

T H E

Free Presbyterian Magazine

And MONTHLY RECORD.

VOL. I.

JULY, 1896.

No. 3.

The Assemblies.

THE General Assemblies of the Established and Free Churches are annual events which arouse considerable interest throughout the country. These Churches represent the greater part of Scotland, and the transactions of their Assemblies are, therefore, watched with minute attention by all ranks and classes of the people. It is by the doings of the Assemblies that we learn the direction in which the currents of religious opinion and practice are moving. These currents, for a number of years past, have set in in the direction of laxity and error in doctrine, worship, and discipline. As far as we can observe, no real change for the better has taken place this year. As for the Free Church, she appears to be steadily running down the steep course of apostacy without hindrance. The Established Church has shown some signs of faithfulness to truth in the Kilmun Heresy Case, but, we have reason to fear that these signs are much more apparent than real, and that as a Church she just stands where she did.

In our last number we referred to the opening of the Assemblies. We now take up some of the more notable matters which occupied the attention of these courts.

At the Established Assembly, on Monday, 26th May, Dr. Marshall Lang, Glasgow, presented the report of the Commission on the Religious Condition of the people. In the course of his remarks upon the Highlands, he touched on "the secession from the Free Church," and Dr. Rainy's recent reference to it. Dr. Rainy, he remarked, had said that the effect of the movement had been to disembarass the Free Church of some impracticable elements. If Dr. Rainy was satisfied, he proceeded, "with that description of the effect of the movement they had nothing to say, although it was possible that the elements which in 1896 were called impracticable, represented the elements, which, in 1843 were praised for unflinching adherence to the Church." On the evening of the same day, the Assembly sat in deliberation upon the case of Professor Johnston, Aberdeen, and his students. A petition was presented by twenty-three students of the Established

Divinity Hall at Aberdeen, "craving the Assembly to exempt the students there from compulsory attendance at Professor Johnston's lectures, and to appoint some one by whom suitable lectures on Biblical Criticism might be delivered." The result of the Assembly's deliberations was to refrain from taking up the matter, as it was at present being considered by the authorities of the University. At another sitting, it was further decided that in the event of the Aberdeen University concluding their investigations before next Assembly, the Commission of the Assembly be empowered to take any action necessary or expedient in the matter. This is a very painful case, and reveals a state of matters among Established students at Aberdeen that is truly deplorable. Dr. Johnston was appointed to the chair he now occupies only a few years ago. We believe he is one of the soundest professors in the Established Church, and the chief ground of his offence appears to be that he firmly holds by the verbal inspiration of the Scriptures, and rejects all modern rationalistic theories about the Old Testament. He affirms that he was ridiculed by the class for maintaining the unity of authorship in Isaiah. One student, we learn, declared in answer to a question, that the account of the creation in Genesis was not to be taken literally, but only as a piece of poetry. This is the sort of thing with which Professor Johnston has to contend. The students have also shown bad behaviour, for one day they meanly shut the professor out of his own class-room. We are sorry to see that the other professors have more sympathy with the students than with their colleague. The whole incident is a fruit of current declension in religion and theology. We shall await further developments with anxious interest.

The next thing of general interest that appeared before this Assembly was the proposed Joint-Hymnal for the three Presbyterian Churches. Dr. Rankin, Muthil, gave in the report of the Committee. After considerable discussion, the new Hymnal was rejected by a majority. The reasons for rejection had, of course, nothing to do with opposition to the use of uninspired hymns, for these are already sanctioned by the Church. The rejection of this hymnal mainly sprang from the fact of the lack of harmony that subsists between the Established and the other Churches on account of the Disestablishment movement. We are not sorry at the issue. Another proof is given, that if men don't unite in the use of the divinely authorised book of praise as a Psalter suitable for all ages, all efforts to agree about an uninspired hymnal will prove a failure.

The last and most important matter that came before this Court was the well-known Kilmun Heresy Case. It came up for consideration in the form of an appeal from the Rev. Alexander Robinson, minister of Kilmun Parish, against a judgment of the Presbytery of Dunoon, finding relevant a libel charging him as the author of a book entitled, "The Saviour in the Newer Light,"

with holding and publishing views containing unsound doctrine, and teaching subversive of and contrary to the doctrines of the Church, concerning (1) the authenticity, credibility, and truthfulness of the four Gospels, and the divine inspiration and integrity of the writers; (2) the divinity of Christ; (3) the holy sacraments; (4) the miracles wrought by Christ during his earthly ministry; and (5) Christ's resurrection. Legal advocates appeared for Mr. Robinson and the Presbytery, and the Rev. John Saunders for the Synod of Argyll. After parties were heard on both sides Mr. Robinson's appeal was dismissed by an overwhelming majority. It was then agreed that before proceeding further a committee would be appointed to confer with Mr. Robinson. The following evening the Assembly received the report of the committee. The report simply consisted of the presentation, without comment to the Assembly, of a statement by Mr. Robinson, in which he adhered to his defences against the Presbytery, but admitted that his book was faulty in form and substance, and promised to withdraw it from circulation, as well as not to publish or preach any views that could be reasonably regarded as antagonistic to the doctrines of the Church. As Mr. Robinson, however, did not withdraw his defences against the Presbytery, the libel on the five points enumerated went to the vote of the Assembly. The libel was sustained by large majorities on all the counts. Dr. Marshall Lang then moved, that the Assembly, whilst recording their condemnation of the book libelled, yet in view of Mr. Robinson's explanations, assurances, and regret expressed in his statement, the Assembly strongly censure Mr. Robinson, and gravely admonish him to avoid all occasions of offence in the future, and resolve, in all the circumstances, to proceed no further in the case. Dr. John Macleod, Govan, moved as an amendment that the Assembly suspend and deprive Mr. Robinson for a year, enjoin him to withdraw the book and instruct him to appear before the next General Assembly to state whether he was prepared wholly to repudiate the statements of the book. The amendment was carried by a majority. We regard it as very satisfactory that Mr. Robinson's case was so firmly handled by the Assembly. The chief drawbacks are that Dr. Macleod, Govan, and several of Mr. Robinson's strongest opponents, are leaders of the Scottish Church Society, who are doing all they can to bring back the Church to Romanism. Mr. Robinson of course is a rationalist, and his views strike at the supernatural in every form. He takes from the truth, while Dr. Macleod and his party add to the truth. Both are seriously wrong. Whilst highly satisfied that Mr. Robinson has been suspended, we cannot but have mingled feelings at the result. Nothing would give us more pleasure than to see the Established Church returning to the pure doctrine and worship of the Reformation embodied in the Confession of Faith. But we fear the time is not yet. One of her greatest enemies is ritualism, and

unless this is cast out she will speedily fall into the hands of Rome.

The Free Church Assembly was occupied with several matters of interest and controversy. The new Joint Hymnal was before the house on Wednesday, 26th May; Professor Bruce, Glasgow, moved the adoption of the hymnal, and Dr. J. H. Wilson seconded the motion. The chief speaker of the opposition was Mr. Archibald Macneilage, Glasgow. He concluded his speech by saying that this was the most contemptible publication in the shape of a hymnal that was ever laid on the table of the house. During the discussion it came out that the Rev. Robert Murray M'Cheyne's hymn, "I once was a stranger to grace and to God," was omitted from the book. We do not approve of the use of uninspired hymns, however sound, in public worship; but we think it a lamentable state of matters when a hymn such as the above, commonly known as Jehovah Tsidkenu, "The Lord our righteousness," written by an eminent man of God and containing sound truth, is rejected in room of Popish trash. The doctrine of imputed righteousness, which is hateful to Papists and Arminians, but sweet to all who love the Gospel, is a prominent element in this hymn, and therefore it was rejected. People have fallen so low that even sound hymns are obnoxious to their taste. The Assembly decided to take the vote by a show of hands, and the adoption of the new hymnal was carried by an overwhelming majority.

Principal Rainy submitted the usual report on the Highlands and Islands, and made reference to the "secession," or rather, the Free Presbyterian Church. It appears that the Presbyteries were communicated with to give in reports of the extent and numbers of the "secession" from the Free Church. The result of the figures furnished was that the total amount of elders and deacons, communicants and adherents, over eighteen years of age, who had left the Church, was 6,756. The amount of decrease in members and adherents in the Highland Presbyteries since 1894, was only 4,008. We are fully convinced that the number of those who seceded is much greater, but as numbers do not affect our principles or position anything, we make no attempt at any elaborate proof to the contrary. We have no doubt but the difference between the two figures given above arises from the fact that the Church has been largely adding to her membership. It is a part of the new gospel that young persons who make the merest profession of religion should be urged to become communicants. And since Highland Presbyteries have got rid of "the impracticable elements," we are sure they have been busy at this work.

A prominent subject in the Assembly was the Church's relations to the U.P. Church. The Synod of the latter body has declared itself this year fully in favour of union with the Free Church. Principal Rainy made a motion to the effect that they cordially

welcome the overture of the U.P. Church, and take steps to draw the two bodies closer together. He said, in the course of his speech, that the matter should not be rushed but should be fully weighed and discussed throughout the Church, but that although "nobody wanted it or wished to bring it to pass, that that union might be accomplished in the end amid disaster and a set of accompaniments, lawsuits, secessions, and troubles of that kind. Not the less it would come to pass." Rev. J. D. MacCulloch, Glasgow, made a statement to the effect that he and those who thought with him adhered to the views so frequently expressed on former occasions, that they desired the larger union of the three Presbyterian Churches, but that they could not seek or agree to such a union, except on such a basis as should neither put in abeyance nor minimise truths or principles which the Free Church was under special obligations to hold and declare. It is quite evident that the power of the minority is getting weaker year by year, and that Principal Rainy and the majority behind his back simply smile at all their endeavours, which are not very vigorous or united at the best, to check the current towards union with the U.P. Church. The cognate subject of Church and State also came up at a further sitting. Principal Rainy moved that "the Assembly adhere to all former findings on the subject, declare anew that the termination of the present connection of Church and State in Scotland is demanded by justice, and by the interests of religion, and is an indispensable preliminary to a general reunion of the Presbyterian Church in Scotland." Dr. Macewan, Edinburgh, made a motion that the Assembly express itself simply in favour of the general reunion of the Presbyterian Churches; Sheriff Cowan, Paisley, a motion in favour of Disestablishment, but against the alienation of endowments from the support of religion; while Mr. J. Hay Thorburn made the usual constitutional motion against Disestablishment and in favour of the principle of national religion. The result was that Dr. Macewan withdrew his motion in virtue of a statement in Principal Rainy's speech, and that the latter's motion was carried as usual by a large majority. Mr. Thorburn's motion only received a little over 40 adherents. Dr. Macewan was at one time regarded as a very vigorous constitutionalist, but he seems to be gradually falling into the arms of Dr. Rainy and his party. His speech and action on this occasion were tantamount to acceptance of Dr. Rainy's policy on Church and State.

The Declaratory Act was the last subject of controversy that was brought before the Assembly. Overtures from the Presbytery of Dingwall and Synod of Glenelg, practically asking the repeal of the Declaratory Act, were discussed. These overtures were spoken to by Rev. Messrs. Macqueen, Kiltearn; Galbraith, Lochalsh; and Sinclair, Plockton. Principal Rainy, in proposing that the Assembly pass from the overtures, said in conclusion that they had heard in the Assembly member after member stating

that they would not have been there as members had it not been for the operation of the Declaratory Act. Mr. Galbraith said, that if matters were to go on, he felt there would be another and larger exodus than that which had taken place. He did not say it would be in the direction of secession, but it would be in another direction, and they might look for themselves. After some further discussion, the Assembly agreed to pass from the overtures. These proceedings need hardly any comment. The Declaratory Act has again been practically declared to be a law in the Free Church, and all the efforts of the minority are utterly futile to check or affect its operation.

Besides the above, several things appeared in the discussions of the Assembly that deserve criticism. Dr. Reith, Glasgow, expressed very lax views about Sabbath observance, and said that he did not rest the obligation to keep the Sabbath on the fourth commandment. In speaking also on Religion and Morals, he referred favourably to the theatre, if it were only purged, as a means of much instruction and profit, and remarked that he had the most intense respect for some men and women in the theatrical profession of to-day. We further observe, that the Assembly leaves it to the discretion of Kirk-Sessions to administer the communion to aged and sick persons. Private communion is one of the Romish things that our Reforming forefathers abjured, but the Assembly of the Free Church is prepared to restore this, contrary to the express prohibition of a former Act of the Church in 1690.

Our sketch of the proceedings of the Free Church Assembly will show our readers that the body represented by that court is still on the down grade, and is going further year by year from the truth. It ought to be a matter of deep sorrow that men who have had such a goodly heritage are so lightly casting it away. The apostacy of the Free Church may well be indelibly impressed upon the hearts of all as an event that carries with it solemn warning to present and future generations. Let us as a Church not boast of our sword or bow, but in humility and lowliness of mind let us seek to go forward "in the strength of the Lord God, making mention of His righteousness, and of His only."

THE SACRAMENTS FOR JULY.—It has been arranged that the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper will (D.V.) be dispensed at Inverness on the first Sabbath of the month; at Moy and Raasay on the second; at Halkirk, Caithness, and Bracadale, Skye, on the third; and at Rogart, Flashadder, and North Uist on the fourth.

A NEW Free Presbyterian Meeting House was opened on 17th June, at Fearn. The Rev. J. R. Mackay, Gairloch, and Rev. Allan M'Kenzie, Inverness, officiated.

A Sermon.

BY THE REV. ALEX. MACRAE, KAMES, TIGHNABRUAICH.

“Whose fan is in His hand, and he will thoroughly purge His floor, and gather His wheat into the garner; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.”—ST. MATT. iii. 12.

THESE solemn words were spoken by John the Baptist in reference to the functions that were to be discharged by Him whose forerunner John professed to be. He appears now to have entered upon the ministry to which he was divinely called. In him some of the predictions made under the Old Testament dispensation are actually fulfilled: “For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.” Malachi also speaks of his coming: “Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me.” A solemn message it was that John delivered. It was exactly the same as that which the Lord Jesus declared when He had entered upon His public ministry on earth: “Repent ye; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” John preached the absolute necessity of repentance with all the authority with which his divine message was invested. The result was that large congregations assembled to hear him, and many “were baptised of him in Jordan, confessing their sins.” But among his hearers were some self-righteous characters who had such a favourable estimate of their own integrity as not to have any need of confessing their sins. These he very sharply rebukes, and delineates their character in a manner in which they did not expect to be described: “O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth, therefore, fruits meet for repentance.” John is careful to inculcate the insufficiency of his baptism. In it, he acknowledged, there was no intrinsic efficacy to effect a change either of state or of nature. He thus turns the attention of his hearers to the absolute necessity of receiving a baptism from Christ,—whose prerogative it is to baptise “with the Holy Ghost and with fire.” The doctrines that John is here careful to inculcate are those expressed in the passage: “What the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh; that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.” John, therefore, does not claim to have any right to hold the fan in his hand. He only has a right to bear the fan unto whom the Father “hath committed all judgment.” His foundation standeth sure, having the seal, “The Lord knoweth them that are his.” “With His fan He will thoroughly purge His floor;” and in the exercise of His

divine rights and prerogatives "He will gather His wheat into the garner; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire."

Three things present themselves in this passage for our consideration, viz. :—

I. The floor.

II. Christ's treatment of the floor: "He will thoroughly purge His floor."

III. His treatment of those who are on the floor: "He will gather His wheat into the garner; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire."

I. In this passage John speaks metaphorically. The Scriptures abound in metaphors; but invariably they convey a deep spiritual meaning. All the hearers of John would understand the literal signification of what he had here spoken; but few of them were able to understand the spiritual meaning these words conveyed. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." Under the representation of a floor the visible church is set forth. Many of those who are members of the visible church are not members of the church invisible. "He is not a Jew which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh. But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly, and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of man, but of God." Thus the floor is represented as having wheat and chaff on it. It has been so from the beginning, and it shall be so to the end of time. From the beginning Christ had a floor. He placed it not among the fallen angels, but among the fallen race of Adam: "For verily He took not on Him the nature of angels; but He took on Him the seed of Abraham." No sooner did wheat appear on His floor than chaff also appeared. Abel, we are told, offered unto the Lord of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof; but Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto Him. To the offering of Abel the Lord had respect, because he offered it in the exercise of faith on the "Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." "Behold the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world." Abel had respect to the doctrine of justification by faith through the infinite merits of the atoning blood of Christ; but Cain repudiated that doctrine, and blindly asserted the possibility of justification by works, as many professors of religion do nowadays. Let them, however, remember that "by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight." It is not by works that any member of the human race can be saved, but by grace: "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."

The Jewish Church was Christ's floor under the Old Testament dispensation. Thus the Psalmist refers to it—"Thou hast brought

a vine out of Egypt ; thou hast cast out the heathen and planted it. Thou preparedst room before it, and didst cause it to take deep root, and it filled the land. . . . She sent out her boughs unto the sea, and her branches unto the river." On it the outward ordinances of Christ's house were instituted. Moses had received the injunction, "See that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount." On the floor of the Jewish Church the ceremonial law was given, which remained in force till the death of Christ. Then it was totally and finally abrogated, for "the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom." On this floor the Lord had some wheat, but there was much chaff. That is very evident from the fact that many thousands of the Israelites were destroyed in the wilderness. "With whom was He grieved forty years? was it not with them that had sinned, whose carcasses fell in the wilderness?" Many of them could not enter into rest because of unbelief: "He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." David was much concerned for this floor in his day. How many in our day are concerned about their own affairs; but how few are really and sincerely distressed for the state of Christ's cause! "Do good," said David, "in thy good pleasure unto Zion; build thou the walls of Jerusalem." What gross darkness had fallen upon it in Elijah's troublous days: "The children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away." The prophets of Baal were numerous. They were lost in carnal security. They heartily rejoiced in the success that crowned their efforts to advance the kingdom of darkness. Fittingly are they described by the Psalmist: "The boar out of the wood doth waste it, and the wild beast of the field doth devour it." But although troops may overcome Gad, he shall overcome at the last. There was indeed much chaff on the floor; but comparatively little wheat. Consider how grieved in spirit Jeremiah was at the state of Christ's cause: "Oh that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people!" Why should he be so affected? There was much chaff on the floor. There was much graceless profession of religion. The prophets were light and treacherous persons; the priests had done violence to the law. How sadly is their character depicted in the Scriptures: "His watchmen are blind; they are all ignorant, they are all dumb dogs, they cannot bark; sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber. Yea, they are greedy dogs which can never have enough, and they are shepherds that cannot understand; they all look to their own way, every one for his gain, from his quarter." No wonder then, though the soul of every child of God should be sorely grieved. The majority of the prophets were like the foxes in the desert. They prophesied out of their own heart, and spoke vanity. How unspeakably sad was the condition of the people who listened to

them. "They have seduced my people, saying, Peace; and there was no peace; and one built up a wall, and lo, others daubed it with untempered mortar." It is very probable that these false prophets would now assert, with all the power of argument at their command, that never before was the floor in a more flourishing condition. It is but natural for them to think that the floor cannot flourish but when they themselves are well represented on it. "The god of this world hath blinded the eyes of those who believe not." Poor Scotland! we fear that Satan is permitted to ride triumphantly on the floor of Christ in thee.

In the fulness of time Christ appeared personally on His floor. The people of God, who are here represented under the character "wheat," were looking for His advent. "The Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to His temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in; behold, he shall come, saith the Lord of Hosts." But did He find much wheat on His floor when He came? No. Simeon was a precious grain on it. He is described as "waiting for the consolation of Israel. . . . And it was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ." We also read of Anna, a prophetess, "who departed not from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day." There were a few others on it who are given under this representation; but the predominating party were those represented by the "chaff." On that account, the question has been put, "Who may abide the day of His coming? and who shall stand when He appeareth? for He is like a refiners' fire, and like fullers' soap." Was Christ kindly received when He appeared on His own floor? No. "He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief." Every graceless person cherishes the same thoughts towards Him now as those did who actually cried, "We will not have this man to reign over us." What a wonderful Person! Christ, the eternal Son, who is the same in substance, equal in power and in glory, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, in the unity of the God-head. In Him is the mystery of godliness revealed. "Without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness, God manifested in the flesh." To assume a sinless human nature and bring it into an indissoluble union with the divine nature was a mighty act of the eternal Person: "The Word was made flesh and tabernacled among us." To this greatest of all mysteries Nahum refers for the consolation of the Church: "Behold upon the mountains the feet of Him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace!" But Him the Church rejected. On His own floor was He apprehended, crucified, and ignominiously put to death. But "ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into His glory?" so that "the stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner." He was indeed delivered for the offences of His people; but He was raised up again for their justification. And now as He is

about to ascend gloriously to the Father's right hand where there are pleasures for evermore, in whose presence is fulness of joy, what is the parting command He gives to His disciples? "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." Christ's floor, therefore, embraces both Jews and Gentiles. Under the representation of a floor the visible church is here set forth.

II. This floor needs to be purged: "He will thoroughly purge His floor." This work He has not entrusted to any other, He has committed to His ambassadors the word of reconciliation which they are exhorted to hold fast, "in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus." "Hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown." To thoroughly purge the floor is not in the power of a finite creature, Christ alone can thoroughly purge it. It is, however, the duty of every person to strenuously oppose whatsoever may tend to corrupt it. We are enjoined to "contend earnestly for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints."

I. The floor needs to be purged because there is much chaff on it. And what is that chaff? The chaff represents two classes:—
(1.) Those who are brought within the pale of the visible Church through the door of baptism; and yet have undergone no saving change. It will avail us nothing though we should have the outward privileges of the Church bestowed upon us if we be not regenerated: "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." When the Church is in a declining condition, she attributes much efficacy to the outward administration of the sacraments. She glories much in outward pomp and splendour. So did the Jewish Church in Christ's time and after it. So does the Church of Rome; and now it has become a marked feature of the Churches of the Reformation, at home and abroad, to glory much in externals. Not only do Episcopalians, but also many so-called Presbyterians believe in baptismal regeneration. Remember that "circumcision or uncircumcision availeth nothing; but a new creation." You shall certainly be found among the chaff though you should be baptised in the name of the adorable Persons of the Trinity if you be not born again. How many to whom this sacrament is outwardly administered give evidence from the fruits they bear in their daily walk and conversation that they are still under the government of the "god of this world, the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience!" But "to whom much is given, of them much shall be required;" and if you think lightly of these privileges you are aggravating your own guilt. Is it not said, "This is the condemnation that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil?" It is indeed a precious privilege to be within the pale of the visible Church; but you shall be accounted as chaff if you remain ignorant of the saving operations of the Holy Spirit in regeneration. (2.) The chaff represents those who make a graceless profession of religion.

There have been many such in every generation; and this generation has its own share of them. It is a fatal mistake those ministers commit who insist on all indiscriminately to partake of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. All have no right to partake of it; and we fear that many such are in the ministry, and hold other important offices in the visible Church. That may be a reason for the encouragement that is given by too many ministers to all indiscriminately to become church members. We read of no class of people against whom the Lord Jesus inveighs with greater severity than against graceless professors of religion. They were the enemies of the cross of Christ in every generation. The preaching of the cross was to the Jews a stumbling block; to the Greeks, it was foolishness. It is so till now. Who were they whom John addressed in the words, "O generation of vipers?" They were professors of religion; but destitute of grace. We can conceive of no class of people more detrimental to the cause of Christ on earth than such. Therefore, it is said that the harlots and the publicans themselves will enter into the kingdom of heaven before them. But harlots and publicans cannot enter without undergoing a radical and a saving change; neither can nominal professors, whether they be ordinary church members or office-bearers in congregations. How showy was the outward profession of the foolish virgins! But what was the value of it? It all vanished. "At midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet Him." Then "they that were ready went in with Him to the marriage; and the door was shut." All graceless professors of religion are but chaff. Through their instrumentality the prince of darkness can advance his cause with greater success than he can through the agency of those who live in open sin. Satan makes greater havoc when he appears as an "angel of light" than when he goes about as "a roaring lion." Do not then rest satisfied with an outward profession of religion. Give the more diligence to make your calling and election sure. Although the process of being emptied from vessel to vessel is by no means a pleasant experience, it is unspeakably sad to have the lot and portion of Moab. "Moab," it is said, "hath been at ease from his youth, and he hath settled on his lees, and hath not been emptied from vessel to vessel . . . therefore, his taste remained in him, and his scent is not changed." The Lord's people are frequently afraid that they are nothing better; but the words of Christ to them are, "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." The two classes that we have been describing seem to be the two parts referred to by Zachariah: "In all the land, saith the Lord, two parts therein shall be cut off and die." He speaks of a third part which shall be left therein, probably representing the wheat, or the Lord's people; for "they shall fear Thee as long as the sun and moon endure, throughout all generations." The floor, therefore, needs to be purged. But Christ "will thoroughly purge His floor."

2. Again, the floor needs to be purged because of the unscriptural practices of churches that profess to be churches of Christ. Think of the foul practices of the Church of Rome. She is represented in the Scriptures as having upon her forehead a name written: "Mystery, Babylon the great, the mother of harlots, and abominations of the earth." She is described as becoming "the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird." The Lord's people are, therefore, exhorted to come out of her, that they be not partakers of her sins; and receive not of her plagues. Are churches that go under the name of Protestant Churches much better? Many of them are not. How corrupt is the floor in Episcopalian Churches! The Church of Rome is rapidly regaining her strength beyond her own borders, and few only have the eyes to behold it. Anglicanism is very closely allied to Romanism. But consider the Romanising tendencies that appear in the Presbyterianism of Scotland. This generation seems to connive at these tendencies; but following generations are likely to be laid prostrate under the heel of Popish dominion as a result of our unfaithfulness. The floor of Christ in Presbyterian communions is much polluted. That is clear (1) from the practice of many of these churches. Have they any divine warrant or authority to introduce instrumental music into the public worship of the sanctuary? No; but the divine injunction is, "By Him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to His name." Many devote all their energies to defile the floor which Christ will ultimately thoroughly purge; but the word of the Lord shall most certainly be fulfilled in them if they repent not: "If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy." Inconceivably dangerous it is then to introduce into the sanctuary a form of worship that Christ Himself has not prescribed; and we would fain hope that congregations who indulge in such an unwarrantable practice as this may speedily give it up for the good of Zion in our land. "To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me. . . . When ye come to appear before me, who hath required this at your hand, to tread my courts." (2) It is also evident that the floor is much polluted by the too many unscriptural views of truth that are given out. The floor was wonderfully purged in Scotland through the instrumentality of the excellent Reformers whom God raised up; but now there is an imaginary enlightenment that looks with contempt upon the attainments of the Reformation. The Confession of Faith is repudiated in many quarters, and doctrines are authoritatively sanctioned that are subversive of the doctrines of the Word of God. They "wrest the Scriptures to their own destruction." To what an alarming extent is the floor now polluted in Scotland with Arminianism, Sacramentarianism, Voluntarism, Romanism, &c.! "For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall

deceive the very elect." On all these accounts the floor needs to be purged.

3. The Lord's people, represented by the wheat on the floor, need themselves to be purged. They have all been washed "by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost." But they need to be washed daily. "Purge me with hyssop and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow." Christ will thoroughly purge His people. By nature they were all chaff. They were "the children of wrath, even as others." But through the powerful and saving operations of the Holy Spirit in them in effectual calling they were made new creatures; for "that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." They acquiesced most heartily in God's way of salvation through the infinite merits of Christ's sacrifice. They realised Christ in His finished work to be an all, yea, an infinitely and everlastingly satisfying portion. "This is all my salvation, and all my desire." Those, therefore, whom He washes not have no part in Him. His people are justified freely by His grace. But they need to be sanctified. "Sanctify them through Thy truth." Christ is thus made to them of God both righteousness and sanctification. In respect of their justification and the acceptance of their persons by God on the ground of Christ's imputed righteousness, they are as perfect as they can possibly be; but they are not so, in respect of their sanctification. There are no degrees in their justification, as there are in their sanctification. The former is a completed act, taking place in the twinkling of an eye—it is an *act* of God's free grace. It is, therefore, a perfect blessedness. What profound and stupid ignorance has been exhibited on the floor of the General Assembly of the Church, which we can no longer regard as representing the Free Church, by the irreverent applause that has been elicited by the utterance of a statement calling in question the orthodoxy of the words in the psalm, "That man hath perfect blessedness, &c." It is not partly that the Lord justifies or reconciles any sinner to Himself; otherwise there could be no justification or reconciliation at all. But justification is a perfect blessedness, and that perfect blessedness all the Lord's people have on earth, as is evident from the words, "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God who justifieth." In this respect they are all "complete in Him," although they are not "thoroughly purged." But sanctification is a *work*—it is a process carried on; so that they shall not be thoroughly purged until this work in them is completed. This is the mysterious work that the Holy Spirit carries on in their souls throughout their whole life of faith on earth; and the singularity of this work is, that the more it advances, the greater is one's own consciousness of the depth of wickedness of one's heart, and the exceeding sinfulness and corruption of one's nature. He will, therefore, bring them "through the fire, and refine them as silver is refined." Christ shall present His people before the Father,

"holy, unblameable, and unreprouable." He is made sanctification to them, so that He shall thoroughly purge them by ultimately making them perfect in holiness. Then only shall a complete and an everlasting separation be effected between them and their corruption. Christ shall thus answer their prayer, "Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity." If the floor is to be thoroughly purged, the Lord's people on the floor shall also themselves be thoroughly purged.

4. He will thoroughly purge His floor by actually separating the wheat from the chaff. "Then shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked." A clean separation shall He effect between them; and for that purpose He has the fan in His hand. Let no person presume to have a right to exercise functions that are exclusively Christ's. In His hand only is the fan safe. Great as John was he entirely disclaims the right to fulfil functions that were never entrusted to him. Let us, therefore, be careful not to presumptuously arrogate to ourselves prerogatives that are not ours to exercise. How unspeakably precious that Christ has His fan in His hand! But what is that fan? (1.) The fan of His word. How many try to wrest it out of His hands! How many attempt to rend it to pieces! But it shall rend terribly the consciences of many eternally; for the worm shall not die, neither shall the fire be quenched. Many think that they can improve on Christ's fan—some by detracting from it, others by adding to it. But His fan is perfect,—“The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul.” How sadly deluded those are who endeavour to interpret it in such a way as to suit their own carnal tastes! The Scriptures, however, shall not be changed, “Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law till all be fulfilled.” Some Churches think that they can make any alterations they like on this fan. Can anything be more dishonouring to God than a deliberate denial on the part of any individual or Church, of the integrity and inerrancy of His word? To the law and the testimony we must come, and by them must our whole conduct be regulated. No individual or Church, or any power whatever, can take the fan out of Christ's hand, “Strong is Thy hand, and high is Thy right hand.” But with the fan of His word He will thoroughly purge His floor. How do you stand related to the Word of God? Is your knowledge of it confined to the letter, or do you know it in its power? “The Word of God is living and powerful.” Many of those who profess to be followers of Christ know it not in its power; and, therefore, in the faithful proclamation of His word He has been carrying on sifting processes in order to sever the wheat from the chaff. We have a very remarkable instance of this when Christ preached to those whom He fed in the wilderness, the necessity of eating the flesh of the Son of man, and drinking His blood, “Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you.” They followed Him because of the loaves and fishes. How

worldly and selfish they were in their aspirations! They could not, therefore, bear to hear the truth faithfully declared, "This is a hard saying, who can hear it?" and "from that time many of His disciples went back, and walked no more with Him." But did His true disciples turn back? No. "Lord," said Peter, "to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life." What are the words of eternal life? "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you," in regard to which His nominal followers said, "This is a hard saying, who can hear it?" Observe the difference between both. What a wonderful sifting had there taken place by the fan of Christ's word! The chaff went away; but the wheat remained. That is exactly the case till now. Many will not listen to the faithful declarations of the Word of God, "The time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears, and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned into fables." This incident in the wilderness serves as a mirror in which we can clearly see the condition of the Churches in Scotland now. What do many say about the doctrines of the Confession of Faith? "This is a hard saying, who can hear it." Some churches have relaxed these doctrines; and we can only compare them to those nominal disciples of Christ who "went back and walked no more with him." Infinitely better it is to have the company of a few despised disciples who receive the words of Christ as the "words of eternal life," than be associated with thousands who regard His doctrines as "an hard saying." He will, therefore, purge His floor with the fan of His word.

(2.) He will also purge it with the fan of affliction. Christ has the government both of providence and of grace upon His shoulders. There is, therefore, no accident in His providential agency. "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall to the ground without your Father." David derived much comfort from the thought that He was the God both of providence and of grace. "My times are in Thy hand," that is, the hand in which the fan is. How much was Jacob tried with this fan! "All these things are against me." He thought that the wheels of providence were revolving in a manner that was detrimental to him. But these wheels Christ controls, so that "all things work together for good to them that love God." With this fan He will purge His floor, and effect a separation between the wheat and the chaff. Consider how clearly this is exemplified in the case of Job and his wife. The Lord was pleased to visit them with sore afflictions. With what resplendent lustre does the work of God in Job shine when he utters the words, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord." But how sadly does his wife appear to be under the influence of the prince of darkness! "Curse God and die." The one blessed, but the other cursed. He will purge His floor with the fan of affliction. If you cast a piece of silver into the

fire it melts. If you cast a piece of clay into it, it hardens. So it is with the righteous and the wicked. In the fire of affliction the Lord's people are moistened, but the wicked are hardened in it. "He will thoroughly purge His floor."

(3.) He will purge it with the fan of trials. With this fan the floor was purged in Gideon's day. His army of two and thirty thousand was reduced to three hundred. Men frequently make much of the chaff. It often appears weighty in their eyes; but it is even lighter than a feather, and before the winds of trial it must inevitably go. "God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised . . . that no flesh should glory in His presence." In fanning operations, how rapidly does the chaff fly away when it is laid out before the wind! It is even so on the floor of Christ's Church. There is, therefore, need of grace to help in every time of need. It is possible—and it has often been the case—that some grains of wheat may be carried away a little before the wind. Although some of the Lord's people may fall, they shall not fall utterly. He shall heal all their backslidings. Satan desired to have Peter that he might sift him as wheat,—“But I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not.” The Lord seems to be sifting the inhabitants of Scotland to-day. Choose you then whom ye will serve; and may many be enabled to say with Joshua, “But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord!”

(4.) Christ will thoroughly purge His floor with the fan of the final judgment. God the Father puts this fan into His hand. “For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son.” The floor shall not be thoroughly purged until then. Christ shall effect with this fan a complete and an everlasting separation between the wheat and the chaff. Then He shall have a perfectly pure Church, “and the inhabitants shall not say I am sick.” These words shall, therefore, be fulfilled to the uttermost, “He will thoroughly purge His floor.”

III. His treatment of those who are on the floor.

(1.) He will gather His wheat into the garner. The wheat is represented as Christ's own possession, “*His* wheat.” His people are the Father's gift to Him, “The Father who gave them Me is greater than all.” They are His by purchase and by their own choice in effectual calling. “Ye are not your own; for ye are bought with a price.” These He will gather into the garner. The garner represents the state of glory. He first gathers them into the kingdom of grace; but He shall also gather them into the kingdom of glory.

“They shall be brought with gladness great,
And mirth on every side,
Into the palace of the King,
And there they shall abide.”

They shall be in the full enjoyment of God throughout eternity. "Their sun shall no more go down. The Lord shall be their everlasting light, and the days of their mourning shall be ended." "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." In the infinite sovereignty of the grace of God, they have all from eternity been linked on to that golden chain of unbroken continuity described by the apostle, "Whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son . . . whom He did predestinate, them He also called; and whom He called, them He also justified; and whom He justified, them He also glorified." They shall see Christ as He is and be made like unto Him, so that they shall shine as the sun in the kingdom of their own Father in infinite and everlasting blessedness.

(2.) "He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." What indescribable horror must overwhelm the wicked when He in infinite righteousness and justice, shall adjudge them to the condemnation of eternal death! "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and for his angels." Fire is an emblem of the wrath of God. His wrath shall be revealed against all unrighteousness and ungodliness of men. "For behold, the day cometh that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble; and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch." The fire is unquenchable. Eternity shall not exhaust the wrath that shall be revealed. The dismal shrieks of the lost shall not stay the outflow of it. The wind of His wrath shall drive them into the bottomless pit of His fiery indignation. "The ungodly are like the chaff which the wind driveth away. Therefore, the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous." They shall not be annihilated in the unquenchable fire of His infinitely righteous indignation. He who inflicts His avenging strokes, shall keep them in being for ever. Think of how inconceivably terrible must your eternity be if you be among the chaff that He shall "burn up with unquenchable fire!" Will you not be made wise for the salvation of your soul? Give up your sinful practices. Cease to indulge your carnal appetites. "Agree with thine adversary quickly, whiles thou art in the way with him." Listen to the voice of Christ in the truth, "Turn ye, turn ye, why will ye die." Hearken diligently unto Him; hear, that your soul may live. The righteous shall go into life eternal; but the wicked into everlasting punishment.

Mr. GLADSTONE's recent letter to the Archbishop of York is a notable example of the Romeward tendency. Mr. Gladstone is very desirous that the Pope should pronounce the Episcopal clergy to be lawfully ordained, so as to pave the way for a re-union with Rome.

Instrumental Music in New Testament Worship.

BY REV. JOHN R. MACKAY, M.A., GAIRLOCH.

IN this paper, I propose to state, in short compass, some of the reasons why our Church is opposed to instrumental music in public worship, and hope, in closing, to show the bearings of this question on a fundamental principle of Presbyterianism.

The discussion of this subject may be regarded as unimportant, if not ridiculous, by scoffers at religion, and such as God is not in all their thoughts; but the reflection that the question relates to the acceptable worship of the great God, will at once lead those that fear His name to regard the matter from a much higher standpoint. In the worship of God, and especially in the singing of His praise, there is, on the part of the Church, a real approach to Him, and those who imagine that under the New Testament believers are left very much to the freedom of their own will as to how this approach may be made, must have forgotten that to the New Testament Church those most solemn words of the Spirit have been addressed: "Wherefore, we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace whereby we may serve God acceptably, with reverence and godly fear; for our God is a consuming fire." To approach God by a mediator, is the most solemn exercise in which the Church of Christ can be engaged, and, as the fear of God obliges her to ascertain with the utmost care by what law such approach is regulated in the scriptures of truth, so having once ascertained it, the same fear obliges her to be careful to walk by that rule. "For we are not without law to God, but are under law to Christ."

Is there, then, in the New Testament Scriptures any such law to regulate the service of praise? For proof that there is such a law, and that by it instrumental music is excluded from Christian worship, I am at present content to rely upon one notable passage: "By Him, therefore (that is, by Christ), let us offer the sacrifice of praise continually, that is, *the fruit of our lips*."—(Heb. xiii. 15.) From this passage, it is not more plain that the addition of the words *of praise* to "sacrifice" excludes from the New Testament Church the bloody offerings of the old economy, than that the definition of the sacrifice of praise, as "the fruit of our lips," shuts out from the new economy all such instrumental accompaniments as characterised the temple sacrifices. And thus, so to say, by one stroke of the pen, the apostle, under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, has for ever swept instrumental music out of those churches that would obey God's will in all things.

The fact that such an expression as we are now considering occurs in the Epistle to the Hebrews, attaches to it an importance of its own. For no one can carefully read this epistle without

observing that in it the Church is instructed as to what things in the New Testament Church are now to take the place of the Old Testament ritual.

Thus we conclude that the fear of God should induce churches that employ the aid of instruments in their worshipping of God to submit to the purity and simplicity that He enjoins, and that this same motive should lead those churches that have cast out these earthly aids to adhere to the position they have already taken up. But gratitude also to the God of salvation, this "expulsive power of a new affection" would, we are convinced, if the reasons of it were attended to, lead to the same results, and if the love of Christ in its constraining power were felt nowadays as in the days of the apostles, it would, among other things, reintroduce among us purity of worship. For however trite this discussion of instrumental music may seem to many, it really touches the springs of some of the Church's deepest emotions and joys. It is as believers offer a sacrifice of praise that they are spoken of as a priesthood. It is by Christ this sacrifice is offered, and when He thus in the midst of the congregation sings praise unto God and the Father He is exercising a priestly function. Thus we see that the discussion of the Church's song of praise joins at once and directly to the priesthood of Christ. Under the Mosaic constitution, Israel offered gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect as pertaining to the conscience, by means of priests that were not suffered to continue by reason of death. But under the new dispensation, believers offer the sacrifice of praise by a great High Priest that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the son of God. What source of joy this change of priesthood has been to the Church need scarcely be pointed out to anyone. It is one of the most common subjects of the New Testament Scriptures. "Glad tidings of great joy" it is called. "The law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did." "If the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who, through the Eternal Spirit, offered Himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" Yea, and as we ourselves think of this change of priesthood, and of all the most blessed and glorious results that accompanied that change, how can we forbear saying:—

"My mouth the praises of the Lord
To publish cease shall never,
Let all flesh bless His holy name
For ever and for ever."

Now, be it observed, that with this "change of priesthood there is of necessity a change also of the law"—(Heb. vii. 17)—that is, not of the moral law, but of the law by which the worship of God was regulated; and it is here that the priesthood of Christ, and

the change of law that it brought along with it, touches the subject we are now discussing.

If we look at the narrative in 2nd Chron. xxix. 25-28, we find the law with regard to the use of music at the Old Testament sacrifices: "And Hezekiah set the Levites in the house of the Lord with cymbals and psalteries, and with harps, according to the commandment of David, and of Gad, the king's seer, and Nathan the prophet: *for so was the commandment of the Lord by His prophets.* And the Levites stood with the instruments of David, and the priests with trumpets, and when the burnt-offering began, the song of the Lord began also with the trumpets and with the instruments ordained by David, king of Israel. . . . And all this continued until the burnt-offering was finished." But "with the change of priesthood there is of necessity a change also of the law"—(Heb. vii. 12)—and what that law is as to how the Church should now offer the sacrifice of praise, we have already pointed out. "By Him, therefore, let us offer the sacrifice of praise unto God continually, that is, *the fruit of our lips.*" Thus we see that this change of law, by which New Testament worship is regulated, leads our thoughts at once to the change of priesthood that brought it about, and thus profoundest gratitude for that change renders the law regulating our approach to the Most High by this Eternal Priest a perfect law of liberty. Gratitude, we say, renders Christ's yoke easy and His burden light. Surely it was under the influence of an impulse such as this, that not only in the days of the apostles did the Church put on that purity and simplicity in worship which is so well known to have characterised that period, but for, at least, six centuries thereafter instrumental music, which was cast out in the days of the apostles, continued unknown in the Christian Church. How can we explain, especially among a people accustomed in their temple service to instrumental music, such a sudden and complete change, save by the consideration that in this the churches were moved at once by profoundest fear of the Most High, and by deepest gratitude to the God of their salvation?

It is important also to notice, that while it was during that period when the real nature of Christ's priesthood was lost sight of that instrumental music first found a place in Christian Churches, no sooner did the true idea of Christ's priesthood dawn upon the Church at the Reformation, than the same motives of the fear of God and love of Christ, led the Church anew to delight in the change of law, which, as we have seen from Heb. xiii. 15, followed the change of priesthood. Luther, we are told, reckoned organs among the ensigns of Baal. Calvin declares "that instrumental music is not fitter to be adopted into the public worship of the Christian Church, than the incense, the candlesticks, and the other shadows of the Mosaic Law." The opinion of John Knox, as is well known, was similar, and largely through the blessing of God upon his labours was the Church of Scotland,

in this as in other respects, purged beyond almost any other of the Reformation Churches. "All other realms, however sincere, that ever the doctrines that by some is taught, retain in their Churches and the ministry thereof some footsteps of Antichrist, and some dregs of Popery; but we (all praise to God above), have nothing within our Churches that ever flowed from the Man of Sin. And this we acknowledge to be the strength given us by God, because we esteemed not ourselves wise in our own eyes, but understanding our whole wisdom to be foolishness before the Lord our God, laid it aside and followed only that which we found approved by Himself. In this point could never our enemies cause us to faint, for our first petition was 'that the revered face of the primitive and apostolic Church should be reduced again to the eyes and knowledge of men.'"—(*Knox's History of the Reformation.*) Of how many of the Churches of Scotland one may well ask, would John Knox now certify that they have nothing within them that ever flowed from the Man of Sin?

And as the fear of God who has enjoined upon his people an explicit law in the matter of their sacrifice of praise, and the love Christ who has made this yoke a pleasure and a delight ought to lead the churches to exclude instrumental music from their worship, so we think the signs of the times ought to lead the churches to be most careful to keep it excluded. We have already pointed out that it was only when with the appearance of the Man of Sin, the impulse, which had moved the Church at the beginning to throw away the beggarly elements of the Mosaic ritual, had been forgotten, that instrumental music began first of all to be used in Christian churches. At the Reformation the Beast (Revelation chap. xiii.), which we understand to be none other than the Man of Sin, and Popery, was wounded with a deadly wound, and that by the sword of the spirit which is the Word of God. But among the many things which in the Book of Revelation we are told "must shortly come to pass," one is this, the deadly wound must be healed. And when that wound is healed "all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world."—(Rev. xiii. 8.) "If any man have an ear, let him hear."—(Rev. xiii. 9.)

And blind indeed they appear to us to be who cannot observe that that healing process is rapidly progressing in these days. Space forbids reference to the many evidences there are of this. Very solemn as well as sad, in connection with this fulfilling of the Scriptures, does the reflection appear that humanly speaking it was through the influence of churches that were only half reformed from the beginning that this healing of the wound has been rendered possible. For the dregs of Popery, retained in half reformed churches at the Reformation, have as leaven tended ever since to make those half reformed churches more and more like Rome; and further, churches which to begin with were

pure have been ready to imitate half reformed churches, and thereby to fall away from that apostolic purity they had attained to; while in all likelihood if those dregs of Popery had been confined to the Church of Rome, wholly reformed churches would never have the daring thus far to imitate the latter. But the heaven will work until the deadly wound is healed, for thus the Scripture must be fulfilled; only those that are written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world shall not worship the Beast or receive his mark on their forehead. And as we should be anxious that so far as we can help it, that wound may always be, not a healed but an open wound, so ought we to be careful not to receive any of the characteristics of the Beast; and that such is instrumental music in the worship of God, we have shown.

As I have expanded this discussion somewhat more than I intended, I shall defer considering its bearings on a fundamental principle of Presbyterianism until a future opportunity.

Professor G. A. Smith on the Twelve Prophets.

UNSOUND VIEWS ON FUNDAMENTAL DOCTRINES.

IN our first article on Professor Smith's new book, we dealt with the views expressed in its opening chapters on the authorship and composition of the Old Testament Scriptures, and the character and attainments of the prophets in early Israel. These views, we saw, were plainly subversive of the inspiration of the Scriptures as the Word of God, and of the fundamental doctrine of supernatural revelation. Further examination of Professor Smith's work provides additional evidence of the irreverent rationalism, which is its pervasive quality. It also leads to the discovery that in his comment on Hosea, he commits himself in the rawest and barest terms to the doctrines of Arminianism in regard to the love of God and the Atonement, and to a new and somewhat startling theory as to the nature of hell. Quotations in evidence of this, we shall give in due course. In the meantime, we notice the fourth chapter, which is entitled "The influence of Assyria on prophecy." The ideas embodied in this chapter largely consist of unwarrantable speculations at the expense of revealed truth. Professor Smith holds the opinion, in common with modern critics, that during all previous ages up to the eighth century before Christ, Israel had no higher conception of Jehovah than as their own peculiar tribal god. Not only was the heathen world in darkness as to the existence of one absolute God, but the highly favoured patriarchs and ancestors of Israel, as well as their descendants were involved in the same darkness. They were, in fact, during these ages, no better than idolaters who had framed

for themselves a god, whom they named Jehovah. In the eighth century, Israel had fallen into a low condition as to religion and morals. The prophets who were possessed of a keener conscience than others as to righteousness, saw in the moral decay of Israel the signs of coming doom. Assyria, who had on former occasions proved the enemy of Israel, appeared again on the horizon, and came and vanquished her. At this period there was a conflict between the prophets and the people. The latter held the popular religious idea that Jehovah was Israel's own God, and would defend her for ever from her enemies. Her downfall by Assyria, Professor Smith regards as a blow to the popular religion. The prophets had somewhat more enlightened ideas as to what our author vaguely calls "universal righteousness," and were to some extent prepared for the downfall of Israel. But it was not until the Assyrian invasion took place that even they believed in Jehovah as a universal governor, who would use Assyria, a heathen nation, to fulfil His purposes, and to act as a rod of chastisement to Israel. The prophets, though continually presaging coming doom, were little heeded by the people who fought against the Assyrians with all their might. Professor Smith generally sides with the prophets, but, strange to tell, he evinces a secret impression that they were too severe in their denunciations, and that the people were hardly so corrupt as they were often described. He says—"Let us not think that the opponents of the prophets were utter fools or mere puppets of fate. They had reasons for their optimism; they fought for their hearths and altars with a valour and a patience which proves that the nation as a whole was not so corrupt, as we are sometimes, by the language of the prophets, tempted to suppose." (p. 50.) We have always understood that the prophets were the messengers of God who cannot lie, but, according to Professor Smith, they are their own messengers, and may have often spoken unadvisedly with their lips. But what is the religious result according to our author of "Assyria's Conquest of Israel?" We give his own words—"In fact, for the mind of Israel, the crisis, though less in degree, was in quality not unlike that produced in the religion of Europe by the revelation of the Copernican astronomy. As the earth, previously believed to be the centre of the universe, the stage on which the Son of God had achieved God's eternal purposes to mankind, was discovered to be but a satellite of one of innumerable suns, a mere ball swung beside millions of others, by a force which betrayed no sign of sympathy with the great transactions on it, and so faith in the Divine worth of these (transactions) was rudely shaken—so Israel, who had believed themselves to be the peculiar people of the Creator, the solitary agents of the God of Righteousness to all mankind, and who now felt themselves brought to an equality with other tribes by this sheer force, which, brutally indifferent to spiritual distinctions, swayed the fortunes of all alike, must have been tempted to unbelief in the spiritual facts of their

history, in the power of their God and the destiny He had promised them. Nothing could have saved Israel, as nothing could have saved Europe, but a conception of God, which rose to this new demand on its powers—a faith which said, ‘Our God is sufficient for this greater world and its forces that so dwarf our own; the discovery of these only excites in us a more awful wonder of His power.’” The theory and even illustration here given, we believe, are in utter disagreement with actual facts. A word as to the illustration. We have not the slightest evidence from history that the astronomy which affirmed the existence of many planets besides our own, shook the Church’s faith in the Divine worth of the great transactions which took place on this earth. Infidels and atheists may employ scientific discoveries for the purpose of undervaluing Christianity, but no one who has seen the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, and in His work of redemption can do so. In a word, the discoveries of science, though they should reach to the utmost bounds of the material universe, are not worthy to be compared for a moment with the discovery of infinite wisdom and unspeakable love in the incarnation of the Son of God, His death upon the Cross, and His redemption of sinners from wrath and hell to the highest privileges in heaven. We think, therefore, that Professor Smith has used an illustration that betrays a decidedly low conception of the glory of Christ’s work on earth. If the illustration is bad, the theory is no better. He says that “Israel felt themselves brought to an equality with other tribes by this sheer force, which, brutally indifferent to spiritual distinctions, swayed the fortunes of all alike,” and that in being brought to this position of equality, they “must have been tempted to unbelief in the power of their God and the destiny He had promised them.” What is the sheer force which Professor Smith declares is brutally indifferent to spiritual distinctions? If he means the providence of God, and nothing else will suit the connection, the language he uses is both irreverent and profane. The theory which underlies our author’s reasoning is this. The doctrine that God had chosen Israel as a peculiar nation to Himself was Pagan in its character, and belonged to the earlier stages of Israel’s history. This doctrine got a fatal blow in the eighth century, and the nation rose up on the ruins of their former faith to the possession of two new ideas. These were that as a nation they were on a moral equality with other nations, and that there was one God who ruled the whole earth. Jehovah, they now concluded, was this absolute God. These two ideas, Professor Smith regards as inconsistent with the idea that Jehovah was, in a special sense, the God of Israel. The old idea of the popular religion received a fatal blow. This theory, we believe, is radically and totally unsound. The after history of Israel quite belies it. It was a distinguishing characteristic of Israel down to the time of Christ, that they regarded themselves as God’s peculiar people. They were then subject to the Roman Empire, but their

highest religious authorities never lost this grand ruling idea. They believed that the Lord had in store for them a great future, and, though they rejected the promised Messiah, and are now a scattered people, they cling to this day to the belief, that there awaits them, in the future, great national prosperity. Belief in Jehovah as the God of their nation was unaffected by belief in Him as the God of the whole earth. But, further, we have no evidence from the Scriptures that Israel was ever destitute of belief in Jehovah as the one living and absolute God. The evidence is all the other way. Every reader of the Old Testament sees at a glance that God has been known to men since the fall, in two aspects of His character, both as the Governor of the whole earth, and as the God of salvation to a chosen people. He was the God of Abel, Enoch, and Noah,* in a sense in which He was not the God of Cain, and Ham, and other wicked men. And this distinction is clearly observed throughout the inspired record. Striking events in the world's history also testify to this distinction. Noah, the preacher of righteousness, declared divine judgments against the whole earth for its wickedness, and the flood is a standing witness to the end of time that the God of Noah was the one absolute Ruler of the world. Many of the descendants of Noah, it is true, lapsed into ignorance and idolatry. But the children of Shem, who were favoured above others, retained the knowledge of the true God. He revealed Himself to the patriarch Abraham, as God Almighty, and made with him the covenant of promise, a revelation of the covenant of grace, to which the apostle Paul, under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, refers in more than one of his epistles. If Abraham was ignorant of the God of the whole earth, then the covenant of promise is a mere concoction of the human mind, and the teaching of the New Testament on this subject is founded upon a historical myth. Further, the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, and the deliverance of Lot is another testimony that the God of the patriarchs was the world's Governor and Judge. It was the same God who revealed Himself to Moses as Jehovah, "I am that I am," the self-existent God. He wrought miracles by the hand of Moses in Egypt, and finally sent the destroying angel over the land to slay the first-born in every Egyptian home. He took Israel out of Egypt across the Red Sea and overwhelmed their enemies in the mighty waters. He led His people through the wilderness and brought them to the land of Caanan. Is it possible that any nation under heaven could have more powerful demonstration that the God whom they worshipped was none other than the absolute Ruler of heaven and earth? Professor Smith makes it quite clear by his theory that he regards the books of Moses, Genesis, Exodus, etc., as largely composed of poetic fancies and mythical stories. The narrative of the miraculous interventions of Jehovah has no historical value in his eyes, and therefore, the books of Moses are not only not the inspired Word of God, but

not even authentic history. According to this theory, the early patriarchs, Moses and Joshua, Samuel and David, Elijah and Elisha, the judges, kings, and prophets for the first three thousand years of the world's history, down to the time of Amos, were all as ignorant as heathen idolators, and thought of their deity as a mere tribal god. As for Elijah's contest with the prophets of Baal on behalf of Jehovah as the one true God, Professor Smith manifestly regards it as simply an exhibition of magic by a sooth-sayer, for he describes Elijah as a "wild worker by fire and water."—(p. 200.) He considers that the Assyrian conquest would tempt Israel to distrust the power and promises of their God. We do not deny that Israel might do so, but they would, at the same time, shut their eyes to the threatenings that God had warned them by long before through His servant Moses. For Moses declares in the 28th chapter of Deuteronomy, that if they forsook the Lord, and disobeyed His commands, He would bring against them "a nation from far, from the end of the earth, a nation of fierce countenance, which shall not regard the person of the old, nor shew favour to the young."—(Deut. xxviii. 48-50.) Israel had no occasion to be surprised by the invasion of Assyria. But, of course, Professor Smith's speculations as to Israel's religious condition at this time are based upon a rejection of the Mosaic authorship of Deuteronomy, and upon the supposition that it is a work of later date even than Amos.

We conclude our observations on this chapter by pointing out the marked opposition of its leading ideas to the fundamental doctrines of revelation. As already stated, these ideas are opposed to the express testimony of Scripture, which bears that the absolute God spake to men from the beginning. But the assertion that it was a mark of paganism on the part of Israel to regard, in any sense, Jehovah as a national God, strikes not only at the idolatrous idea of a tribal god, but also at the fact of God's peculiar favour for Israel. It was the saving element in the Old Testament dispensation that the eternal God had revealed Himself as the Saviour of a chosen people. Salvation does not spring from a knowledge of the universal government of God, or of the moral equality of all mankind. It springs from a special revelation of grace. This revelation Israel enjoyed in old time. If we take this away we rob Israel of its hope and salvation. We observe also, that Professor Smith elaborates his whole theory upon the supposition that religion in Israel rose by a process of evolution or development from dark paganism to belief in one absolute God. This hypothesis, which is of course a mere speculation, is directly opposed to the fact of divine revelation. It proceeds upon the idea that it was man who first began to think of deity, and to frame to himself conceptions of a God. The consequence must necessarily follow that the God whom men now think of is a god of their own construction and workmanship. On the other hand, revelation teaches us that man

originally possessed a real knowledge of God, but lost that knowledge by sin. This knowledge was restored to a chosen race by direct revelation. Man would never have regained the knowledge of the Eternal had He not been pleased to reveal Himself first. If the Bible, therefore, has any message whatever, it is that God has spoken directly to men, not simply by the movements of Providence, but by an immediate voice from heaven. According to our author's theory, religion is earth-born, and rises upward from earth to heaven; according to the Bible, religion is heaven-born, and comes down from above from the eternal God. The two systems are totally inconsistent and mutually destructive of one another. We cannot hold both. It is further evident that Professor Smith's theory undermines the very foundations of revealed religion. It not only takes from under our feet the Bible as the inspired Word of the living God, but also the very fact that God has spoken to men. If this fundamental fact is taken away, the Bible is simply a collection of human ideas and conceptions of deity, and all that believers have been resting on in view of eternity is but the thoughts and words of dying men who, equally with themselves, were ignorant of God and were wandering in the imagination of their own hearts.

We shall conclude our notice of Professor Smith's book in our next number.

The late Alexander Cameron,

AHARACLE, ARGYLLSHIRE.

WHILE the cedars of Lebanon were numerous the cutting down of one did not affect the view of the landscape so much; but when they are few and far between the blank becomes very discernible. In our day "the trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord for His own glory," are very few; and therefore, a breach in their ranks leaves a barren wilderness behind it. There departed to be with Christ, at the ripe age of 82 years, about the beginning of this year an eminently godly man, concerning whom we humbly offer the following remarks:—

Alexander Cameron was born at the township of Aharacle, in the parish of Ardnamurchan, county of Argyll, in the year 1814, his father being one of the small farmers of that place. During the first twenty-nine years of his life, Alexander Cameron lived "without God and without hope in the world." In the year 1843, that eminent servant of Christ, the Rev. Peter M'Bride of Rothesay, was sent by the evangelical party in the Church of Scotland, to enlighten the people of the west coast of Argyllshire concerning the matters of controversy which culminated in the famous Disruption. Many looked back to him, upon this occasion, as the messenger of the King Eternal to their immortal souls. He preached at Aharacle. Alexander Cameron went to hear him,

and the arrows of the Holy Spirit pierced into the darkness of his benighted soul. The struggle was long and very trying. At last relief came, as he thought, but such was its nature that were it not for the faithfulness of Him who called him he would, according to his own testimony, have been eternally lost. This is the warning he gave at a question meeting four years before he died: "Had the Lord left me in the first peace I obtained I would spend my eternity with the devil and his angels." Being questioned seriously afterwards about the nature of the peace he had found so dangerous, he said: "I was for two years under a delusive peace, going to many communions and other means of grace, thinking that all was well; but still ignorant of Christ Jesus, and Him crucified, as the only foundation. The blessed Lord, by His word and Spirit, revealed to me that I was building my hope for eternity upon a foundation of sand; and that though there was an outward reformation in my conduct, my nature remained unchanged; and that I was basing my hope of eternal salvation upon my attendance on the means of grace, rather than upon Christ Jesus and Him crucified." This plunged him almost to despair of ever being saved. The necessity of regeneration was so indelibly stamped upon his soul during this long trial that we never heard him pray without imploring that sinners might "be born of the water and of the Spirit." During this crisis in his history the sympathy and advice of the godly Alexander Cameron, catechist, Strontian, were very helpful to him. His love and reverence for this godly man continued unabated to the end; though the catechist died many years before him. He became an elder in the Free Church, and few were more faithful in fulfilling the sacred vows of that responsible office than he. He was a mighty man of prayer; and his knowledge of the Scriptures was both accurate and comprehensive. The cavils of infidels against the Bible, with which the Free Church abounds, were intolerable to his honest and God-given faith. His love and reverence for the Word of God was most profound. To him, an appeal "to the law and to the testimony," was the settling of all controversy. The doubting spirit of this ungodly generation he dreaded with the utmost abhorrence. He often said, to such as he found in doubts and distresses about their interest in Christ, "The word of the blessed God never deceived any man." His zeal for the Sabbath-day was very great; and many were the faithful rebukes he uttered, both in public and private, in its defence. That day was to him "the holy of the Lord, honourable;" and a sweet solemnity would be seen on his bright and intelligent countenance as he would "go up to the house of God." His yearnings after the salvation of lost sinners were most intense, and when he saw the people of the township indulging in sinful practices it grieved him deeply. There were not many living, at last, of the brethren with whom he felt peculiarly bound in the Lord, and when any of them came the way he would take them in his arms and kiss them. His love

for the brethren in Christ was not superficial, but deeply rooted in the hidden man of the renewed heart. Many, who did not know him intimately, thought he was a censorious and abrupt man; but a more loving man than Alexander Cameron could seldom be met with.

Not being able to follow the subtilties of the so-called men of christian progress in the Free Church, which led to the formulating and passing of the infamous Declaratory Act, he was, for some time, much grieved at seeing some who were before intimate friends divided regarding the proper path of duty. In consequence, the testimony raised for truth, principles, and conscience in 1893, caused him some confusion; but as soon as he saw that the Rev. Messrs. Macfarlane and Macdonald were thrust out from their churches and manses by the Declaratory Act Church, his difficulties vanished. Immediately he recognised the Church of Christ suffering and hated of all men for the word He gave them, and he sent a message to that effect to one of their followers. A few weeks before his death he told one that called to see him, that he was so thoroughly convinced in his mind they had done their duty that he never bent his knees without remembering them before the Lord, and that he was certain the Lord would prosper their weak efforts for His cause and glory. We mourn his loss much; but rejoice that he has gone to his everlasting rest. His grave sweet countenance we shall not see any more. His tears and sorrows were many in the valley of Achor; but now "sorrow and sighing have for ever fled away." "A mighty man has fallen in Israel," and left the house of David to mourn his loss. Joabs there are many, but "Israelites indeed," are very few. He left one son and an aged widow. The Lord be to them "a Father of the fatherless, and a Judge of the widows in His holy habitation." "Help Lord, for the godly man ceaseth, for the faithful fail from among the children of men."

N. C.

Four Streams in the Desert.

"IN the wilderness," saith the prophet, "shall waters break out and streams in the desert." When any eminent revival of religion takes place, the effect of the flowing forth of the living waters of gospel grace is to make the moral waste "rejoice and blossom as the rose." There shall yet, according to the divine promise, be a world-wide realization of such a transformation as this; but meanwhile such foretastes of this millennial glory as have already been given are worthy to be noted, and had in remembrance. Four eminent and amiable examples of the public effects of the Gospel have occurred to us in the course of our reading, and we here give them without note or comment. The first is from Kirkton's "History of the Church of Scotland."

Writing of the year 1660, he says: "At the king's return every parish had a minister, every village had a school, every family almost had a Bible, yea, in most of the country, all the children of age could read the Scriptures, and were provided of Bibles either by their parents or their ministers. Every minister was a very full professor of the reformed religion according to the Confession of Faith. Every minister was obliged to preach thrice a week, to lecture and catechise once, besides other private duties wherein they abounded according to their proportion of faithfulness and abilities. None of them might be scandalous in their conversation, or negligent in their office so long as a presbytery stood; and among them were many holy in conversation and eminent in gifts. Nor did a minister satisfy himself unless his ministry had the seal of a divine approbation as might witness him to be really sent of God. Indeed, in many places the Spirit seemed to be poured out with the Word, both by the multitude of sincere converts, and also by the common work of reformation, upon many who never came the length of a communion. There were no fewer than sixty aged people, men and women, who went to school that even then they might be able to read the Scriptures with their own eyes. I have lived many years in a parish where I never heard an oath, and you might have ridden many miles before you heard any; also, you could not, for a great part of the country, have lodged in a family where the Lord was not worshipped by reading, singing, and public prayer. Nobody complained more of our Church government than the taverners, whose ordinary lamentation was their trade was broken, people were become so sober."

Our next scene is from Jonathan Edward's account of the revival in the town of Northampton, in America, in the year 1735.

"This work of God, as it was carried on, and the number of true saints multiplied, soon made a glorious alteration in the town; so that in the spring and summer following in the year 1735 the town seemed to be full of the presence of God; it never was so full of love and joy, and yet so full of distress, as it was then. There were remarkable tokens of God's presence in almost every house. It was a time of joy in families on account of salvation being brought to them—parents rejoicing over their children as new born, and husbands over their wives, and wives over their husbands.

"The goings of God were then seen in the sanctuary; God's day was a delight, and His tabernacles were amiable. The congregation was alive in God's service, every one earnestly intent upon the public worship, every hearer eager to drink in the words of the minister as they came from his mouth; the assembly in general were from time to time in tears while the word was preached, some weeping with sorrow and distress, others with joy and love, others with pity and concern for the souls of their neighbours.

"Our public services were then greatly enlivened. God was then served in our psalmody in some measure 'in the beauty of holiness.' In all companies on other days, on whatever occasions persons met together, Christ was to be heard of and seen in the midst of them. Our young people when they met were wont to spend the time in talking of the excellency and dying love of Jesus Christ, the gloriousness of the way of salvation, the wonderful, free, and sovereign grace of God, His glorious work in the conversion of a soul, the truth and certainty of the great things of God's Word, the sweetness of the views of His perfections, &c. And even at weddings, which formerly were mere occasions of mirth and jollity, there was now no discourse of anything but the things of religion, and no appearance of any but spiritual mirth."

Our third scene is from Dr. Kennedy's "Minister of Killearnan." "My father often spoke of a certain glen (in Sutherlandshire about the year 1802) in which about thirty families resided, in each of which there was at least one who sought the Lord, and in each of which there was the true worship of God. The houses in this blessed hamlet were close together, around the sides of an amphitheatre through which a small river had torn a course for itself. Standing on the edge of the declivity above the glen on a quiet summer evening one could hear the songs of praise from all those houses mingling together before they reached the listener's ear, whose heart must have been hard indeed if they failed to melt it. One, at least, did feel while listening to the psalm-singing in these blessed homes as if the place were none other than the house of God, and the very gate of heaven. By one ruthless eviction all the tenants of that glen were banished from their homes, and the most of them found no resting place till they reached the backwoods of Canada."

Our last scene is from Ryle's "Christian Leaders of the last Century." "Not long before Grimshaw's death (1763) he stood with the Rev. John Newton upon a hill near Haworth surveying the romantic prospect. He said that at the time he first came into that part of the country he might have gone half a day's journey on horseback, towards the east, west, north, or south, without meeting one truly serious person, or even hearing of one. But now, through the blessing of God upon his labours he could tell of several hundreds of persons who attended his ministry, and were devout communicants with him at the Lord's table; and of nearly all the last named he could say that he was as well acquainted with their several temptations, trials, and mercies, both personal and domestic, as if he had lived in their families."

THE Government Education Bill, with the obnoxious clause in favour of Romish teaching, has for the present been dropped.

Meeting in Edinburgh against Prelacy.

WE take the following from the *Scotsman* of May 26th :—A public meeting was held last night in the Oddfellows' Hall, Edinburgh, regarding "Presbyterian hypocrisy and prelacy, against which our forefathers fought and bled." The Rev. Jacob Primmer presided, and the attendance numbered about a hundred. After devotional exercises had been engaged in, the Chairman said that the whole history of Scotland was bound up with religion, and when the country was under the dominion of the Pope of Rome it was more popish than any other country. They had been steadfast to the Lord for many a generation, but in these later days men were growing weary of the old style. Ministers were coming into their pulpits who had no real faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. What did they care so long as they could get their money and the people drawn in? It was different two hundred years ago. Now, apathy and hypocrisy were everywhere. A Catholic priest in the Highlands told him that the ritualists were doing work for his Church, and that they should soon have them all back into mother Church. He (Mr. Primmer) thought there was not a person in that hall but looked with contempt on a traitor—on one who tried to sell the citadel to the enemy. (Applause.) They wanted faithfulness in their ministers. He believed the people of Scotland were true. He found, in going about the country, that the middle classes and the working classes were disgusted with the tomfoolery of their ministers in the pulpit. (Applause.) He proceeded to relate that he had been refused permission to sell literature in the lobby of the Assembly Hall, although the Scottish Church Society and the Church Service Society were allowed to do so, and, quoting from a pamphlet by Dr. Cooper, Aberdeen, sold in the lobby, he said that man was a papist. Yet he was in the General Assembly, and was allowed to sell that popish trash at the door. ("Put him out.") He (Mr. Primmer) next ridiculed the reading of prayers, which he witnessed in St. Giles' Cathedral last Thursday; and stated that the General Assembly had not allowed Dr. Marshall Lang, with £1000 a year, £50 for an assistant, because they said they could not take £45 from him (Mr. Primmer) and allow Dr. Lang to keep the £50. But, no doubt, Dr. Lang would get it in some other way. Speaking again of ritualism, he said the Pope wanted to take them all to his bosom, and they had men plotting to bring about that end. The remedy was in the hands of the people, who, if they asserted themselves, would soon bring those ritualists to their senses. He did not believe that many ministers wrote sermons nowadays; they could buy them for even less than a penny. They must have abundance of time for golf, concerts, the theatre, and other amusements. Why, it was one of the jolliest things imaginable being a minister in these days. They did not even require to visit

now ; they might get a curate to do that. Next he dealt with the United Presbyterian Hymnal, in connection with which there was, he said, a dodge to deceive the people. Instead of being brought on early for consideration, it was brought on at the tag-end of the Synod, when only one or two spoke against it. The Churches were becoming like Noah's Ark, with clean beasts and unclean beasts, and they must have a hymnal to suit everybody. He quoted from the hymnal to show that it recognised prayers for the dead, altars, and the Virgin Mary, and said it was choke-full of popery, because they knew that what people sang they would soon believe and put in practice. Referring to the statue of John Knox recently placed at the New College Buildings, he said that if John Knox could only march out of the statue and into the Free Church Assembly there would be a row. If the Free Church had been true it would have been the greatest in Scotland. A Church that was false to the Redeemer must fall. In conclusion, he counselled his hearers to stand by the old faith, and oppose every form of innovation. Mr. Murdoch Mackay afterwards moved, and Mr. Thomas Grieve seconded, a resolution to petition the Supreme Courts of the Presbyterian Churches against prelatic worship, and to petition Parliament to withdraw their endowments unless they returned to Presbyterian worship. When the Chairman put the resolution to the meeting, about a dozen hands were held up for it, and none against. He therefore declared it to have been unanimously carried. Before the proceedings closed, he protested against Archbishop Macdonald and Bishop Dowden having this year again been invited to Holyrood by the Lord High Commissioner.

Incidents at the Free Church Assembly.

UNVEILING OF JOHN KNOX STATUE.

THE statue of John Knox, which has been erected within the quadrangle of the New College buildings, was unveiled on Friday afternoon, May 22nd. Sir John Cowan, Bart., of Beeslack, on behalf of the Committee of subscribers, handed over the statue to the custody of the Free Church ; and Principal Miller, Moderator of the Assembly, formally, on behalf of the Church, accepted the trust so committed to it. In the course of Sir John Cowan's address he said that the Committee had wished the statue to be erected in a public locality, such as Princes Street Gardens, but they received no encouragement at all from the authorities. After long delay, the Ecclesiastical Commissioners also refused a site for it in St. Giles—the Church where John Knox had preached the gospel. They then approached the Free Church authorities who at once consented to place it in the quadrangle of the New College.

The authorities of Edinburgh have evidently but small esteem for the memory of John Knox, one of the greatest public benefactors, under God, of this land, when they found no site for his statue. This is a sign of our religious apostacy as a nation. We would rejoice to think that the statue had fallen into the hands of the Free Church were it not that she also, by her ecclesiastical departures, is doing her best to bury those scriptural principles upon which John Knox, as an instrument in the hand of God, founded the Church of Scotland.

PORTRAIT OF PROFESSOR ROBERTSON SMITH.

A portrait of the late Professor Robertson Smith, who was deposed from office in the Free Church some years ago for heretical teaching, was placed for exhibition in the Common Hall of the Free Assembly buildings, and attracted much notice. The final destination, it seems, is the Free Church College, Aberdeen, where the late Professor used to teach. The movement to have a portrait of the late Professor Robertson Smith originated at a meeting of his friends, held during the sittings of the Assembly of 1894, under the chairmanship of the Rev. Dr. Walter C. Smith.

The Free Church reveals a strange inconsistency in trying to perpetuate the memory of Professor Smith as well as John Knox, two men whose principles are entirely opposed to one another. Professor Smith was one of the leaders of the modern school of rationalistic criticism. The Free Church put him out not because his views were contrary to the Word of God, but simply because they were inconsistent with the standards of the Church. Since his death her leading men have honoured Professor Smith to the utmost, and tried to undo even the measure of faithfulness that the Church showed at the time of his deposition.

The Irish Presbyterian Assembly.

HYMNAL DEBATE.

THE Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland began its proceedings on Monday, 1st June, in May Street, Belfast. The Moderator for this year was Rev. Dr. H. M. Williamson, Fisherwick Place Church, Belfast. The subject of hymns in public worship occupied a prominent place in the discussions of the Assembly. It was only last year that the Irish Presbyterian Church gave any authorisation of the use of hymns. Hymns in public worship are almost unknown in country congregations in Ireland, but in the towns they have been in use for some time. Even yet in some of the large Churches in Belfast the Psalms are alone used. The Hymn question came on on Friday. It was opened by the presenting of a memorial signed by 646 elders, the burden of which was that "neither instrumental music nor the

singing of uninspired hymns was authorised in the Church when the memorialists were ordained to office and signed the Confession of Faith." This memorial was supported by Messrs. Joseph Irwin, J.P., and James Harper. The latter began his speech by showing that it was the Purity Party who desired the peace of the Church. His references to the innovators, who profess unbounded affection for the Psalms, are worthy of quotation. "The most inconsistent part of all of these unrestful brethren is their professedly affectionate regard for the Psalms. ('Hear, hear,' and applause.) Those who sat in the House last year during the debate on this question could measure the regard that was entertained for the Psalms by the direct statements and inferences made relating to them. These statements were distinctly made by their professed friends, not on the spur of the moment or thoughtlessly, but after due consideration and careful preparation—first, that they were Jewish, and, by a series of arguments, Christless; second, that in times of revival or spiritual awakening they were unsuited to the needs of the people; third, that they were so ill adapted to the praise service of the Church they should not be sung at all—to my mind most audacious statements, and, as I hope to show afterwards, as incorrect as they are unbecoming. In this Assembly was the first place I ever heard a disparaging observation made about the Psalms. Where, then, is the friendly feeling on the part of the troublers of the Church who wish to drive out the Psalms? They may profess it, but they are destitute of it. Friendly, but yet more inspiration in "Rock of Ages" or "What's the News" than the First Psalm. Friendly, and yet they are unsuited to the moral and spiritual wants of mankind. Friendly, and yet unsuited to the praise service of the Church. Away for ever with such friendship. (Applause.) Open enemies at any time before such cruel and unreliable friends. (Applause.) But, Mr. Moderator, they don't stand or fall by the changing fashions of the age or the ingratitude and forgetfulness of those who should be true to them. They stand as the Word of the living God—impregnable, unmoved, and unassailable—amidst the fierce conflict of changing opinion and the endless demand for sensual, ornate, and semi-theatrical worship; and when "Rock of Ages" and "What's the News" are buried and out of print, the Psalms, even the first, will have lost none of their pathos, beauty, or power. It's only of late it has been found out that the Psalms were unsuited to the service of the Church and insufficient for the spiritual wants of man. How it is, Mr. Moderator, that the Psalms have come to be gloomy, obscure, and Jewish, tending to Judaise the Church, is hard to understand. The dishonour heaped on them and the sainted dead who have for many generations used them and never felt the need of any hymnal, is not creditable to this Church. Are they not full of spiritual life, giving expression to the liveliest Christian emotions and affections, adapted to all circumstances and situations of the Church of God, a source of

light and life, quickening, refreshing, and invigorating the followers of the great King and Head of the Church, whose reign and rule and love they so vividly set forth. In a word, they are filled with Gospel truth, given by inspiration of God for the praise service or psalmody of His house. Let the enemies of the Psalms show themselves here to-day in their true colours, let them pour forth the vials of their disdain and personal vindictiveness on those who wish to give them the first and only place in the praises of His house."

The next business of the Assembly was an overture on the subject of a hymnal. The burden of the overture was—"since the last Assembly declared that it was desirable for the guarding of the doctrinal purity of the Church and for the greater convenience of the members that a uniform hymn book be used, that the Assembly sanction such a hymnal." After the adoption of this overture was moved and seconded Professor Petticrew rose to move the rejection of the overture. Professor Petticrew is not so well known in Scotland as he ought to be. He is Professor of Systematic Theology in the Presbyterian College, Londonderry. He is also the trusted and learned leader of the Purity Party in Ireland. His speech on this occasion was marked by all the ability and learning of its esteemed author. Rev. Dr. H. B. Wilson also moved the rejection of the overture in the interests of the Church's peace. The Purity Party, however, are at a great disadvantage owing to the fact that paraphrases have always been allowed by the Church. At the Union in 1840 between the Presbyterian Synod of Ulster and the Secession Synod many ministers and members of the former Synod said, "We hold ourselves free to sing paraphrases." This has weakened the efforts of the opposition against hymns. Rev. Dr. Brown, Limavady, reminded the Assembly that there was a body of feeling behind the elders who signed the memorial against hymns, and that these men would form associations in defence of the truth. When the vote was taken the overture in favour of the hymnal was carried by a majority. Dr. Petticrew entered his protest and reasons. So the Presbyterian Church of Ireland has departed from her historic ground and despised the heritage her fathers gave her. Her own illustrious son, Dr. Henry Cooke, said of the Psalms, "There are two things that confirmed my decision in favour of the exclusive use of inspired psalmody in public worship:—First, the Biblical Psalms being inspired by the Holy Ghost, in using them there can be no error. Secondly, though in uninspired sacred poetry I had discovered many beauties and other excellencies I never had discovered any compilations which I could pronounce free from serious doctrinal errors. This I perceived to be especially the case with not a few of the Paraphrases and Hymns authorised by the Church of Scotland. If a doctrinal error be at all times dangerous, how much more when it is stereotyped in the devotions of the sanctuary."

THE NEW HYMNAL.

The report of the Committee on the hymnal to be adopted came before the House on Friday night. The draft hymnal of the Committee of the Scottish Churches—which has been adopted by the Free and U.P. Churches, but rejected by the Established Church—was adopted by an overwhelming majority subject to the condition that some hymns would be omitted.

We shall watch with interest the development of this Hymn Question. There is still a strong body, especially among the people of the Irish Presbyterian Church, who stand by the old paths. May they have strength to contend earnestly against all unscriptural innovations and hold fast their precious heritage for ever.

Ard-Chuirtean nan Eaglaisean.

(1) AN EAGLAIS STEIDHTE.

BHA ni no dha fa chomhair ard-chuirt na h-eaglais so tha araidh air gun deanamaid iomradh orra. Chuir foghlumaich na h-eaglais ann an Aber-aidhean agairt suas an aghaidh an t-oileamh Johnson, fear-teagasg 's an oil-thigh 's a bhaile sin. Bha iad 'cuir as a leth gun robh a theagasg gun fheum, agus mar sin gun robh e eucomasach dha an t-urram a choisinn 'o na foghlumaich a bhuineadh dha mar fhear-teagasg. Bha iad a' gearan gu h-araidh gun robh na h-argumaidean leis an robh e 'daingneachadh deachdaidh nan Sgriobtuirean cho seann-fhasanta 's nach burrain doibh ach tair agus fanoid a dheanamh orra. Air an aobhar sin bha iad a' tagradh nach biodh e mar fhiachaibh orra gnuis a thoirt ni b' fhaide d'a theagasg. Bha 'n t-oileamh Johnson a lathair 'ga dhian fhein, agus thubhairt e g'un robh e na rùn na teagasgan aige o là gu là a chlo-bhualadh chum 's gum biodh cothrom aig an t-saoghal breth a thoirt co dhiu bha iad gun fheum no nach robh. Os barr dhaithris e ni no dha mu thimchioll cleachdadh nam foghlumach araon anns an oil-thigh agus ann am bhi deanamh suas na cuise so n'a aghaidhsan nach robh moran chum an cliu. Cha do ghabh an t-ard chuirt gnothuch ris a chuis, do bhrìgh gum bheil e fa chomhair Seanadh oil-thigh Aber-aidhean.

Feudaidh sinn ainmeachadh gur e'm fìor aobhar a th'aig bonn na h-aimhreite so gum bheil an Dr. Johnson a cumail ri teagasgan Leabhar aidhmeil a Chreidimh mu thimchioll deachdaidh nan Sgriobtuirean agus na teagasgan ceudna, agus gu'm bheil na foghlumaich air an togail cho mor leis na beachdan ùra a tha cho coitichionn 'n ur la, 'snach fuiling iad teagasg fallan.

Bha gnothuch eile tha araidh air focal no dha f' an comhair coimh-cheangailte ri leabhar Mr. Robinson, ministear na h-eaglais Steidhte ann an *Kilmun*, 's an Iar-ghaidheal. S-griobh an duine so, o chionn ghoirid, leabhar d' am b' ainm "Am Fear-

Saoraidh ann an Solus nis nuaidhe," anns an robh e 'g aicheadh firinnean bunaiteach eachdraidh an t-soisgeul. Bha e meas na soisgeulaich mar sgeuldairean a rinn suas eachdruidhean bha e saor do gach duine a chuir gu taobh a reir a thoile fhein. Dhaicheadhadh leis mar an ceudna miorbhuilean agus aiseirigh ghlormhoir Chriosd. Chaidh an gnothuch a thoirt fa chomhair cleire Dhuin-Eoine agus dhiteadh leo-san beachdan Mr. Robinson. Thogadh leis-san a chuis gus an t-Seanadh. Shonruich iadsan anns a cheud aite buidhean araidh a cho-labhairt le Mr. Robinson a thaobh a bheachdan, agus tharruing e air ais cuid dhiu. Ach cha do riaruich aidmheil so a chreidimh an Seanadh agus 'mar sin dhaontaich a mhor chuid dhiu gun robh na cuisean uile 'chaidh thogail 'na aghaidh air an làn-dhearbhadh, agus air an aobhar sin shonruich iad a chuir as a dhreuchd airson bliadhna. Dhorduich iad mar an ceudna stad a chuir air ball air craobh-sgaoileadh an leabhar.

Rinn an Dr. Marshall Lang iomradh air staid an t-sluaigh air feadh na tire a thaobh buaidh an t-soisgeul air am modhannan, anns an d' thug e guth, ann an rathad molaidh, air an Eaglais Shaor-chleireach.

Thilg an Seanadh a mach an leabhar laoidhean ùr a chaidh tharruing suas airson nan tri Eaglaisean Chleireach.

Ann am bhi beachdachadh air mar a chaidh cuisean aig an t-Seanadh so tha aon ni ri fhaicinn gu soilleir, tha na aobhar bron, agus se sin mar a tha deasghnathan na h-eaglais Easbuigeich agus na h-eaglais Phapanaich a sgaoileadh, a chuid, 'sa chuid air feadh na h-eaglais Steidhte. Ged a bhuin iad ann an rathad aig am bheil coslas dilseachd ri ministear Khilmun tha so 'cuir droch dhreach air na huile ni 'rinn iad. Bha luchd-sgrìobhaidh anns na paipeirean naidheachd air taobh a muinistear chaidh chronachadh, a nochdadh gun robh an fheadhainn a dhìt Mr. Robinson cheart cho mearachdach ris fhein n'am beachdan, ann an rathad eile. Tha an t-oileamh MacLeoid ann an Govan agus moran eile a creidsinn mearachdan nam Papanach, gum bheil buaidh ath-ghinmhuinn aig a bhaisteadh, agus gum bheil fìor lathaireachd Chriosd gu corporra ann an Sacramaid an t-suipeir; agus moran de nithean eil tha calg-dhireach an aghaidh teasgasan an Ath-leasachaidh.

(2) AN EAGLAIS SHAOR.

Bha cuisean gu math samhach aig ard-chuirt na h-Eaglais Saoire, agus bithidh so air a thoirt suas mar dheadh chomhara, ach 's ann do bhrìgh nach eil neach sam bith a nise, ach gle bheag, a thogas a ghuth an aghaidh nam mearachdan.

Rinn na buidheann chaidh shonruchadh airson a bhi sealltuinn thairis air a Ghaidhealtachd agus na h-eileanan iomradh air soirbheachadh an Aobhair anns na h-aitean sin; agus a reir am beachd-san tha cuisean anabarrach gealltanach. Thubhairt iad nach do chaill iad, air lorg an Dealachaidh, ach beagan thar sè mile sluaigh, agus moran diubh sin, ann am barail an Dr. Rainy,

muintir a bha draghail agus mi-reusonta. Thubhairt e, ann an ait eile beagan roimh choinneach-adh an t-seanaidh, gun robh lamh a Chruith-fhir ri fhaicinn anns a chuis, a chionn gu'n robh na daoine a bha seasamh an aghaidh nan nithean a bha 'n Eaglais a toirt a stigh air an sguabadh, mar gu'n biodh, aisde!

Ghabh iad ri leabhar nan laoidhean; agus dhaithris an t-oileamh Bruce ann am bhi 'g mholadh gu'n robh an laoidh a sgrìobh *Macheyne* air fireantachd Chrìosd air a mheas da shluagh, air a cumail a mach as an leabhar, do bhrìgh gu'n robh cuid na h-aghaidh, agus tha e nadurrach dhuinn bhi co-dhunadh gur ann an aghaidh an teagasg sin a bha iad, 's nach e ni sam bith eile. Cha deach seasamh sam bith a dbeanamh an aghaidh nan laoidhean a chionn gum bheil e neo-sgrìobtuireil a bhi g'an cleachdadh ann an aoradh foluiseach an Tighearna, agus a thaobh an ni so, comhla ris na nithean ùra eil a tha tighinn a stigh, feudaidh sinn a ghradh—"Fhuair an dream a bha 'g iarruidh am beatha bas."

A thaobh an Aonaidh, chaidh dail a chuir anns a ghnòthuch re tiota fhathast; ach chaneil e mi-choltach gu'm bi ceum air a thoirt air an ath bhliadhna. Mar bu ghnathach leo, dhaontaich iad, ach gle bheag, gu'm bu choir do'n Eaglais 'bhi dealuichte gu h-ìomlan o'n Staid. Chaidh na h-agartasan a chuireadh suas o Sheanadh Ghlinn-eilg agus Inbhir-feothairean mu thimchioll an Achd mhineachaidh (Declaratory Act) a chuir gu taobh; agus cha-n-eil e mi-choltach gur e so an oidhirp mu dheireadh a theid a dheanamh a thaobh an ni so. Chaidh carragh a chuir suas ann an Cuimhne Jain Knox ann an oil-thigh na h-eaglais ann an Dun-Eidin, agus chaidh dealbh *Robertson Smith* a chuir suas anns an àite cheudna ann an Aber-aidhean; da ni nach eil co-chordadh gle mhaith ri cheile.

New Presbytery and Synod.

OUR Church has found it necessary, for the better management of her affairs, to constitute a Southern Presbytery to embrace the congregations south of the Grampians. The new Presbytery met in Glasgow on 22nd June, Rev. Neil Cameron, St. Jude's, moderator. Rev. J. S. Sinclair, Knox's Tabernacle, was appointed clerk. A meeting of Synod will (D.V.) be held in Fraser Street Church, Inverness, on 7th July, at 7 P.M.

THE Sixth General Convention of Presbyterian Churches, called the Pan-Presbyterian Council, opened at Glasgow, on 17th June. Rev. Dr. Roberts, Philadelphia, president. There were 300 delegates, said to represent twenty millions of Presbyterians. Professor Dick of Belfast, on the second day of the Council, objected to the use of instrumental music in the worship of the delegates. He was successful in silencing the organ. Some of the principal advocates of sound doctrine came from America.