

Memoirs
OF THE LIFE AND RELIGIOUS LABOURS OF HOWELL HARRIS, ESQ. INCLUDING AN AUTHENTIC ACCOUNT
OF THE CALVINISTIC METHODISTS IN WALES.
BY JOHN BULMER.

Inspicere tanquam in speculum in vitas omnium Jubeo, atque ex aliis sumere exemplum sibi.

TERENCE.

*(The lives of other men should be regarded as a mirror from which we may take an example and a rule of
conduct for ourselves)*

Haverfordwest:

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TO THE REV. JOHN ARUNDEL, HOME SECRETARY TO THE LONDON MISSIONARY SOCIETY,
These Memoirs of Howell Harris, Esq. are respectfully inscribed by his obliged and devoted friend, the
author.

PREFACE.

The idea of compiling the following Memoirs arose from the Author's having engaged to furnish a short article of Biography for a Periodical Work to which he statedly contributes. On examining the materials he had collected, he found them so ample, and, in his opinion, of such interest, as to induce him to go beyond his original design.

The chief instrument employed by the great Head of the Church in giving rise to a very considerable, and still increasing Denomination of Christians - a man whose apostolic labours were the means of promoting an extensive revival of religion, not only in Wales, but in different parts of the kingdom - appeared to demand more attention than he has hitherto received. The various incidents of his life, and the striking interpositions of Providence, in preserving him from the rage of Persecution, and in defeating the machinations of his enemies, were thought worthy of being presented to the Public under every possible advantage. With those important views of Experimental Religion, developed in what Mr. Harris himself has written, it was conceived that many could hardly fail to be instructed and edified. Under these impressions, the Author was desirous of sending forth the present work,

iv

which he now commits to the candour and liberality of the true friends of religion.

Though steadily attached to the views and principles of the Denomination to which he belongs, the writer of these Memoirs trusts he shall always be disposed to recognise the truth, and to honour moral excellence, wherever he finds it. He views that body of Christians, by which the memory of Howell Harris is deservedly honoured, with no other than feelings of Christian affection. He embraces the leading doctrines maintained by them, rejoices in their prosperity, and only laments that it has not been in his power to render the continuation of their history, which he has attempted in the conclusion of this work, more complete. Should any future opportunity, however, be afforded, it will give him much pleasure to make such additions as may be deemed proper, on receiving more particular information.

Haverfordwest, May 28, 1824.

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I. PAGE 1

The birth and early life of Mr. Harris—His predilection for the Ministry—The means and result of his first serious impressions—His convictions and resolutions on first coming to the Lord's Table—Benefit derived from Duppa on the Commandments—His ineffectual endeavours to render himself holy, and sudden change of his views as to the means of sanctification—Happy state of his mind at the next Communion—He mentions it to his acquaintance, and is afraid of losing it—His distress in consequence of anger—Contempt and ridicule incurred by speaking of divine things—His own account of the state of Religion in Wales—His concern for the Clergy, and endeavours to promote that religion to which he saw they were indifferent.....

CHAPTER II.

Mr. Harris goes to Oxford, and quits the University after his first term—visits the families in his own, and neighbouring parishes, exhorting the people with great success—keeps a school in the parish church at Trevecka—accompanies a teacher of psalmody in his journeys, addresses the singers in different

viii PAGE 8

parts of the country, and begins to form societies on the plan of Dr. Woodward—He is invited to preach at the house of a gentleman in Radnorshire—has his school broken up through persecution—and his sphere of usefulness thereby enlarged—His account of the mode of preaching he adopted, together with the exercises of his own mind—Opposition of the Magistrates and Clergy—Mr. Harris apprehended while preaching in Montgomeryshire—His life in great danger at Machynlleth—Progress of religion in several counties of Wales—First interview between Mr. Harris and Whitefield.....

CHAPTER III. PAGE 15

The benefit Mr. Harris derived from his first visit to London—He returns to his itinerant labours in Wales—preaches at Long Town, in Herefordshire, at a public feast—expostulates with a magistrate at Pont-y-Pool for reading the Riot Act—hears, and has a profitable interview with Mr. Wesley, at Bristol—returns to appear at the Monmouth Assizes—receives further satisfaction respecting the course he was pursuing—His account of the state of public instruction within the pale of the Established Church.....

CHAPTER IV. PAGE 22

Testimony of the Rev. Charles Wesley to the extraordinary talents of Mr. Harris, as a teacher of religion—His dangerous tour with Mr. Seward in Glamorganshire and Mon-

ix

mouthshire—They are assaulted by the mob at Newport, Caerleon, Usk, and Monmouth—preach at Coleford and Gloucester—Mr. Harris receives the Lord's Supper at St. Nicholas's church—goes to a Revel

in Radnorshire, and is apprehended by two Justices—appears twice at the Quarter Sessions, where they attempt to convict him under a persecuting statute of Charles the Second—He obtains the friendship of Marmaduke Gwynne, Esq.—has his preaching interrupted in Carmarthenshire—nearly loses his life at Bala—hears a sermon against himself in Carnarvonshire—remonstrates with the Dignitary who preached it, and is stoned by the congregation—is again in danger from the mob at Penmorfa—escapes their fury, and lodges at the house of a Dissenting Minister—The spiritual improvement he derived from this stormy and perilous journey.....

CHAPTER V.

Character under which Mr. Harris considered himself as acting—Reasons of his attachment to the Established Church—His arguments against separation—He goes to London, to assist at the Tabernacle—preaches with Mr. Cennick in travelling through Wiltshire—both shamefully treated by the mob at Swindon—and rendered useful at a neighbouring village—In returning from London Mr. Harris preaches at several towns in England, and declares against one prevailing evil of the times—His marriage, and previous views of the mar-

x PAGE 34

riage-state—His settlement and persecution at Trevecka—Impressment of James Ingram—Mr. Harris also in danger of being taken—His account of the impressment of three other friends, and of the progress of religion, in a letter to Charles Wesley.....

CHAPTER VI. PAGE 42

Further account of Mr. Harris's itinerant labours in Wales—Persecution of well-disposed persons near Wrexham—Success of the gospel—Mr. Harris's apology for the Welsh Calvinistic Methodists—His observations on the revival of religion, in which he was a chief instrument—His endeavours to check prevailing errors—particularly that of depending on past feelings and impressions to the neglect of present duty.....

CHAPTER VII. PAGE 49

Mr. Harris is visited by some religious persons at Trevecka, and forms the idea of a Settlement resembling those of the Moravians—Beginning, temporary prosperity, and subsequent decline of the establishment—Its history, as given by the successors of Mr. Harris—Further particulars—His concern for the best interests of the country—Account of five young men who volunteer in its service against the French—Sickness and happy death of several members of the Family—Mr. Harris's remarks on the hand of Providence in favour of the Institution..... 49

xi

CHAPTER VIII. PAGE 58

Mr. Harris accepts a commission in the Breconshire Militia—receives full liberty to preach when on permanent duty—is accompanied by twenty-four of his people—and obtains the rank of Captain—His reflections on the Word of God—Affairs at Trevecka during his absence—He visits Yarmouth, and preaches in his regimentals—His successful exertions at Bideford, and Torrington—Barnstaple, and Plymouth—He returns to Trevecka, and pursues his former labours—succeeds in procuring the monthly administration of the Lord's Supper in the parish church—and assists the Countess of Huntingdon in the establishment of her College.....

CHAPTER IX. PAGE 65

Death of Mrs. Harris—Decline of Mr. Harris's Health—Final disposition of his affairs—His "Dying Testimony"—Triumphant Departure—Monumental Inscription.....

CHAPTER X. PAGE 74

General Character of Mr. Harris—Esteem in which he was held by the Rev. Charles Wesley—His Eccentricities—Nature of his zeal—His knowledge of religion—Catholic Spirit—Want of Learning—His natural good Sense—Usefulness in the cause of Religion.....

APPENDIX.

History of the Welsh Methodists continued—Their attachment to the Church of England—

xii.

PAGE 86

Their Preachers—Societies—Monthly Meetings—Quarterly Associations—Further Persecutions—Opposition of the Established Clergy—Vindication of the Methodists from the charges contained in several abusive pamphlets—particularly, "Hints to Heads of Families"—"A Parish Minister's Serious Advice to his Parishioners"—"Methodism Unmasked"—and "The Welsh Looking-glass"—Gradual Increase of the Welsh Methodists—Estimate of their Religious Character.....

Memoirs of HOWELL HARRIS, Esq.

CHAPTER I.

The birth and early life of Mr. Harris—His predilection for the Ministry—The means and result of his first serious impressions—His convictions and resolutions on first coming to the Lord's Table—Benefit derived from Duppa on the Commandments—His ineffectual endeavours to render himself holy, and sudden change of his views as to the means of sanctification—Happy state of his mind at the next Communion—He mentions it to his acquaintance, and is afraid of losing it—His distress in consequence of anger—Contempt and ridicule incurred by speaking of divine things—His own account of the state of Religion in Wales—His concern for the Clergy, and endeavours to promote that religion to which he saw they were indifferent.

THIS eminently pious and useful man was born at Trevecka, in the parish of Talgarth, in the county of Brecon, January 23, 1714. He enjoyed the ad-

vantages of an ordinary education until the age of eighteen, when, on the death of his father, he became an instructor of youth, and opened a common school in the country. Being now removed from parental restraint, and having no serious friends to converse with, he was soon carried away, as he expresses it, "by the stream of vanity, pride, and youthful diversions," which obtained a complete ascendancy over him. The serious thoughts and reflections, which had previously occupied his mind, were, in a great measure, banished; though he had such convictions of the truth of religion, as never suffered him to remain perfectly easy in the neglect of it.

His sphere of acquaintance with persons of property and influence being increased, and having a predilection for the ministry in the Established Church, a prospect of being qualified for ordination was soon presented to him; and it pleased God, about the same time, to enlighten his mind, and bring him to a knowledge of divine things. In the spring of 1735, and the twenty-first year of his age, the parish minister was induced to offer some arguments to shew the necessity of coming to the Lord's Supper, and to answer the objections usually made by those who neglected it. On his saying, "If you are not fit to come to the Lord's Table, you are not fit to come to church;--you are neither fit to live, nor fit to die,--" Mr. Harris was so impressed, that he resolved to forsake his outward sins; though, as he confesses, he knew "very little of inward corruption;" and, as the first step to a new life, in going home from church, he became reconciled to a

neighbour, with whom he had been at variance, acknowledging his own fault, and forgiving his.

The following Sunday, being Easter Day, he went to the Lord's Table; and, on repeating the words, "We do earnestly repent, and are heartily sorry for these our misdoings; the remembrance of them is grievous unto us; the burden of them is intolerable;" he began to reflect, and consider if such was indeed his experience; when he was alarmed to find, that his confession was only in word, that he had no inward grief at the remembrance of his sins, and that they were not an intolerable burden. "I was convinced," says he, "that it ought to be so; and finding that it was not, I perceived I was going to the Lord's Table with a lie in my mouth, and was much inclined to withdraw, but quieted my mind with having determined to lead a new life; and in that resolution I received the pledges of God's dying love. I then began to be more serious and thoughtful, was given to prayer, and strove to keep my heart and thoughts fixed on the Lord;--but all in vain. Thus I went on for about a fortnight, till I had almost lost my convictions."

By reading, however, those convictions presently returned with still greater power. This was chiefly occasioned by Bishop Duppa's work on the Commandments; of which he says, "The more I read, the more did spiritual light shine into my mind, discovering the extent of the Law, calling me to account, not only for outward sins, but for my looks, aims, and ends, in all I had thought, said, or done. Then I clearly saw, that if I were to be judged by that law, I must be undone for ever." The more he searched into the nature of things, the more he

saw himself, and others with whom he conversed, to be in the broad way to destruction. He found himself to be void of spiritual life, “carnal,” and “sold under sin.” He felt that he could no more believe, or mourn for his sins, than he could ascend to heaven.

He then began to humble himself by fasting, and by denying himself almost every temporal comfort, hoping thus to subdue the power of inward depravity; for he was yet ignorant of the blood of Christ, as the only “fountain open for sin,” and a total stranger to the life of faith. “Having laid no foundation,” as he observes, he “knew not the Saviour’s voice,” till one day, in prayer, he felt a strong impression on his mind, urging him to give himself to God as he was; and, after a great conflict, he was made willing, so as to resign himself entirely to the grace and mercy of his Redeemer. “I believe,” says he, “I was then effectually called to be a follower of the Lamb, and had some inward satisfaction in my soul, but no evidence of my acceptance with God, till the following Whitsunday, at Sacrament.”

On that occasion he thus writes: “I went, labouring and heavy laden, but was convinced by the Holy Spirit, that Christ died for me, and that all my sins were laid on him. I was now acquitted at the bar of Justice, and in my own conscience; and my faith proved itself to be true, by the peace, joy, watchfulness, hatred of sin, and fear of offending God, that followed it.” —Notwithstanding many severe trials of his faith, to which he adverts in the account he has given of his experience, Mr. Harris still retained his assurance and comfort. He was

delivered from temptation, his heart was detached from the world, and his happiness increased.

In returning from church, on one occasion, he could not help telling some of his acquaintance, that he knew his sins were forgiven him, though he had never heard anyone profess the same assurance, or say it could be obtained. At this time, however, he felt no persuasion that he should continue in so happy a state; and observes, that “the fear of losing what he then had,” kept him “continually watching and praying.” He was afraid of seeing any of his old companions, lest they should draw him aside; and was particularly induced to guard against “all lightness of mind, idle words, and foolish jesting,” to which he was naturally prone.

Sometime after this, while engaged in the ordinary business of his school, Mr. Harris “felt some risings of anger” in his heart towards one of his pupils; on which occasion he says, “The enemy immediately accused me, alleging that I had now forfeited all the happiness I had just before enjoyed;-- that I was fallen from grace;--and therefore in a worse condition than ever. This occasioned no small pain and confusion; but, while hating myself, and ready to despond, God pitied me, and sent home those words to my soul—‘I CHANGE NOT.’ That these words were scriptural, I was not then aware; and was at a loss how to apply them to myself, until light broke in upon my mind, to shew me that my salvation did not depend on my own faithfulness, but on the faithfulness of Christ; so that, though I was subject to change, yet because of his unchangeableness, I was secure. Thus was I delivered from my fears, and found rest in the love and faithfulness

of God my Saviour. I was all this while a total stranger to the controversies of religion: I only knew this, that God loved me, and would, for his own name's sake, love me freely to the end: this made me to love him again, and study how to show my love to him. I cannot express the comfort I now enjoyed in my soul, being continually favoured with the divine presence, and having my conversation in heaven.

"Now I could talk of nothing but spiritual things, which soon brought contempt upon me. I was daily derided by some, and pitied by others. Some strove to terrify me, and others to allure me with counsel, that savoured too much of the wisdom of this world, to have any weight with me; and it grieved me that I had neither seen, nor heard of any on in the country, who seemed in earnest to work out his own salvation."

The state of the Principality, as to religion, was then very deplorable. The following is Mr. Harris's account of it, together with the effect it produced on his own mind, and the first exertions he was led to make for the conversion of sinners. "At that time there was a deep slumber throughout the land. The generality of the people spent the Lord's Day contrary to the laws of God and man, it being by none rightly observed. No sooner was public worship over, than the conduct of the people discovered that the heart was entirely alienated from all that was good. The remaining part of the day was spent in indulging the prevailing corruptions of nature; all family worship being utterly laid aside, except among some of the Dissenters, while a universal deluge of swearing, lying, reviling, drunkenness, fight-

ing, and gaming, had overspread the country; and that without any stop, as far as I had seen, being attempted to be put to it. Seeing both rich and poor going hand in hand to ruin, my soul was stirred up within me. The ministers were the first that lay on my heart. I saw that they were not in earnest, and did not appear to have any sense of their own danger, or experience of the love of Christ. Hence their instructions were delivered in such an indifferent, unfeeling manner, that they seemed to have no effect upon any of their hearers. I had never seen one man awakened by their preaching in our part of the country. Their deadness and indifference, therefore, made me, out of the abundance of my heart, speak to some of those with whom I was acquainted; but finding it had no effect, I betook myself to secret prayer and mourning, and encouraged some others to pray with me. After this I could not help speaking to as many as I could of their danger. Death and judgment were my principal subjects of conversation. I set up family worship in my mother's house; and, on Sunday mornings, some of the neighbours would come to hear me read the Lessons and Psalms. Sabbath evenings I spent with a few friends whose hearts the Lord had touched with some sense of their danger. Now the fire of God did so burn in my soul, that I could not rest, day or night, without doing something for my God and Saviour. Time was so precious that I knew not how to improve it to his glory and the good of others. When alone, I was wholly employed in reading, praying, or writing. At the same time I continued to exhort the poor people, who flocked to hear me every Sunday evening."

CHAPTER II.

Mr. Harris goes to Oxford, and quits the University after his first term—visits the families in his own, and neighbouring parishes, exhorting the people with great success—keeps a school in the parish church at Trevecka—accompanies a teacher of psalmody in his journeys, addresses the singers in different parts of the country, and begins to form societies on the plan of Dr. Woodward—He is invited to preach at the house of a gentleman in Radnorshire—has his school broken up through persecution—and his sphere of usefulness thereby enlarged—His account of the mode of preaching he adopted, together with the exercises of his own mind—Opposition of the Magistrates and Clergy—Mr. Harris apprehended while preaching in Montgomeryshire—His life in great danger at Machynlleth—Progress of religion in several counties of Wales—First interview between Mr. Harris and Whitefield.

IN the beginning of November, 1735, Mr. Harris went to Oxford, and entered at St. Mary's Hall, under the tuition of Mr. Hart. His friends were now in hopes that he would be cured of his enthusiasm, as they were pleased to call it. But when he saw the irregularities and wickedness that surrounded him, he soon became weary of the place, and "cried to God," as he expresses it, "to deliver him from thence." And though he had the promise

of a benefice of £140. a year, together with the situation of sub-tutor in a public school, if he would finish his studies at Oxford, he declined the offer; and after spending one term, he took his leave of that seat of learning, with all the advantages it offered him, and came again into Wales.

On his return, he employed himself in going from house to house, until he had visited nearly the whole of the parish in which he was born, together with some of the neighbouring ones. The people now began to assemble in vast numbers, so that the houses in which he addressed them were too small for the congregations. The word was attended with such power, that many cried out on the spot for the pardon of their sins. Such as lived in malice acknowledged their faults, made peace with one another, and appeared concerned about their eternal state. The parish churches were now better attended, and family worship was set up in many houses. These things excited astonishment and opposition in various quarters, but nothing could extinguish the flame that was kindled.

Mr. Harris had been induced to open a school at Trevecka, which was presently removed to the parish church. This afforded many young persons an opportunity of coming to be further instructed in the way of salvation. About the same time a serious man was going from one parish to another, to instruct the young people in psalmody. This afforded Mr. Harris another opportunity of doing good. He accompanied this man in his journeys; and every evening, when the business of instruction was over, he proceeded to give a word of exhortation. By this means many were brought under convictions,

and many religious societies formed. "I began," says Mr. Harris, "in imitation of the societies which Dr. Woodward had given an account of in a little treatise on that subject, there being as yet no other societies of the kind, either in England or Wales. The English Methodists were not then heard of, though, as I afterwards found, the Lord had been working on some of them, at Oxford, and elsewhere."

In the summer of 1737, a gentleman in Radnorshire, having heard of his extraordinary proceedings, sent for Mr. Harris to preach at his house. This excited the curiosity of some in the higher classes of society, who came to hear him. Many had their prejudices removed by conversing with him, and some were convinced. About this time his school was broken up, he and his pupils being turned out of the parish church; and, in consequence of persecution, it was never re-established. This circumstance, as he observes, enlarged his sphere of usefulness. He now readily complied with every invitation to preach, went wherever he was sent for, and "discoursed to crowded auditories, generally three or four, and sometimes five or six times a day." He observes that his "particular gift was as yet to convince the conscience of sin." He says, "I took no particular texts, but discoursed freely, as the Lord gave me utterance. Necessity was laid upon me to go and awaken souls. Thus I went on, though with fear and trembling, lest others, of bad intentions, should take occasion to go about after my example. I therefore prayed that I might know the will of God more perfectly, and whether his glory, and the salvation of my fellow sinners, were the

only objects in my view. But though I had many comfortable assurances that my commission was from above, yet I was not thoroughly satisfied in my own mind, until summoned before a person of distinction, to give an account of my going about as I did; when these words forcibly came to my mind: 'Behold, I have set thee an open door, and no man can shut it.' And by the effect produced on my soul, I am persuaded that the passage was applied to me by the Holy Spirit."

Mr. Harris had now to endure much persecution. The magistrates threatened him, and the clergy preached against. The mob was also active, pursuing him in many places with mischievous intentions; so that his life was sometimes in danger. In February, 1739, while preaching in Montgomeryshire, a clergyman and two justices came and apprehended him, taking cognizance of some of the hearers for assembling in an unlicensed place, and threatening them with the utmost rigour of the law; but on consulting a lawyer at the ensuing Sessions, they were persuaded to drop the intended prosecution, and Mr. Harris was set at liberty. "After my dismissal," he says, "I went to Merionethshire, where, I trust, the Lord blessed the seed sown to some. In my return from thence, I came to Dinas Mowddu, and discoursed there; and at the request of a friend, I went to Machynlleth. Here I found no one disposed to receive me. However I proposed to preach from an open window, or door, to such as might assemble in the street; but I was soon obliged to desist, by the noise of the multitude, who continued hollowing, threatening, swearing, and throwing stones, or any thing they could lay their

hands on. An Attorney came up to me, with as much rage and fury in his looks, and his mouth as full of the language of hell, as if his name had been 'Legion.' A gentleman and clergyman followed him, in the same spirit and language, to head the mob. One of them discharged a pistol at me, but I received no hurt. I was, however, obliged to go amongst them into the street, not expecting that I should escape alive, as every circumstance threatened me with death; but my hour was not yet come. Though they used me ill, I was miraculously preserved, and one of the mob was disposed to fetch my horse. As soon as I was mounted, they observed which way I went, crossed the road, and began to throw sticks and stones at me, till the Lord delivered me out of their hands. I was at length so accustomed to these and other trials, which I often passed through, that when I arose in the morning, I was daily in expectation of them. My natural strength was so spent by incessant labours, night and day, that frequently when I went before a congregation, I could hardly stand, until enabled to plead that promise, that 'they who wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength:' then I have felt strength sufficient for soul and body to carry me through my work; yea, I have felt it as really as ever I felt the benefit of food when hungry, or the warmth of fire when cold."

Mr. Harris had now the satisfaction of witnessing "a general reformation in several countries." Public diversions were laid aside, religion became a common subject of conversation, and places of worship were every where crowded. By the exertions of the Rev. Griffith Jones, or Llandowror, the Welsh

Charity Schools began to spread, people in general expressed a willingness to receive instruction, and societies were formed in many places. By this time, also, the Rev. Mr. Rowlands, and other young clergymen in Wales, began to preach in a manner similar to that of Mr. Harris, and to discover a promising zeal for the advancement of true religion.—It was in March, 1739, that Mr. Harris had his first interview with that eminently useful man of God, the Rev. George Whitefield. He had, indeed, heard of him previous to his first voyage to America; and, understanding that he had often preached four times a day, and was much blessed, Mr. Harris says, “My heart was united to him, but I had not the least prospect of seeing him. In the beginning of January, 1738, I was agreeably surprised by a letter from him. Having providentially heard of me, he wrote in order to encourage me to go on.” Providence, however, so ordered it, that, in the following year, they met at Cardiff; “where,” says Mr. Harris, “I was much refreshed by the sight of him, this being the first time I met him to converse face to face.” The feeling of satisfaction and delight, on this occasion, was mutual; for Mr. Whitefield says, “When I first saw him, my heart was knit closely to him. I wanted to catch some of his fire, and give him the right hand of fellowship with my whole heart. After I had saluted him, and given a warm exhortation to a great number of people, who followed me to the Inn, we spent the remainder of the evening in taking sweet counsel together, and telling one another what God had done for our souls. My heart was still drawn out towards him more and more. A divine and strong sympathy seemed to be

between us, and I was resolved to promote his interest with all my might. Accordingly we took an account of the several Societies, and agreed on such measures as seemed most conducive to promote the common interest of our Lord. This done, we ate a little supper, and then, after singing a hymn, we went to bed, praising and blessing God for bringing us face to face. I doubt not but Satan envied our happiness; but I hope, by the help of God, we shall make his kingdom shake."

CHAPTER III.

The benefit Mr. Harris derived from his first visit to London—He returns to his itinerant labours in Wales—preaches at Long Town, in Herefordshire, at a public feast—expostulates with a magistrate at Pont-y-Pool for reading the Riot Act—hears, and has a profitable interview with Mr. Wesley, at Bristol—returns to appear at the Monmouth Assizes—receives further satisfaction respecting the course he was pursuing—His account of the state of public instruction within the pale of the Established Church.

ABOUT the end of March, 1739, Mr. Harris went to London, where he received further light on one leading feature of the gospel, by conversing with a friend. Of this conversation nothing more is recorded than the following remark of the person to whom he refers: "I see many people concerned about working in themselves; but few seem to be convinced of the necessity of believing in Christ, before they can do any thing acceptable in his sight." After this, Mr. Harris observes, that he "could not but insist on faith as a fundamental grace, and the genuine spring of all obedience; that until we receive this grace, we cannot apprehend the righteousness of Christ; and consequently cannot say that we are justified." These views and convictions were improved and strengthened by reading. Cotton

on the Covenant of Grace, especially that part of the work in which the author shows how far a person may go without even the right notions of salvation, - without properly believing, or confidently relying on the merits of Christ. Here he was shown how prone we are to depend upon something done by, or in ourselves; - how many trust in an outward profession of the true religion, in the orthodoxy of their principles, or the reformation of their lives; - all which were considered as those works of the law, by which a man cannot be justified. The work made so deep an impression on his mind, as to occasion much distress for several days together. At length he was much relieved by meditating on the words: "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." But being still troubled with some reasonings and fears about going directly to Christ in every condition, he was presently set right by the experience of one who had been in the same situation. "Upon hearing this," he observes, "with some preaching afterwards, I was enabled to lay my complaints and fears before the Friend of sinners, who loved me freely. Now that legal principle of fitting myself for Christ, and of being afraid to go to him when I was not in a good frame, was rooted out of my heart: then I learned to look, and go directly to him at all times, and under all circumstances."

Immediately on his returning from London, he addressed himself afresh to his itinerant labours. The following account of one of his excursions, and of the most remarkable events connected with it, is given nearly in his own words, "Though for eight days past I had travelled very hard, I was assisted

to sit up all night to read, write, and pray. On the following day at noon, I was enabled to discourse with great strength of body; and again in the evening, with much power, near the Hay. From thence I set off about five miles further, and went to bed about twelve. The following day, as I was going to Long Town, in Herefordshire, the young people were crowding to a Feast that was to be held there. I felt a spirit of pity for them, and endeavoured to dissuade them from going, knowing that their souls were in a perishing condition, and that God would be publicly dishonoured. Then I felt inclined to go to the Feast, and was willing to suffer whatever might be permitted; and after praying alone, I ventured to go in the name of God. Before I came to the great crowd, I found a few people together at their diversions. To these I began to speak, on account of one of them swearing; and while speaking to them, intelligence was conveyed to the multitude, that I was there. Then they ran up by hundreds, until, I believe, there were, in a little time, nearly two thousand about me; and the Lord gave me courage to attack the Devil in his own quarters. He made my face as a flint, and gave me something proper to say on the occasion. And when I saw some gentlemen and ladies coming up, I was made stronger and stronger. I was also moved to address the minister of the parish, and two justices, who were present, asking how they could give an account of their stewardship, while they countenanced swearing, drunkenness, and vanity. Some of the gentlemen laughed at me; and one cried out, 'Take the babbler down;' but my time was not yet come. Thence I went towards

Abergavenny. There the vilest of the town came to hear me, and the Lord helped me to deliver my message faithfully and boldly.

“Having now, by the strength of the Lord, power to resist the Devil in two towns, I went to a third; namely, Pont-y-Pool: and here, after I had been led to discourse on the courage of Daniel and his companions, and to show how the Lord stands by his people in the day of trial, I was honoured with the fulfilment of it in my own experience; for Mr. C—H—came upon us, and read the Riot Act, ordering us to separate in an hour’s time. At his coming our spirits were a little discouraged; but the Lord strengthened me to tell him that we had no Riot there, nor sedition against church or state. I also asked him if he read the Act at Cock-matches, &c.; but he went on to threaten that he would take notice of as many as he could; and that, if we did not disperse, we should certainly suffer for it. The assembly, however, continued unmoved; and I told him that we would disperse, having first prayed for him, that God would not lay this to his charge at the Day of Judgment, when he would have to give an account how he bore the sword of justice. He replied, that that did not trouble him at present. Then we went to prayer, and I begged that the Lord would meet him, as he did Saul of Tarsus, with his saving grace. After this he went away, and so did the people, most of them in tears; so that we separated in great love. But a constable having been instructed to apprehend me, I went with him late in the evening; and having consulted with some friends, I gave bail to appear at the next great sessions in Monmouth. At the same time I

further expostulated with the magistrate, saying I was surprised that he should be the first persecutor of a peaceable Protestant assembly in that part of the country. He said he had his orders from above. I asked him if it was from heaven. He replied, 'No, I do not mean that.' I then told him that I thought, if his Majesty knew how loyal and harmless we were, he would not like him the better for suppressing us. Thus I parted with him, leaving some arrows in his conscience, by telling him that he must soon give an account of himself at an awful tribunal, but that I would pray for him; and he thanked me.

"This being about the middle of June, and as I had not to appear at the Great Sessions in Monmouth until August, I was determined, in the mean time, to be diligent in the work of my Lord. I therefore went to Bristol, where I had sweet conversation with many friends. I went to a society of Welshmen, where I expounded for nearly two hours. Then I went to hear Mr. John Wesley, of whom I knew nothing but by report. In consequence of what I heard of him, I loved him much, though I had some prejudice against him because he did not maintain the doctrine of Election, and the Perseverance of the Saints. His text was Isa.xlv.22: 'Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else.' He preached so excellently, and so clearly held forth free justification by faith, without the works of the law; the necessity, duty, and privilege of looking to Jesus for righteousness and strength; and the Spirit of God attended his discourse to my soul in such a manner, that my prejudice fell to the ground,

and I was convinced, that he was a faithful minister of Jesus Christ. This was especially the case when I went to his lodgings, where he was vastly enlarged in prayer for me, for the Rev. Griffith Jones, and all Wales. Thus I believe, from the benefit I received, that my going to Bristol was of God. Thence I set out again for the Principality, and found the door now opening wider and wider to the counties of Glamorgan, Brecon, Carmarthen, Radnor, Cardigan, and Pembroke. I had reason to believe my labours were attended with much blessing.

“On the 7th of August I arrived at Trevecka, and in the evening of the same day, set out for the Assizes at Monmouth. I spent the night in a most agreeable manner with some friends at Abergavenny, whose hearts the Lord had inclined to go with me, and bear a part in my sufferings, should occasion require. Having heard that my persecutors were resolved to have me punished with the utmost rigour of the law, and having renounced my former friends, who had it in their power to help me, I was driven to send up strong cries to the Lord. I prayed that he would give me clear proof of my mission, and whether I suffered for his cause, or for my own imprudence, as some said. But I was soon comforted, though I expected to stand at the Bar, and endure the contempt of the Court, and of the whole county. For when I arrived at Monmouth, the Lord had, without my knowledge, brought many friends from several parts, not only of Wales, but from Gloucester and London, all of whom were ready to stand by me. But the magistrates, on consulting about my case, thought it best for no one to appear against me; and so I was dismissed.

“After this I was more satisfied than ever that my mission was from God, especially as I had so often applied for holy orders, and was rejected, for no other reason than my preaching as a layman. I saw, both from Scripture, and the practice of the Church, that the preaching of laymen was proper in times of necessity; and I thought that a greater time of necessity could hardly be than the present, when the whole country lay in a lukewarm and lifeless condition. In many churches there was no sermon for months together; in some places nothing but a learned English discourse to an illiterate Welsh congregation; and where an intelligible sermon was preached, it was generally so legal, so much in the spirit of the Old Covenant, that should any give heed to it, they could never be led thereby to Christ, the only way to God. Seeing these things, and feeling the love of Christ in my heart, I could not refrain from going about to propagate the gospel of my dear Redeemer.”

CHAPTER IV.

Testimony of the Rev. Charles Wesley to the extraordinary talents of Mr. Harris, as a teacher of religion—His dangerous tour with Mr. Seward in Glamorganshire and Monmouthshire—They are assaulted by the mob at Newport, Caerleon, Usk, and Monmouth—preach at Coleford and Gloucester—Mr. Harris receives the Lord's Supper at St. Nicholas's church—goes to a Revel in Radnorshire, and is apprehended by two Justices—appears twice at the Quarter Sessions, where they attempt to convict him under a persecuting statute of Charles the Second—He obtains the friendship of Marmaduke Gwynne, Esq.—has his preaching interrupted in Carmarthenshire—nearly loses his life at Bala—hears a sermon against himself in Carnarvonshire—remonstrates with the Dignitary who preached it, and is stoned by the congregation—is again in danger from the mob at Penmorfa—escapes their fury, and lodges at the house of a Dissenting Minister—The spiritual improvement he derived from this stormy and perilous journey.

THAT Mr. Harris was qualified to instruct his countrymen, and more “apt to teach” with success than those of whom he complained, as in the close of the preceding chapter, the testimony of the Rev. Charles Wesley will be generally admitted as sufficient evidence. In his journal, under date of May

8, 1740, when Mr. Harris was in London, that excellent man thus wrote respecting him: - "He declared his experience before the Society. O! what a flame was kindled. No man speaks in my hearing as this man speaketh. What a nursing father God has sent us! He has indeed learned of the Good Shepherd to carry the lambs in his bosom. Such love, such power, such simplicity, was irresistible."¹—Thus qualified for the work before him, in the summer of the above year Mr. Harris went through Glamorganshire. At Cowbridge he met with Mr. Seward, with whom he travelled, and preached at the towns of Newport, Caerleon, Usk, and Monmouth. Of this tour he gives the following account: "At Newport the mob rushed upon us with the utmost rage and fury. They tore both the sleeves of my coat—one of them quite off. They also took away my peruke, so that I had to stand bare-headed under the reproach of Christ. Having a little silence, I continued my discourse: but soon they hollowed again; and while some pelted me with apples and dirt, others threw stones. I received one blow on my forehead, which occasioned a little swelling, with the loss of some blood. Many friends would have persuaded me to give over in the tumult; but I was unwilling to do that, until the storm should abate, and God be glorified over Satan.—When we came to Caerleon, every thing seemed calm and quiet while brother Seward prayed and discoursed sweetly by the Market-house; but when I proceeded to discourse after him, they began to roar horribly, pelting us with dung and dirt, throw-

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¹ Life of Rev. C. Wesley, Dublin, 1805, p.129.

ing eggs, plum stones, and other hard substances in our faces, while they hollowed so loud as entirely to drown my voice. Brother Seward had a furious blow on his right eye, which caused him much anguish. As this affected his left eye, he was obliged to be led by the hand for a few days; and at length he became totally blind of the other. When we arrived in Monmouth, we had much the same treatment as we had at Newport and Caerleon. There happened to be Races there, when both high and low were assembled against us. As I began to discourse on a table over against the windows of the Town Hall, where the Duke of B--, and Lord N--, with a great number of gentlemen and ladies, were at dinner, they ordered a drum to be beaten at our sides, although the Lord enabled me to bear my testimony against their horse-races, balls, assemblies, whoredom, and drunkenness. The drum continued to beat, and the mob pelted us with apples, pears, stones, and a dead dog. During this storm, brother Seward was much afraid of being hurt; yet he endured it with calmness of spirit, saying, 'Better endure this than Hell.' Thus all their opposition could not hinder our progress; but in the strength of the Lord we went on from conquering to conquer. Brother Seward went with me to Coleford, and to Gloucester, where we had much power to discourse to many hundreds, both in public and private.—Being in Gloucester on the Lord's Day, and hearing that the Sacrament would be at St. Nicholas's church, I went there, and had a fresh sense of my spiritual poverty and vileness; so that I could feelingly say, 'O Lord, I am the poorest and unworthiest here before thee.' And when I

thus fell at my Saviour's feet, I had sweet and close communion with him. Then my soul felt compassion for the whole world, longing that all might be born again, and brought to the true knowledge of the Saviour of sinners: yea, I felt that I deserved hell for not valuing his precious blood more.

"My reception at different places was daily facilitated, although the enemy caused some disturbance almost every where. At the entreaty of several friends, I went to a Revel in Radnorshire,--a yearly meeting, where numbers of people had assembled to dance. I usually went on such occasions, to speak to the people; and God was pleased to bless his word to the conversion of some, and conviction of many, who would not attend preaching elsewhere. As I was showing the attentive crowd the folly, vanity, and danger of these ways, and inviting them to the Saviour, I was apprehended by two justices; and after I had suffered much contempt and derision, they drew up my commitment. But when they perceived that I was willing to go to prison, they sent for some of my friends to bail me; which I assented to, lest they should think me obstinate. Being thus bound to appear at the Quarter Sessions, they dismissed me, and I departed, filled with unspeakable joy.

"In consequence of my obligation, I appeared at the Quarter Sessions, accompanied by those who had answered for me; but though my trial was required of the justices, they declined it, and obliged us to appear again the next Quarter Sessions. At this time an attempt was made to destroy me. The Hall, wherein the Sessions were held, was an upper room, leading to which was a high flight of stairs,

facing the street. It being night, the mob had placed themselves at the head of the stairs, with a design to throw me down; which, had it been carried into effect, would have certainly caused my death. They had begun to push me from the door, when, by a special providence, a worthy gentleman, one of the magistrates on the bench, came at the moment of danger, and not only rescued me out of their hands, but took me under his protection, and conducted me to his lodgings. As I was going out of the town, the mob assembled again, unanimously exclaiming against me; but I was induced to demand peace in the king's name; upon which they were struck with such awe, that I was permitted to escape.—At the next Quarter Session, when I appeared in court, an act was read, made in the twenty-second year of Charles the Second, against seditious and illegal assemblies, in which, under pretence of divine worship, people were said to meet in order to plot against the King. When they had done reading it, to the surprise of the whole court, a Counsellor, being employed by a certain gentleman, stood up, and pleaded that these assemblies were not subject to the censure and penalties of that act, unless they could justly charge them with sedition and disloyalty, which they could not possibly do. Therefore he was clearly of opinion, that the defendant might be acquitted of that charge and suspicion, on his subscribing to the Articles of the Church, and taking the oath of allegiance to his Majesty. This I expressed my readiness to do, and they thought fit to dismiss me.

Being once expected near Garth, in Breconshire, the residence of Marmaduke Gwynne, Esq.,
that

gentlemen, being alarmed at the reports he had heard respecting Mr. Harris, determined, as a magistrate, to put an end to his proceedings. Supposing that he held the tenets maliciously ascribed to the Independent Dissenters in the times of Oliver Cromwell,² and regarding him as an incendiary in church and state, Mr. Gwynne prepared himself for an open attack, but said to his lady, on going out, "I'll hear the man myself, before I commit him." Accordingly he made one of the congregation, eagerly waiting to lay hold of any thing that might be construed into a charge against the preacher. He had also the *Riot Act* in his pocket, which he was prepared to read, and thus disperse the people. Mr. Harris's sermon, however, was so truly evangelical, so calculated to arouse the careless, to alarm the wicked, and to encourage the penitent, and his manner so zealous and affectionate, that Mr. Gwynne thought he resembled one of the apostles! He was so convinced of the purity of his doctrines, and of the benevolence of his motives, that, at the end of the discourse, he went up to him, shook him by the hand, told him how much he had been misled by slanderous reports, avowed the intention he had formed of *committing* him, asked his pardon, and, to the amazement of the assembly, entreated him to accompany him back to Garth to supper. Mrs. Gwynne was a woman of superior understanding, but under strong prejudices of birth and fortune. She was one of six heiresses, each of

² For an impartial statement of the matter, and a satisfactory exculpation, see Mosheim's Ecclesiastical History, vol. v. pp.397-403.

whom had £30,000 for their portion, and had married into suitable families of high descent and splendour. She was a violent enemy to all Dissenters; and when her husband returned, introducing Howell Harris, a man of inferior rank, an innovator in the church, and, as she suspected, a rebel to the king,—when she heard Mr. Gwynne himself, in the presence of his whole family, entreat his forgiveness, acknowledge his error, and pay him as much respect as he would pay to a bishop,—she thought her dear husband must have lost his senses; and, in grief and consternation, she quitted the room, nor would return to it till after supper, when Mr. Harris had departed. Nothing, however, could alter the opinion Mr. Gwynne had formed, or remove his attachment to the preacher. His daughter Sarah, afterwards the wife of the Rev. Charles Wesley, also entered into the views of her father. She delighted to accompany him to hear Mr. Harris, her mind was open to receive the truth, and she was particularly benefitted by his discourses. Her piety and religious profession, therefore, exposed her to the raillery of her gay brothers and sisters; and her partiality to Mr. Harris incurred the displeasure of her mother, who passed much of her time in tears at the supposed infatuation of her family. Nor was she reconciled to Methodism till she had perused the “Appeals” of Mr. John Wesley, and heard the character of the two brothers from some of their colleagues at Oxford, which convinced her that their intentions must be good. Till then she would not hear Mr. Harris; but afterwards, her remaining prejudices were entirely removed.—The authority and countenance of Mr. Gwynne and his family

now became highly important to the cause of religion. Regardless of public and private censure, he openly stood up in Mr. Harris's defence, and made use of his extensive influence in promoting the spread of the gospel.

In Carmarthenshire, not far from the county town, Mr. Harris was interrupted by a magistrate, who came on purpose to apprehend him: but having satisfied him that he was not guilty of what was laid to his charge, he was permitted to give the people a warm exhortation. "The Lord enabled me," says he, "to be faithful, and to speak boldly in my Master's cause, as well as to behave with humility. After this the magistrate went quietly away; and from that time I had peace in this and other counties, while the door was now open to several considerable towns in South Wales, where I was not permitted to preach before."

The rage of persecution, however, was very far from being generally abated, especially in North Wales. In the beginning of the following year, 1741, having been importuned to visit Bala, in Merionethshire, Mr. Harris accidentally met the Clergyman of the parish on the road, who cautioned him, at his peril, against going to preach there. Mr. Harris meekly replied, that he thought it his duty to go, and that he had no other intention than to publish the glad tidings of salvation, and would not wilfully offend any one. For this reply he not only received ill-language in return, but was threatened with violence; and as the Rev. gentleman approached to beat him with a large club, Mr. Harris rode off, saying that, when he was reviled, he was taught not to revile again. Of the dangers and

trials which now awaited him, he gives the following account: "When I entered the town, I found a numerous assembly waiting for me, and it was said that the country mob had assembled on purpose to abuse and hinder me. At the request of my friends, I quitted the street, and went to preach in a large house. Here I was happy in my soul, full of courage and power, so that my voice was lifted up like a trumpet. But presently there was a disturbance made at the door, and at the window, which was broken to pieces. The mob had been preparing themselves by excessive drinking, and were now come among the people. Preferring the advice of my friends to the impression felt on my mind, I ceased to speak, and retired to an upper room. I then immediately felt the power withdrawn from me, and understood that I had done wrong. Instead of retiring, the mob appeared to be more enraged. Some surrounded the house, while others climbed to the top of it, threatening me with death, as soon as I should come out. Night at length approaching, I thought it my duty to go out among them, committing myself to the hands of God. As soon as I had got out of the house, one of them seized me, but lost his hold; another struck me on the face; whilst others threw stones and dirt. I now thought it would be my lot to die, like Stephen, in the midst of them. While speaking to, and praying for my persecutors, one of the people told me that I was tempting the Lord by staying there. But no sooner had I turned myself around to go away, than I was somehow left to myself, and sunk under the waves. I was not afraid of death, knowing it to be the entrance to eternal rest; I had no doubt of the favour of God,

through the blood of Christ my Saviour; yet I felt unwilling to die by the hands of these men. However I fell under their merciless feet, where they continued to beat me, until the Lord touched the heart of one of them with pity, or fear of being prosecuted for killing me. He swore that they should beat me no more, and was the means of rescuing me out of their hands. My friends, in the mean time, had experienced the like treatment, and bore all patiently, as I had desired them to do. At length we reached our lodgings together, where we dressed our wounds, and rejoiced that we were counted worthy to suffer for Christ's sake."

From Bala, Mr. Harris proceeded to Carnarvonshire, and reached the first place he intended to visit on a Saturday night. In the morning he inquired for the best preaching in the Church, and was recommended to hear a certain Chancellor, at the distance of a few miles. This Dignitary, it seems, had heard of his coming to North Wales, and had determined, that very day, to forewarn the people, lest he should lead them astray. When he had ascended the pulpit, Mr. Harris heard from him "such a sermon as he should have thought it impossible for the heart to conceive, or the mouth of man to deliver." He found himself pointed out as "a minister of the devil, an enemy to God, to the Church, and to all mankind!" In several respects, he was described as being "worse than the devil, since that malignant spirit could only act here by such instruments" as he was. Having thus sounded the trumpet of alarm, the Chancellor proceeded to declare, that it was "a duty incumbent upon the people, out of love to God and his church, as well

as out of love to their country, to join unanimously against such a man, who carried with him a destructive poison, that would not only injure their persons and estates, but destroy their souls for ever!" During service, it was not known that Mr. Harris was present; but on his speaking to the Chancellor, as he came out of church, on the subject of establishing Welsh Schools, and expressing his dislike of so intemperate a sermon, he was concluded to be the person exposed as such a "false prophet and deceiver." On this supposition, the people set themselves in array, intending to take his horse from him, and carry into effect the instructions they had received. But though many stones were thrown at him, the Lord saved him, as he was fully persuaded, from any considerable harm, and kept them from laying violent hands upon him. He was, however, in much danger all that week, and often thought he should not return alive from that journey.

While waiting for his passage at Penmorfa, the mob assembled against him, and he could see "the spirit of murderers in their looks and behaviour." They abused him; but "being in chains," as he expresses it, they could not hurt him. He escaped their fury, and came over Barmouth Ferry, to a Dissenting Minister's house in Merionethshire. From thence he went to Machynlleth, and Llanbrynmair, in Montgomeryshire, where his life was again in danger; but he was "preserved as prey out of the lion's mouth;" went on, and visited those in that county, who had now begun to form themselves into small societies.

"O what experience I gained," says he, "by

this perilous journey! I never had so much acquaintance with the nature of self-love, which grew insensibly upon me, in consequence of my success. I saw more and more of the depth of evil in my nature, and had clearer evidence of the truth of that expression of good Bishop Hooper, when at the stake: "Lord, I am hell, but thou art heaven." The Lord continued, by degrees, to show me more and more of the height, depth, length, and breadth, of his love in Christ; and led me to know, by experience, more of his sufferings, death and resurrection, love and faithfulness. My eyes were more opened, and my spiritual understanding increased, to apprehend the mystery of Jesus Christ, who can be savingly known, in his various characters, only by the operation of the Holy Spirit. By this light and experience, I had deliverance from the Old Covenant and its legal fear, while it drew me more and more under the law of faith and love. It enabled me to reap the fruits of the New Covenant, enter into gospel liberty, and avoid licentiousness."

CHAPTER V.

Character under which Mr. Harris considered himself as acting—Reasons of his attachment to the Established Church—His arguments against separation—He goes to London, to assist at the Tabernacle—preaches with Mr. Cennick in travelling through Wiltshire—both shamefully treated by the mob at Swindon—and rendered useful at a neighbouring village—In returning from London Mr. Harris preaches at several towns in England, and declares against one prevailing evil of the times—His marriage, and previous views of the marriage-state—His settlement and persecution at Trevecka—Impressment of James Ingram—Mr. Harris also in danger of being taken—His account of the impressment of three other friends, and of the progress of religion, in a letter to Charles Wesley.

IT will now be proper to let Mr. Harris give some account of the character he considered himself as sustaining, and state the reasons of his attachment to the Church of England. He says, "I was followed, in general, by those of the Established Church, because I professed myself a Churchman, and that I had no intention to draw them from the Church. The Dissenters at first liked me much, as I encouraged the people to go any where to hear, where Christ was preached, and where they received most benefit. When they found their places of worship by this means better attended, I was, for

some time, much respected by all parties, and did not want encouragement to join any of them. But the Lord kept me from meddling with differences and controversies about the externals of religion; for I dreaded the consequence of so doing to souls newly awakened. Being, for many reasons, persuaded in my own mind, that I was called to labour as a member of the National Church, my conscience did not permit me to dissent. And when I came to see the bigotry of some parties, the lukewarmness and worldly-mindedness of others, with their legal method of preaching, I began to bear my testimony against them. Then many grew cold towards me, some disputed with me, and others thought it their duty to weaken my hands as much as they could."

Though it must be difficult to conceive how Mr. Harris could be labouring in the Established Church, or with what propriety he could talk of his Churchmanship, while acting in opposition to its regulations, and disowned by its Clergy, he nevertheless observes, "I still remained a member of the Church of England, though I was blamed for my conformity by people of all denominations. Yet I cannot but rejoice on this account, and because of the good work which the Lord began in the Established Church; and I hope it is a leaven that will effectually operate." As we hardly find any thing on the part of the Clergy of the Establishment, or on that of most of its Laity, but opposition to the labours of Mr. Harris, the following passages seems rather remarkable: "I commend the peaceable spirit that still remains in the Church, which tolerates those who differ from it, and does not quench these small

efforts of a revival in it. I look on this as a token for good. I always find the presence of God in its worship and ordinances, and have great freedom to wrestle in prayer for it, and a strong confidence that God will revive his work in it. In this faith and persuasion, I abide in it, and not from any prejudice against any other party.”

Though he tells us that the Lord “kept him from meddling with differences about the externals of religion,” it was not long before he became a public advocate for the external worship of the national church; and not aware that he was laying the foundation of a very extensive separation from its communion, he thus writes: “Several were going to the Dissenters, and I thought it my duty to declare against them, by laying the following reasons and scripture arguments before them:—That the Prophets, and good people of old, abode in the *Jewish Church*, notwithstanding its degeneracy in every respect—That our Saviour and his Apostles, in the same church, attended at the hour of prayer, though they knew its service was to be abolished—That the Apostle did not exhort the sincere to forsake the Corinthian church, notwithstanding the many irregularities therein: and that our Saviour, after his ascension, did not advise his people, in the seven churches of Asia, to leave any church of which they were members, and go to another; but to reform that which was amiss.³ Thus I argued, with respect to

³ The Jewish church was divinely constituted, and its ordinances appointed by the law of God. The Church at Corinth and the seven churches in Asia were also scriptural in their constitution, and their order was regulated according to the mind of Christ. The Church of England, on the contrary, is the creation of the State, owing her constitution, and very being, to Acts of Parliament; while much of her order and discipline is the invention of men. Were it not for this difference between the Jewish church, together with the New Testament churches, and the Church of England, Mr. Harris’s reasons would be to the purpose; and none would be more readily influenced by them than orthodox Dissenters. But as Jesus Christ, the only proper Sovereign and Lawgiver of the church, has declared against “the commandments of men” in religion; it appears to Dissenters, that all the assumed authority of men, to legislate in the church, is an invasion of his prerogative, supposes a defeat in his wisdom, and is a corruption of Christianity, which its true friends cannot knowingly countenance.—As to “reforming that which is amiss,” Mr. Harris does not seem to have reflected, that, in the Church of England, every thing is so fixed by the law of man, as to render it impossible for the people to make any reformation, except in their own conduct.

ourselves, that, though poor and despised members of the Church of England, the Lord had done great things by this revival, and could make us the salt of the Church and Nation.”

In the summer of 1742, Mr. Harris was called again to London, to assist for some time at the Tabernacle. He went by way of Bristol; and in going through Wiltshire, met with Mr. Cennick. They travelled in company to Swindon, and were furiously assaulted by the mob, while preaching there. Mr. Harris says, “They went the length of their chain in venting their rage upon us. They brought horns, guns, and a fire-engine, to annoy us. When they presented a gun to my forehead, my soul was happy; I could cheerfully stand as a mark for them. One of them struck me on the mouth, and brought some blood; but God was pleased to endue us with uncommon patience, meekness, and great power to speak to the people; and many listened with much

seriousness. We then walked up into the town, reasoning with those who opposed us, besmeared with mire, gunpowder, and the muddy water thrown by the engine. We were followed by a large concourse of people; and when we had washed ourselves, and changed clothes, we preached to them in the yard belonging to the house where we were entertained. Mr. Cennick prayed, and I preached; when, I am persuaded, some of them were convinced of sin. They begged us earnestly to go to a village about a mile distant, which we promised to do, should the Lord permit. We went; and in that village the word of God now runs and is glorified.”

After spending some months in London, Mr. Harris preached at several towns in England as he returned. About this time he clearly saw that many were beginning to turn the grace of God into licentiousness, indulging themselves in spiritual pride, judging, and despising others. Not believing that perfection, or a deliverance from indwelling sin, is attainable here, they appeared to be at ease under its dominion, particularly as to the lightness of spirit, and love of the world. “Seeing this,” says he, “I had new light and power to preach the genuine fruits of real faith, and the necessary effects of divine truth, savingly believed in the heart. I was enabled to distinguish between nominal and real christianity, and saw the absolute necessity of exhorting all to make their calling and election sure.”

In June, 1744, Mr. Harris was united to Anne, the daughter of John Williams, Esq. of Skreen. This excellent woman had been called under his ministry some years before, while he was preaching on the conduct of Moses, in “choosing rather to

suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season." She was enabled to make the same choice, and to show her faith under many trials. By her he had a daughter, his only child, who was married to a gentleman at Brecon, previous to her father's decease. Mr. Harris entered into the marriage-state with "much prayer and self-examination," conscious that it was no light thing to become a husband, a father, and the head of a family, so as to discharge his duty in those important relations, as it became a servant of Christ. In a letter to the Rev. Howell Davies, dated April 2, 1744, he thus writes to his fellow-labourer, who was also about to marry nearly at the same time: "As it is an affair of such moment, and as your character is so public, I doubt not but you have had many anxious thoughts, lest you should mistake the will of God. I can indeed sympathize with you; for I see more and more, that our happiness does not consist in possessing the creature, but in being delivered from our own wills, so that God may reign. One brother has observed, that every thing is to us what God makes it; and that if our expectations are built upon the gifts, graces, or seeming fitness of the creature, we shall be disappointed. Let us help each other in our prayers, that every step we take in this great affair, may furnish a pattern for others, who are more influenced by example than by precept. Let it appear to all, that we seek not ourselves, but the Lord Jesus and his interest. The love of beauty, and of the world, is what, by our profession, we declare against. These things were much upon my mind, for a long time, until, as I thought, the Lord showed me his will. I saw that

I should be nothing better than an idolater, until I could marry for God and his church,—not for myself, but ‘only in the Lord;’ and blessed be his name, I have felt something of this in my soul, being willing that he should have his own time and way, and that I should be truly resigned to his will.”

Immediately after his marriage, Mr. Harris settled at Trevecka, where he now remained the greatest part of his time. He was only in the 30th year of his age, and by no means inclined to retire from the field of labour. In following years, therefore, he made several journeys to different parts, and was still the subject of persecution. This, indeed, he experienced at Trevecka about the time of his marriage, of which he gives the following particulars in a letter to the Countess of Huntingdon. “The magistrates, in pursuance of the order given them to impress idle and loose men for his Majesty’s service,” (war having then been proclaimed with France,) “have shown us how much the spirit of Bonner and Jefferys doth influence them. They have taken up one James Ingram, whose heart the Lord had engaged to assist me in my place and work, to write and copy for me, go on errands, and take care of my outward concerns. He had been with me nearly a year and a half; and was, when apprehended, working at my house. He has been confined in prison at Brecon about a fortnight, though I sent the Commissioners word that I had hired him. But as this was not for any given space of time, they said he was no servant, but under the character of persons called for by the Act. They seek for me also, and have charged the Constables

to take me, though they know that I have a settled abode at Trevecka, with a mother and maid-servant, besides this young man, as a household under my care. They have likewise taken another of our brethren, with a view to send him to the army. If the Lord call, I esteem it the same to go home by a French musket, or a sword, as to die a natural death; but if he does not call, in vain these attempts to destroy us.”

In another letter, addressed to the Rev. Charles Wesley, dated July 16, 1745, he says, “Satan rages horribly, as if he would swallow us up alive. The gentlemen in part of Breconshire, and Carmarthenshire, hunt us like partridges; but still the work prospers. Four of our brethren have been pressed, and are now in Brecon Gaol. One of them was apprehended last year. Of the other three, one was a private man; one a Welsh Schoolmaster to Mr. Griffith Jones; and the other taught an English school, was one who exhorted, and is full of faith. They are kept exceedingly happy in their souls. Blessed be God, I can send you good news! The gospel never ran with more glory than now. Last week we had a meeting of Ministers, and Labourers, who help in the work; and the Lord was indeed amongst us. Congregations every where are increasing, fresh doors opening, and a new commission, as it were, is given. Many are called, and wounded; whilst others are so favoured with views of our Emmanuel, as to be kept whole nights singing his praises; being so filled with his love, that they are obliged to cry, ‘Lord, hold thy hand.’”

CHAPTER VI.

Further account of Mr. Harris's itinerant labours in Wales—Persecution of well-disposed persons near Wrexham—Success of the gospel—Mr. Harris's apology for the Welsh Calvinistic Methodists—His observation on the revival of religion, in which he was a chief instrument—His endeavours to check prevailing errors—particularly that of depending on past feelings and impressions to the neglect of present duty.

IN a letter to one of his friends, Mr. Harris gives an interesting account of his continued labours, sufferings, and success in Wales. "Are you surprised," says he, "at my silence? Could you but take a turn with me for two or three months, and see my labours and trials, your surprise would cease. However I will inform you, that it is now about nine weeks since I began to go round South and North Wales, and this week returned home. I have visited, in that time, thirteen counties, travelled about 150 miles every week, and discoursed twice a day, occasionally three or four times. In this last journey I have not taken off my clothes for seven nights together, being obliged to meet the people, and discourse at midnight, or very early in the morning, to avoid persecution. One man, near Wrexham, the week before I went thither, was obliged to pay £20 to Sir W. W. W—e; several of the hearers 5s.; and one of them, who had paid that sum be-

fore, was now fined 10s. This is the third time the poor people have been so served in that neighbourhood for assembling together. Near the town of Bala, where I was formerly like to be murdered, I had a severe blow on my head, but received no hurt. I never saw such crowds coming to hear; many hearts and doors have been opened lately; we know of several who have been awakened; and many speak with delight of coming to hear Mr. Whitefield, when he visits us again."

It will now be proper to introduce some of Mr. Harris's statements and reflections, by way of apology for the conduct of the Calvinistic Methodists in Wales, together with his observations on the extensive revival of religion through their instrumentality. The former occur in a letter to the Rev. Griffith Jones, written in 1746. "Let my name and labour be forgotten, only let the Saviour be known and adored, his truth preached and believed, and his poor despised Church raised out of darkness and formality, to her former faith and love. This alone is my desire, and, I am persuaded, the desire of all the other labourers, who have been thrust out in the same way. Often have we wished and prayed, that those who are in power did but really know our motives and aims, the difficulties we struggle with, and the good that is done to souls. If they knew these things, they would surely be moved with compassion, their judgment of us would be altered, and they would no longer think of us mad enthusiasts. What, if in our zeal against ignorance and profaneness, we betray our imperfections, drop a few unguarded expressions, and, in some things, for want of more experience, go too far, being perhaps im-

posed upon by designing hypocrites, shall no other side of the work be viewed? or are there no considerations to soften the charges brought against it? Are we not sorry if we give just offence to any, or discover a spirit and behaviour contrary to the gospel? Do we not openly acknowledge and bewail our infirmities, and profess our earnest desire of conformity to our Saviour's example and precepts? Though we are refused regular admission to the Communion, for reasons which doubtless seem sufficient to our superiors, according to the light in which we are set before them; though we are publicly reproached and branded, even from the pulpit, on account of that which does not belong to us; and though many, in their own parish churches, have been refused the Sacrament for no other reason than frequenting our Societies; yet we still determine to continue in prayer for our desolate Church, and to abide in her until we are totally put out. I know too well her spiritual poverty, though she, in her fallen state, is ready to say that she wants nothing. The work done among us is too evident to be denied, and is clearly, as to the substance of it, a work of the Lord, though attended with some unavoidable weaknesses, which true charity will cover. We have ventured our lives for several years, under all manner of discouragements, in the face of an angry world, frequently in danger of being stoned to death, and sometimes having our blood mingled with the dust, because we invited sinners to the only Saviour. The Lord knows that, being constrained by love to him and his church, we have travelled incessantly, day and night, through rain and wind, frost and snow, discoursing in all

weathers in the open air, seeking no other reward in this world but what we had in our conscience. We have endured scandals, hard speeches, and reproaches, esteeming it a sufficient recompense to hear poor, ignorant, profane wretches, crying out, 'What shall we do to be saved?'—breaking off their sins by righteousness, following the Lord they once blasphemed, and bringing forth the good fruit of obedience in their future lives. This recompense we undeniably have, though several tares grow with the wheat. These, at first, make a fine show, then discover their true nature, and occasion an evil report. This we have witnessed with aching hearts; yet, blessed be God, there are several thousands in England and Wales, who prove, by gospel characters, that they have enlisted into the army of Christ indeed. To these the Lord has made us the means of salvation, by plucking them, as fire-brands, out of the burning. O did our superiors know only the hundredth part of the real good done, they would be so far from discouraging, or thinking ill of the work, which so evidently bespeaks its great Author, that they would inquire more into it, and endeavour to satisfy themselves on just evidence. Whatever enthusiastic flights, false zeal, or other irregularities may be mixed with our proceedings, I am persuaded that many masters of our Israel, with tears, or praises, would fall down before Him who sits upon the throne, and say, 'Verily the Lord has visited our land, and this is the Lord's doing!' Who besides could open the eyes of the blind, turn the wicked from the evil of his ways, and make the profane scoffer a humble, persevering worshipper of

God? Of this there are, through his grace, innumerable instances.”

But, in the church on earth, the state of religion is subject to many changes, and its beauty must always be expected to suffer through the frailty of man, and the deceitfulness of sin. Of this the following observations of Mr. Harris will afford an ample illustration: “In the year 1746, I saw a spirit of levity, pride, and unwatchfulness, creeping in amongst us; and this appeared to take place immediately after those extensive transports, the effects of nature, which many seemed to enjoy in hearing the word, singing, &c. The spirit of true seriousness that had begun to prevail, was at length almost extinguished. The spirit of awakening sinners under the ministry of the word was also lost, in a great measure, together with its substantial fruits in the hearts of men. Although the number of Teachers was increasing daily, I discovered in some of them a desire to be thought wise and popular; while a great many of my dearest friends, both in England and Wales, seemed to be losing their former simplicity. Thus the enemy appeared to advance like a flood, and seemed to be now doing, by other means, what he had failed to do by outward opposition. In a word, the spirit that began and carried on the work for a while, was gradually dying away. I now felt the necessity of seeing, and knowing the state of those to whom I preached, so as to make a difference, by giving to each what was proper and suitable, according to the state they were in. I was brought more and more to see the deceitfulness that is in man, and how nature may put on the appearance of grace, being so improved and check-

ed, as to have its course turned from the common way of the world to run in a religious channel, now delighting itself in hearing sermons, singing hymns, and having the passions moved. I saw that, by something in nature, appearing like faith, love, and humility, many were deceived, thinking themselves born again, while they were nothing else but what our Saviour termed whited walls and painted sepulchres. Nature was outwardly changed and enlightened by the common influences of the Spirit of God; so that such persons did experience some sensations of joy and sorrow, to which they had not been accustomed. These they mistook for a real change, though self-love, and the spirit of the world, continued to reign; the strong man armed was not cast out, the spirit not awakened by the Law or Gospel, nor the soul convinced of the evil of secret sin.

“Seeing things in this light, a necessity was laid upon me to lift my voice like a trumpet, exhorting christians to examine their profession, and search into the foundation of their religion and faith, so as to ascertain whether it was formed only in the flesh, or whether it had indeed reached the inner man, called the heart, or spirit. I saw clearly that there is such a thing as knowing Christ after the flesh, and exercising a kind of love to the Saviour, and confidence in him, from natural and historical views of the gospel. I perceived that this might be attended with seeming joy and happiness, as in the case of those represented by the seed on stony ground, while the heart still continued whole, self-righteous, and worldly; the spirit being still carnal and unawakened, — in bondage to the God of this world,—never convinced of the sin of nature, the evil of unbelief,

or the difficulty of obeying the call of Christ in the gospel. Such persons appeared to look back upon something that they had done or felt at different times, and thence to draw the conclusion, that they belonged to God, and therefore should be saved.

“This I plainly saw was the religion of most professors; and that, after all the Lord had done for them, they were only outward-court worshippers, though ready to say, ‘We are Abraham’s children.’ Then I was led to show what were the effects of Abraham’s faith; — how, being dead to his country and possessions, he obeyed the call of God, went out to wander among the Heathens in a strange land, not knowing whither he went, — believed what appeared impossible, — and denied himself by offering up the delight of his heart; — of which noble actions our Saviour reminded the Jews, when he was upon earth, and which are left on record for the imitation of his spiritual seed. I also spoke of the Israelites—how many thousands of them died in the wilderness through the sin of unbelief—not taking God at his word, so as to rely on his promise in the prospect of all difficulties. I observed how Paul applies these things to the christian church, and that they stand recorded as a warning to us, lest we should depend on past favours, instead of attending to present duty, and thus fail to enter into eternal rest.”

CHAPTER VII.

Mr. Harris is visited by some religious persons at Trevecka, and forms the idea of a Settlement resembling those of the Moravians—Beginning, temporary prosperity, and subsequent decline of the establishment—Its history, as given by the successors of Mr. Harris—Further particulars—His concern for the best interests of the country—Account of five young men who volunteer in its service against the French—Sickness and happy death of several members of the Family—Mr. Harris's remarks on the hand of Providence in favour of the Institution.

THE stated residence of Mr. Harris being now at Trevecka, a few of those who had been awakened under his ministry in former years, began to visit him there; and as he preached to them two or three times a day, they earnestly desired to continue with him. This desire, it is said, "he could not withstand," and was induced to think of forming an Establishment, something resembling the present Settlements of the United Brethren. His friends were of opinion, that he "set about it purely in faith, relying on the Lord and his promise." They have also said, that he "had an impression on his mind, for some years past, that he should build a house for God." This being the case, it is too obvious to need remark, that he would hardly be inclined, for

a moment, to “withstand” the desire of his friends. He no doubt had the example of Professor Frank and Whitefield in view, especially as to the means by which each of those great men erected an Orphan House. But Mr. Harris shall speak for himself. He says, “I was impelled to build by the same spirit which sent me about to preach, and at a time when I was far from being provided with money or friends; and yet I made use of no means to get one shilling, but a humble pleading and confiding in the promise, on which I trust my all, both as to temporal and spiritual things.” The foundation of the present building at Trevecka was laid in April, 1752, apparently without any definite and regular plan, and was carried on at different times, as circumstances seemed to require. Thus Mr. Harris became subject to the charge of having “deluged his native country with bad taste.” It was for want of a well digested plan in the beginning, that the traveller beholds “towers, battlements, and bastions,” with “here a Gothic arch, and there a Corinthian capital!” The appearance of this Establishment has been described by a late Tourist,⁴ as resembling the Paragon, Prospect Place, Mount Pleasant, or some of those other places of a similar description, which appear within a circle of five miles round London: “a space which,” according to him, “comprehends most of the architectural absurdities, and horticultural deformities, to which a vitiated imagination has ever given birth.” Trevecka, indeed, in his opinion, with its “peacocks cut in box, and lions

hacked in holly," seems, "by combination, to have outdone them all!"—In addition to his own small estate, Mr. Harris purchased farms in the neighbourhood for the support of the Institution, and established manufactories, to as great an extent as his finances would admit, or as opportunities presented themselves of laying out the money he received from time to time. The people who placed themselves under his care, were "required to pursue their avocations of husbandry, or trade, solely for the benefit of the common stock, without interfering in the management of the joint capital," while they adhered punctually to the other regulations and observances previously established. The Institution continued to flourish until some time after Mr. Harris's decease. His people were considered as good farmers. The produce of their fields not only supplied the wants of the Establishment, but "furnished a large surplus for the market." The members of the community also manufactured, independent of other articles, large quantities of fine flannels, which were in high request in the country around, and large orders were executed for Bristol. The Institution, however, has been gradually declining for several years, and is now in a very low condition, owing chiefly to the decrease of its members.

The history of the rise and progress of this Establishment, as given by the friends and successors of its founder, will not be uninteresting. "Soon after he began to build, some people came to offer their labour, that they might be under his care, and profit by his ministry. Thus the Family began to be gathered in 1752. In the following year, part

of the building being finished, a great number of people flocked to him from all parts, many of them merely to hear the word, and others partly from curiosity, the report of his preaching daily at Trevecka having spread through all Wales. Some presently returned, others stayed for some time, and went away complaining, either that the fare was too hard, or the preaching and discipline too severe; but many, especially single persons, both men and women, continued, giving themselves to the Lord. In the beginning of the year 1754, the Family consisted of about a hundred persons, besides those coming and going. Mr. Harris took upon himself the sole care of their spiritual and temporal concerns, though at present he had no adequate means for their support, having as yet only two small rented farms, and a quantity of wool for the women to spin. The difficulties into which he was brought, were such as to occasion him many restless nights, which he spent in prayer; and the Lord was with him in a surprising manner. 'Being often in straits,' says he, 'wanting twenty, fifty, or a hundred pounds, and having no where to turn for assistance but to the promise, persons living sometimes at the distance of 70 or 80 miles, have been moved to bring me as much money as I wanted. This will appear strange to many, as well it may; yet thus the Lord often appeared for me.'

"In 1755, several families came to Trevecka, especially from North Wales; some to live in the Institution, and some to occupy farms in the neighbourhood, that they might have a convenient opportunity of attending Mr. Harris's preaching. Many of them had substance; others were poor; and

having many children, were obliged to be assisted. About this time he wrote as follows: 'Now and then appeared a family, which I nether thought of, sent for, nor expected. Many people have continued to come here, drawn only by love to the truth, and that voice of the Lord which they heard under my ministry, being called to work and live hard, and to put themselves wholly under my direction. There are now with us ten families, who board, work, and sleep in the House; and ten other families live in farms near us.' When these people came to reside at Trevecka, many of them testified, that the word of God, as preached by Mr. Harris, was attended with more and more energy and benefit to their souls; and also that they saw it necessary to be under the discipline, as well as under the preaching of the word; especially as the Lord hath appointed, that his servants should meet in fellowship, and use other means of grace for their improvement; his ministers being overseers of the flock, as well as preachers of the word to them. At the end of this year, there were about 120 persons in the Establishment, besides those families in the neighbourhood that belonged to it."

Thus the Institution gradually rose to prosperity, notwithstanding the many unfavourable circumstances which attended it. Soon after the Building was begun, Mr. Harris had a severe fit of sickness, from which he was not expected to recover. This was followed by the circulation of calumnies and injurious reports, originating in the different ideas formed respecting the characters and views of those who attached themselves to the Institution, as well

as in the suspicions entertained of the motives and designs of its founder.

Mr. Harris preached publicly to the Family at Trevecka two or three times a day, besides holding private meetings with one part or other of its members, an hour every day of the week. From the beginning he had two or three persons able to assist him in these religious exercises; and in process of time, others were raised up as helpers, both in the ministry, and in the government of the Family. Divine Service was established three times a day, all year round, the time of harvest not excepted, and a numerous attendance secured by certain regulations, similar to those observed by students at College. There never were more than 140 members of the Family besides children; and in 1756, some of these were removed by death. They enjoyed the prospect of a glorious eternity, through the blood of Christ, praising him for his love, and blessing God for having brought them to Trevecka. Thus "seeing their brethren and sisters depart, strong in faith, to their eternal home," we are assured, "afforded much comfort and joy to those who were yet left below in the vale of tears."

A further decrease of their number was occasioned, about the same time, by furnishing recruits, who volunteered their service in the war with France. Being much concerned for the stability of the Protestant religion, and fearing lest the country should be deprived of its religious liberty, Mr. Harris made known his sentiments to the young men under his care, asking if any of them were willing to go and serve their good king against Popery. Many of them unanimously answered, that they were willing;

and it was then settled, that five of them should join the army. It is said that “they went in faith, and in the strength of the Lord, willing to lay down their lives for the liberty of the gospel.”

They joined the 58th regiment at Hereford, and marched from thence to Plymouth. There they received orders to embark for Ireland; and as the chief seat of war was in America, they received further orders to cross the Atlantic. They landed at Halifax, in Nova Scotia; were engaged in the siege of Louisburgh; at the battle of Quebec, under General Wolfe; and in taking the Havannah from the Spaniards. The Lord was with them in a remarkable manner. They kept close together in watching and prayer, reading the Scriptures, and exhorting one another. They wrote home from Quebec, that they had the spirit of prayer and reliance on the Lord, even in the heat of battle. Four of them died a natural death in that part of the world; the fifth was taken prisoner by the French, and returned to England as soon as peace was concluded. He had an offer of preferment in the army, but chose rather to return to Trevecka, where he was gladly received by the Family, after an absence of seven years. Their joy on this occasion was the greater, on finding that he had been preserved from those evils which commonly prevail among soldiers, that he had continued to grow in grace, and brought a most pleasing account of those who had finished their course. This honest man, with a musket-ball in his leg, spent the remaining part of his life at Trevecka, happy and contented, being useful in exhortation, and a remarkable witness of the Lord’s faithfulness and goodness.

In 1757, though many people came to the Establishment, many also went away, after being there for a time. In this and the two following years, about *forty* persons in the Family died, some of them from seven to twelve years of age, and mostly of the small pox. Some of the children spoke in a surprising manner, testifying their love to the Saviour, who died for them. "Mr. Harris," say those who were present, "was powerfully enabled to pray for them in their dying moments; and we are living witnesses of this, that the Spirit of the Lord was present, removing the fear of death, and comforting some who at first complained; so that they longed to behold the Redeemer's face, and be for ever with him. The blessing which attended their departure, was a recompense for their loss, so manifest was the Lord's grace and faithfulness to them in their last hours. They were enabled to triumph over death, and induced to thank God for the means he had been pleased to use in bringing them to know themselves as sinners, and look to Christ as their Saviour."

In the spring of 1759, Mr. Harris wrote as follows: "We have buried, since the beginning of our Establishment, above forty persons; there are still about the same number in the Family; and about thirty in the farms. The word has been preached with power; and I can surely say that this is the Lord's work; for he has hitherto been pleased to own it, by bringing and keeping people here. He hath honoured us in standing by, and protecting us, amidst many heavy storms, which would have defeated all natural strength, and overturned all that was not built on the rock. Here, therefore, I can

set up my *Ebenezer*, and say, *Thus far the Lord hath helped me*. This is the Lord's doing. This Institution was begun, carried on, and supported by the Lord, and not by the wisdom and power of man. And though Satan would be glad to destroy it, yet it remains standing and flourishing, in spite of all difficulties without, together with all imperfections and divisions within."

CHAPTER VIII.

Mr. Harris accepts a commission in the Breconshire Militia—receives full liberty to preach when on permanent duty—is accompanied by twenty-four of his people—and obtains the rank of Captain—His reflections on the Word of God—Affairs at Trevecka during his absence—He visits Yarmouth, and preaches in his regimentals—His successful exertions at Bideford, and Torrington—Barnstaple, and Plymouth—He returns to Trevecka, and pursues his former labours—succeeds in procuring the monthly administration of the Lord's Supper in the parish church—and assists the Countess of Huntingdon in the establishment of her College.

THE nation being still at war with France, and many persons apprehensive of an invasion, Mr. Harris, in common with others, was much concerned for the welfare of the kingdom in general, and especially for its rights and privileges in reference to religion. The gentlemen of the county, considering his influence as very extensive and important, now offered him a commission in the Breconshire Militia. This was in the year 1759. Having received such a mark of respect, and taken all things into serious consideration, he requested the prayers, and obtained the consent of his friends, who encouraged him to accept it. He therefore informed the gentlemen, that he was chiefly moved to accept their offer

on seeing the danger with which our religious privileges were threatened; and that, as he had, for many years, exposed his life in preaching the gospel, he was now willing to lay it down, if occasion required, in defence of religion; but “that, if he must serve as a soldier under king George, he must have liberty to preach the gospel of king Jesus.” To this the commissioners assented, giving him full liberty to preach wherever he went. Under these circumstances, many of the young men in the Family were willing to go with him; and having delivered the affairs at Trevecka into the hands of Trustees, he took his leave, believing that he was going to “serve the Lord and his king.” He was accompanied by twenty-four of the men, “twelve of them at his own cost, in arms, clothing, and maintenance, for three years.” They imbodyed with the Militia in the beginning of 1760; when, for an Ensign’s commission, Mr. Harris received that of Captain.

About this time he wrote, what undoubtedly were his real sentiments and feelings, on the subject of his coming forward in defence of religion, however they might differ from those of the apostles, the weapons of whose warfare were “spiritual,” and “not carnal.”—“I am ready to go, and die in the field of battle, in defence of the Word of God against Popery. Who can sufficiently set forth the value of a Book, wherein God speaks to all ages and nations, ranks and degrees of men?—a book which he has made the standard, touchstone, and rule of all doctrine, ministry, and church discipline; and by which our faith, love, truth, and obedience are proved! Here is the seed of the church—the believer’s armoury—and the light of the world!

Here man's pride is humbled, his wounds searched, the Saviour revealed, and declared to be ours! If life and its various comforts are dear, how much more so should we esteem this ineffable treasure, without which there can be no faith, no salvation? By this we know, with the greatest certainty, what could not be known by any other means. It reveals every thing, relating both to our present and future existence, that it is necessary for us to know. Without this, all is uncertain; — this alone speaks infallibly! O that its glory may fill this nation!

"I now go freely, without the least compulsion, to show the regard I have for the privileges we enjoy under the best of kings, especially the precious gospel of our Saviour, contained in the whole book of God, which is openly read throughout the kingdom, and every person now suffered to exhort his neighbour without molestation. I commit my Family to the Lord, and am going, with a part of it, to defend our nation and privileges; and to show publicly, that we are dead to all things here below; or at least, that we can part with all for the sake of our dear Lord, even life itself, while we seek an inheritance in the world to come."

During his absence from Trevecka, the preaching and meetings were kept daily, as before; and the temporal affairs of the Institution were conducted in a satisfactory manner. The people, however, experienced two seasons of severe affliction, in one of which no less than fifty persons lay sick at the same time, some of whom had the care of the Family. This was during harvest, when many of the sick were wanted in the fields; yet they were so favour-

ed, that every thing turned out well, and their sorrow eventually gave place to joy.

The first route which Mr. Harris and the Militia had, was to Yarmouth, in the spring of 1760. On his arrival in that town, it pleased the Lord to open a door for him to preach, both there and in the neighbourhood. This he did every evening, generally in his regimentals, to crowded congregations, who seemed to listen with attention, while many received a blessing to their souls. In the following winter, the Militia returned to Wales, by a different route, which gave Mr. Harris an opportunity of preaching in several other towns. Their head quarters being at Brecon, he was enabled to spend a little time, now and then, with his friends at Trevecka. In the summer of 1761, they took their route to the West of England, where a new field of labour was presented to him. They continued some time at Bideford, and at Torrington, where he met with a kind reception, and had many hearers. In the following summer, he had an opportunity of visiting several large towns in the West of England, particularly Barnstaple, and Plymouth, where he continued to preach with his usual frequency and fervour. After being thus employed for three years in the Militia, a treaty of peace being concluded, he and his little company returned to Trevecka, after showing their loyalty to their king, their love to their country, and their faith in Christ. Whatever some may think of their piety, in connexion with a military life, and whatever mistaken ideas they had of serving the cause of religion in this way; it cannot be doubted that they appeared "as lights of the world;" and that, by their strict

morality, they left no unfavourable impression on the public mind respecting the religion they professed.

Mr. Harris spent the remaining part of his life with the Family at Trevecka, taking only some occasional journeys to preach, both in England and Wales. He was now not far from finishing his course, and sensibly felt the effects of his past labours. He therefore directed his attention more than ever to spiritual things, and endeavoured, by every means in his power, to promote the best interests of those under his care. In 1764, he induced the Vicar to have the Sacrament at the parish church every month, it having formerly been administered only four times a year. On the first monthly Sunday, Mr. Harris says, "We were happy in the morning under the exhortation; went happily together to the public service; and, I trust, in one spirit to the Lord's Table. This privilege has been given us in answer to our prayers, and is a further proof of the Saviour's love to us." Their attachment to the Vicar was augmented by his attention to their wishes; and, in the same month, many of them sat, for the first time, in the gallery of the parish church to sing, which they afterwards continued to do. In this they found themselves happy, declaring that they thought it their duty "to go to church every Sunday, to join in the prayers, to hear the reading of God's word, and to use the ordinances." Their reason was, that the Saviour met with them there, and rendered the service a blessing to their souls.

Mr. Harris was highly pleased with Lady Huntingdon's plan of establishing a College at Lower Tre-

vecka, which was effected in 1767, and the year following. He began to repair an old Building for that purpose, and rented it to her Ladyship. When the College was opened, he often went to address the students, and converse with them, hoping that many would be sent out from that Institution, to preach the truth in its purity. His prayers for its success appear to have been heard and answered; for many of the most useful ministers in the kingdom received their education there. Several who had been students at Trevecka, offered themselves, with proper testimonials, for episcopal ordination: but the difficulties and obstacles were so many and great, that but few could obtain it. Openings for their labours being numerous, and admitting of no delay, they went out without ordination: a few were admitted into the Establishment, and some were placed over dissenting congregations, while others continued to itinerate as evangelists.

It being not in the power of Lady Huntingdon to make provision for perpetuating the College after her decease, her income being only a jointure for life, a Society, under her sanction, was formed for that purpose in London. On their exertions, which she trusted the Lord would crown with success, she solely relied for its continuance. By this Society, it was deemed expedient, in 1792, to remove the Institution from Trevecka to Cheshunt, in Hertfordshire, where it still continues to flourish, under circumstances more propitious than formerly, as appears from the annual report of 1820. There were then but nine students in the college, and it is said to have never been capable of receiving more than fourteen. The Trustees observe, that numerous

applications for preachers were made from various parts of the united kingdom; that young men of talent and piety were presenting themselves to be educated, but could not be admitted for want of room; that Chapels had been offered the Connexion, which they were under the necessity of refusing, for want of supplies; and that, as the College House had been from time to time out of repair, the friends of the institution would be gratified to know, that “a neat and commodious building” was “in great forwardness for the accommodation of twenty students.”

CHAPTER IX.

Death of Mrs. Harris—Decline of Mr. Harris's Health—Final disposition of his affairs—His "Dying Testimony"—Triumphant Departure—Monumental Inscription.

IN the beginning of the year 1770, Mr. Harris was called to part with the most intimate companion of his earthly cares and enjoyments. She died in the Lord, exceedingly happy in her mind, and a means of imparting edification to all around her. After her death, the health of Mr. Harris rapidly declined; and, in his last year, he was subject to very severe fits of the stone, which at length put an end to his life. A few weeks before his decease, he frequently came from his room to address the people. On these occasions he spoke chiefly on the necessity of a thorough change of heart, pointing out the danger of resting in any superficial ideas or impressions of religion, and showed that salvation cannot be attained until we become one spirit with Christ, experience the power of his resurrection, and enjoy the benefits of his death.

In the final disposition of his temporal affairs, Mr. Harris assigned to his only daughter an apartment in the House at Trevecka, should she, at any time, be disposed to reside there. But as, by her mother's fortune, she was rendered independent of him, and thus sufficiently provided for, he bequeathed, by his last will, the whole of his possessions, hereditary

and accumulated, to the maintenance of the Institution for ever, on the strict principles of its foundation. He appointed two Trustees, with directions for replacing them, who were to live in the House, receive the earnings of the people, conduct the pecuniary arrangements, look to the devotional services, and, in every respect, exercise that plenary authority which he had himself preserved. It is, however, to be lamented, that he seems to have made no adequate provision for the purposes of education, as not a word is said on the subject, in any thing that he, or his successors have published. And, upon the whole, there appears to be too much truth in some of the remarks of Mr. Malkin, who represents the Institution as upholding the evils of the monastic life, to the exclusion of its learning and utility.

During his lingering illness, Mr. Harris employed himself, as circumstances would permit, in writing his own reflections, some of which were afterwards published under the title of his "Dying Testimony." A few of the most striking passages are here given, under a conviction, that they may be read with advantage.—"I cannot avoid writing, it being now the only way in which I can publish what the Lord does for me, and thus leave behind me a testimony of his grace and love. I see him as the only hope of the world, and yet almost all unacquainted with him: I see him as the only sun of the world, and yet almost all walking in darkness: I see him as the life of the dead, the only deliverance, refuge, and heaven of poor sinners; and yet how is he rejected! I must declare that I die weeping over Wales, especially over those who once appeared to run well,

and who, as I thought, would be my crown of rejoicing for ever.—O Professors, let me speak to you when I am dead: let these my dying requests sink into your hearts. Let my death be a means of awakening you, and making you sensible of your spiritual state, which is more naked, wretched, and poor, than you imagine. You are in danger of falling, as the Israelites did in the wilderness. I have reason to fear, lest the enemy should blind you, as he did the Jews. God is the same now as he then was, and the enmity of fallen nature the same, only the sin of unbelief is now greater, since we have their fall before our eyes. God pities, forgives, and receives none but those who are poor, self-condemned, broken hearted, and sincere. If you would have peace with him, throw down your weapons, cease from your own wisdom, become as little children, and receive the truth in love.

“It was by an experimental knowledge of Christ crucified, that I was brought from death to life, washed in the fountain of his blood, and enabled to live by faith. The way is the same now as formerly; and all who shall be saved, must possess the same faith, and experience the same divine teaching. Now no man ever came into liberty without feeling himself in bondage; no man ever truly believed without finding it, through ‘an evil heart of unbelief,’ the hardest thing in the world; nor did any ever deny themselves, and take up the cross, without perceiving hell, darkness, and wrath, every where pursuing them, until taken into Christ, the only refuge. This is a truth, of which many hear something, but which, I fear, sinks into very few hearts, so as to wound and awaken them; else the love of the world,

the fear of man, the desire of applause, and fear of censure, would not be so visible among professors.—‘He that believeth not shall be damned!’—Are you shocked at the expression? But if the sound of this truth be so harsh, what will the experience of it be? What will it be to see the creation consumed by fire,— the sun darkened, — the graves opened, — and the God of heaven, who called you here, freely offering you peace and pardon, now clothed with justice—coming ‘in flaming fire’ to take vengeance on all who have slept away the day of their visitation! What will then be the state of those who could not deny their own wisdom, nor get over the stumbling-blocks that were in the way; but would mind what did not belong to them, though the Lord himself condescended to say, ‘What is that to thee? follow thou me!’

“To my fellow-travellers, whom I leave behind me as witnesses of the truth, I feel the same love. I am one with them in spirit, through the incarnation, obedience, and blood of Christ. All are helped, and not hurt, by this unity in the cross. We live one life;—we eat one bread;—we speak one language, though in many dialects. We are not only redeemed by one price, to possess one heaven, and unite in one employment at last; but even now we worship one God,—share in one bliss,—have one feeling,—and live by one faith. As we fell in one common parent, so we are recovered by one Saviour, and have now a greater oneness than we imagine. Your sorrows and joys are mine; and if you cannot own me now as your brother, that which prevents you will soon be removed. You will be agreeably surprised when you find me among those

who have made their robes white in the blood of the Lamb, having come out of great tribulation, with palms in their hands, and with a new song in their mouths.

“I take my leave of you all, whoever you are, for a little while. It is enough that the Lamb is on mount Zion, and has all your cares and burdens on himself. While others are distressed about many things, you have but one thing to mind, even your interest in Him, who, though he is your God, is also your brother and friend, and cannot bear to see you unhappy. He will not leave you long before he calls you to share in that glory, which he is now preparing for you:—The cry of my soul is, ‘Come, Lord Jesus; come quickly!’—O how I love the glorified spirits, and long to be among them, because they have no guile, no self, no corruption, no slavish fear, no wisdom or righteousness but that of the Lamb!

“I feel my spirit continually from home. I know that I am one of the Lamb’s company, and cannot be long from him. My spirit cries, ‘Lord thou canst not fail to pity and love me, because thou hast given me what thou hast promised to every poor, broken, penitent, and humble spirit. I have faith to lay hold of thy blood and righteousness. Thou canst not let me be long here: thou must pity, and call me home; for I am indeed a stranger here! My spirit desires to be with thee, that I may be filled with thy fulness, that I may sin no more, wander no more from thee, but eternally view thy glory.

“I adore thee that I was created with an immortal spirit; that thou didst follow me with thoughts

of love and mercy, when in a state of rebellion, that thou didst bear with me, more than with any other, after thou didst call me; that thou didst continue to forgive and save me, never leaving me in the deep waters. For this I adore thy free grace, and beg that thou wouldst make my death a blessing. Forgive all those who have hated me; save them from the darkness; and let me meet them before thy throne, to adore thee for ever.

“Take care of the few witnesses, who come to thy cross, desiring to feed on thy flesh and blood, as being eternal life, and nothing else. Take care of the House thou hast put it into my heart to build for the use of thy poor pilgrims. Let it be full of thy glory, and let none have power in it but such as do indeed love thee. Keep those to whom I now commit it, in that faith and simplicity, which now appears to be in them. I leave the Family under the care of thy Spirit: I trust thou wilt live in them, and speak by them when I am dead. I give them to thee, as my chief care, that thou mayest be in the midst of them, to rule, and make them faithful to thee and thy truth. Keep them from error, and let not the foot of pride come against them. Fit them for the work thou shalt give them, by teaching, directing, and strengthening them, while they are daily united to each other, and all thy people.

“My relations, whom I could not bring to the obedience of faith, O remember them, and bring them when I am gone! The child whom thou hast given me is thine, and I leave her under thy care. The observations I have committed to paper, I leave with thee, to destroy, or bring them to light, as

may be best for thy cause. I adore thee for the ineffable favour of giving me any thoughts of my dissolution before it takes place, for enabling me to settle my affairs, and for giving me freedom to speak my mind. This testimony I leave behind me to strengthen the hands of such as dare to stand in this evil day, and cry aloud for thee to a crooked and perverse generation. Whether I see aright in all things or not, I adore thee that thou hast made my heart one with thine towards all thy people. In this spirit I come to thee, praying thee to hide all my mistakes, and turn my labours to what account thou wilt.

“I find that my Saviour’s will is my heaven, be it what it may: but I think I have from him insatiable cries to go home to my Father, Saviour, and Comforter. I adore him for giving me leave to hope that my work is done, and that I shall soon come into his presence. My soul is like one at the door, waiting to be called in. I feel my spirit leaving all places and men here below. O let me eat no more of the bread that perisheth: be thou my bread for ever! Be thou my sun, and let me see this no more! O take me where thou showest thy glory! I cannot see thee with these eyes; but I am coming to thee, and to the spirits about thy throne.—How lovely are the symptoms of approaching death to me! I love this body because thou hast made it, and hast united it to thyself. I give it to thee to be embalmed in the earth, where thine was laid. O what an inheritance do I hope soon to enjoy! My spirit, I feel, dies to my body, and to all about me; while I am resigned to the will of my dear Lord.

O come, Lord Jesus; come quickly, and take me home to thy rest!"

Being at length confined to his bed, and no longer able to write, Mr. Harris expressed his joy in the prospect of eternal rest, observing that, though he had much bodily pain, he was perfectly happy in his soul. He frequently said, "Glory be to God, death hath no sting!" At one time he said, like one full of faith and assurance, "It is now more clear to me than ever, that God is my everlasting Father, and that I shall go to him soon." He signified again and again, how exceedingly precious the Saviour was to him, and said, "I am already on Mount Zion: I have seen great glory in that God-man before, but nothing in comparison of what I now behold in him." At another time, awaking from slumber, through extreme pain of body, his spirit seemed to leap within him, like a prisoner waiting to be set at liberty, thinking that this would be the last struggle, when he cried out, "O Jesus, here I come! Here I come to thee!" Again he expressed his faith, and longing desires to depart, saying, "I am in great pain, but all is well, —He hath settled all things well! O how would it be if the sting of death had not been taken away!"

He constantly meditated on the sufferings of the Redeemer, and was thereby enabled to bear his own sufferings with resignation. Thus he departed in the Lord, July 21, 1773, in the 60th year of his age. His remains were interred in his own parish church, in the same grave with his beloved wife. There a monument was also erected; and as he was never ordained to the ministry, but always consider-

ed himself as a lay member of the Church of England, it bears the following inscription:--

Near the Communion Table lie the Remains of HOWELL HARRIS, Esquire; Born at Trevecka, Jan.23, 1714.

Here, where his Body lies, he was convinced of Sin,
Had his Pardon sealed,
And felt the Power of Christ's precious Blood
At the Holy Communion.
Having tasted Grace himself, he resolved to declare to others
What God had done for his soul.
He was the first Itinerant Preacher of Redemption
In this period of Revival in England and Wales.
He preached the Gospel For the space of thirty-nine years,
Till he was taken to his final rest.
He received those who sought Salvation Into his House.
Then sprang up the Family at Trevecka,
To whom he faithfully ministered unto his end,
As an indefatigable Servant of GOD,
And a faithful Member of the Church of England.
His end Was more blessed than his beginning:
Looking to JESUS crucified,
He rejoiced to the last, that Death had lost its sting.
He fell asleep in JESUS at Trevecka, July 21, 1773,
And now rests blessedly from all his labours.

Under the same Stone lie also the Remains of his late Wife,
ANNE HARRIS,
Daughter of JOHN WILLIAMS, of Skreen, Esquire,
Who departed this life, March 9, 1770, aged 58.
She loved the LORD JESUS; relied on his Redeeming
Grace and Blood; and, with her last breath, declared
Her Confidence in Him.
They left one beloved Daughter, the constant
Object of Their Prayers and Care;
And who honours their venerable Memory.

CHAPTER X.

General Character of Mr. Harris—Esteem in which he was held by the Rev. Charles Wesley—His Eccentricities—Nature of his Zeal—His knowledge of religion—Catholic Spirit—Want of Learning—His natural good Sense—Usefulness in the cause of Religion.

IN reviewing the general character of Mr. Harris, it is not easy to form a correct estimate of his excellencies and defects. He met with the fate of most worthy men, who have stepped out of the common path, with a view to advance the cause of truth, and promote the best interests of mankind. One who was well acquainted with him, and sometimes visited his House and Family, though he did not labour in the same field, observes that “he has been defamed, and that many things were laid to his charge, which, for a time, prejudiced against him, not only such as are always ready to believe an evil report, but even some well-meaning and worthy men.” He declares that he himself, in consequence of what he had heard, once looked upon Mr. Harris as “at least a suspicious character;” but that, upon close inquiry, his doubts were removed; so that he afterwards found no reason to esteem him more highly as he probably should have done, had no particular investigation been required. He further observes, that though Mr. Harris was regarded by

some, "as a designing and self-interested man," his life and death have proved the contrary; and that, if we are to judge of causes by their effects, his principles and practices have been attended with no bad moral results; but that his exertions were the means of producing "virtuous men, good subjects, and devout members of the Established Church."

That the character of Mr. Harris was substantially good, appears from the *esteem in which he was held by the Rev. Charles Wesley*. In consequence of vain disputings about Predestination, which had done harm in several societies, it is affirmed that some interruptions of their friendship had taken place. In consequence of this, Mr. Wesley, on visiting Wales, thus wrote to Mr. Harris from Cardiff: "In the name of Jesus Christ, I beseech you, if you have his glory and the good of souls at heart, to come immediately to meet me here. I trust we shall never be two, in time or eternity. O! my brother, I am grieved that Satan should get a moment's advantage over us, and am ready to lay my neck under your feet for Christ's sake. If your heart be as my heart, hasten, in the name of our dear Lord, to your second self."—The desired interview took place at Llantrissant, in about eight days after this, when Mr. Wesley says, "All misunderstanding vanished at the sight of each other, and our hearts were knit together as at the beginning. Before the Society met, several persons were with me, desiring that, as I had now got him, I would reprove him openly. In my discourse, a gentleman, who had come thither on purpose, interrupted me, by desiring I would now speak to Mr. Harris, since

I was sent for to disprove his errors. However I quashed all further importunity by declaring, 'I am unwilling to speak of brother Harris, because when I begin, I know not where to leave off, and should say much good of him, that I fear some of you would not willingly bear it.'"⁵

It is, however, acknowledged, that Mr. Harris had many *eccentricities*, for which a very reasonable apology had been offered. "The natural warmth of his temper would be likely to produce something eccentric in the most ordinary walks of life; so that when we consider the extraordinary course he took, it is no wonder that there not only appeared, but really was something eccentric in the several parts of his conduct. As a man, he was liable to mistakes; and some of his mistakes arose from his zeal to accomplish speedily the work to which he thought himself called. His natural impetuosity made him, at times, forget that he who believeth does not make haste. But is it right to expect more from a man acting in such a sphere, than from those who were formerly instruments in the hand of God, for the accomplishment of his purposes relating to the church? Were LUTHER, or CALVIN, or any of the English Reformers, without strong marks of eccentricity? And is it not evident, that even their eccentricity tended to the accomplishment of the great work to which they were appointed? Had they studied eccentricity, they would have been inexcusable; but necessity produced an unpremeditated line of conduct, which, to a cool spectator, appeared very eccentric; but which was, in reality,

all circumstances considered, regular and necessary for that period. Luther was a man of warm passions, and his natural temper would have been productive of the greatest injuries to himself and others, had not God appropriated his warmth, and made it subservient to the great purposes of the Reformation; and it seems that the same may also be justly said of Mr. Harris, in reference to the work he was the instrument of accomplishing. He was naturally of a choleric disposition, and wholly undisguised in his words and actions. He would flatter no man, nor give up a particle of what he was persuaded to be truth, even to please his nearest and dearest friends. The grace of God, however, made a great alteration in his temper; and notwithstanding his activity, he would often retire, and spend many hours in meditation and prayer. He frequently neglected his health, and was unmindful both of food and sleep at the stated times. He neither attended to heat nor cold, if engaged in doing what he thought to be the will of God."

Mr. Harris was undoubtedly led by the purest motives, to act the part he adopted, being impelled by the affecting state of the country, in reference to religion; so that the *nature of his zeal* was truly benevolent. This appears from one of his letters, addressed to the Rev. Mr. Cooper, of Kent, in which he thus writes: "O dear Sir, did we but really believe what we seem to believe, our hearts would be ever in a flame of zeal for his cause, and our eyes would ever run with tears of real grief, the He is so much neglected and slighted, while the world is loved, and so many venturing their souls for eternity on that original lie of the devil: 'Ye

shall not die.’—Surely we sleep, or else pity to souls around us, living ‘without God in the world,’ would at least make us spend much more of our time in earnest prayer for them, ‘with strong cries and tears to him who is able to save.’ How little do we really see of the dreadful evil of sin, the original, universal fountain of it, that defiles our whole man! How little are we convinced, that it is of infinite grace and patience, that we are not lifting up our eyes in torments! O grace! grace!—why are we not, like many others, yielding willing obedience to our lusts, and to the father of them—the god of this world? Surely the cry of our grateful hearts must be, Why me, Lord? why me?—who made me to differ?—O may all the young men, who are thrust out into the vineyard to testify of a dying Redeemer, and to awaken a fallen, dead church and nation, go forth in the name of the Lord, having first counted the cost, and be the means of snatching thousands of perishing souls from the darkness, chains, and tyranny of sin!”

For the instruction of the ignorant and profligate, Mr. Harris was so far qualified by the *knowledge of religion*, as effectually to point out the plain way of salvation, and teach those things which are most essential. In a letter to Mrs. Whitefield, he thus discovers his views of Christ crucified: “One view of him in his eternal Godhead, love, obedience, and sufferings, is worth millions of worlds. Who can set forth the unspeakable nature of his sufferings, and the riches of his death! Here the inexpressible evil of sin appears more clearly than if we saw all the misery of the damned. Here, had I more faith, I should see more of the fall, the glory of the co-

venant, the riches of grace, the perfection of God, and the privileges of believers. The nature of the law, of sin, death, judgment, heaven and hell, are to be seen in the garden of Gethsemane, and on mount Calvary. Here let us learn all our Christianity. Here we understand what was meant by the Ark, the Gate of Heaven, the City of Refuge, and the Brazen Serpent. Here we behold Jesus—the eternal Word—the Lord Jehovah—groaning under the load of our sins, bearing them away to eternal oblivion, drinking up the river of divine wrath, and encountering all hell to rescue our souls from the death that never dies! O let us adore, though we cannot comprehend;—let us bow before the infinite Sufferer, praying that the streams of mercy may be turned into our parched hearts, so that we may become like a watered garden. It is here, in beholding the humiliation of my dear Master, that I feel my pride subdued, my will broken, and my carnal wisdom nailed to his cross; and yet I am ashamed that I have still so much of a Jewish heart, as not to see more of his glory. O how great that Atonement, of which all the ancient types were so glorious! If the shadows, that were to vanish away, were of so great account, what must the substance be? By this, eternal torments, plagues, and curses, are removed; and we, the heirs of hell, made the heirs of heaven! If we were not so very stupid, hard, and carnal, this would be the subject of our thoughts and conversation, as well as preaching, continually. Every mercy we enjoy, temporal, spiritual, and eternal, all come to us by this door, and preach a crucified Saviour.”

In another of his letters, he states, at consider-

able length, his views of Justification, and acceptance with God. "How sweet and ravishing are the thoughts of death and eternity to the soul that hath heard the Shepherd's voice! His strength fails not, when ours doth; he watcheth over us, even when we forget him. He is our righteousness, in which we stand equally justified at all times; so that though we fall short of the glory of God, being complete in him, God can love and accept us, even when we perceive many imperfections in all that we do, think, and say. We appear before God, not what we are in ourselves, but what we are in Christ. The moment we flee to him, we also become dead to the law, as to any expectation of life by keeping it. And as the law cannot save, so neither can it condemn us to eternal death, Christ having, in our stead, answered all its demands. But having found rest from the terrors of the law, through the life and death of Emmanuel, we have it written in our hearts, and we long for an entire conformity to its precepts, because in it we behold the image of our heavenly Father. We love holiness because God is holy, and hate sin because it is Satan's image, and contrary to the divine nature. O what happiness, to see 'Christ all in all,' and self nothing!—to see God's eternal love in the Redeemer, and eternal life flowing to us freely from that fountain! This will enable us to bear more fruit to our dear Lord, and to be more useful in his church. Thus we shall have more fellowship with him, be more assured of our interest in him, and long for the moment, when this mortal shall put on immortality."

Though attached to the Established Church, and sometimes violent against those who separated from

its communion, Mr. Harris was nevertheless of a *catholic spirit*. In addition to the evidence we have of this in his "Dying Testimony," an interesting passage occurs in one of his letters to the Countess of Huntingdon. Referring to the Cross of Christ, he says, "This is the uniting point,—the centre of all union. Here we forget all names and prejudices; and can truly think of nothing but to love, adore, wonder, and be happy. To bring all to this point, is, and ever has been, my sole business with my fellow-creatures. I can, through grace, testify, that such has been my life for above thirty years; and that I consider life, spent on any other principles, as being only self, in some shape or other. All who live out of themselves, on the great Atonement, are dear to me. But as the outward form and affairs of religion are at present, every one must be persuaded in his own mind respecting his peculiar circle and work. Each must stand to his post, and serve the Lord in sincerity, till we either see the Saviour's meaning more clearly, or meet above, where we shall sing but one song, and that most loudly,—'*Worthy is the Lamb.*'"

But while this great man possessed the most important qualifications for the service of the church, his *want of learning* must be acknowledged by all. There is reason to suspect that he even despised it, or conceived it to be more injurious than serviceable to the cause of true religion. Nor is it at all difficult to reconcile this with the interest he took in the plan of Lady Huntingdon respecting her College at Trevecka. It appears that he thought the Institution important chiefly, if not exclusively, on account of the study of divinity, and the religious

training of young men for the ministry. It is certain that he had no taste for human learning when at Oxford, and that he wholly renounced the advantages of a regular education, when these were within his reach. He had nothing, therefore, superior to what we call common-school learning, obtained chiefly before he reached the age of eighteen; and it is obvious that his habits and pursuits after that period, were unfavourable to the study of any thing but religion. He never could write the English language with propriety, or even grammatical accuracy. He never attended to the unity, strength, or clearness of his sentences. They frequently run into one another, and often embrace different subjects. Purity and propriety of style seem never to have engaged his attention. His method of writing is also defective as to precision, there being a great redundancy of words and phrases, which sometimes renders his meaning obscure. On this account it was found necessary to abridge, and otherwise correct the extracts contained in this work.

Mr. Harris was, however, a man of *natural good sense*, notwithstanding his eccentricities, and occasional imprudence. His advice to a wealthy friend discovers much of this. "As the Lord has given you a heart to use some portion of your wealth according to his will, and as his work calls for such help in various ways, take heed how and where you give. You have need to pray, not only that what you do may be with a single eye, and out of love to Jesus, but also that you may be directed where to give much, and where to give little; not only to lay out your property for God, but so as to bring most glory to him. I give you these general hints, that

your love may not be abused through the vigilance of a cunning enemy. Good of various kinds is going on, and calling for the assistance of God's people, according to their circumstances. Some worthy people who keep house, are poor, fail to get work, and are near being in want. Some who are called to go about in the service of religion, often fail to do it as much as they would by reason of narrow circumstances. Some things ought to be printed,—Schools are much wanted;—and many talents, I believe, lie unimproved. Many who seem called to the ministry, fail to have necessary instruction. Society-rooms ought to be built, or rented.—May the Lord direct you how to give your mite according to his will." Mr. Harris's good sense enabled him also to judge of the characters of men, and not to place undue confidence in any. He was not easily imposed upon; and did not, like many, over-rate his own usefulness, by mistaking the appearance for the reality of things. He was sensible of those improprieties which attended the revival of religion throughout the country, and endeavoured to check them. What he wanted, therefore, in some respects, was made up in others. In what he did, he generally had some worthy end in view; and was always concerned for the honour, as well as the advancement of religion.

With respect to his *usefulness* in the church of God, there can be but one opinion among enlightened sober-minded christians. Mr. Whitefield considered him as "a barrier against profaneness and immorality, and an indefatigable promoter of the true Gospel of Christ." He observes that "many alehouse people, fiddlers, and harpers, cried out

sadly against him for spoiling their business;" that, during the first three or four years of his ministry, he had "established near *thirty* societies in South Wales;" and that his sphere of action was still daily enlarged. "Many," says he, "call, and own him as their spiritual father; and, I believe, would lay down their lives for his sake." He was indefatigable in the work of the Lord during the space of thirty-nine years, seventeen of which he spent in travelling through Wales, and a great part of England, preaching and exhorting in the high-ways and hedges, at wakes, revels, and such like scenes of vanity. In the midst of opposition he steadily pursued his victorious career, and was the means of bringing thousands to the knowledge of the truth. His labours gave rise to the present body of Calvinistic Methodists in Wales, by whom the same system of itinerant preaching is still successfully carried on. He may therefore be considered as still living in them, and speaking by the mouths of their preachers. Among those who have "turned many to righteousness," he holds a distinguished place, and must for ever enjoy a large reward. When the honours of statesmen and warriors sink into comparative insignificance, and when the actions of mankind are weighed in the balance of Justice and Truth, the part which he acted will prove to have been that of true wisdom; while the contempt with which too many treated him, will appear as the offspring of wickedness and folly. God will then honour those who have honoured him, while they who have despised him, shall themselves be despised. Those who, like Howell Harris, have acknowledged Christ before men, will then be acknowledged by

him before his Father who is in heaven; while those who have disowned him, will he also disown before his Father, the holy angels, and an assembled world!

As every one, therefore, has his peculiar gift, and may hope to find his proper sphere of usefulness pointed out to him, the highest wisdom will be found to consist in becoming "imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises." Such are "happy" in their latter end, because they "die in the Lord, rest from their labours, and their works follow them," as the proper evidence of their faith and piety. God is not unrighteous, so as to forget what they have done in obedience to his will, and must, therefore, receive them to that "glory, honour, and immortality," which he has promised freely to bestow through the merits of his Son.

APPENDIX.

History of the Welsh Methodists continued—Their Attachment to the Church of England—Their Preachers—Societies—Monthly Meetings—Quarterly Associations—Further Persecutions—Opposition of the Established Clergy—Vindication of the Methodists from the charges contained in several abusive pamphlets—particularly, “Hints to Heads of Families”—“A Parish Minister’s Serious Advice to his Parishioners”—“Methodism Unmasked”—and “The Welsh Looking-glass”—Gradual Increase of the Welsh Methodists—Estimate of their Religious Character.

THE origin of the Welsh Methodist being given in the preceding Memoirs, some further account of their Connexion, together with the progress and present state of religion amongst them, may probably be desired by the reader. This, so far as information could be readily obtained, is given in the present Appendix. By the labours of those clergymen who were associated with Mr. Harris, assisted by a considerable number of lay preachers, whom they termed Exhorters, the Societies in North and South Wales continued to flourish after his decease. But here it must be observed, that very few of them approved of the Establishment at Trevecka, or of Mr. Harris’s proceedings in collecting the Family, and incurring expenses, which they thought unwar-

rantable, if not useless. Many of them opposed the measures he adopted, and a partial separation was the immediate consequence. This was afterwards rendered nearly total by a degree of imprudence on the part of Mr. Harris, in consequence of which he became subject to certain imputations, from which he was never cleared to the general satisfaction of his former friends. He was therefore considered as having no proper connexion with the Welsh Methodists, for some time previous to his death. To this he seems to refer in his "Dying Testimony," where he tells his "fellow-travellers" that, if they could not own him then as their brother, the cause would soon be removed, and that they would be agreeably surprised to find him in heaven. Among the chief instruments of carrying on the cause of religion among this people after him, may be mentioned the Rev. Daniel Rowlands, of LLangeitho; the Rev. Howell Davies, of Parke; the Rev. Peter Williams, of Carmarthen; the Rev. David Morris, of Twr-gwyn; the Rev. William Williams, of Pant-y-celyn; the Rev. William Davies, of Neath; the Rev. David Jones, of Llangan, with several others in South Wales. In North Wales, may be particularly mentioned, the Rev. Richard Tibbot, of Llanbrynmair; the Rev. John Evans, of Bala; the Rev. Thomas Charles, of the same place; and the Rev. Thomas Jones, of Denbigh. These all dying in the faith, have been succeeded by other able and pious men, who are now successfully pursuing the same course of labour and usefulness.

Although treading in the steps of Dissenters, and freely owned by some of them as brethren, the Welsh Methodists are generally *attached to the Es-*

tablished Church. They say, “We do not designedly dissent, or look upon ourselves as dissenters from the established church. In doctrine we exactly agree with the Articles of the Church of England, and preach no other doctrines but what are contained, or fully and clearly expressed in them. We highly approve of her excellent, and most evangelical Liturgy. In general the people in connexion with us baptize their children in the church, and many of them frequently receive the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper there. Our meetings also are seldom, or never held on church hours. But, in union with the church, we desire the full enjoyment of those privileges, which the laws and happy constitution of our favoured country amply afford us; having liberty, without restraint, to use every scriptural means to spread the knowledge of the gospel of Christ, among poor, ignorant, and perishing sinners. Whatever appears in our proceedings, as in any degree tending towards a separation from the established church, takes place from *necessity*, and not from *choice*. Fines and confiscations have obliged us to license our preachers, and record our places of worship, which we had no inclination to do. Making a sect, or forming a party, is not the object we are aiming at; but we think it our bounden duty, and high privilege, in the diligent use of all lawful means, to edify one another, and to promote the knowledge of divine truth, and the power of practical godliness among all. Our feeble efforts in this view, we acknowledge with gratitude, have not been altogether in vain. By the faithful labours of our dear brethren, for half a century past, our country wears a very different aspect from what it did before

their time. A hundred for one, among the lower ranks, can and do read their bibles with pleasure and edification. Many hundreds, if not some thousands of families, unite daily in social devotions in their houses, where such devout exercises were entirely neglected before. May thousands more be added to their number, till no ungodly family is left in the principality! Hitherto our eye, as a body, has been single to this point of highest importance, the salvation of immortal souls; and whilst we continue to pursue this object, we humbly beg the forbearance, the assistance, and the prayers of all."—The following account of their preachers, societies, monthly meetings, quarterly associations, and discipline of their whole body, is compiled from the best sources of information, chiefly from what they have published for the information of others, and will not therefore be disputed by any, either in or out of the connexion.

The Welsh Methodists having no public Seminaries, and but very few of the established clergy among them, their PREACHERS seldom possess the advantages of a regular education. They are not, however, to be considered as *ignorant*, though generally illiterate men. They are well acquainted with religion, and often versed in those branches of knowledge which are more immediately connected with it. They have the most important of all qualifications—*true piety*, arising from a change of heart,—without the evidence of which, they would not be suffered to speak, either in public or private.

Formerly none but those who had received episcopal ordination, were allowed to administer the Lord's Supper; but their societies at length became

so numerous, as to render it impracticable for the few ministers so qualified, to visit them as often as they desired. A wish was therefore generally expressed, that some of the preachers might be set apart, in order to administer both that, and the ordinance of Baptism. This was, for several years, opposed by the late Mr. Charles, of Bala, as he was desirous that they should remain in communion with the Established Church; but as this appeared to be impracticable, he at length acquiesced in it, as a matter of necessity. In the year 1811, several men of sterling piety, who had long been useful in the church of Christ as preachers, were therefore set apart to administer these ordinances; and the result has proved, that such a measure was according to the will of God.

None of the ministers are settled over any one society or congregation, all being properly *itinerant* preachers. Yet where there is a Meeting-House in the place of a minister's residence, it sometimes happens that he preaches to the people assembling there more frequently than to any other congregation, having better opportunities of serving them. They have, without exception, no salary. Some, whose circumstances admit of it, entirely defray their own travelling expenses; while others, who cannot afford to do so, have those expenses paid by the societies, from a fund raised for that purpose, by the free-will offerings of the people.

The account given of these preachers by Mr. Malkin, in his Tour through South Wales, is by no means just, if applied to the whole body. The "apparel consistently mean," together with the "air and manner" of the preacher he heard at Trevecka, and

which in his opinion “indicated the lowest ignorance,” should not have been considered as characteristic of many in this connexion. The “pocket handkerchief tied under the chin,” with which his head was covered, and which furnished that gentleman with a subject for ridicule, had its origin in the constant habit of preaching in the open air, when the use of some such covering for the head was both prudent and necessary. What he says on the subject of “scarcely human contortions and ejaculations,” is evidently written in a bad spirit, and cannot be received without considerable abatement. That some of the ministers in this denomination have their imperfections, is only what must be allowed with respect to those of every other connexion; and the respect due to any, must arise, not from their “apparel” and genteel appearance, but from their piety and usefulness, in which the Methodist preachers are not, comparatively speaking, deficient.

In the formation of their SOCIETIES, the example of the apostles and primitive christians is successfully pleaded. In these societies the Welsh Methodists profess to “meet together as joint members of the household of faith, to instruct and admonish; to reprove, to warn, and to comfort one another;—desiring to speak a word in season mutually, as the different circumstances, trials, and difficulties of each individual may respectively require;”—thus conforming themselves to the apostle’s injunction: “Warn the unruly, comfort the feeble-minded, support the weak.”—They observe that “the churches of Christ, from the beginning, besides their public meetings for the general instruction of all indiscriminately, had also their private meetings for more familiar instruction,

mutual conference, and the proper exercise of church discipline.” This, they imagine, “appears most evident to all impartial judges, from the whole of the New Testament.” They conceive that “the epistles, addressed to the different churches, clearly prove it; as there must have been societies, formed out of the general mass of the people who attended public instruction, to whom the epistles were particularly addressed.” By way of apology, they observe, that “the necessity and great utility of such private meetings, for the more familiar instruction of poor people, have been acknowledged in all ages, by men the most eminent for learning and piety, whose minds were most impressed with the inestimable value of immortal souls, and the difficulty of conveying instruction in divine things to illiterate minds, blinded by sin and the love of it.” In favour of such societies they quote Bishop Butler, who says, “Since the great body of the people, especially in country places, cannot be brought to attend the service of the church oftener than one day in the week; and since *this is in no sort enough* to keep up in them a due sense of religion; it were greatly to be wished they could be persuaded to any thing which might, in some measure, supply the want of more frequent public devotions, or serve the like purposes.” And again, “It were greatly to be wished, that every man should have the principles of Christianity, and his own particular duty, enforced upon his conscience, in a manner suited to his capacity, *in private*.”⁶ With the same view they also refer to a Charge by the present Bishop of Durham, in which

he says, "Much, I conceive, might be done by occasional conference with poor aged people, by conference with them at their own dwellings, concerning the state of their faith, their hopes, and their views of futurity; and if this conference were accompanied with reading to them some portion of Scripture, &c. the minister would do inestimable kindness. If you could advance one step beyond this, and induce the aged poor to assist one another, and form *little societies* in a large, or *one* society in a small parish, at which those who are readers might read to those who are not, it would be bringing your poor to a most desirable and edifying state of spiritual communion."

The Societies of the Welsh Methodists are, however, like the churches of the orthodox Dissenters, formed on the principle of *selection*. None are received as members without a proper examination of their principles, nor without careful inquiry respecting their walk and conversation. If any doubts arise on the subject of their fitness for communion, they are not admitted till further satisfaction be obtained.—The following qualifications, or at least some hopeful signs of them, are required in those whom they receive as members: "That they are, in some degree, convinced of sin, and of their guilty and lost state by nature—filled with godly sorrow for sin, together with an earnest desire to be saved from it: That they are, in a measure, convinced of their need of Christ and his righteousness, and look to him as their only Mediator, and all-sufficient Saviour: That they feel such a hunger and thirst after Christ and his righteousness, as to make them diligent and faithful in attending to all the

means of grace, that they may grow in the knowledge of him, dependance upon him, and conformity to him: That they be not contentious, proud disputers, doting about questions and strifes of words; but humble, meek, peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, and willing to be taught in the way of God more perfectly: That they be willing and determined, in the Lord's strength, to forsake every evil way; to renounce the pomps and vanities of this wicked world; not to associate with vain companions, nor conform to any of their corrupt ways, such as card-playing, plays, assemblies for dancing, intemperate feasting, rioting, and drunkenness; but behave themselves as becometh Christians, in all holy conversation and godliness: That they be not unequally yoked in the marriage-state with unbelievers; and also that, in their previous intercourse, as well as in their manner of entering into that state, they conduct themselves with all decency, sobriety, and godliness: That they be not covenant-breakers, but conscientiously fulfil all their lawful engagements to the utmost of their power: That they worship the Lord in their families twice a day, rule their own houses well, and bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord: That they and their families keep holy the Sabbath Day, resting from all such works as buying and selling, worldly employments and recreations, idle talk and idle visits; spending the whole day, except such part of it as may be requisite for works of necessity and mercy, in the exercises of private and public devotion,—instructing their families, and poor ignorant neighbours, —or in such employments as tend to promote the knowledge of God and his will,

with the spiritual edification and comfort of immortal souls: That they be temperate in eating and drinking—not gluttons nor drunkards: That they avoid all such peculiar modes of fashion in their dress, as are indications of pride, indecency, and prodigality; adorning themselves with modest apparel, such as becometh those professing godliness, with shame-facedness and sobriety: That they be a people of *pure* language, sparing in their words, avoiding all corrupt communications, speaking that which is good to the use of edifying, so as to minister grace to the hearers; not indulging themselves in foolish talking and jesting; not double tongued, not given to detraction, back-biting, evil speaking, lying, or slandering; not given to swearing, or taking God’s name in vain in common conversation: That they use not many words in buying and selling, neither speaking too highly of the commodity they have to sell, nor undervaluing what they buy; but that they ask and give to all what is just and equitable, as far as they can understand the state of the market: That they do no unrighteousness in judgment, in meteyard, in weight, or in measure: That they do not trade, or deal in smuggled, or unlawful goods; but conscientiously pay tribute to whom tribute, and custom to whom custom is due: That they do not borrow, or get any thing upon trust, without conscientiously endeavouring to repay, or without having at the time some hopeful prospect of being able to fulfil their engagements: That no one continue a member of these societies, who has failed in any trade or occupation, leaving his just debts unpaid to his creditors, unless he can give satisfactory proof that he has conducted himself with dili-

gence and care in his calling—not living in a prodigal and wasteful manner above his income—that his accounts have been fairly and carefully kept—and that he has endeavoured, to the utmost of his power, in his distressed circumstances, to do justice in an equal proportion to his creditors: That no one is to be admitted, or continued a member, who lives in habitual idleness; every one whose circumstances demand it, being required to ‘labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth:’ That no one continue a member who is implacable and unforgiving towards his brethren who have offended him; or who is contentious and quarrelsome among his neighbours; Christians being required to show all meekness towards all men, ‘putting on bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, longsuffering; forbearing one another,’ as Christ is ready to forgive us: That the members of these societies be not covetous oppressors; but merciful, tender-hearted, and liberal; ready to give according to their ability for the relief of the distressed; doing good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith: That those whose habitations may be situated near the sea coast, show all acts of humanity and kindness towards those who may appear to be in danger on the sea; and if a vessel should be wrecked on the coast near their habitations, that they exert themselves, to the utmost of their ability, to save the lives of those on board, and secure the property, with which such vessel is freighted, to the rightful owners: That all the members be careful and attentive in faithfully fulfilling the several duties enjoined upon them

in the word of God, according to their respective relations and situations in life: That as it is the indispensable duty of every church-society to support the cause of the gospel amongst them, and contribute to supply the necessities of the poor, every member be expected, as God has prospered him, to give cheerfully for such necessary purposes: That they do not speak evil of dignities, but conscientiously honour and obey the king, and all that are put in authority under him; showing all fidelity, in word and deed, to the government under which we happily live; acknowledging, with gratitude, the protection, the liberty, and the great privileges, both of a civil and religious nature, which we abundantly enjoy.”—Such is the avowed standard of religious and moral character adopted by the Calvinistic Methodists in Wales; and it must be acknowledged, that the members of their societies, in general, approach as near to it as the severest moralist can well expect, in the present imperfect state of the church on earth. In sound piety, and propriety of conduct, the whole connexion appears to be at least equal to any other denomination of Christians.

For the purpose of conducting the private meetings of their societies, the Welsh Methodists have Leaders, which each society chooses out of its own members. Those who are chosen to this office, are not only to be men of gifts, but also of grace; showing themselves to be of a humble temper, spiritually minded, and such as love Christ. Leaders without those qualifications prescribed for overseers and deacons, in the third chapter of Paul’s first epistle to Timothy, are considered as being “of men’s choosing, and not of God’s appointment.”

When the members are assembled at a private meeting, one of the Leaders, in the first place, reads a chapter in the Bible distinctly and deliberately; then they join in singing a few verses of a psalm or hymn; and after this they unite in prayer to God for his blessing, interceding for their king and country, for all mankind, and especially for the success of the gospel in the world. The remaining part of the time is spent in free conversation, for the instruction, admonition, and comfort of all present. Nothing is introduced but what has a direct reference to the state of the soul. Care is also taken, not to exceed the time usually prescribed; and the meeting is concluded with prayer and praise. The Leaders of these societies act as Stewards, taking charge of the collections that are made, paying all expenses that are incurred, and acting, in temporal affairs, as the Deacons in Dissenting Churches. They differ from those formerly called Exhorters, as they rarely attempt to preach, or exercise their gifts out of the private societies committed to their care, and of which they have the oversight in spiritual, as well as in temporal things. Yet when a public preacher happens to be present at any of their private meetings, they are always ready to give him the precedence, and allow him to fulfil the spiritual part of their office.

The Doctrines embraced by these societies are strictly Calvinistic. Hence their preachers and members are usually called Calvinistic Methodists, to distinguish them from those of the Wesleyan connexion. They declare that the doctrines they receive are in exact conformity with the Articles of the Established Church; and observe, that they

cannot conceive of terms more scriptural and forcible, by which to express their ideas of divine truth, than those used by our very learned, judicious, and pious Reformers; so that they see no need of any other exposition of their principles. They have, however, distinctly stated, that none can be received into their societies, who hold any doctrine “contrary to the fundamental truths of Christianity; such as the Being of God;—the doctrine of the Trinity in unity;—the divinity and incarnation of Christ, and the mystery of his person as God-man;—the fulness and all-sufficiency of his work and offices;—God’s everlasting purpose and covenant;—the guilt and corruption of all mankind by the fall of Adam;—the justification of a sinner before God by faith alone;—the necessity of the work of the Holy Ghost, to regenerate and sanctify those that believe to salvation, and to dispose them to walk becoming the gospel, in all holy conversation;—the perfection of the law of God as our rule of duty, and our eternal obligations to obedience and conformity to it, being under the law of Christ.”

The late Rev. Thomas Charles, of Bala, during his connexion with the Calvinistic Methodists, is said to have formed about seventy of these societies in North Wales alone,—so great was the increase of the denomination in his time. In that division of the principality, as appears from collections recently made in aid of Missions to the Heathen,⁷ there cannot be less than 240 societies, or probably more. In South Wales they are not so numerous, the col-

⁷ See Annual Report of the London Missionary Society for the year, 1823.

lections made for missions, in the same year, being only about 160. It is, however, possible, that the same zeal may not have been exerted here as in the North, there being a few places of worship, belonging to the Connexion, known to the author of this work, in which no missionary collections appear to have been made at the time referred to. But, independent of the number of Meeting-Houses, many of those in North Wales are said to be more spacious, and the societies and congregations generally much larger than in the South.—For the fact, that the increase and prosperity of Calvinistic Methodism is chiefly remarkable in the northern countries, various reasons may be assigned. Among these, the prevalence of the English language in some extensive districts of South Wales, is not to be forgotten. The religion of the gospel is propagated by preaching; but the Welsh Methodists do not abound in English preachers, or at least in those who can preach with acceptance in any language but their own. Besides, when a Welshman preaches to an English congregation, he is like Samson, when shorn of those mysterious locks, on which depended his usual strength. He wants the peculiar powers of his own language, feels himself fettered, and finds it impossible to impress and move his audience, as on other occasions. This is known to be a general subject of complaint with those who attempt to preach in English. Where preaching in that language is required of them, they consider it as barren ground; and that their labours in those places are not so successful as among the Welsh, is but too evident to the most common observer.

Besides the weekly meetings of their private

societies, the Welsh Methodists have MONTHLY MEETINGS, or Societies, as they are commonly termed. One of these meetings is held in every county through North and South Wales. Each of them is composed of all the preachers and leaders within the county to which it belongs, and is generally held at the Meeting-Houses of the different Societies in that county, by rotation. On these occasions there is always public preaching, as well as private opportunities for prayer and religious conference, conducted as the ordinary private meetings of all the societies. At the monthly meetings, those who are chosen to be the Leaders in the different societies, are proposed, and either approved or rejected; it being required that their election should be thus confirmed before they can act in that character. The members of these monthly meetings are also members of the quarterly associations, (which are next to be described,) and are now furnished with tickets, which must be then produced for their admission to the private meetings.

The QUARTERLY ASSOCIATIONS are composed of the preachers received into full connexion, and the elders, or leaders of societies, who are members of the monthly meetings, held in the different counties. As many of these as conveniently can, assemble at the time and place fixed upon by themselves at their last quarterly association. On these occasions three private meetings are held. In the *first*, the preachers, and they only, meet for the benefit of free and familiar conversation, the increase of brotherly love, and their mutual encouragement in the important work in which they are engaged. This meeting takes place at ten o'clock,

in the morning of the first day of the association. In the afternoon, at two o'clock, the *second* private meeting is held, when the elders, or leaders of the different societies, assemble with the preachers. Having chosen a president and a secretary, one of the brethren reads a portion of Scripture, and engages in prayer. The general outward concerns of the Connexion are then taken into consideration, and the opportunity is concluded with prayer. The *third* private meeting, conducted in the same manner, takes place on the following morning, at eight o'clock, when some point of doctrine, discipline, or experience, is discussed. Every member is at liberty to speak on the subject under consideration, provided he do not occupy too much time, as long speeches are never allowed, unless some particular member be requested to enlarge on a subject of importance for the edification of all. If no particular subject is proposed for consideration, the brethren converse freely with one or more of the members present respecting their knowledge and experience of the doctrines of the gospel, especially as to their practical influence on the mind. They are of opinion, that such conversations cannot be omitted without great detriment to the whole body, and that they never will be neglected whilst any measure of the life and power of godliness remains among them.—The members of the South Wales associations are considered as members of those in North Wales, without any distinction whatever; both forming one entire body, united in the bonds of peace and love, for promoting the knowledge of sound doctrine, genuine experience, and practical godliness among their countrymen.

On these occasions, as well as at the monthly meetings, there is always public preaching; and as the people come in all directions, and often from a considerable distance, an immense concourse is generally assembled. At an Association, held at Aberystwyth in 1805, it was computed, that there could not be less than *twenty thousand* present when some of the sermons were delivered. This, however, was at a time when “hundreds joined the societies in those parts,” and when “general and powerful awakenings” prevailed over “a large district, fifty miles by twenty.” At their Association, held in Carmarthen, in November, 1807, when the weather was unfavourable, it was thought that there were present, on the second day, “above ten thousand persons.”—It being impossible for any Meeting-House to contain the congregation, a stage, with some kind of covering, to defend the preachers from the weather, is erected in some convenient place, from which the assembly is addressed. Two discourses, and sometimes three, are delivered at one time; so that during the two days the Association continues, ten or twelve sermons are commonly delivered. Of the Association at Aberystwyth, already referred to, an attentive observer said, “The sight, to a religious mind, was pleasing beyond expression! Ten preachers, in the course of two days, delivered very animated and impressive discourses, to the most solemn, attentive, and affected congregations I ever saw. The preaching was evidently in the demonstration of the Spirit, and with power.”⁸ It may also be added, that the *Singing*,

from the vast number of voices that unite in it, has sometimes an overpowering effect. It is never conducted by a solitary band of thoughtless persons, hired for the purpose; but being general, in every part of the assembly, while appropriate and intelligible words are sung with devotional feeling, such a sympathy and harmony of soul is sometimes awakened, as an English congregation can form no proper conception of. Even one who does not understand the Welsh language, is in some measure sensible of the effect, and feels himself like Saul among the prophets.

On the subject of Discipline, in reference to the whole body of the Welsh Methodists, the following statement will be admitted as tolerably correct:—When any member of a society knows that a brother is guilty of some trespass, he is to go and tell him of his fault privately, in the spirit of love; then he is to wait for a short season, to see what effect the reproof has had in restoring him to a sense of duty. But if he will not hear him, he is to take one or two more, and those the most pious and prudent of his brethren, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. They are to reprove the offender in the spirit of meekness and love, with a view to his recovery: but if he shall neglect to hear,—then, and not before, the case is to be brought before the society; and if he neglect to hear the reproof then given, he is to be excommunicated, and regarded as a heathen man, or a publican. And no expelled member is to be restored without satisfactory proof of his repentance and reformation.

When an accusation is laid against any member,

the society is to examine impartially into the nature of it—whether the charge be respecting what is really sinful,—whether, upon the evidence produced, the person be proved guilty,—whether it be an occasional sudden, fall into sin, or whether, by long practice, he has acquired the habit of it. When a person guilty is reproved, it is to be done according to the heinousness of the offence, the unerring rule of God's word, in the spirit of meekness, and with a view to his restoration, considering that all are subject to temptation.

Every matter of dispute that may arise in any society, is to be determined, if possible, among themselves, to the satisfaction of every one. But if that cannot be done, it is to be laid before the Monthly Meeting, to which that private society belongs; and if it cannot be determined there, it is to be brought before the Quarterly Association, and the determination of the brethren there is to be final.

Every disputed point, brought before the Association, after mature consideration, is to be determined by the majority of the members present; and those who are of a different opinion, are expected to behave themselves with affectionate submission and brotherly love towards their brethren.

The PERSECUTION of the Welsh Methodists have not been confined to the early period of their history. The mode of attack, indeed, has been changed, from time to time; but the same spirit of persecution has still continued to show itself. Infuriated mobs, with their various weapons of cruelty, have been succeeded by malicious and oppressive attempts to put the Conventicle Act in force. Thus

many of them have suffered by imprisonments, fines, and confiscations. One of their preachers was imprisoned at Dolgelley for six months. In one year they paid nearly a *hundred pounds* in fines! All this was occasioned by their attachment to the Established Church! At length they were forced to take shelter under the Toleration Act, by recording their places of worship, and having their preachers licensed as Dissenters. This they had long scrupled to do, and only submitted to it from necessity.

Being now by law protected from fines and prisons, their enemies commenced an attack by means of scurrilous and abusive pamphlets, representing them as enemies to the church and state. The first of these was entitled, "Hints to Heads of Families," published anonymously, but afterwards acknowledged by one of the clergy. A second anonymous pamphlet, in Welsh, was entitled, "A Parish Minister's Serious Advice to his Parishioners." The leading object of this production was to denounce the Methodist Preachers as illiterate men, self-sent, and self-ordained, while it revived the Popish doctrine of Apostolical Succession in favour of the ministers of the Established Church! An answer to these pamphlets was drawn up in 1802. It was signed by the late Rev. Thomas Charles, of Bala, in behalf, and by order of the Association held at Llanrwst, and was published under the title of "The Welsh Methodists Vindicated."

The author of the "Hints" had the assurance to make the following proposal to his countrymen: "Let us, from the highest to the lowest, avoid all connexion with those who have virtually disclaimed all communion with us. Let us show the enemies

of our religion neither *favour, affection, nor encouragement*. Let us, by *every means in our power*, discourage these seceders from our establishment." Of the spirit of this pamphlet, and the advice it contains, the following account is given in the Vindication: "As to the general conduct towards the Methodists, which this gentleman prescribes to the legislature, to gentlemen of landed interest, and to those who have the management of great concerns, under the one or other of which most of our people get their bread, we were really much shocked, the whole being so opposite to law and gospel, and to every thing honourable, just, and equitable. We envy not his peace of conscience, or that state of mind which could induce him to propose what corresponds exactly with the horrid practices of the Papists towards the Protestants of France in the time of Louis XIV. We are not to be massacred, or burnt at the stake; but we are, according to this mild gentleman's advice, to be starved to death, by refusal of all employment, by which we may, in the way of honest industry, get bread for ourselves and families! This we are to suffer, according to our author's just judgment and tender mercies, or renounce our religion! However, while our ways please the Lord, we shall enjoy the countenance of our superiors. Their impartial love of justice will not suffer them to act contrary to it: their humanity and benevolence, we trust, will ever dispose them, with sensations of pleasure, little known to the dark mind of our accuser, to show mercy to the distressed, of whatever religion they may be."

The author of the "Hints" had imputed a similar line of conduct to the Methodists, in their em-

ployment of labourers and servants; to which they answer: "We deny that we exclude all others from our employ, except those only who are members of our societies. Our author's effrontery exceeds all bounds, when he could assert a falsehood, proved to be so by the many hundreds, if not thousands, in our employ, who never were members of our societies. It is true we attend, as we in duty ought to do, to the moral characters of those we employ, and prefer religious to irreligious servants and workmen. But whether they be Churchmen, Dissenters, or Methodists, is to us a matter of indifference, provided their characters stand fair for honesty, sobriety, and fidelity. Irreligious persons seldom find themselves at ease in religious families where domestic devotions are daily attended to, and where sobriety and a moral deportment are expected. Servants also, who are of a devotional turn of mind, prefer serving in those families, as they in duty ought, where pious dispositions are cultivated, and where religious exercises are maintained. Thus individuals necessarily associate, and form connexions, according to their attachments or aversions with respect to religion. All that we require of those connected with us is, that they govern their families *well*, and serve God daily with their domestics; nor can we require less, without unfaithfulness to God and their souls."

In answer to certain charges and insinuations respecting their *Societies*, the Methodists observe, that "every novice in ecclesiastical history well knows that the primitive christians had their private meetings, and that they were accused of being guilty of the most abominable crimes in them;" that the same

kind of meetings are now charged with the same crimes," and declared to be "formed for bad purposes." "We ask our author," say they, "Do you think, Sir, that if our societies were formed for '*traitorous designs and purposes*,' that apostates from us, who have proved our most inveterate enemies, would not gladly have divulged such designs, if there were any?—They would if they could; but they cannot do it;—we defy them. It is left, therefore to you alone, to assert what we cannot be proved.—We peremptorily deny any designed privacy, or *secrecy* observed by us in our societies, as alleged against us by this author. No secrecy is observed any further than is requisite for peace and quietness, to prevent the intrusion of those who may wish to disturb us, and that we may converse together about sacred things without distraction, and with due solemnity. Another charge against us is, that we hold our private meetings *in the dead of the night*. This also is not true. Many societies, in country places, meet at ten or eleven o'clock in the forenoon; and where they meet in the evening, the general rule is, to begin at six o'clock in the winter, and at seven in the summer; and the meeting continues only for two hours. Late meetings we particularly disapprove of, and always discourage: but in some instances, labouring people's circumstances and occupations will not admit of early meetings; and rather than be deprived of the benefit of social prayer and mutual fellowship, they will devote an hour once a week, late in the evening, for that purpose. Neither have we *orders and degrees* amongst us, but what must, in the nature of things, exist. In every religious society, where any attention is paid to due order and

proper discipline, some are admitted into full communion, whilst others are only probationers. Some must take the lead, and be to others 'teachers of good things.' Of religious societies our author seems to be very ignorant; and therefore he should have been silent about them till he had informed himself better. We sincerely wish him more acquainted with them, and the great spiritual benefit to be obtained in them. Then, if he pleases, he may write again; when he will give a very different account from what he has given in the *Hints*."

In answer to the charge of *disloyalty*, they refer to the proceedings of their Association at Machynlleth, April 15 and 16, 1795, a time of considerable anxiety throughout the kingdom, and when the duty of subjects to their rulers and governors was particularly discussed.—"The commandment," it was then observed, "is most express and positive: 'Let *every* soul be subject to the higher powers: the powers that be are ordained of God; whosoever, therefore, resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God; and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.' Christ's example points out, with evidence sufficiently clear, to those who are willing to be convinced, the path in which we, as his followers, ought to walk. Our divine Master, with dignified meekness, and cheerful readiness, paid tribute, when it was demanded of him, rendering honour and willing obedience to that government, which he knew would at last most unjustly put him to death. In him, meek and lowly, we observe a temper and conduct quite the reverse of those of an angry and dissatisfied politician, who rashly condemns the wisest measures for the public weal, because, perhaps, not

proposed by himself. As He did not despise dominion, or speak evil of dignities, such a temper, and such evil practices, ill become those who profess to follow his holy example. This is one of the many ways which Satan hath to corrupt professed Christians, and by reason of which the way of truth is evil spoken of. What folly and improper meddling is it, for those who can pretend to no call, or abilities for a work of such weight and importance, to take upon them to order and to adjust the political concerns, in all their bearings, of the different kingdoms of Europe; whilst their own domestic concerns, of importance to them, to their families, and to the community at large, are perhaps wholly and shamefully neglected! This is one of those snare of the devil, in which men of crooked, perverse, and corrupt minds, are taken captive by him at his will. A friendly caution was given to all present, which was received with hearty and unanimous approbation. The danger of such snares and evil practices was pointed out; and all were warmly exhorted to follow, as they had done heretofore, the way of peace, quietness, and thankfulness, paying tribute to whom tribute is due, custom to whom custom, fear to whom fear, honour to whom honour." On this subject they add, in the words of the Rev. George Whitefield, "We verily believe, should it ever come to the trial—God forbid it should!—the poor despised Methodists, who love his Majesty from *principle*, would cleave close to him in the most imminent danger, when others, who adhere to him only for their own ends and emoluments, perhaps might not appear altogether so hearty."

In another publication, containing the Rules of

their Societies, they say, "Some high in office may think it their duty to make inquiries: they have a right to be fully satisfied; and we profess ourselves ready, at all times, with all due respect and honour to our superiors, to give them most faithfully every information in our power. With full reliance on their candour and justice, we are confident of a fair hearing, and impartial judgment; and if any thing can be *proved* against us, as a body, contrary to these our solemn avowals, we shall deem ourselves unworthy of any further protection." "But our author," adds the Vindication, "requests his readers to peruse the history of England, from the beginning of the reign of Charles the First to the Restoration. If any of them should comply with his request, we apprehend they will find much to blame in all the jarring parties of that interesting period of English history: not only in the conduct of the oppositionists in Parliament to the measures of the Court, and their abettors out of doors, but also in the highly arbitrary and oppressive proceedings of the royal party; particularly in the high tone, and unjustifiable conduct of the Laudensian faction, which may justly be deemed the high-church party of those times; there being little or no moderation to be perceived on either side. In our own days we hope we shall learn, from their example, the useful lesson of exercising more moderation and forbearance towards one another, that we may avoid the dangerous precipice which proved so fatal to them."

In reference to another charge advanced by the author of the "Hints," the following very suitable answer is given: "Suppose the Methodists were guilty of *drawing the people from the church*; is it

to the honour of the Clergy, in this enlightened age, as it is called, that a few 'ignorant sectaries, men of weak heads and worse principles,' should cause any alarm on this head? In learning, in wealth, in numbers, in favour with the great of the world, and in every outward circumstance, they have by far the advantage over us. Surely, therefore, if there be any danger on this head, the cause must be somewhere with themselves. But here we beg leave to introduce a few of the dignitaries of the Established Church to speak our humble sentiments; not doubting but they will command a more candid hearing, and more serious attention, than we can expect. Archbishop Secker, than whom few men ever wore a mitre with more lustre, in one of his charges to his clergy, observes—'To improve the people effectually, you must be assiduous in teaching the principles, not only of virtue and *natural religion*, but of the *gospel*; and of the *gospel*, not *as almost explained away* by modern refiners, but *as the truth is in Jesus*; as it is taught by the church of which you are members; and as you have engaged by your subscriptions and declarations that you will teach it yourselves. You must preach to them faith in the ever blessed Trinity—you must set forth the original corruption of our nature—our redemption according to God's eternal purpose in Christ, by the sacrifice of the cross—our sanctification by the influence of the Divine Spirit—the insufficiency of good works, and the efficacy of faith to salvation. The truth, I fear, is, that *many*, if not *most* of us, have dwelt too little on these doctrines in our sermons; partly from not having studied theology deeply enough to treat of them ably and beneficial-

ly; God grant it may not have been from want of inwardly experiencing their importance: But whatever has been the cause, the effect has been lamentable. We have in fact lost many of our people to sectaries, by not preaching in a manner sufficiently evangelical; and shall neither recover them, nor keep more from going over to them, but by returning ourselves to the right way.⁹ The excellent Bishop Horne observes, in one of his charges, to the same purpose, and nearly in the same terms: 'Many well-meaning Christians of this time thirst after this doctrine, and think they have heard nothing unless they have heard of *salvation by Jesus Christ*, which is what we *properly call the gospel*; and if they do not hear it in discourses from our pulpits, where they may expect to hear it, they are tempted to wander in search of it to other places of worship. And it must not be concealed, that, by delivering cold, inanimate lectures on moral value, independent of Christianity, many of our clergy of late years have lost themselves very much in the estimation of the religious part of the laity.'¹⁰ When some of the clergy once made their complaint to Bishop Burnet, of the increase of sectaries in their parishes, his lordship very nobly replied, 'Out-live, out-pray, and out-preach them.'—'Wherever,' observes another excellent writer, 'the genuine doctrines of our church are faithfully and discreetly inculcated by her ministers, there is seldom wanting a crowded attendance upon them, and some other visible effects of their labours; wheresoever these doctrines are notoriously neglected, there, almost invariably,

9

⁹ Watson's Tracts, vol. vi. p.79.

10

¹⁰ Charge, 1792, pp.14-19.

will be found a greater number of one description of persons, who seek such doctrines elsewhere; and of another description, who neglect public worship altogether. The evil is wholly chargeable on those who desert the true doctrines of the church; who introduce the tasteless fare of Aristotle in the room of the rich provision of Christ; and the only proper and adequate remedy would be, that all ministers should preach evangelically, that their flocks should uniformly be fed on the feast of fat things, which is made for all people.¹¹ We shall only add the testimony of another well-known writer: 'Thin congregations, whether in town or country, are always the fault of the clergy. I never heard of a really good, impressive teacher, who delivered the doctrines of the gospel, and not those of so many modern divines, and who seemed truly to feel the truth and importance of what he uttered, without finding a numerous and attentive assembly.'¹²

In noticing the "Parish Minister's Serious Advice," they say, "It is a pitiful performance, as devoid of sense and learning, as it is of sound doctrine. It would be easy to make use of bitter satire, and disdainful irony; for the author is open to every attack of this kind;

'Sed non defensoribus istis,'—

these are not the weapons of a Christian's warfare. If this reverend gentleman can serve his poor parishioners with no better fare than is contained in this pamphlet, 'we should not wonder,' to use the ex-

11

¹¹ Overton's True Churchman, p.414.

12

¹² Arthur Young's Inquiry.

pressions of a learned prelate, ‘that good inclinations should carry the more pious part of his parishioners, on the Sabbath, to conventicles; and that the devil should invite those of another cast to the ale-house, or any amusement congenial with their temper and corrupt inclinations.’” —Like the “Hints,” it abounds with hard names affixed to the Methodists, such as “sectaries, schismatics, enthusiasts, fanatics, traitors,” &c.—names which “always signify whatever the imposers please to mean, or the people to hate.” In the words of Bishop Horne, the Methodists reply: “Many things may be ridiculed under false titles, which it would not be quite so decent to laugh at under their true ones; as an affront may be safely put upon a person in a masquerade, which would produce a duel if offered to him in propria personâ: But through evil report and good report lies the road of a Christian; for a *deceiver* he must be looked upon till the resurrection to immortality shall demonstrate him to be none, and wisdom be justified of all her children.”

They observe that “the old Popish doctrine of *succession*, long ago exploded by all Protestant divines, is attempted to be revived by our author once more, at the commencement of the nineteenth century, as a very forcible and decisive argument against the preaching of the Methodists!” Then, referring him to the works of Bishop Jewell, and some of the other Reformers, they say, “We are sorry to observe symptoms of a strong tendency towards Popish errors, and a total ignorance of the ground upon which they stand in their separation from the Church of Rome, in any of our clerical brethren. By the Papists *they* were called *schismatics, heretics, trai-*

tors, &c.,—the very terms they are pleased so plentifully to apply now to the Methodists. The pretended succession, not of doctrines, but of persons and offices, we will confidently pronounce, with our pious reformers, to be void of all foundation whatever in the Bible, contrary to every principle of reason and common sense, and incapable of being ascertained from ecclesiastical history. ‘Ye shall know them,’ not by some pretended succession, but ‘by their fruits.’ Let our author’s succession be what it may, if he has not the wholesome fruit of sound doctrine and holy living, by this rule, he is no better than a false prophet in the Saviour’s estimation. This rule for judging of teachers, and discriminating the true from the false ones, is simple and intelligible to all. Whilst we have the Bible in our hands, and a moderate share of common sense, we cannot believe that any ordination will ever make an ignorant profligate, or a stubborn heretic, a successor of the holy apostles. Surely they have a much better claim to this high honour, who preach the same doctrines, are influenced by the same spirit, and follow their holy example. Those who do not preach the genuine gospel of Christ, can never be proved to have been sent by him, whomsoever they may succeed, and by whatsoever mode of ordination they got into the ministerial office. If they do not succeed in gospel doctrine and holy living, they succeed the apostles only in name.

“But our preachers, it is objected, are self-sent, self-created, and self-ordained. To this we reply in the negative. They are chosen by the societies, having first a proof of their lives, experience, doctrines, spirit, and gifts; they are then examined,

and approved, or rejected, by the ministers and the delegates of the different societies assembled in an Association; they are afterwards observed with candour, and approved in proportion as, in doctrine and living, they come up to the great examples set before us in the divine oracles. Though to episcopal ordination we give the decided preference, and think it very desirable, could it be obtained; how, we would ask, in the present state of things, is it to be obtained by any of our preachers, though ever so well qualified in learning and abilities? Several clergymen are now labouring among us, who were absolutely turned out of their different cures, for holding principles and doctrines, which we deem to be the very doctrines of the church, as by law established. From the discountenance which those already in the church have experienced from their superiors, and from the ill success of others, who have applied for orders, many have been discouraged from making any tender of themselves at all, but go on and labour in their Lord's vineyard, and do all the good they can, upon the present irregular system, as it is called."

After their vindication from the charges and aspersions in these two pamphlets had gone to the press, a third made its appearance, entitled "Methodism Unmasked, &c. By the Rev. T. E. Owen, Rector of Llandyfrydog, Anglesea; intended as an Explanatory Supplement to Hints to Heads of Families." In this pamphlet, their former anonymous accuser was so foolish as to unmask himself, and appear before the public as the "unjust defamer of a people who had never injured him." "We immediately sent," say they, "for this new publi-

cation, though we had no reason to suppose that any further defence could be required besides what he had already advanced in our Vindication. The 'Hints,' we suppose, the Rev. T. E. Owen would wish us to consider as a pop-gun, discharged to frighten us, and that this last publication is an eighteen-pounder, by which the strong citadel of Methodism is to be for ever demolished. However, in perusing the work, full of intemperate zeal, under the pretence of loyalty and defence of religion, we felt very little alarmed for consequences. Surely this gentleman entertains a very high opinion of himself and his literary exertions, as well as a very low opinion of the foundation on which the Established Church is supported, when he deems all, short of his fierceness and violence, insufficient to defend it against the Methodist preachers, whom he holds up to public view as such contemptible beings. We could not avoid indulging a smile on the occasion; but, for our own parts, we are convinced that Mr. Owen's bluster and malevolence, his bitterness and consuming zeal, will do the cause he pretends to support no good, and that the church needs not his intemperate aid."

As Mr. Owen's pamphlet contained scarcely any new accusation, it was thought sufficient, in general, to refer to the "Vindication." In one instance, however, he had found them "righteous overmuch," in a conscientious regard to the Lord's Day, and which he was ready to construe into *disloyalty*! Of this they endeavour to clear themselves as follows: "The poor men who refused to bear arms, and learn military exercises on the Sabbath Day, are surely undeserving of the bitterness with which Mr.

Owen relates the story; neither can the inference of disloyalty be fairly drawn from such a refusal. Their conduct was the effect of a scruple of conscience about the observance of a divine command; and on that account, they ought, under a free government, to have been treated with lenity, and convinced of their error, if they were in an error. The Methodists, both in England and Wales, do not scruple to bear arms on the Sabbath Day, in defence of their country, *in case of actual invasion*; but they do object, from a conscientious regard to the divine command, to spend their sabbaths under arms, in learning military exercises, thinking that some convenient time in the week-days should be allotted for that purpose. In this their conscientious scruple *they have been actually indulged by Government*. During the late war, the Methodist in the island of Jersey applied for relief in that case; and on their expressing their readiness to learn their exercises at their own expense on other days, and their willingness to march with alacrity on Sunday, if called out to oppose an invading enemy, relief was readily granted them. We beg leave to remind the Rev. Rector of Llandyfrydog, that to trifle with a divine command is a very serious thing: we had better bear their frowns and sneers of poor worms of a day, than trample under feet the sacred laws of our Judge. We shall soon appear before a tribunal, from whose decision there will be no appeal: and there, we apprehend, too great a scrupulosity in the observance of divine injunctions, will not appear so heinous a crime as open profaneness and a total disregard of them."

On another interesting point the Methodists say,

“We are much obliged to the Rev. T. E. Owen for classing us with such good and respectable company as we and all Protestants deem the *Waldenses* to be. We hope he does not mean to rank himself with their bloody opponents and persecutors, the *Papists*. Possessed of kindred zeal in hunting down sectaries, perhaps he may feel himself at no great distance from them. Be that as it may, we profess ourselves satisfied with our associates, and most highly approve of their purity in doctrine and strict discipline, of their great zeal and assiduity in spreading the knowledge of divine truth among all ranks and ages, and the noble testimony they bore against the corruptions and superstition of the Antichristian Church of Rome. With them, and the Church of England, after the example of the blessed Saviour, we are verily guilty of heretically deeming, under the gospel dispensation, all grounds to be equally holy without consecration; and that it is meet and right, and our bounden duty, at all times, and in *all places*, to give thanks, or worship, unto the Lord. If the Rev. Rector of Llandyfrydog cannot say his prayers but within the church walls, which is as convenient a place as any, let him go on in his own way; we wish him there often, and much of the aids of the Holy Spirit in all his solemn addresses to the throne of grace. But why, on this account, should he quarrel with us, with the Waldenses, and with the Church of England, for giving thanks and praises unto the Lord at all times, and in all places?

“We beg leave to ask the Rev. T. E. Owen, had he lived in the time when our divine Saviour dwelt here on earth, if His character and conduct, in

every particular, would have met his cordial approbation? Surely the practices of the Methodists, which our accuser severely reprobates, are not very dissimilar to his. Let Mr. Owen well consider the following traits in his spotless character:—He was a carpenter’s son, and a carpenter himself, working as a low mechanic,—he had not the advantages of a liberal education,—he kept private societies often with his disciples,—he went about, or itinerated, doing good,—he preached and prayed, not only in the temple, but on mountains, on the sea shore, in houses; in short, he never omitted an opportunity of doing good to the bodies and souls of poor distressed sinners. He really seemed to judge it perfectly regular to do good at all times, and in *all* places, in season and out of season; and are we not, as Christians, fully authorized, in these particulars, to copy after his example?”

The last work that appeared against them, was “The Welsh Looking-Glass,” in the year 1812, supposed to have been written by a clergyman, formerly in their connexion. It was occasioned by the ordination of their own ministers in the preceding year. Its object was to accuse them of an open dissent from the Established Church, to prove their ordination invalid, and to charge them with a renunciation of their former principles. As an attack was also made on the conduct of other Dissenters in the Principality, it was answered, with much ability, by the Rev. John Roberts, of Llanbrynmair, a minister of the Independent denomination, who published “Remarks on a Pamphlet, entitled ‘The Welsh Looking-Glass,’ in a Letter, addressed to its Author.” —“Nothing,” says Mr. Roberts, “seems to

displease you more than the ordinations of ministers, which have lately taken place among the Calvinistic Methodists. As the pastor of a Congregational Church, I am not particularly concerned with these ordinations; neither does it become me to say much about them, being persuaded that the ministers concerned in them, are capable of giving a reason for their own conduct. But I assure you, Sir, there are not many individuals in North Wales, so little acquainted with the respectability of the Calvinistic Methodists, as to believe the account you have given of these ordinations to be true and just. You labour, with all your might, to hold them, and the persons concerned in them, up to contempt; but whether the contempt will ultimately fall on them, or on your own head, time will discover. I was not present at any of the said ordinations, but I am inclined to believe that the solemnity took place much in the same manner as ministers are ordained in the connexion of the late Countess of Huntingdon.”¹³

“In your late publication you say, ‘There are *two things* absolutely necessary to a true ordination—That the person to be ordained, be every way qualified for the office;—and that he enter upon it in the very way Christ has appointed. He must be *duly qualified* for the sacred office, or he is no priest of God. Should one be ordained regularly without the necessary qualifications, and another possessing these qualifications, take upon him the work of a priest, without scriptural ordination, (that is, according to you, Episcopal ordination,) I feel not

the smallest hesitation to affirm, that neither of these enters in at the door, which is Christ and his established order; but both climb over some other way, and are denominated in scripture, thieves and robbers.' Thus, Sir, you have arraigned at your bar, all the Dissenting Ministers, of every denomination, in the kingdom, and condemned them at once as thieves and robbers. But though thus condemned by you, they have one unspeakable comfort yet remaining, namely, the liberty of appealing to a higher Court. But you say that those who are not every way qualified for the office, though ordained regularly, 'are no priests to God,' but are denominated in scripture, 'thieves and robbers.' Pray, Sir, are you sure that all the English Bishops are duly qualified for the sacred office? Were those Bishops and Clergy, whom you represent as driving pious ministers out of the church, duly qualified for the sacred office? If not, according to your own rule, they were 'no priests of God,' but 'thieves and robbers;' and, Sir, are such *thieves* and *robbers* fit to ordain others? According to you, all who were ordained by Bishops, not every way qualified for the sacred office, were not ordained by priests of God, but by thieves and robbers; and thus, not entering in at the door, *they* also must be *thieves* and *robbers*. Pray, Sir, are you sure that the Bishop who ordained you was every way qualified for the sacred office, and thus a priest of God,—and the Bishop who ordained *him*, and the Bishop who ordained *him*, and so back to the days of Christ? Can you prove that every individual in that succession, from the Bishop who was ordained by Christ himself, to the Bishop who laid hands on the

Reverend Author of 'The Welsh Looking-Glass,' was every way qualified for the sacred office? If you cannot prove this, you would find it no easy task to prove that you yourself have been regularly ordained. You say, '*Christ himself personally* ordained his first minsters, and endowed them with power to commit to others, (well qualified,) what they had received themselves;' — 'that the priesthood is a fixed ordinance, and can no more be changed than the Christian sacraments.' But I would ask, where did this regular succession of priests, duly qualified, exist in the dark ages of Popery? If it existed anywhere, it must have been in the church of Rome. But will you say, Sir, that the Roman Pontiffs were the only properly authorized minsters of religion God had in the world for so many centuries? But if the Roman Pontiffs were not the regular priests of God, (and they could not have been, according to your own rule, if they were not duly qualified for the office,) your regular succession of priests has been long extinct, and there is not a regular priest in the kingdom at this day."¹⁴

"Speaking of the Church of England, you say, 'Let those who depart from it, devise a plan more pleasing to God than his own.' Here you assumingly speak of the Church of England, as being formed on *God's own plan*. But Dr. Buchanan says, '*Christ left no form*, because churches in different climates must have different forms, and they may even vary in the same climate.' No Dissenter, of liberal principles, would be displeased with a Churchman for

thinking and speaking in favour of the Establishment. But pious Dissenters, and, I believe, many pious Churchmen too, (witness the late Sir Richard Hill, in his Apology for Brotherly Love,) are far from thinking, that the Church of England, and the general Church of Christ, are one and the same. They believe there are many thousands, who are not members of the Church of England, and yet members of the general Church of Christ; and they have too much reason to fear, that there may be many, who are members of the Church of England, and yet not members of the general Church of Christ. The true followers of the Lamb, members of his body, are to be found among the various denominations of professing Christians. These are all *one* in the Lord.—They have all been made to drink into one spirit—under the influence of this blessed Spirit, they join in the same petitions at the throne of grace;—and they shall all soon meet in the same place, and unite in the same work for ever.

“You represent the four branches of Dissenters in North Wales, namely the Independents, the Baptists, the Calvinistic, and Arminian Methodists, as ‘so many turbulent factions, appearing more like armies drawn out against armies, discharging at each other their envenomed shafts, than the meek and peaceable followers of the Lamb.’ You call them ‘*sect-makers*,’ and say, ‘They wander from fold to fold, and steal from each other all they can obtain: on these occasions, one glories in the prey he has taken, while the other is filled with spleen, and determined on revenge.’ Sir, I am greatly surprised, and much grieved, that you have been guilty of publishing to the world such foul and groundless ca-

lumnies. I have lived in North Wales all my life, and have been in the ministry more than twenty years. During that time I have heard some hundreds of sermons by Independent ministers; and I solemnly declare, that in no one of them do I recollect to have heard a single reflection on any other body of professing Christians. We desire always to be ready to give a reason for our own conduct, 'with meekness and fear,' but are not in the habit of speaking ill of others. I confess I seldom had opportunities of hearing Baptist, and Arminian Methodist ministers; but I have had frequent opportunities of hearing Calvinistic Methodist ministers; and their sermons, in general, seemed to me, to breathe the genuine spirit of the gospel of peace, which is, certainly, a spirit of love and good will to all mankind. I do not pretend to deny, that unguarded expressions have sometimes been made use of; but does that never happen but in North Wales? Is that peculiar to Dissenters? And will some unguarded expressions, that may have been imprudently made use of by the different denominations in North Wales, justify such a representation as you have given of them?

"That the public may be better qualified to judge of this, I shall further take the liberty of stating a few facts. About two years ago, while the Calvinistic Methodists at Bala were enlarging their chapel, they preached at the Independent chapel in that town. About the same time, while the Independents at Llanuwchllyn were rebuilding their chapel, they were accommodated with the use of the Calvinistic Methodist chapel in the neighbourhood. In the town of Llanfyllin, the Calvin-

istic Methodists had no chapel, till of late;—previous to this, they were in the habit of preaching, whenever their minsters wished, at the Independent chapel in town. The case is the same in the town of Welsh-Pool at present. In the town of Llanidloes, the Independents have no chapel, and are in the habit of preaching occasionally at the Calvinistic Methodist chapel in that place. A few weeks ago, the Independents held their Northern Assembly at Bala, and were kindly accommodated with the use of the Calvinistic Methodist chapel on the occasion, it being much more convenient than their own. Now, Sir, I appeal to you and all the world, whether the representation you have given, of the different denominations of professing Christians in North Wales, be just or unjust.”¹⁵

“You predict, Sir, with the greatest confidence, that the end of the Welsh Methodists is at hand. You say, ‘A religious society has its youth, manhood, declension, and dissolution. The Welsh Methodists were once the chief ornament of their country; the salt that kept it from putrefaction. Their meridian is gone by: symptoms of decay, and wrinkles of age, are but too visible in their countenance. A divided people never live long, though they may have a name to live, when they are dead.’ Now a Welsh Methodist, of the same spirit as yourself, might predict, with equal confidence, that the end of the Church of England is at hand, when one of her greatest Dignitaries has published a professed ‘Refutation of Calvinism,’ the glorious doctrine of the Church, in a twelve shillings volume, which has

reached a fifth edition in the space of less than two years! This Methodist might say, 'Most of the Clergy preach doctrines contrary to their own articles,—Schism prevails in the very heart of the Church;—the members of the Church are divided, and *a divided people never live long, though they may have a name to live, when they are dead.*' But such predictions, on either side, will not be much regarded. The fact is, (and it affords unspeakable satisfaction to all who are under the blessed influence of the gospel of peace,) that at no period since the Act of Uniformity passed in England, was there such an encouraging appearance of vital religion prevailing, both in the Establishment and among the various denominations of Dissenters, as there is at present."¹⁶—As the pamphlet of Mr. Roberts appeared to contain a sufficient defence of the Methodists, they encouraged its circulation, and deemed it unnecessary to publish any more in addition to it; at least the writer of these pages never heard of any similar publication.

The cause of religion among this body of Christians has not only been well sustained from time to time, but has continued to flourish, and is still thought to be in a progressive state. One of their ministers wrote as follows, in the year 1812: "The prospect in South Wales is most delightful. In some parts we have truly had a representation of the day of Pentecost. Into one society above 140 were received in the space of about two months. The Associations at Aberystwyth and Haverfordwest were very pleasing and profitable, and great order and solem-

nity prevailed during the whole of the meetings. I have seen something similar in former days, but nothing equal to what I have lately witnessed. Without being in the work, and partaking of the divine influences which attended it, no one can form any conception of it. For my own part, whilst I have any memory, I shall never forget it! It is the more delightful to me, as I view it, in a great measure, as the happy fruit of our Sunday Schools. More has been done in a few weeks since the work began, than was done before in so many years, although, perhaps, it is the produce of those years of faithful labour.”¹⁷

The character of the Welsh Methodists, as it respects their attainments in christian knowledge, must be considerably above that of past generations in the principality. In addition to the abundance of instruction, directly communicated by preaching, the press has long been successfully employed in furnishing approved and useful publications. Among these must be particularly mentioned the “Scripture Dictionary” of the late Rev. T. Charles, containing the signification of words not translated, with the names and histories of the different nations, kingdoms, and cities, of which mention is made in the Scriptures, and a short explanation of all the chief articles of religion. This highly interesting and important work was published in four thick octavo volumes, and was so well received, that a second edition has recently been called for. This work has been pronounced “a rich mine of biblical information to the Welsh student, in his na-

tive language, probably not excelled by a similar work in any language." Another useful work, long edited by Mr. Charles, was "The Spiritual Magazine," published quarterly, which must have considerably promoted the increase of religious knowledge. Through his successful exertions in the establishment of Circulating Charity Schools, on the plan of those instituted by the late Mrs. Bevens, and his still greater success in promoting Sunday Schools generally throughout Wales, the number of readers eventually became above a hundred fold more than at any former period. To supply the wants of so many young people, he published elementary books, and especially four Catechisms, two of which he translated into English. During the short period of eleven years from the establishment of a press at Bala, more than 320,000 copies of these little works were published by their author; previous to which time he had also printed and circulated a very considerable number. His exertions in procuring correct editions of the Welsh Bible, and promoting a most extensive dispersion and use of the Scriptures in Wales, are well known, and will be long gratefully remembered by his countrymen. The publications of the late Mr. Jones, of Denbigh, original and translated, were also numerous, the circulation of which has been calculated to amount upwards of 26,000 copies. Of him it has been said, that, "as one of the principal translators and authors of his day, his name will be noticed with respect in the annals of Welsh literature." From such ample means of acquiring knowledge, augmented by the publications of other popular preachers in the connexion, it is to be con-

cluded, that knowledge must have rapidly and greatly increased among the Welsh Methodists within the last twenty years. And, indeed, it may be fairly questioned, whether there be, in reference to divine things, a more intelligent body of Christians in the united kingdom.

Much has been said, by different persons, on the subject of those *rejoicings* which occasionally take place among them. The writer has heard many statements from those who have been present at their revivals; and, in the autumn of 1822, he had an opportunity of seeing and hearing for himself, when at Cardigan. The noise made at the Meeting-House was certainly loud, and heard at a considerable distance. On entering the place, he observed a number of persons in motion, clapping their hands, uttering short ejaculations, and praising God. These were chiefly in the area of the place, and near the pulpit, from which a popular preacher had been addressing them. They were surrounded by many spectators, who behaved with becoming gravity. And however strange such proceedings might seem to a person from England, where it has been said that "there is nothing worth jumping for," no serious person could feel the least disposition to smile. Every thing appeared so natural, and bore such marks of real feeling and sincerity, that the effect was wholly different. After being a spectator for some time, he returned to his lodgings, which were near the Meeting-House, and heard the people retiring from their worship, in separate companies, and at intervals, rejoicing as they went, until a late hour. Every thing which he heard and saw among the Methodists on this occasion, he is not prepared

to justify; but is confident that many, who pass the midnight hour at a ball, or supper, have reason to envy the happiness of persons who were then so much better employed.

In connexion with this body of Christians, there are thousands who exhibit the amiable portrait of primitive christianity. They return from their meetings, in peace and contentment, to their lowly habitations, satisfied with the dealings of Providence, and prepared, either to suffer the evils of life, or cheerfully to discharge its several duties. Thus they exhibit the religion of our common Saviour, in its practical effects, and appear as "lights in the world." However, therefore, serious persons, of other denominations, may differ from them in some particulars, they cannot but discover much in their system and religious character, both to admire and to imitate; while they earnestly wish that their own people were more like them, at least in things of chief importance to the being and power of godliness.

THE END.

J. Thomas, Printer, Haverforwest.

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‘He first of all turn’d water into wine;
Then numbers heal’d, who did with sickness pine;--
Restor’d the blind;--and the defective ear
He caus’d the sound of human voice to hear.
He made the cripple in a moment go,
And leap for joy like some young sportive roe!
Upon the boist’rous billows, far from shore,
He walk’d erect, and still’d their noisy roar!

Ev'n by a single word, and as he pleas'd,
 When most it rag'd, the tempest he appeas'd!
 He show'd his Godhead when the sons of men
 He rais'd from death, and bade them live again!
 With five small loaves five thousand souls he fed;--
 So great his pow'r to multiply their bread!
 The furious fiend he often dispossess'd,
 And gave the troubl'd maniac peace and rest!
 Such were the num'rous miracles he wrought
 To prove the sacred doctrines which he taught!"

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'Heaven.

'Behold the kingdom God's own
 Son For all his faithful servants won!

Not earth its glories can declare,
Or tell what its enjoyments are.
Nor summer's heat, nor winter's snow,
Nor rain, nor storm, those regions know;
For ever blooming they appear,
Nor are the seat of care or fear.
No hunger there, nor thirst remains;
No sorrows, weariness, or pains---
No weakness, want, or dumb despair,
Afflict the soul that enters there.
There ev'ry want is well supply'd,
And ev'ry wish is satisfy'd;
For each pure taste in heav'n can find
Enjoyments of a proper kind.
The sky that is above us plac'd,
With all the stars and planets grac'd,
Is but the pavement of that home,
To which the just will shortly come!
Such is the world where Jesus reigns,
And such the purchase of his pains:
From death and revolution free—
The same to all eternity!'—pp.15, 16."

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