kind remembrances to all who love the Lord Jesus in sincerity. Brethren, pray for us. I retain my old name, 'Less than the least of all saints,' but for Jesus Christ's sake,

"Yours in our common Lord,

"G. WHITEFIELD."

It has frequently been remarked that many of those who had been particularly attached to Mr. Whitefield, afterwards joined the Independents, before that time comparatively a small body, though now so numerous and respectable. This was the plan which numbers at Bradford, who, for the reasons already assigned, had left Mr. Wesley's connexion, proposed to adopt; and with them the subject of this memoir united himself. They frequently went to Leeds on Lord's days to hear the Rev. Mr. Edwards,* of

* This valuable minister, for whose memory Mr. F. had a very sincere respect to the latest period of life, was born at

Whitechapel, and the Rev. Mr. Whitaker, minister of Call Lane, whose ministerial labours were very edifying to them. A design was formed to establish an interest of the same kind at Bradford, both on account of the distance from Leeds, and for the advantage of the neighbourhood. A young man, whose name was Hales, preached frequently among them with great acceptance. He lived at that time at Wakefield, where he was apprenticed to business, but was bought off, with a view to his engaging in the ministry. He was a good speaker, and his education had been liberal. In many respects, if the account given of him be correct, he bore a great resemblance to the much lamented Spencer of Liverpool. He won their hearts, both by his address in the pulpit and by his general behaviour; and he gave them encouragement to hope that he would

Shrewsbury; and was first convinced of the great importance of religion by hearing Mr. Whitefield when in Ireland. Few particulars are known of the early part of his life. For several years he preached among the Methodists; but having removed to Leeds in 1755, he left that body of people, and, with the concurrence and assistance of some friends, began to build a chapel. Mr. Whitefield, who was personally acquainted with him, at first expressed his disapprobation, and in passing by gave his opinion, that *Ichabod*, 'the glory is departed,' would soon be written upon it. Being some time after informed of the success of Mr. Edwards's labours in this place, he, with great modesty and humility, replied, "It is not the first time I have spoken like a *man*, implying an acknowledgment of his own mistakes and ignorance of the ways of God.

Mr. Edwards was a person of unaffected, warm piety; his views of Divine truths were clear, and his manner of explaining them forcible and eloquent. He died Feb. 17, 1785, aged 71. It is scarcely necessary here to relate the rapid extension of that cause in the town of Leeds, which he was the honoured instrument in establishing. 'Zion has indeed here lengthened her cords and strengthened her stakes.'

remain with them. But, to their great disappointment, a sudden change afterwards took place in his views; he told them he thought himself too young to assume the pastoral office, and that it was his desire to spend some time in preparatory study. They were still, however, unwilling to give up the idea of his settling among them. He left Bradford to pay a visit to his relations at Liverpool: as he continued there longer than they expected, being anxiously desirous to know his final determination, they deputed Mr. John Smith, and another person of their number, to wait upon him there. To their deep regret, they found that his affections were growing more and more cool towards them. His relations, being rather gay, persuaded him to abandon all thoughts of engaging in the ministry, so that he never returned. Several ministers of the same denomination preached occasionally among them. Of these, Mr. Thorpe was one of the most acceptable; but the circumstance just related threw such a damp over their spirits, that the plan of erecting a place of worship was relinquished, and not resumed during the life-time of many who then took so active a part.

The transient acquaintance which the subject of this memoir had with Mr. Hales, was of permanent advantage to him, as he was the means of directing his attention to the writings of the Rev. James Hervey, of which Mr. Hales himself was remarkably fond.

From those invaluable works, in the future periods of his life, he acknowledged himself to have received great advantage, both as a private Christian, and a minister. He imbibed the spirit and taste of his favourite author, both in admiring the beauties of na-