

## RELIGIOUS COMMUNICATIONS.

*To the Editor of the Christian Observer.*

BURNET's account of Archbishop Leighton is probably to be found in an abridged form in various biographical compilations. I have transcribed it entire, with the exception of such inconsiderable portions as are interwoven with details of the "Comprehension Scheme," &c., but which do not afford any farther illustration of the prelate's character, than what will be found below.

EXEMPLUM PRÆBET.

## ACCOUNT OF ARCHBISHOP LEIGHTON.

"He was accounted a saint from his youth up. He had great quickness of parts, a lively apprehension, with a charming vivacity of thought and expression. He had the greatest command of the purest Latin that ever I knew in any man. He was a master both of Greek and Hebrew; and of the whole compass of theological learning, chiefly in the study of the Scriptures. But that which excelled all the rest was, he was possessed with the highest and noblest sense of divine things that ever I saw in any man. He had no regard to his person, unless it was to mortify it by a constant low diet, that was like a perpetual fast. He had a contempt both of wealth and reputation. He seemed to have the lowest thoughts of himself possible, and to desire that all other persons should think as meanly of him as he did himself. He bore all sorts of ill usage and reproach, like a man that took pleasure in it. He had so subdued the natural heat of his temper, that in a great variety of acci-

dents, and in a course of twenty-two years' intimate conversation with him, I never observed the least sign of passion, but upon one single occasion. He brought himself into so composed a gravity, that I never saw him laugh, and but seldom smile. And he kept himself in such a constant recollection, that I do not remember that ever I heard him say one idle word. There was a visible tendency in all he said to raise his own mind, and those he conversed with, to serious reflections. He seemed to be in a perpetual meditation. And, though the whole course of his life was strict and ascetical, yet he had nothing of the sourness of temper that generally possesses men of that sort. He was the freest from superstition, of censuring others, or of imposing his own methods on them, possible; so that he did not so much as recommend them to others. He said, there was a diversity of tempers; and every man was to watch over his own, and turn it in the best manner he could. His thoughts were lively; off out of the way, and surprizing; yet just and genuine: and he had laid together in his memory the greatest treasure of the best and wisest of all the ancient sayings of the heathens as well as Christians, that I have ever known any man master of; and he used them in the aptest manner possible.

"He had been bred up with the greatest aversion imaginable to the whole frame of the Church of England. From Scotland his father sent him to travel. He spent some years in France, and spoke that language like one born there. He came afterwards and settled in Scotland,

be procured in such a place would give less disturbance. And he obtained what he desired; for he died at the Bell Inn in Warwick Lane. Another circumstance was, that while he was bishop in Scotland he took what his tenants were pleased to pay him; so that there was a great arrear due, which was raised slowly by one whom he left in trust with his affairs there; and the last payment that he could expect from thence was returned up to him about six weeks before his death; so that his provisions and journey failed both at once. And thus in the several parts of this history I have given a very particular account of every thing relating to this apostolical man; whose life I would have writ, if I had not found proper places to bring the most material parts of it within this work. I reckon, that I owed this to that perfect friendship and fatherly care with which he had always treated me."

*To the Editor of the Christian Observer.*

I OBSERVED, some years ago, an inquiry in the *Christian Observer*, respecting the miracle mentioned in *Joshua x. 13*: "And the sun stood still, and the moon stayed," &c. Some remarks thereon appeared at the time, but they did not, in my apprehension, tend much to obviate the objections of those who are disposed to reject every thing related in the Bible which may be deemed miraculous. Some of the miracles recorded in Holy Writ, at which the sceptic may cast his darts, are, however, confirmed by the traditions and histories of nations very remote from the land of Judea; and that this is the case in the instance before us, appears by the following note on this text, in Purver's translation of the Bible, printed in 1764, and which therefore seems to me to deserve a place in the *Christian Observer*.

W. T.

"Reckoning this a year after the

Israelites entered Canaan, it amounts, by my tables, to 556 years after the death of Noah. Now the Chinese history has a tradition that the sun did not set in ten days, while the emperor Yao reigned. Days may be thought a mistake for hours, and both miracles to be the same; especially as the computation agrees: for after the decease of Fohi, their first emperor, who is counted to be Noah, the time is recorded thus:

	Y.	Am.
"Xinum reigned.....	140	—140
"Hoamti .....	100	—240
"Xaohao .....	84	—324
"Chuenhio .....	78	—402
"Tico .....	70	—472
"Chi .....	8	—480
"Yao .....	100	—580

"So that this concurs with the Scriptures, and may be justly esteemed a testimony for it. Besides, China is so far eastward, that the time of the day there may be reckoned upwards of four hours later than in Canaan; which answers better still, as the Chinese report seems to intimate that the sun was towards its setting there. And according to the Scripture it was not just an artificial day, or twelve hours; so may rather be thought less than more, which that day itself is in the winter part of the year. The Chinese relation, on the other hand, having ten, might arise from this; that the sun was not there observed to stand still till an hour or more, which might easily be the case, especially if it was cloudy; and that may seem likely too, because they have no mention made of the moon. However, dials would not inform them how long it was, and they had scarce other instruments for it, besides such as hour-glasses. Thus, if we particularly examine and compare the accounts, they appear the more agreeable.

"The Copernican system of astronomy being now received and demonstrated, by it the moon's standing still may be accounted for, as that was useless with the sun: for the diurnal rotation of the earth, by

which it turns round like a wheel, being stopped, if the moon continued its course, the position of it to the earth, which it is about a month going round, would be altered but little: nay, the moon being a satellite of the earth, might stand still with it, as an effect of the earth's cessation, or that their mutual relation to one another, and the other heavenly bodies, might not be destroyed; not for any benefit it would be then to the Israelites. Thus the modern system of the universe, and the Scripture account, agree together, and mutually confirm each other. As it will be allowed the notion then was, that the sun went round the earth; if this piece of history had been fictitious, would not the authors, in consequence of that notion, have represented the sun only standing still, since there was no need of the moon? Whereas, that the sun might seem to stand still (in like manner as the moon seemed a light, Gen. i. 16), the earth really must; and so the moon would seem to stand likewise. This shews that the fact was true, since it could not be invented, and that Joshua did it by divine direction.

"The pitiful objections to this noble miracle—viz. of Maimonides, that God only enabled Joshua and his army to do as much execution in one day as would have taken up two (More Nevoch, part ii. cap: 39); of Spinosa, that it was nothing but a refraction of the sun's rays by the sky (Tract. Theolog. Politic. cap. 2.); of Grotius, that it is omitted in Hebrews viii. put for xi. (though mentioned Hab. iii. 11.); not to mention others more ridiculous, can really deserve no answer. Peirerus, as a person of extraordinary skill for making the miracles of Scripture natural, supposes it was the twilight, after sun-set, which Joshua mistook for the sun (Præadamit. lib. iv. 6.): whereas, without insisting on the sun's being in the middle of the sky, his staying under the earth to make the twilight longer than usual, would be as much a mi-

racle as to stay above it; and to create a new light might be a greater. Besides, the Israelites pursued their enemies; then returned to Makkedah; took it, and, slaying the five kings, hanged them up, some time before sun-set (ver. 19. 28.) To conclude; Le Clerc, who seems to have laboured it most, objects further, among other wretched trifling shifts, that Joshua would more probably pray for a longer day at sun-set than at noon: which would not invalidate the miracle, if it had been so: but the Israelites might not have had faith enough, upon Joshua's speaking to the sun to stand still at sun-set, then to have dispersed, and pursued their enemies to their several cities, for fear of dangers in the night. To the pretence that the same slaughter might have been made in two days as in that one, may be opposed, what is said by the Jews, that it was the day before the sabbath, as in Pirke Eliez. 52. However, two days would not do instead of that one; for, supposing the Amorites had been beat the first day, the second would not have served for pursuing them, since they might have got away in the night between: moreover, the terror of such a wonderful thing might be of great use to discourage the yet numerous enemies, according to what had been before (chap. ii. 9, 10, 11, and v. 1.); as well as encourage the Lord's people, and engage them to thankfulness and obedience, besides gloriously displaying the power and providence of God to future and perpetual ages."—*Purver's Bible*, vol. i. p. 292.

For the Christian Observer.

ON THE NATURE AND SOURCE OF JOY  
IN GOD.

I know of no rule in religion more important than this; that we should form our ideas of spiritual subjects only from Scripture, and not from the opinions and customs prevalent in the world. Do we wish to un-