

the greatest good to man, have had far more serious difficulties and discouragements to encounter than those which fall to our share;—and since they have succeeded in so many instances, we have no reason to doubt that with time, patience, perseverance and the blessing of Almighty God upon our labours, our efforts will be crowned with success.—Engaged as we are in a work the importance of which will admit of no calculation; cheered and supported by the prayers and good wishes of every sincere follower of Jesus, every friend to God and man, we have every reason to proceed with confidence, looking to Him, who alone can order the unruly wills and affections of sinful men, who alone can give the blessing, and cause the seed sown by his unworthy instruments, to bring forth and produce their glorious fruits to the eternal salvation of immortal souls.

It will be unnecessary for us to detail, at length, in the present report, the object and design of our association, and our means of carrying them into effect, since they were so fully set forth in the last annual report. Our grand, and indeed our sole aim is the distribution of the Bible,—that blessed Book which was the inestimable gift of God to man, designed to cheer and support him through this vale of sorrow, pain, and death, and to guide his upward aim to realms of everlasting glory—that blessed book, which instructs us in our duty to God and to our fellow men, which declares the whole counsel of God in the salvation of a lost and ruined world, through the great atonement made on Calvary—through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus our Lord—that blessed book which bringeth glad tidings of great joy unto all people, which is able to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all mourners.—In a word, that blessed book, which teaches us how to live, and how to die, that we may rise again to life eternal.—It is by conveying this exalted messenger

of divine love and mercy, this glorious light of gospel truth, into the habitations of those who lie in darkness and in the shadow of death, that we are able to substitute beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness.

Such being the great object of our association, can we for a moment distrust our ability, by our means, or be wanting in confidence towards Him, whose glory and whose kingdom upon earth we thus seek to promote and enlarge?—Certainly not.—If we fail in any degree, the fault must be our own.—It is because we employ not our talents as faithful stewards in our master's cause.—While our fellow christians of all nations and languages and sects are exerting themselves in one grand effort to diffuse the Blessings of Gospel light, shall we remain idle spectators, or only be distinguished by some feeble efforts rendered vain and fruitless by indecision and want of perseverance? No—rather let us apply ourselves with greater diligence to the work, unite our hearts and hands in the cause of God and our Redeemer, and press forward with faith and confidence to the attainment of the prize, assured that we shall reap, if we faint not.—That gracious God, whose cause we espouse, will surely be with us, will bless our humble endeavours to do him service, and will grant us that crown of victory which will be our ornament, our glory, and our life in the great day of his visitation. *God is not unrighteous that he will forget your works, and labour that precedeth of love*—and we have a two-fold stimulus to excite us to diligence, that while we seek the good of our fellow men, we also promote our own eternal interests.—It is indeed a work peculiar in its nature, fraught with blessings on every side, in which both the giver and receiver are equally benefited, and which must secure the approbation and favour of Jehovah on all concerned.

Such being the nature and importance of our design, and such the benefits attending the execution of it, most earnestly and imploringly would we say to our fellow citizens,

generally, and especially to the young men of our community, come and help us—Unite with us in the great and good cause, and assist us, with your prayers and your means, in accomplishing this blessed work—and while we thus endeavour to sow the seed of divine knowledge, may God give us the increase, bring forth to maturity the fruits of righteousness and true holiness, and grant us a plentiful and glorious harvest in the day of Judgment.

For a statement of the fiscal concerns of the Society, the Board refer to the Treasurer's report, which they beg leave to offer as a part of this report.

All which is respectfully submitted. By order of the Board of Managers. J. GEO. WHITWELL, Sec'y. Richmond, May 6. 1822.

RICHMOND BETHEL UNION SOCIETY.

As required by the constitution of this Association, the Board of Directors present their first Annual Report. If, while reporting the progress of this Society, we may be indulged in a retrospective view of its origin; we may congratulate our constituents, the religious public, and, indeed, the community at large, on the possession of a favoured few among the different religious denominations, who have been taught with effect, to make the kingdom of God and his righteousness, the object of their first and most ardent pursuit, and, by all the means they possess, to call upon, and incline their fellow immortals to join them in it—with them to taste and see that the Lord is gracious—to such men, under the guidance and direction of the great source of all good, we owe it, that, during the last autumn, our attention was solicited to the condition of our seamen and the claims they had upon us. We were called upon to contemplate what had been done, and was doing, in England and in the Northern Ports of our own Country, for this long neglected and important portion of our fellow-men. It was observed, that, for some years past, the moral condition of Mariners had

become an object of no little attention and solicitude in London and other British Ports. That, in December, 1817, a meeting had been held in London for the purpose of investigating this important subject, which resulted in the formation, first, of the Merchant Seamen's Bible Society; secondly, of the Port of London Society; and, subsequently, of the Seamen's Friend and Bethel Union Societies in all the principal Ports of that country.

In New-York, we have been led to contemplate the appointment in 1816, of a committee to receive donations for the erection of a Mariner's Church; in the two succeeding years, the formation of the Marine Bible Society, and Port of New-York Society; the objects of the latter being, as well the erection of a Church, as the support of a Preacher of the Gospel to Seamen. These were promptly followed by the New-York Marine Society, whose object it is to furnish preaching to Seamen, until the Church shall be completed; since which they have been regularly blessed with sanctuary privileges—the overtures of mercy and salvation, through the blood of atonement; and, finally, in aid of the Port of the New-York Society, the New-York Bethel Union Society was established on the 4th June last.

In the contemplation of such objects of benevolence and piety in many of our sister ports—seeing with the Liverpool Seaman's Friend Bible Society, that “the national importance of Seamen makes them objects of national interest,—that they are the life of our commerce and successful defenders of our rights—that, upon their enterprise and integrity the success of our trade and the honour of our country so greatly depend—objects too vast and vital to be entrusted in any hands, without the guarantee of moral principle,”—considering, also, with our respected brethren of New-York, that these objects, imperiously weighty and imposing as they are, must “dwindle into comparative insignificance, when put in competition with the eternal interests of a single soul!”—with objects, such as these, before us—with

such appeals to our hearts and consciences, we were induced to make an experiment; the successful result eventuated in the formation of this Society.

The Society is composed of members of the Episcopalian, Presbyterian, Methodist, and Baptist Churches—and with grateful hearts to Him, who has all hearts in his hands, who inclined us to the work, and can thus cause brethren to dwell together in unity, we can adopt the language and sentiment of our northern friends, and say, that, discarding all sectarian jealousies, and meeting on the broad basis of christian philanthropy, they have advanced to, and persevered in the work, as with one heart and one hand. The object of this union is to "extend to Seamen the instructions of the Gospel, to persuade them to become reconciled to God, and generally, to promote their temporal and eternal welfare." In furtherance of this design, as enjoined by the Board of Managers were first, to establish Prayer Meetings on board vessels in port, or in some house convenient for the attendance of Seamen; in which short addresses, prayers and hymns should constitute the exercises; second, social and secret prayer by ship's companies while at sea; and thirdly, the distribution of Bibles and Tracts among Seamen.

The Board consisting of twelve Members were divided into four Committees, to each of which, a Minister of the Gospel was assigned, as their leaders in the religious exercises.

Our week day visits, having been confined to the evenings of Thursday, were regularly attended on the deck of some one of the vessels in port; we have the pleasure to say, that our wishes have been uniformly and cordially acquiesced in, and the best accommodations which were attainable, promptly and cheerfully provided. Thither like an eastern star, the lantern at mast-head invited all to come—there to learn that they were sinners by nature and by practice—there to learn their danger and their remedy—to be directed to Him—the once babe of Bethlehem—to

Him who in the day of his flesh could speak the angry billows into peace—who alone can give the troubled conscience peace—the once crucified—the now exalted and glorified—the Almighty, and the Divine Redeemer!

While some made the invitation to it, others accepted the light of it, Gospel feast—they found, that, even among their own hardy and generally heedless sons of the ocean, praying souls were to be met with—men, who, having buffeted with them the angry billows, know well the peculiar dangers to which they were exposed, and could warn them against that of making shipwreck of their souls. With such, we rejoice to say, we have, occasionally, united, in our exercises, with pleasure and with profit.

By the liberality of one of our own body, we were soon enabled to hoist the Bethel Flag, and, thus, during the day, remind them of their sins, their Savior, and where they might seek and find Him. When the mills of autumn rendered our decks no longer tenable, it soon became apparent that the cabins were, by far, too circumscribed for these meetings, and some establishment on shore the necessary alternative. This, by the assistance of our standing committee was soon provided, warmed, lighted and furnished with seats. To this place the Signal Flag and Lantern were removed, and there, by the attention of the same committee, they invite the seamen and landsmen to come and take of the water of life freely.

At these meetings, the religious exercises have, usually, been introduced by a short promontory address, the object of which was to remind our auditory that they were in a place appropriated to the worship of that God, who could not be imposed upon, and would not with impunity be mocked—in the presence of Him who searches the hearts and tries the reins of the children of men—that, as sinners, we came to them with the overtures of heavenly mercy, the slighting or rejecting of which must necessarily heighten and aggravate their condemnation. A psalm or hymn has then been sung and fol-

lowed by a prayer and a portion of holy writ. An address has been offered with the view of recapitulating and impressing upon the mind and memory the important truths conveyed by such passage—another prayer and song of praise have concluded the exercises—at other times, an interesting tract or article of intelligence, as to what has been done and is doing in other places has been read—in short, as much discretionary latitude has been given to the different committees, the exercises are frequently varied, and it may be, with good effect. Through the liberality of the Bible Societies, that blessed book has been offered to these men at a low price or gratuitously as they might be able and willing to receive it, and of this offer some have availed themselves.—

Tracts have been introduced among them, as we trust, with good effect, being sought after with much avidity: of these, our stock being limited, the recommendation of an interchange was given; and with the blessing of heaven, which was invoked, all may indulge the hope, that they have been, and will continue to be, very effective preachers of righteousness to these long neglected sons of the ocean. For these winged messengers of salvation, which humble as is their guise, we cannot but consider as very powerful auxiliaries—under the great Captain of our salvation, we (whether seamen or landsmen, with the community at large), are indebted to the pious youth of our city—and in some way, which shall at once become us and them, we flatter ourselves the debt will be discharged. In accordance with the number of vessels in port, the number of seamen who attend our ministrations, are necessarily variant—from 20 to 50—they are, generally, orderly, serious and attentive, but, unaccustomed to restraint, of this character, it ought not to surprise, and much less to discourage us, if, occasionally, there shall be some degree of restlessness or a premature retirement. We may safely say, that, this is not, in a single instance, attributable to their bearing any thing indicative of a party or sectarian spirit—any thing

which militated against the church of their fathers—unless indeed, that were an antichristian church—on the contrary, the great leading and essential truths of the Bible have been exhibited to their view, and, with our best energies pressed upon their attention and regard; and we cannot but flatter ourselves with the belief, that, many of them have opened their hearts to receive these truths—this belief, if it is true, has but little better foundation than the apparently serious attention with which they have been heard, by those open, generous and noble spirits—such, proverbially, is the character of a sailor. During the short days of the past season, we have not succeeded to our wish in collecting these men together at an early hour on the Sabbath, so as to enable our clerical brethren to attend, without an interference with their other incumbent duties; but, during the present and coming season, we hope to keep up these ministrations with some regularity. When we take into consideration the infancy of our institution, with which it has had to struggle, we cannot but indulge the hope, that some good has been done—that, *we have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain*—we look forward with cheerful anticipations, even to that day, when the earth and the sea shall give up their dead—when the secrets of all hearts shall be revealed—when some of these weather-beaten Tars may be even unto us, crowns of rejoicing. By the Treasurer's account, which is referred to, it will be seen, that, including the rent which will be demandable on the 17th of this month, the sum which remains at our disposal is reduced to \$10.33. Under such circumstances—our contingent expenses being considerable in the course of the year, and it being one of our objects to distribute religious Tracts and other publications among seamen, those who are friendly to the Bethel Union are invited to lend it their pecuniary aid. They may do this by becoming members at the trivial expense of Fifty Cents per annum—by the payment of Ten Dollars at one time may become

Members for life—or by such donations as their benevolence may prescribe.

*The Committee appointed to prepare a Narrative of the state of Religion, within the bounds of Hanover Presbytery, beg leave to submit the following Report:*

It is, as in every similar case, we find much reason for humiliation and regret, and much ground of encouragement, gratitude and praise.

The prevalence of intemperance, and its accompanying vices, in some parts of our bounds, is a subject of lamentation, and calls for vigorous and united efforts, by the friends of morality and religion, to check the growing evil.

It is believed however, that the sentiments and morals of the people are, upon the whole, improving.

We rejoice to learn from the reports of the different congregations, that the cause of evangelical religion is generally, with a steady step advancing. Professing christians are steadfast, and consistent; and the order and discipline of the church are maintained. Among ministers and people a very great degree of harmony and brotherly love prevail—and the increasing union of sentiment and effort among our private members, encourages the hope that much will be done to advance the general interests of religion.

To the various religious institutions which characterize the present age of the church, liberal patronage and support have generally been afforded. Sabbath Schools are increasing in number and usefulness—Bible Classes are in successful operation in many of our congregations; and it is peculiarly pleasing to learn, that the attention of our youth to the word of God, is increasing. The monthly concert of prayer is observed in the churches generally, and private meetings for prayer and praise are numerous, and well attended.

Missionary labours within our bounds, during the past year, have

greatly multiplied, and promise the most pleasing results. Missionaries have been received with great cordiality, and with unbounded hospitality and kindness. The efforts of the Young Men's Missionary Society in Richmond, are entitled to the particular notice and approbation of the church. During the last year, they have employed eight missionaries, and expended in their support nearly one thousand dollars. The reports of missionaries are in a high degree encouraging. Two or three new churches have been erected within our bounds, one in the city of Richmond, and another in the town of Portsmouth.

In most of our congregations there is a pleasing increase of worshippers, and a growing attention to the word, Sabbath, and ordinances of God. In several of the churches, professing christians are aroused to a sense of duty, and are beginning to call on the name of the Lord with faith and fervour, and pleasing hopes are entertained, that the Lord is about to pour out his spirit and revive his work. In the city of Richmond, we trust, a revival has already commenced, which will result in great good to the church of Christ. Since last November, between 40 and 50 have been added to the First Presbyterian Church in that place, of these a majority were young people, two or three at the age of 13 or 14 years. A few were aged persons, and one was baptised at the advanced age of 70 years. The work has been characterized by stillness and solemnity, and has been greatly advanced by the exertions and prayers of private members.

In the Peak congregation, in Byrd and Providence, in Lynchburg, in Petersburg, and in Norfolk, and its vicinity, the state of things is peculiarly encouraging.

Upon the whole, there appears to be opening a brighter day, to encourage our hopes and animate our exertions.

#### THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY AT PRINCETON.

[We have embraced every opportunity that has offered, to express our good will towards the Theological Seminaries in our country, and our best wishes for their complete success. In our last No. we gave a slight historical sketch of the school of the prophets established at Andover; and now it affords us great pleasure to insert a similar sketch of that at Princeton.]

*To the publisher of the Evangelical and Literary Magazine.*

SIR,—I send, for insertion in the Magazine, an outline of the history of the Seminary at Princeton. It is chiefly derived from "A Brief Account of the Rise, Progress, and Present State of the Theological Seminary of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, at Princeton," &c. just published by Anthony Finley of Philadelphia; to which your readers are referred for more extended information, if they desire it, than I am able to give. I shall, however, notice such changes as have been made by the last General Assembly.

#### *Rise and Establishment of the Seminary.*

The general reasons, which induced the General Assembly to establish this institution, are so well expressed in the little book just noticed, that I cannot forbear transcribing the first paragraph.

"The importance of the union of piety and learning in the Holy Ministry, is one of those radical principles of ecclesiastical wisdom, which the experience of ages has served more and more to confirm. If the priests' lips were of old to keep knowledge; if the ministers of the Gospel are bound to feed the people with knowledge and with understanding; then nothing can be plainer than that ignorance, or small and indigested knowledge is, next to the want of piety, one of the most serious defects in a candidate for the sacred office. It is equally plain, that if this great concern be properly directed, especially if it be directed with order and uniformity, it must be attended to by the church herself. That which is left to individual enterprise and caprice, may sometimes be well managed, but will seldom be managed in any two cases alike. Besides, unless the church take this matter into her own hands, she cannot inspect and control the education which her candidates for the holy ministry receive. Her most precious fountains may be poisoned without her being able to apply an effectual remedy. No church, therefore, which neglects the proper education of her ministers, can be considered as faithful, either to her own most vital interests, or to the honour of her divine head and Lord."