

CHAPTER XX.

Doctrines and Discipline of the Connexion—Concluding Observations.

HAVING recorded the circumstances connected with the origin of the denomination, and narrated its progress to the conference of 1860, it may not be improper to insert here a brief summary of its doctrines, and to present an outline of its system of government, for the information of those who are not acquainted with the printed rules of the body. The following account of its doctrines is copied from the general minutes of conference, as consolidated in the year 1860:—"This connexion is composed of protestant christians, who hold the following doctrines:—The being of a God, including the Holy Trinity: the Deity of Jesus Christ; the innocence of our first parents when they came from the hands of their Creator; their subsequent fall, and that of their posterity; general redemption by Jesus Christ; repentance, including godly sorrow for sin, and corresponding reformation; the justification of the ungodly by faith, on their turning to God; the witness of the Spirit to our adoption into the family of God; sanctification by the Holy Spirit, producing inward and outward holiness; the resurrection of the dead; the general judgment, and eternal rewards and punishments." In the connexional Deed Poll enrolled in Chancery, this brief summary is illustrated by a reference to the doctrines taught by Mr. Wesley:—"The doctrines believed and taught by the Primitive Methodist connexion were and are that system of religious doctrines which was laid down and es-

established by John Wesley, and which doctrines the said John Wesley believed to be none other but the doctrines of the Church of England, as by law established ; and which were set forth by him in certain notes of the New Testament, and in the first four volumes commonly called his sermons, and reputed to be written and published by him."

The constitution and government of the denomination will require a more lengthy notice.

The members "are divided into official and unofficial ; and none are allowed to be official members who promulgate doctrines contrary to the fore-named ; nor are unofficial members allowed to remain in the connexion when their heterodoxy is likely to injure the peace and welfare of a society."

The members are formed into small companies called classes, which meet weekly for religious conference and devotional exercises. One member in each class is styled the leader, because he usually takes the *lead* of the meeting, and administers instruction, counsel, or reproof to the respective members, as their varying states may require. An assistant leader *assists* the principal leader in the discharge of his duties, occasionally conducting the meeting of the class, and administering counsel or advice to the members. The members of each class have their names enrolled in a class-paper or class-book, and each member holds a society-ticket, which is renewed quarterly, as a token of continued membership, when a visitation of the classes by a minister, or other office-bearer, takes place.

When a society has more than one class, the leaders, the society steward, who is frequently entrusted for a time with the contributions of the members, and a travelling preacher, or preachers, meet statedly to transact the society's business. These meetings are called "Leaders' Meetings," being chiefly composed of *leaders* ; but none can be legally held without the presence of a minister or travelling preacher, extraordinary cases excepted. Persons earnestly desirous of fleeing from the wrath to come, or who are penitently seeking salvation, may be admitted to meet in class

on trial ; but their earnest desires, penitential emotions, or proofs of sound conversion must be consistently manifested three months at least before they be received into full membership. "No person must remain a member of the connexion if he attends vain and worldly amusements, wastes his time at public houses, buys unaccustomed goods, is dishonest in his dealings, or is guilty of any other acts of immorality."

A number of societies united, form a circuit, which is of more or less extent, according to the number of the societies included, and the distance of the places at which the respective societies meet. These united societies share in the labours of the same preachers, and assist each other in the support of the ministry and the maintenance of different religious and benevolent institutions. A circuit has a meeting once a quarter, composed of leaders, stewards, and preachers, "and of such other persons as it chooses to admit." This is called "the quarterly meeting," and its duty is to transact the business of the respective societies within the circuit.

The preachers belonging to a circuit are usually of two classes, called travelling and local preachers. The "travelling preachers" are regular ministers, wholly devoted to ministerial and pastoral duties, and receive a moderate stipend for their support. They are called "travelling preachers" because they generally *travel* from place to place in a circuit, and at stated times, after a shorter or longer period of residence, remove from one circuit or station to another. The "local preachers" are so named because they reside in one *locality*, according to their own convenience or desire, and are not removed by the decisions of church meetings. They are "laymen," and when sent as delegates to district meetings or conferences are called "lay delegates," to distinguish them from the regular ministers, or "travelling preacher delegates." They usually follow some worldly callings for a maintenance, and preach on the Sabbath as opportunities permit, but receive no pecuniary remuneration for their services. They are chosen to their office by the representatives of the united societies to whom they minis-

ter, and should their preaching prove unacceptable to the people generally, their services are discontinued.

In the transaction of the business of the circuit's quarterly-meeting, travelling and local preachers are equal. A travelling preacher usually, but not always presides, but each preacher has an equal right to speak and vote.

Among the travelling preachers the leading minister is called "the superintendent," because he especially is required to *look over* the business of the circuit, and see that it be properly transacted. He is not a "bishop," in the ordinary sense of the term, but simply "the first among equals," much the same as a senior pastor in a congregational church. When there is only one preacher in a station he, too, is called a superintendent, he having the supervision of the different societies.

Between the circuit's quarterly meetings the general business is transacted by a committee, called the "circuit committee." This is composed of the travelling preachers, who are members of it by virtue of office, and of such local preachers, class leaders, or stewards, as are appointed by the preceding quarterly meeting to represent the respective societies. The committee generally meets once a month, and is responsible for its doings to the ensuing quarterly meeting.

When the places in a circuit become too numerous or important to be conveniently managed at one quarterly meeting, a number of the places are frequently formed into a "branch," which is a portion of the circuit, having its own office-bearers and regular meetings for business, but subordinate to the authorities of the home part of the circuit. So soon as branches are capable of supporting their own ministers, and of transacting the business of their respective societies, they are usually, but not always, formed into new circuits or independent stations.

Places visited through missionary labours, and united in one station, like places in a circuit or a branch, are called "a mission." A few of the missions are under the supervision of circuits, but most of them are under that of the General Missionary Committee.

Leaders' meetings are held on mission stations as early as convenient ; as are also quarterly meetings and committee meetings. When a sufficient number of leading men are raised upon a mission to be entrusted with its management, and the station is able to support two or more travelling preachers, it is usually made into a circuit.

A certain number of circuits, branches, and mission stations, form "a district." In each district a meeting is held yearly, called "The District Meeting." This meeting is composed of one delegate from each circuit ; the respective circuits sending a travelling preacher one year, and a layman the two following years, so as to secure, as nearly as practicable, two laymen to one travelling preacher. A member of the general or connexional committee, who is usually a senior or influential minister, called "The General Committee Delegate," who takes the lead in the transaction of the business, being held responsible to the conference for its performance according to rule. A delegate from the district committee, a minister, or layman, according to its option, is styled "The District Committee Delegate," and occupies a subordinate position to the general committee delegate. The district meeting receives the report of all the stations, including the number of its members, preachers, leaders, scholars and teachers, chapels and other preaching places ; inquires into the state of each, and stations the travelling preachers within the district ; subject, however, to appeals from the stations or preachers, and to alterations at conference.

The "Conference" is a yearly meeting of delegates from all the districts in the connexion, of twelve permanent members, and of four persons appointed at the preceding conference, in proportion of two laymen to one travelling preacher, or as nearly so as circumstances will permit. The delegates meet to confer with each other on all affairs connected with the body, to receive the reports of all the stations, to appoint the ministers or travelling preachers for the ensuing year, and to make such regulations for the welfare of the community, as may seem necessary, most of these having

been recommended by circuit quarterly meetings and by district meetings. The conference is the highest court in the connexion, from whose decisions there is no appeal.

A "General Committee," composed of ministers and laymen, usually in about equal numbers, is appointed to transact the most important business of the connexion between one conference and another. The executive has for some years resided in the metropolis for the sake of convenience, and has made an important part of the General Missionary Committee.

A "District Committee," occupying a subordinate position to the general committee, is appointed for each district, and adjudicates on certain cases submitted to its examination by the stations within the district.

From this brief description of the constitution of the connexion, or of its system of church government, it will be seen that it lies between the extreme of pure Independency on the one hand, and that of diocesan Episcopacy on the other. It is substantially the Presbyterian system of government, but contains a much larger mixture of the lay element than is found in most Presbyterian denominations. From a certain gifted writer we learn that this circumstance causes "intelligent observers of the constitution and operations of the religious sects in Great Britain" to question "whether the Primitive Methodist connexion is adapted for perpetuity." As the object of this work is neither to glorify "our church principles," nor boast of our "liberal and beautiful system of church government," nor to praise our "wise economy," nor to attempt to solve problems which puzzle our wiser brethren, we shall content ourselves by stating, in reply to this writer, that whatever influence the liberal constitution of the connexion may exert on its future destiny, it has, in our judgment, materially contributed to its past success. That among thousands of lay office-bearers in the connexion, none has ever abused his power would be too much to assert. No office in the church, not even that of the sacred ministry, is an infallible preventive of the undue assumption of power, or of its improper

exercise. But, as far as our means of observation have extended, which have neither been few in number, nor on a very limited scale, the official laymen have mostly exercised their authority with prudence and moderation, and have thereby ministered in no small degree to the well-being and prosperity of the denomination.

We conceive, however, that it is not the liberal constitution of the denomination which has so largely contributed to its progress, as the abundance of its labours and the simplicity and zeal by which it has been characterized. The travelling preachers, as a body, have performed an amount of labour which would probably bear favourable comparison with that of any equal number of christian ministers in any age or country, the first ages of the church not excepted. The following account of twenty-one years' labours by Mr. William Garner may safely be regarded as a pretty fair specimen of the labours of his brethren in general. Writing from Brigg, in Lincolnshire, under date of January 8th, 1844, Mr. Garner says :—

“I was called out to travel by the quarterly meeting of Hull circuit, in December, 1822, and I entered on my new and important vocation on January 8th, 1823. From the day that I left my paternal roof for the work of the holy ministry to the present date, I have kept a diurnal record of my journeys and my regular pulpit labours. By the grace of God I have now completed three times seven years' service in the vineyard of Jesus Christ. In three months hence I shall be forty-two years of age. And after having reviewed ‘my manner of life,’ from the period of my accountability to God to the present day, I feel thankful to heaven that I can rationally come to the conclusion, that the time which I have spent in the gospel field has been far the happiest, and notwithstanding my imperfections, I doubt not, far the most useful portion of my existence. I *feel* that this is not a mean stimulus to be ‘faithful unto death.’ In the space of twenty-one years I have travelled on *foot*, with comparatively trifling exceptions, 44,936 miles, and have preached 6,278 sermons. The journeys do not include my

daily perambulations in the cities, towns, villages, &c., where my lot has been cast; nor do the sermons include exhortations, addresses, missionary speeches, &c., which amount to a great number. Some of my fellow-labourers, of equally long standing in the ministry with myself, have probably not travelled and preached so extensively as I have; but by others, in these respects, I have undoubtedly been exceeded. So that the extent of my preachings and travels may be regarded as a fair specimen of that of the first race of Primitive Methodist preachers in general. Frequently, after having walked twenty and (occasionally) thirty miles a day, I have been enabled to stand up and preach, or assist at a missionary meeting. Some of my old and esteemed companions in toil are able to confirm this statement. And to their honour be it recorded, I know that they have endured similar fatigues.

“On many days, of course, I have not travelled at all. And I gratefully acknowledge that many of my journeys have been agreeable, and recreative to both body and mind; but not a few of them have been extremely exhausting, especially in the early years of my ministry.

“It appears from my diary that forty-eight of my principal journeys, which were performed on foot, between January 8th, 1823, to July 27th, 1830, amount to 1,068 miles, which average rather more than twenty-two miles a day. And the reader must bear in mind that some of these journeys were performed beneath a scorching sun—some through depths of snow—some through windy storms and tempests—and some through drenching rains in the cold winter, while I was encumbered with an umbrella over my head, and a library and wardrobe on my back; though others were performed beneath a serene sky, and while I was surrounded with all the charms of a delightful spring. Nor should it be forgotten that preaching and travelling do not form the *whole* of the work of a Primitive Methodist preacher; in addition to these he has to ‘give attention to reading,’ to ‘study to show himself a workman that needeth not to be ashamed,’ especially to ‘search the Scriptures,’ to use the pen extensively, and to ‘visit from house to

house,' besides attending to those things which come upon him daily, the cares of the church.

"Under the arduous toils of the Primitive Methodist ministry many of our fellow labourers have fainted, and have either returned to their secular employments, or withdrawn from the connexion, and entered the ministry of other churches. Some of these, we hope, left us for conscience' sake; others, we fear, 'went out from us because they were not of us.' They sought an *easier life* and a *larger income* than the Primitive Methodist ministry could afford: verily these are enjoying their reward now. Others, regardless of invitations and lucrative proffers, have

'Nobly for their Master stood,
Valiant 'champions for their God.'

These look for their reward **HEREAFTER**.

"If the preceding remarks be a means of cheering my young brethren in the ministry in the prosecution of their arduous, but blessed toil (which they may, at times, be tempted to regard as insupportable), and if they be in any measure instrumental in confirming the love of our lay brethren to a class of ministers who are not seeking *theirs* but *them*, they are not written in vain."

In reference to "visiting from house to house," to which Mr. Garner refers, it may be proper to state that each travelling preacher is expected to pray with thirty or forty families a week, at least, on an average, for the year round; and that we have reason to believe, from an extensive examination of official documents for a number of years, that though a few of the preachers have not equalled the amount, through lack of health and strength, or the pressure of church affairs, a greater number have considerably exceeded it, and the majority have not fallen short of it. Evangelical and pastoral labours so abundant, performed with energy and zeal, and accompanied by the blessing of God, will account in part for the multitude of souls which have been brought to the Lord, and united to the denomination.

But no inconsiderable amount of the success which the con-

nexion has realized is to be attributed, under God, to the zealous and laborious efforts of a large body of local preachers. Among this class of labourers there is a great diversity of talents ; some of them are men of superior intelligence, extraordinary gifts, and of great acceptability ; others, of course, are less distinguished ; and some, as might be expected, have but slender abilities for public speaking. The amount of labour they perform differs according to their age and strength, the localities in which they reside, or the requirements of the respective stations to which they belong ; in most established circuits in thickly populated portions of the country their labours are not usually oppressive, but in agricultural districts and in feeble stations they have frequently to go long and toilsome journeys, which are calculated to test their zeal and to exhaust their strength. In the early period of the connexion's history the labours of these unpaid and devoted brethren were conducted on a scale almost incredible, and eminently contributed to the extension and establishment of the rising community.

The class-leaders, prayer-leaders, and considerable numbers of other church members, have also emulated the zeal and activity of the travelling and local preachers, and endeavoured in various ways to awaken careless sinners from their slumbers, and guide inquiring minds to the Saviour. The community has happily presented the spectacle of a *working ministry* and a *working church* in harmonious combination. It has been mindful of the apostolical admonition, "Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate." It has usually left the wealthy and the polished classes of society to the care of older denominations, while it has sought the enlightenment and elevation of the poor, the neglected, and the down-trodden. Its labours have often been regarded with contempt, even by many of the followers of Christ, and sometimes have been bitterly opposed by those whose benefit they were designed to promote ; but God has smiled upon its well-meant efforts, and crowned them with his signal blessing. If its ministry has not been distinguished by learning and refinement, it has uniformly

given prominence to the leading truths of the gospel, and has been characterized by plainness, earnestness, pathos, and power, and has been honoured with a large share of success in the conversion of sinners.

Simplicity, earnestness, and zeal, have distinguished the denomination, and equipped it for some kinds of labour, which, though repulsive to some persons of calm and retiring habits, are nevertheless adapted to the wants of the multitude, and have been productive of most important and heart-cheering results. The main secrets of the success of the denomination are, under God, its extensive and persevering labours, and its spirit of earnest piety, ardent zeal, and glowing charity. It is humiliating and saddening to reflect that it has occasionally declined in piety and zeal,—such declension having injuriously affected its prosperity and usefulness. Had the zeal of the community never abated, and had all its preachers and members always laboured to the utmost of their ability for the glory of God and the salvation of sinners, how many thousands more would have been brought to Christ through their instrumentality. The reflection should produce deep humility and contrition, and lead to greater watchfulness in future, and to increased ardour and devotion.

In the former edition of this work we observed—

“The year 1860 will be the Jubilee of the connexion, the Standley society having been formed in the Spring of 1810, and Mr. Clowes having taken charge of a separate class in the autumn of the same year. It is intended to celebrate the event by suitable religious services in all the stations, and by liberal contributions to the various institutions of the denomination. It is not for us to dictate as to the manner in which these services should be held, nor as to the amount which should be contributed in aid of the institutions in question. But we may be allowed to express a hope that, while proper mention may be made of the labours, sufferings, and success of the connexion, there will be no vain-glorious boasting, no reflections on less prosperous communities, no ministering to denominational pride and vanity. It is in the highest degree

desirable that the services should be rendered eminently spiritual and devout, and thereby contribute to increased activity and zeal, and enlarged success." And we believe many of the services hitherto held have been of the character just named, and have tended to fan the flame of christian zeal, and excite to increased activity and nobler enterprise. Wide are the fields of usefulness open before the denomination, and solemn its responsibilities to the Great Head of the Church for their proper cultivation, and it is to be hoped that these extensive fields will be duly cultivated, and be productive of abundant fruit. The connexion is not yet prepared for extensive missionary efforts among strictly heathen nations, though a beginning may ere long be prudently attempted. It is cause of gratitude that older and wealthier communities are largely employed in this blessed work, and we earnestly wish them success in the name of our common Lord. But if missionary operations among the heathen cannot yet be undertaken on any *large* scale, many agricultural districts in our own country, hundreds of thousands of persons in our cities and large towns, and the increasing population of the British colonies in different parts of the world, require additional efforts for their enlightenment and conversion, and are accessible to the missionaries of the Primitive Methodist denomination, and may be visited at comparatively little expense.

The Congregational Home Missionary Society, according to its report for 1859, has resolved to withdraw several of its agents from villages and thinly-inhabited districts, and devote more labour to cities and towns. This may be a prudent arrangement for that society, but certainly the Primitive Methodists cannot innocently withdraw any of their labours from villages and agricultural districts, leaving them entirely, as they would, in many instances to the superstitious errors of Puseyism, or to semi-heathen ignorance, and frightful forms of wickedness and vice. The itinerant system, and the extensive employment of lay-agency in their denomination afford facilities for the maintenance and spread of the gospel in such localities, which are not found in the Congregational polity ;

and these facilities should be diligently improved, for the diffusion of the truth through every needy district of the land.

And what a field of useful labour do many of our cities and large towns present. The rapid increase of their population, the multitudes who habitually neglect public worship, the awful desecration of the Lord's-day, the terrible amount of intemperance, licentiousness, and other forms of vice, which alarmingly prevail, call loudly for greatly increased efforts to arrest the progress of these fearful evils, to stem the tide of ungodliness which threatens to overflow the surrounding country, and to spread evangelical truth and piety among these dense crowds of our fellow-men, deeply sunk in depravity and misery. Speaking of cities and large towns, Albert Barnes eloquently says, " Beautiful as they often are, rich, splendid, magnificent, the seat of science, and the nurse of the arts—I add, too, with thankfulness to God, the home often of deep piety and rich and liberal-hearted benevolence—yet they are the home also of every kind of infamy, of all that is false and hollow, and of all that fascinates, allures, and corrupts the hearts of men. There are found men of all nations, colours, characters, opinions. There men of splendid talents live to corrupt by their example and their influence; there unbounded wealth is lavished to amuse, betray, and ruin the soul; there are the vortices of business and pleasure that engulf all; and there are the most degraded and the worst forms of human depravity." " I might go over the whole catalogue of crimes that are marked on the calendar of human guilt, and we should find them all concentrated, organized, consolidated in our cities and large towns. There foul and offensive exhalations rise from the receptacles of human depravity; there volumes of curses roll up towards heaven; there the seducer practices his arts to inveigle the young; there tens of thousands riot in intemperance, and curse their Maker; there multitudes practice all acts of fraud and infamy; and there Satan, knowing the power of cities in all the surrounding regions, has established his strongholds, and fortifies and guards his possessions with all that skill and art can do."

The zealous efforts made by different sections of the christian church to spread the leaven of christian truth and piety among the most degraded inhabitants in many of our largest towns, and in the mighty metropolis, are worthy of commendation, and should excite our thankfulness to the Author of all good. But it is mournful to think that these praiseworthy efforts, in many cases, fall far short of the rapid increase of population. Does not the providence of God loudly call upon the Primitive Methodist connexion to assist largely in this godly enterprise, to do much more for the enlightenment and evangelization of these centres of population than it has ever yet done? Of late years, indeed, its success in several large towns has been greater than formerly. But yet in many of them its societies are few and feeble, its Sabbath-schools far from numerous, its chapels small and uninviting, compared with the amount of population. Look at London, Portsmouth, Bristol, Plymouth, Liverpool, Manchester, Birmingham, Leeds, Bradford, Newcastle-on-Tyne, and several other large towns and cities. How little has the connexion done for them compared with their pressing wants and its powerful resources. The time has surely come when more enlarged and vigorous efforts should be employed for the spread of vital religion among the ignorant, the wretched, and degraded portions of these cities and towns. Cannot the ecclesiastical system of the community be made to work with as much efficiency there as in smaller towns and villages? Something worth naming has been effected in Leicester and Nottingham, Sheffield and Hull, Yarmouth and Sunderland; and could not as much be accomplished in other towns? The honour of God, the glory of our Saviour, the salvation of immortal souls exposed to the imminent peril of endless perdition, the credit of the community, and the well-being of our beloved country, require more comprehensive, systematic, and persevering efforts, to spread the vital truths of the Gospel throughout the cities and towns in the kingdom, and to raise up flourishing churches where none at present exist, than have ever yet been

employed by the denomination. Happy will it be for the community if it shall faithfully discharge its duty in this respect.

And then in the colonies of our empire what extensive spheres of usefulness present themselves. Never, in the history of the world, had any empire such colonies for number, importance, and extent, as those of Great Britain. Her energetic sons are carrying her language, her commerce, her laws, her literature, her institutions, into all quarters of the globe. Ponder the progress of Canada during the last few years. Look at the rich and fertile colonies of Australia, and their rapidly increasing population, where villages, towns, and cities are rising up as by magic, and new states, or germs of future kingdoms, are starting into being with all, or more than all, the life and energy of the mother country. Yet how pressing their spiritual necessities. How perilous the condition of the settlers, unless the gospel be carried along with them as they spread from place to place. Without this, fast will they verge towards practical heathenism; and instead of being centres of light and holy influence amidst the surrounding darkness of heathendom, they will prove a dishonour to the christian name, and a curse instead of a blessing. But let the rising colonies of Australia, Tasmania, and New Zealand, be filled with gospel light, and thoroughly imbued with vital religion, and a mighty advancement will be made in the cause of truth, and vast means be created for the diffusion of christianity in the most populous parts of the heathen world,—India, China, and Japan. The Primitive Methodist missionaries have done a little towards the spread of the gospel in these respective colonies. But what calls are there for vastly augmented efforts. What encouragements to send a large number of missionaries to follow the settlers into distant districts, and to establish the means of grace where God is not yet publicly worshipped, and where the gospel is not yet proclaimed. What fearful responsibility will the community incur should it not avail itself of these promising openings for the spread of evangelical truth,—should it not hearken to the calls of Provi-

dence to extend, according to its ability, the kingdom of Christ in these extensive and flourishing colonies !

The connexion has reached the fiftieth year of its existence. God has been graciously pleased to bless it with signal tokens of his favour, and to crown its humble labours with abundant success. Past mercies should stimulate and encourage both its ministers and people to labour in faith for enlarged success in the future. They should strive more than ever to diffuse evangelical truth and scriptural holiness, both through the needy districts of our own country, and in distant lands. Our means of usefulness have vastly increased since the early days of the connexion, and even during the last few years. The great additions made to the number of our ministers, office-bearers, and members of society ; the multiplication of our chapels and schools, and the progress of education among the junior portion of our people ; the accumulation of wealth among one part of our friends, and the greatly improved circumstances of others ; the more favourable light in which the denomination is regarded by the public in general, and the declining opposition to our peculiar mode of operations, afford facilities and a power of doing good superior to those enjoyed in any former period of our history. May these facilities be diligently employed, and their power be rightly exercised, in dependence upon the Holy Spirit for the conversion and salvation of multitudes of precious souls.

No truth was more deeply impressed upon the minds of the fathers and founders of the denomination than this, that it is not by human power or might that spiritual good can be effected, but by the Spirit of the living God. Earnestly did they pray for His gracious and powerful aid in all their efforts to extend the kingdom of Christ, and to save immortal souls from sin and hell. Strong was their faith in the promises relating to the gift and assistance of the Holy Spirit,—strong their confidence that through the mediation of Jesus Christ these promises would be fulfilled in answer to their fervent supplications. Let the same spirit of fervent prayer and of powerful faith continue to characterize their

sons in the gospel, and the societies in general, and they will still be favoured with "times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord," and the prosperity of his blessed work among them. Showers of blessings will descend upon their Zion; she will strengthen her stakes, and greatly enlarge her borders, and her converts will be multiplied; and thus will the denomination, by the Divine blessing, nobly assist in extending Messiah's peaceful empire, and in hastening the happy period when "the kindgdoms of this world shall become the kingdom of our God and of his Christ." That glorious period is predicted, and will assuredly come to pass. "There shall be an handful of corn in the earth upon the top of the mountains; the fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon: and they of the city shall flourish like grass of the earth. His name shall endure for ever: His name shall be continued as long as the sun; and men shall be blessed in Him: all nations shall call Him blessed. Blessed be the LORD GOD, the GOD of ISRAEL, who only doeth wondrous things. And blessed be His glorious name for ever: and let the whole earth be filled with His glory. Amen and Amen."