

# THE CHRISTIAN ADVOCATE.

SEPTEMBER, 1823.

## Religious Communications.

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

LECTURE III.

(Concluded from p. 342.)

It seems proper that I should here take some notice of the various readings of the Old and New Testaments, in the original languages; as this is a subject in regard to which erroneous notions are often entertained and propagated. These various readings were, indeed, a fruitful theme of infidel declamation, for a long time. But it led eventually, as other infidel objections have always led, to a more full and satisfactory establishment of sacred truth. Dr. KENNICOTT of England, who led the way in this important undertaking, and a most learned Italian by the name of Dr. ROSSI since, have collated, or compared, all the manuscript copies of the Hebrew scriptures, which they could find in the whole world, as well as some of the earliest printed copies, and have given a fair exhibition of the various readings in all. The same has been done, in regard to the New Testament, by a considerable number of learned men; the most laborious and successful of whom was probably GRIESBACH. And what has been the result? Truly the number of various readings is great, and at first sight might appear formidable. But examine them carefully and candidly, and not only does the fear of a corrupted Bible vanish, but the integrity of the sacred text, is most wonderfully

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established. Ninety-nine hundredths of them—I think I may safely say—are manifest slips of the pen, mistakes or oversights of transcribers, or errors of the press—exactly like what you may see in a collection of the same kind, made by Mr. Carey, in his first edition of our translation of the Bible, printed in this city; and like what you may now find, in almost all the Bibles that you daily read. But do any of you think that you are in danger of mistaking the truths of your Bible, because of these errors of the press? You know you do not.—And competent judges have given it as their opinion, that the most corrupt copy of the Greek New Testament that can be found, if taken altogether, would not change one important truth of the sacred volume.

You will not understand, however, that among these various readings there are not some of very considerable importance, for ascertaining the true sense of particular passages, and with a view to determine whether certain clauses or periods, ought to be retained or rejected. But when the whole are brought together and compared, the true reading is, in general, not difficult to be judged of; and the mind of the biblical scholar is satisfied, and even delighted, to find that his faith in scripture is not shaken, but greatly confirmed.—To find, that although a perpetual miracle has not been wrought—for nothing less would have been sufficient—to prevent the slips and errors of transcribers and printers, yet that the providence of God has manifestly and wonderfully pre-

vituperation and contempt, and yet seldom speak of his eulogist but as the *learned Hooker*, and the *judicious Hooker*. We are prevented by nothing but our confined limits from extracting from this work the whole section that relates to the affair of *SERVETUS*; which the enemies of Calvin never fail to bring forward as fixing an indelible stigma on his character; but in which, in truth, the error of Calvin was less the error of the man, than of the age in which he lived. Not one of the reformers, we verily believe, would have refused to do what Calvin did, in that concern. *Cranmer*, in England, was certainly as criminal, in regard to the poor *Anabaptists*, in the reign of *Edward the Sixth*, as

Calvin was at *Geneva*. Why then has so much been said about the former, and so little comparatively about the latter? We leave it to others to answer the question. For ourselves we lament the error of both these good and great men. But we think them chargeable only with the common evil of persecution, which the church in which they were educated held to be a virtue, and the unscriptural character of which they had not yet discovered.—We earnestly recommend these well written memoirs of Calvin to all our readers. In some future number of our miscellany we hope to make extracts from this work, especially from the section to which we have already referred.

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## Religious Intelligence.

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### FOREIGN.

*From the Missionary Herald.*

#### PALESTINE MISSION.

*Extracts from the Journal of Mr. Temple.*

From the Journal of Mr. Temple we make some extracts illustrative of the agriculture and of some curiosities, in the island of Malta.

*March 25, 1822.* This day visited the Old City, as it is called, distant from *Valetta* about seven miles. We are informed, that the road to that city passes through the most fertile part of the island. All the land on both sides of the road, was in a high state of cultivation. Luxuriant fields of barley in the milk, of vines beginning to unfold their leaves, of fig trees, almond and olive trees, some covered with blossoms, and others with green foliage; these altogether gave a most enchanting loveliness to the whole landscape. This is my first visit into the country. Our company consisted of eight persons. We rode in two carriages, each of them drawn by a single mule, whose master runs at his side, and urges him forward. During our visit at the Old City, we went into the church, built over the grotto, where, as tradition says, *St. Paul* slept when he was on the island. The church is not a very spacious one, but is held in great veneration. Beneath it is the grotto, in which stands the venerable Apostle in

marble statue, as large as life. Formerly the viper was hanging on his hand; but not long ago some foolish person wantonly broke it off. On entering this grotto it is impossible to suppress all emotions of religious enthusiasm, if one can believe that it once heard the prayers, and gave rest to the wearied limbs, of the Apostle.

From this church we proceeded to the catacombs. These are immense subterraneous vaults cut out of the rock, of which the island is composed. We entered them through a narrow passage, each of our number bearing a lighted wax taper, and following a guide who is acquainted with these dark and silent regions. Different opinions are entertained concerning these immense caverns. Some suppose they were made to be the habitations of the living, in times of danger and war; but others think that they were prepared as dormitories for the dead. It is said they extend the whole way from the Old City to *Valetta*. They are divided into cells much better adapted for the repose of the dead, than for the dwellings of the living. Whatever may have been the purpose, for which they were made, it is certain that they are at present the mansions of the dead; for I saw in them different bones of the human frame, some in a good degree of preservation, and others mouldered almost to dust. In this subterranean world we saw a church, where, without doubt, religious worship has been, at some period or other, cele

brated according to the forms that prevail in Catholic countries. It is dangerous to lose one's guide in these caverns. Not many years ago, it is said, several young persons had the curiosity to enter without a guide. They entered and were lost in the gloomy labyrinths, and to this day have not been found. This event has led the government to shut up several of the passages, that a similar event may not occur again. We spent about half an hour in traversing these possessions of the dead, and then came back to inhale the pure air and greet the cheering light of that world, which was made for the living.

He next visited the college which contained 65 scholars. His report concerning their appearance, is unfavourable.

The library, which was shown us, was small; consisting principally of the writings of the Latin fathers. Greek is not studied by any of them. Almost all the students are preparing to become priests. The other learned professions are not much encouraged here.

The Old City, in which the college is situated, contains between three and four thousand inhabitants.

*May 22.* In a walk into the country, I was much amused by seeing the people gathering the barley harvest. The men and women were pulling it up by the roots, as they pull flax in America, and then binding it in bundles, and throwing it in heaps. I am surprised at the change effected in the face of the country, within a few weeks. Eight weeks ago the fields were green, and ten thousand beautiful flowers every where appeared; now every flower is withered and dead, and the whole country has the aspect of sterility. Vegetation is generally dead here, during the summer, except in the gardens, which are daily watered. The beasts are fed on green grass in the winter, and on dried grass through the summer. The grass has come to maturity before the middle of May, and before the end of the month all kinds of grain are ripe and gathered.

*July 16.* Again went into the country. The farmers were getting out their barley, which is laid upon the ground, within a circle of perhaps thirty feet in diameter, and trodden out by cattle. I noticed that, contrary to the law of Moses, they muzzled the mouth of the ox. I saw large fields of cotton, and melon vines and melons in great abundance. They were green and flourishing, though not a drop of rain has fallen for more than two months, and all the rest of the country is parched with heat and drought. I have not seen a plough in Malta; though it is

used. They prepare the ground for the seed, chiefly by means of the mattock.

*Sept. 1.* Last Sabbath we opened a Sunday school in our house for the benefit of the English children belonging to our little congregation. We are happy to find among our juvenile pupils, six Maltese children, and a little Jewess, together with about thirty English children. We are assisted in this enterprise by the labours of our pious friends. Much difficulty was anticipated in establishing such a school; but we have been most happily disappointed in meeting with very little.

22. To-day our little Jewess wished to read with some young Misses, who were reading to me in one of the Evangelists. I took her Bible, which was Italian, and pointed to the chapter where they were reading; but as soon as she discovered that it was in the New Testament, she seemed alarmed and said "Questo non è buono." That is, this is not good; and I could not persuade her to read more than a verse or two. It was afflictive to me to find this little creature beginning to display the same prejudices against the New Testament, which have distinguished her forefathers. We regard it, however, as a peculiarly auspicious circumstance, that her parents are willing to send her to be taught by Christians. She is about twelve years of age, reads and speaks only Italian, has apparently a good disposition, and her lessons are always thoroughly committed to memory. The Jews are held in great contempt among the Maltese, and it is not long since they were forbidden to lodge within the walls of this city.

#### *Letter from Mr. King.*

By the kindness of Mr. Wilder of Paris, we are favoured with a letter from Mr. King, dated Alexandria, Jan. 20th. The following is extracted from it:

Through the goodness of our Lord, I arrived here with Messrs. Fisk and Wolff, the 10th inst. after a pleasant passage of seven days from Malta. We have been continually occupied since, in selling and giving Bibles, and in reasoning with the Jews and Gentiles. We have preached to congregations, consisting of from six persons to one hundred and thirty persons, in five languages. We have sold 100, and given away 50 copies of the Bible and parts of the Bible in ten languages. The Catholics in the convent have excommunicated us and our books, and ordered the books to be burned. Some few Bibles have been burnt. Still the people are most of them for us, and one priest has refused to preach against

us. There seems to be much excitement here; and the word of God runs, and I hope will be glorified. Mr. Drovetti, the French Consul General, has received me with much kindness. I was introduced to him by the Asiatic Society. The day after my introduction, I dined with him. The Superior of the convent applied to him to prevent the New Testament's being used in a school here; but he refused. Blessed be the name of the Lord for this. The schoolmaster, who is a Catholick, and has about forty pupils, bought fifteen Testaments, and we have given him fifteen more. These are now read by his pupils in the school.—This morning we have heard that he has been excommunicated.

Every day here has been interesting, and God seems truly to bless our feeble efforts. Could you have seen us here sometimes, with Jews around us, speaking to them of Him, whom their fathers crucified, your heart would have leaped for joy.

The Bedouin Arabs have just been robbing a caravan, near Mount Sinai; and it is thought rather dangerous going through the desert. But if the Lord be with us, we have nothing to fear.

We have been so much struck with the justice and the importance of some remarks of Dr. Scudder, a missionary in the island of Ceylon, on the subject of prayer, that we shall give the small part of his journal which contains these remarks; although we have not room for more. The humblest Christian, male or female, may here see that the success of missions may be promoted by him, or her, without going out of the family, the closet, or even from the bed of sickness or languishing—*by fervent prayer*. In his journal for June 10th, 1821, Dr. Scudder says—

How delightful the privilege to labour for Christ. O that the consideration, that I am permitted to engage in this blessed work, might induce me to live near my God, and devote myself unreservedly to his service. I long for more zeal; more of the spirit of Him who loved and who died for me; more of that earnestness of spirit in prayer, which Moses and Jacob and Daniel had. Prayer is one of the most powerful engines, which can be used in destroying the kingdom of the god of this world. Without it, we shall labour in vain. Without it, missionary societies will send forth heralds of the cross in vain. Without it, those, who contribute of their substance to send the gos-

pel to the heathen, will contribute in vain. One great reason, perhaps, why so few heathen are gathered into the fold of Christ, is because the people of God plead no more with him, in their closets and in the social circle, for his blessing. Christians may expect, that, because they have made great exertions in sending many missionaries to the heathen, hundreds and thousands of conversions will take place. But God, who seeth not as man seeth, will frown upon all their doings, unless their exertions are accompanied with earnest prayer.

#### SANDWICH ISLAND MISSION.

The letter from which the subjoined extracts are made was received by the editor, to whom it was directed by the writer, more than two months since. It was mislaid, or the extracts now given would have appeared in our last number. It contains information from the interesting missionary company on board the ship *Thames*, bound to the Sandwich islands, about six weeks later than that which has been communicated in the *Missionary Register*, from the Rev. Messrs. Stewart and Bishop. Their letters are dated on the 17th and 20th of Dec. 1822. The last date of Betsey Stockton's letter is Feb. 2d, 1823—the same date with some communications summarily mentioned in the *Missionary Herald* for July. We hear much, and with much interest, of the missionary life *on land*; we have here some details of the manner in which that life is passed *at sea*.

*“Ship Thames, N. Lat. 24° 2', W. Long. 20° 43'. Dec. 19, 1822.*

“Rev. and dear Sir—Conscious of the deep interest you take in my welfare, I will endeavour to give you some faint idea of our situation—To describe all that we have seen and felt, would require an abler pen than mine.

“You no doubt anticipated many of the dangers to which we were to be exposed, but we were called to witness some, before you could have anticipated them. We embarked on the 19th ult.—The boat was sent to land the pilot at 12 o'clock; but having reached the extremity of the sound, the pilot discovered that we were drifting rapidly on the Race Rock, and returned as speedily as possible to save

us from destruction. He remained with us till 4 o'clock, and was then landed at Block island—By him I suppose you received a short letter from Mr. Stuart. At 6 o'clock we got far enough out to feel the motion of the water, and of course the sea-sickness commenced. I cannot describe the scene which ensued—The most death-like sickness I ever felt in my life, was occasioned by the motion of the ship. Every person in the mission, except Mr. Stuart and Kernoola, was sick at the same time. The weather became very boisterous on the following Friday—rainy and squally in the evening—and in the night it increased to a gale. I was up very early the next morning, and as I was looking toward the companion way, we shipped a sea, and the water rushed into the cabin in a torrent. It was the first I had seen, and I felt alarmed for a moment; but it was soon over. I am happy to tell you that since I left home, in all the storms and dangers I have been called to witness, I have never lost my self-possession. This I consider as a fulfilment of the promise, that as my day is, so my strength shall be. But we have not yet come to the most trying part of the voyage. We are now near the coast of Africa, and I fear I shall not act the Christian, in the thunder storms which are to be expected there.\* But I am glad to have it in my power to say, that notwithstanding all our difficulties, I have never looked toward home with a longing eye. I cannot say indeed, sir, that I have not longed to see your family. You are all as dear to me as life itself; and nothing but the consoling thought that we are destined to meet where parting will be no more, could support me.

"My friends are all very kind to me. I have not been disappointed in Mr. and Mrs. Stuart. Their kindness lays me under renewed obligations to them. I share with them in all their stores—if our water was good, we should be quite comfortable; but it was spoiled before we left port, and it has grown no better since. We have cider, porter, beer, &c. but would gladly exchange them all for water. We hope the captain will take in some at St. Jago. The captain appears to be a well disposed man, and does every thing in his power to render the family happy. He attends prayers with us in the morning, in the cabin, and in the evening on the quarter-deck. We met the first Monday of the month, and observed the concert of prayer; and the season was very precious to us. We frequently comfort ourselves by reverting to our native coun-

try, and reflecting on the prayers which are there ascending in our behalf.

"The mission family are, on the whole, as pleasant a company as I ever met with. The natives are the kindest creatures I ever saw. They talk and sing for us in their own language, the sound of which is soft and pleasant.

"I wish it was in my power to give the ladies of your family some account of our manner of living; but I cannot at present. Sometimes, in imagination, I visit them in the night, and get a piece of bread; for there is nothing I have wanted so much since I left home, of the provision kind, as bread. Ours is pilot-bread and crackers, and by using them in our sea sickness I took a dislike to them. But we have pudding, boiled rice, and mush once a week, and beans, potatoes, boiled onions, fruit, &c. The cook, however, is a dirty man, and we are obliged to eat without asking questions. While I was sick, they gave me a mug of chicken soup—The grease, the pepper, and the feathers, floated together on the surface. Being on deck, I was unable to get a spoon; so I took out what I could with my fingers, and drank the rest. It seemed as good as any I ever tasted; and it nourished me so that I soon began to recover. \* \* \* \*

"All the births in the cabin are occupied by the married people; and it was thought best to make up one for me, by the dead-lights—for we were obliged to have them all in. The captain, who has doubled Cape Horn five times, says that he never saw the sea in such a condition in his life. The bowsprit was at times buried in the sea, and again almost perpendicular in the air; so that every thing in the cabin which was not lashed, was thrown from one side to the other. The vessel pitched and rolled at the same time, in such manner that no one could stand on their feet without holding. And as my birth was abaft the beam, whenever my head went to leeward and my feet to windward, which was the case every five minutes, it made me very sick—I found it would not do for me to endeavour to sleep so. The captain therefore had a hammock made and swung over the table; to be let down at night and strung up in the morning. The first night I tried it I rested very well—I was both sick and tired. The second night the ship rolled without pitching, and I was thrown back and forth as fast as I could go, until about 12 o'clock at night; when a bed that had been placed in one of the dead lights was thrown down, and struck one corner of my hammock—This threw me, first up against the ceiling and then on the dining table. At the same moment we shipped a sea; and the water

\* She has a natural timidity in regard to thunder.

running on the deck, and the trunks falling in the cabin, allowed me to think very little of myself. However I was soon accosted by Mr. Stuart, who came to know if I was hurt. When I assured him that I was not, I heard the rest of the family laughing heartily behind their curtains—It was fine sport for them and the captain, for a few days. I did not venture into my hammock again for the remainder of that night, but stayed with Mrs. S. But I have learned to sleep very comfortably it since. I go to bed between 9 and 10 o'clock, and get up at day-break—ring the bell at day-light, and we have prayers at sun-rise—then have breakfast, and afterwards go about our business. Our study hours are from 9 till 12 in the morning, and from 2 till 5 in the afternoon. . . . Mrs. Stuart has suffered more than any of the family; but she is now recovering very fast.

“We have had many remarkable interpositions of Providence already in our behalf. The first pleasant day after the storm, we met the *Prime*, of Philadelphia, and spoke her. It was out of our power to write by her; yet it was very gratifying to us to send word to our friends that all was well. We have seen a number of vessels since; but have not been able to speak any bound to America. We saw the *Winslow*, of New Bedford, soon after, and sailed in company with her for some time. On Sabbath morning, Mr. Stuart went on board and preached, and in the afternoon the captain came on board our ship to church. Mr. Stuart observed when he returned, that he never expected to have gone to preach in the midst of the Atlantic ocean. The day will, I think, be long remembered by us. The captain invited us all on board his ship, the next day that the weather should be fair. But the wind, after blowing from several points of the compass, died away in the night, so that the helm became useless; and the two ships got so near together that immediate destruction appeared inevitable. But the wind sprung up, after a short time, and enabled both ships to steer off. The *Winslow* then left us, and we have had no company since—Company was very desirable, and yet we were glad to get rid of it, as it was like to cost us so dear.

“I have, sir, already realized many things that you told me when at home. . . . But still, sir, I am as happy as I ever was in my life.

“It would do your heart good, to see with what firmness that part of our family who have been accustomed to better things, bear their trials. Here I do not insinuate that there are any who have not borne them like Christians. But it was

thought that Mr. S. would not bear them with as much fortitude as Mr. B.; because one had been accustomed to a more delicate manner of life than the other. If those who indulge that opinion were with us, they would find that refinement in a missionary, is no objection to him. I have seen your friend lie down on a pile of boards, or on the top of the locker, when almost exhausted, without a murmur. He has already begun to ‘bear hardness like a good soldier.’ I feel very much ashamed at times, when I look at him, and think what he is, and what I am—if he bears hardships thus, how ought I to bear them?

“Leaving home and becoming a missionary does not, I find, make peace with the great enemy—I find my heart still inclined to forget God, and to wander in the paths of sin. We have no place in the ship to which we can retire, and spend a moment in secret with our God. This is one of my greatest privations: for the poor spark in my breast requires to be constantly fanned by prayer, to keep it from being extinguished—Sometimes I feel as though it were almost out. . . . You will please to excuse my saying so much of myself.

“Tell Mr. — that I have not forgotten him. I see many things to remind me of him constantly. This morning we saw and caught the *Portuguese man of war*;\* but could devise no plan to preserve one for him. The string of one of them hung from the ship to the water; it looks very much like a string of blue beads. One of the natives who was in the water bathing, says that one of these animals bit him. He brought a piece with him on his hand. Most of the missionaries this afternoon have been out in a small boat, and found the sun very hot. The heat is not as yet very great in the ship. . . . No whales have been taken as yet, although we have seen a number—and the harpoons are all in readiness. . . . You will please to excuse the defects of my letter. I find it hard, as yet, to think and write at sea. Remember me to . . .

“With feelings which neither time nor space can change, Yours humbly,

“BETSEY STOCKTON.

“P. S. After writing the above, we were driven off Cape Verd, and were unable to stop there, and I gave up all hopes of being able to send my letter—January 5th, A ship has just appeared in sight, and I have scarcely more time than to tell you we are all well. We crossed the line yesterday, and had the usual ceremonies. We have had a very interesting voyage thus far. We

\* Mollusca.

have caught a number of fish of different kinds—such as the black fish, sharks, dolphins, &c. The manner of harpooning them is very curious. I can say no more—We are taking in sail. B. S.

“Mr. and Mrs. Stuart desire to be remembered to you.

“P. S. 2d.—We have been disappointed, the third time, in sending our letters. But this morning, at 4 o'clock, we discovered an Englishman, who has engaged to take them. Since I last wrote, we have had trying times; but no damage has been done to the ship. I have learned to be quite a sailor; and have not been frightened since I came on board—any more than to feel solemn. For this I desire to be very thankful—The Lord has not forgotten me. We are now in S. lat. 44° W. long. 60°—the family all well. Feb. 2d, 1823.—We got soundings yesterday, for the first time after being out 75 days. I will write again by the first opportunity.

“BETSEY STOCKTON.”

#### DOMESTICK.

We earnestly recommend to the serious consideration of our readers, and especially of our female readers, the subjoined paper. The world, it is plain, can never be evangelized, while that degradation of the female sex exists, which is found in most heathen, and in all Mahometan countries. Not only do women compose a full moiety of the human race, but their influence on the other moiety, as sisters, wives, and mothers, is necessarily great. In all Christian communities it has always been peculiarly great; and this is unquestionably agreeable to the design of the divine Author of our religion. While in the revealed code we find it written—“I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence.” (1 Tim. ii. 12.) We notwithstanding find her every where represented as the companion of man, his equal—as far as is consistent with the nature of her sex and the subjection which harmony and order demand—and a partaker with him to the full, in all the blessings and glorious hopes of the gospel of Christ. “She,” it has been beautifully remarked, “was last at the cross, and first at the sepul-

chre.” To her the Redeemer first appeared after his resurrection from the dead. She became the first convert, and furnished the first accommodations to the apostolick mission, when it first passed from one quarter of the world to another—from Asia to Europe. (Acts xvi. 6—15.) Christian missions have always owed much to Christian women. It is so at the present time. They not only go as missionaries, and aid most efficiently in the instruction of schools, and in other ways by which the heathen are enlightened and converted, but they take a part in missionary operations at home. To them the funds of almost every benevolent institution, in this era of benevolent enterprise, are deeply indebted. While this is so, we do not well know how to account for it, that they have not done something more, with a special view to the benefit of their own sex in heathen and Mahometan lands. We really think that they are called on to do this—and we sincerely rejoice that there is one society formed for this purpose. We have heard that others are about to be formed; and we hope they will increase till they are as numerous as the Christian churches in our land. We again recommend the preamble of the following constitution to the most serious consideration of our female readers.

*Constitution of the Princeton Female Society, for the support of a Female School in India.*

It is among the excellent effects of the Christian religion, that it elevates the female sex to their proper rank in society, and gives them the common privileges and hopes of the gospel. Among heathen and Mahometans, females are not regarded as immortal beings, but are considered and treated as little better than the beasts that perish. What Christian woman can think of this without emotion? Without an earnest desire to do all in her power to rescue as many of her sex as possible from this horrible degradation—to raise them to the possession of the rights of human nature, and to teach them to aspire to all the present and future felicities, which in the gospel of Christ, are proposed to them, equally