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ART. I.—REVIEW OF THE LIFE OF MOHAMMED.

The Life of Mohammed; Founder of the Religion of Islam, and of the Empire of the Saracens. By the Rev. GEORGE BUSH, A. M. New-York, J. & J. Harper.

WE took up this little work with three considerations in our minds, which served to awaken an interest in its favor. We recollected that it is one of a series of volumes, which have thus far been highly interesting and instructive; and which if placed in every family to the exclusion of those flimsy productions which only enervate and corrupt the mind, might be of incalculable advantage to the youth of our country. We remembered, too, that it comes from an American pen; and we are always gratified to notice any indications of a growing confidence in our own resources, and a disposition on the part of our booksellers to call them forth. And lastly, the work before us promised without the trouble of long research, to make our readers acquainted with the life and character of one of the most extraordinary men, who has yet appeared in the long development of the great drama of human existence. And now that we have perused it, we are gratified to say, that in our opinion it is in every respect worthy of a place in the selection of which it forms a part;—is highly creditable to the taste and judgment of the author;—and furnishes a portraiture as full and faithful as can now be drawn, of the great founder of the Islam faith.

In making our readers acquainted with this work, we propose to draw from it a brief outline of Mohammed's life; to notice the means by which his doctrines were at first propagated, and the causes to which their perpetuity may be ascribed; and to remark

of other depopulated lands. I have never seen, for instance, such marks of an unhealthy climate as at Pæstum on the gulf of Salerno, a city which was once full of men : the eastern side of Calabria too where of old large and powerful Greek cities stood, is now exceedingly unhealthy, and many examples of a like kind might be brought forward. Whatever be the cause of the malaria, it seems to follow a certain degree of decay and desolation, and to be slow in attacking compact settlements. The thickly peopled parts of Rome are little exposed to it. Some proof of this may be found in the fact that the population has increased about ten thousand since the peace in Europe, according to a statement published last year. It appears to me that the moral causes of decay here are far more to be dreaded than this. If the malaria comes, as many think, from the deposition of undisturbed vegetable matter, a few generations of men by turning up the soil might arrest its progress ; but what remedy can be found for a sunken and enslaved people ? What other than that, which the government would rather see a desert around it, than resort to—pure christianity with its invariable attendants, knowledge and freedom. When that remedy shall be used, I believe that it will restore the land to whatever appearance of fertility it once wore, and take away its diseases by giving it into the hands of a regenerated nation.

ART. III.—REVIEW OF THE WORKS OF THE REV. ROBERT HALL.*

The Works of the Rev. Robert Hall, A. M. Minister of Broadmead Chapel, Bristol, England. First complete edition ; with a brief Memoir of the Author. In two volumes. G. & C. & H. Carvill : New-York.

THERE are some names to which Providence assigns a sort of earthly immortality ; men who perhaps do not bring their powers into more vigorous exercise than many others, but who have powers to use, which others have not ;—men who leave the impress of their minds upon the character of an age, who are emphatically the master spirits of their generation, and whose thoughts scarcely assume a tangible form, before they are darting, as if by a magical influence, all over the world. Men of this description it must be confessed are few. So we shall find it *has been*, if we look back upon the history of past ages ; and so no doubt it *will be* in respect to our own age. Nevertheless, we hesitate not to assign to this

* At the moment when this article was passing through the press, the melancholy intelligence arrived in this country, that Robert Hall is no more. It is now too late for us to modify our remarks with reference to this fact : they will be read, we trust, with increased interest, under the impressions created by the loss of such a man.

highest rank of names, the venerable name of ROBERT HALL. For though his published works in which he will speak to posterity are far more limited than could be wished, yet what he *has* written is of such a character, and his personal influence, independent of his writings, will have been so great, that his life, we have no doubt, will, in many respects, have been one of the most important, which the history of the present age will record.

Until very recently, the works of Robert Hall have existed only in the form of miscellaneous pamphlets, some of which it has been difficult to obtain even in England; and most of which, with the exception of some of his occasional sermons, have been comparatively little known in this country. Some of these have indeed had an extensive circulation on this side the water, especially his sermons on infidelity, which Dr. Dwight, (and we know not where to look for higher authority,) pronounced to be inferior to no sermons in the language. We had, therefore, much pleasure in hearing that a young clergyman, a countryman of ours, who was every way qualified for the undertaking, was engaged in preparing an edition of the entire works of Mr. Hall, to be accompanied with a short memoir of his life. The work has at length appeared, and is, in every respect, highly creditable to the editor, while we are persuaded it will prove one of the most acceptable gifts, which the reading public of this country has for a long time received. While we congratulate the mother country that she has given such productions to the world, we may, perhaps, congratulate our own, that she has been the first to collect and arrange these productions, in such a form as to secure for them a general circulation.

It is our design in this article, not so much to attempt a particular notice of the various publications of Mr. Hall, which are given us in these volumes, as to present an outline of his life and character, and especially of the character of his writings; and to exhibit in several points of view the influence which he is probably destined to exert on the interests of the present age. If, in noticing his life and character, we should seem to have gathered materials from any other source than the judicious memoir with which the editor has supplied us, or to speak with more confidence than might be expected, of a foreigner who has never been among us, we may be allowed to say, that we shall state nothing which has not been authenticated to us either by Mr. Hall's particular friends, or by our own personal observation.

ROBERT HALL is the son of a distinguished Baptist minister in England, of the same name, who is known in this country chiefly as having been the author of a small, but very useful book, entitled, "Help to Zion's travelers." The son was born at Arnsby, August, 1764. In very early youth, he gave indications of the

rarest intellectual endowments, being able, as his father states, at the age of nine, fully to comprehend some of the profoundest reasoning on moral subjects, which the language affords—that contained in the most elaborate treatises of Jonathan Edwards. In 1773, he became a member of an academy at Northampton, under the instruction of the late distinguished Dr. John Ryland. Thence he was removed to the institution at Bristol, designed for the education of young men for the ministry, under the care of Dr. Caleb Evans, a man of fine powers and enlarged views, who, at that time, officiated as pastor of the congregation of which Mr. Hall now has the charge. At the age of seventeen, he entered King's college, Aberdeen, where he continued nearly four years, in constant attendance on the lectures of Dr. George Campbell, author of the celebrated work on miracles, etc. During this period he formed an intimacy with Mr. (now Sir James) Macintosh, in many respects a kindred spirit to himself, which is known to have been continued, and which in later years has given rise to a letter from the pen of Sir James, which is judiciously incorporated in the memoir of Mr. Hall, and which one cannot read without feeling perhaps an equal admiration for the intellect and the heart of its author.

About the time of his leaving Aberdeen, Mr. Hall took the degree of Master of Arts, and became associated with Dr. Evans at Bristol, not only in the ministry, but in the instruction of the theological academy. Here he immediately acquired a popularity, which would have been too great to be enduring, had it not been founded on the rarest intellectual endowments of the age. Though the Dissenters in England, at that period, had far less influence than they enjoy at present, and though the denomination to which Mr. Hall belonged, was by no means the most popular even among *them*, yet such was the admiration of his powers, that the most distinguished divines and even dignitaries of the Established church, were often among his hearers. But in the midst of his almost unprecedented popularity, an event occurred, which, for a season, awakened painful apprehensions lest this bright star, which had risen with so much radiance, and had begun to diffuse its light in both hemispheres, might, so far as the present state of existence is concerned, be prematurely struck out of the intellectual firmament. This was nothing less than a temporary derangement of intellect. In consequence of this, he was taken home to his friends in Leicestershire, and for some time it was strongly apprehended, that he was the subject of an incurable mental alienation. Gradually, however, this most appalling malady yielded to a course of judicious treatment; and his great mind having regained its accustomed balance, came back to its former habit of sober, well ordered and majestic operations. There has since been a recurrence of

this affecting visitation, though for several of the last years, it is understood, there has been no indication of it; and from the advanced period which he now has reached, it is reasonable to hope, that this noble intellect will never suffer another eclipse, or cease to operate for the benefit of the world, until it shall blaze forth with brighter splendor on a nobler field of existence.

Possibly it may be with some a matter of curiosity to know, what were the operations of this mighty mind, at the melancholy season to which we have adverted. It is said, that during no period of his life, did he ever evince, in a higher degree, his native intellectual superiority. He was great, incomparably great, even in the wildest ravings of the maniac. His reasonings, it is said, always of course, proceeding upon false premises, and often conducting to most ridiculous conclusions, were nevertheless logically accurate, and sometimes in the highest style of forensic eloquence. Many of the sentiments and expressions which he then uttered, were treasured up by his friends, and some of them must certainly be regarded as among the most brilliant effusions of the human mind. We have seen nothing from his pen, and heard nothing from his lips, which discovered more of the fire of genius, than some remarks which have been reported to us by his friends, as having fallen from him during the continuance of this calamitous visitation.

Soon after this season of mental alienation had gone by, Mr. Hall accepted an invitation to become pastor of the Baptist church at Cambridge, which had been rendered vacant by the death of the celebrated Robert Robinson. This singularly gifted man, (Mr. Robinson,) had been one of the most eloquent and popular preachers in England, and withal, for a time, decidedly evangelical; but he gradually departed from the simplicity of the gospel, till he landed in the grossest errors of Socinianism, and probably in downright infidelity. Mr. Hall, who knew him well, declared that he had never seen a man who possessed more engaging powers either in preaching or in conversation. No one was better fitted than Mr. Hall to succeed such a man as Robinson; for while he had far more intellectual force than his predecessor ever possessed, and thus was able more than to meet the demands which even Robert Robinson's hearers might naturally make, for noble exhibitions of intellect, he was prepared by the same means successfully to resist the influence of previous false ministrations, and even on that ground, to raise the standard of evangelical truth and piety.

During Mr. Hall's residence at Cambridge, he occupied a field, than which, perhaps, no other could have been found better adapted to his gigantic powers. Living in the immediate neighborhood of the university, he was constantly brought in contact with the most

distinguished scholars of the age ; and many of them who had no great sympathy in the interests of the Dissenters, regularly availed themselves of his ministrations. While there was here every thing to waken the energy of his genius, and to impel his mind to its noblest efforts, his influence was powerfully felt by many other minds, which were destined to an active and public career, and in some instances to be the light of their generation. He continued here till about the year 1804, during which time he published several pamphlets, the most important of which were his *Apology for the freedom of the press*, and his sermon on modern *Infidelity*. At the period above mentioned, his mind sustained another shock similar to that which we have already described, in consequence of which his labors were again interrupted, and he was finally separated from a charge, which he had served for several years with the highest ability and acceptance.

On this calamitous occasion, the apprehensions of Mr. Hall's friends and of the public were renewed, that his intellect would never emerge from the dark cloud which had again settled over it. But by the blessing of God accompanying the most judicious medical treatment, he was shortly restored to complete mental sanity, insomuch that he was enabled to resume his ministerial labors, and to prosecute them with his usual vigor and success. He was finally prevailed upon to accept the pastoral charge of the Baptist church at Leicester, and so efficient and popular was his ministry, that it became necessary repeatedly to enlarge the chapel in which he preached.

The removal of Mr. Hall from Leicester to his last place of residence, took place in 1825. The church at Broadmead, Bristol, having been left destitute by the death of the venerable Dr. Ryland, invited Mr. Hall to become his successor. So strong was the mutual attachment between him and the congregation which he had served for nearly twenty years, and which had risen under his ministry from a state of great depression to the highest respectability, that it was not without much reluctance and a severe conflict of feeling, that he finally resolved on a removal. After a deliberation of several months, he came to the conclusion, that the indications of Providence were in favor of the proposed change ; and accordingly resigned his pastoral charge amidst the prayers and tears of an admiring and devoted congregation.

From the period last mentioned, he has labored constantly, with the exception of occasional interruptions from ill health, in the church which his intimate and venerable friend, Dr. Ryland, had served for many years, and in which, if we mistake not, Mr. Hall preached his first sermon. His congregation, though not large, is composed chiefly of the most respectable class ; and probably

the only reason why it is not larger, is, that his chapel is only of ordinary size, and his health and voice are such as would not admit of his preaching in a larger place. It is hardly necessary to say, that his chapel is the resort of almost every intelligent stranger who visits Bristol; and instances are not unfrequent of persons from remote parts of the kingdom, and from other countries, who happen to be in that part of England, making it a matter of calculation to pass the sabbath at Bristol, for the sake of the gratification and benefit of hearing from him even a single sermon.

It has been the lot of this great man from early childhood, to be afflicted by a bodily disease (*tic dolooureux*) which has not only often occasioned an interruption of his labors, but has rendered his life emphatically a life of pain. His sufferings are sometimes so severe that, if it were not for a very free use of laudanum, it would seem that he must speedily sink under them; but by frequently resorting to this remedy, he gains a temporary and partial relief from his pains, while his constitution has been so trained to the habit of using it, that there is scarcely any quantity which he cannot take with perfect impunity. It has often and justly been the occasion of regret, that he has published so little; but the true reason is unquestionably to be found in the fact that he has always been subject to this constitutional disease; and the only wonder, after all, really is that, with scarcely any relief from severe pain except that which is gained by artificial means, he should have produced so much; especially that he should have held on in so constant and brilliant a course of labor in the pulpit. It is truly wonderful, that his constitution should not long ere this, have yielded to the power of this dreadful disease; but it has not, until at very recent period, seemed to affect in the least, his general health and vigor. No doubt it has been a salutary discipline to his heart, and perhaps the very discipline which, in connection with the painful visitation to which we have already adverted, was best calculated to keep down that pride of intellect, to which such a mind must be in some respects peculiarly exposed. During the last four months, as we have learned, Mr. Hall's public labors have been much interrupted by the increased power of his disease; and though he was very lately able to appear before his people once on the sabbath, yet considering the strength which his disease has already gained in connection with the fact that he has reached the age of sixty-six, we can scarcely anticipate any thing but the melancholy intelligence, at no distant period, that his brilliant course is finished.

There is in most minds a curiosity to know something of the personal appearance of those, whose character or works have been the subject of their admiration. The engraving prefixed to the works of Mr. Hall conveys perhaps as accurate an idea of his

face, as can be gained from any thing short of the original; but there is, after all, something in the man himself, which we do not expect ever to see copied, and which we do not believe can be copied in all its perfection. In certain states of feeling, his eye exhibits not merely the fire, but if the expression may be allowed, the very lightning of genius. You could not meet him as a stranger in the market place, without perceiving at a glance that he is no common specimen of man; and if he should turn his eye upon you when his mind is coming forth, as it sometimes does, in the majesty and storm of burning thought, you would scarcely find it difficult to believe, that he was intended to link man to some higher order of beings. In his person he is of about the medium height, with a large frame and perhaps a little inclined to corpulency. In his very gait there is a majesty, which tells of the greatness of his intellect.

Perhaps the character of Mr. Hall's mind cannot be better described in a single word than by saying, that it is perfectly balanced, and combines all the various powers in their highest perfection. If he possessed any one faculty in the same exuberance in which he possesses them all, and in respect to the others were not in the least distinguished, it would be enough to render him an extraordinary man. If he reasons, it is always with strict philosophical accuracy; with a keen, searching glance into the very mysteries of his subject, leaving the reader or hearer often at a loss whether most to admire the light, or the strength, or the depth of his argument; and generally leaving his antagonist to the alternative of quiet submission, or of preparing for a still more mortifying defeat. If he comes into the region of taste or imagination, here also he is equally at home. With the same apparent ease that his mind can frame a powerful argument, it will pour forth images of exquisite beauty and tenderness, as well as of overwhelming majesty and strength. In short, there is no part of the intellectual world in which he does not seem to breathe freely, as if it were his peculiar element. He is at home as far below the surface of things, as far down in the depths of metaphysical abstraction, as perhaps any mind ever penetrates. He is at home amidst the common sense realities of life, judging of men and things with as much accuracy, as if the whole business of his life had been to watch and analyze the operations of the human heart. He is at home in the field of fancy, in worlds of his own creation; and he can find in the mountain and the valley, in the ocean and the sky, in the storm and the lightning, in every thing in the kingdom of nature and providence, a field where his imagination may expatiate with unlimited power. His acquisitions correspond, in a good degree, to his original endowments. It were not to be expected, indeed it were not possible, that he could have gone extensively into every de-

partment of science and learning, in which his great and versatile mind would have enabled him to become preeminent; we suppose his favorite studies to have been the science of morals and theology, though he has shown himself deeply versed in political economy, and the various branches of polite literature. His knowledge of the ancient and modern classics is extensive and exact; and if we mistake not, they make part of his every-day reading even at this advanced period of life. We remember to have been equally delighted and astonished at hearing him converse for an hour upon the philosophy of language, in a style which discovered a degree of reflection and research from which one might have supposed, that it was not only a favorite topic, but that he had made it the study of his life.

It were naturally to be expected, that an intellect of such uncommon strength should be associated with a corresponding strength of feeling. This is true in respect to Mr. Hall; and it is no doubt to the power of his feelings, that the world is indebted for some of the most brilliant and useful of his efforts. A man of a dull temperament, let his intellect be what it might, could never produce those fine strains of soul-stirring eloquence, in which it is the privilege of Mr. Hall to pour out even his common thoughts. But with all the strength of his feelings, his heart is full of kindness and affection. In all his intercourse he is noble and generous. His attachments are strong and enduring. He is open and honest in respect to every thing and every body. As no one can approach him without a deep feeling of respect, so no one can be admitted to the hospitalities of his fireside and the privilege of his friendship, without finding, that the sentiment of respect is fast ripening into that of cordial and affectionate attachment.

The piety of this great man is at once rational and evangelical; equally removed from the false fervors of enthusiasm and the cold reveries of a philosophical religion. His views of religious truth are well known to correspond generally with those of Dr. Dwight, Dr. Lathrop, and the other divines of the same school in this country; and it were not possible that his religious character, built upon such views, should be otherwise than rational and consistent. In his conversation, his preaching, his devotional exercises, he shows not only that he is familiar with every part of divine truth, but that its influence deeply pervades his heart; and that he covets no higher honor, and no more delightful employment than to sit at the feet of Jesus and commune with him. In his prayers, there is the same originality and strength of conception that mark every thing which comes either from his lips or his pen; but there is apparently the simple breathing out of the soul in fervent and holy desires, and an entire forgetfulness of every thing that does not per-

tain to the duty in which he is engaged. While his manner in prayer is deeply earnest and impressively solemn, his tones are simple and natural, and as far removed as can be from that artificial and whining manner, which is intended to indicate deep feeling, but which to a reflecting person always gives some reason to doubt whether there is any feeling at all.

It must be obvious to any one who is even moderately conversant with Mr. Hall's writings, that he has no great partiality for theological technicalities; indeed we know of no writer who has done more than he by example at least, to discountenance them, and to restore to the science of theology the plain language of the bible and common sense. It admits not of question, that many a great mind has been held in bondage to error by the mere influence of words and phrases; and perhaps it were not rash to assert that there are yet some modes of expression, that the church is not prepared to part with because they seem to her venerable on account of their age, which would not bear to be brought to the simple standard of scripture and common sense. We are far from wishing to see any change on this subject, which should unnecessarily shock the feelings of any of our fellow christians; nor would we desire any change unless in cases where the popular phraseology is manifestly adapted to obscure the truth or lead to positive error. But we regard it as one of the happy effects of the controversy which for the last twenty years has been going on between the friends and the enemies of evangelical truth, that it has served greatly to reduce the technical vocabulary of theological science. We are satisfied, that the religion of Christ is not only most attractive, but most powerful, when it is presented in its native simplicity. It feels every thing foreign that is laid upon it, as a dead weight. Let it be entirely unembarrassed by human inventions, and it will soon take wing and fly through the world.

But if we mistake not, there is as much reason for reform in the technology of experimental religion, as of theological science. We had hoped that Foster's enlightened and admirable view of this subject, would not have been lost upon the religious community of this country; but if we are not entirely deceived, there never was a time when the use of quaint and offensive phraseology in the department of christian experience, was more common than it is at present. There is a set of phrases which seem by many persons to be regarded as inseparable from revivals of religion, which are neither warranted by scripture nor consistent with good taste; and the tendency of which is to keep many in the higher classes from ever examining the subject at all. We happened within a week to be traveling in a stage coach with a gentleman of apparently deep and earnest piety, who actually seemed to

have so identified these phrases with all his ideas of experimental religion, that he could not speak of the subject at all in any other language. Instead of saying, for instance, that a certain church which seemed to be on the eve of a revival, was deeply humbled before God, he said there were *great breakings down* in it; and instead, of saying, that there was a spirit of earnest prayer, he remarked irreverently as we thought, that there was prayer *which took right hold of the Lord's arm*. Indeed we have to object to much of this phraseology, which has come in upon us of late years, not merely that it is offensive to good taste, but that it is positively irreverent; and we earnestly hope, that ministers and all intelligent christians will set their faces steadfastly against it, and will endeavor to realize themselves, and so far as they can, make others realize, that earnest piety and common sense have never declared war against each other. We have never heard any person converse on the subject of religion, who was more entirely unexceptionable in this respect than Mr. Hall; and if there were the same tendency to this evil in England which there is in this country; we should set down his complete exemption from it as one of the positive evidences of his greatness.

In private conversation, Mr. Hall is the admiration and delight of every circle in which he mingles. He converses a great deal, partly because when his mind is excited, it is not easy for him to remain silent, and partly because there is so much in his conversation to interest and edify, that almost every one who is in his company regards it as a privilege to listen rather than talk, and acts accordingly. We have been struck with the fact, that let the conversation turn on whatever subject it may, even though it be a subject on which he might be expected to be least at home, he is equally ready, equally eloquent. He possesses beyond any other man we have known, the faculty of bringing facts and principles which are stored up in his mind, instantly to bear upon any given subject; throwing around it at once, to the mind of the hearer, the clear, strong light in which it appears to his own mind. This must be owing partly to the original power which he possesses, of discerning almost intuitively, even the most remote relations of things to each other, and partly to the perfect order with which all his intellectual acquisitions are arranged. In the midst of an involved discussion, he will bring to his aid insulated facts from the various departments of knowledge, without the least hesitation or effort; just as we have known some men who had a remarkable attachment to order, able to enter their library, and lay their hand on any book at pleasure in the dark. But notwithstanding he converses so much, there is not the semblance of an obtrusive or ostentatious manner; nothing that seems to say, that he is thinking of his own

superiority : on the contrary, he seems to forget, and sometimes makes those around him forget, the greatness of the man, in the greatness which he throws around his subject. He has a strong passion for irony, which often comes out in his conversation, and sometimes with prodigious effect. He is, however, by no means severe in the common estimate which he forms of character ;—so far from it, that he treats characters for the most part with unusual lenity, and sometimes seems delighted with exhibitions of intellect from others, which would have appeared to every one else far beneath the most common-place efforts of his own mind. It must be attributed to his disposition to judge charitably of the productions of other minds, that he has written recommending prefaces to several books which, though certainly adapted to be useful, do not, in point of intellectual merit, rise far above a respectable mediocrity.

As a preacher, none, we presume, will accuse us of extravagance, when we say, that Mr. Hall is the admiration of the age ; and not of his own country only, but of the whole christian world. It must be confessed, that his manner in the pulpit will not bear to be tried by any rhetorical rules ; you might as well think to chain the wind or the lightning, as to cramp such a spirit as his in any of its operations. In the commencement of his discourse, you would see nothing promising but his majestic countenance and piercing eye ; and it would not be strange if a few of the first sentences should excite but little expectation. His voice, at best, is small, and his articulation not the most distinct, or his gesture the most graceful ; but before he has proceeded far, you observe the kindling of his spirit in his tones, his countenance, his gesture, his attitude, in every thing that goes to constitute his manner. You find yourself carried along by him as irresistably as if you had been taken up in a whirlwind ; and you have neither the power nor the disposition to stop to analyze the impression which he makes upon you, until you are free from the almost magical power of his eloquence. We cannot call him graceful or elegant ; we cannot say that he has a commanding voice, or that its inflections are greatly varied ; but we can say, that the *tout ensemble* of his manner, in our estimation at least, is wonderfully impressive. There is something in it which communes directly with the understanding, and the heart, and the conscience, and the whole man. We ought in justice to add, however, that some other persons who have heard him have judged differently ; and that our estimate in this respect, is formed from having heard him preach a single sermon, and that confessedly one of the most eloquent as to matter and manner, which those who had stately listened to his preaching for years, remembered to have heard.

Mr. Hall never writes his discourses, though it is impossible that he should preach as he does, without having previously digested his subject and arranged his thoughts. He regards the writing of sermons as an intolerable drudgery, and even those which he has published were written after they were delivered. But he has the habit of speaking with such perfect correctness, that it were impossible for his discourses to be improved by being committed to paper. Our limits do not permit us here to discuss the subject of the comparative advantages of reading sermons, and the mode adopted by Mr. Hall and most of the English dissenters. But we think it a point deserving of much more consideration, especially in our theological seminaries, than it seems yet to have received. We would not by any means, wish to see our students of theology or young clergymen, becoming converts to the doctrine that writing is mere useless drudgery; but we do think it their imperative duty to train themselves to a habit of extemporaneous speaking, and to exercise this "gift that is in them," at least once every week. We do not indeed believe, that in ordinary cases, so great an amount of instruction is likely to be communicated in any other way, as by committing one's thoughts carefully to paper; but that a greater degree of excitement will usually be the effect of an earnest and impassioned discourse, in which the language at least is extemporaneous, admits of no question. Whatever else may be said in a comparison of English and American preachers, (we of course refer only to English Dissenters,) there is no room for doubt that the former are far more ready, and usually far more happy, in their extemporaneous efforts than we are. This difference is owing wholly to a difference of education; and it is dishonorable to our country, that it should exist, especially where there are such ample opportunities for our young men to make themselves, in this respect, every thing which they ought to be.

As to the character of Mr. Hall's sermons, unhappily the world are left to judge, from a very few, though incomparably brilliant specimens. We do not mean, that these are not fair specimens of his preaching, or that he might not probably have given to the world many more which would have done equal honor to his intellect and his heart; but we mean, that they are, to say the least, among the noblest specimens of this species of composition which the language contains. His sermon on Infidelity may perhaps be considered his master piece. We know of nothing within the same compass, in which there is such an array of artillery played off upon the infidel, and with such prodigious effect as this sermon. The sermon on the death of the Princess Charlotte, is, perhaps, on the whole scarcely inferior to it, though of an entirely different character. It has all the tenderness, beauty, and sublimity, with which such a mind

would naturally be inspired by such an occasion. All his published sermons are distinguished by a simple and easy arrangement, though sometimes there is not the formality of announcing a plan; by an extent and majesty of thought which is peculiar to himself; by a completeness and force of argument which is fitted to compel conviction; and by a deep sense of the impressive greatness of every thing that is connected with God's holy truth. As they are occasional sermons, it were not to be expected, that they should contain such discriminating and pungent exhibitions of the doctrines and duties of the gospel, as might reasonably be looked for in the ordinary ministrations of the sabbath; and if these sermons are really in that respect a specimen of Mr. Hall's common preaching, we should not hesitate, with all its consummate excellence, to pronounce it faulty. We have reason, however, to believe, that he deals honestly and faithfully with the consciences of men; and that while all his preaching is strictly evangelical, much of it is characterized by that directness and point, which is fitted above any thing else, to procure for the truth a permanent lodgment in the heart. We have very recently heard, that as he considers himself drawing towards the close of his ministry, his preaching is less argumentative and more devotional; and, that in all his public services, he seems more than ever to breathe a spirit, which is nearly ripe for the communion of the world of glory.

It is manifest, that Mr. Hall's style of preaching has a peculiar adaptation to the higher classes of society; and, perhaps, it is not too much to say, that there principally we are to look for its effects. It is easy to conceive of an audience upon which such sermons as most of those he has published, would be entirely thrown away; and it is equally easy to conceive of one, upon which they would exert the highest moral influence, that could be expected from any human compositions. The latter, to a considerable extent, we suppose to have been the audience to which they were actually addressed. If our object were to furnish an ignorant, unthinking mind, with an antidote against the poison of infidelity, there are many tracts which we should select for the purpose sooner than Mr. Hall's celebrated sermon on that subject; but if the individual concerned, had been trained to a habit of reflection, and was capable of comprehending a strong and logical course of argument, we know of nothing in the language from which we should more confidently expect a happy result.

If we mistake not, there is a disposition extensively prevalent, to bring up, or bring down, the preaching of every body to some one particular standard; and that standard is the one which each individual happens to have framed for himself. There is no doubt,

that some modes of preaching are better on the whole than others; but provided only that the pure gospel be exhibited, we do not think there is any great cause either for complaint or alarm, if each preacher adopts the particular mode of exhibiting truth which happens to suit him best; and in all ordinary cases a person will succeed best in his own way, the way that is most natural to him. And it is manifest that God has had some purpose in respect to this matter, and a wise purpose too; and that he demands our co-operation for its accomplishment. He has given to mankind a great variety of intellectual and moral constitution; and while some minds may be successfully approached in one way, others, if we come at them at all, must be approached in a very different manner. Now in the distribution of gifts among ministers, there is a variety, corresponding to the diversity of native character, to be found among those whom they are called upon to address. When, therefore, we hear a preacher, whose mode of exhibiting truth does not precisely accord with our own taste, if his argument is a little more refined, or his language a little more figurative, than we should ourselves have chosen, while we endeavor to turn it to as good account as we can, as it respects our own edification, we take the comfort of thinking, that there are other minds of a different texture from our own, into which it will enter with more light and power. And here, as it seems to us, is a reason why every preacher should consider it a point of duty to find out if he can, (for that is not always an easy matter,) what his own manner is, and study to perfect himself in that, rather than attempt to borrow one which was never designed for him. If God had intended, that a preacher should have any other manner than that which naturally belongs to him, no doubt it would have been among his original endowments; hence it is manifest that in endeavoring to assume any other, he is acting contrary to the design of Providence. We of course would not carry this doctrine so far as to discourage attempts to remedy natural imperfections: we only mean that each individual may be expected to do most and best, when his faculties operate in the most easy and natural way, and when he acts in consistency not only with the several but the particular laws of his intellectual and moral constitution. In our own country, we have had several distinguished pulpit orators; and we sincerely regret, that there are so many copies, or we should speak more accurately to say, caricatures of them, scattered through the land. If we were permitted to speak one and only one sentence in the ear of every theological student in this country on the subject both of writing and speaking, it should be, "Cast away all models, and yield yourself up to the simple dictate of nature."

But it may be asked whether no advantage is to be derived by

the student of theology, from hearing and reading fine specimens of pulpit eloquence? We answer, very great advantage, provided they are not adopted as models, and suffered to give an artificial direction to the operation of one's own faculties. Probably the whole benefit may be derived from them by attending to them without any thought of imitation, and getting one's mind so far imbued with the spirit by which the effort was prompted, as is necessary to form a proper estimate of it. There is in every person a natural love of proportion and symmetry. Every one loves to see things in keeping; and if they are not so, it is easy for any person to see that there is something wrong, though it may not always be easy to discover where the fault lies. The moment a preacher assumes another man's peculiarities, there is a feeling on the part of his hearers, in many instances perhaps scarcely noticed by themselves, that there is something discordant, something out of proportion; and where the imitator happens to be a man of small powers, and attempts to incorporate into his manner the peculiarities of a giant, to every person of common sense he actually appears small in the same proportion that he attempts to appear great.

While therefore, in contemplating the character of Mr. Hall as a preacher, we see much of the wisdom and goodness of Providence, in raising up such a man to speak with so much power and effect to the higher classes of society, and while we regard him as being perhaps as perfect in his own way as any other preacher with whose labors the christian world has been blessed, we are far from proposing him as a model to persons who are constituted with different peculiarities of mind, and to whom God has evidently assigned a very different part in the building of his spiritual temple. We have heard some men speak even of Robert Hall and of other kindred spirits, as accomplishing but little for the church. And why? Because their preaching was not conformed to the standard which they had themselves adopted, because forsooth it was too logical, or too elevated for common minds. But let these persons recollect, as a cure for their weak prejudices, that there are in the world some *uncommon* minds; minds upon which their own addresses, however useful in their place, would be entirely lost; and that in providing some such men as Robert Hall, the Head of the church has shown alike his wisdom and his goodness. Let those from whom such complaints are sometimes heard, be contented to do the utmost good they can in their own way; but let them not conclude that minds of a higher order accomplish no good, because they act in a somewhat different sphere, or because their influence is less concentrated, and therefore less palpable. A common parish minister may be instrumental in the conversion of many souls, while a distinguished professor in a theological seminary may

never be the direct instrument of converting one ; but it would be wrong to infer that the former has been on the whole a more useful minister than the latter, or even that he would ultimately have as many souls as crowns of his joy ; because in training up young men for the ministry, he is training them up for the business of effecting conversions ; and in each of these conversions he may be regarded as having not a direct, but an indirect instrumentality. But even when two ministers are devoted in the same way to the ordinary duties of their office, it is not always right to estimate their comparative usefulness by the number of apparent or real conversions, of which they are *directly* instrumental ; because though the preaching of the one may awaken a great number of sinners, and bring more persons into the church, yet that of the other may exert an influence upon a few minds, which in time will be destined to influence a multitude ; it may be the means of controlling in a measure the secret springs of society, and even guiding the destinies of a nation, and thus may be rendered powerfully subservient to all the just and holy intents of Christ's kingdom. We should think it strange if Dr. Beecher's sermons on intemperance, had been *directly* instrumental in bringing about a revival of religion, or even effecting a single conversion ; but we should not think it strange, if they should be found at last to have exerted a mighty influence in saving this great nation from ruin ; we should not think it strange, if they should procure for their author some of the brightest gems, which will adorn his immortal crown. Let the preaching of Mr. Hall then and of others like him (if there are any such) be judged by a fair and liberal standard ; and let other men of less gifted minds, instead of attempting to imitate them on the one hand, or to detract from them on the other, learn the great practical lesson, of using their own powers for the purpose and in the manner which God intended.

We cannot close our remarks upon Mr. Hall as a writer, without adverting to his polemical productions. Most of these relate to the subject of open communion, and religious liberty ; though some of his miscellaneous reviews, it must be confessed, partake somewhat of a controversial character. The same qualities of mind which appear in all his other writings, characterize these,—viz. copiousness, clearness, strength, and majesty both of thought and diction ; but in addition, there is here often the most keen and lightning-like sarcasm. He always meets his antagonist with boldness, and sometimes handles him with great severity ; and if he occasionally exhibits a burst of indignation, it proceeds from a strong conviction, that he is dealing not merely with ignorance, but with gross moral obliquity. He seems desirous to be courteous towards his opponent wherever he *can* be ; but where he supposes

there is a call for severity, he sometimes deals off his blows with the strength of a giant. We are at a loss where to find any polemical writings in our language, in which the argument is more thoroughly sustained, and the whole subject dispatched with more dignity and effect, than in his tracts on open communion, and his apology for the freedom of the press.

We have already had occasion to remark, that such a man as Robert Hall must be destined to exert a powerful influence on the character of the age. To ascertain the extent of that influence were at present, and perhaps will always be, impossible. Before concluding our remarks, however, we will notice some of the most prominent ways in which he is likely to assist in molding the destinies of his country and of the world.

It cannot be questioned, that Mr. Hall's influence has been, and is destined to be, extensively felt in elevating the standard of preaching. We are aware, that there are those who are not prepared to appreciate his labors in this respect, from the fact that they regard every thing beyond the mere commonplaces and technicalities of theology, as involving a departure from the simplicity that is in Christ; and some there are who tremble almost as if the ark were in danger, when along with the simple truths of the gospel, there happens to be an exhibition of intellectual greatness, and especially of cultivated taste. For ourselves we confess, that we have no sympathy with any prejudices of this kind: we do not care how much taste or eloquence may be exhibited in a discourse, provided only it is made subservient to the great end of preaching, and does not serve to blunt the edge of the sword of the spirit. But whatever our own opinion may happen to be in reference to this subject, it is certain, that there is a large class, (and in the progress of society, it must be expected to be constantly increasing,) who require preaching of an elevated character; who rather than sit down quietly under a ministry which has in it little or nothing intellectual, will choose to stay at home, or perhaps go still more quietly to sleep. It may be said, that this is a wrong taste, and that it ought not to be humored; but without stopping to inquire how far such demands are reasonable, it is obvious that to a degree at least, they must be met, or a considerable number of the class to which we have referred will rarely, if ever, be brought within the influence of the preaching of the gospel. Far be it from us to recommend to a preacher in any circumstances, the least attempt at compromise with the feelings of worldly men, by a partial concealment of the truth; we insist that he shall always preach the simple gospel of Christ; but we are willing that he should do it, if he can, with the eloquence and dignity of Robert Hall; because we well know that there is a class with whom such preaching is more likely per-

haps than any other, to prove the power of God ; and we are quite confident that such a man will find his right place.

Now it seems to us, that Mr. Hall has probably done more towards forming a style of preaching adapted to men of a high order of intellect, than any other man of the age. While there is in his sermons no covering up of evangelical doctrine,—nothing which indicates that timid and miserable policy, which would conciliate the great at the expense of ministerial fidelity, there is an originality, and depth, and grandeur of conception, which cannot fail to chain every admirer of intellectual greatness. While Mr. Hall's personal ministry has been a source of edification and delight to many of the most distinguished of his countrymen, it has no doubt served to form and elevate the taste of many a young preacher, who is now following in his brilliant track, though it must be confessed *hauri passibus æquis*. This influence on the English pulpit may be supposed to have been more decisive from the fact, that during a considerable part of his ministry he has resided in the immediate vicinity of one of the great universities of the country, or else has been connected with an institution designed to educate young men for the christian ministry. Even in our own country, his published sermons are probably more read, as fine specimens of that kind of composition, than any other in the language ; and we have no doubt that they are destined to hold the same precedence for a long time to come.

It is impossible to compare the sermons of the present day with those of past ages, without perceiving, that there has been in some respects at least, a manifest improvement. We say in *some* respects ; for in regard to extent of thought, copiousness of scripture illustration, and deep and earnest piety, we shall look in vain for those who have risen higher than some of the English divines of the seventeenth century. The improvement to which we refer relates more particularly to the art of making sermons, and consists in the greater simplicity of method, in the absence to a considerable extent of technical phraseology, and in the combination of those qualities which are fitted to make a more single, and of course, a deeper impression. But we do not suppose, that the church has yet, in this respect, seen her best days. In her onward march towards the millennial glory, as the ministry is to be chiefly instrumental in directing her destinies, and as the preaching of the gospel is the principal means by which the ministry operates, we have a right to expect, that preaching as an art will be better understood, and that the sword of the spirit will be wielded with more skill and effect. While Mr. Hall will have contributed to form one class of preachers, which the exigencies not of the present generation only but of posterity will demand, other distinguished men will have ex-

erted an influence in forming a different class ; and thus we have reason to believe that the standard of preaching will, on the whole, constantly rise higher and higher, while there will still be that variety in the manner of exhibiting truth, which is adapted to the various orders and classes of society. It is by no means an improbable supposition, that those who listen to the preaching of the gospel on the morning of the millennial day, will hear the servants of God proclaim their message in a nobler, bolder, holier style of eloquence than uninspired men have yet been able to reach. And may it not even be regarded as an indication, that our lot is cast near that most glorious day of the church, that young men enjoy so many more advantages than formerly for becoming accomplished, able, efficient preachers ; and that the word of truth is actually proclaimed to the men of this generation, probably with more skill and higher effect, than it has been to any generation that has preceded it ?

Not less is the influence which Mr. Hall is destined to exert in sustaining the cause of truth against the advocates of error and skepticism. Every one knows, that infidelity with its twin brother Socinianism, has always been fond of claiming a monopoly of the talents and learning of the age. That there has sometimes existed a monstrous union of great talents with great errors and vices, it were in vain to deny ; though the claims which skeptical men have made on this subject are not only without foundation, but ridiculous in the extreme ; for where infidelity can point to a single great name, we hesitate not to say that christianity can produce its scores, if not its hundreds. And who does not know, that a certain sect in our own country which has sprung up within a few years, was wont for a long time to make the same arrogant pretensions ; claiming all the biblical learning, and nearly all the intellectual greatness of the times ; and we confidently believe, that if the whole truth were known, we should see that not a small proportion of those who have gone over to this fatal heresy, were drawn into the snare by the bait that was spread before them, in these unfounded and ridiculous pretensions. Even admitting the alledged fact, that the larger proportion of men of great minds are unfriendly to christianity, or are the advocates of some false form of christianity, it is manifest that this would make nothing against the truth of the gospel ; because the evidences on which the gospel rests its claims, together with the doctrines which it reveals, require nothing more than an ordinary mind to examine and estimate them ; and considering the pride of intellect by which most great minds are distinguished, and the natural tendency of this to blind the eye against the light of God's truth, it may well be questioned whether the opinion of an individual of common intelligence, who has faithfully examined the subject of

christianity with an honest and tractable temper, is not as much to be valued as that of a more gifted mind, with no more than a common exemption from the pride of opinion. But inasmuch as men naturally love darkness rather than light, and are glad to find an apology for the rejection of truth and the admission of error, it is an occasion for gratitude when God is pleased by employing the noblest talents of the age in defense of evangelical christianity, signally to confound those who have the impudence to exhibit it as the creature of weakness or fanaticism. For ourselves, we attach but little importance comparatively to any argument that is drawn merely from human authority; nevertheless, as the abettors of error and skepticism are pleased to make much of it, we are willing to confront them with weapons of their own devising. When they talk of Hume, or Bolingbroke, or Rousseau, or any other of their champions, whether among the living or the dead, we point them to Robert Hall as a man whose intellectual powers are probably not exceeded by those of any other man of the age, and yet one of the firmest defenders of christianity which the world has seen. And we doubt not, that the union of intellectual power and moral excellence which his character presents, may stand in the place of many arguments, with a multitude of youth, to keep them from entering the broad road of open or disguised infidelity. In referring them to such a character as Mr. Hall, we accomplish a double purpose; we not only show them genuine christianity in alliance with one of the noblest intellects, but also as exerting its benign and choicest influences on the heart and life. If it were admitted, that infidelity has sometimes been found associated with an equally vigorous and powerful mind, we have still the advantage in the argument from authority, as it can never be shown in unison with the same high standard of moral excellence.

But Mr. Hall has exerted a still more direct influence in favor of the cause of evangelical truth by his writings, than by his character. His masterly sermon on infidelity, to which we have already more than once alluded, was peculiarly demanded by the exigencies of the period at which it was published; but its influence has been felt ever since on both sides of the Atlantic, and no doubt is destined to be felt with undiminished power, until the monster whose deformities it was designed to expose, shall hide his head in the dark corners of the earth. Perhaps he has published nothing in which he has aimed so heavy or so efficient a blow at Socinianism, as his review of Belsham's life of Lindsey; in which not only the author whom he reviews gets an exemplary chastisement for his gross misrepresentations, and his ridiculous attempts well nigh to canonize a man of only a common mind, but the arrogant claims of the sect to which the biographer belongs (we should ra-

ther say *belonged*, for Mr. Belsham has gone to his account) are exposed with a masterly hand, and in a spirit of keen, though well deserved sarcasm, and of genuine triumph. His tract on the Holy Spirit is more deeply imbued than any thing else we have seen from his pen, with simple gospel truth ; and while it was evidently dictated by a heart distinguished by a rich experience of the power of godliness, it is admirably fitted to aid others in the great work of their sanctification. Each of these several publications, and others of the same general class to which they belong, have exerted, and must continue to exert, a powerful influence, in arresting the progress of error, and in helping forward the great cause of truth and holiness. And while the writings of Mr. Hall are adapted to exert a powerful, direct influence in favor of evangelical religion, they are also fitted, and are no doubt destined, to accomplish much by forming the minds of others for a successful conflict with error, and for an able defense of the authority and truths of the bible.

Until lately, infidelity has concealed itself in this country, at least to a considerable extent, under various and delusive disguises. When exhibited in its true character, it is far less to be dreaded than when thus concealed, because in the one case we contend with an open enemy and always know where to meet him; in the other we have to encounter an equally bitter foe, under the guise of friendship, and sometimes not the least difficult part of our task is to ferret him out from his lurking places. But whether more or less formidable, every thing at present seems to indicate that all disguise will soon be thrown off, and that open infidelity is the great enemy with which the present generation of Christians in this country will have to contend. In some of our cities there are already depositories of infidel and blasphemous tracts ; there are organized associations which hold their stated meetings for the purpose of strengthening each other in the malignant work of scoffing at the bible ; there are annual celebrations of the birth of a man, whose very name we forbear to mention, because it is only another name not only for blasphemy but for the very loathsomeness of pollution. These certainly are facts of no good omen ; but no christian need be afraid to look them fully in the face ; because they that be for him are a thousand fold more than they that are against him. Nevertheless, facts like these ought to bring every intelligent christian to his post ; and put him upon a course of effort according to his ability to resist this overwhelming tide of skepticism that is coming upon us. We regard the publication of Mr. Hall's entire works at this time, as peculiarly calculated to subserve the christian interest in this country, with reference to the infidel controversy ; and we would earnestly recommend the publication and circulation of other books and tracts, which are especially adapted to the same

end. We would venture even to suggest to our clergymen generally, whether the exigency of the case does not demand that they should distinctly bring before their hearers, the leading evidences of christianity; and in many instances vindicate it directly against the attacks of infidels. It has been perhaps too common in years past, to take for granted, that the mass of hearers were intelligent believers in the divine authority of the bible, and to feel as if nothing were to be done but to explain and enforce its doctrines. There is reason to believe, that this course has given great advantage to infidels of the present day in diffusing the poison of skepticism; they have availed themselves of the ignorance of multitudes to assail the very foundation of the christian fabric, and have actually seemed to lay it in ruins before their eyes, when if the individuals concerned had been previously well instructed, they would have seen that their rude attack had accomplished nothing. It is certainly too much to take for granted, that the mass of people even at this day, are familiar with the evidences of christianity, or have even so much knowledge of them as to be prepared for an encounter with a wily infidel; and we repeat our conviction, that ministers cannot render a more important service to the cause of truth, than by making their hearers, and especially the young, thoroughly acquainted with the grounds on which the gospel claims to be a divine revelation.

Perhaps after all, the most interesting point of view in which Mr. Hall's character can be viewed, is in his entire freedom from a spirit of sectarianism, and his efforts to unite evangelical christians of various denominations in the bonds of holy affection, and in their exertions to advance a common cause. He is himself, as all our readers are aware, a Baptist; but he dissents from most of his brethren on the subject of strict communion. Indeed he is the pastor both of a Baptist and Independent church, worshipping in the same congregation; and he administers the Lord's Supper to them separately, because many of the Baptists still adhere to close communion. But he does not hesitate to avow, that he has more fellowship of feeling for an Independent or Presbyterian, than for a close communion Baptist; for while he regards the one as wrong only as to a matter of form, he regards the other as wrong in a point which is vitally connected with the interests of the church. His whole intercourse and conduct are in strict accordance with his liberal principles. During his residence at Leicester he formed an intimacy with the Rev. Mr. Robinson, a distinguished clergyman of the established church, whose general views were as liberal as his own. After the death of Mr. Robinson, Mr. H. pronounced an eulogium upon him, which is in his best style of eloquence, and which demonstrates that he is as capable of appreciating intellectual

and moral excellence beyond, as within, the limits of his own sect. Indeed the qualities of his heart, no less than those of his understanding, utterly forbid that he should be exclusive either in his friendships or his intercourse; and the fact is, as might be expected, that the most enlightened and excellent in the various christian denominations are among his friends.

Every one knows, that Mr. Hall is not only opposed in principle and practice to strict communion, but that the energies of his great mind have been drawn out in several tracts on this subject, which may be regarded in respect to the influence they are fitted to exert, as the most important of all his publications. Notwithstanding he has discussed the subject with particular reference to his own denomination, the great principle of free communion which he attempts to settle, and which to our apprehension, he does settle in the most convincing and triumphant manner, applies to several other christian denominations, as well as the close communion Baptists. Though his argument has already had great influence, we believe it is destined to have much greater. In England we learn that the principle of open communion among the Baptists is gradually, though perhaps not very rapidly gaining ground; and we *know* that there are a considerable number of clergymen besides Hall and Foster, and many laymen of the highest respectability, who have cordially embraced it. For our own country we fear we cannot say so much. We know among our Baptist brethren men of fine minds, and on every other subject but this, even to that of ministerial fellowship, as open and generous as we could desire; but at the table of our common Master, where it would seem as if there were most to awaken and cherish a liberal spirit, they still show themselves exclusive. We, however, know many individuals, who, we are fully persuaded, regard this as a state of bondage; and who are anxiously looking forward to the time when they shall be enabled to escape from the trammels which sectarian influence and prejudice have imposed upon them, and recognize at the communion table, as well as every where else, the relation which they sustain to the whole body of Christ. It seems to us impossible, that Mr. Hall's works on this subject can be read by intelligent and reflecting men, who are not entirely under the dominion of prejudice, without producing an effect; and though that effect may be gradual, we confidently anticipate that it will be certain; and that to Mr. Hall more than to any other man of the day, will belong the honor of bringing one denomination at least upon the broad ground of open communion.

It is impossible, indeed, as the millenium draws nigh, but that the exclusive principles on this subject which have so long prevailed in many churches, should fade away before the brightness

of that period of light and love. All, we are persuaded, will soon see, that no religious community has a right to prescribe as a term of communion any thing more to be believed than the *fundamental truths of the gospel*; by which we mean those truths, a belief of which can justly be regarded as essential to christian character. Let a church hold as many other true doctrines as she may, we insist that her believing them shall not keep christians who have less light or less faith than herself, away from the privilege of her communion. Whether there is or is not to be some general modification of the church, as the millennial day approaches, which will melt down many different sects into one, we pretend not to predict; but it seems to us that there must be at least that commingling of christians which is involved in the principle to which we have adverted, else the church can never arrive at that state which the millenium supposes. And if there were nothing in God's word to render it certain that christians in that day will "see eye to eye," there is enough to establish the fact, in the events of Providence as they are passing before our eyes. The disciples of Christ all over the world, of whatever variety of name, have received an impulse from on high, which is carrying them rapidly and successfully forward in the great work of evangelizing the nations. Already in nearly every instance, sectarian peculiarities are forgotten in this grand and holy enterprise; and while each denomination can consent to range the whole field of action, hand in hand with other denominations, it reserves a small space and but a small space, on which it claims the privilege of standing alone; and even there for the most part, it does not hold a hostile attitude. We are persuaded that in the benevolent operations of the day, God is working faster than even christians are aware of, in redeeming the church from the curse of mutual alienations and jealousies; and that the march of benevolence is only to be extended a little farther before the church, on seeing all the great barriers which have prevented her co-operation removed, will exclaim with surprise and delight, in the spirit of unity and love, 'What hath God wrought.'

If our limits would permit, we might dwell on the influence which Mr. Hall has exerted, and is likely to exert on the civil and political destinies of England; for though he has never to our knowledge, stepped out of his appropriate sphere as a minister of the gospel, or discovered any undue predilection for mingling either directly or indirectly in the affairs of state, yet he has, both from the pulpit and the press, declared sentiments which the greatest politicians of England have not dared to disregard. What the destinies of that great nation are to be, is a question which it is becoming more and more difficult to answer, and which if we do not greatly mistake, their boldest minds cannot now agitate without

being themselves agitated. One thing, however, we regard as certain;—that in the progress of opinion, and amidst the bold steps which other nations are taking towards reform, as it respects political and religious liberty, that cumbrous religious Establishment must fall, and the event only can determine whether the throne may not be buried amidst its ruins. It is well known, that the number of Dissenters is rapidly on the increase; that their influence is felt more and more in all the departments of society, and that they are awaking to the injustice of being enormously taxed for the support of an ecclesiastical Establishment with which they cannot conscientiously be connected; and especially as this Establishment is maintained by grinding the face of suffering thousands, whose cry is continually going up to heaven. As the sons of those who fled from ecclesiastical oppression, in a much more appalling form, it were to be expected that our sympathies should be with the Dissenters; though we earnestly hope, if God will, that the change which we foresee in the ecclesiastical state of England, may be brought about without a violent national convulsion. Mr. Hall has no doubt lived at period when his influence on his country in this respect, was much greater, or will prove to be much greater, than he himself has imagined; for though his life may not be protracted to see the great crisis in English affairs which we anticipate, he has been active at a time when his efforts in the cause of civil and religious liberty, will probably have a direct bearing on that mighty result. We look upon England with veneration and love, not only as the land of our fathers' sepulchres, but as one of the most ancient fields of intellectual greatness and moral glory; and whatever may be her fortunes in other respects, in coming years and ages, we devoutly ask for her that she may sustain her honorable rank in sending abroad the gospel, and that her walls may be salvation and her gates praise.

In estimating the influence of Robert Hall, we are aware that we have been estimating the influence of one of the mightiest minds which this, or any other age has produced. But if we mistake not, there is an important lesson to be learned from the view we have taken, by persons of every order of intellect; we mean the great importance of devoting such talents as they have to the service of God and their generation. Let any individual labor faithfully with the powers which God has given him, and in the field which God has marked out before him, and though he may accomplish less than Robert Hall, he will do enough to entitle him to the gratitude of his generation, and to procure for himself a bright crown. We are accustomed to say, that it is a privilege to live at this age and in this part of the world; and it is so, not only because of the immense variety of advantages for forming one's own in-

tellectual and moral character, but on account of the greatly increased number of facilities for doing good. Considering the attitude which this country now sustains in the view of other nations, considering her immense extent, her rapidly increasing population, her political and moral relations, we do not believe that there is any part of the world, or that there has ever been a period since the beginning of time, in which a good influence would be more likely to be extensively and powerfully felt than in the period, and in the country, in which our lot is cast. There is every thing to encourage men of all ages and professions, and especially our young men of the clerical profession, to bring all their powers into exercise in the prosecution of their work; for it were scarcely too much to say, that a faithful minister of the gospel can hardly open his lips in the delivery of his message, or in any effort to advance the cause of Christ, but he speaks ultimately to people who dwell in the ends of the earth. Let this thought be impressed upon the mind of every minister and every christian; and let it be accompanied with a conviction that to be comparatively idle, or to be only half awake at such day as this, were enough to forfeit for any one the character of a disciple of Christ.

ART. IV.—REVIEW OF THE LIFE OF REGINALD HEBER, D. D.

The Life of Reginald Heber, D. D. Lord Bishop of Calcutta. By his Widow. With selections from his correspondence, unpublished poems, and private papers; together with a journal of his tour in Norway, Sweden, Russia, Hungary, and Germany, and a history of the Cossacks. In two volumes. New-York.

OF Bishop Heber we can speak only with respect and kindness. We make this declaration with so much sincerity, that in expressing our dissent from some of his principles and religious views, we hope to do it with a spirit, such as he himself generally manifested, and with a full consciousness of our own liability to error. To be explicit at the outset,—we are aware that this eminent individual was, while living, the delight of his personal friends; and now that he is dead, his memory is cherished with no ordinary veneration, by most of those, who have become acquainted with him through his writings. As an author he has honorably distinguished himself both in prose and verse. To the lovers of sentiment and song he has rendered a highly acceptable service, in many of the effusions of his fancy: and the religious public will long feel under obligation to him, for several of his sacred poems, particularly for his delightful little hymn,

“From Greenland’s icy mountains.”