

THE
CHRISTIAN ADVOCATE.

FEBRUARY, 1830.

Religious Communications.

LECTURES ON THE SHORTER CATECHISM OF THE WESTMINSTER ASSEMBLY OF DIVINES—ADDRESSED TO YOUTH.

LECTURE XLVI.

In the present Lecture we are to consider the reasons annexed to the fourth commandment, which are,—“God’s allowing us six days of the week for our own employment, his challenging a special propriety in the seventh, his own example, and his blessing the Sabbath day.”

So much that in strictness belongs to this answer of the Catechism has been unavoidably anticipated, that little remains to be added to what has been heretofore said.

We have already remarked, that the precept before us is introduced in a singular manner by the word *Remember*: and you will now notice, that it is enforced by *more reasons*, than are attached to any other command of the decalogue. From this it is evident that God foresaw, what has always been witnessed, that mankind, corrupted and debased by sin, would be prone either entirely to forget the day of holy rest, or to disregard the duties which belong to it; and that, at the same time, he intended to teach us, by the special guards placed around this precept, that its due observance is highly important, and that the sin of transgressing it is entirely inexcusable.

VOL. VIII.—Ch. Adv.

Of the four reasons annexed to the commandment, the first is, that God has “allowed us six days of the week for our own employment.” This, we have already had occasion to observe, is as large an apportionment of time for uninterrupted servile labour, as comports with the vigorous and healthful state either of man or beast. Time, like every thing else we enjoy, is the gift of God; and when, in making this gift, he has bestowed as liberal a portion for our employment in worldly concerns, as is consistent with our own comfort and happiness, even in the present life, we surely have reason, not only to be satisfied, but thankful also, to the bountiful giver of all good. Had he claimed a larger portion for his immediate worship, we should have had no cause to complain; but when he has taken no more than is most in accordance with our own advantage, his claim to this is manifestly supported and sanctioned, not merely by authority, but likewise by every principle of reason, and every sentiment of gratitude. How unworthily of a rational, moral, and accountable being, does that man act, who refuses to yield a seventh part of his time to the God who gave him the whole; and from whose bounty and beneficence he derives every present enjoyment, and every future hope!

The second reason for the obser-
H

to protect the Indians where they now reside; and if Congress will not, or cannot, exercise this authority now, we verily believe they will not exercise it when the white settlements shall surround the proposed Indian reservation—nay, we believe that what shall wrongfully be done now, will be pleaded as a precedent for then doing it again. Our hope and earnest prayer therefore is, that He who has the hearts of all men in his hands, will influence those with whom is the disposal of this momentous and most interesting concern, by a reverence for his Sovereign authority, a regard to the rights of human nature, the law of nations, and some of the very principles on which we contended for our own independence, to do justice to the Indians; and not to expose our happy land to the sore visitations of heaven, and tarnish our national character before the whole civilized world, by a forcible removal of them, or a refusal to grant them complete protection in their present abode.

From the Evangelical Magazine.

PILATE'S QUESTION.

What is truth? The fickle Roman
Ask'd, nor waited for reply.
Question this of mighty omen!
Shall I also pass it by?
No! my Lord; I'll turn me to it,
Anxious all its depths to sound;
Let me humbly, closely view it,
Till I have the answer found.

What is truth? The only token,
Lent to guide our blinded race,
Is the word which God hath spoken
By the heralds of his grace.
Thence we learn how helpless strangers,
Guilty rebels such as we,
May escape ten thousand dangers,
Burst our fetters and be free.

What is truth? That man is mortal,
Wretched, feeble, and deprav'd;
Dying still at mercy's portal,
Yet unwilling to be sav'd:
Oft to safety's path invited,
Prone from it to wander far;
'Midst the blaze of noon benighted,
With himself and God at war.

What is truth? That He, who made us—
He, who all our weakness knows—
Stoop'd himself from heaven to aid us,
Bear our guilt and feel our woes:
Like the lamb the peasant slaughters,
See him unresisting led;
'Midst the tears of Judah's daughters,
Mock'd, and number'd with the dead!

Yes, my soul! thy lost condition
Brought the gentle Saviour low;
Hast thou felt one hour's contrition
For those sins which pierc'd him so?
Dost thou bear the love thou owest
For such proof of grace divine?
Bold I answer, Lord, thou knowest
That this heart is wholly thine!

Long, indeed, too long I wander'd
From the path thy children tread;
Long my strength and substance squander'd,

Seeking that which was not bread;
Now,—though flesh may disavow it,
Now,—though sense no glory see,
In thy might, my God, I vow it,
Ne'er again to turn from Thee!

Edinburgh.

H. F.

Review.

MEMOIR, CORRESPONDENCE AND MISCELLANIES, FROM THE PAPERS OF THOMAS JEFFERSON, *Edited by Thomas Jefferson Randolph.* 4 vols. 8vo. Charlottesville. Published by F. Carr & Co. 1829.

We do not propose to enter into a detailed review of these four closely printed octavo volumes—The limits, as well as the design of

our work, forbid such an undertaking. The religious, or rather the irreligious character of the publication, will claim our principal attention. We have read the first volume throughout with much care; and with equal care have perused selected parts of the other three, and taken a general view of their entire contents. We state this, because we think a reviewer should

always tell his readers what he has read, and what he has not read, of any book of which he attempts to give the character; unless he means to show them, by the manner in which his review is conducted, that he has faithfully plodded through the whole.

The first volume of the work before us contains a Memoir of Mr. Jefferson, of 89 pages, written by himself; an appendix to the memoir, of 56 pages; then a series of letters, entitled Correspondence, with an Appendix, which, together with an Index, fill the remainder of the volume of 446 pages. The other volumes, which are a little larger than the first, contain, in the language of the editor,

"I. Letters from 1775, to his death, addressed to a very great variety of individuals; and comprising a range of information, and in many instances, regular essays, on subjects of History, Politics, Science, Morals and Religion. The letters to him are omitted except in a very few instances, where it was supposed their publication would be generally acceptable, from the important character of the communication, or the general interest in the views of the writer; or where the whole or a part of a letter had been filed, for the better understanding of the answer. In these cases, such letters are inserted in the body of the work, or in an appendix, as their importance, and connexion with the subject discussed by the author, rendered advisable. And where inferences from the tenor of the answer, might in any way affect the correspondent, his name does not appear in the copy filed. The historical parts of the letters, and the entire publication, have the rare value of coming from one of the chief actors himself, and of being written, not for the publick eye, but in the freedom and confidence of private friendship.

"II. Notes of conversations, whilst Secretary of State, with Pre-

sident Washington, and others high in office; and memoranda of Cabinet Councils, committed to paper on the spot, and filed; the whole, with the explanatory and miscellaneous additions, showing the views and tendencies of parties, from the years 1789 to 1800.

"Appended to the publication, is a 'Fac simile' of the rough draught of the Declaration of Independence, in which will be seen the erasures, interlineations and additions of Dr. Franklin and Mr. Adams, two of the appointed Committee, in the hand-writing of each."

Returning to the memoir, with which the first volume commences, we have to say, that we are friendly to auto-biography; and were glad to find this narrative of a considerable part of Mr. Jefferson's life from his own pen. "It commences—remarks his editor—with circumstantial notices of his earliest life; and is continued to his arrival in New York, in March, 1790, when he entered on the duties of the department of State, of which he had just been appointed Secretary."—It begins thus:—

"January 6, 1821. At the age of 77, I begin to make some memoranda, and state some recollection of dates and facts concerning myself, for my own more ready reference, and for the information of my family."

Mr. J., after his grammar school education, entered William and Mary College, in the spring of 1760, where he continued two years. He studied law under the celebrated George Wythe, one of the signers with himself of the declaration of American Independence, and with whom he maintained, till the death of that distinguished man, a warm and uninterrupted friendship. After practising law at the bar of Virginia for two years, he became, by the choice of the county in which he lived, a member of the legislature of that then British colony, and so continued till the period of the revolu-

tion; and in the mean time, followed his profession as a lawyer, "till the revolution shut up the courts of justice." In January, 1772, he was married "to Martha Skelton, widow of Bathurst Skelton, and daughter of John Wayles, then twenty-three years old." At the death of his wife's father, he received, as her portion, a sum about equal to his own patrimony, and which he says "doubled the case of our circumstances."*

Mr. J. was one of the most active members in the legislature of Virginia, in opposing the claims of the mother country on her colonies. His own representation is, that his zeal against British assumptions carried him somewhat farther than he found any one willing to accompany him, except his friend Wythe. He was not a member of the first Congress, which met in Philadelphia in 1774. In the second, which convened on the 10th of May, 1775, and in which he took his seat on the 21st of June, it is known that he acted a very conspicuous part; although, as he states, he was, with the exception of one individual, the youngest member of that illustrious body. The memoir gives a detailed account of the measures and deliberations which preceded the declaration of independence. The committee appointed to make the draught of that important instrument, he tells us, consisted of John Adams, Dr. Franklin, Roger Sherman, Robert R. Livingston, and himself; and that, at their request, he drew it up. A copy of this draught, as it came from his pen, with a distinct indication of the omissions and amendments it received before its adoption, is given

* It appears that his wife died a short time before he went to France in 1783, leaving three daughters; the youngest of whom did not long survive her mother. The eldest accompanied her father to France; and the second, after the death of her sister, was sent thither also, at the request of her father.

in the memoir; and the 4th vol. is closed with a fac simile of this far-famed paper, with interlineations in their own hand-writing of Dr. Franklin and Mr. Adams, the only members of the committee who thought proper to propose alterations. The other changes, which are pretty numerous, but which after all leave to Mr. J. more than three-fourths of his original copy, appear to have been inserted while it was under discussion in Congress. No one needs to be informed that it was approved and signed on the 4th of July, 1776.

We have given the foregoing abridgment of facts as stated in the memoir, up to the last mentioned date, because we thought it would be gratifying to our readers to be acquainted with the early history of Mr. J. His subsequent life is more generally known. We shall therefore only take the epitome of it, as given by himself, in Vol. IV. p. 434, when he asked permission of the legislature of Virginia to sell his property by lottery. After mentioning that he had been a member in the colonial legislature, he adds—"I was thence sent to the old Congress. Then employed two years, with Mr. Pendleton and Mr. Wythe, on the revisal and reduction to a single code of the whole body of the British statutes, the acts of our Assembly, and certain parts of the common law. Then elected Governor—Next to the legislature, and to Congress again. Sent to Europe as minister Plenipotentiary. Appointed Secretary of State to the new government. Elected Vice President and President. And lastly, a visiter and Rector of the University. In these different offices, with scarcely any interval between them, I have been in the publick service now sixty-one years; and during a far greater part of the time, in foreign countries or in other States"—He died, as the world knows, on the 4th of July, 1826.

The larger part of the first volume, and the whole of the three that follow, save the concluding part of the fourth, consists of letters, with some notes and references to certain publick documents—all this the editor denominates "Correspondence." The letters, however, to which Mr. J. replies, and those that were sent in answer to his, are, as the editor states and we regret, not given, except in a very few instances. More than 80 pages, at the close of the fourth volume, are devoted to what are called "*Anas*," containing explanations, memoranda, notes of conversations, &c. &c.

The work before us, from the great variety of subjects discussed, exhibits Mr. J. as a statesman, a diplomatist, and a scholar, and in each of these characters he certainly appears to advantage; nor are we disposed to mention those minor defects, which we think might be pointed out in his political and literary productions, farther than as they may fall in our way in animadverting on his ethicks.

We suppose it probable, although it is not intimated in the preface of the editor, that Mr. J. intended the whole of the papers which compose the volumes before us, for a posthumous publication. In our judgment, his reputation, in every view, would have been consulted, by consigning more than a fourth part of them to everlasting oblivion. He, or his editor, has thought otherwise; and has chosen to submit them indiscriminately to the publick. No one therefore has a right to complain if they are made the subject of just criticism. We will endeavour to offer our remarks with Christian temper and candour—Not meaning by this, however, that we shall not express our mind freely; but that we will try to misrepresent nothing, to exaggerate nothing, and not to indulge in feelings or language unbecoming our character as a *Christian Advocate*.

VOL. VIII.—*Ch. Adv.*

Our first remark is, that if our Declaration of Independence had been published without an amendment of Mr. J.'s draught, it would not have contained that proper and solemn "appeal to the Supreme Judge of the world, for the rectitude of their intentions," made by the representatives of our nation, as a preface to the formal act by which we were separated from the parent state; nor any expression of "a firm reliance on the protection of divine providence," for being carried through the hazardous contest which they saw before them, when they pledged to each other "their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honour." In examining the fac simile of the original paper, it would seem that Dr. Franklin was the author of the first amendment here indicated. His name appears in the margin a little above this interlineation, but whether it refers only to the correction of a word or two, to which it is opposite, or extends farther, we are not certain. Be this as it may, it has led us to reflect on the different course which he took, in regard to religion, from that which was pursued by Mr. Jefferson. The Dr., we fear, had no belief in divine revelation. But he never openly impugned it; he never became the bitter reviler of religious sects; but kept his infidelity as much as he could to himself. He was the defender and patron of the celebrated Whitfield; he seems to have had a practical sense of the providence of God; and he always wished to mix the solemnities of religion with publick acts. It appears to be well authenticated, that when the deliberations of the national convention, by which the federal constitution was formed, were brought to a stand, by the unyielding temper of its members, he very seriously proposed that a clergyman should be called in, to lead them to seek counsel and direction from heaven, in solemn prayer. The course of Mr. J., as the sequel will

I.

show, was as opposite to this as the east to the west; and we do not owe it to him that our national appeal to arms and declaration of independence, was not made without any recognition of the superintending and all disposing providence of God.

Yet after all, we find that Mr. J. did call in the aid of religion on one occasion, when he found it would serve a political purpose. In his memoir, which it will be recollected was written when he was 77 years old, he gives, in the true style of Gibbon or Hume, the following curious account of the method taken by himself and a number of his friends, to excite the people of Virginia to a defence of their rights, at the commencement of our revolutionary struggle.

“We were under conviction of the necessity of arousing our people from the lethargy into which they had fallen, as to passing events; and thought that the appointment of a day of general fasting and prayer, would be most likely to call up and alarm their attention. No example of such a solemnity had existed since the days of our distresses in the war of '55, since which a new generation had grown up. With the help, therefore, of Rushworth, whom we rummaged over for the revolutionary precedents and forms of the Puritans of that day, preserved by him, we cooked up a resolution, somewhat modernizing their phrases, for appointing the 1st day of June, on which the port bill was to commence, for a day of fasting, humiliation and prayer, to implore Heaven to avert from us the evils of civil war, to inspire us with firmness in support of our rights, and to turn the hearts of the King and Parliament to moderation and justice. To give greater emphasis to our proposition, we agreed to wait the next morning on Mr. Nicholas, whose grave and religious character was more in unison with the tone of our resolution, and to solicit him to move it. We accordingly went to him in the morning. He moved it the same day: the 1st of June was proposed; and it passed without opposition.

* * * * *

“We returned home, and in our several counties invited the clergy to meet assemblies of the people on the 1st of June, to perform the ceremonies of the day, and to address to them discourses suited to

the occasion. The people met generally, with anxiety and alarm in their countenances, and the effect of the day, through the whole colony, was like a shock of electricity, arousing every man and placing him erect and solidly on his centre. They chose, universally, delegates for the convention.”—Vol. I. pp. 5, 6.

We have a few remarks to make on what we have here quoted: and first of all, we ask our readers what is the appellation they give to a man who, to carry a point, gravely makes use of religion, in some of its most solemn rites and appeals, when in his heart he considers the whole as a farce—and then has the face to tell the world that he has done so? If a clergyman should do this, we know that men in general, and none more readily than such men as Mr. J., would brand him as a most detestable hypocrite, and a most reckless profligate—and we think they would do perfectly right. But we want to know whether what would be thus base in a clergyman, aggravated, as we admit it would be, by the nature of his vocation, is altogether innocent in a politician? is rather a matter of boast than of shame? We want to know, too, whether it is very consistent for men who do this, to be the readiest of all to charge the friends, and especially the ministers of religion, with almost an indiscriminate hypocrisy—“Physician heal thyself.”

Our next remark is, that Mr. J. here admits, that at the commencement of our revolution, the influence of religion and the clergy, effected that which, without their aid, he and his brother politicians could scarcely have effected. This was indeed the fact. But for the religion of our country—the spirit it infused, and the habits it had formed and cherished—our revolution, instead of being orderly, and comparatively bloodless, would have resembled that of France. And but for the influence of the clergy, the people never could have been simultaneously roused to exertion, nor their spirits have been cheered and their

courage sustained, through the trying conflict which ensued. We well remember the times of which we write, and we know that we state the simple truth. Yes, and among all the clergy of our land, there were none more universally and ardently attached to the cause of their country, or more zealous and efficient in advocating and promoting every patriotick plan and effort, than

those of the Presbyterian and Congregational churches. Yet these are the men whom Mr. J., in the work before us, thinks he cannot reprobate with sufficient severity; the men on whom he exhausts the whole vocabulary of vituperation and of opprobrious epithets and appellations.

(To be continued.)

Literary and Philosophical Intelligence, etc.

Talipot Tree of Jaffna.—The Talipot tree is one of the most remarkable of the palms, (if it be properly classed with them, as it has been by some,) but it is of very rare occurrence; and has been well described by Mr. Spaulding in his journal from this mission. It is usually somewhat taller and larger than the palmyra, is more uniformly erect, and has a much wider spread leaf at top. The circumference of this leaf is indeed such as to cover six or eight persons from the rain when spread, and yet it is so light as to be easily carried in the hand, as it often is, in the shape of a long fan. Natives of distinction often have these umbrella fans handsomely ornamented, borne over their heads by a servant. The tree blossoms and bears fruit but once in its life, and that at the end of about 40 years. The sheath which envelops the flower is very large, and shoots up from the centre of the leaf crowned top, to the height of 15 or 20 feet. When it bursts, it is said to make an explosion like the report of a cannon. Afterwards, it shoots forth branches, spreading on every side, and dividing into innumerable stems, like tassels on the top of Indian corn, on which are beautiful yellow flowers, of a strong smell. The whole tuft is a magnificent cone, near thirty feet in height and half that in diameter. The flowers are succeeded by a small fruit the size of a cherry, but of no use, except to propagate the tree. It is, however, remarkable as an instance of the luxuriance of nature, that, though this singular tree bears fruit but once, and then dies, it then produces seed enough to cover a large tract of country with its progeny.—*Mr. Winslow's Missionary Journal.*

The Great Earthquake in Calabria in 1783.—The boding terrors exhibited before the earthquake by the animal world were remarkable. Man alone seemed to be exempt from all foreknowledge of the approaching calamity, and causes which

excited evident distress and panick in the whole brute creation, produced in him neither physical nor moral change. The effect upon animals was infinitely diversified. In some the apprehension was evinced earlier, and with vehement and rapidly succeeding emotions: while in others it was later, slower, and less demonstrative. A short time before the first shock, and during the whole period of the great shocks, the fishes along the coast of Calabria Ultra appeared on the surface in a state of stupor, and were caught in unusual quantities. Wild birds flew screaming and in obvious alarm through the air, and were caught in traps and nets with increased facility; while geese, pigeons, and all other domestic fowls, exhibited the same degree of terror. Dogs and asses betrayed an earlier and stronger consciousness than any other quadrupeds. They chased about in wild and staring terror, and the air rang with their horrid howlings and brayings. Horses, oxen and mules, neighed, roared, and shook in every limb; pointed their ears forward, and their eyes rolled and glared around with terror and suspicion. When the terrible first shock was felt, they braced every limb, and endeavoured to support themselves by spreading their legs widely asunder; but many were nevertheless thrown down. Some of them took to flight immediately before the shock, but, soon as they felt the earth heaving under them, paused, and stood motionless and bewildered. Pigs appeared less conscious than any other animal of approaching danger. Cats, although not so early sensible of it as dogs and asses, were more demonstrative. Their backs rose, and their fur bristled up in terror. Their eyes became blood-shot and watery, and they set up a horrible and doleful screaming. Thus foretold by the brute creation, the first shock was more immediately preceded by a sultry shower—the wind howled and the sea