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MEMOIRS OF MR. STUDLEY.

Extracted from Gillies' Historical Collections.

OLD Mr. Studley was a lawyer in Kent, of about 400l. a year. He was a great enemy to the power of religion, and a hater of those that were then called Puritans. His son followed his steps until the Lord called him home as followeth. The young man was at London, and being drunk in company, and going late at night to his lodgings, fell into a cellar, and in the fall was seized with horror, for he thought he fell into hell. It pleased God he took little harm, but lay there some time in a drunken drowse, his body being heated with what he drank, and his soul awakened; he thought he was actually in hell.

After he was come to himself, and had returned home to Kent, he fell into melancholy, betook himself to read and study the scriptures, and to much prayer; which at length his father perceived, and fearing he would turn Puritan, was troubled, and dealt roughly with him, made him dress his horses, which he humbly and cheerfully submitted to. When his father per-

ceived he sat up late at night, reading his Bible, he denied him candle-light; but being allowed a fire in his chamber, he was wont to read by fire-light; and long after told a friend, that while he was dressing his father's horses in his frock, and reading by fire-light, he had those comforts and joys from the Lord, that he had scarce experienced since.

His father seeing these means ineffectual, resolved to send him into France, that by the airiness of that country his melancholy might be cured. He went, and being at his own disposal, the Lord guiding, he placed himself in the house of a godly Protestant minister; and between them, after they were acquainted, (and such is the likeness of saving grace in divers subjects, that a little time will serve for christians to be acquainted) there grew great endearment. He made great progress in speaking the language, and his father expecting an account from the gentleman with whom he lived, of his speaking French, he sent it

to him, but soon after he had orders to return home. The father directing, or the son intreating, his landlord came with him into England, and both were welcomed at the father's house, he not knowing that his son's landlord was a minister. At last, the father found the French gentleman and his son at prayers, was angry, and sent him away. Then, Mr. Studley having interest in a person of honour, a lady at White-hall, and his son, now by his education, accomplished for such an employment, prevailed with her to take him for her gentleman, to wait upon her in her coach. The father thought by a court life to drive away his son's melancholy, (as he called his seriousness in religion.) The lady had many servants, some given to swearing and rudeness, whom this young gentleman would take upon him to reprove, with that prudence and gravity, that sin fell down before him. If any of the servants were ill employed, and heard him coming, they would say, let us cease, or be gone, Mr. Studley is coming. After a year's time, his father waited on the lady, to inquire of his son's behaviour. She answered as it was, that she was glad she had seen his son, he had wrought a mighty reformation in her family. She that had formerly been troubled with unruly servants, by his prudent carriage, was now as quiet in her house, as if she had lived in a private family in the country. Upon receiving this information, the father stormed; what, will he make Pu-

ritans in White-hall? told the lady that was no place for his son, that he would take him with him, which, to her trouble, he did. When he had him at home in Kent, as his last refuge, he thought of marrying him, and, to this end, found out a match, which he thought fit for his ends, to stifle that work of religion in his son. One evening he bade him put on his best clothes the next morning—ordered his servant to make ready their horses, and himself to wait on them. When they were riding on the way, he bade the servant ride before, and spoke to his son to this purpose: "Son, you have been matter of great grief to me, and having used much means to reclaim you from this way you are in, to no purpose, I have one more remedy to apply, in which, if you comply with me, I shall settle my estate upon you, else you shall never have a groat of it. I am riding to such a gentleman's house, to whose daughter I intend to marry you. The son said little, knowing that family to be profane, but went with his father, who before had made way there. They were entertained nobly; he had a sight of the young lady, a great beauty, and fell much in love with her. When they had taken their leaves, and were on their way home, the father asked the son, what he thought of the young lady? He answered, "no man living but must be taken with such an one; he feared she would not like him." The father was glad it had taken, bid him take no care for that. The wooing

was not long: at three weeks end they both went to London, to buy things for the wedding.

The father had charged that in the time of wooing, at the house of the young lady's father, there should be no swearing nor debauchery, lest his son should be discouraged. Wedding clothes were bought, and the day come; the young couple were married. At the wedding dinner, at the young lady's father's house, the mask was taken off; they fell to drinking healths, and swearing among their cups; and, amongst others, the bride swore an oath; at which the bridegroom, as a man amazed, rose from the table, stepped forth, and went to the stable, took an horse, none observing, all were busy within; he mounted and rode away, not knowing what to do. He bewailed himself, as he rode along, as undone, and deservedly; for that he had been so taken in love, and the business so hurried on in design; he said he had at that time restrained prayer, and slackened his communion with God, when, as in that grand affair of his life, he should have been doubly and trebly serious; and so might thank himself that he was utterly undone. He sometimes thought of riding quite away: at last, being among the woods, he led his horse into a solitary place, tied him to a tree, in his distress, and betook himself to prayer and tears, in which he spent the afternoon. The providence of God had altered his argument of prayer, which was now for the conversion of his new married wife,

or he was undone. This he pressed with tears a great part of the afternoon, and did not rise from prayer without good hope of being heard.

At the bride-house was hurry enough; horse and man, (after they missed the bridegroom) sent every way. No news of him: he was wrestling, as Jacob once was at Peniel. In the evening he returned home, and inquiring where his bride was, went up to her, found her in her chamber pensive enough; she asked him, "if he had done well to expose her to scorn and derision all the day?" He intreated her to sit down upon a couch there by him, and he would give her an account of what he had been doing, and tell her the story of his whole life, and what the Lord, through grace, had done for him:

He went over the story here above mentioned, with many beautiful particulars, with great affection and tears, the flood-gates of which had been opened in the wood, and often in the relation would say, through grace, God did so and so for me. When he had told her his story, she asked him, what he meant by that word so often used in the relation of his life, "through grace," so ignorantly had she been educated; and asked him, if he thought there was no grace in God for her, who was so wretched a stranger to God! Yes, my dear, said he, there is grace for thee, and that I have been praying for this day in the wood, and God hath heard my prayer, and seen my tears: let us now go together

gether to him about it. Then they kneeled down by the couch side, and he prayed, and such weeping and supplication was there on both sides, that when they were called down to supper, they had hardly eyes to see with, so swelled were they with weeping. At supper, the bride's father, (according to his custom) swore. The bride immediately said, "father, I beseech you, swear not." At which the bridegroom's father, in a rage, rose from table: what, says he, is the devil in him! Hath he made his wife a Puritan already? and swore bitterly, that he would rather set fire, with his own hands, to the four corners of his fair built house, than ever he should enjoy it; and accordingly he did: for when he made his will, he gave his son (when he should die) ten pounds to cut off his claim, and gave his estate to several persons, of whom a Dr. Reeves was one; and not long after died.

Dr. Reeves sent for the gentleman, paid him his ten pounds, told him he had been a rebellious son, and had disobliged his father, and might thank himself. He received the money, and meekly departed.

His wife (the match was so huddled up) had no portion promised, at least that he knew of, so that she was also deserted by her friends, only having two hundred pounds in her hands that

had been given her by a grandmother, with which they stocked a farm in Suffex, where the writer of these memoirs hath often been, and seen her, who had been highly bred, in her red waistcoat, milking her cows; and was now become the great comforter and encourager of her husband, exceedingly cheerful. God, said she, hath had mercy on me, and any pains I can take, are pleasant.

There they lived some years with much comfort, and had the blessing of marriage, several children.—After about three years, he was met in Kent, on the road, by one of the tenants of the estate, and saluted by the name of landlord. Alas! said he, I am none of your landlord. Yes, you are, said the tenant, I know more of the settlement than you do. Your father, though a cunning lawyer, with all his learning, could not alienate the estate from you, whom he had made joint-purchaser. Myself and some other tenants know it; and have refused to pay any money to Dr. Reeves. I have sixteen pounds ready for you, which I will pay to your acquittance, and this will serve you to wage law with them. He was amazed at this wonderful providence, received the money, sued for his estate, and in a term or two recovered it. "He that loseth his life for my sake and the gospel's, shall find it."

nevolence ! This is presuming to know better than infinite wisdom, and is giving the lie to Jehovah. We may as reasonably deny the dispensations of providence which are daily taking place around us, or assert, that they are inconsistent with perfect benevolence, because we cannot see how these will conduce to the general happiness.

How extremely weak and inconclusive then is this most plausible argument for universal salvation from the benevolence of God? When examined, we see it amounts to no more than this: "It appears to us, as if it would be most for the good of the universe, that all should be saved; therefore it will be so: we cannot see why it is best, that any

should suffer endless punishment; therefore none will."

But how inconclusive such reasoning is, must be apparent from what has been already observed upon the subject. And what little dependence can be placed upon such arguments, when facts continually manifest, that we are wholly unable to comprehend God's vast plan of universal government, and determine what, upon the whole, will be best, and most for the general happiness of the system? To risk our eternal welfare upon such a slender foundation, is hazardous to the last degree: it is the height of folly and madness. It is leaning upon the staff of a broken reed, which will break and pierce the heart with endless sorrow.

THE VARIETY.—No. VIII.

*An Attempt to vindicate the Character of Mr. Thomas Paine, from the Infamy of being the Author of the Pamphlet, entitled, "The Age of Reason."**

A GOOD name is rather to be chosen than great riches. The truth of this observation will be evident to all who duly consider the importance of a good name, as it respects personal comfort, or public utility. And this consideration should excite us to great carefulness with respect to defamation, and to use our influence for preventing the ruin of good characters. These thoughts may apologize for the present attempt.

It is well known, that Mr. Thomas Paine sustained an emi-

nent character in America, in the time of our struggle for liberty; and, indeed, for considerable time since the revolution. His usefulness has been publicly acknowledged and applauded. But within a few years an infamous pamphlet has appeared in America, with the pompous title, "The Age of Reason." And, by some means or other, it has been generally believed that Mr. Paine was the author. In consequence of this belief, his character has greatly depreciated, and the probability of his usefulness is proportionably

* This was written before the account of Mr. Paine's death reached the author.

** Paine died in 1809*

portionably diminished. And such has been the credulity of all ranks respecting this matter, that there has not, to my knowledge, so much as an individual appeared to support his character, by suggesting a *doubt*, whether he was, in fact, the author of that publication. Therefore, as a deed of charity to Mr. Paine, and to the public, I now step forward, and venture to assert, that it *may be doubted* whether Mr. Paine was the author of the pamphlet, entitled, "The Age of Reason." In support of this assertion I shall transcribe a passage which I have seen quoted from that pamphlet.

The author, whoever he was, to invalidate the scripture history and doctrine, respecting the resurrection and ascension of Christ, reasoned as follows:—"The resurrection and ascension, supposing them to have taken place, admitted of public and ocular demonstration, like that of the ascension of a balloon, or the sun at noon day, to all Jerusalem at the least. A thing which every body is required to believe, requires that the proof and evidence of it should be equal to all, and universal: and as the public visibility of this last related act was the only evidence that could give sanction to the former part, the whole of it falls to the ground, because the evidence never was given. Instead of this, a small number of persons, not more than eight or nine, are introduced as proxies for the whole world to say, they *saw it*, and all the rest of the world are called upon to believe it."

Although we cannot approve

of the pamphlet in general, yet it doubtless contains some just observations, and the passage before us is so intelligible, so convincing, and so agreeable to the common sense of mankind, that it needs no comment; and nothing can be said to advantage in its vindication. And in a view of this passage, I appeal to your consciences, O Americans! and ask, what evidence have we that Mr. Paine was *guilty* of writing "The Age of Reason?" His writing that piece, "supposing it to have taken place, was capable of public and ocular demonstration." But who of us *saw him write it?* or so much as heard him *say* that he did write it? Are there so many as eight or nine to stand as proxies for the whole world, to *say they saw him write it?* But supposing that such a small number of proxies could be found, what is that to others? "A thing which every body is required to believe, requires that the proof and evidence of it should be equal to all, and universal." And, surely, I did not see him write it; and it may be scrupled whether there is one to a million of those who believe him to be the author of that book have had any ocular demonstration. O foolish people! O credulous generation!

But it will be said, that the pamphlet appeared with his name to it. Granted; and what of that? so do the epistles of Paul appear with his name to them; but does this prove that he wrote them? And may not people be guilty of forgery in this age, as well as in former ages?

Will

Will any further plead, that Mr. Paine has not disowned the production? I may ask, how you know he has not? He may have done a great many things in France which have never come to our knowledge. But granting he never has disowned it, perhaps he has never seen it; or if he has seen it, possibly he thought it to be so weak and contemptible, that none of his friends would be so credulous as to imagine that he wrote it.

Some will say the stile is Paine's stile; but, perhaps, it is wholly owing to your imagination or prepossession, that you see a familiarity between the stile of that production and Mr. Paine's writings. Probably, you were so credulous as to believe the performance to be his, before you examined the stile. If so, you were completely prepared to see his stile, whether he wrote the book or not. It is, my friends, difficult to say, how far our understandings may be imposed upon by an impetuous imagination or strong prepossessions. But admitting the idea of a familiarity of stile, is it impossible that another

person should imitate his stile? Once more; if there is a *familiarity of stile* between "The Age of Reason" and Mr. Paine's writings, is there not a *contrast* with regard to *sense*? Did not Mr. Paine use to write *Common Sense*? But is not a great part of "The Age of Reason" a *sort of sense peculiar to the vulgar class of infidels*?

I am now ready to submit three things to the public mind, viz.

1. Whether there is not reason to suspect, that some designing person, either to injure Mr. Paine or the public, wrote "The Age of Reason," and published it to the world as Mr. Paine's production?

2. Whether we have more evidence that "*The Age of Reason*" is the *word of Paine*, than we have that the *sacred scriptures* are the *word of God*?

3. Whether Christians are chargeable with a more ridiculous credulity in believing the resurrection of Christ, than even Deists themselves are, in believing that Mr. Paine wrote "The Age of Reason?"

THE VARIETY.—No. IX.

Questions relating to several Subjects; designed to facilitate the Investigation of Truth.

WITH respect to the subjects to which the following questions relate, the writer of *The Variety* cheerfully confesses his need of instruction, and requests the assistance of those who, by careful attention to the subjects, have obtained satisfaction to their own minds.

Sect. I. *Respecting a succession of ideas in the divine mind.*

1. Is there any succession of ideas in the mind of God? Are the creation of the world, the events of the present day, and the day of judgment, coeval in the divine view?

2. Is