

MISSIONARY MAGAZINE;

OR,

EVANGELICAL INTELLIGENCER.

THE
GENERAL ASSEMBLY'S
MISSIONARY MAGAZINE;

OR,
EVANGELICAL INTELLIGENCER:

FOR 1806.

WILLIAM P. FARRAND, EDITOR.

VOL. II.

PHILADELPHIA:
PRINTED FOR, AND PUBLISHED BY, WILLIAM P. FARRAND, N^o 170,
MARKET-STREET.

FRY AND KAMMERER, PRINTERS.

.....
1806.

THE
ASSEMBLY'S MISSIONARY MAGAZINE;

OR
EVANGELICAL INTELLIGENCER.

VOL. II.

JANUARY, 1806.

No. I.

BIOGRAPHY.

Sketches of the Life of the Rev. Dr. ROBERT SMITH, Pastor of the Presbyterian Church at Pequea, in Lancaster County, in the state of Pennsylvania.

DOCTOR SMITH, who was so long distinguished in the churches of Pennsylvania as a preacher of the first eminence, as the superintendant of a respectable academy for the instruction of youth, and as a teacher of theology, was sprung from a Scotch family who had migrated to the city of Londonderry in Ireland, and afterwards passed over to America, while he was yet a child, about the year 1730. His ancestors, both by his father's and mother's side, were substantial farmers; and, for several generations, had been distinguished for a vein of good sense, and fervent piety, running through both families. The first period of Dr. Smith's life furnishes few materials to the biographer. He lived in retirement with his parents on the head waters of the river Brandywine, about forty miles from the city of Philadelphia. At the age of fifteen or sixteen years, he became a subject of that gracious influence which so eminently accompanied the preaching of the Rev. Mr. George Whitefield, during his first visit to the churches in America. Young Mr. Smith, who had a mind turned to reflection and reading, had his attention powerfully arrested, and his heart deeply penetrated by the truths of the gospel, under the discourses of that celebrated orator, and most pious minister of Jesus Christ. Having become a fervent believer in the doctrines of salvation, he conceived, at the same time, an ardent desire to qualify himself to preach to his fellow-sinners that precious gospel, the ineffable consolations of which he felt in his own soul. His pious parents readily concurred in his desire; and, with their permission, he placed himself under the instruction of the Rev. Samuel

THE DEATH OF VOLTAIRE.

MR. EDITOR,

THE following account of the death of Voltaire, the great apostle of infidelity, is extracted from the Abbé Baruel's *History of Jacobinism*. Should you think proper to insert it, such of your readers as may not have had access to that work will have an opportunity of contemplating the end of a man whose life was unremittingly employed in endeavours to *crush* Christ and his cause.

S. L.

It was during Voltaire's last visit to Paris, when his triumph was complete, and he had even feared that he should die with glory, amidst the acclamations of an infatuated theatre, that he was struck by the hand of providence, and fated to make a very different termination of his career.

In the midst of his triumphs a violent hemorrhage raised apprehensions for his life. D'Alembert, Diderot, and Marmontel, hastened to support his resolution in his last moments, but were only witnesses to their mutual ignominy, as well as to his own.

Here let not the historian fear exaggeration. Rage, remorse, reproach, and blasphemy, all accompany and characterize the long agony of the dying atheist.

His death, the most terrible that is ever recorded to have stricken the impious man, will not be denied by his companions in impiety. Their silence, however much they may wish to deny it, is the least of those corroborative proofs which could be adduced. Not one of the sophisters has ever dared to mention any sign given of resolution or tranquillity by the premier chief, during the space of three months, which elapsed from the time he was crowned in the theatre, until his decease. Such a silence expresses, how great their humiliation was in his death!

It was in his return from the theatre, and in the midst of the toils he was resuming, in order to acquire fresh applause, that Voltaire was warned, that the long career of his impiety was drawing to an end.

In spite of all the sophisters flocking around him in the first days of illness, he gave signs of wishing to return to the God whom he had so often blasphemed. He called for the priest who ministered to *him*, whom he had sworn to *crush*, under the appellation of the wretch.*

* It is well known that Voltaire had been accustomed, for many years, to call our blessed Saviour *The Wretch, l'Infame*, whom he vowed to *crush*. The conclusion of many of his letters is in these words: *Ecrasez l'Infame, Crush the wretch.*

His danger increasing, he wrote the following note to the Abbé Gaultier:

“ You had promised me, Sir, to come and hear me. I intreat you would take the trouble of calling as soon as possible.

(Signed)

VOLTAIRE.”

Paris, February, 1778.

A few days after, he wrote the following declaration, in presence of the same Abbé Gaultier, the Abbé Mignot, and the Marquis de Villeville, copied from the minutes deposited with M. Moinet, notary, at Paris.

“ I, the underwriter, declare, that for these four days past, having been afflicted with a vomiting of blood, at the age of eighty-four, and not having been able to drag myself to the church, the reverend the rector of St. Sulpice having been pleased to add to his good works that of sending to me the Abbé Gaultier, a priest, I confessed to him; and, if it pleases God to dispose of me, I die in the holy Catholic church, in which I was born; hoping that the divine mercy will deign to pardon all my faults. If ever I have scandalized the church, I ask pardon of God and of the church.

(Signed)

VOLTAIRE.

March 2, 1778.

“ In presence of the Abbé Mignot, my nephew; and the Marquis de Villeville, my friend.”

After the two witnesses had signed this declaration, Voltaire added these words, copied from the same minutes.

“ The Abbé Gaultier, my confessor, having apprized me that it was said among a certain set of people, “ I should protest against every thing that I did at my death;” I declare that I never made such a speech, and that it is an old jest, attributed long since to many of the learned, more enlightened than I am.”

Was this declaration a fresh instance of his former hypocrisy? for he had the mean hypocrisy, even in the midst of his efforts against christianity, to receive the sacrament regularly, and to do other acts of religion, merely to be able to deny his infidelity, if accused of it. After the explanations we have unfortunately seen him give of his exterior acts of religion, might there not be room for doubt? Be that as it may, there is a public homage paid to that religion in which he declared he meant to die, notwithstanding his having perpetually conspired against it during his life. This declaration is also signed by that same friend and adept, the Marquis de Villeville, to whom, eleven years ago, Voltaire was wont to write, “ Conceal your march from the enemy, in your endeavours to crush the Wretch!”

Voltaire had permitted this declaration to be carried to the rector of St. Sulpice, and to the Archbishop of Paris, to know whether it would be sufficient. When the Abbé Gaultier returned with the answer, it was impossible for him to gain admittance to the patient. The conspirators had strained every nerve to hinder the chief from consummating his recantation, and every avenue was shut to the priest, whom Voltaire himself had sent for. The demons haunted every access; rage succeeded to fury, and fury to rage again, during the remainder of his life.

Then it was that D'Alembert, Diderot, and about twenty others of the conspirators, who had beset his apartment, never approached him, but to witness their own ignominy. He would often curse them, and exclaim, "Retire! It is you that have brought me to my present state! Begone! I could have done without you all; but you could not exist without me! And what a wretched glory have you produced me?"

Then would succeed the horrid remembrance of his conspiracy. They could hear him, the prey of anguish and dread, alternately supplicating or blaspheming that God whom he had conspired against, and in plaintive accents would he cry out, "Oh Christ! Oh Jesus Christ!" and then complain that he was abandoned by God and man. The hand which had traced in ancient writ the sentence of an impious and reviling king, seemed to trace before his eyes, *Crush them, do crush the Wretch*. In vain he turned his head away; the time was coming apace when he was to appear before the tribunal of him whom he had blasphemed; and his physicians, particularly M. Tronchin, calling in to administer relief, thunderstruck, retire, *declaring the death of the impious man to be terrible indeed*.

The pride of the conspirators would willingly have suppressed these declarations, but it was in vain. The Mareschal of Richelieu flies from the bed-side, declaring it to be a sight too terrible to be sustained; and M. Tronchin, that *the furies of Orestes could give but a faint idea of those of Voltaire*.



ON THE DEATH OF DAVID HUME.

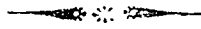
THE arts and falsehood of infidels in propagating their destructive principles are but little understood by christians in general, and indeed they are often so dark and detestable that a charitable mind is scarcely able to believe them real. It appears, by the statement of the Abbé Baruel, that Voltaire approached his end

with horror, and was endeavouring to return into the bosom of the church in which he had been educated, when his infidel friends, particularly D'Alembert and Diderot, kept from him the priest whom he wished to see. It is a well known fact, that Diderot himself, when he came to die, had the same compunctions, and was treated in a similar manner. It appears, in short, that the fraternity of deists are not willing to trust their system, to trust themselves, nor to trust each other, to the impressions which may be produced by the near approach of death. Some have, as Voltaire intimates had been affirmed of him, protested *beforehand*, against all they should utter in a near view of death: and it seems to have been adopted, as a kind of *system*, by the infidels of Europe, to exclude christian witnesses from the death-bed scenes of their distinguished friends, that thus the truth might be concealed and representations be made favourable to their own cause. From the statement which Adam Smith has published of the death of David Hume, and from the manner in which it has been treated in Europe, both by the friends and enemies of infidelity, the writer of this article was induced to believe that statement to be correct. But on suggesting this idea to the late Dr. Charles Nisbet, whose veracity and whose accuracy of information and narration were singularly unimpeachable, the Dr. replied nearly in these words: "Let David Hume die as he might, the manner of his death was not personally known to Adam Smith. It is a pretty good specimen of infidel friendship, but yet I know it is true, that though Hume's house was in sight of Adam Smith's, he never saw him for several weeks* before his death. Hume's infidel friends were careful to keep from him any witnesses but those of their own choice or character, and we do not know how he died, for they have reported what they pleased." This information the writer believes to be strictly correct, and the opinion of judicious friends has corroborated his own, that it is of sufficient importance to be given to the public—Not because it is believed, that either infidels or christians prove their sentiments to be *true*, by the manner in which they view them at death. At most, they prove no more, as bishop Watson has well remarked, than that *they really believe what they can abide by at that "honest hour."* But it is plain, that infidels themselves do actually lay great stress on this circumstance, by their endeavours to suppress what is unfavourable to their cause, and by their zeal to publish and blazon

* The writer thinks that six weeks were mentioned, but he is not certain.

what they think will serve it. And it is equally manifest, that they find themselves encumbered with no easy task, and furnished with very scanty materials for their work, when they set about the vindication of their system by bringing it to the death-bed testimony of its friends and abettors. Hence their endeavours to make much of a little, to conceal the truth, and to furnish out tales of composure and serenity, which probably are greatly coloured, if not entirely fabricated. Do they wish to combat christians on their own ground? Let the following facts be attended to, and it will be seen, that, after all, they do not attempt a fair competition. Christians, when they come to die, are often afraid that they have not been *sincere* in the religion they have professed. But you cannot show *one instance* of a christian in these circumstances, whose fear arises from the apprehension that the system he has embraced, the gospel of Christ, is not *true in itself*. He is then, more than ever, satisfied that his *religious system* is true. He is only afraid that he has not *lived up to it*. On the contrary, the infidel often fears, because he then suspects that *his system is not true*, and that he is going to be punished because he *has lived up to it*.

G.



THOUGHTS ON SLOTH.

SLOTH and self-indulgence are extremely natural to man. Whoever has informed himself respecting the character of our fellow creatures in their most savage, which is, unquestionably, their most natural state, will be prepared to admit the truth of this observation. The native Indian, as Dr. Robertson remarks, will lie on the ground for many days, and even weeks together; and will only shake off his sloth when excited by appetite, or raised by some violent gust of passion. The case of persons in civilized society is not altogether different. Their artificial wants, indeed, are multiplied, and in consequence of these a system of more permanent industry is produced; but when appetite, as well as ambition and vanity are satisfied, even civilized man, except so far as religion has new created him, relapses into his native sloth.

Let us proceed to point out the manner in which the spirit of idleness and self-indulgence shows itself in this country among the higher and middling ranks of life.

How many hours are needlessly spent by some on their beds; by others in the most idle and frivolous conversation; by others in reading, with a view to the mere gratification of the fancy; by others in unprofitable amusements, in amusements, we mean,