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A

SERMON,

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

NEW-YORK MISSIONARY SOCIETY,

AT THEIR ANNUAL MEETING, APRIL 6th, 1802.

BY SAMUEL MILLER, A. M.

ONE OF THE MINISTERS OF THE UNITED PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCHES IN THE CITY OF NEW-YORK.

TO WHICH ARE ADDED,

THE ANNUAL REPORT OF THE DIRECTORS,

AND OTHER PAPERS RELATING TO AMERICAN MISSIONS.

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*At a Meeting of the New-York Missionary
Society, April 7, 1802,*

RESOLVED,

THAT the thanks of the Society be presented to the Rev. SAMUEL MILLER, for his Sermon preached before them last evening, and that he be requested to furnish a copy thereof for publication.

Extract from the Minutes,

PETER WILSON, Clerk.

A SERMON, &c.

HABAKKUK ii. 3.

For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry.

THE dispensations of Providence toward the children of Israel were intended to give a general exhibition of the heart of man, and of the character and principles of the Divine Government. The deliverance of that chosen people from Egyptian bondage, by the power of the Most High; their journey through the wilderness; the trials which they were called to sustain in every part of their course; their conflicts with numerous and powerful enemies; their perverse departures from God; their gracious supports and restorations; the alternate scenes of despondency and encouragement through which they passed; and their final triumphant entrance into the promised land, were designed, by infinite wisdom, as typical representations of the various steps by which individual saints, and the Church in general, are conducted, amidst temptations, dangers, and backslidings, through the wilderness of this world, to the consummation

of their glory, in the heavenly Canaan. Hence the Apostle, having recounted some of the sins of Israel, and the punishments which they endured, informs us that *all these things happened unto them for examples; and are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.**

But while we learn weighty lessons of instruction from the history of the Israelites; while we read, in every page of their annals, the corruption and perverseness of the human heart; the evil of departing from God; the wisdom and justice of the Divine Government; and the absolute necessity of holiness, in order to social and individual felicity; it is also our privilege to partake of the consolations wherewith they were comforted. To them were promises given as well as unto us. To them circumstances of discouragement arose, under the delay of God's merciful visitation, as well as at the present period; and to them the Prophet *Habakkuk* was commissioned to give the renewed and precious assurance of the divine mercy and faithfulness which we find in the passage under consideration.

The precise time at which *Habakkuk* ministered in his prophetic character is not certainly known. It is generally supposed that the prophecy from which the text is chosen was delivered during the reign of *Manassah*, when wickedness abounded, and when destruction, on account of this wickedness, was hastening on Judea, by means of the *Chaldeans*, a fierce and terrible nation. But at

whatever period it was written, it is plain the Prophet speaks of a time of great degeneracy and distress; when dark occurrences, and still darker prospects, overshadowed the chosen tribes; and when they stood in peculiar need of comforting intimations from their heavenly King. Accordingly, in the passage before us rich consolation is suggested. In the preceding chapter the Prophet had complained to God of the afflictions which had been brought on his people, and of the heavy burdens under which they groaned. In answer to this complaint, God reveals to him that distresses still more dreadful were about to come upon them, for which it was their duty to prepare; but announces, at the same time, the approach of a day of deliverance. He informs him that the proud Chaldeans should not be permitted to carry their work of oppression and destruction farther than was necessary to correct his people, and answer his gracious designs; and that when these purposes should be attained, he would arrest them in their cruel course; destroy their power; raise up his oppressed and mourning people; and accomplish all the promises in which he had caused them to hope.

By the word *vision*, in this passage, we are to understand a *prophetic communication*, or an extraordinary discovery of the divine intentions. In this instance the discovery related to that deliverance from their enemies, and return to a state of comparative prosperity and happiness, which were promised, and in reserve for the children of Israel. For the fulfilment of these promises God declares, by his

servant, that there is an *appointed time*; and to prevent his people from being discouraged by delay, he adds, that although they may not be fulfilled so speedily as some fondly hope; yet, when the proper period shall arrive, it will be made to appear that the vision is true; that its divine Author is faithful; and that no part of the promised deliverance has failed.

But although our text has a primary reference to expectations long since realized, and to blessings enjoyed many ages ago; it may, with equal propriety, be applied to the distresses of the militant Church, in all periods, and to the promises of better days, which are scattered through every part of the sacred volume.* *Glorious things are spoken of the city of our God*; many of which, and some of the most interesting, yet remain to be accomplished. That we expect their fulfilment in due time, our profession as christians, and our plans and exertions for spreading the gospel, abundantly testify: and that we do not expect in vain, the declaration before us furnishes a precious assurance and pledge: For thus saith the Lord, *The vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry.*

In illustrating this passage, and in applying it to the occasion on which we are convened, I shall consider it as embracing, and as intended to inculcate, the following truths:—

* This general application of the text is abundantly warranted by the reference which the Apostle makes to it in Heb. x. 37, 38.

I. God is acting agreeably to a plan, in which there is a *fixed time* for executing all the designs announced in prophecy.

II. In executing this plan, occurrences often arise which disappoint the expectations of the pious, and lead them to suppose that the fulfilment of the promise for which they look is delayed beyond the appointed period.

III. The punctual and full accomplishment of every divine prediction is, nevertheless, certain.

IV. We ought, therefore, to wait for this happy issue without anxiety or fear; and to use every exertion, as *workers together with God*, for carrying his designs into effect, in his own way and time.

I. *God is acting agreeably to a plan, in which there is a fixed time for accomplishing all the designs announced in prophecy.**

This position will scarcely be thought to need formal proof before an assembly of professing Christians. If we believe that God possesses those perfections which all who acknowledge his existence have concurred in ascribing to him, we must consider him as acting with design; and if this be the case, then every event was foreseen, and adjusted

* Some respectable Hebrew critics, in translating the first clause of the text, instead of adopting the phrase of our English translation, *an appointed time*, have contended that the original expression means *a future time; a time somewhat remote; a little time; or a distant period*. Each of these methods of rendering the Hebrew word has had its advocates among learned men. It is obvious to the intelligent reader, that whether the common translation, or one of these should be preferred, is a question which, however it be answered, the first *proposition* will remain equally true, and equally founded on the text.

with infinite skill; and nothing, however minute, was left to be the sport of chance or accident. If *a sparrow do not fall to the ground* without his providential notice, and if *the hairs of our heads be all numbered*, we may confidently conclude that a wise plan, a perfect system of procedure reigns in every part of the universe.

When we look on the course of human affairs, indeed; we perceive much apparent disorder, and many seeming deviations from a regular plan. We behold, on every side, continual confusion and change. We see fluctuating purposes, weak and abortive undertakings, and a mingled mass of vices and virtues, success and disappointment, joys and sorrows. We see empires rising and falling; forms of government built up and destroyed; and nations rushing together with lawless fury, as if bound by no tie, as if directed by no steady principle of action. Every thing seems committed to accident, or dictated by caprice. *The race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, nor bread to the wise, nor riches to men of understanding, nor favour to men of skill, but time and chance happeneth to them all.** *No man knoweth love or hatred by all that is before him* in life.† But this confusion is only apparent. The whole system of Creation, of Providence, and of Redemption, was fixed in the counsels of God, *before the mountains were brought forth, or ever the earth and the world were formed.* Amidst the seeming disorder, therefore, which we witness, there is an infinitely wise Agent behind the

* Eccles. ix. 11.

† Eccles. ix. 1.

scene, who "rides in the whirlwind, and directs the storm," and with a regularity which, though unperceived, is real and perfect, is conducting every thing in the best possible manner. Yes, it is a precious and consoling truth, that, amidst all the frivolities of human weakness, the conflicts of insatiable ambition, the struggles of diabolical malignity, and the jarrings of selfishness and passion, one great and noble purpose is ever in the view of Jehovah; is still carried on, with undeviating steps; and will be finally accomplished by him, whose prerogative it is to bring good out of evil, light out of darkness, order out of confusion, and to make every creature and action promote his glory.

But if God be acting upon a plan thus perfectly digested, thus wisely arranged, in all its parts; then the *time*, as well as the place, of each event is known and fixed. To suppose that any circumstance, relating to any object, is either hidden in uncertainty from the eye of Omniscience, or not determined by boundless Wisdom, is to suppose a contradiction: To dream of doubtful or unknown contingences in the plan of government devised and pursued by an infinitely perfect Being, is to rob him of his glory, and to consider him *altogether such as one as ourselves*. No; he who made the universe, who continually governs it, and who guides all its complicated movements, foresaw every event, adjusted every instrument, ascertained the time, the place, and all the circumstances of every action; and interwove, with his plan, from the beginning, the means necessary to meet every exigency, and the

agents suitable for every season that should arise, from its commencement to its consummation. *He is a rock, his work is perfect. Known unto him are all his works, from the beginning of the world. He declareth the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done.*

In confirmation of these remarks there are many striking examples in the sacred history. The time which the Israelites spent under the pressure of Egyptian bondage, was determined, and distinctly announced to their faithful progenitor, several centuries before it commenced. The time when our Lord came in the flesh was not only fixed in the Eternal Mind; but also, with remarkable plainness, foretold in prophecy. The time of the destruction of Jerusalem was determined with equal certainty, and foretold with nearly equal plainness. The time to *favour Zion* with those rich blessings which her King has in store for her, is said to be a *set time*. And the general judgment, we are informed, will take place on a certain day, *appointed* by the Sovereign of the universe, to try the characters, and to fix the condition of men. Nay, the inspired writers go farther, and teach us that the time of the smallest events, affecting individuals only, as well as that of those which concern the Church, or other large communities, is fully ascertained by him from whom nothing is hidden. With respect to every man, we are told, *his days are determined; the number of his months is with God; he has appointed his bounds which he cannot pass.**

* Job xiv. 5.

The *times* and the *seasons* appointed for the accomplishment of particular events, are marked in prophecy, with different degrees of plainness and precision. Sometimes they are revealed in terms of absolute certainty, which admit neither of doubt nor mistake. In other cases, and much more frequently, the chronology of prophecy is stated in terms which, though they admit of some latitude of interpretation, yet furnish abundant means of calculating *nearly* the time when the predicted event will come to pass. This was the case with the prophecy respecting our Lord's Incarnation. The believer was pointed to the time when that great event should happen, by such circumstances as these—that it should be before the final dissolution of the Jewish state—while the second temple was standing—and within seventy prophetic weeks after the going forth of the commandment to rebuild Jerusalem.* Now, although all these indications had some degree of obscurity attending them, and did not admit of being interpreted with indubitable certainty; yet it is evident that those who perused the sacred writings, particularly at the approach of the event foretold, did see, with some degree of clearness, about what time Messiah was to appear. And it is an unquestionable fact, that when he came, the Jews, and many of the Gentiles, were actually and earnestly looking for a great deliverer. There is a third class of prophecies, in which dates are very obscurely if at all marked. In these the pe-

* *Bishop HURD's Introduction to the Study of the Prophecies, &c.* vol. i. p. 188, 189.

riods of the predicted events are expressed in language which allows a wide range for conjecture and variety of opinion. And although they are often placed in such an order and connection as furnish some grounds of probable conclusion as to the time of their accomplishment; yet it seems evidently to have been the intention of infinite Wisdom that they should be but partially understood before the arrival of this time.

That there is much wisdom in these different modes of exhibiting future events, we ought, without hesitation, to take for granted, since God has been pleased so to order them. But some portion of this wisdom, and the utility of the methods which it has adopted, are visible, and easily comprehended. It is evident, that, in prophetic disclosure, distinctly and unequivocally announcing dates and names, was, in some cases, necessary to the attainment of the divine purposes. It is equally evident, that, in other cases, such absolute plainness and precision would have been, humanly speaking, inconsistent with the fulfilment of the prediction. Some doubtfulness of expression, also, and the degree of uncertainty thence arising, had a happy tendency to keep alive the attention of believers, to try their faith, to exercise their patience, and to cherish in their hearts that unlimited trust in God, and entire submission to his sovereignty, which are, at once, the duty and the happiness of man.

Hence, though it is the privilege and the duty of Christians to study the prophecies, as well as the other parts of the sacred volume, and to endeavour,

as far as possible, to ascertain the *times* which infinite Wisdom has marked out for their accomplishment; yet it is to be lamented that so many, with a curiosity most inordinate, and with a confidence highly presumptuous, have undertaken, where these periods were left in a degree doubtful, precisely to fix them, and, in a sense, to limit the Holy One of Israel. This is both erroneous and criminal. The prophecies were not given to make us prophets. Their purpose is manifold; but, in many cases, their declared end doubtless is, not to enable us, with entire certainty, to foresee and foretell events before they come to pass; but that when they do come to pass, we may see their truth; admire their conformity with facts; and be constrained to adore the wisdom and faithfulness of their Author. Thus *Daniel*, in the close of his prophecy, tell us, that, after having received intimations of some very interesting purposes of God toward his people, the sacred Messenger said to him, *But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end.* And, upon his making a more particular inquiry concerning the *time*, and the circumstances of fulfilling the predictions, the Angel gently rebuked his excessive curiosity, by replying, *Go thy way, Daniel; for the words are closed up, and sealed till the time of the end.** In like manner, when our blessed Lord was conversing with his disciples, concerning the future blessings, to which he had directed their hopes; they asked him, *Lord, wilt thou*

* Dan. xii.

*not, at this time, restore the kingdom to Israël? And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times and the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power.**

Nor let the enemies of revelation say, that the prophecies are designedly delivered in terms so equivocal and indefinite, that an ingenious mind can apply them, with equal ease, to all times, and all events. That some portions of the prophetic scriptures are less plain than others, will not be denied; but that a large number of predictions found in the sacred volume, and among these, several which have been already mentioned, are remarkably precise, clear, and exclusively appropriate, so as scarcely to admit of any mistake in the application, is unquestionably true. Some of the bitterest enemies of our holy religion have acknowledged this striking character of certain prophecies, and their wonderful coincidence with events; and have resorted to the wildest suppositions, and the most contemptible cavils, in order to evade the consequences of such a concession.

But, however fallible men may be at a loss, in some instances, in decyphering the chronology of prophecy; however doubts may overspread our minds, with respect to particular periods, which are either announced in obscure language, or hidden under the veil of silence; they are all known and fixed, in the counsels of Eternal Wisdom. With him there is no doubt, no uncertainty—all is de-

* Acts i. 6, 7.

terminated, all arranged. It has been supposed by some, that this representation of the immutable designs and fore-ordained proceedings of God, is inconsistent with the freedom of human volitions and human actions. But the scriptures recognize no such inconsistency. While they assert all that we have done, respecting the divine plans and government, they speak of man as a free and accountable agent. Nor is it any objection to the truth of either or both of these doctrines, that we are not able fully to reconcile them. *Such knowledge is too wonderful for us, it is high, we cannot attain unto it. O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!*

II. In carrying on the divine plan, occurrences often arise, which disappoint the expectations of the pious, and lead them to suppose that the execution of the promise for which they look is delayed beyond the appointed time. In other words, *The accomplishment of the prediction may appear to tarry.*

It is scarcely necessary to remark here, that no delay actually takes place. The *vision* may, and often does tarry beyond *our* time; but it does not, it cannot tarry beyond *God's* time.* The human mind is ever prone to be busy in anticipation. It rushes to the end, with inconsiderate precipitancy,

* The translators of the Bible, on account of the poverty of language, have adopted the word *tarry*, both in the middle and last clauses of the verse. But in the original, two different words are used, the one expressing a delay merely *apparent* and *relative*, the other that which is *absolute* and *real*. It was probably thought better to make choice of a single word, though in some degree defective, than to incur the necessity of using circumlocution.

without sufficiently regarding the intermediate steps of necessary preparation. Into this error the pious are apt to fall, with regard to the declared purposes of God. They fix their hearts on a particular event, or promise. They hastily take up an expectation that this object of their hopes will be accomplished at a certain time, which they are pleased, without any warrant, to fix; and when their expectation fails of being realized, the disappointment fills them with anxiety, their faith is shaken, and desponding thoughts begin to arise.

But, *as high as the heavens are above the earth, so are God's ways above our ways, and God's thoughts above our thoughts.* While man is fluctuating in his designs, and precipitate in his movements, Jehovah is ever advancing toward his mighty purpose, with a steady, gradual, majestic course. Nothing can retard, nothing accelerate his progress. Although his plans sometimes appear to us to be arrested in their course, and at others to be retrograde, like the planetary motions to an ignorant observer of the heavens; yet they are all, in reality, still moving on, as rapidly as their nature and their systematic relations will permit.

The principal reason of the *apparent delay* in the execution of the divine purposes, which frequently takes place, is, that we do not understand the whole plan which infinite Wisdom is carrying on. It is a plan extensive, complicated, and eternal. We are able only to see a few detached portions at once; and even these are seen so imperfectly, that we are very inadequate judges of their tendencies and con-

nections. It is one of the pleasures reserved for heaven, to be enabled to comprehend, more fully than we do upon earth, the system of Providence, and to perceive more satisfactorily the mutual relations, dependence, and harmony of the numerous parts. For the present, and for very wise reasons, this pleasure is almost wholly denied us. Placed in a small, distant, and obscure tenement, we can neither trace nor understand those counsels which govern the kingdom of God. As well might infants undertake to judge of the designs formed by parental knowledge and experience. As well might emmets, crawling in the dust, presume to comprehend the various interests of states, and to direct the counsels of empires. We see, indeed, enough of the plans of the Most High to convince us that they are his. *But his path is in the deep waters, and his footsteps are not known.* Accordingly it has been a part of his wisdom, in every age, to disappoint the expectations of the confident; to set at nought the plans of the most discerning; to reject those instruments and opportunities which were thought by man best fitted for his purposes; to employ those which earthly sagacity would not have chosen; and, in opposition at once to the sanguine hopes of friends, and the malice of enemies, to accomplish both the promises and the threatenings of his word. *The foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.**

Another source of *apparent delay* in accomplishing the predictions of God, is found in the general

* 1 Cor. i. 25.

character of his dispensations. It is his ordinary manner to work *gradually*. This is remarkably the case in the natural world. The loftiest oaks which decorate the forest have risen, by slow degrees, from small seeds, which were once trodden, unseen, under the feet of the traveller. The rivers, which pour their rapid and fructifying streams through the earth, all take their rise from inconsiderable springs, which, singly, appear unworthy of notice; but which, concurring and united, form mighty waters. In like manner, when we contemplate the works of Providence, we see the most important series of events slowly evolving from causes, in appearance, the most trivial. We behold the rise and fall of empires, proceeding, by imperceptible gradations, through a long tract of time; and very rarely either advancing or declining so rapidly as is expected. A similar principle appears to have regulated the manner in which the plan of Redemption was disclosed to a guilty world. The light of revelation was not poured upon mankind at once, in full splendour. The gracious designs of heaven were first announced in obscure and doubtful terms; to these succeeded communications more clear and distinct; and it was not until four thousand years after the first promise, that life and immortality were brought to light, with a glory complete and perfect. The same general character of the divine dispensations belongs also to the progress of the gospel, and the extension of the Mediator's kingdom. It would be easy for a Being of infinite power as well as grace, to effect the conversion of

the whole human race to Immanuel, in a moment of time; but the triumphs of his word are, in general, conducted gradually. Thus our Lord compares the *kingdom of heaven*, or the administration of the gospel, to the operation of *leaven* which is *hidden in a measure of meal*: it must have time to ferment, but will, in the end, *leaven the whole lump*. The same divine Teacher likens the dispensation of grace to the progress of a *grain of mustard seed*, which is small in the beginning: it must have time to grow; *but when grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof*.*

In conformity with this general character of the works of God, we might expect, beforehand, that the accomplishment of the divine predictions would, in most cases, proceed by slow degrees; with many successive steps of preparation; and in a manner bearing the appearance of delay. Accordingly, we find that this has actually been the case, in a number of remarkable instances, recorded both in sacred and profane history. God early promised to *Abraham*, the father of the faithful, that he would give him a son, who should be a rich blessing to him, and to distant generations; but twenty-five years were suffered to elapse before *Isaac* was born; and almost the whole of this period was passed under circumstances which seemed to threaten the failure of the promise. The same venerable Patriarch was assured that the Messiah, according to the flesh,

* Matt. xiii. 31, 32.

should issue from his loins; and he, perhaps, fondly imagined that this interesting event was not many centuries distant. But nearly two thousand years rolled away before the promise was accomplished; and often were his desponding posterity almost ready to dismiss their hopes.

It was also promised to *Abraham*, that God would make of *his seed a great nation*, and would put them in possession of a goodly land, *flowing with milk and honey*. This blessing, some of the pious, who came after him, probably expected to see realized in a short time. They had, perhaps, never heard, or had forgotten the information given to their faithful ancestor, respecting their approaching slavery, in a strange land, and therefore indulged the most sanguine hopes. But many a heavy trial was destined to be laid upon them, and many a dark cloud to overshadow them, before the happy day should arrive. Four hundred years did the posterity of the pious Patriarch languish in Egyptian bondage before a deliverer was provided. At length, however, *Moses* was sent to carry them the glad tidings, that the cry of their affliction had gone up for a memorial before God, and that he was about to visit them in mercy, to deliver them from their oppressors, and to fulfil the promises made to their great progenitor. This pleasing message, no doubt, revived their hopes; and all their troubles were swallowed up in joyful anticipation. But what was the immediate consequence? New difficulties arose, and the promise appeared to tarry. The interference of *Moses* in behalf of the people, instead

of hastening, seemed to retard their emancipation. *Pharaoh*, and his merciless task-masters, incensed at the exertions made by this messenger of God, were prompted to treat his brethren with more rigorous severity than ever. From this moment the sufferings of the people exceedingly increased. The burdens of their servitude were doubled; their bondage became more intolerable; they were ready to stone *Moses*, as having rivetted, rather than broken their chains; and so dark was the dispensation, that this leader of Israel was scarcely able himself to see through the cloud which veiled the purposes of heaven. Still, during all this time, the merciful designs of God toward his chosen people were going on, and each event was necessary as a preparation for that which succeeded, and for the happy result. But yet farther appearances of delay were destined to occur. *Moses*, at the proper period, was successful in conducting his brethren out of Egypt. The sanguine believers of the day, probably, now considered their troubles as nearly at an end, and the completion of their hopes at hand. Ah! how different are the counsels of heaven from those of earth! Forty years must they still wander in the wilderness; disappointment must be heaped on disappointment, and sorrow on sorrow; and only *Caleb* and *Joshua*, of all who went out of Egypt, must be permitted to enter Canaan.

Similar appearances of delay took place with regard to the coming and kingdom of our Lord; This glorious Personage was early promised. He was, by many, expected long before he came: and

some began to be almost weary of waiting for the *Hope of Israel*. Many a dark and tedious day did the pious cast a longing eye toward the rising sun; but the darkness grew thicker, and the clouds more lowering and impenetrable. *The fulness of time* had not yet come. Subordinate prophecies were yet to be fulfilled. The state of the moral and political world was not yet such as infinite Wisdom had determined it should be when the Prince of Peace was *manifested in the flesh*. At length the day dawned, and the Sun of Righteousness arose. The animating message, sent by the celestial choirs, resounded from the heavens—*Behold, I bring you glad tidings of great joy; for unto you is born, this day, in the city of David, a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord.** Now expectation was raised high, and all who believed the message fondly hoped that the day of deliverance was fully come. But Immanuel must remain thirty years in obscurity before his ministry commences, or his divine mission is publicly declared. An harbinger must be sent to *prepare the way of the Lord*, and yet more thoroughly to rouse the attention of lethargic man to his wants and his hopes. At the appointed time, however, Jesus began to teach, and to unfold to his disciples the riches of his grace, and the glories of his reign. Immediately their minds, as in former instances, outran the promise. They dreamed of a temporal kingdom, to be set up without delay, and of temporal magnificence, for which the prediction afforded

* Luke ii. 10, 11.

no warrant. They expected it would have been he that *should restore the kingdom to Israel*, and deliver them from the Roman yoke. But very different were the designs of heaven. It was not earthly grandeur, but spiritual glory, that Messiah came to reveal and establish. And in order to accomplish this holy purpose, new appearances of delay, and new circumstances of discouragement must previously take place. The Divine Master, on whom all hopes are founded, *must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, and be crucified. In a word, the Shepherd must be smitten, and the sheep scattered*, and the expectations of all must be again depressed, before such displays of the power and grace of the Redeemer can be made, as shall suffice to confirm the faith of his disciples, and to convince unbelievers that he is the Lord.

Apparent delays, equally remarkable, have taken place in more modern times. Faithful witnesses of God, and zealous reformers of his Church, appeared, in different parts of the world, for a long time before the period eminently distinguished as the æra of the Reformation. The *Waldenses*, in *Italy* and *Spain*; the *Albigenses*, in *France*; the followers of *Huss* and *Jerome*, in *Germany*, and of *Wickliff*, in *England*, all bore an honourable testimony against the corruptions of their day, and *contended*, with a noble firmness, *for the faith once delivered to the saints*. It is probable that the pious of those countries, while they *sighed and mourned for all the abominations* done in the Church, were confident in expecting that the prayers and the labours of these zealous

adherents to the truth would be speedily successful. They were, indeed, blessed of God, and their testimony was by no means unproductive of useful effects. But though they shed some light on the cause of the Redeemer; yet the clouds of darkness still sat thick and deep over the nations. The Lord's time to visit Zion with that rich mercy which he afterwards displayed, was not fully come. Even when the dawn approached, as in the natural night, the darkness became thicker, and the aspect of the Church more melancholy; until, when the proper period had arrived, and the necessity of divine interference had become more than usually apparent to every serious mind, *Luther, Calvin, Knox*, and other distinguished Reformers, were raised up, endowed with wisdom, girded with strength, and prepared with every requisite qualification, to extend and finish the work which had been long before commenced.

I will only detain you, brethren, by reciting one instance more, to illustrate and confirm the position before us. The downfall of the immense and odious fabric of Papal superstition has been long, and particularly within a century past, an object of the earnest supplications and the confident hopes of the pious. Several recent events encouraged many Protestant believers to suppose, that the accomplishment of the divine predictions on this subject was *nigh, even at the door*. And, especially, when the late Pope was, for a time, driven from his throne, and reduced to the humiliating circumstances which my hearers familiarly recollect, multitudes imagined

that the work was already completed; that *Babylon the great* was fallen; and that this obstacle to the commencement of millennial glory was taken out of the way. We have lived to see that our hopes were, in a degree, premature. We ran before the promise of God. That corrupt hierarchy has been shaken by the righteous judgments of the Most High: it still totters to its base; and we have reason to be confident that the time is not far off, when it will be totally overthrown: but, for ought we know, before this event shall be fully accomplished, God may see fit, for more than another century, to exercise the faith, the patience, and the prayers of his people, in behalf of the gracious design.

Such, then, are some of the reasons of that delay which often appears to take place in accomplishing the divine predictions, when the appointed time is measured by human expectation; and such are some of the numerous instances of this apparent delay, which we find in examining the history of human affairs. We may apply the same principle to the prophecies which remain to be fulfilled. A character which has so generally marked the dispensations of Providence and Grace, we may expect to see continued, at least in some degree, until the consummation of the gospel plan. The hopes of man will, probably, be again disappointed. The promise will again appear to *tarry*. But let none apprehend the failure of a single declaration that God has made; for, amidst all appearances of delay—

III. *The punctual and full accomplishment of every divine prediction is, nevertheless, certain. In the end*

the vision will speak, and not lie; or, as some render the original, In the end it shall break forth with glory, and not deceive—it will surely come, it will not tarry.

The faithfulness of God in fulfilling all the declarations of his word, is mentioned by the inspired writers with peculiar frequency, and with animated confidence. They dwell on this precious attribute with delight, and cheerfully stake their all upon its reality. The same attribute still remains as the foundation of the hope and joy of believers in every age. *The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness.* Hath he said, and shall he not do it? hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?† The counsel of the Lord, that shall stand. Once, says Jehovah, have I sworn by my holiness, that I will not lie unto David. My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that has gone out of my lips.‡ Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my word shall not pass away.§*

The certain accomplishment of the divine predictions may be inferred *from the character of their Author*. The promises of men are frequently violated, and their designs often perish. They may forget their engagements; they may change their minds; the most upright intentions which they form may be frustrated by the carelessness or the malignity of others; or they may be arrested by death, in the midst of their enterprises and hopes. But none of these events can interpose to prevent the execu-

* 2 Pct. iii. 9. † Numb. xxiii. 19. ‡ Psa. lxxxix. 34, 35. § Mat. xxiv. 35.

tion of the divine purposes. The Most High cannot forget his engagements, because all things are constantly, and equally in the view of his infinite understanding. *But Zion said, The Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me.* Hear the gracious answer of God—*Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, they may forget; yet will not I forget thee. Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands; thy walls are continually before me.** Jehovah cannot change his mind; because immutability is one of his essential perfections. *He is the Lord, he changes not. He is not a man that he should lie, or the son of man that he should repent.†* He cannot be prevented from executing his purposes by the exertions or the cunning of other beings; his wisdom cannot be overreached by artifice, nor his power overcome by strength. In a word, no unexpected exigences can occur to make new measures necessary; no obstructions can arise to retard, to suspend, or to modify his proceedings. No, my brethren, the great Head of the Church, on whom we rely, is not a feeble creature. *He is King of Kings, and Lord of Lords. All power is given unto him, in heaven, and in earth. The government is upon his shoulder; and he doeth his will in the armies of heaven, and among the inhabitants of earth, and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?‡* Here is a ground of confidence, precious and immoveable. The Divinity of our Lord

* Isa. xlix. 14—16. † Numb. xxiii. 19. ‡ Mat. xxviii. 18. Isa. ix. 6. Dan. iv. 35.

and Master is the firm and eternal pillar on which we may build our hopes, without fear of disappointment or shame.

Again; that every divine prediction will be punctually and fully accomplished, may be also argued *from the constitution of the Covenant of Redemption*. In this Covenant it was engaged to the Son, that, as a reward for *making his soul an offering for sin*, he should *see the travail of his soul, and be satisfied*.* This was *the joy that was set before him, for which he endured the cross and despised the shame*.† It is plain, then, that, in the fulfilment of every promise, concerning the prosperity of Zion, the glory of him who promises is as really involved as that of his Church. Are we assured that, in due time, the Father will *give the heathen to his Son for an inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for a possession*—that *the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of his glory, as the waters cover the sea*—that *he shall have dominion from sea to sea, and from the rivers to the ends of the earth*—and that *every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father*?‡ To doubt whether the *King of Zion* will be mindful of these promises, or faithful in their accomplishment, is to doubt whether he will remember his own glory, or attend to its advancement. To suppose that he will suffer one of his predictions to fall to the ground, is not only to impeach his holiness, but also to admit the idea that he will surrender the crown which was

* Isa. liii. 10, 11. † Heb. xii. 2. ‡ Psa. ii. 8. Hab. ii. 14. Zech. ix. 10. Phil. ii. 10.

promised as the reward of his obedience and sufferings. To believe that he who is *exalted as a Prince and a Saviour*, to give *repentance unto Israel, and remission of sins*, will abandon the engagements which he has made to the living members of his body, is to believe that he humbled himself, and died in vain. It cannot be. The work of Redemption is Jehovah's chief work. To the *King of Zion* her prosperity and honour are his chief joy; and it is one of the principal excellences, and firmest securities of the new covenant, that it unites the glory of the Redeemer with that of his Church; and represents her universal establishment and exaltation as equally certain with the continuance of his eternal power and Godhead.

We have, farther, a sufficient pledge of what the Head of the Church will do for his people, *in that which he has already done*. He has been faithful to his promises, in every instance, from the beginning of the world. He has supported Zion, in all ages, amidst numerous enemies, and under heavy trials, and brought her thus far in safety. Every species of hostility that ingenuity could devise, or malice perpetrate, has been directed against her; but he has borne her in triumph above it all. The terrors of power, the force of plausible reasoning, the weapons of ridicule and wit, and the still more insidious attacks of pretended friends, have successively threatened her destruction; but they have threatened in vain. The corrupting power of pagan superstition, the malignant arts of Jewish rulers, the rage of heathen persecution, and the unwearied ef-

forts of the learned and the eloquent, have done their utmost to erase her very name from the face of the earth; but *the Lord was always in the midst of her; he helped her, and that right early.*

To the eye of human wisdom it was altogether improbable, that the children of Israel, bound by the heavy chains of Egyptian slavery, subject to a haughty and powerful monarch, and having become, by their tedious and cruel bondage, depressed, timid, and desponding—it was altogether improbable that such a people, thus situated, should throw off the yoke of their tyrant, go forth with all their flocks and herds, march through an extensive wilderness, conquer the fierce and potent natives of Canaan; and possess their land. But God had promised, and he made good his word. Mountains of difficulty became plains before him; obstructions the most formidable vanished at his approach; and instruments to accomplish his purpose were raised, contrary to all human expectations, from the humblest walks in life. It was opposed to every principle of human probability, that the chosen tribes, after being carried to Babylon, and remaining seventy years in captivity, should return to their own land, rebuild the temple of God, and restore the rites of his worship. But the engagement of Jehovah was pledged to effect these things for them; and every opposing power yielded to Omnipotence. *Daniel* was inspired with wisdom, and advanced to honour, that he might be the means of softening the rigours of captivity to which his brethren were subjected; and, at length, when the proper time arrived, *Cyrus*

was raised up (according to a prophecy delivered near two hundred years before), and prompted, contrary to all probability, to release the people, and assist them in returning to the land of their fathers. It was no less unlikely that a few poor and illiterate fishermen should be successfully employed as the instruments of proclaiming and establishing, in an enlightened age and nation, a system of religion directly opposed to the pride, the prejudices, and the supposed interests of all around them. But their divine Master had promised to be with them, and to prosper their labours, whithersoever they went. Obedient to his commission, therefore, and zealous for the honour of his name, they went forth, preaching every where—preaching precisely those doctrines which earthly wisdom would have pronounced to be, of all others, least fitted to arrest the attention, or to captivate the hearts of men. And what was the consequence? Faithful to his promise, their Lord never forsook them. He filled them with wisdom, strengthened them for their work, raised them above difficulties, put their enemies to shame, confirmed their ministrations by *signs, and wonders, and divers miracles*, and, through their instrumentality, made his name glorious among all nations. And, to mention but one instance more, who that calculated on the ordinary principles of human conduct would have expected, that the labours of a few individuals, at the æra of the Reformation, could have produced such extensive and permanent effects? The interest both of temporal and ecclesiastical rulers, and the prejudices of all

descriptions in the Church, were leagued against them. But the purpose of the Most High had gone forth, and no created power could stand in the way of its execution. When, therefore, predictions, in times past, have been so punctually and gloriously accomplished, shall we doubt the faithfulness of God with regard to the future? When such wonders have been wrought in favour of Zion, in every age, can we suppose that her King will abandon her to her enemies, when the consummation of her glory is, comparatively, so near at hand? No, my brethren, *Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever. The mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting, upon them that fear him. Having loved his own, he will love them unto the end; and will not leave them until he has done that which he has spoken to them of.**

That difficulties will arise, and opposition stand forth, with malignant obstinacy, against the accomplishment of every important promise, is abundantly certain. The Church on earth always has been, and, until the universal reign of righteousness and peace shall commence, always will be in a militant state. Never did she advance a single step toward her destined glory, without being called to dispute and to fight for every inch of ground with the powers of darkness. *But no weapon formed against her shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against her shall be condemned. The heathen may rage, and the people imagine vain things. The*

* Heb. xiii. 8. Psalm ciii. 17. Gen. xxviii. 15.

*kings of the earth may set themselves, and the rulers may take counsel together, against the Lord, and against his Anointed; but he that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh, the Lord shall have them in derision.**

Yes, brethren! the *enemies* of truth may be numerous, malignant, and unwearied; but their opposition will always terminate, as it has ever done, in their own confusion and shame. The *friends* of truth may be few in number, weak in faith, feeble in their exertions, and timid in their warfare; but he who is able to work with or without instruments, at pleasure, will carry on his cause without their aid, and in spite of their negligence. *The floods may lift up their voice; the floods may lift up their waves. The Lord on high is mightier than the noise of many waters, yea, than the mighty waves of the sea.†*

Nay, it is a most instructive and curious fact, on which the pious mind dwells with wonder and delight, that the very malice of enemies, and the most unpromising occurrences, in the estimation of man, are made the means of promoting the gracious designs, and accomplishing the predictions of God. When *Moses* was instructed *in all the wisdom of the Egyptians*, the daughter and family of *Pharaoh*, no doubt, intended that his literary and scientific acquirements should fit him more eminently for an heathen office, and enable him more successfully to carry on heathen purposes, in opposition to the God of Israel. But, behold this pupil of pagan instructors,

* Psalm ii.

† Psalm xciii. 3, 4.

snatched by divine grace from the worship of idols, inspired with zeal for the true God, made a leader of the armies of Israel, and a scourge to their enemies! When *Paul* was placed to study at the feet of *Gamaliel*, nothing, doubtless, was farther from his own mind, and the minds of those concerned in his education, than the idea of promoting the Christian cause. But how easily were his genius, learning, and eloquence converted into means of building up *that faith which once he destroyed*; and of advancing, perhaps more extensively than any other individual ever did, the honour of that Name which he had so long and so obstinately blasphemed!—So will all the exertions of the enemies of Christ be over-ruled for the good of his kingdom. They, indeed, *think not so, neither do their hearts mean so*; their desire is to oppose his interests, and to tread his honours in the dust; but all their malignant activity shall be made to illustrate, extend, and establish his glory. *Surely the wrath of man shall praise him, and the remainder of wrath he will restrain.**

Let believers, then, *hold fast their faith* and their hopes *firm, without wavering, for he is faithful who hath promised*. Let them *lift up their heads, because their redemption draweth nigh*; and no expectation founded on the word of God shall fall to the ground. The promises which he has made to his Church are upon solemn record: read them, Christians, with joy and confidence, for not *one jot or tittle* of their precious import shall fail of accomplishment. I

cannot tell you precisely when the happy period shall arrive; but I can tell you, upon authority not to be questioned, that *in due time the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ*. I can tell you that he will yet, notwithstanding every unfavourable appearance, *make Zion beautiful, through his own comeliness put upon her*. He will yet *make her righteousness to go forth as brightness, and her salvation as a lamp that burneth*. He will yet cause her to *look forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners*.* These promises may not be fully realized till we are all sleeping in the dust: but though we die, God liveth, and will surely visit his people in mercy. Though neither we, nor the next generation should be permitted to witness the glorious days of the Son of Man; yet, let us rejoice in the assurance, that *he must reign until he hath put all enemies under his feet*; and that *of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end*.†

It is of importance to add, that the accomplishment of every prediction is always at the *appointed time*. To the eye of imperfect reason; one time frequently appears as suitable as another; but to the eye of infinite Wisdom, that time only is proper, which has been set apart, from eternity, for the express purpose. In this time, and in this only, will every connecting line, in the great system of Providence, harmoniously meet and unite: in this, and in this only, will the greatest possible good be ef-

* Ezek. xvi. 14. Isa. lxii. 1. Cant. vi. 10. † 1 Cor. xv. 25. Isa. ix. 7.

fectured by the event: and therefore in this, and in this only, will the power of the Highest be manifested for accomplishing his word, to the joy of all who wait for his salvation.—Hence it follows, that—

IV. *We ought to wait for this happy result without despondency or fear; and to aspire to the honour of being workers together with God, for carrying his designs into effect, in his own way and time.*

If we believe that the time of fulfilling every prediction is *fixed*; and that the fulfilment, when this time shall arrive, is indisputably *sure*; then the duty of waiting for it with patience and cheerfulness is self-evident. If we know not what God is doing; but have, at the same time, an absolute assurance, from his perfections, from his works, and from his word, that he is doing all things well; it follows that we ought, with calm and fearless confidence, to repose in him, believing that at the best time, and in the wisest manner, he will perform all that he has promised. *He that believeth, therefore, ought not to make haste. Behold his soul which is lifted up, is not upright in him: but the just shall live by his faith.**

* Habakkuk ii. 4. This verse immediately follows that which is the subject of the present discourse; and is doubtless intended to give additional force to the injunction of *waiting* for the accomplishment of the divine promises. The Apostle, in quoting this passage, to confirm the faith of believers in his day, adopts the *Septuagint* version, which our translators have thus rendered—*Now the just shall live by faith; but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.* Heb. x. 38. It would be improper to attempt an enumeration here of the different modes in which learned men have proposed to render the original passage, as it stands in the prophecy. They generally agree, however, that it conveys a meaning directly opposed to *faith*, or that

There is, perhaps, scarcely any point of practical religion, concerning which the pious are more prone to error than this. They are apt either to *stagger at the promise, through unbelief*; or to discover impatience for hurrying on the execution, by indirect methods, and at a premature time. Ignorant of the plans of heaven; measuring every thing by their own imperfect wisdom; and keeping their eyes upon some favourite object; they indulge presumptuous curiosity, or anxious doubts and fears with respect to the result. But all this is unreasonable in itself, and contrary to the revealed will of God. *For we have need of patience, that after we have done the will of God, we may receive the promise. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and the latter rain. Be ye, therefore, patient, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. For the Lord is good unto them that wait for him, to the soul that seeketh him. It is good for a man that he both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of God.*

To *wait* for the divine promises, is an expression strongly significant, and very comprehensive in its meaning. It implies a firm and unwavering expectation that the accomplishment of them will take place in due time; an habitual direction of the mind

temper which is implied in *waiting* for the promise. And, indeed, whether the mind be *lifted up* by pride—grow careless through unbelief—or recede from its wonted confidence in the divine faithfulness, on account of discouraging appearances, it may be considered as equally chargeable with a want of that *bumble, patient, believing, and attentive* disposition, which trusts, without weariness or wavering, in the fulfilment of every prediction contained in the word of God.

toward this event, as an object of desire and hope; attentively marking the course of divine Providence; and comparing it with the intimations of prophecy; praying, with unwearied and fervent importunity, for the fulfilment of every prediction; and, finally, amidst all these ardent desires and aspirations of heart after the anticipated blessing, cultivating a spirit of patience and entire submission to eternal Sovereignty, with respect to the time and the mode of accomplishing that which he hath promised. In a word, *waiting* for the *vision* implies a firm belief in its reality, and a fixed confidence in its fulfilment; reposing in the faithfulness of God for the execution of all that he hath said; and willingly leaving to his wisdom so to order the period and the manner of the execution, as will most effectually promote his own glory and the greatest good of his kingdom.

But the *waiting* enjoined upon us is by no means inconsistent with the most diligent exertions to promote the cause, and to hasten the events on which our hearts are placed. When the scriptures exhort us to *wait patiently* for the fulfilment of the divine predictions, we are not to consider them as giving countenance to idleness and sloth: nay, that man is essentially deficient in duty, who contents himself with merely *looking* and *praying* for promised blessings. It is required of every Christian that he be active, that he aspire to the honour of being a *worker together with God*, and that he employ every power conferred upon him in hastening the desired period. While he is bound, on the one hand, to wait, with patience, the indications of Providence, and to sub-

mit, without repining, to every appearance of delay ; he is equally bound, on the other, to labour with as much zeal and diligence as if every thing depended on human exertions. Neither the existence of divine purposes, nor the necessity of divine operations, excludes human agency. The Most High ordinarily works by means, and accomplishes the predictions of his word by disposing his creatures to work conformably to his good pleasure: How should this fire the ambition of every believer! How high the honour of being employed as instruments in carrying on the designs of God! How animating the thought, that by our feeble and imperfect services, we may promote the progress and the glory of that kingdom which is *righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost!*

It may be said, that we know not what course of action will best promote the designs of heaven ; and therefore ought to sit still, lest we labour in vain, or do mischief by unskilful activity. The answer is obvious. The command of God is always a safe guide. Every exertion made in conformity with this, is not only acceptable, but also useful. No sincere and honest effort to advance the Mediator's kingdom, and to promote the divine honour, ever was, or ever will be made in vain. It may not do precisely that *kind* or *degree* of good which the agent intended ; but that it will not wholly fall to the ground ; that it will be made conducive to some valuable purpose, seems to be infallibly secured, both by the character of God, and by the precepts and promises of his word. He hath *never said unto*

the seed of Jacob, Seek ye me in vain. On the contrary, the language of his grace is, *Be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.**

A spirit of indolence is apt, on different ground, to convert the certain accomplishment of the divine predictions into an apology for inactivity and sloth. "God," say those who are under the influence of this spirit, "will support his own cause, and execute his own purposes; and therefore it is unnecessary for us to indulge in anxiety, or to busy ourselves with exertions, in promoting them." Degrading and criminal plea! God *will* support his own cause; but if we refuse to co-operate with him, in maintaining and conducting it, he will reject us, and give the happiness and the honour connected with such co-operation to others. He *will* execute his purposes, in spite of every negligence in his people; but if we be not found among the number of those who labour to bring about the execution, we have no right to expect either his blessing, or the consolations which abound to faithful servants. It was to that servant whom his Lord, when he came, found *watching*, and *doing his will*, that rich rewards and honours were adjudged.

It is, then, a part of the duty enjoined in the text, and, of course, is required of every Christian, that he mingle with patient and humble waiting for the fulfilment of the divine promises, the most active

and unwearied labour, to hasten on the desired event. There is no inconsistency between these. It is a wretched mistake to suppose that humble dependence on God has a tendency to discourage exertion, or that it renders activity unreasonable. In truth, when duly considered, they will be found to impart aid and strength to each other. No man is so likely to be diligent in the improvement of every talent committed to him, as he who lives under a deep and habitual conviction, that without the Captain of salvation he can do nothing; and, assuredly, none are found to maintain so lively an impression on their minds of the dependence of all things on God, and of the absolute necessity of *the working of his mighty power*, to render means effectual, as those who are most distinguished for their faithful endeavours to do his will, and advance his cause. To promote these two becoming, and most harmonious dispositions in his people, is one great design of the dispensations of Providence. On the one hand, their patience, submission, and humility, are continually tried and increased by apparent delay; and, on the other, their faith is confirmed, and their activity excited, by manifestations of divine power in their behalf, by encouraging prospects, and by a faithful accomplishment of every promise in its time. *Here are the patience and the faith of the saints!* Here are the temper and duty of those *who keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus!* Here is the solution of that frequently perverted injunction of holy writ, which requires us to *work with fear and trembling*, and assigns as a rea-

son, that it is *God who worketh in us, to will and to do of his good pleasure.**

Wait on the Lord, therefore, be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart; wait, I say, on the Lord. For they that wait on the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up on wings, as do eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; they shall walk, and not be faint.† And when the great Object of their love and confidence shall come, to take to himself his great power and reign; to be glorified in his saints, and admired in all them that believe; it will be the privilege and the happiness of such to be able to say, *Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is the Lord; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation!‡*

From the doctrines of our text, as they have been stated and explained, we may derive ample materials for seasonable and useful reflection. To some of these, out of the many which solicit our notice, I would request your serious attention.

1. In the light of this subject, Christians may see how much reason they have to be confident and joyful under the most discouraging appearances which occur, both with respect to themselves and the Church. Disciples of Christ! you are often disquieted and cast down, by the absence of particular comforts, and by the delay of expected blessings. You are often ready to say, *God hath forgotten to be gracious; his mercy is clean gone for ever.§*

* Phil. ii. 12, 13. † Psa. xxvii. 14. Isa. xl. 31. ‡ Isa. xxv. 9. § Psa. lxxvii. 9.

But *wherefore do ye doubt, O ye of little faith?* Is it not promised, that *the good work which is begun in you shall be carried on unto the day of Jesus Christ; and that all things shall work together for good, to them that love him?* Has he not already brought you by a way that ye knew not, and led you in paths that ye had not known? Has he not made darkness light before you, and crooked things straight?* And can you not trust him for that which is future? Yes, believers! though *what he does ye know not now, ye shall know hereafter.* Therefore, though ye walk in darkness, and see no light, trust in the name of the Lord, and stay yourselves upon your God. For a small moment he may forsake you; but with great mercies will he gather you. In a little wrath he may hide his face from you for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will he have mercy upon you, saith the Lord your Redeemer.†

Equal reason have you to cherish confidence and joy with respect to the Church. Notwithstanding every appearance to the contrary, *God is good to Israel. He doeth all things well:* and he will ultimately produce a kingdom of the greatest glory and blessedness, out of materials which, at present, seem discordant and unpromising. Be not alarmed, then, Christians, because *the chariot wheels of your King are so long in coming,* or because those who defy the armies of the living God are bold and clamorous. Let infidels deride—let politicians build their hopes on earthly wisdom—let formalists be-

* Phil. i. 6. Rom. viii. 28. Isa. xlii. 6.

† John xiii. 7. Isa. l. 10. Isa. liv. 7, 8.

come weary of waiting—let the timid friends of truth grow pale, when opposition arises; but *be not ye afraid; only believe. Stand still and see the salvation of God.* Is he not giving us a pledge that his spirit hath not forsaken his Church, by *reviving his work* in different parts of our land;* by exciting his people, on both sides of the Atlantic, to form missionary plans, and engage in missionary enterprises, to an extent altogether unprecedented since the days of the Apostles; and by lifting up a standard against infidelity and vice, when, like a flood, they threatened to overwhelm and destroy? *Be strong, then, and of good courage.* You are on that side which must ultimately prevail. Be faith-

* There is an allusion here to the remarkable revivals of religion which have taken place, within the last four years, in various parts of the United States, particularly in Massachusetts, Connecticut, Kentucky, Tennessee, and North-Carolina; to which may be added an unusual religious attention in many congregations scattered through most of the other States. Information on this pleasing subject is so generally diffused among that portion of our citizens who feel interested in the prosperity of Zion, that I shall not attempt to enter upon any details. The circumstances which have attended this revival, in Kentucky and Tennessee, are truly wonderful. And although the aspect of some accounts which have been received from that quarter is such as to induce many, who have only contemplated religion as it appears in societies where the gospel has been long steadily preached, and its ordinances generally respected, to doubt the genuineness of the work which they describe; yet there seems abundant reason to conclude that it is a real and most astonishing effusion of the Spirit of God, for which his people should rejoice, and give glory to his name. Were not some extraordinary means *necessary*, speaking after the manner of men, to rouse the attention, and to affect the minds, of a people, among whom ignorance, infidelity and vice had so melancholy a prevalence? That much *unballoved fire* will be found, in the end, to have mingled itself with this flame of religious zeal, there is every reason to suppose; but, judging from the accounts already received, there appears to be a great and pleasing predominance of facts, which wear a promising aspect, over those of an opposite kind.

ful; watch; pray; *keep yourselves unspotted from the world*; and you shall in no wise lose your reward.

2. From the view which has been given of this subject, we may infer the duty of Christians to *observe, with habitual attention, the course of Providence, and diligently to compare it with the designs announced in prophecy.* If we believe, as all who deserve the Christian name do, that the sacred volume contains very important disclosures of the divine intentions with respect to our world; and if we also believe, as we doubtless ought, that history is but a developement of prophecy; then it is evident that studying the prophetic scriptures, in conjunction with the course of human affairs, is not only our duty, but also a most interesting, delightful, and profitable employment. Is it possible that those who sincerely regard the welfare of Zion, and who hold in their hands the chart by which her earthly voyage is to be conducted, should feel no desire to look upon it, and compare it with her progress and her situation? It is not to be supposed. No, believers! in proportion as you possess the temper which becomes the faithful followers of Christ, you will *regard his work, and consider the operations of his hands.* You will be careful to *discern the signs of the times*; to study those intimations of the divine plans which the sacred oracles contain; to compare with these the dispensations of Providence; and endeavour to deduce, from the whole, the condition and prospects of the Church. Such exercises will have a tendency to

confirm your faith, to animate your hopes, to bind your affections more closely to the Redeemer and his kingdom, and to promote your best consolations.

3. The doctrines which have been delivered administer *reproof to those who are ready to say, that the time is not yet come for the friends of Zion to exert themselves with diligence and zeal for her extension and glory.* This plea is the wretched offspring of sloth, or of unbelief. Who told you, indolent, pusillanimous, hypocritical professors of religion!—who told you that the time had not yet come? Sure I am you find no warrant for such a conclusion in this holy book. The truth is, *all times* are proper to exert every power committed to us, for enlightening the ignorant, for reclaiming the vicious, for offering the message of eternal love to guilty men, and for endeavouring to build up the cause of our heavenly King. Admit that the *set time* to favour Zion, with peculiar and unclouded glory, is not yet come. What then? Are Christians, therefore, to *stand all the day idle?* It would be doing injustice to themselves, as well as robbing their God. It may be said concerning activity in behalf of the Church, as well as of our individual salvation—*Behold! now is the accepted time.* Hear the word of the Lord—*This people say, the time is not yet come that the Lord's house should be built. But thus saith the Lord, Is it time for you, O ye, to dwell in your ceiled houses, and this house lie waste? Now, therefore, consider your ways. Go up to the mountain,*

*and bring wood, and build the house; and I will take pleasure in it, and I will be glorified, saith the Lord.**

4. The truths which you have heard shew *the extreme folly, impiety, and danger of those who ridicule our hopes, and attempt to oppose the progress of the gospel.* Are there any in this assembly disposed to say, with the blasphemers of old, *Where is your God? where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were, from the beginning of the world.* Guilty and deluded men! *In a little while, He that shall come, will come, and will not tarry: He will come in the glory of his Father: He will come in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.* But, fellow mortals! when we look forward to a period so joyful and glorious for believers, it damps our joy to remember, that, unless grace previously snatch you from the ranks of rebellion, and from *the bonds of iniquity,* it will be a dreadful day for you! *Oh! that our heads were waters, and our eyes fountains of tears, that we might weep over the destruction which every successive triumph of our beloved King will assuredly prepare for his enemies!*

Do you entertain the mad hope of exterminating his religion, and erasing his name from the face of the earth? Read, I beseech you, the faithful page of history. Near eighteen centuries ago, a few obscure and unlearned men went forth and preached

* Haggai i. 2, 4, 7, 8.

a crucified Saviour. The infidels of the day sneered, scoffed, blasphemed, predicted their downfall, and, no doubt, deliberately believed that all their hopes would speedily perish. But, did it prove to be so? Nothing was farther from the truth. While those enemies of the Redeemer mouldered in dust, the power of his cross rose and prevailed: while the names of most of them rotted in oblivion, his honour shone with growing lustre: and while the memory of *Nero, Caligula, Julian, Celsus, Porphyry*, and a few more odious persecutors, is preserved only for general execration, the despised *Nazarene* reigns in the hearts and affections of millions, and will ultimately reign, with undivided and undisputed glory, *from the rising of the sun to the going down of the same.*

Be wise, then, ye enemies of Zion's King; and be instructed, ye opposers of his cause! Though the fulfilment of his predictions may appear to *tarry*, let not *your hearts be fully set in you to do evil*; they will be realized much sooner than you will be prepared, in your present condition, to meet them. But—*why will ye die?* Listen, I entreat you, to another offer of mercy. The Master whom we serve is *full of grace*; *his blood cleanseth from all sin*; he is *mighty to save*; and those who return to him, penitent and believing, *he will in no wise cast out*. He waits to be gracious. Turn not away from the proffered blessing. It is the only hope of the guilty. Hear! O hear! that your souls may live.

5. This subject is eminently fitted *to illuminate*

our path, and direct our steps, in the present situation of the world. When we look abroad, and survey the affairs of men, on the principles of human calculation alone, every thing appears perturbed and inexplicable. I ask those who despise the prophecies and the government of God, to contemplate the political, the moral, and the religious condition of mankind, and to tell me what the end of these conflicts, changes, and retrocessions, will be? Ye votaries of presumptuous Reason! Ye worshippers of political Wisdom! Ye who rely on the power of Philosophy, falsely so called, to govern the heart without Religion, and to regulate society without God! tell me, I beseech you, what ground of hope you enjoy with respect to the future? I pause for your answer—These proud interpreters are dumb! I turn to the Christian. Humble believer! take the light of prophecy in thine hand; this will guide thee through the labyrinth; with this thou mayest meet difficulties, dispel the clouds which gather round thee, walk over ruins, march with firm and dauntless step in the midst of general disorder, and, in every possible exigency, *rejoice in the Lord, and joy in the God of your salvation.*

Every hope of the future melioration of mankind, and of the establishment of general happiness, which does not rest on the future prevalence and influence of the gospel, is delusive. The Religion of Christ is the only effectual remedy for human depravity, and this depravity is the source of all disorder and misery. To think, then, of reforming, purifying and tranquilizing society by literature—by science—by the preva-

lence of political orthodoxy—by any thing but Christianity, is an expectation which all experience has shown to be a vain dream. But, founded on this religion, no hope can be too sanguine to be entertained, no confidence too strong to be cherished. It is the light of the world—the pillar of society—the hope of the miserable—the medicine of the heart—the salvation of man: and its universal prevalence shall be the universal prevalence of peace, benevolence, purity and joy.

But the application of this subject, to which I would more particularly invite your attention, is,

6. That it *affords great encouragement to missionary plans and exertions*. Is there a Christian in this assembly who does not believe that the heathen are given to Christ for an inheritance; and that, notwithstanding all the difficulties, the discouragements, and the apparent delays which arise in extending the Redeemer's kingdom, his gospel will yet be preached in its power to every nation under heaven? Is there a Christian in this assembly who does not know that the gospel has always been spread, in times past, by the instrumentality of human exertions; that there is every reason to suppose that this will continue to be the case; that we are commanded to proclaim its gracious offers to every creature; and that the feeblest and humblest endeavours have been, and may yet be made effectual to the promulgation of that truth, which, alone, can enlighten and save mankind? Can a more solemn obligation, or a more powerful excitement be presented to engage in this glorious

cause, the labours, the prayers, and the hopes of all who love the Saviour?

We have assembled this evening to celebrate the anniversary of our Missionary Association; to offer our thanksgiving to God for the degree of success with which he has crowned our infant undertaking; to implore the continuance and extension of his blessing upon us; to pray for the outpouring of his Spirit, and especially for the accomplishment of his promises in behalf of the heathen world; and, finally, to ask for the prayers and the assistance of all the friends of Zion, in our exertions to send the gospel to those who are *sitting in the region and shadow of death*. Brethren, does not the occasion interest your feelings? Is not the cause in which we are engaged dear to your hearts? Will you send us away without testifying your desire to strengthen our hands, and encourage our resolutions, in this labour of benevolence?

Since our last annual meeting, the missionary spirit has been gradually growing, both in extent and ardour; and several additional grounds of encouragement have risen before us. New societies have been formed in our country, for the same purpose with our own;* and new exertions made for spreading the honour of the Redeemer's name among the benighted nations. The number of those who appear friendly to our design is manifestly increasing: the number of those who discover a willingness to

* For more particular information on this and several other subjects briefly noticed in the following pages, see the *Annual Report* of the Board of Directors, subjoined to this discourse, and the *Appendix*.

exert themselves in promoting the execution of our design, is also increasing: and, what is by no means of least importance, we have, farther, reason to believe, that the number of those who daily plead with God in prayer, for our success, and for the conversion of the heathen, is daily becoming larger, and more fervently engaged.—To these general sources of encouragement there may be added some more immediately connected with our own Society. God has been pleased—let us acknowledge it, brethren, with gratitude—God has been pleased to bless our exertions. He has given our missionaries favour in the eyes of the wandering savages to whom they were sent. He has disposed those tenants of the dark and howling wilderness to listen with attention to the message of eternal love; and he has, in some instances, we trust, *opened their hearts to receive the engrafted word, which is able to save their souls.*

From our Missionary in the *Chickasaw* Nation,* we hear favourable and encouraging accounts. Under his ministrations, fourteen persons have been brought to make a profession of their faith in Christ, and have been solemnly admitted to Christian baptism. His preaching is heard with growing attention and seriousness; a sense of their want of religious instruction appears to be more deeply impressed than ever upon the minds of the heathen among whom he resides; and the number of those who profess a regard to the Gospel is increasing.

* The Rev. Mr. BULLEN.

Our Missionary, who went, soon after the last annual meeting, on a second mission to the north-western Indians,* has just returned, and is now in this assembly——Servant of the living God! we hail thy return! may a rich blessing crown thy labours! and may the Head of the Church give to thee, and to us, the pleasure of seeing his work prosper abundantly in thine hands!

This Missionary is accompanied by a young man,† of the tribe of Indians residing at New-Stockbridge, who has served as an interpreter, and subordinate instructor in the mission; and who has come to this place with a view to qualify himself for greater usefulness in the same employment. He is also seated among you——Our Red Brother! thou art welcome to our city! Oh! if it might please the great Disposer of all events to make thee an instrument of usefulness to thy brethren, *a savour of life unto life* to their souls, how rich would be the reward of our exertions! how great and elevated our joy!

From this northern mission our accounts are yet more favourable and flattering than from the South. Our Missionary was received, on his second journey, with even greater kindness and affection than at the first. He was treated with respect, and heard with serious attention, by a nation which had never before consented to receive a minister of the Gospel. His labours seem to have made an unusual impression upon all the tribes which he visited. They discover an ardent and increasing desire to

* The Rev. Mr. HOLMES.

† JOHN WAUTUHO'NAVT.

obtain instruction, and express an earnest wish that nothing may discourage, or lead us to abandon the benevolent cause in which we are engaged. Yes, brethren! those savages who lately heard our message with indifference, and treated our messenger with coldness, or with scorn, now beg us, with affecting earnestness, to send them the means of knowledge; entreat us not to suffer any difficulties or opposition which may arise, to weaken our hands, or produce weariness, in prosecuting our exertions for their welfare; and solemnly pledge themselves to co-operate with us, in these exertions, to the utmost of their power.

In a word, the field of missionary labours is opening wider before us, is whitening to the harvest, and calling for additional labourers to enter into the harvest. The heathen on our borders are in a state more tranquil, and more favourable to the reception of the Gospel than ever before. Their prejudices are giving way to juster impressions of our benevolent and useful design; their conviction of the importance of acquiring some of the arts of civilized life, in order to their welfare, and even to their national existence, is evidently growing; obstacles are vanishing on every side; inducements to multiply and extend our missions, in various quarters, are continually presented: Next to that blessing which alone maketh rich, and giveth efficacy to means, we only need more missionaries, and more ample funds for supporting them.

My Brethren of the Missionary Society! I congratulate you on the auspicious circumstances under

which we have convened. Do not the degree of success with which your exertions have been already crowned, and the pleasing prospects which lie before you, fill you with gratitude, fire your ambition, and animate you with new zeal, in prosecuting the great designs of your institution?

Despise not the day of small things. Be not discouraged, because the effects arising from your exertions are not greater and more splendid. It may be safely asserted that we have had as great, if not greater success, than could reasonably have been expected. Did any man suppose, when we sent messengers of Grace to the heathen; that their blindness and prejudices would instantly vanish? that their habits, confirmed by the example of ages, and endeared by innate corruption, would be immediately laid aside? or that their minds, pre-occupied by delusive superstitions, would, in a month or a year, generally undergo the revolution which we aim to accomplish? Surely no sober calculator could have anticipated, thus early, such effects as these. The grace of God can do any thing; but what have we a right to expect? All experience teaches us, that the introduction of the gospel among heathen tribes, to any extent, requires time, patience, unwearied labour, and a fortitude appalled by no trial, discouraged by no delay. We have already done much. We have addressed ourselves to them. We have gained a hearing. We have conciliated their minds. We have planted the seed of truth among them, and it must have time to grow.

Though it tarry, wait for it; and I will venture to add, it will surely come, it will not tarry.

Let us, then, respected and beloved Associates! grateful for past success, and animated with the hope of more extensive blessings in future, hold on our way, not only with firmness, but with increasing confidence, zeal and assiduity. Let us endeavour to excite in each other more of that spirit which becomes the cause in which we are engaged. Let us persevere in faith, in exertion, in prayer, in ardent and active desires to extend the honour of our Master's name: *Let us not be weary in well-doing, for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.* Be assured, if we honestly aim, in our hearts, to build up the kingdom of the Redeemer; *our labour will not be in vain in the Lord.* If it be not made immediately effectual for the conversion of the heathen, it may promote the growth of religion in our own souls; it may advance the power of godliness in those around us; it may scatter blessings where we least expect them to fall, which will prepare joy and gladness for distant generations.

How delightful the thought, that the seed which we are now sowing in the wilderness may, through the effectual working of divine power, in due time, spring up, and produce a rich harvest, to the glory of our Father in heaven! How animating the hope, that our humble endeavours may become the means of converting a desert into a fruitful field; and of planting innumerable churches where Sa-

tan's seat now is! With what lively joy must every disciple of Christ anticipate the period, when roaming savages, transformed and fixed by the power of grace, shall form regular and happy societies; when the *war-whoop*, dreadful signal of murderous design! shall be exchanged for the accents of charity and the song of devotion; when the idolatrous sacrifice shall give place to the incense of humble and believing hearts to the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world; when the pagan feast shall yield to the table of the Lord; when the bloody *hatchet*, buried deep in the earth, shall be surrendered for the implements of husbandry and peace; and when the *habitations of cruelty* shall become holy temples of the living God! Welcome, happy day! May the Lord hasten it in his time!

Ministers of the Gospel! permit a junior brother to remind you of the peculiar ties by which you are bound to interest yourselves in the Missionary service. It is the cause of Him to whom you have devoted your talents and your lives; it is the cause which employed the counsels of Jehovah from everlasting; the cause which brought the Son of God from heaven; the cause in which he suffered and died; the cause which your character and your vows have pledged you to promote, to the extent of your power. Ought not, then, your influence, your public ministrations, your private intercourse, as well as your prayers, to be employed in pleading for the heathen, in endeavouring to excite an holy zeal for spreading the gospel in the wilderness, and in favouring the societies which have been formed

for this benevolent purpose? Fathers and Brethren! our task is mighty; our responsibility is awful; but our encouragements are great; our employment is delightful; our reward is glorious. *They that be wise, shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever.*

Private Christians! indulge not the unworthy thought that you can do little in this interesting cause. Is there any one of you deeply impressed in his own mind with the obligation and the magnitude of the Missionary undertaking, but who, at the same time, imagines that nothing can be done, until many of a similar character are ready to join him? Upon this principle, nothing great or laudable would ever be effected. Believer! do your bowels yearn over the benighted heathen? Go forward. Exert yourself. Plead their cause in private circles. Contribute, not only your entreaties at the Throne of Grace, but also your time, your advice, your example, the influence of your name, and your temporal possessions, to forward the noble work. Were every individual Christian to do his utmost, according to the talents committed to him, for the promotion of this great object, what a flood of blessings might be poured on the wilderness, until there should be no room to receive them!

My brethren, of every description, and of every name, in this large assembly! we would spread before you, this evening, the case of the heathen, for whose salvation we are engaged, and would entreat you to help us; help us with your prayers,

with your counsels, and with your worldly substance. We ask a portion of that abundance with which God has blessed you, that we may be enabled to send the bread of life to those who are hungry and perishing. Lift up your eyes upon the extensive wilderness on our borders, and contemplate the condition of its savage inhabitants. Behold them sunk in ignorance, covered with superstition, degraded by vice; and say, whether a nobler enterprise of benevolence can be conceived, than to send them the means of knowledge, of civilization, and of holiness? It is our desire to institute more extensive plans for the attainment of these important objects: but the mortifying truth must be told—we want the means.—You are able, and it is your duty to help us.—Testify your love to God, by giving of the good things which he has heaped upon you, for advancing his glory. Testify your love to the souls of men, by contributing the means of sending them the greatest of all favours. Testify your love to your country, by supporting an institution, eminently calculated, in its consequences, to promote the peace, the prosperity, and the general interests of our land.

Finally, my brethren, filled with hope, and trusting in the power and grace of Him whom we serve, to make *the desert rejoice, and blossom as the rose*, when his own time shall come, let us *wait upon him* for the promised blessing. Yet a little while, and *he will gather all nations, and tongues, and cause them to come and see his glory*. Yet a little while, and *the Lord's house shall be established on the top of*

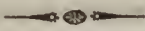
*the mountains, and exalted above the hills, and all nations shall flow into it. His name shall be continued as long as the Sun: men shall be blessed in him, and all nations shall call him blessed.**

Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly, above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us; unto Him be glory in the Church, by Christ Jesus, throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.

* Isa. lxvi. 18. Isa. ii. 2. Psa. lxxii. 17.

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE
DIRECTORS.



BROUGHT, through the favour of a gracious Providence, to another Annual Meeting of this Institution, the Directors beg leave to congratulate their brethren who compose it, on the favourable aspect of the circumstances under which they convene, and to offer them their salutations in the Lord. Their records for the year past furnish much information that is both new and interesting, which they would now endeavour, with all convenient brevity, to lay before the Society.

By their last annual report, they announced the settlement of the Rev. Joseph Bullen, and Deacon Ebenezer Rice, with their respective families, in the Chickasaw country. The mild disposition of those Indians, their confidence in Mr. Bullen, the approved character of Mr. Rice, and the favourable reception which was given to both, promised to the latter the same degree of esteem which the former had conciliated, and raised expectations of mutual usefulness and success, which, the Directors are sorry to state, have not been fully realized. In consequence of a misunderstanding between Mr. Rice and the Indians, they conceived so unfavourable an impression of him as to produce a determination, on their part, that he should remove from their country. The details of this unpleasant affair cannot be satisfactorily collected from either of the letters which relate to it. All that can be stated, at present, is, that Mr. Rice, after being permitted to remain long enough to arrange his affairs, and provide for his journey,

removed to Nashville, in the State of Tennessee, where he still resided, at the date of his last letter. Encumbered with a large family, and at so great a distance from his native country, it is, no doubt, a source of keen distress to be thus cast out. But it is pleasing to add, that his letter breathes a spirit of firm dependence upon the promise of his God, and of submission to this unexpected allotment. A consolatory answer has been returned to his letter, and the payment of a draft of 293 dollars 34 cents, drawn in his favour, by Mr. Bullen, has, for the present, closed the transactions of the Directors with Mr. Rice.

However discouraging this occurrence may prove, all the accounts which have since been received are so favourable, that they forbid us either to abandon that mission, or despond of its success. Not having made as yet such proficiency in the Indian language as to dispense with the aid of an interpreter, some difficulty has arisen to Mr. Bullen from that source. He has been under the necessity of discharging one for unfaithfulness; but another, more faithful, has been procured. The kindness he at first experienced, continues without abatement. His addresses are still received with decent attention by all, and deep impressions upon some. Fourteen persons, consisting of Indians, half-breeds, and negroes, have already been baptized; and, by late information received from him, it appears that the number of professors is increasing.

It may not be improper here to add, that the Chiefs of the Chickasaw tribe had, in the course of the year, made, through Mr. Bullen, an application for some manufacturing implements, for which they proposed to make payment on delivery. Unwilling to engage in any thing like traffic, and convinced that a compliance with this request might give rise to expectations which the funds of the Society could not realize, the Directors thought it most prudent to refuse it, and stated, in a letter to Wolf's Friend, and other Chiefs, such reasons as were best calculated to reconcile them to the refusal.

Among the north-western Indians, a still more flattering prospect opens to the Society. Though accounts were pleasing at the date of the last annual report, the intelligence which has since been received greatly increases the claims upon our gratitude, and justifies the elevation of hope, in which the mission commenced. Two days after the annual meeting, the Rev. Elkanah Holmes returned to this city. The progress of his mission, till that period; the affectionate addresses received from the Indians he had visited, and the proposal by them to establish two schools, the one at Buffaloe Creek, the other at the Tuscarora Village, may be seen in the appendix to our last publication.

John Johnston, a young Chief of the Seneca nation, entrusted to the Society for his education, came with Mr. Holmes. He has been placed under the tuition of Mr. M'Gregor, teacher of the school under the care of the Associate Reformed Church, where he is boarded at the rate of 182 dollars per annum, and educated without expense. His regular habits, the improvement of his time, and the affection which he will probably imbibe for the Society, promise great advantage to its designs, when he shall have returned to his tribe.

Attached to the Indians by the kindness he had experienced, and moved, we trust, still more powerfully by compassion for their souls, Mr. Holmes expressed a willingness to renew his mission, and was again engaged upon the same terms as before. Furnished with additional instructions for himself, and special instructions for Nicholas Cusick, the Tuscarora Indian who was before employed as his Interpreter, and now both as assistant and Interpreter; having received at the same time, addresses for the Tuscarora, Senecas, Onondagas, Cayugas, Warriors at Abeel's Town, and the Delaware nation, together with letters to the inhabitants of Buffaloe, to Capt. Brandt, and the Moravian Mission at Trench River, he set out upon his mission in the end of June last. On his way he engaged, agreeably to the directions of the board, Silvanus

Palmer, to teach the school, which it was resolved to establish at Buffaloe, and agreed to allow him, as a compensation for his services, 250 dollars per annum, together with his board. He also, at his own discretion, engaged for three months, John Wautchnaut, a principal man of the Muchheconnuch nation, who speaks several Indian languages, to teach reading and psalmody among the Tuscaroras, at the rate of 10 dollars per month, beside travelling expenses. The reasons assigned for this measure were so satisfactory that the board approved of it, and resolved to continue this man in their service.

Towards the establishment of the school at Buffaloe, Mr. Holmes received in this City, and on his journey, donations amounting to about 190 dollars. Shortly after his arrival at that place, most of the timber for the School-house was hewn, and immediately, on opening a subscription among the inhabitants, 300 dollars were raised. Owing however to sickness, which has prevailed among them, they have not as yet been able to finish this building; but the school has been taught by Mr. Palmer, till the beginning of the last winter, when it was thought proper to suspend it till spring.

Cusick has been indefatigable. The Directors have lately received from him a letter, written with his own hand. Considering its author and contents, it is a communication both rare and valuable. In it he breathes the spirit of humble piety, laments the plague of his own heart, and expresses deep solicitude for the salvation of his fellow Indians, as well as lively gratitude to the Society for its efforts in sending them the Gospel. He promises, should he again be employed, to keep a more particular journal, to collect materials for making up an account of the present state of the Indians, as well as for a history of the ancient tribes inhabiting this continent; and declares, with Christian triumph, that Sacharissa, Chief Sachem of the Tuscaroras, has expressed a desire to forsake all idolatry, and depend on the Gospel for salvation.

Through the instructions of Wautchnaut, the Tuscaroras

have made very rapid progress in psalmody, and the elements of English reading. A number of Indian boys regularly attended his instructions, and in the space of three months made such proficiency, as to read a little, and write a legible hand. A specimen of this writing has been transmitted to the board, and will be laid before the Society.

Most of the tribes for whom he had received addresses, have been visited by Mr. Holmes. From some of them, answers, soliciting, in the most earnest manner, a continuance of the Society's labours, have been received. All seem desirous to have the Gospel preached, the means of education afforded, and the habits of civilized life introduced among them. Foremost among these are the Senecas, who never, till Mr. Holmes visited them, would receive a missionary. They informed him, that once before one had been sent to them from Boston; that through a suspicion of his having come to tame them, in order to get their lands, they had rejected him; but declared that now they saw and lamented their folly. Recovering from the prejudices imbibed against education of every kind, they have expressed their wishes to adopt the habits of civilized life, to have a Church and School-house erected among them, and solicited clothing for eight of their children, whom they intend to send to the school at Buffaloe. As the highest testimony of their respect that could be devised, they have sent to the Society a belt of white Wampum, four feet in length, five inches broad, with a silver medal annexed, upon which is engraved the arms of the United States. The dimensions are thus particularly mentioned, because by these the Indians estimate the value of the pledge.

The Tuscaroras in general listened to the truth with respect, and not a few of them with deep emotion. Mr. Holmes has frequently observed a considerable number in tears while he was preaching. To this tribe, the ministrations of the missionaries appear to have been in a peculiar manner profitable and acceptable. It has already been related that the chief Sachem has renounced his idolatry, together with the festivals

and evil habits of the Indians. We may add, from recent information, that he has resolved to persevere in his respect for the Gospel: Through his influence over the tribe, they have, in solemn council, determined to receive the Gospel, and, as is their manner, covenanted with the Society to listen to those who may be sent to preach it. As a pledge of their fidelity to this contract, the board has received from them a rich belt of Wampum. On one occasion, after they had passed the greater part of a day in council, Mr. Holmes was requested to preach to them; he expressed a fear that they might be fatigued; but in a manner of speaking peculiar to them, they replied that they were *tired not to hear him*.* From their address to the Society it appears that formerly they knew no difference of days, but since the obligation to devote some part of their time to the immediate service of God has been inculcated upon them, they have resolved to observe the Christian sabbath. When they have no one to instruct them, the greater part assemble on that day, and sing the hymns which Cusick has taught them.

So deeply were they impressed with the value of the Gospel, that they commissioned three of their Chiefs to visit a branch of their tribe, residing in the southern part of the continent, and invite them to return home, in order to learn the way of salvation. Two of these, with an Interpreter, have returned. In passing through this city, they had a conference with the Directors; a conference as affecting as it is uncommon. The venerable Sacharissa, the principal in this mission, after expressing his gratitude to the Great Spirit for preserving him and his companions thus far on their journey, stated, with apparent regret, that their brothers, for whom they had been searching, had dwindled to a very small number, and that these were too poor to undertake the long and expensive journey. His acknowledgments to the Society for affording

* Meaning that they were so anxious to hear him that they were weary of waiting for that purpose.

his tribe the means of salvation, were made in a manner which evinced the sincerity of his gratitude; and while he deplored the ignorance and misery of his red brothers, as well as the difficulties to which their benefactors must be subjected, he, with emotion unusual in an Indian, solicited the prayers of the Directors, and urged them to patience and perseverance in their efforts to make his people happy. After taking an affectionate leave of these Chiefs, with their Interpreter, the board resolved, in consideration of the distance and expense of their journey, to present them with 40 dollars, to help them on their way.

In addition to this pleasing intelligence from Mr. Holmes, some, not less pleasing, has been received in a letter from Mr. Joseph Badger, Missionary from the Connecticut Missionary Society. It affords, in the Indians south-west of Lake Erie, particularly the Shawanese, strong evidences of a disposition favourable to the reception of the Gospel; and contains an account of the conversion and baptism of young Blue Jacket, under the ministry of Mr. Hughs, of Ohio Presbytery.

It would be injustice to our civil rulers not to mention, before we dismiss this part of the Report, that the Legislature of this State, already distinguished as the patrons of its literary interests, have, by a late act, extended this patronage to the promotion of religion and knowledge among the poor Indians. Fifteen hundred dollars have been appropriated to the erection of two buildings, for the purpose of public worship and instruction; the one at the Seneca, the other at the Tuscarora Village. When plans so benevolent are supported by such authority, there is every human probability that they will be successful.

So far as the correspondence of the Directors furnishes information, the missionary spirit still continues to increase. Events which could not be foreseen, and difficulties which were not contemplated, have occurred. In some persons a momentary despondency has taken place; but the general

result appears to have been, a new direction, not an extinction of zeal; greater wisdom in devising missions, more patience in conducting them, and a firmer dependence for their success upon the Lord of the harvest. Originating in a period unusually distinguished by political agitations, and cherished, notwithstanding the prevalence of loose principles, more general than has marked any period of the Christian world since the æra of the Reformation, this singular spirit holds its steady course, and promises soon to effect what it first proposed, “ a general movement of the Church of Christ upon earth.”

Wherever we turn our eyes, whether to the banks of the Indus, to the borders of the African desert, to the Islands of the South Sea, or the American wilderness, there is reason to hope that the Lord of Hosts is about to be *exalted among the heathen*.

Accounts, well calculated to confirm our hopes, have been received, in a letter signed by Mr. Carey, in behalf of the missionaries in Bengal. A translation of the Gospel of Matthew into the Bengalee language accompanied this letter; and in all probability the whole of the New Testament is by this time printed, and may be read by the millions who inhabit the immense regions of Hindostan. In a letter from the London Missionary Society, accompanied by a volume of Sermons, and the report of their Directors, the board is happy to learn that the President of this Society is elected a Director of that respectable institution.

A correspondence has been commenced with the Connecticut Missionary Society, an establishment promising extensive advantages to the missionary cause.

Another Society has lately been established in Hampshire, in the State of Massachusetts, under the style of the Hampshire Missionary Society; and in consequence of a letter, requesting the advice, friendship, and co-operation of this Society, a regular correspondence with them has been established.

The Directors have also received and answered a communication from a Missionary Society lately erected in New-Jersey.

The humble and exemplary Paul still continues to preach the Gospel to the Indians on the east end of Long-Island. That he might be enabled to devote a greater proportion of his time to the Montauk Indians, than he could otherwise spare from the cultivation of his ground, 20 dollars have been added to his salary.

Among the last communications received by the Directors is a letter from the President of the Missionary Society of the United Brethren, dated Nazareth, in Pennsylvania, and accompanied by several numbers of their "Periodical Accounts." Those patient, persevering, indefatigable friends to Jesus and the perishing heathen, have, in addition to the missions long established among the American Indians, lately commenced one in the Cherokee nation.

In addition to the information now given, the Society will learn, with gratitude and joy, that a zeal for spreading the Gospel has lately sprung up among those of the Indians who have themselves enjoyed its privileges. It is well known that a small congregation of this description has long been organized at New-Stockbridge, and now flourishes under the pastoral care of the Rev. John Sergeant. Having experienced the miseries of the Pagan's condition, and persuaded that he will hear, with more attention and confidence, the glorious truths of the Gospel from one of his own colour, they have determined upon sending a delegation, to visit every different tribe of their brethren, on this side of the Mississippi, to inquire into their disposition towards the Gospel, to recommend a civilized life, remove their prejudices, prepare the way for missionaries, inculcate peace and union among themselves, and show them the vast importance and benefit of collecting into towns, of cultivating the earth, and of perpetual friendship with the United States. Mr. Sergeant, who has furnished the information, has also, in the same let-

ter, made application to the Society for some pecuniary aid, to procure the quantity of wampum necessary for an introduction to so many tribes.

From the success which has attended every missionary attempt of the Society, the prospect is encouraging. Scarcely any of the difficulties which usually accompany such attempts have occurred. The poor heathen not only welcome, but in the most earnest manner solicit the republication of the glad-tidings which had first been proclaimed by our missionary. To satisfy their claims upon the Christian world, a much more extensive plan of missions is required. From various parts of the wilderness, the cry for spiritual assistance is heard.

But amidst these pressing calls, and these strong excitements to compassion, the Directors are sorry to report, that their funds, at no period of the institution adequate to its designs, have, within the last year, received no accessions in proportion to its expenditures. For the payment of arrears due to the late treasurer, and other demands against the Society, they have been under the necessity of selling thirteen shares in the New-York Insurance Company.

It cannot be that the multitudes in this country who are constrained by the love of Christ can receive this information with indifference, or reflect upon it without a united zeal to grant relief. The precept and the promises of their Master—the nature of their profession—the value of their privileges—the baseness of ingratitude to God, and of cruelty to the souls of men, forbid the supposition. The undertaking in which we have engaged, is of such a nature, that we cannot desist from it; and however frequent and large the demands to carry it on may be, none whose love is unfeigned will grow weary of them, till *the wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them, and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose.* Isa. xxv. 1.

Signed in the name and by order of the Directors,
SAMUEL MILLER, *Sec. Pro. Tem.*

New-York, April 6, 1802.

STATE OF THE FUNDS.

THE Committee appointed to audit the Treasurer's Account, report, that they have examined the same, and found it right and accurate; and that there remains a balance due from the Treasurer, this day, to the Missionary Society, of one hundred and twenty-nine pounds, seven shillings and ninepence.

The Committee farther report, that there remain in the name of the Treasurer, twenty-two shares of the stock of the New-York Insurance Company, the property of this Society.

LEONARD BLEECKER, } Committee,
JOHN MILLS, }

New-York, April 6, 1802.

OFFICERS OF THE SOCIETY.

J. RODGERS, D. D. *President.*
J. H. LIVINGSTON, D. D. *Vice-President.*
JOHN BROOME, Esq. *Treasurer.*
Rev. J. M. MASON, *Secretary.*
P. WILSON, LL. D. *Clerk.*

OTHER DIRECTORS.

WILLIAM LINN, D. D.
JOHN M'KNIGHT, D. D.
Rev. J. N. ABEEL.
Rev. SAMUEL MILLER.
Rev. JOHN WILLIAMS.
JOHN BINGHAM, Esq.

LEONARD BLEECKER, Esq.

GEO. LINDSEY, Esq.

MR. ROBERT GOSMAN,

JOHN MILLS, Esq.

ANTHONY POST, Esq.

MR. BENJ. EGBERT.

The following Gentlemen were, at the last annual meeting,
elected honorary Directors.

The President of the Northern Missionary Society in the
State of New-York.

The President of the Connecticut Missionary Society.

The President of the Massachusetts Missionary Society.

The President of the Hampshire Missionary Society, in the
State of Massachusetts.

The President of the Missionary Society of New-Jersey.

The President of the London Missionary Society.

The President of the Netherland Missionary Society.



Donations to the Society will be thankfully received by
Mr. JOHN BROOME, Treasurer, or by any other of the Di-
rectors.

APPENDIX.

The Board of Directors judging that a Specimen of Indian Talks would be gratifying to the Public; have selected the two following.

FATHER, ATTEND!

WE, the Chiefs and Young Men of the Tuscarora Nation, wish to speak a few words in your ears. We are very happy that the Great Spirit has protected you and us, so that we meet together this day at our fire-place. We also thank the Great Spirit that he has put it into the hearts of the Directors of the Missionary Society to pity us, and send you again to visit us. We also thank the Great Spirit that he has preserved all our chiefs and warriors, so that we are able to meet you again in council.

Father, we all, Sachems, Chiefs, Warriors, and Young Men, speak with one heart. We are very happy to hear the talk of the Missionary Society. Now we find that they are true friends to our poor nation; that they wish to have us and our children taught, that we may become a civil and happy people.

Father, we now thank you and the Missionary Society, that you have brought a schoolmaster with you, to teach our children to read and write, and to learn our people to sing praises to the Great Spirit. He is our brother, we receive him in love. We will all be kind to him, and use him well, as long as he will be a good man; but if he should be a bad man, we will let you know it, for we think you do not want a bad man amongst us; we are bad enough ourselves, we do not want any bad man to live among us.

Fathers and Brothers,* we are happy that the Missionary

* By Fathers and Brothers, they told Mr. Holmes they meant him and the ministers and others belonging to the Missionary Society.

Society have taken so much pains to seek the happiness of our poor nation, for we are as it were lost; they have undertaken to raise us from the dust.

Fathers and Brothers, we thank you for your instructions; we have received your instructions. We used to think that there was no difference in days; but now we are convinced that we ought to keep the sabbath as holy time, and we are determined hereafter to rest on that day, and keep it as holy time, to serve the Great Spirit in.

Fathers and Brothers, you know we are poor, we can do but little ourselves; we would be very happy if the Missionary Society would assist us to have a house to worship in, and for a School-house.

Fathers and Brothers, we will now let you know that our nation is much scattered; some are at North-Carolina; a few at Oneida, and others at Grand River, in the British dominions. We wish to have them all collected together in this place, that they might be instructed in the good ways of Christians, and have the Gospel of Jesus Christ preached to them.

Fathers and Brothers, we will now let you know that our desire is that we may have constant instruction in the ways of the Great Spirit, lest we grow weak; and we wish that you would not be discouraged, and not forsake us because of our wickedness. We expect there is one above that will judge us, if we do not forsake all our evil ways. We hope and wish we shall be faithful to hearken to your instructions, and try to do all the good we can to our nation. If evil men among us should try to disturb us, and hinder us from doing good, we will try to shut our ears, and not listen to them, but try to keep on in the straight, good path.

Father, we now let you know that we will leave it to the young warrior to speak last, and deliver this belt of Wampum to you, to send to the Missionary Society, as a token of our love and friendship with them.

Then the young warrior took the belt, and spoke as follows, and delivered it to Mr. Holmes.

FATHERS AND BROTHERS,

We deliver this belt, according to the custom of our forefathers, as a token of peace and friendship, which we wish may continue as long as the sun shines, and trees grow; and that our nation may have the Gospel preached to them as long as the world shall continue.

Sacarese, Sachem.

William Prentup, Chief Warrior,

Billy Prentup, Warrior.

Taquateaha, Warrior.

Dekayeateat, Warrior.

Keayatha, Warrior.

Isaac, Warrior.

John, Warrior.

Hendrick, Warrior.

Witnesses present.

Nicholas Cusick, Interpreter.

John Waututgnaut.

George, Warrior.

John Mountpleasant, Warrior.

Niagara, August 29 & 31, 1801.

2,

FATHER,

SINCE you, as a Missionary, first visited us, we have been slow to give you an answer. The reason has been, that as there were three nations to consult, it took up much time; but now we are ready to give you an answer. In the situation that we are in, we are exposed to the white people; but we believe the Missionary Society of New-York to be our friends. You are our instructor; if you take advantage of us, you take advantage of the ignorant.

Father, now attend to the custom of our forefathers. Since you returned from visiting our brethren at the River La Trench, you have received the heavy tidings of the death of your daughter. Now we suppose that you have more understanding about the departure of a soul into the other world, by the word of Jesus, than we have.

Father, now we are ready to receive you, and remove your grief, and wipe away your tears, and clear your throat; that as you have the knowledge of the Gospel, you may see clearly, and speak freely to your children. We hope your daughter is gone to happiness, to Jesus, for we hear that Jesus came to save sinners. Now we deliver you this wampum* to wipe away your tears, and clear your throat, that you may see and speak freely to your children, and also as a token of our friendship, according to a custom of our forefathers in cases of grief like yours, before we proceed to public business. We suppose that all mankind, though of different colours, when they die go to one place, according as they have done good or evil.

Father, your mission is a great thing. We suppose you are sent to take care of the souls of men.

Father, now attend! As you are sent to us from the New-York Missionary Society, we hope you will be kind enough to excuse our delay, in giving you a full answer, respecting the objects of your mission. We have taken time to deliberate. We have been embarrassed with doubts. We thought not proper to proceed hastily, lest, not having thoroughly weighed the objects, we should do wrong, and have reason hereafter to repent it, therefore we have been slow since you have been here.

Father, we now accept the offer of the Missionary Society.

Father, our forefathers were happy in the enjoyment of this whole island, which was well stocked with game and trees, which was given them by the Great Spirit: although they did not enjoy the things and the means to get a livelihood that the white people had, yet they were contented.

Father, our brothers, the Missionary Society, are taking great pains to instruct us. If our forefathers had accepted such an offer, we should not have been so deceived and cheated by the white people. We do not suppose that we that are grown up can receive much benefit; but we hope that

* Two strings of black Wampum.

our children will be instructed, so that they may not be so deceived and imposed upon by white people, as our forefathers and we have been.

Father, we have heard from our forefathers, that they had a Missionary sent them from Boston some years ago, to preach to them the name of Jesus, but they did not receive him; and now we are sorry they did not receive him. We suppose that our forefathers thought it was not necessary to have preaching among the red people, being strictly attached to their old customs, and not to those of the whites. We have learned, however, that the white people have a name given them, by which they may be saved; but we suppose our forefathers did not understand that name, and therefore rejected the preaching of the Missionary.

Father, we present you this Wampum as a testimony of our minds.

Fathers, we let you know that this is the Wampum which we received from our father, the great man of the United States, Awnondagoinius,* as a chain of friendship between the United States and the Six Nations. When we transacted business with the United States, their intention, doubtless, was good, intending the welfare of Indians; which consideration encourages and begets in us a desire to brighten the chain of friendship, and adopt the customs and modes of living practised by the white people, as our mode of living, by hunting, will soon become difficult, because the game will be destroyed, by reason of the white people increasing, and settling our game country; and we have already seen it come to pass, that our lands are in the possession of the white people.

Father, from the Commissioners of the United States holding treaties with us, we have heard talk about the Great Spirit, and that it was the wish of the white people, that for our own good we should become better acquainted with the Great Spirit.

Father, we are always glad to hear from you; you have

* Destroyer of towns.

given us some instruction about the Gospel of Jesus, which he has commanded to be preached to all people. We think it a great thing to receive the Gospel, therefore we thought it proper long to deliberate. Now we, the Seneca Nation, have concluded to receive the Gospel of Jesus: now we hope that we shall have success, and not fail, and that it will be continued to be preached to us, for we have great trials.

Father, as the Missionary Society have sent to us, offering us assistance in the education of our children, we receive it kindly, and return them our thanks; but we have some difficulty in our minds about the School-house. The white people at Buffaloe were to provide a house, which not being done, we cannot send our children at present.

Father, we wish you to know that we accept the favour offered to us by the Missionary Society, for the schooling of our children; but it is our desire that a house may be provided in our village for worship, and schooling our children, and that assistance may be given us by the Missionary Society, to build such house, that it may be handy for our children.

Father and Brother, we pray you be not offended at the difficulty we shall now mention. The white people seem to despise us for our poverty and nakedness. Our children being ragged, and partly naked, will probably be disagreeable to the schoolmaster; we therefore pray the Missionary Society to grant us some assistance in clothing our children, that they may be comfortable and decent to go to school.

Father, we are glad that the Missionary Society have had pity on us, and that they wish to communicate to us the knowledge of the Gospel; and, as we have just began our friendship, we wish to talk often together, and that you would visit us as often as you can find it convenient, that we may have a better understanding of the Gospel.

Father, as we expect the Missionary Society will act towards us as fathers towards children, we expect they will enlighten us for our good. We know that the white people have cheated us out of our interest. We feel ourselves ignorant and unacquainted, which was the cause of our being cheated.

Father, now we let you know that we have eight children which we mean to send to school as soon as the house at Buffaloe is finished, and we wish the Missionary Society to provide meal for them, while they are at Buffaloe, but when the school is on our land we will provide for them ourselves.

Father, now we will mention this—it may be that our own way of worshipping the Great Spirit may appear barbarous to you, but we desire our elderly people may be indulged in their former mode of worship; not that we will despise your instruction, we rather desire more of it, that we and our children may be wise and happy.

Father, we have now opened our minds to you; we have said what we have to say, and, as a testimony of our friendship, we deliver you this belt of Wampum, to be communicated to the Missionary Society.

This may certify all whom it may concern, that at Buffaloe, on the 19th of November, 1801, the foregoing speech was delivered in my presence, to the Rev. Elkanah Holmes, Missionary from the New-York Missionary Society, in Council with the Chiefs of the Seneca Nation, by Red Jacket, Second Sachem, in behalf of said nation; and that the mode of expression by the orator, and the words used to communicate their ideas, are carefully preserved in the above; to which Mr. Holmes pertinently and particularly replied.

JOSEPH BADGER,

*Missionary from the Connecticut Missionary Society
to the Connecticut Western Reserve.*

I served to minute down, from the mouth of the Interpreter, the aforesaid Speech, delivered by Red Jacket to the Rev. Elkanah Holmes, and do fully agree with what the Rev. Joseph Badger has asserted, as above.

SYLVANUS PALMER.