

THE VOYAGES AND TRAVELS OF A BIBLE.

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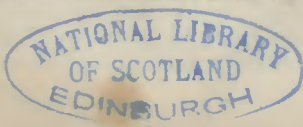
A work containing a clear and interesting account of the progress of the Bible in various parts of the world, from the first discovery of the New World to the present time. It is a valuable and interesting work, and one which every Christian should possess.



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~~VOYAGES AND TRAVELS~~

AFTER remaining a close prisoner for some months in a bookseller's shop, I was liberated, and taken to the country, to be a companion to a young gentleman who had lately come of age. The moment I entered the parlour where he sat, he rose up, and took me in his hands, expressing his surprise at the elegance of my dress, which was scarlet embroidered with gold. The whole family seemed greatly pleased with my appearance, but they would not permit me to say one word. After their curiosity was satisfied, they desired me to sit down upon a chair in the corner of the room. In the evening, I was taken up stairs and confined in the family-prison, called by them the library. Several thousand prisoners were under the same sentence, standing in rows round the room; they had their names written upon their foreheads, but none of them were allowed to speak.

We all remained in this silent, inactive posture for some years. Now and then a stranger was admitted to see us; these generally wondered at our number, beauty, and the orderly manner in which we stood, but our young keeper would never allow a person to touch us, or take us from our cell.

A gentleman came in one morning, and spoke in high commendation of some Arabians and Turks who stood at my right side; he said they would afford fine amusement on a winter evening. Upon his recommendation, they were all discharged from prison, and carried down stairs. After they had finished their fund of stories, and had not one word more to say, they were all remanded back to prison, and one who called himself Don Quixote was set at liberty. This man, being extremely witty, afforded fine sport for Mr William, (for that was our keeper's name.) Indeed, for more than a fortnight, he kept the whole house in what is called good humour. After Quixote had concluded his harangues, Mr William chose a Man of Feeling for his companion, who wrought upon his passions in a way which pleased him vastly. Mr William now began to put a higher value upon his prisoners, and to use them more politely. Almost daily he held a little chit-chat with one prisoner or another. Mr Hume related to him the history of England down to the Revolution, which he intersected with a great many anecdotes about Germany, France, Italy, and various other kingdoms. Dr Robertson then described the state of South America when first discovered, and related the horrid barbarities committed by the Spaniards, when they stole it from the natives. Mr

William wept when he heard of their savage treatment of Montezuma. Rollin next spoke; he related to him the rise and fall of ancient empires; he told him that God was the supreme Governor among the nations; that he raiseth up one to great power and splendour, and putteth down another. He told him what he did not know before, that God had often revealed to some men events which were to happen hundreds of years afterwards, and directed him to converse with me, and I could fully inform him on that subject. Mr William resolved to converse with me at a future period; but having heard some of his relations speak rather disrespectfully of me, he was in no hurry. At length, my prison-door was unlocked, and I was conducted to his bed-room.

My first salutation struck Mr William. 'In the beginning,' said I, 'God created the heavens and the earth; and then proceeded to make man, whom he placed in a garden, with permission to eat of every tree that was in it, except one.' I then related the history of Adam, the first man, how he was urged and prevailed on by the Devil not to mind God's prohibition, but to eat of the forbidden tree; how, by this abominable act, he had plunged himself and his posterity into misery. William, not relishing this conversation, closed my mouth, desiring me to say no more at that time.

A few days afterwards, he allowed me to speak of the wickedness of the old world; how God sent Noah to reprove their iniquity, and to threaten the destruction of the whole world if they did not repent and turn to the Lord; that the world were deaf to his remonstrances; and that God at last desired Noah to build an ark of wood, such as would contain himself and family; for he was soon to destroy the inhabitants of the earth by a deluge of water. This conversation was rather more relished than the former.

The next opportunity, I gave him a history of the ancient patriarchs, shewing the simplicity, integrity, and holiness of their lives, extolling their faith in God, and promptness in obeying all his commandments. Mr William became much more thoughtful than I had seen him upon any former occasion. What I told him he generally related to his friends at table.

He was wonderfully taken with the account I gave of that nation whom God had chosen for his own people, viz. the Jews. I told him how wonderfully God had delivered them from captivity in Egypt; how he drowned in the Red Sea the army of the Egyptians, with their king at their head, who were pursuing the Jews. But, when I told him of the holy law of God, and expatiated a little upon it, he shrugged up his shoulders, and said it was too strict for him. 'Well,

William, said I, 'cursed is every one who continueth not in *all things* written or commanded in that law.' He pushed me aside, ran down stairs, and soon became sick and feverish. His mother begged of him to tell her the cause of his sudden distress. He said I had alarmed him exceedingly; that he found himself a great sinner, and saw no mercy for him in the world to come. His mother came running up stairs, and, in the heat of passion, locked me in my old cell, where I remained in close confinement for some days. But, as William could not be happy without my company, I was sent for. I found him very pale and pensive; however, I faithfully told him, that the imaginations of the thoughts of the heart were only evil, and that continually. He said he lately began to feel that; he had tried to make it better, but could not. Upon this, a stranger entered the room, and I was hidden at the back of a sofa, because the family were quite ashamed that I should be seen talking with William. The stranger remarked he had observed him talking with me, and assured him that I should do him much more harm than good; that I had occasioned great confusion in the world, by driving many people mad. On this, they all joined in scandalizing my character; and I was again confined to my old cell, in the library.

But, when my God enables me to fix an arrow in a sinner's heart, the whole universe cannot draw it out. William was always uneasy when I was not with him; consequently, he paid me many a stolen visit. I told him, one day, not to trust in riches, for they often took to themselves wings, and flew from one man to another, as God directed them. Job once possessed houses, lands, sheep, a flourishing family, all of which were taken from him in a few hours; but God never forsook him.

William was advised by his friends to take a tour for a few weeks, to remove the gloom which hung upon his mind. He did so; but he returned more dejected than ever. The moment he arrived, I was sent for to talk with him. I desired him to behold the Lamb of God who taketh away the sins of the world; I said there was no other name given under heaven among men, but the name of Jesus, by which they could be saved; that God so loved the world, as to send his Son into it, to save it by his death. I then went over the whole history of the Saviour, from his birth at Bethlehem to his death on Calvary, describing his resurrection, and pointed out the evidence of it; then led his attention to Bethany, describing the marvellous circumstances attending his ascension to his Father; and testified to him the wonderful effects which followed, in the immense increase of conversions to the

faith. I then enlarged upon Christ's commission to his apostles, his commanding them to publish to every creature under heaven the glad news, that Christ had died for the ungodly, had finished redemption, and ascended up on high to receive gifts for men, and to bestow them on all who believe God's testimony concerning him.

God opened the mind of William to perceive the importance and truth of these things. He began to hope in God, through the offering of his Son a sacrifice for sin. I advised him to follow holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord in heaven, nor can he continue to see his glory on the earth; to have no fellowship with wicked men; to be a faithful steward of what God had given him. I told him how Christ rewarded those who overcame all their enemies through faith in his blood, and by believing the word of his testimony. This conversation made him very happy, and he left me rejoicing in the Lord.

Some time after, he came with a sorrowful heart, complaining that he did not feel the Lord's presence; that God had forsaken him. I assured him that that was impossible; for God expressly says, He will *never* leave, no, nor forsake his people; and that he changes not in his love to them. I warned him to be cautious how he spoke against God; for such language is calling God a liar. I told him likewise that the Church had once preferred a similar complaint against her God; upon which Jehovah said it was possible for a mother to forsake her infant child, but impossible for him ever to leave or forsake his people; for he had pledged his *word* to the contrary. Whereupon I warned him to be no more faithless, but believing, and by doing so he would glorify God greatly before men; it would tend to make men think more favourably of God, and probably lead some to seek an interest in his favour, who otherwise would not. Upon this he cried out with tears, 'Lord, I believe, help my unbelief! I change in my love, but thou changest not.'

William was afterwards brought into great affliction. I told him God sent it to him for good; to make him more holy, humble, dead to sin and the world, and fitter for heaven. He believed me, and praised God for his attention to him, to send his messenger, affliction, to do him good. A person who came in expressed sorrow at seeing him so pained. William replied, 'Don't sorrow for me; rejoice rather, because God has said, that our light afflictions, which are but for a moment, work out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. I am willing to be sick, or to die, or to recover, just as God pleases.'

William completely recovered from his indisposition; his knowledge of God, and experience of his faithfulness, and

love, were much increased by it; and I continued his bosom companion for many years. He walked in the fear of God, and in the comforts of his Holy Spirit, till at length he entered with triumph into the eternal joy of his Lord.

After conducting Mr William to the gates of the New Jerusalem, I was sent for to reside with a young man in the middling ranks of life, who had received a liberal and religious education from his parents, lately removed from this poor world. He lived what men call a good moral life. He regularly conversed with me twice every day, and prayed in his closet morning and evening. On the Sabbath, I talked to him from dinner to supper. An old uncle of his perpetually exhorted him to go abroad to amass a fortune, and he consulted me on the subject.

I told him to be content with such things as he had; for that numbers were ruined through the deceitfulness of riches.

'Labour not for the meat that perisheth,' said I, 'but for that which endureth to everlasting life.' He now reasoned with his uncle against going abroad, merely to make money; he declared that the object was a pitiful one to an immortal creature, who must soon bid an eternal adieu to the affairs of time. However, he at last consented to go a voyage to the West Indies. He sailed from Liverpool, and took me along with him. As all the passengers in the ship were profane sinners, he was ashamed to let me be seen, and I was hid in a corner of the state-room. On the first Sabbath morning, he took a single peep at me before the other passengers awoke. I hastily told him to Remember the Sabbath, to keep it holy; and he resolved to abide by my advice. The passengers asked him to take a hand at cards, but he refused. 'Pho!' said they, 'we have got a Methodist along with us; we shall have nice sport with him.' They teased him the whole day, and poor George could not well bear it. One bold sinner asserted that, before they reached their destination, they would have all his enthusiasm hammered out of him.

George, having none to encourage and countenance him, and not possessing firmness sufficient for confessing me before men, resolved to give up his religion, during the voyage, and to comply with their abandoned customs while he continued in the ship; thus he fell before temptation.

One day, in the midst of his merriment, he recollected an advice which I had solemnly given him. It was this:—'When sinners entice thee, consent thou not.' Immediately he rushed out of the cabin, threw himself on his bed, and wept bitterly. He called out, (but not so loud as to be heard,) 'I have ruined my soul; Oh! what would my worthy mother have said, had she witnessed my conduct for days past!' On his return to the cabin, the sadness of his countenance was

observed by the company; they laughed heartily, and assured him that his reluctance to join them in what *they* termed their sociality; arose from the prejudice of education; that he must endeavour to banish all his fears of futurity, and mind present enjoyment. These, and similar observations, gradually unhinged the principles of young George, and before reaching their destined port, his checks of conscience were almost gone. What a dreadful state when a man's conscience ceases to be a reprovcr!

After the arrival of the ship, we all went ashore, and George was soon fixed in a very advantageous situation for getting money. When the first Sabbath arrived, he protested against transacting business, on that day, declaring that he had never been accustomed to do anything of that kind. They advised him to labour hard seven days in the week, and he would return sooner to the country from whence he came. They told him that only a few superannuated whites in the whole island went to church, and sometimes a few slaves. In this manner he was prevailed upon to conform to the infidel practices of the place. I told him that for all these things God would bring him into judgment; that he was like the rest of the wicked, who waxed worse and worse; that he did not love Jesus Christ, else he would keep his commandments, notwithstanding all the raillery and reproach to which he was exposed. I warned him, that whoever was ashamed to confess Christ before men, of him would he be ashamed in the presence of his Father and the holy angels.

In a few months he became as wicked and abandoned as any on the island. He made a present of me to a poor native, who could read a little English. I frequently conversed with him, but he could not understand what I said. He often desired me to speak to his companions. A few were greatly affected with what I said. They often called upon me. Sometimes they pleasantly said, my words made them very happy; they desired to go to that happy world which I commended so highly; they fervently prayed to Jesus to take them to it. An old slave crept in one day, inquiring if Jesus could do anything for very bad people. I replied, — 'It is a faithful saying, that Christ Jesus came into the world, to save sinners, even the chief. He is able to save to the very uttermost all who come unto God through him.' The black man, bathed in tears, exclaimed, 'Good book; tell me good news!

After some years, I was sent for in great haste to visit my old proprietor George, who, by his intemperance, was brought to the gates of death. In his affliction he remembered me. I told him, 'Fools make a mock at sin, but sin finds them

out.' God had been long angry with him every day. He confessed he had been a great sinner. He said that bad company had been his ruin; that, by following their example, he had destroyed a fine constitution; that, in his distress, his bottle companions had all forsaken him; they could not bear the thoughts of death. 'Had I my days to begin again,' said he, 'I would flee from a swearer, or drunkard; as I would from the plague.' He prayed frequently that God would forgive his iniquity for the sake of his Son Jesus Christ. His fever increased, and he died. I was now put into his trunk, and sent home with his effects to his friends in England. Upon my arrival, I was soon released from my confinement, and put in a dark closet, where I remained unknown and unnoticed for several years.

Being released from my solitary confinement, in consequence of the death of my owner, I was seized by a captain of a West Indiaman, carried on board his ship, and placed at the head of his hammock, there to rest in silence during his pleasure. Indeed, when he brought me on board, he had no design of ever permitting me to speak a word; only supposing it was lucky to have such a companion in a ship, and that I should be useful for this purpose, though I lay as still as the ballast at the bottom of the vessel. How little did he know that his great Creator spoke through me to him, and to all on board.

In this uncomfortable state I remained for some weeks, like Joseph in Pharaoh's prison, neglected and forgotten by all. At length we set sail with a favourable wind. I frequently overheard them thanking my Master for the fine weather they enjoyed, which, if continued, would in a few weeks bring them to their destined port. But suddenly a gloomy cloud appeared in the west, which indicated a dreadful storm. All hands mounted aloft and reefed the sails, and got everything ready for weathering the gale. The wind rose and continued rising, till it blew a perfect hurricane. Now they began to think of me. I was taken from my confinement, and placed on the captain's table, but the rolling of the vessel was such that I could not remain steady, but was frequently thrown with violence upon the floor.

About midnight the captain allowed me to speak; when I gave him a faithful relation of the conduct of Jonah and the mariners in similar circumstances, and how they called upon the gods whom they knew. The captain and others in the cabin perceived, from what I said, that storms were raised by the power of the God of heaven and earth; that he had some end in view by every such storm; and none but he who raised a storm could create a calm. On this the

captain called all hands into the cabin who could be spared from managing the vessel. They knelt down, and the captain prayed to the God of heaven to have mercy upon them, and preserve them from foundering in the midst of the ocean. In the morning, the clouds began to disperse, and the wind to fall; and, consequently, the sea became less tempestuous. This change occasioned my dismissal from the cabin, and being thrown as useless lumber into my old hammock. Next evening, being found troublesome to the captain's head when he laid it on the pillow, I was ordered into his chest, under lock and key. I made no complaints, but silently submitted to these insults. There I lay almost smothered; for I had not a friend on board to intercede for me, nor even to say a word in my behalf; on the contrary, I overheard some of them laughing at their having allowed me to address them the former night, and still more at the impression my speech made upon their minds at the time. Is not the patience of my God wonderful with the rebellious sons of men? Is it not astonishing that he did not in ire plunge them into a watery grave? But he is slow to anger, and possesses great pity.

For nearly a week, there was hardly a breath of wind, and the vessel lay like a log in the water, moving neither one way nor another. The people on board hardly knew how to employ themselves. Sometimes they sung songs, and at other times they amused themselves with games; but they were so discouraged by the continuance of the calm, that these things lost their power to please. The captain, one morning, went to his chest, and opened it without knowing what he wanted. He stood motionless for some time, looking down upon the articles which it contained; when, observing the corner of my red coat, he took me up, and brought me forth to the light. Now, I had once more my liberty to speak, when I addressed to him the substance of the 107th Psalm. I saw he felt the force of what I said. He desired me to be silent till he considered what I had now stated. He now began in good earnest to attend to my instructions, and sometimes would continue consulting me about various things till midnight. He made a rule that no one should swear an oath on board his ship; at the same time, he endeavoured to convince all of the sinfulness thereof. This conduct in the captain made a wonderful change in my circumstances; I was locked up no more; indeed, most people on board professed a desire to hold a little converse with me every day. Being the only one of my nation on board, I had abundant employment for a while. A fine breeze springing up, we were soon wafted to our desired haven, which occasioned great joy to all on board.

While all were busy unlading the cargo, I had a good deal of leisure, though now and then some one or other would turn aside for a few minutes, and speak with me. While our vessel was waiting for a fresh cargo in one of the islands, and most of our crew were on shore, a young black slave came on board to view her. He happened to step into the cabin while I was lying on the table, and seeing that none were in the cabin but himself and me, he took me into his arms, though ignorant who or what I was, ran off with me, and brought me once more to a bookseller's shop, where I was placed in the book ranks, to remain silent for some time. One day, a gentleman called, and, while taking a view of our ranks, when he came to me, he expressed considerable surprise to find any of my species in the West Indies; 'for,' said he, 'I have resided here for upwards of twenty years, and this is the first Bibleian I have met with.' He acknowledged that the inhabitants were a barbarous people, and had little relish for talking with such a sedate person. However, he determined to have me; to which my new master had no objection, provided he left money in lieu of me, which he did. His wife was not pleased to find me in his company, and said they had no occasion for me. However, when I related the history of David, they became enamoured with my company. They wondered at the circumstance which brought David into public notice, viz. his duel with Goliath, the giant of Gath. The young people thought David was wrong in not going well armed against the giant. I told them that all his dependence was on the God of heaven, whose armies Goliath had defied; and, that the victory might appear to be of God, David went only with his staff and his sling to combat with this champion of the Philistines. The young people were amused with the accounts I gave of Esther, queen of Persia. They perceived how much depended on the king's being unable to sleep that night, that he called for the records of the kingdom to amuse himself; and one of the young ladies remarked, 'What a good thing it was that he did not ask for any other writings but these; for, had he, it is probable Mordecai would have remained in obscurity unrewarded, and the whole Jewish people been cut off by means of proud Haman.' This gentleman, under whose roof I resided, was far advanced in years, and sometimes reflected that he must soon bid adieu to all things here below. This consideration sometimes created uneasiness; and he frequently involved himself in a hurry of business, and courted much company, in order to banish such unwelcome thoughts; but all his art could not always overcome them. I would sometimes whisper, 'The time is short, and the day of the

Lord cometh as a thief in the night.' Then I turned to the young people, and said, 'Remember your Creator in the days of your youth; while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them.'

One morning, when the family were contriving new schemes for acquiring wealth, I was hastily taken into the midst of them by their youngest child, which afforded me an opportunity of saying one word, which was this:—'What shall it profit a man though he gain the whole world, if he lose his own soul?' The saying was seasonable, and caused great silence for a few minutes; after which, the lady observed, that my question was very important, and that she had often heard her old grandmother converse on such things when she was a child; but after she was introduced into the gay circles, she had forgotten the many good things which she had been told by her worthy grandmother. 'Then,' said I, 'hearken to me now, and I will teach you the fear of the Lord. Search me for wisdom as for hidden treasures; for he that findeth this, findeth life.' 'Well,' said she, 'I will; but I have not leisure at present; however, at some future period I will send for thee.' 'But *now*,' said I, 'is the appointed time, *now* is the day of salvation; and we know not what a change a single day or an hour may produce respecting us.'

She now drew me nearer to her, and requested me to relate the conversation between Jesus and Nicodemus the ruler of the Jews; with which request I readily complied. When I repeated the objection which the ruler started against the doctrine of regeneration, she said, 'That is very remarkable, for the same objection occurred to me.' She could not conceive what the Lord meant by calling regeneration an earthly doctrine, till an old Christian sailor happened to touch at the island, and having heard of his piety, she sent for him, and proposed the question: 'In what sense is this an earthly doctrine?' 'O! madam,' said he, 'the necessity of having our natures changed before we can relish the things of God, or be fit for the heavenly world, quite accords with things with which we are familiar on earth. For example; before a lion could lie down peaceably on your dining-room carpet, its ferocity must be removed, and a milder temper communicated to it; before a fish could live out of water, and a beast in it, their natures must be changed.' 'Oh!' said she, 'thank you, I understand now.'

But to proceed with my narration of our first interview. I mentioned all that Jesus stated to the Jewish ruler. I then related the history of the brazen serpent, to which the Lord referred his discourse. What I said seemed like a nail fastened in a sure place by the great Master of assemblies. She

then left me, and retired to her room, where she was distinctly overheard pouring out her whole heart before God. When she returned, the tears were seen falling from her eyes. When this was discovered, several of the family inquired what was the matter. She told them that she had been an utter stranger to the weighty matters I had made her acquainted with, and that she now desired to enjoy the salvation of God; but she feared it was too late. This she spoke, looking at me; but I constantly answered, 'Not so! not too late; the Lord Jesus Christ laid down his life for the ungodly, and he waits to be gracious to all who come unto him. Be not faithless but believing, and thou shalt see the salvation of God.' On saying this, her eyes sparkled, she smiled, and said, 'Precious Bible, what a treasure!' Turning to her husband, she said, 'Come, let us go to heaven together, for yet there is room for us and our dear children.'

Nothing very remarkable within doors occurred for some months; but, out of doors, the family became a subject of discourse to the whole country. They ceased to join in the follies of the fashionable world, which gave great offence to some of their old friends, who condemned and ridiculed them in every company. These insults they bore with a meekness and gentleness that surprised some; for Mrs Sharp, (which was the name of the lady,) was, formerly, singular for pride and haughtiness of carriage to all her acquaintance. But my doctrines, when believed, bring down the lofty looks of men, by making them acquainted with the majesty of God, their own sinfulness, and their constant dependence upon him for mercy and pardon, and for the enjoyment and continuance of all that they possess.

Mr Sharp and one of his sons were soon, through the blessing of God on my instructions, brought to humble acknowledgment of their sins, and a simple dependence on Jesus for his forgiveness.

At one of our evening meetings, a poor old slave stood up, and, with many tears, inquired if any of these fine things, of which I was speaking, were designed for slaves like him. In answer to this, Mr Sharp desired I would repeat to him the commission which the Son of God gave to his apostles, before he ascended into the heavens. Then I repeated, as in Mark, xvi. 16, that Jesus said unto his disciples—'Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel unto every creature—he that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be damned.' The poor slave then stood up, begging Mr S. to explain this to him, which he readily did.

He said, 'Jesus commanded his disciples to go into every country in the world, where black as well as white people

lived, and tell them that they are perishing sinners, but that they had good news for them;—that the Son of God had become also the Son of man; had obeyed God's laws for them, and made satisfaction to God for their sins, by dying on a cross; that he was now risen from the dead, and glorified at God's right hand; and that whosoever believed these things, and made an open profession of their belief, should be saved from the wrath to come; but that whosoever should treat these things as idle tales, and not receive them in love, should be condemned to suffer eternal misery in hell for their unbelief.'

A female slave now rose, and, in a very humble strain, asked if there was nothing which God required us to do, in order to obtain the pardon of our sins. 'Does he not even command us to cut and scourge our flesh, that he may be pleased with us?' 'No,' said her master; 'you have heard that Jesus did all that was necessary for obtaining our pardon; and nothing more glorifies the riches of his grace, and the finished work of his Son, than our believing that pardon and eternal life are freely granted to us through Jesus Christ.'

Every eye was fixed on Mr Sharp while answering these simple but important inquiries. 'Lord, I believe,' said one—'And so do I,' said another. Then they wept bitterly that ever they had offended such a kind and compassionate God, and anxiously inquired how they should live to his praise and glory for the future.

The only preacher in the town, where this family resided, was a mere *fop*, who spent most of his time in the company of the gay and thoughtless, and was as much so as any of them. His discourses on Sabbath were dry dissertations in favour of benevolence and charity, and against lying, stealing, and other gross vices; but he seldom mentioned the name of the Saviour, and never spoke of the necessity and glory of his righteousness. The family were disgusted with his life, and starved under his preaching. They resolved, for the future, only to hear me preach to them on the first day of the week.

Formerly, they had been accustomed to call a certain building the church; but, by my instructions, they began to learn that a church of Christ was composed of a number of living stones, or believers assembling together statedly, for the purposes of mutual edification; watching over one another; observing all the ordinances commanded by the Lord Jesus, as King and Head of his body, the Church. When they understood this, they looked round on each other, to find one who came nearest to a Christian bishop, as described by St Paul, which description I faithfully repeated to them.

As Mr Sharp appeared to them a man dead to the world, and one whose comments on Scripture truth had greatly comforted and edified their souls, and who seemed to rule his own house with prudence and discretion, they, after much prayer to God, chose him to take the oversight of them in the Lord. When he had signified his consent to their request, they commended him to the grace of the Lord Jesus, with prayer and fasting. After which, they chose another from among them, to fill the office of a deacon. They were then what may be termed an organized church of Jesus Christ.

In their meetings, they believed what I said, that Jesus was in the midst of them to bless them. The faith of this made them long for the return of their stated meetings, from which they expected to derive much benefit; because Jesus had appointed them for that purpose, and had engaged to be present, to render them effectual for producing that end. When they were assembled, they looked on each other as heirs together of the grace of life; and when they united in singing a hymn of praise to their exalted Lord, they did it with one heart and one soul. Truly they were a divinely church!

When I related to them what Paul says of the church of Thessalonica, of their sounding forth the word of truth throughout all the region round about, they prayed to God that he would enable them to be followers (or imitators) of those Thessalonians. Some time after, God raised up a humble, gifted brother, who was willing now and then to visit the neighbouring villages, to disseminate the knowledge of him who had died for sinners, and rose again. His excursions were crowned with abundant success. Many of the villages became the willing servants of Jesus Christ. After each of his excursions, he related to the church in Mr Sharp's house, the progress of the incorruptible seed, which occasioned shouts of praise to God, who had rendered his word effectual. The young man, though very laborious, took no praise to himself; he always spoke of the good that was done as the effect of God's presence, and in a way calculated to lead the church to look beyond him to God. They continued praying that God would send forth more labourers into the harvest; and he heard them; for several were converted, who were found afterwards to possess suitable talents for this good work. Those also were sent forth to other quarters which had not been visited, and God was pleased frequently to smile upon their labours also.

While this church continued to attend to the apostolic order, and the simplicity of the Gospel, things went on well;

but when they began to make improvements, as some new members called them, or rules not founded on the published will of Christ, the love of that lively church began to wax cold, both to God and to each other; their zeal began to slacken apace, and divisions about mere trifles arose; they spake evil one against another; and these declensions went on and increased for some years, till their pastor, who, alas! had connived at many of their innovations, being struck with remorse, came forward, at one of their meetings, and expressed his repentance for unfaithfulness to Jesus and to them. He then took a review of their first state, and the great comfort they enjoyed during their former associations; he then pointed out the evils that had crept in amongst them unawares, and moved, that they should turn to their original conformity to apostolic rule. Some opposed this; but, upon the pastor's plainly stating the scriptural order of a gospel church, these were silenced, and almost the whole church cheerfully agreed to their reverting to their original simplicity. A few were offended, and withdrew from the communion of the church, which was a great mercy; for it was soon found that only the corrupting leaven had left them. Now they went on in their former way; they found that the Lord was returned to them of a truth; then they had rest, and were edified; and, walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied like the churches in Judea.

This church unanimously declared it their determination, that I should in every case be their ruler; consequently, when any matter came before them, I was consulted, and they adhered to my decision. For example: one of their members began to conform to this present world, and attend vain and sinful amusements. The matter was stated to the church; then they all looked to me for my counsel. I told them, that if any man was in Christ, he must be a new creature; old things would pass away, and all things become new. They concluded, from this and other things I said to them, that a Christian was delivered from the love and practice of the evil customs and enjoyments of the wicked; that he would find such things hurtful to his soul, and would flee from them; wherefore, they thought they had just grounds for doubting the Christianity of this brother; and having attended to all that I commanded to be done in such cases, without producing repentance in him, they excluded him from their society; and then earnestly prayed, that Jesus would make this his own ordinance useful to him, whom they had just put away from among them.

A short time after these things took place, there happened a most violent hurricane, accompanied with an earthquake.

The largest trees were torn up by the roots, many houses were swept from their foundations, and the sea broke over its accustomed bounds, carrying destruction wherever it went. The scene was awful: the inhabitants were in the greatest consternation; and Mr Sharp's family came into the room where I was, which, indeed, was almost the only one in the house that had received no damage at that time from the storm. I assured them that their God reigned; that winds and waves were his ministers, sent to fulfil his will; and commanded them to call on God in this day of trouble, assuring them that he would hear them. Accordingly, they all knelt down, and prayed to their heavenly Father for protection. When they rose from prayer, they observed the house ready to fall, which obliged them to leave it. With great difficulty, they reached the back of a rising ground, that lay about a quarter of a mile from their house, which screened them from the fury of the contending elements. They had not left their house above three minutes before the whole fabric came down with a crash, and was soon so completely scattered, that, when daylight appeared in the morning, they could hardly discover the place where it stood.

But what a scene of misery did the morning light unfold! The family, though upon their own estate, knew not where they were. A village, which had stood opposite to their house, was carried away, and nothing but the raging waves of the sea were to be seen there. Vessels, of various sizes, were lying wrecked in the fields; and not a house or cottage was left standing in all the country round them. In the midst of all these ravages, they were made happy by my conversations, and hoped that God would provide for the supply of their wants.

About noon, one of the children came running to his father with the joyful news that he had seen a cask of flour, which had been driven up the country by the wind, but had been providentially caught in a large bush. This cask was brought, and in a short time part of its contents was prepared for food, which was the first they had tasted since the preceding day. The hand of God was so visible in this relief which was necessary for the preservation of their lives, that I never saw a family stand up with such cheerfulness, and thank God with such fervency for a single meal. I desired them to continue in this happy frame, and the Lord would provide.

They expressed great anxiety to hear of the circumstances of their Christian friends and neighbours. Though the wind was still boisterous, it was not so furious as formerly. Several of the stoutest of the family went in search of such of their neighbours as might have survived this awful catas-

trophe. They soon found many mangled bodies of those who had been overwhelmed by the falling of their houses, or blown with violence against a wall, tree, or rock. However, they relieved many who had escaped by being sheltered by rocks, trees, bushes, &c.

When the survivors were collected, who were all more or less maimed, they consulted where shelter could be obtained during the night, as all their habitations were overturned, and the materials of which they were composed dispersed in all directions. While consulting about this matter, a young man, who lived a few miles higher up the country, joined their company with the joyful intelligence that several houses in his neighbourhood remained entire; to these the company went, taking along with them their cask of flour, which was all they had saved of their property. The believers in Jesus, when they assembled for worship in the evening, expressed great thankfulness to God that they had a treasure in heaven which no storm nor earthquake could possibly reach. They now understood what I meant when I told them that riches sometimes took to themselves wings and flew away; also that the Lord sometimes gave and then took away, and that even then they should say, Blessed be the name of the Lord.

During the confusion and bustle occasioned by the disasters which had happened, I was frequently left to lie carelessly on the floor. When in this situation, one morning, a little boy took me up in his arms, carried me to a little distance from the house, and hid me under the root of a large old tree. The boy being taken that afternoon to a distant part of the island, none remained to discover to my sorrowful friends the place of my concealment; consequently, many a fruitless search was made for me. There I lay speechless for near twelve months, when an old black slave, upon a journey, happened to lie down under the shade of the tree, to rest his weary limbs. Awakening from a comfortable sleep, while in the act of stretching himself, his hands, which were extended beyond my head, happened to touch my covering, which caused him to search under the root, when he found me half immersed in sand. He called at the first house he came to, and inquired if any of the family knew me, assuring them he wished to restore me to my proper owner; but they honestly declared that they did not know me; so I went forward with the old slave. This slave had been taught my language when first brought to the West Indies; and, therefore, though he had never met with me, or any who spoke on the subjects that I did, yet he could converse with me tolerably well.

When we arrived at the end of our journey, Teito (which was the slave's name) took me into his hut, and put me carefully into his little press.

The next day he brought me out, when I whispered to him, 'Man is born to trouble, as the sparks fly upwards.' 'Sure I have found it so,' said Teito, 'from my youth up.' But, I added, 'The Lord will be a refuge for the oppressed, a refuge in times of trouble; and they that know his name will put their trust in him.' 'I wish I knew this Lord,' replied Teito, 'I would run for refuge to him.' I endeavoured to convince him that sin is the cause of all human misery. 'But,' said he, 'what is sin?' I answered, 'It is the transgression of the law of God;' and that he might understand this, I explained to him the nature of that law, and mentioned many who, in ancient times, transgressed that law, and stated the punishments inflicted on them. In order also to make him acquainted with the progress of sin and misery in the heathen world, among whom he was born, I repeated what Paul wrote in the first chapter of his letter to the Romans. I told him that God had not left men to perish without a remedy; that he had not left them without a refuge; but had so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life. When he had time I related to him the life and death, &c., of Jesus Christ. God inclined him to listen to my instructions, and taught him to understand them. My information was all new to him, having never heard such things before. Wherever he went he repeated what I had told him; and often solicited his comrades to come to his hut and hear me themselves. Some, however, said I talked nonsense; others that I made them uneasy, which they did not like; and a third, that I was a rank enthusiast, and had, in some other islands, created great confusion. 'Oh!' said Teito, 'you do not understand him, or you would not entertain such notions of him; for he has been travelling for some thousand years in the world, teaching without any reward, how men may become happy here, and in a world that is to come.' 'Well,' said they, 'has he done any good?' 'Yes, infinite good; he has comforted thousands in every age, in all their afflictions; delivered them from painful despondency; and made them not only to love each other, but their enemies also; and through his instructions has made them to rejoice even in the solemn hour of dissolution, which, in general, is a terror to the stoutest heart.' 'It may be so,' said one, shrugging up his shoulders and walking off. Some said, these things might do very well for old and infirm people, who are stepping down into

the grave, but *they* had no occasion for them now. On this, Teito held me up, when I took the opportunity to call out—
 ‘Now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation.—
 ‘Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else.’ On this they put their fingers in their ears, and ran off. On which I called after them—‘Who hath believed our report? to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed?’ Some of my words spoken at this time made a deep impression on the minds of several; as they afterwards confessed, when they were converted to the faith of Christ.

Teito supposed that these had treated the Word of God so disdainfully, that there was no hope of their ever being benefited by that Word. But I soon taught him that God had long patience with men upon this earth, and often knocked for many years at their hearts, with the hammer of his Word, and of his providence, before they opened to receive him. This encouraged Teito to pray for his friends who had left him; that God would bring his Word to their remembrance, and cause them to experience it to be his incorruptible seed.

Teito now began to bless God that he had been brought from his country. ‘Without this,’ said he, ‘I never could have known the true God, and Jesus Christ his Son, whom he sent into the world.’ Oh! how thankful he was to the God of providence for leading him to lie down to sleep at the foot of that tree where I lay; who, under God, had conveyed to him such precious and eternal blessings! ‘Oh!’ said he, ‘had any gentleman made me a present of the best horse in the island, and a purse of gold to carry me home, without sleeping at that tree, what a loser I must have been; but His wisdom is a great deep, and his ways past finding out!’

The next remarkable circumstance that happened, while I resided with Teito, was to see two of those who had treated Teito and me with contempt, returning and confessing, with apparent sorrow, their improper conduct; and asking permission to hear me again. Teito received them with great affection, and assured them that his God was infinitely more ready to forgive and receive to *his* favour than he was. They told us that some of my sayings had followed them by night and by day; especially God’s command to look unto him that they might be saved. They often dreamed of these words, *Look unto me*; and while busy at work, they said, they thought they heard a person from a distance crying with a loud voice, ‘Look unto me;’ but this was owing to the deep impression these words had made upon their minds.

Teito related to thout the wonderful providence that introduced him to my acquaintance, and how unwearied I had

been in conveying to his mind the knowledge of his Creator and Redeemer. Before he knew me, he declared he had been as ignorant of himself and his God as the very fowls of heaven. 'But now,' said he, 'I know the grace of the Lord Jesus, that though he was rich, yet for our sakes he became poor, that we through his poverty might be made rich.' They asked him if he was any happier since he knew these things. 'Happier!' said Teito, with tears in his eyes, 'I never was happy before. I knew nothing that could make me so; but now I know my God to be my Friend, his Son to be the Prince of peace and of life to me. My Friend, the Prince of life, lives in my soul, and teaches me to live a life of dependence on his dear, faithful, precious Word, which is sweeter to me than honey from the honeycomb.'

'Do you not think, Teito, you should be happier still, if your master would give you your liberty?' 'I should, in that case,' replied Teito, 'bless God, and thank my master. But though I am now my master's slave, yet I am God's free man. He allows me to speak to him when I please, to ask from him any favour; and he does it for me as readily as he does for the richest christian in the world. He tells me that all his family are one in Christ Jesus, and that when I reach the heavenly mansions, I shall reign with his Son. In fact, that I am an heir of God, and a joint heir with Jesus Christ. Is it not wonderful, my friends, that God should be so kind and condescending to a poor slave?'

Our two visitors sat amazed at hearing old Teito tell them of the love of the great God to his soul. Indeed, this was the first time that he had ever heard a man speak of the love of the great God to his soul; nor is this surprising in such a country, where the acquisition of wealth is universally considered to be the one thing needful to render men happy. God, and his great salvation, are entirely neglected. The white people's children are brought up for business, but not for God. Their education is the same as if they had no soul, and as if there was neither a God, nor a heaven, nor a hell. As for the black children, they are reared like beasts, merely for work. Their parents know nothing to teach them, and their masters, in general, know as little about God; wherefore they are left to grow up, to live, and to die, in ignorance.

Teito now desired me to speak to his two friends, which I did for several hours, and they then left us in silence, but seemingly very thoughtful.

The shadows of the evening began to appear in Teito, for his bodily strength was decaying apace. His master, being a humane man, did not exact his usual labour, but allowed him to work or not, as he pleased. This gave him oppor-

tunity of conversing with me almost from morning to evening. I desired him to continue in the faith of my instructions, and persevere in humble and holy walking; and he should certainly possess the crown of life.

One day, when his master called to see him, he told him he meant to leave me as a legacy to him, and begged he would treat me with civility and affection. He descanted on my qualifications, such as the variety of useful information which I was able to communicate, of my unchangeable veracity, and strict fidelity. He assured his master, also, that I would make men wise unto everlasting salvation; that I had convinced him of sin, righteousness, and judgment to come, all which were necessary in this life to be known and believed; and that I had introduced him to the acquaintance of his God, and of his Saviour, and of all the angelic hosts, who had ministered unto him ever since. He then thanked his master for the kindness he had shewn him for many years, and prayed fervently that the God of Abraham might bless, protect, and reward him, and that both of them might meet at the right hand of Jesus, their Judge. Then his master took an affectionate farewell. On his arrival at home, he related the interview he had had with old Teito, which excited the rest of the family to visit him frequently, and they always brought with them some cordial to revive the heart of old Teito.

In a few weeks, he breathed his spirit into the hands of his heavenly Father, just after he had recommended the Saviour to the notice of one of the young ladies, who ran home in a flood of tears, to tell her father that Teito was now no more. 'Blessed are the dead,' said I to those who were present, 'who die in the Lord, for they rest from their labours, and their works do follow them.'

After the death of Teito, I lay unobserved in his hut for a time; till a young black slave carried me to a distant plantation, and exhibited me to his companions as a great curiosity. Many of the slaves, who had been but lately imported from the coast of Guinea, could not conjecture what use I was for. However, Susanna, a female slave, who had been taught to read, said she could make me speak; accordingly, I was handed to her, when I at the first opening said, 'Unto you, O men, do I call, and my voice is to the sons of men.' In a little after, I repeated the second chapter of the Ephesians. None of them could comprehend what I meant by being 'dead in sins,' or by 'the spirit that worketh in the children of disobedience;' nor what I meant by 'children of wrath,' or by 'God who is rich in mercy,' or by being 'saved by grace.' Of these things, they had never heard. These poor

slaves knew no more about God than what they collected from the wicked oaths of white people. Their conversation on these matters made them forget the proper time when they should have begun work. Of course, the overseer came upon them in a rage, and whipped them to their respective employments, who, finding that I was the cause of their detention, declared I should no more be a snare to his slaves; wherefore, I was put under lock and key in his house. Persecution for imprudence or indiscretion, is not persecution for righteousness' sake. I teach my friends to do all things in order, lest they should bring reproach on the good cause; not to be in their closets when they ought to be at work, nor at work when they ought to be in their closets.

I was soon after sent off the island, in a vessel on its way to South America. In a few weeks, the vessel arrived at its destined harbour, and I was exchanged for a few dead birds, of a beautiful plumage, which the mate intended to carry home as curiosities. My purchaser soon perceived that I had some sentences very different from the assertions of some of my brethren. For example, when I said, one day, that Jacob worshipped, leaning on the top of his staff: 'That's false,' said he; 'for our priest told me that father Jacob worshipped the top of his staff.' At another time, when I said, 'Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, nor the likeness of anything in heaven or in earth; thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them;' he was very angry, and almost threw me into the fire; 'for,' said he, 'our priests insist more on our worshipping images, of the Virgin Mary, and other saints, than on worshipping God, or his Son Jesus Christ.' He then demanded my sentiments about Purgatory, but on this subject he could not get me to say a word. On this he concluded I was some spurious character, and resolved to part with me the first opportunity that offered.

My possessor watched the opportunity of some North American vessel calling at the port, that he might dispose of me. For nearly six months I was hardly permitted to speak one word. Two or three times I was suspended by the corner of my coat, and viewed in the most disdainful manner by some one or another, who, saying I was heretically inclined, would throw me with vengeance against the wall. Immediately after one of these occasions, I happened to say, 'Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish!' which made them scrious for a minute; but a person present assured them that this was an old cant phrase of mine, and need not be attended to.

A North American vessel arrived, but they forgot me till she was sailing out of harbour. However, the son of my pro-

prior remembered me, ran home, snatched me up, ran in great haste to the end of the pier, just in time to catch the vessel as she passed, into which he threw me with great violence. I was now placed much in the same situation I had been in some years before—sometimes in a hammock, and sometimes in a chest, according to the fancy of the captain; only on the Sabbath I was always liberated, and allowed to lie, during the forenoon, on the cabin-table. Indeed, my lying in this posture for a few hours, and those on board dressing a little better, was all that distinguished the Sabbath from any other day.

All on board the ship in which I now sailed, considered and called themselves Christians, yet not one of them ever, as I could observe, worshipped God, or in anything made his will their rule; on the contrary, they laughed at sin, and sported about hell, though, from their own account, most of them had been wonderfully rescued from the very jaws of death. So true is that saying, which I have repeated a thousand times—'Bray a fool in a mortar, yet his folly will not depart from him.'

A young man, named Julius, asked the captain for liberty to converse with me, which was readily granted. At our first interview, I related the history of the prodigal son, Luke, xv. 'Thou hast found me out,' said he, 'for the history of that young man exactly agrees with mine. I had indulgent parents, and, during my younger years, was happy at home; but, in consequence of a disagreement with my elder brother, I went abroad, which was contrary to their wishes. They expended more on me than they could well afford. When I arrived in that country, which we lately left, there was none to befriend me, consequently, I was slighted, and could obtain no situation suited to my expectations. In a few months, everything I had brought with me was sold for my support, and I was obliged to engage in the most menial services; the kind of work in which I was employed, and the people with whom I was constrained to associate, were both extremely disagreeable, which often led me to reflect on the comforts which I had hastily forsaken. Hearing that this vessel was bound for the city where my parents reside, I determined to return; and, should I meet with a reception anything resembling that which you have related, I shall be happy.'

When he had finished, he requested me to favour him with a few good counsels, which might be of use to him in after life; upon which I said, 'Delight thyself in God—believe in the Lord Jesus—look unto him, and you shall be saved—be content with such things as you have—flee youthful lusts, which war against the soul—walk circumspectly, not as fools,

but as wise men—remember the time is short—the Lord is at hand—awake to righteousness—love God with all your heart, and your neighbours as yourself.

An old lady on board, who had concealed her religion, I overhearing all that had passed, came into our cabin, and discovered that she loved and feared the Lord. She rejoiced that this young man had been convinced of his folly; for, said she, 'I know your parents well, and that your conduct has been their constant grief since the day you left, as they never having heard from you has added to their sorrow. I can assure you, you will meet with a hearty welcome.' With tears in his eyes, he told her he had ever regretted leaving home; but he hoped God would enable him to be a comfort to them in their declining years. 'Yes,' said she, 'and so you will, if you will act according to the advice you have just received.'

In the evening, the wind rose very high, and the few passengers who were on board were much alarmed. He thought God was contending with him for his crimes—that the storm was on his account—that he should soon be brought before an angry God. He went to prayer, confessed his transgressions, and earnestly sought forgiveness. After he rose, he came running to me, anxious to hold a little conversation; but the vessel rolled so prodigiously, that I could only get him to hear a sentence now and then. One thing I said, and he heard me distinctly, viz.—That whatsoever a man asked the Father in Christ's name, believing that he received it, that should be done unto him. This cheered and encouraged him to go to prayer again. The storm soon subsided, and we at length arrived safe in a North American port, where Julius met with a most affectionate reception from his parents.

I was now old, my face full of wrinkles, my frame quite shattered, and my constitution completely broken up. Indeed, I could only speak a kind of broken language; many of my sentences, too, were so imperfectly articulated, that they were altogether unintelligible. On these accounts, I was entirely laid aside from active service, like an old and weather-beaten sailor.

Thus ended the Voyages, Travels, and Labours of

A BIBLE.

James Brydone, Printer, Hanover Street, Edinburgh.