

THE
PRESBYTERIAN MAGAZINE.

NOVEMBER, 1854.

Miscellaneous Articles.

A CRITICISM ON 1 COR. 10 : 13.

“ A way of escape, that ye may be able to bear it.”

SEVERAL years ago I heard the words of this verse repeated in a discourse by a speaker who was remarkable for a vague and indefinite diction. It so much resembled his own style that for a moment it did not occur to me that he had quoted the language of Scripture *verbatim*. Here, thought I, are two incongruous ideas. “ A way of *escape*, that ye may be able to *bear* it.” Either idea is intelligible by itself. A man may *escape* from a temptation ; or if unable to avoid it, he may *bear* it. But *escaping in order to bear* is obviously a solecism. All this was but the work of a moment. I recognized it as the very words of our English version, and of course released the speaker from any responsibility in the matter. On returning to my study, I first looked at the passage in my English Bible, to make sure of the very words ; and then turned to the verse in my Greek Testament, to see how it stood in the original. There, to my gratification, I found no obscurity whatever. All was not only intelligible, but precise and congruous. “ Who will not suffer you to be tempted above that which ye are able, but will with the temptation *secure this result*,—that you will be able to bear it.” I have never met with any notice of this verse since that time, which recognized the confusion of thought and diction in our English translation. But any Greek scholar will, I think, agree that it is not in the original.

1. The word *ἔξβασις* does not mean *escape* in the sense of flight at all, much less “ way of escape.” It signifies the *outgoing, issue, result*, of a thing. It occurs but once beside in the New Testament—Heb. 13 : 7—where it denotes the happy termination of a Christian life.

least, in consequence of the appropriation and distribution of the funds being within our own bounds.

Returns have not been regularly made, of such subscriptions and contributions as have been raised: yet there have been sufficient received, to afford data by which to make a probable estimate of our resources. These data will be found in the following summary.

From documents submitted to the Board, it appears there have been raised: In the Presbytery of Washington, by subscriptions in vacancies, \$252; by collections in congregations, \$142 75 cts. In the Presbytery of Lancaster, by subscriptions, \$263,—by collections, \$104 50 cents. In the Presbytery of Miami, by subscriptions, \$1048 33 $\frac{1}{4}$ cents,—by collections, \$201. The whole amount of the subscriptions, \$1563 33 $\frac{1}{4}$ cents; of collections, \$455 25 cents. Grand total, \$2018 58 $\frac{1}{4}$ cents, of which there have been received \$365 37 $\frac{1}{4}$ cents.

In the Presbytery of Miami, there have been five missionaries employed, for different periods of service, amounting in the whole to nearly eleven months' missionary labour. The salutary effects, at least in forming societies and preparing them for future labours, are obvious and encouraging.

The Rev. Dyer Burgess performed a mission of six months. Mr. David Monfort was employed nearly four months.

The others were employed for short periods; but, so far as the experiment has been made, could suitable missionaries be procured, we are warranted in expecting salutary and permanent effects.

Upon a deliberate and impartial view of the subject, your Board are of opinion, that, whatever improvement may be found necessary, the plan adopted, in its essential principles, is calculated to effect the objects for which it was devised. Nor have we now any doubt, with the divine blessing, of extending the field and increasing the means of our operations. And to this end we sincerely hope the great Head of the Church will bless us, with the effusions of his Spirit, and "send times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord;" until "the desert shall blossom as the rose." Let us then press forward in the cause of the Redeemer, while "the pleasure of the Lord prospers in our hand," and let us not be weary in well doing, knowing, that "in due time we shall reap if we faint not."

All which is respectfully submitted,

By order of the Board of Trustees

Under the directions of Synod of Ohio.

JAMES HUGHS, *President,*
R. G. WILSON, *Secretary.*

October 5th, 1817.

SAMUEL DAVIES AND JONATHAN EDWARDS.

MR. EDITOR,—

THE recent formation of a "PRESBYTERIAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY," reminds me, that there are in my possession, several of the MS. letters of that distinguished Presbyterian, President SAMUEL DAVIES. The life of this eloquent preacher, is yet to be written; and these letters ought to be secured in some permanent form, before the originals (as sometimes may be the case) shall be lost. They are of

interest, from their origin, for their own sake, and as furnishing materials for the future biographer and historian. The accompanying letter to Dr. Bellamy is interesting from the description it gives of the sphere of the writer's labours, and as containing some notice of his earnest desires, and the efforts he made, that President Edwards, after his dismissal from Northampton, might be induced to come to Virginia, to live and preach the gospel. Had the attempt been successful, how different might have been the subsequent course of the latter, and how different some of the theological aspects of New England, or even of the entire country.

Yours, &c.,

T. E.

NEW LONDON, CONN.

HANOVER, July 4, 1751.

REVEREND AND VERY DEAR BROTHER,—I never received any information of the kind in my life that afforded me so many anxious thoughts, as yours concerning the great Mr. Edwards. It has employed my waking hours, and even mingled with my midnight dreams. The main cause of my anxiety was the delay of your letter, which I did not receive till about three weeks ago when I was in Lunenburg, about one hundred and thirty miles from home. This made me afraid lest Mr. Edwards had settled somewhere else, being weary of waiting for the invitation from Virginia. Should this be the unhappy case, and should the obligation to his new people be deemed indissoluble, I shall look upon it as a severe judgment of incensed Heaven on this wretched colony. What shall I say? I am lost in perplexity at the thought.

I assure myself, dear sir, of your most zealous concurrence to persuade him to Virginia. Do not send him a cold paper message, but go to him yourself in person. If he be not as yet engaged to any place, I depend upon your word, and "make no doubt but he will come." If he is engaged, I hope he may be regularly dismissed, upon a call of so great importance. Of all the men I know in America, he appears to me the most fit for this place; and if he could be obtained on no other condition, I would cheerfully resign him my place, and cast myself into the wide world once more. Fiery, superficial ministers will never do in these parts: they might do good, but they would do much more hurt. We need the deep judgment and calm temper of Mr. Edwards among us. Even the Dissenters here have the nicest taste of almost any congregation I know, and cannot put up with even the truths of the Gospel in an injudicious form. The enemies are watchful, and some of them crafty, and raise a prodigious clamor about raving, injudicious preaching. Mr. Edwards would suit them both. Our liberties, too, are precarious, and methods are used to restrain them. There is nobody here who is known in Great Britain, whose representation might have some weight to counterbalance that of the council; and on this account, we extremely need Mr. Edwards, whose character there, and especially in Scotland, would have considerable influence. He might also, as you observe, do much good by keeping an academy; and, which is of greater importance than all, might be the happy instrument of turning many to righteousness.

As soon as I returned from Lunenburg, I wrote to the elders in the upper part of my congregation (which I want to cast off when they have an opportunity of obtaining a minister), urging them to take pains with the people in their respective quarters, to obtain subscriptions for Mr. Edwards' maintenance; and though they had no knowledge of him but by my recommendation, they have made up about £80 of our currency, which is about £60 or £65 sterling; and it is the general opinion

of the people, that if Mr. Edwards does in any measure answer the character I have given him (and I doubt not but he will), they can easily afford him £100 per annum. Sundry of them did actually plead their want of acquaintance with him, as the reason of their backwardness; and I could not expect it would be otherwise; and others might have had that as a secret reason who did not publicly mention it. The people about the lower meeting-house, which is in my immediate charge, assure me they will contribute something towards the expenses of his first year's settlement; and the people in Lunenburg told me they would cheerfully subscribe towards his maintenance the first year, should he settle anywhere in Virginia; and I doubt not but that all the dissenting congregations of Virginia will do the same; so that I believe Mr. Edwards may safely depend on £30 or £40 the first year, besides his annual salary. This, however, I am certain of, that he has the prospect of a comfortable livelihood; and indeed should I ensnare him into poverty designedly, I should censure myself as the basest of mankind. My salary, at present, is about £100; and, notwithstanding £20 or £30 peculiar expenses, I find I can make a shift to live upon it.

I could not content myself with following your advice, and only writing to Mr. Edwards, and therefore the people have sent the bearer, a worthy youth who has been under my tuition for some time, to wait on him with their invitation. He has lived so long here, and is so perfectly acquainted with affairs, that he can inform you and Mr. Edwards of them as well as myself.

And now, sir, I shall answer the other parts of your letter. I send you herewith, a narrative of religion here. As I have no correspondence with any of the Boston ministers, I have been obliged to impose upon you the trouble of sending it to the press if you think it worth while. I beseech you, dear sir, to make such corrections as you and Mr. Edwards shall think fit, and be not afraid of offending me by so doing, for I was designedly careless in writing it, as I knew it would pass through your hands. I would have you particularly consider the expediency of publishing the postscript, and the poetical lines of Mr. Blair.

I am impatient, sir, to see your books; and wish you would inform me which way I shall send the price of them to the printer, and order them to be conveyed by water to the care of Mr. John Holt, merchant, in Williamsburg, or of Col. John Hunter, merchant, in Hampton, as may be most convenient.

I have dropped the thoughts of my intended treatise on morality and gospel holiness, till I have more leisure and a larger acquaintance with divinity, but am now and then collecting materials for it.

I believe the weakest of the congregations in this colony, could afford a minister £60 or £70 yearly salary; and as to itinerants, the usual rule is, twenty or thirty shillings a Sunday. As far as I know them, the [people] here are generally pretty generous. This colony is very healthy except on river's sides, and "will suit very well with the constitutions of New England men." Dear sir, if Mr. Edwards fails, shall I prevail with you to come yourself, at least to pay us a transient visit? Oh! how it would rejoice my soul to see you!

Whenever I write to you, I am in such a hurry that I am apprehensive my letters afford you a very mean idea of my intellectual abilities; but as you do not wrong me in it, I shall be quite easy, unless you think I

make you such wretched returns, as that my correspondence is insufferable. Pray for me, and write to me as often as you can.

I am, sir, yours in the tenderest bonds,

SAMUEL DAVIES.

Rev. Mr. BELLAMY.

P. S. You may insert or omit the marginal note in page 28 of the narrative, as your prudence directs. The contents are undoubtedly true, but I am afraid will seem incredible.

July 13th.—I did not receive the complete subscription for Mr. Edwards till yesterday, which happily exceeds expectation. It amounts to about £97, which is near £80 sterling. This will undoubtedly be a very sufficient maintenance. You will see, by the subscription paper, how many dissenting families there are in the least half of my congregation—for the subscribers are chiefly heads of families. O! dear sir, let me renew my importunities with you, to exert all your influence in our behalf with Mr. Edwards. Though the people seem eager for him above all men on earth, yet they request you by me, in case this attempt fails, to endeavor to send some other to settle among them; (for they have no prospect of relief these sundry years from [our] presbytery) but let him be a popular preacher, of ready utterance, good delivery, solid judgment, free from enthusiastic freaks, and of ardent zeal; for I am afraid they will accept of none other, and I would not have any sent here that might be unacceptable. You or Mr. Edwards are the only men they could make an implicit venture upon. I am, with the warmest emotions of heart, dear sir, your most affectionate brother, &c.,

S. D.

Review and Criticism.

The Life of ARCHIBALD ALEXANDER, D.D., first Professor in the Theological Seminary, at Princeton, N. J. By JAMES W. ALEXANDER, D.D. New York. Wm. Scribner. 1854.

OUR profound veneration for the subject of this biography, and our high personal regard for its author, render it difficult for us to write a *critical* notice. We have also been so delighted with the rich and diversified materials for edification and enjoyment, found in every chapter, that even if we had made the attempt, we could not have read it with a very *critical* eye. The volume contains not only the Life of Dr. Alexander, but notices of many illustrious men, both in Church and State, North and South, with whom he was in part cotemporary. This circumstance imparts to the narrative peculiar interest and value. His boyhood was passed amidst the important and soul-stirring events of the American Revolution; and many of the preachers and statesmen who distinguished themselves immediately after that memorable period, particularly in Virginia, his native State, he listened to or associated with as he grew up to mature years. And since that time, many such have listened to or been