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The Declaratory Act.

THE subject of the Declaratory Act has been so often before the public during the last few years that some may think that it has been quite sufficiently discussed. We feel, however, that the Act, as to its standing in the Church, and the serious consequences it entails, has been so much misrepresented and minimised that our readers cannot be too well informed about it. In our introductory article we made reference to the Act as the formal reason of our separation from the Free Church. At present we shall endeavour to show, first, that by the adoption of this Act the constitution of the Free Church is now changed, and secondly, that no one who holds the principles of this Church as settled in 1843 can consistently remain in fellowship with the body that now bears that name.

I.—Our first proposal is to show that an essential change has been made in the constitution of the Free Church. In order to do so we require to state in what that constitution consisted. The constitution in the past mainly consisted in unreserved adherence to the principles and doctrines embodied in the Confession of Faith as the chief subordinate standard of the Church. Her relation to the Confession was that of entire acceptance of its contents. Nothing was to be preached, taught, or practised but that which was in accordance with the Confession. But now, by the passing of the Declaratory Act, that relation has been changed into a modified acceptance of confessional doctrine. In fact a new standard of doctrine has been set up, and if a man preaches or practices up to this measure nothing further is demanded. This change of standard we hold is an obvious change in the constitution. Many think that because the Confession itself has not been interfered with nor formally declared to be no longer a standard in the Church that the constitution is yet intact. But this is a great mistake. The Confession of Faith, as a historical document drawn up in 1643, will remain the same to the end of time, and no one can add to it or take from it in that respect. Churches,

however, while still professing adherence to its doctrines, may so alter their relation to it that it will become ineffectual for the end for which it was framed, and may be lost for all spiritual good to these churches. It is absurd, therefore, to suppose that because the Confession is not in so many words wholly thrown aside, or a new Confession on every point drawn up, that the constitution of the Free Church in relation to the Confession is the same as ever it was. That constitution, we believe, is now, to all intents and purposes, essentially changed by the adoption of the Declaratory Act. That a change in the Church has taken place no one will deny, but many refuse to admit that the constitution has been affected. Some who, at one time, made this admission are by their action doing their utmost to withdraw it. In order, however, to prove a change in the constitution we shall now show that the Church as a body has changed her relation to the Confession of Faith by the Declaratory Act. (1) We shall refer first to what the Declaratory Act says of its relation to the Church and the Confession, and thus provide one step in our proof. The preamble of the Act contains these words: "The General Assembly, with consent of Presbyteries, declares as follows." This sentence tells us that the Act is a declaration of the Assembly, the supreme court of the Church, with the consent of Presbyteries. When the supreme court receives the consent of Presbyteries, it speaks or acts in the name and with the authority of the whole church. But we are not left to draw our conclusions from the preamble only, for the Act runs in such terms as the following:—"That this Church also maintains, holds, disclaims, retains, &c." These expressions, which are frequent, unmistakeably prove that the Act is a declaration of the Church's mind as to particular doctrines, and that the Church now maintains the views embodied in this Act as certainly and surely as ever it held the doctrines of the Confession of Faith. The Act is in reality a new creed, and by its own terms is evidence that the Church has now changed her constitution. It is not our present purpose to enter formally into the views of doctrine set forth in the Act. We have on a preceding occasion pointed out that these views are not expository of, but subversive of, the doctrines of the Confession. We may say, however, in confirmation of this, that ministers and office-bearers still in the Free Church, who were foremost in holding by the principles of 1843, also condemned the Act as containing unsound doctrine throughout. On the other hand, religious bodies that hold the doctrines of Arminianism are well pleased that the Free Church has taken such a step in their direction. Besides, it is sufficiently well known that many ministers and office-bearers in the Free Church, who have given up what is called the rigid Calvinism of the Confession, and are ready to advocate the more palatable Arminian doctrines that God loves all, Christ died for all, and that there is something good in man by nature, are highly satisfied with the Act. These also for most part

scout as intolerance the doctrine of an Established Church in the interests of what is called religious equality. We also observe that the Act in its closing section gives the Church the authority to determine what is and what is not to be held as "the substance of the Reformed Faith," and this is now the undefinable standard of doctrine that obtains in the Free Church. In view of all these things it is clear that the Act's relation to the Confession is one of antagonism, and not of harmony, that by the passing of this Act the Church has changed her relation to the Confession, and therefore has changed her original constitution.

(2) Let us notice secondly that the procedure by which the Act was passed proclaims that it is now a standing law and constitution in the Church. A committee was appointed on the Confession of Faith in 1889. The Declaratory Act, as the result of their labours, was presented to the Assembly of 1891. This Assembly on the motion of Principal Rainy, approved of the work of the committee, and according to the terms of the Barrier Act, sent down this Act to the Presbyteries that it might receive their consent. The Barrier Act makes provision that no proposal of the Assembly shall be regarded as a standing law and constitution in the Church without the consent of a majority of the Presbyteries. In this case the Declaratory Act was approved of by a large majority of the Presbyteries. The Assembly of 1892, therefore, finally passed the Act into law. Resolutions in favour of hymns and instrumental music had, on former occasions, been adopted by the General Assembly, but were never sent down to Presbyteries under the Barrier Act. But the Declaratory Act has passed through all the forms of procedure necessary to make it a law in the Church. It therefore forms a part of the constitution, and if so, the constitution of the Free Church is now essentially changed. But some raise the objection to this conclusion that the Act has not been put into the Questions and Formula which office-bearers require to subscribe. No one is formally asked to accept the Declaratory Act. These are vain objections. It is not the putting of the Act into the Questions and Formula that would constitute it a law. It would require to be made a law before any one would be asked to subscribe to it. That it has received already the Church's sanction through her courts, and is thus fitted for a place in the Formula, no one denies. It stands therefore, as it does at present, a law in the Church. The reason the Act is not in the Formula is the policy of the majority, who are anxious to keep the minority at ease, while at the same time they accomplish all that is necessary by passing the Act. All are now at full liberty to accept the doctrines of the Declaratory Act without hindrance. It is the Church's Act, and every one is at liberty to accept what the Church as a body has already accepted. We hold, therefore, that the constitution of the Free Church is essentially changed

when this Act that opposes and sets aside the Confession is a standing law and constitution in the Church.

(3) The third thing which proves that this Act is a law in the Church, is that protests against the Act found in the minute books of northern Presbyteries were declared null and void by the Assembly. However laudable the object of these protests may have been, they were, in form, contrary to the law of the Church. The fact that they were declared null and void is unanswerable proof that the Declaratory Act is a law. It is vain to say that this was the work of an unjust Assembly, for if it had been a good Assembly, and the Act had been a good Act, similar protests would have been treated in the same way. The Declaratory Act has evidently all the authority of the Church behind it, and, therefore, no one can deny that it is a law, and that its adoption has changed the constitution of the Free Church.

II.—Let us now prove the second proposition that no one who holds the principles of the Free Church as settled in 1843 can consistently remain in fellowship with the body that now bears that name.

(1) We observe, first, that it is inconsistent for such persons to remain in fellowship with the present Free Church, because they adhere to Presbyterianism. Members of Presbyterian Churches are not Congregationalists. They are not only in communion with their own particular congregation, but also with the whole Church. This relationship to the whole body certainly does not make them responsible for the actions of every member, but it makes them responsible for any step that the Church as a whole may take. If the step be good, each member shares the benefit, but if the step be bad, each shares the dishonour, guilt, and loss. In this way when a Presbyterian Church, by a competent majority, changes its creed and constitution, the party opposed to this change has no alternative but to separate from the majority and set up a distinct jurisdiction in order to maintain the creed and constitution intact. If this party chooses to remain in fellowship with a backsliding majority, it incurs the dishonour, guilt, and loss that inevitably attaches to unfaithfulness. The Free Church, as a body, has adopted the Declaratory Act and its doctrines, whereby the creed and constitution of the Church are seriously changed. We therefore hold that it is inconsistent for anyone who professes faithfulness to the original constitution to remain in fellowship with the present Free Church.

(2) We hold, secondly, that it is inconsistent for such persons to remain, because the Declaratory Act, as a law and constitution in the Church, effectually prevents them from the faithful discharge of their vows. Every member and office-bearer is bound to maintain the doctrines to which he has sworn, not only as a private individual or as a member of a Presbytery, but as a member of a Church. The Free Church, as a body, has renounced the principles of 1843, and, therefore, the members of the

minority have no Church. They are part of a Church that is not theirs. Christ expects to have a Church on earth that will maintain His truth. The Free Church, according to the opinion of the minority, does not maintain that truth, and they therefore prefer that Christ should be without a true Church on earth rather than that they should maintain their vows, and constitute a separate Church. We say that they have vowed to maintain the doctrines of truth as members of a Church, and the Free Church has so far departed from these doctrines that the minority are effectually prevented from the discharge of their vows. Further, the Church, by the Declaratory Act, gives liberty to all who hold the views contained therein to become office-bearers in the Church. It is one part of the duty of all to commit the truth to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.—(2 Tim. ii. 2.) The minority have vowed to do this, and how can they do so when the Church gives liberty to candidates for office to believe the doctrines of the Act? No office-bearer or Presbytery can take away the liberty which the whole Church as a body gives. The vows of every office-bearer demand that he commit the truth to none but those who he is sure, as far as human judgment can go, will prove faithful. Northern Presbyteries license men to preach, and they have no guarantee whatever, but the candidates, while answering the usual orthodox questions, may hold the doctrines of the Declaratory Act. It is surely quite plain therefore that this Act interferes with their discharge of their vows, which certainly require that they should be thoroughly acquainted with the views of candidates before licensing them to preach. How can men say that the Declaratory Act is to them a dead letter? Is it nothing to their consciences that they have lost the power to discharge their vows? They cannot ask candidates any question about the Act, and they are bound to admit them to office whether they accept its doctrines or not. It is therefore unmistakably clear that all throughout the Church, minority and majority, are under obligation to acknowledge the Act as a law and constitution in the Church. This fact received abundant proof immediately after the Act was passed in 1892. The Presbytery of Dingwall, in order to satisfy their consciences, recorded a protest against the Act. When the books of the Presbytery appeared before the Synod of Ross the Synod objected to the protest, and the members of the Dingwall Presbytery present agreed to delete the word 'protest' in order to save their declaration from being deleted altogether. This shows that a protest was legally impossible, and had no standing ground in the Free Church. In this case it was admitted by minority and majority that the Act was a law and constitution in the Free Church. We also ask this question, If duty and conscience compelled the Presbytery of Dingwall to record a protest that had no standing ground in the Free Church how can their consciences now be satisfied without such a protest? Duty and conscience

ought to have led them into a position suitable to their protest, that is, outside the Free Church. But it would appear that duty lowered its standard, and conscience relaxed its demands to suit the circumstances in which they were placed. It is quite evident that the Act interfered with the discharge of their duty, and proved that all are bound to acknowledge its authority. There were also cases at Dores and Dornoch which prove that the Declaratory Act prevents the discharge of vows. At Dores the pastor-elect was not allowed to record a statement to satisfy his conscience that he signed the Confession without any regard to the Act. Again at Dornoch a statement of this kind was recorded, but the Assembly of 1893 declared it null and void. The same Assembly declared all such protests in the books of Presbyteries null and void, and this took effect in one or two cases. It is quite evident that such attempts on the part of ministers and Presbyteries to discharge their vows by protest utterly failed. We therefore conclude that the Declaratory Act as a law in the Free Church must be acknowledged by all as such, and that it is impossible for any one faithfully to discharge his vows in this Church.

There is one objection that is frequently raised, and that is, that the Declaratory Act is permissive and that no one is compelled to accept its doctrines. This objection is generally founded on a statement of the Assembly of 1893, that the Church desired to impose no further burdens upon any, and that no one was obliged to accept the doctrines of the Act. But this objection is of little value. If the individual is not compelled personally to accept its doctrines, it is true nevertheless that the Church has already accepted them and announced them in his name. According to the rules of honesty, if the Act is a true exhibition of doctrine, everyone ought to be compelled to accept it. But the Free Church had lost all such sense of truth and consistency that it could publicly declare certain doctrines to be true, and then say to the individual member that he was not bound to accept the Church's declaration. But if the individual is compelled to allow his neighbours to accept these doctrines, that ought to be a sufficient burden on his conscience. He is compelled by this Act to recognise as brethren those whom he otherwise disclaims as such. The Act is obligatory upon all as an act of the Church, and all are bound to recognise and acknowledge its operation. The Act as to its permissive character is also obligatory. The individual is under obligation to permit what the Church permits. The Church permits belief in false doctrine, and the individual must permit the same. It is as sinful for one to give liberty to one's neighbour to believe false doctrine as to believe it oneself. But some ministers assert,—“I hold the principles of 1843, I am not compelled to change my principles, and I preach the same doctrine as ever I did—consistently with the Confession of Faith. Why should I leave the Free Church?” This way of speaking appears very

plausible. But what is one to think of men who hold and preach the doctrines of the Confession and can, at the same time, have fellowship with others who have renounced these doctrines? It makes little difference what men may preach in their pulpits if their public testimony as a Church is against the truth, and if they can submit to sinful laws and have fellowship with truce-breakers. The little that is built by private effort is belied and thrown down by public unfaithfulness. Further, no one in the Free Church is bound to receive the doctrines ministers may preach further than these are embodied in the Declaratory Act. If they preach eternal election, the imputation of Adam's sin to his posterity, total depravity, and the nation's duty to support the Church of Christ, the hearers are not obliged to believe these doctrines. The Church gives liberty to believe doctrines incompatible with these. Again, the most orthodox ministers are bound to give baptism, the Lord's supper, and to admit to office persons that may believe in the doctrines of the Act. In a word, there is no aspect of a minister's work or usefulness but is affected by the operation of the Declaratory Act. Time will clearly prove, by practical examples, the truth of these remarks. The fact is that the foundations of the Free Church have been taken away, and the minority are helpless amid its ruins. We have brought forth abundant evidence to prove that it is inconsistent with the claims of truth, and that it interferes with the discharge of sacred vows for anyone who holds the principles of 1843 to remain in fellowship with the present Free Church.

Notes of a Gaelic Sermon

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(TAKEN BY A HEARER.)

The Good Samaritan and the man who fell among thieves.—

LUKE x. 30-35.

"A CERTAIN man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho." Let us consider, first, the city of Jerusalem which the man left, and then say a word or two about Jericho, whither he was going. We learn from the Scriptures that Jerusalem was highly favoured with advantages and privileges above all other cities. The Temple of God was there. God's presence was there. Many of God's people were also to be found in Jerusalem. Taking into account all the blessings enjoyed in this city you wonder how this man turned his back upon such a desirable place of abode. Yet, we see, the man left Jerusalem, and was on his way to Jericho, a city under the curse of God. Man had all possible

comforts and happiness in the garden of Eden. He was perfectly happy, and lacked nothing for body or soul. And yet man was foolish enough to believe that he might be brought to a happier state. The old serpent beguiled our first parents: "Ye shall not surely die." They believed this lie and did eat the forbidden fruit. They sinned against God and were driven out of the garden of Eden. "God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions."—(Eccles. vii. 29.) "My people have committed two evils: they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns that can hold no water."—(Jer. ii. 13.) The covenant of works was broken, and all mankind fell in Adam. When man was driven out of Eden he went towards Jericho. Notice that the road which led to Jericho was a dangerous road, leading to a cursed place. You who are yet in a state of nature, remember you are travelling a dangerous road. "Wide is the gate and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat."—(Matt. vii. 13.) Soul and body are under the curse.

On his way to Jericho the man fell among thieves which stripped him of his raiment. The poor man was left in a sad condition. The thieves were too strong for him. Who were they? As we already mentioned, the old serpent, the devil, was one of them. What did he steal from man? He robbed him of the image of God. He robbed him of the knowledge of God and of holiness. He took away his spiritual life, and gave man instead spiritual death. He robbed him of righteousness, and left the poor man "naked," exposed to law and justice. And truly it may be said, that man spiritually was left naked. Instead of the holy and pure man as God created him, we have a man altogether vile, quite defiled and corrupted by sin. "From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds and bruises and putrifying sores."—(Isaiah i. 6.) Sin was the cause of all the calamities and troubles, sicknesses and afflictions that the human race are heirs to. Sin, we say, opened the door to diseases without number. Our most skilful physicians are quite unable to relieve the sufferings of thousands of our fellowmen. Many poor sufferers may be found enduring their painful afflictions from year to year. Some do not know what it is to enjoy health from morning to night, and many are not cheered with prospects of recovery. How terrible are the fruits of sin! Not only are we liable to suffering in our bodies, but alas! the mind also, is darkened. We have become so unreasonable and stupid by the effects of sin. Yes, our memories are corrupted. We forget what is good, but retain the evil. The night of death and darkness is reigning in every soul yet in a state of nature.

Consider how much of the fruit of sin we see in our poorhouses. Many have to be supported there, who at one time enjoyed much of this world's goods, but through sin and folly have come to

want. They are now dependent on others for their food and clothing. Consider, also, how we see the fruits of sin in our infirmaries and hospitals. As you look around you, and hear the groans and cries of men and women, do you not think of sin that caused such suffering? But let us visit the asylum, and what awful fruits of sin we behold there? Some of the poor ones who have lost the use of reason require to be guarded to prevent them taking their own lives. When you speak to them and find that their reason has left them, are you not, at such a sad moment, thinking of sin and its sad fruits? The prison house, also, has sad fruits of sin. Many who have broken the laws of God and men are confined and punished for years, while others will never regain their liberty again. But, oh, consider the rivers of blood shed on the battlefields, and do you not mourn at the fearful fruit of sin witnessed there? Do you not long for the time promised in the Word of God when "nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more?" In the last place, we say that it was sin that opened the door to death, natural, spiritual, and eternal. Unbelief is also a robber. "Not this man, but Barabbas." We reject Jesus: "We will not have this man to reign over us."—(Luke xix. 14.) Love of the world is also a robber. We have no time left us to worship God. All precious time is to be spent in the pleasures of sin. You cannot spend one minute to plead with God on behalf of your never dying soul. Love of the world is surely robbing many of everlasting life. Riches are a snare to many. "Love of money is the root of all evil, which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows."—(1 Tim. vi. 10.) Demas should be a warning to us all. "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him."—(1 John ii. 15.) Riches carry away thousands to eternal flames. Hear what Christ says of his people: "But ye are not of the world." "I have chosen you out of the world." I hope you understand me when I say that the thieves stripped the poor man of all good. The thieves wounded him, stripped him and left him "half dead." Notice carefully how they left him, "half dead." We know that in one sense he was quite dead. We are all by nature, "dead in trespasses and sins." How then was he described as "half dead?" Because he could be restored to life again. Jesus could bring him back to the full possession of life. The angels that fell are more than half dead. Their doom is fixed, and there is for them no salvation. Man can be plucked as a brand from the burning, and in this sense he was left "half dead." "The Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." O poor sinner, would that you believed your own condition to be fully and faithfully set before you in this portion of Scripture. You are quite as helpless as this man, who must have died were it not for the good Samaritan. The Priest and the Levite

"passed by on the other side." There was no help from either. These persons represent the law. You need not expect salvation from the law. It will give you no help except that it may show you how much you need a Saviour. It may act the part of a "schoolmaster." But understand that "by the works of the law no flesh can be justified." Consider how near to man Jesus Christ as the good Samaritan came. He came in the flesh. "Great is the mystery of godliness; God was manifest in the flesh."—(1 Tim. iii. 16.) He thus drew near in human nature. He took "bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh." The great sacrifice must have "blood." As God, Christ had no blood, and "without shedding of blood there is no remission."—Heb. ix. 22.) "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son, cleanseth us from all sin."—(1 John i. 7.) Do you realise how much the Church cost Jesus Christ? It cost him His precious blood. You need not wonder at her love to Him, after she understood the infinite value of His atonement. "When I should find thee without I would kiss thee."—(Song viii. 1.) Aged Simeon, no wonder you should desire to have Him in your arms! "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: for mine eyes have seen thy salvation."—(Luke ii. 29, 30.) The Samaritan "had compassion on him." When did Christ's compassion begin? It had no beginning. We say that the love of the Triune God had no beginning. "I have loved thee with an everlasting love."—(Jer. xxxi. 3.) This love had no beginning, and shall have no end. What proofs did Jesus give of His love? He gave strong proofs of His love in the valley of humiliation. "The good shepherd giveth his life for his sheep."—(John x. 11.) Did he not give clear and strong proofs of His love in the garden, and more especially on Calvary? The Church got a sight of Jesus in the garment dipped in blood. She then believed He loved her. The law had Christ's child by the throat and demanded payment: "Pay me that thou owest." What was your answer? It was this, believer, "I have not a single farthing wherewith to pay; you must look to my surety." Yes, believer, your surety paid all your debts to law and justice. He magnified the law and made it honourable. Observe also, that the Samaritan not only had compassion on him, but he also "bound up his wounds." How did Christ bind up the wounds in your broken heart? By the promises of His Word. He poured in "oil and wine." What do we make of the oil? The anointing of the Holy Ghost. There is nothing equal to oil in healing wounds, burnings, &c. Precious oil has healing virtues. The sufferer often groans with the pain of his burnt arm. The oil is applied, and very soon the sting is taken out of the severe pain. Ah, well, my conscience has been severely burnt with the law. "When the commandment came, sin revived, and I died."—(Romans vii. 9.) You know something of the apostle's feelings. You have tasted a little of the bitterness of sin. You and I are much in need of the Holy Ghost in His

healing virtues being applied to our law-scorched consciences. He will bring joy and peace. Oil is very useful for light. It was the Holy Spirit who enlightened your mind in the knowledge of Christ. It was He that revealed Christ to your soul as a suitable and willing Saviour. "Unto you that fear my name shall the Son of righteousness arise with healing in his wings." The Holy Spirit first opened your eyes to see your lost and ruined condition by nature, and then opened the eyes of faith in your soul that you got a sight of Christ on the cross suffering for you. It was then, and not till then, that Christ became precious to your soul. "Unto you, therefore, which believe He is precious."—(1 Peter ii. 7.) The Holy Ghost also opened your eyes to see His glory. "We beheld His glory, the glory as that of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth."—(John i. 14.) He opened your eyes to see the mysterious union that exists between Christ and His people. "I am the vine, ye are the branches."—(John xv. 5.) "I in them and thou in me."—(John xvii. 23.) "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus."—(Romans viii. 1.) Some of the children got a sight of heaven upon earth. "And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it."—(Rev. xxi. 22.) Yes, the poor children get wonderful visions of glory even here below. There is a sweet flavour off this precious oil; so there was off the alabaster box of ointment. There is always a sweet smell off the broken heart. Since the Holy Ghost beautified you there is a sweet odour off your prayers and your fellowship. "All thy garments smell of myrrh, and aloes, and cassia, out of the ivory palaces."—(Psalms xlv. 8.) The gracious soul knows the presence of the oil of the Holy Spirit in his soul; and he knows when the precious oil of the Spirit is absent. When absent, how wearisome and heartless are all your religious duties and exercises. The Holy Spirit comes; and under His influence, how easily and pleasantly the wheels of your soul move, and the soul enjoys living communion with God. When the wheels of a clock or watch become dry and rusty for want of oil, and you cannot depend on either for time, what is your remedy? To have them cleaned, and then to apply the oil. Child of grace, when you are under the power of spiritual death and spiritual darkness, as one of old crying, "He hath made me dwell in darkness as those that have been long dead."—(Psalm cxliii. 3); you, in such a case, need the oil of grace. Again, you must not forget that the good fight must be continued from day to day, and you cannot fight without nourishment. "Yes, we have a daily warfare with the world, the devil and the flesh; and so we need the Holy Ghost. Dr. Love says, that "the world in darkness does not trouble much about anything concerning the soul, but that God's children have no resting place in this world. Their position here is, to be up and doing. They cannot take matters so easily."

Again, the godly Dugald Buchanan says as follows:—

“I’s diamhain dut bhi’g earraidh saimh,
N’aon ni no ’n ait air bith fo’n ghrein;
Cha chlos do d’chorp an taobh so ’n uaigh,
No t’anam n’taobh so shuaimhneas Dé.”

Now, as a fighting soldier, see that you listen to these words, “Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day.”—(Eph. vi. 13.) O, you now desire to say, “My love forever to Jesus who brought me from the fearful pit and saved my poor soul from eternal woe.” Under the influence of the oil of the Holy Ghost you will endeavour to “keep your heart with all diligence.” But the good Samaritan also poured in wine into the wounds. What do we make of the wine? The blood of Christ. Why? Because it cleanses and strengthens the soul. The blood which cleanseth from all sin must be poured into the souls of God’s children. What wonderful effects come from “the blood.” “Come now and let us reason together saith the Lord; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.”—(Is. i. 18.) The blood of Christ is very precious to you now believer; to you it “speaketh better things” than the blood of Abel. Yes, you were strengthened by the blood. I would rather enjoy three minutes of the peace of God in my conscience through the blood, than should I get millions of worlds! For what would all that could be enjoyed on earth do for my needy soul? “What shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul.”—(Mark viii. 36.) No, my poor believing hearer, you will not forget the anguish of soul you were in when the peace-speaking blood was revealed to you by the Holy Ghost. I tell you who have no interest in “the blood,” and no cry for mercy, that sin will yet tear and destroy you as the she-bears tore and destroyed the wicked children who mocked Elisha, the man of God. The blood of Christ is the only shelter for you. “Flee for your life.” Consider how very weak the man must have been by this time, “half dead.” He must have been very far gone indeed, his eyes closing and his strength quite gone. He was much in need of strength. We say that through the oil and the wine, the Spirit and the blood, that the eye of faith and the eye of hope were both opened. The pouring in was as the breathing of hope to the law-slain soul. The wine purifies and also strengthens. But is the wounded man left to look after himself now that he has been so far attended to? No, the Samaritan, we are told, “set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him.” I think I may state that faith is the beast that carried the wounded man. Not the faith, mark you, belonging to the man, but the Samaritan’s own beast. It is the faith of which God is the author that is implanted in the true believer’s soul by the Holy Spirit. Faith must be genuine. Beware of deceiving yourself with a false faith.

If you are going forward to death, judgment, and eternity in the strength of a false faith, which is not begotten by the Spirit of God in your soul, I compare you to sailors who venture out on a voyage on the stormy ocean in a ship that was condemned. Remember you are trusting to "the condemned vessel" a precious soul that may be lost for ever. Think of the solemnity of your position, facing eternity with no faith, or with a faith that is a delusion. Do not forget that every man's work is to be tried by fire. There is a day coming when all of us must be tested and tried. In view of this awful day see to it, dear souls, that you are faithful to your own souls, and to generations yet to come. Support nothing that in any way is contrary to the Word of God, or you will suffer loss. How painful to think of God's own children countenancing and supporting men and views that are nor in accordance with His Word. Ah, well, they will yet suffer loss for such unfaithfulness, should it be at death. Better to suffer the loss of all our worldly substance than that we should lose spiritually here or hereafter.

The people of God go by faith from strength to strength. How tender and kind is our loving Christ to His dear children in this wilderness! If you have tasted that He is gracious, if you in any measure experience His love and mercy, remember that you must not hide your testimony. Do not seek to creep into a corner. You are indebted to Christ, and you must witness for Him. Stand up for His Word. Stand up for His glory. When His enemies are so fearless and so very bold, how is it that you are not out and out defending your Master in this dark and cloudy day? Out of your hiding places, and stand up manfully for Christ. Hear what the faithful soldier of old says, "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ," and he was much persecuted for the gospel in his day.

The Samaritan "brought him to an inn." Why did he bring him to an inn? He was not to be left long in the inn. You must not complain should you get hardship in this life, this world is not your home, believer. "I go," said Jesus, "to prepare a place for you." It is true of His children that they are strangers and pilgrims on the earth. They do not expect much comfort or happiness in this vale of tears. Their desire is to get home and "be with Christ which is far better." His people's great desire is to "see Him as He is." Their heart and their treasure is in heaven. "We know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is."—(1 John iii. 2.) The language of their hearts at times is: "I long so much to get home, I am so weary of this body of sin and death, and I am tired of this prolonged fight with the evil heart of unbelief. I would like so much to get home, I am faint and weak, I need rest." Is this not the inward desire of your heart, my dear friends? Yes, but we must be of good cheer. The horse "faith" will carry you over mountains of trials and troubles, and will see you safe home to

glory. Be of good courage, you are not left to fight the battle alone, for he hath said, "Lo, I am with you alway, even to the end of the world." "Simon, Simon, behold Satan hath desired to have you that he may sift you as wheat; but I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not."—(Luke xxii. 31, 32.) They are "kept by the power of God."

"And on the morrow when he departed he took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee." You may have sympathy from many in words, but the purse is closed against you. The good Samaritan provided for this poor man. Two pence were left for his use, one penny for the body and the other for the soul, or in other words, the stores of providence and the stores of grace. Christ has the key to both stores. "Open your mouth wide and I will fill it." You must draw from the stores of grace if you are to witness for Him at His table on the morrow. See to it that you do not go in your own strength. There must be a daily coming and eating of the bread of life, and you are most welcome. "Eat, O friends; drink, yea drink abundantly, O beloved."—(Song v. 1.)

Christ is coming again. He will soon come, and then you who have been giving the cup of cold water shall be rewarded. Yes, He is coming in glory. Set your house in order. "Ye know not the day nor the hour when the Son of Man cometh." "And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them."—(Rev. xx. 11.) We must all appear before Him when He comes to judge the world. Oh you who are yet unconverted, would that your cry were: What must I do to be saved? Can I obtain the blessings of the covenant? His own words are, "The Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost."—(Luke xix. 10.) May His children here to-day be enabled by His grace to say, "My beloved is mine and I am His."

Concluding Remarks at a Friday Fellowship Meeting.

BY THE REV. D. MACDONALD, SHIELDSDAIG.

SUBJECT: "*Marks of the New Birth.*"—JOHN iii. 3.

NICODEMUS was not so bitter against Christ as were the other Pharisees. He was willing to learn. The children of the new birth come to understand that, "that which is born of the flesh is flesh." There is no virtue in circumcision, as in Paul's case. They must hear the voice of Christ, there is then a change of heart and a change of fruit. "I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth Thee, wherefore I abhor

myself, and repent in dust and ashes.”—(Job xlii., 5, 6.) Self-
abhorrence is a clear mark of regeneration; sin in you set on fire
by the law, is another mark of the new birth. Can you say as
follows?—“He told me all things that ever I did.” Your trials
and even bitter complaints, believer, I regard as the sign of health.
“I am ‘like the slain that lie in the grave.’” “The arrows of the
Almighty are within me.” Yes, you may say, His arrows were for
many a long day in my soul, so that I became unfit for the daily
duties of my calling. The saintly Dr. Love was much afraid of
relief from spiritual trouble, because very severe trials from Satan
often followed relief. Sometimes you complain of being forsaken,
and at other times you can say, “My cup runneth over.” Here
is a precious mark of the new birth in the soul—Love to Him
that begat. “The love of Christ constraineth us.” A mark of
the new birth is drawing near to God in prayer. His children know
how to get near Him, yes, and they try to keep Him when they
do get access to Him. Jacob wrestled with Him and would not
let him go until he got the blessing. Mary availed herself of the
privilege she had, she sat at His feet. Others were made to look
on all things as loss, in comparison with the excellency of the
knowledge of Christ Jesus. They said, “We beheld His glory,
the glory as that of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace
and truth.” When they said so they got a sight of the glorious
sacrifice. A beautiful mark is a desire that the poor without the
fold might be taken in. O taste and see that God is good!
Faith, of course, is another mark of the new birth. They are not
in total despair. Hear this: “For we know that if our earthly
house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God,
an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.” Again,
they enter into communion and fellowship with God. From the
first time you entered into this fellowship you will never cease
entering into it in this world; no, nor throughout eternity. They
grow in grace. The graces of the Spirit work mightily in your
soul. Love in the child’s soul is after more knowledge. “Show
me thy glory.” Archibald Cook says, “How beautiful would a
large mountain of honey appear! when you see this large mountain
consider that a little of it may be eaten by a young girl or boy.
They have a taste of what is in the great mountain, both as to its
quality and kind.” You have in this world a little taste of His love
in your soul. The poor woman who pressed after Him in the crowd
got a drop of His love. Do you remember when the child asked for
a crumb?—“Truth, Lord, yet the dogs eat of the crumbs that
fall from the master’s table.” This was an empty soul for Jesus to
fill. Poor Mary got nothing on earth to fill her soul but Jesus.
I think I can say that His poor ones realise great pain in love.
When their love is hot they feel as if their heart would burst. Do
not fear that Christ will forsake you; no, as one said, “Jesus would
sooner come and suffer again on the cross than that He would
leave any of His poor ones on earth.” Hear another mark of

grace—"I must build a temple," your desire is to labour for Christ. They require to watch and pray. Another mark is: They see that they must be purified, sin is made exceeding sinful. "Nothing that defileth will enter the kingdom." Now I give a word of warning. Without the new birth a man cannot enter the kingdom, and if not, where is he to go? He must go to where there is weeping and wailing for ever. Are you here to-day refusing Christ? Husband out of Christ, your godly wife will, at the last great day, put her amen to your eternal damnation. And you, ungodly woman, remember that your godly husband will take Christ's side in giving you the final sentence of eternal damnation. You, ungodly son, that broke your saintly parents' hearts on earth, will have no sympathy from them at the judgment, they will most assuredly acquiesce in the sentence of Christ upon you, which must be "Depart ye cursed." The children of Christ will get then such a clear view of His glory and His justice, that when He pronounces the fearful sentence, "Depart," even upon husband, wife, son or daughter, they will say, "Amen, so let it be." "They refused to hear our pleadings with them on earth, they despised Christ and neglected the great salvation, Thou art just and righteous in punishing them for ever." No earthly ties will mar the happiness of God's people in heaven, "They neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like the angels." O poor sinner, wont you consider these awful truths? How can you separate for ever and ever from your godly mother or godly father? How can you separate from godly sister or godly brother? My last mark of the children of the new birth is that they fear. They often speak as follows: "Ah! I am so unlike Christ, my beloved, my fear is that I am so filthy and polluted with sin that I cannot inherit the kingdom." You may yet be enabled to say, "My beloved is mine and I am His."

The Establishment Principle.

BY THE REV. ALLAN MACKENZIE, INVERNESS.

THE Scripture evidence in favour of an Establishment of religion is so extensive that it is not easy to give a short summary of it. We are obliged, therefore, in this short sketch to confine our attention to the most salient points. Under the terms of the covenant of works man was bound to obey God in all things. Had he kept his first estate all the civil and sacred relations in the world would have been in entire harmony with the will of God. But sin entered, and all these relations ceased to be for the honour of the Creator. Yet it must be remembered that God did not abrogate His own law, and that the obligation to obey Him is still in force over all the nations and individuals on the earth. This being so, they are bound to obey Him, even if they are unable. Nations and individuals would never grudge

Him the honour due to Him were it not for sin. Sin is inexcusable before God, therefore the refusal to acknowledge Him as King and Law-giver is inexcusable. It is an offence to God, even under the terms of a covenant of works, that nations should deny to Him the glory due to His name. The Three Persons in the Godhead were engaged in the work of creation. It was with infinite delight God viewed His own work. In viewing it with infinite delight He had before His omniscient eye the glorious transaction that was to result in the new creation through the last Adam. It was through the Son who was then, as He is now, "the brightness of His glory, and the express image of His person," that He made the worlds. By "the word of His power" all things were and are upheld. The first Adam, by his sin, ceased to hold the right of heirship under a covenant of works, and Christ who made all things is "appointed heir of all things." This joyful announcement is made in Eden to those who lost their inheritance by their sin. They must now turn to another covenant for life, a covenant ordered in all things and sure. The history of the Church after this all revolves around the promise. The glory of the first creation consisted in the manifestations of the Trinity in executing this work preparatory to the revelation of a purpose of grace in which greater glory was to be revealed through the incarnation of the Second Person—the appointed heir of all things. This glory was designed to transcend the other. Now, keeping other great doctrines at present in abeyance, the question arises, How is the Heir of all things glorified in respect of the relation that should subsist between the Church and the State? It is the work of the devil to mar every relation by sin; but the work of Christ implies in it the restoration of all these relations into harmony with the mind and will of God. This intention we can only know through a revelation from God. We may conclude at the threshold of our inquiry that God, in taking vengeance upon the enemy, shall do so in the way that will conduce most to the glory of His own name in the manifestations made of Himself in Christ. Sin is a barrier to this, but the barrier must be removed in order to make room for this glory. Obstacles are in the way, but He will set them aside. Towering mountains appear to the eye of reason, but His feet shall be all the better seen in their beauty when He travels in the greatness of His strength. It is God Himself who proposes and carries into execution that which was in His mind from all eternity. We must therefore turn to the Word of the Lord for guidance in this matter as in all others. Here we will find the gradual unfolding of the hidden mystery of a purpose to constitute Christ, the last Adam, the Heir of all things, until a consummation is reached in the triumphant shout from the great voices in heaven: "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He shall reign for ever and ever."—(Rev. xi. 15.) But between the time that the Church shall

first be established on a righteous basis and the consummation in which there shall be one grand universal Established Church, we may expect to find the two powers, the spiritual and the carnal, the powers of heaven and those of hell, the powers of light and those of darkness, contending for the possession of the kingdoms, and of the relation in which the kingdoms should stand to the Heir and to His bride. And shall we for a moment doubt as to which side shall ultimately triumph? Shall we for a moment lay aside our weapons of warfare because the enemy *imagines* that he has gained a temporary victory? Shall we give up our efforts in seeking to be in harmony with Jehovah's will and purpose in constituting His Son head over all things in the Church, because in our *day* the subject is involved in serious contention? That were to *cease* contending earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints. Those who act thus, while admitting the scriptural principle of an establishment of religion, are guilty of ignoring the paramount claims of the mediatorial relation in which Christ stands between God and man. They subordinate principle to expediency, and thereby subordinate the paramount claims of Christ to their own circumstances. But it may be asked, Is this principle found in Scripture? How strange if it were not! How strange if this relation were left in the possession of Satan while all other relations are delivered! How remarkable it would be that we should be asked to eat and drink, and to do whatsoever we do to God's glory with this exception! But it is not so. Scripture plainly shows that the antagonism between the Church and the State can be removed by God in a way that shall in a pre-eminent manner show His glory. Ah! how lovely is everything which He does. How lovely is the relation of Church and State when Christ's government is set up in both!

Israel's history furnishes us with clear proof of the possibility and the practicability of Church in union with the State. But we are at once met with the objection that Israel was a Theocracy, governed under the immediate direction of God. Be it so; what objection is there to being immediately governed by God? And is it reasonable to suppose that under the New Testament dispensation we are to be further away from God? That is not the testimony of the epistle to the Hebrews. God "hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son."

The boundaries between Church and State were clearly delineated in the time of David and afterwards, as well as in the time of Moses in the wilderness. David could give commands regarding the ark of God, but he could not do the work of the Levites.—(1 Chron. xv. 12-16.) If Uzziah even, who is a zealous reformer, invades the spiritual province of the priests, he must be resisted at all hazards.—(2 Chron. xxvi. 16-21.) We have, perhaps, one of the finest illustrations of the practical application of the principle of an establishment on record in the arrangements made when Ezra and Nehemiah rebuilt the temple. It was one

of the best days of the Church. She had put on her beautiful garments in such a manner that there was no comparison found for her in any generation but the godly generation in which Joshua led the people. Notice the order that obtains in the restored church. Godly Nehemiah not only obtains permission from a heathen king to build the house, but also obtains an order for the material wherewith it is to be set up, along with the protection of captains of the army and horsemen. Here we have assistance and protection which are not spurned by the Church because of the source from which they are procured. But notice, further, how jealous Nehemiah is in regard to the spiritual prerogatives pertaining to the temple. Nehemiah himself is the Tirshatha, or civil governor; Ezra, with the priests and Levites, preaches and expounds the law, and both parties together enter into a solemn covenant. "And because of all this we make a sure covenant, and write it; and our princes, Levites, and priests, seal unto it."—(Nehemiah. ix. 38.) Here we have a lovely precedent for our own national covenant.

We might multiply examples, but let us now inquire into the promises, promises which are yea and amen in Christ Jesus. Do they indicate that the kingdoms as such shall be subject to Christ's rule? Do they depict the triumph of Messiah as subduing all things to Himself? Do they indicate that He shall be crowned as King of Kings quite as truly as He shall be crowned King of Zion?

The declaration of the eternal sonship in the second Psalm is joined to an offer on the part of the Father to the Son of the uttermost parts of the earth for His possession. To this is added an imperative call to kings and judges to serve the Lord with fear, to rejoice with trembling, and to kiss the Son. How could they possibly do this without embracing Christ in the Gospel in all their regal and judicial capacities? If they refuse, they must inevitably perish for they rob Christ of that glory wherewith He is invested, quite as surely as the Erastian does who invades the royal prerogatives of which the Father speaks when He says in the same Psalm, "Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion." And it is rather remarkable that all this is presented to us in a Psalm which predicts the rejection of Christ by "Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel."—(Acts. iv. 25-27.) But the vengeance which God takes upon them will have this shining lustre about it, that the rejected stone shall "become the head of the corner." Let Herod despise, the scribes and pharisees condemn, and Pilate crucify; Christ shall yet be honoured by kings, princes, and churches, with glory and honour in accordance with an eternal purpose. And if in bringing the First Begotten into the world He saith, "And let all the angels of God worship him," what folly is it on the part of representatives of nations and communities to treat Him with such indifference as was manifested by Herod when He

set Him at nought. If space would permit an examination of the Psalms to which special reference is made in the first and second chapters of the epistle to the Hebrews, it would be seen that among other relations they describe the relation in which Christ is to stand under the New Testament dispensation to the kingdoms of this world as such, as He wields the sceptre of righteousness until all His enemies are put in subjection to Him. Isaiah does not delineate the sufferings of Christ without at the same time describing this as a part of that glory which he saw when he spake of Him, namely, "that kings should see and arise, that princes also should worship, and that kings should be the Church's nursing fathers, and their queens her nursing mothers."—(Isaiah xlix.) In the 60th chapter, the good days of the Church are described as deep in which her gates shall be open continually, so that men may bring unto her "the forces of the Gentiles, and that their kings may be brought." With this is conjoined this terrible intimation: "For the nation and kingdom that will not serve Thee shall perish; Yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted."

How a nation or kingdom could serve the Church by refusing her assistance and protection in the discharge of her duties is beyond our comprehension. A careful study of the visions of Daniel will show how completely all the nations of the world are to be subordinated to the kingdom of the Son of Man, who was brought unto the Ancient of days that He might receive "dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages should serve Him." In that day, "It shall come to pass that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of Hosts, and to keep the feasts of tabernacles."—(Zech. xiv. 16.) Then shall men cease to rob God in tithes and offerings; for all nations shall call the Church blessed.—(Malachi iii.)

If, then, "all things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the Psalms" concerning Christ, what a strange and unaccountable omission it would be if this one element were left unfulfilled! What a remarkable loss to Christ it would be to drop this one only gem out of His crown of gold! There would be a defect in His prophetic office; for He would have no message for kings and judges as such. There would be a defect in His priestly office; for it would fail to satisfy the conscience in the discharge of regal and judicial functions in the representation of a corporate unity. There would be a most marked defect in His kingly office; for it would imply the want of power, exercised through saving blood in a revelation of grace, to deliver the kingdoms of the earth from the power of the prince of darkness. But there is no gem lost. There is no defect in any of His offices. Every jot and tittle of His Word must be fulfilled in this respect as in all other respects. It is in vain that

men argue that the establishment principle is not found in the New Testament. They might as reasonably say that the moral law is not found in the New Testament. If the moral law is delivered from Sinai, it does not require to be re-delivered; it only requires to be applied. If the establishment principle is given forth in the Old Testament, it does not require to be re-issued under the new dispensation; it only requires to be applied when nations embrace the Gospel in accordance with the promises that are sealed with the blood of Christ, and that must be fulfilled in the fulness of time. The New Testament is full of the principles that should regulate the relation of the Church to the State. Here it will suffice to refer to one or two of the proofs.

There were two main accusations adduced against Christ. (1) He claimed to be God. (2) He made Himself a King. Both are indissolubly united. When He said that His kingdom was not of this world, He did not thereby absolve the Jewish nation from the allegiance which was due to Him as God. He simply opposes spiritual weapons to carnal weapons in prospect of the magnificent triumph which He was on the eve of accomplishing through His own death as a surety. Nor does He abrogate His kingly prerogatives by His submitting to their obscuration under the shadow of Calvary's cross. It was an offence to the Pharisees that the multitude should praise Him with a loud voice, saying, "Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord: peace in heaven, and glory in the highest."—(Luke xix. 37-40.) Had the multitude been silent the very stones would have immediately cried out that truth.

But over hardness that was not equalled by the stones, the Son of God wept tears of pity, when He beheld the city that was so soon to show its detestation of His kingly claims. And soon after their rejection of these claims this chief city, and the nation, as such, had terrible experience of the announcement from the lips of Him who cannot lie to which we have already referred: "For the nation and kingdom that will not serve Thee shall perish; yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted." Christ, so to speak, takes it ill of nations to be rejected in His Church as He was rejected in the days of His flesh in His person. Highly-favoured Britain would need to take great care how it should deal with His double crown as King of Zion, and King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

To Paul the constitution of the civil government at Rome, was well known when he wrote the epistle to the Romans. Yet he says, "Whosoever, therefore, resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God, and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. For rulers are not a terror to good works but to the evil. Wilt thou, then, not be afraid of the power? Do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same, for he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which

is evil, be afraid, for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil."—(Rom. xiii.) Here we have a distinct intimation that the civil ordinance is an ordinance of God which has been designed for the service of Christ, as head above all things, and while, when regulated by His laws is unspeakably serviceable to Him in jealousy, guarding against every invasion of his headship within the domain of the spiritual sphere in the ordinances of His own house. He "is the head of all principality and power."—(Col. ii. 10.) "For by him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by Him, and *for* Him (Col. i. 16.) And all this is intimately connected with the redemption of His Church, the setting up of his kingdom in opposition to the kingdom of darkness, and his headship over His own body, the Church, that *in all things* He might have the pre-eminence. Why rob Him of this pre-eminence in any relation whatsoever? Why seek to retard and obstruct the progress of Him on whose head there are many crowns, whose vesture is dipped in blood, whose name is the Word of God—the Word made flesh—and on whose blood-dyed vesture there is written without possibility of erasure—KING OF KINGS and LORD OF LORDS.

The late Dr. Kennedy, of Dingwall, on Free Church Principles, in 1882.

DR. Kennedy treated his subject under the following four heads, the first of which is given at large below:—

1. What in relation to Establishment is the proper attitude and bounden duty of the Free Church? 2. That this Disestablishment movement, while inconsistent with our engagements as Free Churchmen, springs from no creditable source, and is accompanied with such symptoms of spiritual decline as make it very unlikely that it can be prompted and sanctioned by the Lord. 3. That our present duty is to hold our disruption ground, aloof as yet from the existing Establishment, but striving to secure for Scotland the blessing of a rightly constituted and healthily-conditioned Established Church. And 4. That this is very specially the duty of all in the Highlands who are connected with the Free Church. The first head he enforces as follows:—

THE PROPER ATTITUDE AND BOUNDEN DUTY OF THE FREE CHURCH.

What the peculiar constitution of a Church is may be discovered by ascertaining what makes her position distinctive as compared with that of other ecclesiastical bodies in the same locality. No

Church has any right to a separate existence if there be no difference between her testimony and that of the others. Now there are two other large Presbyterian Churches in Scotland—the Established Church and the United Presbyterian Church—each of which till very lately, when the latter materially altered the Confession, professed to adhere to the Westminster Standards. The difference between the Free Church and both these lies in her being neither Erastian nor Voluntary. She protests against interference with her spiritual jurisdiction by the civil ruler, and holds the scripturalness, and highly values the benefit, of a connection between Church and State. It is this which makes her constitution peculiar as a Church in Scotland. Any action, therefore, on her part which is inconsistent with this peculiarity, must be unconstitutional. She was constituted on an intermediate site, with the Erastianised Establishment on the one hand, and the Voluntary Dissenters on the other. She abuts beyond her proper site—she goes off her distinctive position—when she inclines either to Erastianism on the one side, or to Voluntarism on the other.

This was the view of her distinctive position held by the acknowledged leaders of the Free Church in 1843, and by the whole body of the Church as well. "Though we quit the Establishment," Dr. Chalmers, as the moderator of the first Free Church Assembly, said, "we go out on the Establishment principle—we quit a vitiated Establishment, but would rejoice in returning to a pure one. To express it otherwise, we are the advocates for a national recognition and national support of religion and we are not Voluntaries." Dr. Candlish was equally explicit in his disavowal of Voluntarism. "I trust," he said, "we shall be enabled in our Assemblies, and, if possible, in our outward and tangible acts, to maintain uncompromised our principle of a religious establishment. I trust we shall resist every motion or proposal of an incorporating union with any Church that differs from us on that point."

But it may be said that we are not to be bound by the utterances of any men, however eminent their position and however great their influence may have been. But that cannot be said as to the authoritative declarations of the Church, in those documents which form the basis of her position, as to those acts of Assembly which indicate what are her constitutional principles, and as to those engagements which require a faithful adherence to those principles.

The Claim of Right is the document in which, in 1842, the position of the party afterwards composing the Free Church, was formally defined. She is no longer the Free Church of Scotland if she ceases to demand what was claimed in 1842, and abandons the idea of occupying the position in which alone she could accept the concession of that claim. That Claim is in these terms—"The General Assembly do, in name and on behalf of this

Church, and of the nation and people of Scotland, and under the sanction of the several statutes, and the Treaty of Union hereinbefore recited, Claim as of Right, that she shall freely possess and enjoy her liberties, government, discipline, rights and privileges according to law." Now, this is a Claim which can be conceded only to a Church in connection with the State, or to a Church willing to enter into such a relation to the State as Establishment constitutes.

The Protest of 1843 declares, "that the Claim, Declaration, and Protest of the General Assembly which convened at Edinburgh in May, 1842, as the Act of a free and lawful Assembly of the said Church, shall be holden as setting forth the true constitution of the said Church;" and that the rejection of the claim of right is the only reason why the disruption took place. The concession of that Claim, at any time, should therefore suffice as a reason for the Free Church's return to the position of an Establishment.

In Act XII., 1846, "Anent Questions and Formula," it is declared—"That the Church firmly maintains the same Scriptural principles as to the duties of nations and their rulers, in reference to true religion and the Church of Christ, for which she has hitherto contended," both against Erastians and against Voluntaries.

In Act VII., 1853, "Anent the Principles of the Church," it is declared—"That this Church maintains, unaltered and uncompromised, the principles set forth in the Claim, Declaration, and Protest of 1842, and the Protest of 1843, relative to the lawfulness and obligation of a Scriptural alliance between the Church of Christ and the State, and the conditions on which such an alliance ought to be regulated—as well as the position which, in the maintenance of these principles, the Church was called upon to take in 1842 and 1843, as a Church protesting against invasions of her just and constitutional rights, and demanding redress of the wrongs thus inflicted." The Church is thus fixed down in the position of a claimant in relation to the State, till redress is granted. To depart, in any other circumstances from that position is to cease to be the Free Church of Scotland.

And further, we are required, so long as we do not formally repudiate the Claim of Right, "highly to value the connection" of the Church with the State; and in its closing sentences we are directed to pray for the restoration to Scotland of a rightly constituted Established Church. And the Protest reserves a right "to strive, by all lawful means, as opportunity shall in God's good providence be offered, to secure the performance of this duty"—viz., the maintenance and support of an establishment of religion in accordance with God's word by the civil magistrate.

The Free Church, therefore, in terms of the authoritative declarations of her distinctive testimony, is bound to continue—
1. To assert "the right and duty of the civil magistrate to maintain and support an establishment of religion in accordance with God's word." 2. Highly to value the benefit of such an

establishment. 3. To pray for this benefit for Scotland. And 4. To "strive by all lawful means to secure" this boon.

Such is the position and such the action to which as Free Churchmen we are solemnly pledged; and any action inconsistent with those engagements must be unfaithful and unconstitutional, and therefore both unwise and sinful.

A Free Church Professor on the Twelve Prophets.

DR. George Adam Smith, Professor of Hebrew in the Free Church College, Glasgow, has recently published the first of two volumes on the twelve prophets, commonly called the minor. This volume is a critical study and exposition of three of the twelve, Amos, Hosea, and Micah. Professor Smith has already earned for himself distinction as an expositor of the modern school by his two volumes on Isaiah, in which he advocates the theory that chapters 40-66 of that prophecy are the work of another author of unknown name but later date than Isaiah. This theory of a second Isaiah is the offspring of an attempt on the part of Professor Smith, and other writers of the same type to eliminate the supernatural from the Old Testament. They cannot understand, for example, how Isaiah should know of Cyrus, King of Persia, who lived 200 years later, and they therefore imagine a second author nearer the time of Cyrus. They, in fact, regard prophecy not as a revelation from God in regard to future events, but rather as history written at or near the time the events spoken of took place. The prophets are credited with the foresight of politicians, but not with a knowledge of the future immediately derived from God. This rationalistic view of prophecy pervades Professor Smith's new book. He treats the Holy Scriptures in a way which divests them not only of their inspiration by the Holy Ghost, but even of that credibility and integrity which are readily granted to the writings of ordinary men.

We shall now proceed to give some quotations from the work under review, which will afford painful proof to our readers of the irreverence with which the Word of God is treated, even by one who, as a teacher in the Free Church, has sworn to maintain its infallibility and Divine authorship. Professor Smith's first chapter deals with the dates of the twelve prophets. He says, toward the conclusion of the chapter: "This assignment of the various books to different dates is not to be held as implying that the whole of a book belongs to such a date, or to the author whose name it bears. We shall find that hands have been busy with the texts of the books long after the authors of these must have passed away; . . . that here and there are passages which are evidently intrusions, both because they interrupt the argument, and because they reflect a much later historical environment than their

context." The unwarrantable assumption that the sacred books have been tampered with in the above manner runs throughout Professor Smith's whole work. Let us notice some of the things that are gratuitously taken for granted in this assumption. It is taken for granted that the critic is the supreme judge of what should be written by the prophets. If the argument is to his eye interrupted by a particular passage, then he concludes that this passage is inserted by a later writer. Who would have the daring to apply this principle to the works of ordinary men? But the Bible it seems may be treated with much less respect than other books. It is also assumed that later writers had the obvious impiety to interfere with the writings of "holy men of God, who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." We are, in fact, asked by Professor Smith, in his attempt to get rid of supernatural revelation, to believe a more incredible miracle than any other, namely—that some of the brightest prophecies of the future in the Old Testament were written in the name of the Lord, by men who dishonestly inserted them among the writings of earlier prophets. This is an absolute moral impossibility, and needs only to be stated to show how absurd it is. And yet many in our day think this profane interpretation of the Scriptures to be a sign of intellectual and spiritual progress. It is evident also that the assumption of the critic involves a plain denial that the Scriptures are the Word of God given by the immediate inspiration of the Holy Ghost, and amounts to this—that whatever moral superiority belongs to the teaching of the Scriptures, they are themselves, after all, only the writings of men.

In chapter II. Professor Smith gives a sketch of the prophet in early Israel. He proceeds upon the principle that there has been an evolution in religion from the earliest times. The prophet in Israel, to begin with, was, in his opinion, very much the same as the soothsayer of heathen tribes. He regards the early prophet as using the same external means in consulting the Divine will as the soothsayer, and he enumerates as examples of this, the use of rods in Egypt by Moses, Joshua's casting of lots to discover Achan, Samuel's dream in the sanctuary, David and the ephod he consulted, and the sign to go to battle, consisting of a sound in the tops of the mulberry trees. "These," he adds, "are a few of the many proofs that early prophecy in Israel employed not only the methods, but even much of the furniture of the kindred Semitic religions." On the other hand, all who esteem the Old Testament as an inspired record of the dealings of God with the sons of men, see His miraculous intervention in the use of rods by Moses, a divinely-appointed method in Joshua's casting of lots, and the presence and voice of the living and true God in Samuel's dream, but Professor Smith regards these and other incidents as simply rude devices by which early Israel sought to learn the supposed will of their national God. This view turns the history of Israel, the record of a people enlightened

and guided by the God who created heaven and earth, into a narrative of a heathen nation blindly groping in the dark, who had set up for themselves as their national God one who is named Jehovah. Professor Smith, in fact, states that "in many ways the Jehovah of early Israel reminds us of other Semitic deities. Like some of them He appears with thunder and lightning; like all of them He is the God of one tribe, who are His peculiar people. . . . He is propitiated with the same offerings." Every tribe had its God, and according to this view, Jehovah is to Israel its own God, just one of many. The religion of Jehovah, he admits, had a "moral force shared by no other Semitic creed." But what, according to our author, does this moral force consist in? It consists in Israel's "impressions of the character of their God." Human impressions are to Professor Smith the origin of the religion of the Bible. The prophets, from Moses to Samuel, on this theory, thought of Jehovah as a mere national God, but attributed to Him such wonder-working power above all other gods that their successors began to believe in one God, and that Jehovah. Out of the work of these early prophets, he says, grew the monotheism (or belief in one God) of their successors. Professor Smith concludes this section of chapter II. with the following words: "For myself, I cannot but believe that in the influence of Jehovah which Israel owned in these early times there was an authentic revelation of a real Being." This vague expression of belief does not in the least affect the position he has endeavoured to establish in regard to the early prophet, or the view he takes of the Scriptures. For any one to deny that the early prophet was acquainted with the true and absolute God, as Professor Smith clearly does, it is enough. It is nothing short of blank infidelity to suppose that all the righteous, from Moses to Samuel, were ignorant of Jehovah as the one living and true God. What then of the patriarchs before Moses? Were Enoch, Noah, and Abraham ignorant of the same God, and only worshippers of gods of their own imagination? The simple conclusion is that if the early prophet was ignorant of the true God, the Scriptures are a lie, and divine revelation a mere fancy. This is the plain meaning of Professor Smith's theory. He admits that there was an authentic revelation of a real Being in the influence of Jehovah which Israel owned, but this can only mean when taken in connection with what precedes that it was a real Being in hidden providence that dealt with Israel. In this respect God is moving among all the nations of the earth, but it is not simply as a God of providence, hidden and unseen, that Jehovah acted towards Israel, or that Israel recognised Him. Witness His appearances to Abraham in regard to his son, to Jacob at Bethel, to Moses in the bush, and to Israel from Mount Sinai. It is the same God that has spoken to us in these last days by His Son that spoke unto the fathers by the prophets.—(Heb. i. 1, 2.) Professor Smith's theory ignores the testimony of

Christ and His apostles who spoke of Moses and the prophets as messengers of the living God. What can we think of a theory that is established upon a denial of the testimony of Jesus Christ, who is God over all, blessed for ever? Thick darkness has surely fallen upon us as a people when it is possible for a Professor in the Free Church to uphold such a theory, not only without fear or shame, but with the expectation of approval and applause. He dedicates his work, as a token of respect, to Professor Henry Drummond. We observe also that Professor Marcus Dods commends it very highly in a recent number of the *British Weekly*. In another article we shall submit some further extracts from Professor Smith's new work.

The Case against the Choir.

THE Church Choir is such an invariable feature of the present day religious service, and such an apparent necessity to public worship as now conducted, that all controversy respecting the rightness of the institution might seem to be put out of court. A bad choir will have many detractors, but a good choir is esteemed to be a good thing in every way.

If, however, religious persons were content to have regard only to New Testament rules in the conduct of New Testament worship, they might, we believe, find it needful to exclude the choir, having in that case come to see that it is an unspiritual device, not suitable to the glory of the New Dispensation.

In presenting our case against the choir there are four points which we will endeavour to prove. The first of these hardly needs proof. It is that in *the New Testament there is no warrant either formally or by implication for setting up a Choir*. The favourers of instrumental music have been fain to derive some countenance for their device from the Book of Revelation where they find music made by harpers with their harps, but neither there nor in any other writings of the apostles or evangelists is there any suggestion of a choir, and this surely is a significant omission, and might be held to prove the whole case. But we go on to our second point, which lies in the essential character of the New Testament dispensation. It is this, *that in the erection of a Choir there is an infringement of the priestly honour which pertains to all believers*. Under the old dispensation the functions of priesthood were vested solely in the tribe of Levi. For this tribe were reserved the honours and privileges of the public service of God in His temple. The Levites alone were entitled to wait at the altar, to burn incense, to keep the doors of the holy house, and theirs also was the right to offer the public sacrifice of praise: "For the Levites which were the singers, all of them of Asaph, of Heman, and of Jeduthan, with their sons and brethren, being arrayed in white linen, having

cymbals, psalteries, and harps, stood at the east end of the altar.” —(2 Chron. v. 12.) It was a high offence for the common Israelite to intrude upon any of these sacred offices. Here, therefore, was a distinction made between secular and sacred persons, and an election of the consecrated tribe to dignities and duties which inferred a corresponding denial of privilege to the great body of the people. But this was only imposed till the time of reformation, for now in Christ this distinction is done away, and all His people are placed on one platform, not by levelling down the privileges of any, but by elevating all the sons of Israel to equal rank, and this thing the Holy Spirit testifies in these grand words, “Unto Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us to be kings and priests unto God and His Father.”—(Rev. i. 5; 6.) And like as the apostle in his vision of the New Jerusalem (which is but a vision of the Gospel Church) saw no temple therein, for the place was all temple, so also he heard no choir therein, for the worshippers were all in the choir.

They therefore deal injuriously with His people's honour, and thwart (so far as mistaken creatures can) the gracious intention of Christ, who revive this relic of Judaism, and erect upon the forefront of Christian worship this device of an unspiritual and restricted dispensation. But some patrons of the choir may say, “We meddle not with such a high matter as the priestly function of believers, we only set on foot a common sense method for the cure of bad congregational singing.” But it is not possible so to limit the scope and significance of things done in the worship of God. Innovations made by the will of man upon the Divine order have meanings and issues far beyond what the innovators intend. Thus, the apostle would by no means give way to the seemingly innocent and pious proposal of circumcision for the Galatian converts. On the contrary he wrote an epistle showing what weighty consequences hung upon this act, and that if they would be circumcised, Christ would profit them nothing. And the searching and powerful argument of this epistle to the Galatians has a valid bearing upon all carnal Judaistic devices whatever which men would introduce into the Church.

We pass to our third point viz., that the *Choir is at variance with the family character of Christian worship*. The church is God's household, and the redeemed are all His sons and daughters by faith in Christ. Under the old Testament this kindly filial relation was obscured, and a formal, ceremonious, burdensome worship was prescribed. But now this darkness is past, and the true light shineth. The fact of adoption is revealed, and the Spirit of adoption is poured out, and the only worship that befits this new relation is a worship characterised by the utmost simplicity of form, and the utmost sincerity of spirit. His people are commanded with “one mind and one mouth to glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.” When Aquila and

Priscilla had family worship in their household we cannot think that two or three of the younger members, more musical than the others, were set forward to do the singing owing to their superior mastery of the art. This would offend both the eye and the heart of the master of the house, and he would by no means suffer it. But now, when the "church that was in their house" met—when the family of which the condescending omnipresent Christ is the head was assembled, would the choir be any more suitable there? Surely not! If Aquilla would be offended by this invidious distinction made among his sons and daughters, much more would Christ be offended.

Neither will it avail to object that what is unfit for a small gathering may yet be suitable and necessary in a large assembly, for the gift of song is diffused in a competent measure throughout the visible church, and if the spirit of gratitude were present, the sacrifice of praise could rise as readily from a thousand worshippers as from ten. The Church is but a collection of families, and if family worship were observed in every household, the familiar song that was sung by each family apart could as easily be raised by all the families together. The decay of congregational singing is directly due to the disuse of family worship.

But however we may reason for or against the choir, we shall find, we believe, that the Spirit of God has decided the controversy long ago, and plainly set forth what at least is the Divine ideal of congregational praise. For in the 148th psalm He calls all creatures, both animate and inanimate, to praise the Lord, and thus He summons human society in all its relations.

"Kings of the earth, and all people, princes, and all judges of the earth; both young men and maidens, old men and children, let them praise the name of the Lord."

The modern choirmaster sets little store by the praises of old men and little children. None are eligible for his purposes but the young men and maidens, but the Spirit of God plainly declares His disapproval of this partiality shown for the more artistic it may be, but often least spiritual part of the congregation, and intimates that His will is to have all ages and degrees put upon one footing in the matter of the public service of praise—that is, He declares for congregational singing as against choir music.

Our fourth and last point is that the *Choir is a failure*. Whatever be the case in isolated instances here and there, we scruple not to affirm that the choir has quite failed to accomplish the end ostensibly aimed at in its erection, viz.—the improvement of sacred song. We confine our view to the Presbyterian province of the Church. The choir is an institution alien to Presbyterianism. The more spiritual minds among us have always been suspicious of it. Our fathers, we believe, received spiritual light to cast out many inventions and devices of men from the worship of God, and among others they cast out the choir.

Degenerate Presbyterian Churches who have admitted choirs have, therefore, had to rebel against the light, and the Divine disfavour has visited their rebellion in various ways. One token of the divine disapproval has been that the management of this innovation has usually been abandoned to the most unspiritual and unpromising members of the congregation. Very few seekers or fearers of the Lord would ever meddle with it, but if there were any of the thoughtless youth of both sexes, who had never strived to enter in at the strait gate, and who wished to diversify the Sabbath with a little recreation, then you would find forward to go into the choir. The choir, we say, has failed to mend the bad congregational singing. The pews have become more dead and songless. And then when the artistic sense of some persons demanded satisfaction, they have been fain to mend the matter by the introduction of instrumental music. The organ has been set a-blowing, but still the pews have sunk into deeper deadness, and then, perhaps in the interest of high art, paid singers have been imported from the concert room into the choir. Music of an elaborate and classical character has been performed. This is the case in some of the more debased churches in Britain and America, and in them the worshippers have finally given up the idea of congregational singing, and have transformed themselves into a mere concert audience. What message do these dead songless pews carry to dwellers in heavenly places? "We have not been made kings and priests unto God, and we care not for it." This is the desolation that has overtaken those churches who have in this and in other matters strayed from the path of the Divine commands.

It is written that he that "loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver," and in like manner those professing Christians who dote on mere music shall not have the music they desire. Their churches shall become dead and songless in spite of their devices to produce music. For indeed the springs of church melody lie deep, and cannot be moved save by God Himself. Not till He Himself has tuned the heart, and put the new song into the mouth of the worshipper can that music be heard which is acceptable to heaven, and pleasing to the ear of right thinking men. When the day of Pentecost is fully come, and His salvation is made known to multitudes of renewed souls at once, then will the sound of the Divine praise flow forth as a torrent, and it will be seen how clumsy, froward, and superfluous were all the devices of choirs and organs to accomplish this end. The only cure for death is life, and songless churches are dead churches. When, therefore, the reproach of a dead formal worship becomes a burden to any, let them set their hearts upon the more excellent way of remedying that, viz.—to importune the outpouring of the Spirit of God, whose excellent power can move young men and maidens, old men and little children to praise the Lord God of Israel, who alone doeth wondrous things; and whose glory shall one day fill the earth.

J. M'N.

The New Joint-Hymnal of Free, U.P., and Established Churches.

ROMISH HYMNS.

THE report of a committee on the subject of a new hymnal for the above Presbyterian Churches was laid before the U.P. Synod on the 11th of May. Mr. G. T. Niven (elder), Glasgow, moved the following amendment:—"Inasmuch as the draft hymnal now submitted for the consideration of the Synod contains compositions which it is undesirable that our church should sanction as hymns, some of these having a Romanising tendency, while some are otherwise objectionable in sentiment, and a few not in any true sense hymns at all, the Synod instructs its representatives upon the Joint Hymnal Committee, in concert with the representatives of the other churches, carefully to revise said draft, with a view to the exclusion from the collection of all such compositions, and very specially of Nos. 40, 63, 300, 303, 456, 495, 497, 514, 515, 516, and to report to next Synod." Speaking to the amendment, Mr Niven said that since he had drafted it he had studied the draft hymnal carefully, and he had found that there were a considerable number of hymns in the volume which he should have liked to have added to the list specified in the resolution. In his view they had reached an epoch of the greatest importance in the history of their Church—an epoch which was of the gravest importance to their common Presbyterianism. He was perfectly willing to have union, friendship, and co-operation with the churches that held their sentiments, but he for one would not give his voice to the sanctioning of Romanism, or something as like Romanism as it was possible for anything to be. He pointed out Romish elements, such as virgin with a capital V in hymns 29 and 32. In hymn 40 the practice of bodily austerities was praised. Reference was made in hymn 63—"The Stabat Mater"—to the anguish experienced by the mother of our Lord when she beheld the death of her Son. By introducing those references they were paving the way for Romish feelings towards Mary. Again, there was Cardinal Newman's hymn, No. 101. In this occurred the words, "Jesus, Son of Mary, hear." He objected to other hymns because they taught that the Communion elements were pledges of salvation. He submitted that the compositions of Tennyson and Mrs. Browning introduced were not hymns at all, and also condemned the insertion of the National Anthem to the Queen. He did not believe, he said in conclusion, that the United Presbyterian Church would signalise its jubilee by doing what it had never done before in a manner so abhorrent to the mind of everyone who valued the principles of their church. On a vote by a show of hands the report of the committee was carried by a large majority, only four

members, so far as could be seen, supporting Mr. Niven's proposal. Mr. Niven entered his dissent.

The above, which we take from the columns of the *Scotsman*, speaks for itself. We shall see at the coming Assemblies how this Romish Hymnal will be received by the Free and Established Churches.

Convention of Reformed Presbyterian Churches.

THE programme has been sent us of a Convention of R.P. Churches, to be held in Scotland from June 27th to July 3rd. Delegates are expected from the Churches in Ireland and America. The first public function, which takes place on June 27th, is the inauguration of a monument at Lochgoin, to John Howie, the author of the "Scots Worthies." On Sabbath following, Martyr Memorial Services are to be held at such places as Richard Cameron's Monument, Ayrsmoss; Blackadder's grave, North Berwick; Cargill's Stone, Maybole; Peden's Monument, Cumnock; Drumclog, Fenwick, Cathcart; Infirmary Square, Glasgow; Greyfriars Churchyard, Edinburgh; and other places of historical interest throughout the country. These services will chiefly be conducted by the stranger delegates. On Tuesday evening, 30th June, a reception meeting will be held in the Christian Institute, Glasgow. On Wednesday and Thursday several meetings will take place at which papers will be read on the distinctive principles of the R.P. Church. On Thursday evening a number of memorials of Martyr times will be exhibited from the platform of the Institute; original copies of the National Covenant and Solemn League and Covenant, the swords of John Brown, of Priesthill, and other covenanters, the blue banner of the Covenant, the first edition of Laud's Liturgy, pulpit and pocket Bibles of Alexander Peden, pulpit Bibles of Donald Cargill and Macmillan of Balmaghie, and a number of other relics of covenanting times will be on view. On Friday, delegates and friends will go by train to Edinburgh to visit Martyr scenes, and the Convention will close with a meeting in the Free Assembly Hall that evening. The object of this Convention, which is to arouse interest in the Covenanters and covenanting principles is good, and we trust that the proceedings will not be without beneficial results. We have to mourn in all quarters the absence of the spiritual power that was felt in covenanting times, and we fear that covenanting Churches share to a large extent in the prevalent deadness. We earnestly pray that the Lord would be pleased for His great name's sake to cause a true revival of vital godliness to visit our churches and our land.

The Progress of Rome.

THE following report appears in the *Bulwark* for May :—"The inaugural meeting of the West London Protestant Association was held at the Paddington Baths Hall on 27th March, under the chairmanship of Colonel Sandys, M.P. The chairman delivered an excellent address, and the Rev. Charles Stirling, in the course of his speech, stated that the Roman Catholic members of the House of Commons were merely tools in the hands of the Pope, and that the whole tendency of Roman Catholicism was to derogate from the honour of God, and to exalt and to worship the creature more than the Creator.

"The Rev. W. Lancelot Holland, who was also one of the speakers, pointed out that Rome had not increased so much numerically as in social influence and political power. Thus in 1800 our population was $15\frac{3}{4}$ millions, of whom $4\frac{1}{4}$ millions were Roman Catholics. In 1891 the population stood at $37\frac{3}{4}$ millions, $5\frac{1}{2}$ millions of whom were Roman Catholics. Therefore, in 1800 the proportion was 5.7 Protestants to 2.7 Roman Catholics, and in 1891 6.7 Protestants to 1.7 Roman Catholics. Take the United States as another instance. The Roman Catholics had increased from 1,000,000 in 1800 to 8,277,039 in 1890, yet they had lost there more than 20,000,000 of adherents, as the emigrants had largely abandoned the Romish faith. On the Continent the same tendency might be noted. On the other hand there had been a vast increase in Romish agencies and political influence. In England and Scotland, since 1851, the priests had increased from 958 to 3239, the chapels from 709 to 1754, the monasteries from 17 to 236, the convents from 54 to 490. In the three kingdoms there were 6429 priests—in Ireland one priest to 1010 Roman Catholics, in Scotland one priest to 866 Roman Catholics, in England one to 409. There was a concentrated effort for the perversion of England."

Principal Rainy on the Free Presbyterian Church.

THE *British Weekly* gives a report of a speech by Principal Rainy at the annual congregational meeting of the Free College Church, Glasgow, on the evening of 22nd April. We make the following extract :—"He felt that God had been very good to the Free Church in many ways. There was one movement in connection with their Church which created a certain amount of tension. He meant the secession movement in the Highlands. They regretted that movement. He was very far indeed from having any unkind feeling to those who had committed themselves

to that movement. He regretted that for their own sake. He respected the personal character of many of those who took part in that movement. At the same time there was no doubt at all that the effect of that movement was to disembarass a number of the Free Church congregations of impracticable elements—those elements which from conscientious conviction led men to set themselves against everything like the active and vigorous developments of Christian life in modern times. He must say that one effect in the Highlands was that they were all to a large extent in the Free Church pulling together, and not disposed to create difficulties for one another, or to throw stumbling blocks in one another's way. That was a good thing. While they desired that the secessionists might do good work, he felt there had been a guiding hand in this matter which the Free Church would do well to recognise."

"The Saviour in the Newer Light."

THIS book, written by the Rev. Alexander Robinson, has had some notoriety as the foundation of what is known as the Kilmun Heresy Case. The work, as its name suggests, is intended to give a new presentation of the earthly life of our Saviour. The author, though a parish minister, is a rationalist of the most extreme type, who can savour nothing that is supernatural. He has, therefore, written a life of the Son of Man with all the power and glory of God left out. The Saviour's miraculous birth, His glorious resurrection, His words, especially His more severe and awful words, His manifold revelations of invincible power over diseases and devils, His Transfiguration, His walking upon the sea, His raising of Lazarus, &c., he receives none of these for they are all foolishness unto him. His critical treatment of the four Evangelists is bold, hardy, and disrespectful to an extreme, but he is especially disrespectful to the evangelist John. His narrative, he says, "is altogether unhistorical and idealistic." According to Mr. Robinson, John had a philosophical theory to serve and was not at all scrupulous with regard to facts. Indeed, with the possible exception of Mark, the Evangelists it seems, were all forgers of fictions—witnesses of little value. If it were not for accidental shreds of authentic fact which their narratives contain, and which Mr. Robinson with his "newer light" will recover for us, we would hardly have any real life of Christ left at all. We have no space to give many instances of Mr. Robinson's perversions of the gospel story, but a few will suffice. For example, he affirms that "Jesus was born at Nazareth," the accounts of a birth in Bethlehem given by Matthew and Luke "having no historical value." The fourth gospel "sports with time and place." The narrative of the healing of the impotent man

in the fifth of John, is merely a "late unhistorical rendering" of the healing of the paralytic in the second of Mark, and John's story is as much a "fairy tale as a story of Jesus." The raising of Lazarus is "an inhuman and artificial tale" "contributing nothing of real worth to our own religious faith and hope." His pages teem with such sallies of a wild irresponsible unbelief. The Presbytery of Dunoon, or at least a majority of them, have clearly seen the impropriety of allowing Mr. Robinson to wear the badge of a Christian teacher. They have handled the case with considerable firmness, and have at length served Mr. Robinson with a libel accusing him of subverting the Confession of Faith in five cardinal points. Mr. Robinson, at a meeting on 24th April, denied the relevancy of the libel, and appealed to the General Assembly. The case will now, therefore, go to the highest Court of the Established Church, and we will see what its course will be.

J.P. Students at the Assembly's College, Belfast.

THE results for last winter's session are as follows:—John Macleod, M.A., 1st in class of Ecclesiastical History, and 1st in class of Biblical Criticism. Donald Beaton, 1st in Systematic Theology; 3rd in class of Sacred Rhetoric and Catechetics, and winner of two Getty Prizes of £10 and £5 for work done during the session. As Mr. Macleod did not take out the number of classes required, he could not compete for the prizes. The venerable President of the College, Dr. Killen, in his remarks at the close of the session referred to the Scottish students:—"Among the students of the past year," he said, "they had a fair proportion of youths of more than ordinary ability. They had attended with commendable diligence to the business of their respective classes. The numbers in the several class rolls had been very encouraging, exceeding considerably what they had been able to report for a good many preceding years, and some of those most distinguished for talent and diligence had been students from Scotland. They hailed with peculiar pleasure the appearance on their College benches of these candidates for the ministry from the land of their fathers." (Applause.)

SACRAMENTS FOR JUNE.—The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper is (D.V.) to be dispensed at Duthil, Inverness-shire; Coigach, Ross-shire; and Tarbert, Harris, on the first Sabbath of this month, at Shieldaig on the second, and at Gairloch on the third.

The Opening of the Assemblies.

THE opening of the Assemblies of the Established and Free Churches took place on Thursday, 22nd May. The usual functions were gone through at the opening of the Established Church Assembly. The retiring Moderator, Dr. Donald Macleod, delivered a brief address in which he referred to the honour the Queen had now conferred on the Moderators of their Church in giving them the same rank in State functions as Bishops of the Church of England. Her Majesty had intimated this last year through the former Moderator, and Dr. Macleod thought it was due that an acknowledgment should now be made of this gracious act of the Queen, who sought to honour that church by thus honouring its ecclesiastical representative. This intimation was received with applause. We fail to understand what place ministers of Christ's Church have in State functions, and we fear that prelacy is looming in the near future when the Church of Scotland welcomes the conferring of the rank of Bishop on her Moderators. Truly our noble reformers would have spurned with disdain such prelatie privileges. Kings or queens have no scriptural authority to appoint bishops, and much less authority do they possess to confer civil privileges upon officers in Christ's Church.

The new moderator is the Rev. Dr. Archibald Scott of St. George's, Edinburgh.

At the opening of the Free Church Assembly, the retiring Moderator, the Rev. Dr. J. H. Wilson, of the Barclay Church, Edinburgh, delivered the usual sermon. He urged that it was not a new gospel or new truth that the Church required, but new spiritual power, a baptism of the Holy Ghost. This is very true, but has that church a right to expect a baptism of the Spirit that has treated lightly the Word of God, the incorruptible seed by which sinners are born again? It is vain to compliment the Holy Spirit if we honour those who have done much to tarnish the beauty and blunt the edge of the sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God.

The new Moderator, Dr. William Miller, Principal of the Christian College at Madras, delivered his inaugural address. In his opening remarks he said that his work in India had been, and would be while strength remained, scarcely even that of laying the foundations of the temple of the Lord in India; rather that of digging the trenches in which the corner stones would be laid by others in the future. He then proceeded to refer to the methods of mission work adopted in India. He referred to these as divine and progressive, and to the present stages of work as marked with defect and incompleteness. In speaking of this he used a rather bold illustration, and one that shows that he

regards it as something antiquated to cherish suspicion of men who charge the Scriptures with imperfection. He said that those who insisted upon the necessary imperfections of the earlier stages of mission work were regarded with such suspicion as used to be bestowed on one who allowed that any kind of imperfection could exist in the utterances of inspired men. In the course of his address he acknowledged it was a false impression that the bulk of those whom they were gathering to Christ's standard in India were, in the full evangelical sense, converted men. Towards the conclusion, he said that India had begun to ask in broken accents, as if one half awake, "What must I do to be saved?" An outstanding characteristic, in the meantime, of India's awakening was a reviving Hinduism, an attempt to purify the ancient system, and to read into it as much as might be of Christian truth; but that a part, and a large part of the current of new life should set in this direction was only natural. He would venture to add that it was right. It seems to us that Principal Miller's whole address was a plea on behalf of methods of mission work that are likely to do more evil than good. The apostle Paul went forth to preach the Gospel for the conversion of sinners. If men were not converted to Christ they were still in their sins, and on the broad way to everlasting destruction. If Principal Miller does not seek to bring the people of India under the power of the whole truth as it is in Jesus, a veneer of Christian education will do little for them. It is not simply education that men need, they also need regeneration. An educated but an unregenerated India is a lost India. We know that Principal Miller believes that Christianity came to perfect other religions, such as Hinduism and Buddhism. There is nothing in his address as Moderator that is inconsistent with that belief. We deplore the low condition of the Free Church when she maintains as a Principal in one of her colleges, and promotes to the highest honour in her power, one who holds such erroneous views of Christianity.

Congregational Notes.

RAASAY.—The following circular has been issued by the congregation of Raasay, and we trust it will meet with a ready response from friends and sympathisers:—"This congregation, comprising some five-sixths of the entire population of Raasay and Rona, although about the first to have disrupted in 1893, have hitherto failed in securing a suitable site for either church or manse. This hardship has been especially felt in the matter of a manse, inasmuch as it has entailed upon the pastor, Rev. D. Macfarlane, for the last two years, the necessity of renting, at his own expense, a house at Broadford, Isle of Skye, and only with much additional expense

and fatigue has he been able during that time to supply services at Raasay. In these circumstances, and when there is no likelihood of the proprietrix of Raasay being more favourably disposed, the congregation have concluded to proceed, with as little delay as possible, with the erection of a manse at Portree, a residence considerably nearer Raasay than Broadford. The proprietor, Lord Macdonald, is willing to grant a site for a dwelling-house, and over and above that, the congregation are assured that if at some future time a suitable site was granted at Raasay, the manse at Portree could easily, and without loss, be disposed of, so that the congregation should not need to make a second appeal for a manse at Raasay. The congregation, while willing to do their utmost, being generally poor, are not able, without help, to secure this much-needed residence for their pastor, and would hereby take the liberty of appealing to liberal Christian friends and sympathisers for help. The probable cost is £700. Contributions will be thankfully received and acknowledged by Rev. D. Macfarlane, Broadford, Skye, or by Mr. Alex. Macfarlane, teacher, Raasay, by Stromeferry." The Presbytery very cordially endorse the above appeal, and strongly recommend it to the liberality of Christian friends.—Signed, Allan Mackenzie, *Moderator*; John R. Mackay, *Clerk*.

TARBERT, HARRIS.—We are informed that Sir Samuel Scott has very kindly granted a suitable site for a Church to this congregation, which consists of several hundreds of people. The congregation has now begun to build a church by the personal labour of its adherents, but being poor stands much in need of help. An appeal, which the Presbytery heartily endorse, has been issued to friends of the cause. Contributions will be thankfully received and acknowledged by Mr. Donald Bethune, Tarbert, Harris.

Literary Reviews.

THE KING'S OWN. Marshall Brothers, London.

This is a publication which deserves a note of commendation. It exists for the laudable end of defending the inspiration of the Word of God and of rebuking present-day unbelief, especially as exhibited in the sphere of the higher criticism. The writers are able and well informed—the editor being specially expert in all customs and questions which are among the higher critics. The number for May contains articles on "The God of Shem," "The Times of Moses," "Is Daniel History?" "The Latest Phase of Historical Rationalism," "Was Primitive Man a Degraded Savage?" &c. There is also a serial story—a feature we cannot commend. The price is sixpence.

THE CHURCH AND STATE QUESTION: by the Rev. Allan Mackenzie, Free Presbyterian Church, Inverness. The Northern Counties Publishing Company, Inverness.

This booklet is a reprint of a series of letters that recently appeared from Mr. Mackenzie's pen in the columns of the *Northern Chronicle*. The subject treated is one which occupies considerable attention at the present time in connection with Disestablishment, but it is too evident that wrong and shallow views of the relations between Church and State prevail in many quarters. A sound treatise such as the above which brings the subject up to date, will prove useful in contributing to right and Scriptural views of the relative duties of Church and State. The writer begins with the testimony of Scripture and proves that it is the duty and privilege of the nation to support and defend the Church of Christ on earth. After showing that the separation of the Church from the State will seriously affect the nation's power to enforce the sanctification of the Sabbath, Mr. Mackenzie proceeds to give a historical sketch of Church and State from the early centuries of the Christian era down to the time of the Reformation. The principles of the Church of Scotland as then adopted are expounded at length. It is pointed out that the Free Church in 1843 left the Establishment in maintenance of these principles. Her subsequent policy in advocating disestablishment is shown to be entirely inconsistent with her own testimony. She has in fact, become a "Voluntary" Church. Her adoption of voluntarism was one of the reasons for separation from her communion: and we, as a Free Presbyterian Church, are called upon to contend strongly on behalf of the principle of national religion. The whole procedure of the disestablishment party is proved to be an attempt to undo the principles and work of the Reformation, and to rob the nation of every shred of its testimony in favour of Christ's Church. We commend this booklet which is written with much vigour and ability to the attention of our readers.

NOTE.—*We beg to inform our Highland readers that we expect to have a Gaelic page in our next number.*