

The Christian Watchman

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BY PURENESS, BY KNOWLEDGE—BY

LOVE UNFEIGNED.—ST. PAUL.

REV. E. B. DEMILL, A. M., Editor.

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Original Contributions

For the Christian Watchman.

THE BLESSING OF SIMEON.

No. III.

JESUS—A SIGN.

Simeon, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, predicted, that while Jesus was to be the Saviour, he was also to be the sign of the fall as well as of the rise, of many in Israel. He now proceeds to indicate the most striking characteristics of the manifestation of Jesus, and thereby to explain a statement which seems to conflict with the very nature and office of the Messiah.

It is to be noticed that, Jesus saves, not by delivering sinners from the consequences of their transgression—but by delivering them from the power of sin. He saves by imparting such truth as is fitted to enlighten the mind, to change the affections. Rejection of the truth precludes the possibility of salvation, darkness the understanding, depraves the affections, and ensures a more fearful penalty than would have been otherwise incurred.

Unless Jesus proved that his teachings were true, that he was what he claimed to be, an ambassador commissioned by God to make terms with guilty man, the rejection of him would involve no guilt, and he could occasion neither the "rise" nor the "fall" of any. In fact, faith in him would only be credulity, and unbelief pardonable, if not positively virtuous.

Jesus, however, proved the truth of every word which he spoke. He not only afforded convincing arguments that he was the Messiah, but he was himself a "sign" that his mission was divine, and that all his teachings were true.

As we briefly glance over the life of Jesus, we will be able to perceive how abundant was the proof which he afforded that he was a Divinely commissioned teacher.

His birth was attended by supernatural circumstances—a heavenly messenger announced to Zacharias the birth of him who was to be the herald of the Messiah; the same messenger subsequently visited Mary and announced the miraculous birth of a Saviour. When the babe was born, the event was announced to the shepherds by an angel, and a multitude of the heavenly host descended to earth and celebrated the event by singing an anthem of praise to God. At the same time wise men saw his star in the east, and were on their way to pay homage to the new born King. When the infant was presented in the temple, Simeon and Anna, and the prominent features of his life. He escaped the peculiar perils which threatened his infancy. By special warnings from God to Joseph and Mary. When but twelve years of age, he astonished the learning of the Jews by his wisdom.

When about thirty years of age he began his public ministry. At his baptism the Divine Spirit descended upon him in dove-like form, and the great God proclaimed him to be His Son, well-beloved and only begotten. Shortly after he endured a fast of thirty days and nights in the wilderness, during which time he triumphantly resisted the most insidious temptations of the devil. After his victory, angels descended from heaven to minister unto him. His public ministry lasted for about three years. He preached principally in Galilee—a province whose inhabitants were illiterate and despised. His disciples were chosen from the common people. During the first two years of his ministry he wrought many miracles. He went about doing good—saving bodies as well as souls. The last year of his life was chiefly spent in teaching his peculiar doctrines. His teaching attracted the notice of the rulers of the people. The priests saw that his teachings were directly opposed to theirs, and that he or they must fall. Jesus was accordingly apprehended. But though he had associated with the people for so long a time, no charge brought against him could be sustained. However, on being asked, he acknowledged that he was the Messiah. This was sufficient, and he was condemned to die. He was accordingly crucified, and between two thieves. The third day after his execution he arose from the grave, and after being seen by his disciples for many days, ascended into heaven in the sight of many witnesses.

As we consider Jesus as portrayed by the evangelists, we discover the most convincing evidence that he was a teacher sent by God.

The circumstances which attended his birth, his baptism, his temptation, the transfiguration, the agony in Gethsemane, the crucifixion, are convincing evidences that he was no ordinary teacher. In all these events the Father gave testimony that Jesus was commissioned by Him, and consequently that his doctrine was true.

The miracles which Jesus wrought also prove his Divine mission. He wrought many great miracles, in public, in the presence of spectators, many of whom bitterly hated him. Determined not to regard him as the Messiah they could only account for his miracles by attributing them to Beelzebub, the prince of the devils. We cannot for a moment suppose that God would allow an impostor to interfere with the laws of nature. A miracle is the credential which a divinely commissioned teacher presents in proof of the validity of his claims. The miracles which Christ performed conclusively prove that his doctrines were true and his claims valid.

reals of righteousness. The wonderful purity of his character is a conclusive evidence of the truthfulness of his doctrines and the validity of his claims.

Moreover, these doctrines themselves bear evidence that they are true. Reason acknowledges that they contain nothing absurd—conscience asserts that they inculcate nothing wrong. Of what other system of religion except that revealed through Moses, could this be said? But more, these doctrines reveal the true character and condition of man, worthily portray the Creator and Preserver of the Universe, make known to the guilty a way of salvation which satisfies the conscience, present the only motives which can impel the sinner to serve a holy God, and reveal the only precept which can render man's mortal life happy. Can we suppose that any other than a teacher sent from God could unfold such doctrines.

Again, he imparts love and peace and joy to believers. He infuses in the spirit a principle which impels to an incessant but triumphant conflict with sin, which sustains the sufferer in every hour of trial, and which can resist even the terror of death. No man could afford such blessings as those which Jesus evidently dispenses to all his people.

Thus Jesus is a "sign." The incidents of his life, his miracles, his character, his words, his gifts—all conclusively prove that he is all that he claimed to be, and that his doctrines are true.

Jesus is an ambassador from God to man; He came to effect a reconciliation between the rebel and his justly offended Sovereign, and he leaves with him his credentials. No candid mind can contemplate him without perceiving that he is commissioned by the Father.

Those who believe in him but obey the dictates of reason. They believe his words because he proves them to be true. They accept of him as Saviour and Ruler because he proves conclusively that he stands to them in this relation.

For the Watchman.

THE LAMB OF GOD.

NUMBER I.

The expression "The Lamb of God," presents clearly to the mind the most mysterious, and also, the most important of doctrines of our earthly faith; it indicates at once the condescension of Jesus, the perfection of His character, the extent of His sufferings—and also, the nature of the blessing which He bestowed upon man.

This single expression not only enlightens the mind and touches the heart—but it also excites the imagination, carrying the mind back, as it does, into incidents of the most touching character, to the most remote antiquity, and also transporting us through the future to that great day which shall bring to a conclusion the world's history.

The saints of old from "righteous Abel" to Melchizedek, in the sacrifices which they offered perceived and adored the Lamb of God. These sacrifices but typified that wonderful Being who subsequently appeared upon the earth, who not only exhibited qualities fitted to touch the coldest heart—but who lived a life of absolute perfection, and who freely surrendered that holy life to take away the sins of the world. That wonderful man is not now dead—He has arisen, and though exalted as King of kings and Lord of lords is yet in the loveliness and perfection of His character, the nature of His office as Saviour, "The Lamb of God," and as such, excites the confidence and love of the redeemed. Hereafter, also, when the history of this world shall be no more—the finally impatient will quiver with horror in view of the wrath of the Lamb, while the most rapacious praises of redeemed saints will be elicited by the presence of the Lamb that was slain.

We may wonder how it was that John the Baptist obtained so clear a view of the central and most mysterious doctrine of Christianity.

John had been reared in seclusion and solitude where he might study the scriptures uninterrupted by the bustle and frivolity of the world, unobscured by the false notions of men who made void the plain word of God. Here with the spirit of God for his instructor he could penetrate into the meaning of the sacrifices of the Jewish dispensation, and discover in the future one great sacrifice in whom these all were realized. He could study the prophecies and learn more of this glorious victim, how though bestowing the most precious blessings on others, He was Himself to suffer and die. The transcriptions connected with the birth and infancy of John would lead him to anticipate that the great Sacrifice was soon to be offered up. The spirit of God had informed him that He had actually appeared, that a mighty sign of His presence should be given to the Baptist. By and by he met with One whose presence filled him with awe and veneration. This stranger solicited baptism—but John suspecting the real character of the speaker hesitated at complying with his request; at length he complied, and lo! the heavens opened, and the spirit of God in the form of a dove descended and rested upon him, and out of the open heavens, God spoke, and said, "this is my well beloved Son."

A few days after the temptation in the wilderness, as John with his disciples was at Bethabara, baptizing, Jesus passed that way. In a moment all the scattered truths which John had acquired during his secluded and thoughtful life concentrated in one true and glorious thought. He saw all that Christ was, all that he was doing and would do, and the means whereby the glorious consummation was to be achieved. Behold, said he to his

disciples, the long predicted victim provided by God himself—the victim to whom all the sacrifices enjoined by the laws pointed, and in whom all the predictions of Moses and the prophets are fulfilled—the victim without spot or blemish, whose voluntary and bloody death takes away the punishment threatened against sin, and at the same time destroys the predominance of sin itself—a victim who takes away the sin and punishment of a guilty world.

According to the Mosaic ritual, no animal could be presented as a sacrifice but one who was pronounced clean; even those were to be perfect of their kind. But while a kid, a sheep, a heifer, a bullock, or a lamb could be presented in sacrifice, there were occasions when a lamb was required, a lamb without spot or blemish. The offering of an animal unclean or imperfect would have destroyed the whole moral effect which the sacrifice was intended to produce.

Now, Christ was truly a lamb without spot or blemish. He was free from all taint of sin—no stain of original depravity was in His nature, and as He grew up to manhood He kept himself pure and unspotted.

The keenest investigator could discover no fault in His character. He could look his boldest and most malignant adversaries in the face and say, "which of you can convict me of sin?"

Not only do we notice a perfect freedom from all the follies and vices of the age in which He lived, but we find every conceivable perfection in His character.

In all His relations with men He exhibited all the qualities that are fitted to win esteem and affection; forbearance, patience, meekness, sympathy, benevolence. In all His conduct towards God the most perfect reverence, submission and obedience.

He was tried, but Satan found nothing in Him, no point where he was vulnerable—he tested Him in the wilderness—he tried Him through the spiteful tongues of malignant foes, but Christ exhibited only meekness—he tried Him through a wily fickle multitude, when they wished to take Him by force and make Him a king, but Christ exhibited no earthly ambition—he tried Him through worldly minded disciples, but Christ exhibited forbearance and patience—he tried Him in Gethsemane, yet here Christ uttered no repining, but afforded an example of submission—he tried Him in the cross, where bodily anguish and the absence of the Father seemed to give prospect of success—but here, too, the Saviour came off triumphant.

But Jesus in his death as well as in his life appears as the Lamb of God. According to the Mosaic ritual, the lamb was brought into the court of the tabernacle and there slain. While alive it could not be presented as an offering. Without the shedding of blood the law was no remission. The victim, especially if a lamb made no resistance, it seemed to consent to its death.

It was not enough that Christ should come into this world, and teach the ignorant, and then when He had accomplished His work return to the Father. It was necessary that His blood should be shed, that he should die.

His death was a terrible one; every circumstance in connection with it was sufficient to wring the soul and body of the innocent sufferer. The betrayal by Judas, the mock trial before the Sanhedrin, the scoffs and blows of the rude soldiery, the scourging by Pilate, the ignominy of the mode of death selected for Him, the excruciating agony of the cross, the temporary desertion of the Father, all this made the sacrifice complete. Every element of death was concentrated in the cup given Him to drink, but this death was purely voluntary. There was no resistance made when He was apprehended, there was no murmur when He was nailed to the cross. He could have found means to escape this fate. He could have kept Himself out of the way of His foes, or He could have destroyed them all when they attempted to seize him; but no, He had even predicted that He was to die, and He went up to Jerusalem as the Lamb of God, to take away the sins of the world.

For the Christian Watchman.

Studies for the Sunday School.

SECOND SERIES.

NUMBER IV.

JESUS GAINS DISCIPLES.—John, 35-52.

On the following day, John was with two of his disciples in the same place where he had seen Jesus, and had given his testimony concerning him. Again he sees the Saviour walking by himself without a disciple or a friend. The Baptist directs the attention of his disciples to the Saviour in language similar to that which he had used on the preceding day. "Behold," he says, "The Lamb of God."

The two disciples, Andrew and John, when they heard these words, approached Jesus, anxious to see him more closely, and if possible to become acquainted with him. They did not presume to address him, but followed him respectfully, waiting for him to speak.

At length Jesus noticed them, and mildly accosted them with the inquiry, "what seek ye?" They replied Master, we would learn where thou dost dwell, in order that we may visit thee, and listen to thine instructions. He then invited them to accompany him, to the place where he dwelt for the time.

They gladly accepted this invitation, and went with him and remained during the remainder of the day. It was about two o'clock in the morning when they went with Jesus, and enjoyed a day of profit and delight.

Andrew, one of these two disciples of John, was the brother of Simon Peter.

The next day John and Andrew, convinced of the Messiahship of Jesus, as well from what he himself had taught them, as from the testimony of their old teacher, went in search of Simon to tell him of their great discovery, and to make him a participant in their joy. Andrew was the first to find his brother. He told him that John and he had discovered the Messiah, and had enjoyed an interview with him.

Simon was easily prevailed upon by his brother to go with him to Jesus. When he saw the stranger, he immediately knew him. His supernatural knowledge at once penetrated the character of the new comer, though he had never seen him before. "Thou art Simon the son of Jonas," he said, "thou shalt be called Cephas—a rock."

The day after, Jesus prepared to leave Bethany for Galilee. As he was about setting out he met Philip of Bethsaida, a townsman of Andrew and Peter, Jesus called him, and invited him to become one of his disciples. After Philip had determined to be a disciple, he met with a man named Nathaniel (Bartholomew, Mat. 10, 3.) and said to him. We have found him of whom Moses and the prophets wrote, Jesus, the son of Joseph, of the town of Nazareth. Nathaniel could not believe that the Messiah belonged to a place so insignificant, scornfully inquired. "Can any thing good come out of Nazareth?" Philip did not think it worth while to attempt a direct reverse of Nathaniel's prejudices. He simply requested him to visit Jesus, and satisfy himself.

Nathaniel did not hesitate, but prompted by mingled motives of hope and curiosity, accompanied Philip. Jesus saw the stranger coming, and said of him to the bystanders, "Behold a genuine Israelite, a true and guileless son of Jacob." Nathaniel astonished by those expressions, which though so favorable, indicated a knowledge of his character, inquired wonderingly, how came you to have known me, a stranger? Jesus answered. Before Philip spoke with you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw thee. This allusion to a circumstance in the life of Nathaniel, which though of importance, was known to no one but himself, overcame his unbelief. He felt convinced that the man before him, who knew so well his heart, and the most secret actions of his life, must be the Messiah, and that wonderful language used by John respecting him, must be true. With every feeling of unbelief subdued, he exclaimed, thou art the Son of God, thou art the expected King of Israel.

To this Jesus replied. Dost thou believe simply because I said I saw thee under the fig tree? Thou wilt yet receive still more striking proofs of my dignity, and of the importance of my office. Verily, verily I say unto thee, hereafter thou shalt see communication between earth and heaven, and messengers of God, ascending, and descending through the Son of man.

A. B. C.

For the Christian Watchman.

Notes on Upper Canada.

CONTINUED.

The society in the Ontario districts, composed, as it mainly is, of emigrants and descendants, at a short remove, of emigrants from the British Islands, retains many of the characteristics of the father land. At the same time much intercourse and commingling with the inhabitants of the Republic across the lake, have not failed to impress upon it many of the peculiar features of that peculiar people. If ever Canada attains a nationality it will doubtless be the land of the Anglo-American. One meets everywhere with indications of the two races, as we may now almost call them, sometimes standing out in striking contrast, at others, blended in a new character differing from either. Many of the customs and institutions seem to be almost purely British, others are as unmistakably the growth of this continent. The wealthier members of society (we presume the remark will most truthfully apply to such as have become wealthy since their immigration) appear often more American in their habits than the laboring classes. The teams, wagons, working utensils, &c., of the latter have a heavy, substantial, English look; while the buggies and carriages of the former bear in their slender proportions unmistakable proof of their Yankee original. And yet, as a matter of taste or convenience, one can hardly help preferring one of these swift vehicles, driven by its owner, to one of those huge, lumbering, though most comfortable looking affairs one meets with in Montreal, even with its extra appendages of hired groom and footman.

We are quite at a loss what origin to ascribe to the peculiar which may almost claim rank as one of the fixed institutions of this portion of Canada. It is, we suppose, indigenous to the country, springing up spontaneously to meet the wants of the sparse population in the great inland districts. Almost every imaginable and unimaginable species of merchandise may be found in one or another of these moving retail shops which figure so conspicuously on the streets. From patent double action pumps down to whips and lozenges, nothing seems too large or too small to demand a team and a salesman. Here one not unfrequently meets with the anomaly, the almost paradox of an honest pedlar. Too frequently, however, the business is conducted on the famous American principle. One very communicative individual overtaking the writer on a pedestrian tour, kindly offered him a seat

by his side. His visible stock-in-trade consisted of five or six heavy fanning mills, which formed a sufficient burden for a powerful pair of horses. In reply to an expression of surprise that he could find sufficient sale for such lumberlike commodities to defray expenses, he confidently unfolded the secret. Supplying farmers with these useful machines was a respectable business, and served as an excellent cover for the really profitable branch of his trade—the selling of spurious jewelry. From this, by his own showing, he derived great profit. His theory of making sales was about this. Get good counterfeits, i. e., those not easily detected—exhibit few specimens—ask enormous prices, and in no case fall from them. To offer people bargains in jewelry, spoils the trade—it excites suspicion. His philosophy on the moral aspects of the business was no less worthy of notice. In reply to some rather prying questions as to the voice of the inner man on the honesty of the practice, he said, his conscience gave him no trouble. Ladies would have jewelry—the articles he supplied answered every purpose, at least until the quality was discovered, which was often not until long after the purchase—he compelled no one to buy, nor did he assert that his jewelry was genuine, but usually asked them to test it. One more of his remarks we venture to give the ladies, for whose especial benefit this whole fragment of personal history is thrown in. The younger ladies were his best customers, and the growth of the rising generation always kept his trade good, when others became too wary.

One remarkable phase in Canada life is very clearly due to the neighbors over the border. Some of the smaller towns present quite a gay appearance, from the walls being almost literally covered with placards, illustrated handbills, &c., in the greatest profusion and variety. These expensive pictorials are got up to notify the people of such a place of some signal honor about to be conferred upon them. Messrs. Smith & Brown, having travelled over the known world, and procured at the greatest expense, the most complete collection of wild animals, of every description, ever exhibited, are generously bringing them to the amusement and edification of the inhabitants of S—.

Miss J., the most accomplished and eloquent speaker on this continent, having spent several years among the Mormons, will entertain the people of S—, with an oration upon the subject of their peculiar views, &c. Such attractions are, we were told, this season much more abundant than usual, in consequence of the civil war in the neighboring nation. Be that as it may, there are few evenings in any place of the least importance on which one may not be delighted by seeing elephants dance, monkeys do duty as horsemen, donkeys unseat their riders and discharge pistols, or by listening to some one acknowledged as the best lecturer in America—all for the insignificant trifle of twenty-five cents. In fact, such is the morbid consciousness of these purveyors to the public eye and ear that they are not content without giving the purchaser of a ticket the full value of his money, quite independently of all the attractions we have so miserably failed to describe. The generous showmen often announce that prior to the opening of their tent doors, the public are respectfully and earnestly solicited to witness gratuitously the ascent of Miss Etheria L. K. the world renowned Aeronaute (we have been unable to learn the name of the naturalist who has given the classic name to this new circle-pennated species), upon a tight rope; while the lecture bills announce that with every ticket will be bestowed a gift ranging in value from the price of the ticket to one hundred dollars. Truly, the "Book Sales Extraordinary" are outdone in generosity, and poor Blondin has need to exclaim with the injured Othello, "My occupation's gone."

Such are a few of the novelties which are after all, we fear, peculiar rather to the age than to any particular country, though their unblinking prominence in some localities brings them more unpleasantly into notice. While in themselves they seem legitimate subjects of ridicule, in their effects upon the habits, the tastes, and the morals of communities, they afford matter for the most serious consideration. We are happy to believe that their present abundance in the country of which we are speaking, is the result rather of an excess of supply in other countries, than the creation of a want in the public mind in Canada itself.

To be Continued.

For the Christian Watchman.

State of Affairs.

Mr. Editor.—We find in passing over the Province that business is everywhere at a stand still, and the people generally are complaining of the hard times. The lumbering interests especially are greatly depressed, and multitudes scarcely know what they shall do for the coming winter season. The small merchants also will feel the pressure severely, and will not be able to collect in their debts in season to supply themselves with fresh supplies of goods. Still, as a whole, perhaps we have little cause of complaint, as buck-wheat and oat meal are in abundance, with plenty of lamb, pork and beef, upon which an Englishman can feast and grow fat at any time. Improved condition of business can hardly be expected while the war continues in the States, so intimate are the relations of trade and commerce of the two countries.

Neither one can do without the other, without suffering great and untold injury. The manufacturers of England must find an outlet for the sale of commodities, and must receive in return the raw material and the bread. These Provinces also must ever carry on a brisk trade with the States on account of their near proximity. And as the real sentiments and feelings on both sides shall be better understood, warmer

attachments will spring up between them which nothing in the world will be able to separate.—Your correspondent knows from long acquaintance with the American people, having been born and educated in their midst, that in the great heart of the nation none other than the most friendly feelings exist at this moment towards the mother country and her colonial possessions. All past sentiments of bitterness have long ago passed away and have been buried with the times and circumstances which occasioned them.

To no people in the world are the United States so deeply indebted as to England for all that is good and great in their constitution, in their laws and their liberty, and for all of those noble sentiments of moral virtue and religion which were not the productions of an adventurous life in the wilderness, but the fruits of early and pious education received anterior to their embarkation for America.

Now that the scenes of former strife have passed away, these things are being brought into view and impregnate the popular mind with a deep sense of obligation. Perpetual peace with Great Britain is now declared to be the interest, the policy and the wish of the American people. Conscious however of their numbers, their wealth and their great national strength, like Englishmen, they are prone to speak boastfully of what they could and would do, under certain contingencies. These they sincerely hope and trust may never arise, and nothing could more mournfully impress them than the realization of any such unhappy catastrophe.

No fiery declamation or fanatical inspiration of interested leaders, nor the ebullitions of a corrupt and licentious press, could by any means arouse again the war spirit, so long as no positive and flagrant injury has been received which needs to be redressed. Impressed with a high sense of national honor, they, like the English, would be likely to demand satisfaction for any intended insult. The people of the States we think are fully satisfied with their present domain and have little or no desire to extend their national boundaries. Scarcely a man in the North could be induced to go for a war of conquest.—A clamorous filibuster does now and then arise urging the conquest of Cuba, of Mexico, or of the Canadas, but to all of these propositions the public mind turns away in disgust. Despotism would not be acceptable to the people of the States, and they would resist its introduction upon the American continent to the extent of their power. English rule, however, is in no way objectionable, since all her North American Colonies enjoy every liberty and blessing which can be desired. And there can be no doubt that in after time the government of the States will come more into conformity with that of the mother country, as it reflects upon the sad incidents occasioned by its weakness and inefficiency to enforce the laws. Linked then by a thousand ties of language, of law, and of religion, these two great powers, will go forth in the love of constitutional liberty to deliver the nations and redeem the world to Christ.

They are even more essentially alike in the main features of government.

There are in reality only two great forms of government in the world, the one is the government of will, and the other is the government of law. To the first belong all of the despots of Europe, aided by the Papal power, and a priest-ridden, unprincipled soldiery, who aim to completely overthrow the rights of the people, and stifle the least rising notes of popular liberty. They claim the right to control the heart and the conscience, the body and the soul of their subjects, both for time and eternity. To the other belong the rulers of republics and limited constitutional monarchies, who are raised to office and supported therein by the voice of the people. The will of the people is the supreme law of the land, expressed by statutes and constitutions, and the rulers are only the executive officers appointed to enforce the laws; they are the guardians of their liberties.

The light of the gospel is fast dispelling the darkness of former generations, the power of the Papacy is losing its hold upon the masses, and the time is approaching when a mighty struggle must ensue between the despots and their down-trodden subjects.

We cannot doubt the final issue because we believe that God is on the side of justice and righteousness.

Yet the contest must soon come, and the blow must be struck which will decide the fate of man for centuries to come. All the friends of freedom throughout the world must then breast themselves to the storm and receive the shock of congregated nations. Then will they need the wealth of their merchants, the prowess of their warriors, and the agency of their statesmen.—Then on the altars of our God let us each devote himself to the cause of the human race; and in the name of the Lord of Hosts, go forth unto the battle.

SUMMA.

Withhold not Good.

It is in the power of Christians to give the gospel to the world. The resources of men and money at the command of Christians are vast. It would astonish the most sanguine to see the thousands of men and millions of money that might be set apart for the spread of Christianity, were there as much zeal in this cause as its importance demands. Is it too much to say that in one score of years the gospel might be carried into every portion of the earth? Were all pro-