

It has pleased the God of mercy to pour out his Holy Spirit so remarkably on this place, that a considerable number of persons are not only reading with attention the Holy Scriptures, and affording good hopes of eventual conversion, but an infant Church of Protestant Christians has been already formed; and at the first sacrament, no less than twenty-seven persons, all of them, in the judgment of charity, sincerely seeking eternal salvation, were partakers.

“I have been residing in the midst of this little flock about a fortnight, and I am deeply affected with admiration at the work of divine grace which is here exhibited. Eighteen months ago the very name of Protestant was scarcely known in the neighbourhood, no right views of Christ and his salvation were in existence, the grossest superstitions of popery, and the most reckless infidelity divided the territory between them; in short, a moral midnight brooded over the whole population: now a religious impression has been produced of the most extensive character; not a family, perhaps, can be found, which has not conversed, and thought, and felt, either favourably or unfavourably, on this great subject. Up to this hour the Protestant labours are the theme of universal and perpetual conversation. To my own observation the twenty-seven communicants above-mentioned, and several others, have been ‘brought from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God;’ and it is known to God alone how far eventually the blessings of the gospel will be diffused in this region.

“It is most interesting to mark the new converts, to observe their diligent study of the Bible, some of them even in old age beginning to read, that they may peruse the sacred pages; to listen to them singing delightfully the praises of God, in the beautiful hymns and tunes of our Geneva brethren; to hear with what simplicity and unction they lead the prayers of the congregation when invited to do so; and, above all, to notice that ‘where sin abounded, grace doth much more abound.’ The habitual deportment of the converts is highly consistent; the world cannot reproach them with ill-conduct; some of their number, who had been notorious for drunkenness and other sins, are now eminent examples of temperance and holiness, and ‘the peace of God which passeth all understanding,’ reigns over the whole Church. I was exceedingly struck with the expression of countenance of many persons amongst them. There is a calm, solid happiness portrayed on their features, which no principle, no ideas, no events, however prosperous in life, nothing but the assurance of eternal glory, through the sacrifice of Christ our Redeemer, could ever produce.

“JOHN HARTLEY.”

“*Thiers, Puy de Dome, August 5th, 1839.*”