

The Religious Remembrancer.

The wages of sin is death: but the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord.—ROM. vi. 23.

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From the Christian Monitor.

View of the state of Religion in the Churches under the care of the Synod of Virginia.

Christian Brethren,

AFTER a free conversation upon the state of religion, we are happy in being able to congratulate the churches under our care, upon the general prosperity of our charge. At the same time, we would earnestly desire to render our devout acknowledgments to the great Head of the Church, from whom the blessing is derived, and to whom the praise is due.

We have to lament, indeed, that some of our congregations appear to have grown remiss and negligent in their attendance upon the ministry of the word; and we would solemnly exhort all such to be zealous and repent, lest the anger of the Lord should rest upon themselves and their descendants to the latest generations.

On the other hand, we have been consoled and refreshed by the intelligence, that in many of our congregations there is a silent and gradual progress in the things of religion. The number of praying people is increasing—family worship is observed—the children are catechised—the walk and conversation of members are in some good measure such as become those who profess Godliness—attempts are making to establish Bible Classes, and Sunday Schools—Societies are forming for the support of missionaries and candidates for the gospel ministry—and the general interests of religion are pursued with increasing diligence and zeal. Such is peculiarly the case in the congregations of Norfolk, Petersburg, Winchester, Leesburg, Frederickburg, and Richmond.

In some other of our churches also, the state of things is still more encouraging. In that of Winchester an unusual degree of religious excitement has prevailed for some time past, and many have been added to the church, of such we trust whose names are in the book of life. In that of Leesburg too, there is reason to hope that the Lord has heard the cry of his people, and is visiting them in mercy. Several have already been anxiously awakened to a sense of their sinfulness, and led to seek salvation through the righteousness of Christ. A deep and solemn attention to the means of grace is still prevailing, and many are anxiously enquiring *what they shall do to be saved.*

We are further gratified to learn, that several new churches have been erected within our bounds and that the number of those who attend upon their service is generally increasing. We are also particularly pleased to hear, that there is a fair prospect of organizing a new congregation in the county of Princes Anne, under circumstances that promise to advance the interests of religion in that section of the State.

In addition to these interesting notices, we are most happy to observe that the Theological Seminary under our care continues to enjoy the blessings of Heaven. The contributions to its funds for the year past have been unusually liberal; and the number of its students is constantly growing. At the same time, associations of pious females and others are forming around us, still further to enlarge its resources and extend its usefulness. But above all, it affords us the highest satisfaction to find that candidates for the gospel ministry are becoming more numerous than at any former period, and that our churches may soon enjoy the benefit of their labours.

Notwithstanding these flattering prospects however, we have but too much reason to apprehend that many parts of our State are almost destitute of the means of grace. There is indeed a woeful famine of the word of the Lord in many corners of our charge, and the cry of souls perishing for lack of knowledge is in our ears. In several counties within our bounds the glad tidings of the gospel are seldom heard, and the privileges of public worship with the countless blessings that attend it, but rarely enjoyed. In the mean time, our population is rapidly increasing around us, and no adequate means of instruction are provided to meet the wants of the rising generation.

It is a consolation indeed, that in the midst of these discouragements there are some hopes of relief, and the means of procuring it are perhaps within our reach. In many of these places now overspread with moral darkness, the inhabitants are beginning to feel their way for the light of the gospel, and may we not hope that *the day-star is rising in their hearts?* "Send us missionaries, let us hear the word," are sounds which come to us from a thousand tongues. And shall we then remain insensible under these afflicting appeals to our hearts, as men and Christians? Shall we turn a deaf ear to the cries of our own kinsmen according to the flesh? Shall we see them suffering and bleeding in the way, and pass by on the other side? Or shall we not rather regard their entreaties as the calls of Providence to redouble our exertions for the salvation of perishing souls?

We would therefore affectionately and solemnly call upon the members of our charge, ministers, elders, and brethren, to renew their diligence and zeal in the great work which God has confided to our care, the work of promoting the prosperity of his church, and cause in our land. Let us come forward with united hearts and hands, with all the means that we possess, to provide missionaries, to diffuse religious knowledge throughout the community, and to extend the means of grace and the blessings of the gospel in all the various modes which love and duty can suggest. At the same time, let us be careful to *purify our own hearts by faith*, that we may be better instruments for the work before us. And above all, let us be instant and fervent in prayer to Him from whom cometh all our help, that he may send more labourers into his harvest, and that the land of our charge, with the whole earth, may soon become as a watered garden, and as a field which the Lord has blessed.

Signed by order of the Synod,

JOHN H. RICE, Moderator.

Fredericksburg, Oct. 28, 1816.

From the 12th Report of the British and Foreign Bible Society.

CONVERSION OF A JEW.

Account of the Conversion of ABRAHAM WERTHEIM, a Jew, now JULIUS EDWARDS: written by himself in German, and translated by the Rev. Mr. Ramfiter.

If any wish to learn how the Lord cares for the destitute, has mercy upon his straying sheep, and conducts them to his flock; how he grants power and courage to them that are lost, to come to the knowledge and possession of truth, let them read the brief memoir of my life, and praise the Lord with me, for giving grace to sinners.

Born of poor parents at Breslau, even in my childhood, I felt no greater desire for any object

than for knowing and worshipping the true God. With rapture my mother embraced me, when I could read and understand the Talmud in the sixth year of my life; and when eminent Rabbies assured her, that I should in all probability become a learned and pious man. I do not enlarge upon the indigent circumstances in which I spent my early youth, nor upon the manner in which I earned a scanty pittance by singing in the synagogue; but only briefly state, that I should think lightly of what I then suffered, if my desire to think lightly of the knowledge of the Christian religion, and to grow in this knowledge, could but be satisfied. I became acquainted in my eleventh year with several truths of Christianity, by means of one Schubert, a Roman Catholic, to whom my mother frequently sent me. This man and his whole family were very kind to me, and requested me to visit them often, which I did with pleasure. Schubert who was a pious man, once read, in my presence, the account of the miracles which Jesus did, when his disciples were exposed to great danger on the sea, from Matt. xiv. 22, 23. How great was my astonishment when I heard this! I begged him urgently, to tell me if Jesus had really done this. He replied, that the Holy Scriptures contained truth without any mixture of error. I immediately went home, and related to my mother what I had heard; but she refuted me with such powerful arguments, viz. a large cudgel, that I felt the pain for a considerable time; whilst she added, "Rather kill thee than educate thee to be a Goy!" (Gentile.) I was prohibited all intercourse with Christians, and every question concerning Christ was returned with blows. This severity, however, only served to make me more eager in my inquiries after truth.

At length I succeeded, in escaping my mother's vigilance, and heard a Christian sermon. The preacher discoursed on the miracle of five thousand men being fed with a few loaves, from John vi. 1—15. I am unable to express what sensations pervaded me, when I heard of another miracle of Jesus: those only, who consider it a duty to reflect on the wonders of Omnipotence can enter into my feelings. Now I formed a firm resolution to worship him who had done these miracles. With this determination I met my mother with this address;—"Tob; (Jesus the crucified) is God, for he hath done what God alone can do." My mother scarcely suffered me to finish these words, but, after severely beating me, expelled me from her house. Now I took refuge with my friend Schubert; but my pleasant abode with him lasted but one day only, for I was compelled to go with my step-father to a Jewess, who took me into her house. This Jewess, notwithstanding her strict inspection, being unable to prevent me from repeatedly going to church on Sundays; it was determined to send me to Lissa, in Poland, where some relatives of my mother resided. I gladly agreed to this plan, in hopes of having better opportunities there for the accomplishment of my desire; but my situation in Lissa soon became very gloomy. I was watched with the greatest severity; wherever I went, I met with a Jew; and no sooner did I make an acquaintance with a Christian, and go with him to a church, than it was discovered and betrayed. I lost the support which I had procured by singing in the synagogue, was exposed to general contempt, was cruelly persecuted, and provided with the meanest food, so that my constitution at length was seriously injured.