

T H E

Free Presbyterian Magazine

And MONTHLY RECORD.

VOL. I.

SEPTEMBER, 1896.

No. 5.

Explanatory Criticism of the Declaratory Act.

WE now proceed to examine the second paragraph under the first section of the Act, which runs as follows:—
(b) “That this Church also holds that all who hear the Gospel are warranted and required to believe to the saving of their souls; and that in the case of such as do not believe, but perish in their sins, the issue is due to their own rejection of the Gospel call. That this Church does not teach, and does not regard the Confession as teaching, the foreordination of men to death irrespective of their own sin.”

This paragraph, to begin with, deals with the general call of the Gospel. We are fully agreed that all who hear the Gospel are under obligation to believe in Jesus Christ for salvation. But this obligation, we hold, rests upon the direct command of God, and the suitableness of the Gospel provision to men as sinners, and not upon supposed universal love, or universal atonement, as seems to be the case here, from the close connection between this and the preceding clause, which we have already dealt with. The Arminian Gospel is, “God loves all, Christ died for all, and the Holy Spirit strives with all,” and this is almost verbally the Gospel we find in the Declaratory Act. The command to believe, referred to in this clause, is evidently grounded upon such universal propositions as these, which afford a false and unscriptural basis for faith. We also observe, that no reference is made here to the person of Christ as the object of faith. The command of the Gospel is, “Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ.” Many may believe the Gospel, as they believe a piece of history, and remain spiritually ignorant of Christ. On the other hand, saving faith in Christ springs from a revelation to the soul of His divine glory, sufficiency, and suitableness as a Saviour. No one, therefore, savingly believes the Gospel, except he is enlightened by the Holy Ghost as to the person and work of Christ. To believe unto salvation is not something which men can do, upon invitation, as easily as a common task, but can only be performed after the

reception of spiritual life and enlightenment by the Spirit of God. This all-important aspect of the Gospel appears here to be lost sight of in the haste to emphasise the universality of the Gospel call.

We also regard as unsatisfactory the reference to those who "do not believe, but perish in their sins." It is said, "the issue is due to their own rejection of the Gospel call." Whilst we can so far agree with this statement, we feel that it is written so as to hide from view the solemn, but nevertheless indisputable fact referred to in ch. 3, sect. 7, of the Confession, that God has in strict justice for sin passed by some of the human race, whilst He has chosen others unto salvation. It would also seem from the language of the Act that man, without special grace, was quite capable of receiving the Gospel, and that everything depended upon free will. Probably this the framers might deny, but we see nothing expressed that would prevent such an interpretation, and they ought to have been as careful to guard against error as to expound what they imagined to be truth.

In conclusion, we do not think that the universality of the Gospel call was an aspect of the truth that required any special emphasis at the present time. Our fathers, both in the near and remote past, never failed to give due prominence to this aspect of the Gospel, and it is only an insult to the living and the dead to bring it forth in the way done in this Act, as if it were hidden or obscured until now. The best Scottish Calvinistic Theology is full of it. Who could give a freer and more liberal offer of Christ to sinners than Samuel Rutherford, one of the leading framers of the Confession of Faith?

We now take up the second clause of this paragraph, which is to the effect:—"that this Church does not teach, and does not regard the Confession as teaching, the foreordination of men to death, irrespective of their own sin." This clause deals with the relations of foreordination and sin. The emphasis lies upon the words, "their own," and the meaning appears to be that men are not foreordained to death, temporal, spiritual, or eternal, irrespective of their own personal sin. This teaching is in direct contradiction to the truth as stated in the 5th chapter of the Romans. We are told there that "by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men for that all have sinned." Adam stood not only for himself but also for his posterity, and so by his sin death passed upon all men. "By the offence of one many be dead." It is also written in 1 Cor. xv. 22, that "in Adam all die." Temporal death is one form of this death. The Act therefore denies, for example, that the temporal death of infants takes place on account of Adam's sin, a fact evidently asserted in Rom. v. 14. It does more however; it denies that the spiritual death under which all men are born is in consequence of the imputation of Adam's first sin. It may even be taken as denying that we are born in a state of

spiritual death at all, for it associates death only with one's own personal sin. If the Act refers however, as some affirm, only to everlasting death, the omission of the word 'everlasting' is a serious one, for the clause, as it stands, embraces temporal, spiritual, and everlasting death. But even in this latter case the teaching is quite erroneous. If Adam stood for all his seed, then by his sin all were made liable not only to temporal and spiritual, but also to everlasting death, for the wages of sin involve the curse of God which eternity alone can exhaust. "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them."—(Gal. iii. 10). "Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire."—(Matt. xxv. 41). The logical consequence clearly is, that in Adam the whole race merited by his sin the curse of God, which is everlasting death. But if, according to the Act, men are not foreordained to death, "irrespective of their own sin," then Adam's sin did not merit for the race everlasting death, which consequently implies either that Adam did not stand for his posterity, or that his sin deserved less than the curse of God. The latter alternative may be regarded as too absurd a conclusion. We are therefore justified in affirming, in virtue of the former, that the Act, by implication, denies that Adam stood for his posterity. The denial of this doctrine may appear to some of little consequence, but, if the subject is carefully studied, it will be seen that a denial of Adam's federal headship not only unhinges our views in regard to man's natural state, but also seriously affects our views of Christ's federal headship as the second Adam, and of the way of salvation through Him. If it is unwarrantable to say that Adam stood for his seed, it is equally so to say that Christ stood for His people. The denial therefore of Adam's representative character has consequences of a serious and far-reaching character upon the welfare of men. For it is only by right apprehensions of the truth about sin and salvation that men will be converted from the error of their ways, and the cause of Christ advanced in the world.

We now pass on to consider the third paragraph under section I. :—(c) "That it is the duty of those who believe, and one end of their calling by God, to make known the Gospel to all men everywhere, for the obedience of faith. And that while the Gospel is the *ordinary* means of salvation for those to whom it is made known, yet it does not follow, nor is the Confession to be held as teaching, that any who die in infancy are lost, or that God may not extend His mercy for Christ's sake, and by His Holy Spirit, to those who are beyond the reach of these means, as it may seem good to Him, according to the riches of His grace."

In the opening words of this paragraph it is declared to be "the duty of those who believe to make known the Gospel to all men everywhere." It has been always held by the Church of Christ that it is the duty of believers to make known the Gospel to all men by their life and conversation, but it has never been held that it is their duty to preach or conduct religious services. According

to this clause, it is "one end of their calling by God" to preach or declare the Gospel. For the expression "make known" is evidently general enough to embrace this as well as other forms of setting forth the Gospel. We think this doctrine is of the essence of Plymouth Brethrenism, and is inconsistent with the system of pastors and teachers, which God has instituted in His Church. In the Presbyterian Church scope has certainly been given to Christian laymen to exercise their gifts both in public prayer and public address, but it has never been affirmed that it was the duty of all such thus to make known the Gospel. Many excellent men have lacked special gifts, especially in the direction of public address. It is further evident that this clause gives full liberty to women to declare or preach the Gospel, for it is said to be "the duty of those who believe,"—men or women, without distinction—"to make known the Gospel to all men everywhere." Women are at liberty, according to the Scriptures, to be helpers in the Gospel, but it is not their duty to occupy the position of preachers. This position the Declaratory Act gives them full liberty to assume. The words, "to all men everywhere," clearly indicate that liberty is given to these and all others to make known the gospel, not only in private, but also in public. We think, therefore, that this provision is wise above the revealed will of God. For persons who have no Scriptural call or fitness thus to engage themselves, this is to adopt expedients upon which the blessing of God cannot be expected to rest. Now-a-days, in connection with the Churches, there are multitudes of "workers" so called, many of whom would be better engaged at home striving to enter in at the strait gate, and seeking to learn the divine art of prayer at a throne of grace.

We further observe that this paragraph affirms "That while the Gospel is the *ordinary* means of salvation for those to whom it is made known, yet it does not follow, nor is the Confession to be held as teaching, that any who die in infancy are lost." The first thing which calls for our attention is that which is said of the Gospel as "the ordinary means of salvation." There is something very suspicious about this mode of expression, and if it is meant that there are some other extraordinary means of salvation available for hearers of the Gospel, nothing could be more contradictory to the plainest teaching of Scripture. Witness the words, "There is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved."—(Acts iv. 12). The next matter is the reference to infants. The Confession has already spoken with the utmost wisdom and carefulness on this subject. It says, "Elect infants dying in infancy are regenerated and saved by Christ through the Spirit." It pronounces no opinion on whether all or some are elect, as the Scriptures have given no absolute decision. We would desire, however, to call particular attention to the terms of the Confessional statement. Many people not knowing the Scriptures or their own hearts are ready to ground

the salvation of infants upon their early age or supposed innocence. If infants are saved, let it be observed, it is, first, because they are "elect," secondly, because they are "saved by Christ," and thirdly, because they are "regenerated through the Spirit." Nothing more is needed for adult persons, and nothing less is needed for infants. Let no one therefore suppose that infants slip into heaven without requiring any inward change. They are by nature corrupt in heart, and children of wrath. There is nothing in them that a holy God can look upon with complacency. They require, therefore, a second birth before they can enter the kingdom of heaven. And who would be bold enough to impugn the holiness and justice of God although the whole corrupt human race, both infant and adult, had been shut out of that holy place? We know nothing aright if we do not hold that salvation is of free and sovereign grace both to the infant of days and to the man of mature years. "All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." The framers of the Act would have done well to adhere to the careful words of the Confession on this subject. At the present day especially, there is such manifest wickedness and carelessness in regard to the upbringing of the young, and in the lower grades of society, even in regard to their very life, that we little need opiates to dull the consciences of parents and guardians as to their responsibilities.

The closing sentence of this paragraph asserts that the Confession is not to be held as teaching "that God may not extend His mercy for Christ's sake, and by His Holy Spirit to those who are beyond the reach of these means," that is, the Gospel, described above as "the ordinary means of salvation." For this statement there is no warrant in Scripture. The persons spoken of as "beyond the reach of these means" are evidently the heathen, and we think it ill becomes the Free Church that has shown so much missionary activity to speak of any as beyond the reach of the means, or as being saved without the Gospel. Further, the expression "beyond the reach of these means" is not a true statement of the case. There are none in the most remote parts of the earth that are beyond the reach of the means. God is able to send the Gospel by His servants to any corner of the world. This clause, nevertheless, affirms the very dangerous and pernicious error, that "God may extend His mercy" to those who are without the Gospel. This teaching is in the most manifest contradiction to Scripture. We are told in Rom. ii. 12 concerning the Gentiles, that "as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law," which plainly declares that the Gentiles, who had not the Jewish revelation, perished in their sins. And the heathen who are to-day without law or Gospel are in a similar position, and so must likewise perish. The framers of this Act shut their eyes to the truth as stated in the above passage. We also find in the Scriptures abundant testimony to the fact that men require to know the Gospel before they can be saved. No other way is once hinted at. The parting

message of the Lord Jesus to His disciples was, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature" (Mark xvi. 15), unmistakably announcing that no creature in all the world could be saved without the Gospel. We are surprised, in face of a passage such as this, that men can speak of a possibility of salvation without the Gospel. Again, the Apostle Paul by the Holy Ghost thus addresses the Ephesians, "In whom (*i.e.*, in Christ) ye also trusted after ye heard the word of truth, the Gospel of your salvation."—(Eph. i. 13). The word of truth is here said to be the Gospel of their salvation. He also declares in the 2nd chapter of this epistle that in their natural state they were "children of wrath" (v. 3), and therefore liable to perish for ever without the Gospel. It is also written by the Apostle Peter that the Word of God is the seed of the new birth, "being born again of incorruptible seed, by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever."—(1 Peter i. 23). Sinners are also said to be "saved through faith," the gift of God.—(Eph. ii. 7). How does faith spring up? "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God."—(Rom. x. 17). These passages further confirm the truth that it is by the Word of God, and by it alone, accompanied by the Spirit, that sinners are born again. A passage already quoted sets a final seal upon the necessity of the Gospel of Christ for salvation, "There is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."—(Acts iv. 12). The word "name" points out that Christ must be preached in the hearing of men, and His person and work made known that they may be saved.

But to show that at least one leading man in the Free Church holds the view contained in this clause of the Act, we may mention that we heard Professor Marcus Dods declare on one occasion from his chair in the New College that there would be many on the right hand at the great day who had had "no knowledge of the historical Christ." This conclusion he drew from the answer given by the righteous, narrated in Matt. xxv. 37, "Lord, when saw we thee an hungered and fed thee?" &c. From the King's reply, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me," he affirmed that in whatever part of the world men are found doing good to their fellowmen, there we find "the spirit of Christ." All persons who were engaged thus in doing good would be found on the right hand. This is clearly a perversion of the obvious meaning of the passage, and of Christian doctrine in general. But it shows what pernicious views may be held in consistency with the doctrine that God may extend His mercy to those who have not heard the Gospel. We cannot but wonder that the Lord Jesus should have sent forth so many servants in apostolic and later times, who gave their lives for the Gospel, if some other way was available for the conversion of men. Surely the very end for which the Gospel was given was that its sound might go throughout the world (Rom. x. 18), and those who knew its unspeakable value

were willing to sacrifice all earthly comforts, and endure the most cruel deaths, that the Gospel might be known among men everywhere as the power of God unto salvation.

The Free Church, by adopting this clause, puts a dagger into all true missionary effort. If her missionaries hold this view, as we have no doubt some of them do, the Gospel they proclaim, and their efforts to proclaim it, will be detrimentally effected thereby. We have, indeed, no ground for concluding that the Gospel that is now proclaimed abroad is one whit better than that which is preached at home. In fact, the question arises if this clause is true, "What need is there for missionaries to the heathen at all?"

A Sermon

BY REV. JOHN R. MACKAY, M.A., GAIRLOCH, ROSS-SHIRE.

Gather My saints together unto Me; those that have made a covenant with Me by sacrifice.—PSALMS I. 5.

THE Psalm, of which our text forms a part, is altogether a very solemn one. In it is revealed much of the glory of the Eternal as Judge of all. The Psalm may be conveniently divided into three sections. In ver. 1-4, the Mighty God, even the Lord, summons all nations before Him that He may judge them. In ver. 5-15, Jehovah speaks of, and to, His saints. In ver. 16-22, Jehovah addresses and admonishes the wicked.

The Psalm must not be interpreted as if the judgment therein spoken of were confined to the great day. God is presently judging all nations; and those nations to whom the Scriptures have been sent may, even now, read in the light of God's word what is His judgment concerning them. The Scriptures of truth reveal to us the standard by which all shall be judged at last.

The Psalm must thus be understood in a comprehensive sense as bringing before us eternal principles by which, in time, as well as at the judgment seat of the great day, those of our race who are acceptable unto God may be distinguished from those who are unacceptable. The time is at hand when he that is unjust will be unjust still, and he which is filthy will be filthy still, he that is righteous will be righteous still, and he that is holy will be holy still.

In the words of our text, Jehovah commands that His saints should be gathered together unto Him; and at the same time He indicates who they are, "Gather My saints together unto Me; those that have made a covenant with Me by sacrifice."

In proceeding to meditate for some time upon this portion of the Word of God we shall, in dependence upon divine aid, consider:—

- I. The sacrifice spoken of.
- II. The covenant made by means thereof.
- III. The saintship here referred to, and
- IV. The ends for which God's saints are to be gathered.

I. The sacrifice. Under the ceremonial law, sacrifices, well nigh numberless, were offered up. Those sacrifices of the old economy, we learn from the Scriptures of the New Testament, were, at best, but shadows of the one great sacrifice, in the offering up of which the new economy was introduced, that sacrifice whereby Christ Jesus hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified. How then shall we interpret the reference in the instance before us? We cannot think of the reference here as being only to the blood of bulls and of goats, so far, at least, as these were only a means of sanctifying to the purifying of the flesh. Here, the ultimate reference is to that sacrifice in which Christ Jesus, through the Eternal Spirit, offered Himself without spot unto God. Our reason for coming to that conclusion is this: The sacrifices of the Aaronic priesthood so far from being of eternal efficacy, were, on account of their weakness and unprofitableness, abolished and taken away in and through the death of the Lord Jesus. The sacrifice spoken of in this Psalm is a sacrifice which is of eternal efficacy. In time, at a judgment seat, and through eternity those who have entered into covenant with Jehovah in virtue of this sacrifice are acceptable unto Him. Of no other sacrifice is that true than of that which Christ Jesus offered up to satisfy divine justice and to reconcile us unto God. Moreover, even in this very Psalm, wherein mention is made of a sacrifice upon which an everlasting covenant is based, contempt is poured upon such as would put their confidence in the blood of bulls and of goats. "I will take no bullock out of thy house, nor he goats out of thy folds. Will I eat the flesh of bulls or drink the blood of goats?" The conclusion forces itself upon us that the Spirit of inspiration who taught the Psalmist, in the language of the 40th Psalm, to predict the taking away of the sacrifices and offerings of the Aaronic priesthood through the establishing of the one great sacrifice of the Lord Jesus, here also teaches the author of the 50th Psalm not only "to find fault" with the sacrifices which consisted only in the blood of bulls and of goats, but to bring into great prominence, in the words of our text, that there was a sacrifice present to the mind of God, which was presupposed in those that were only shadows, and that this sacrifice is a rock which shall abide when heaven and earth shall have passed away. For what end were sacrifices generally, and this sacrifice in particular, offered up? The great end for which a sacrifice was offered was to take away sin. As John Bunyan says:—

Sin is the living worm, the lasting fire;
 Hell soon would lose its heat, could sin expire,
 Better sinless in hell, than to be where
 Heaven is, and to be found a sinner there.

We are very much more apt to think with awe and terror of the wages of sin, than sin itself. But these two things should not be disconnected. Sin is that loathesome thing which God hates, and all the misery of time and of eternity, among men and among fallen angels, must be traced up to this one great cause and fountainhead of woe. By setting fully before us the misery that results from sin, the Scriptures reveal to us how hateful, how loathesome, transgression of His law is in the sight of Jehovah. Angels that sinned God spared not, but cast them into hell, and they are reserved in chains of darkness against the great day. For iniquities, the old world was deluged with a flood. Sodom and Gomorrah, for like reason, suffered the vengeance of eternal fire. The way of transgressors is hard, and, therefore, is the life of millions, even in this world, so full of anguish and sorrow. "The fearful, and the unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death."

These are the colours in which the Spirit of God has portrayed the ruin which sin works in time and throughout eternity, and from the evil effects of sin, from the wages of sin, we are taught in some measure to realise what sin is, in the estimation of Him who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity. Moreover, sin is loathesome and hateful in itself, and that even if there were no hell as its wages. How intolerable a burden it is, not only in the eyes of God, but also in the eyes of those who are taught by Him, may be learned from such agonising cries as these, "Cast me not out of Thy sight," "purge me with hyssop that I may be whiter than snow," "create a clean heart in me, and renew a right spirit within me."

Well, then, we are all sinners. "If we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." We may rest assured, upon the testimony of the Word of God, that if we live and die in our sins, if our sins be not put away, there can be no escape from the intolerable wages of transgressing God's law.

But now God Himself is raised up out of His holy habitation in order that sin may be put away. God's way of putting away sin is by sacrifice. By sacrifice He makes an end of sin, finishes transgressions, makes reconciliation for iniquities, and brings in an everlasting righteousness. And "now once in the end of the world hath Christ Jesus appeared to put away sin, by the sacrifice of Himself." This is that "fountain which has been opened to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness;" and this is that fountain head of consolations and blessings to which perishing sinners of our race are invited, when it is said, "The Spirit and the bride say, come, and let him that heareth say, come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will let him take the water of life freely."

Have sin and its consequences become a burden too heavy for

you to endure? In this sacrifice of the Lord Jesus is the only remedy under the sun for your relief; and if you believingly accept of it, and of the testimony of God concerning it, you will find that not only will yours be the blessing of pardon for all the transgressions you have done, but that through the powerful influences of the knowledge of Christ crucified those hateful chains of sin, and death and hell, wherewith you are bound will be broken asunder. Truly, when one considers how terrible is the thought of living, and dying in sin, and how fearful the consequences of going on in such a course, one might expect that the mere mention of such a blessing as "sin put away," would arrest the attention of the most careless and indifferent; and that the millions of our race unto whom this word of God hath come, would regard the possession of this blessing as the one thing needful. And why is there such indifference? Because so many imagine that it is an easy matter to put sin away. Was it then in vain, and for no purpose that Christ died? For He died, in order to put sin away.

II. But to proceed, let us now in the second place, consider the intent and nature of the covenant here spoken of, and which is said to have been made by virtue of this sacrifice. From the words, "those that have made a covenant with Me," we at once conclude that this is a covenant which is entered into by certain of the children of men with Jehovah. It is a covenant not only approved of by Jehovah, but into which he heartily enters.

Man, in his state of innocency, was in covenant with God. But when man sinned he was driven far away from God, and to point out the impossibility of access on any ground that was then revealed, cherubims and a flaming sword were placed at the east of the Garden of Eden which turned everyway to keep the way of the tree of life. "For the Lord God said, lest he put forth his hand and take also of the tree of life, and eat and live for ever."

Now, ere man can again enter into covenant with Jehovah, it is evident that there must on his part be a return; for to enter into covenant implies nearness of relation. But what if the first cause and reason of separation still exist, is there any changeableness with God? It were impious in the highest degree to suppose that there is. And we may safely conclude, yea, rather we are bound to conclude, that if the first cause and reason of separation, which is sin, be not taken away, reconciliation is impossible, a new covenant also is impossible. Now this really is the gospel of the grace of God, that God himself hath found out a means by which sin, death-deserving, death-occasioning sin might be put away, and by which His banished might return. "All things are of God, who hath reconciled us to Himself by Jesus Christ." The only cause for which God drove away mankind was sin, and only by this sacrifice of the Lord Jesus can sin, in any instance, be put away. Of whom, other than Immanuel, dare we say that He hath by himself purged our sin? How great then is the folly and ignorance

of those who, notwithstanding that as a race we were, on account of sin, driven away from God, and that over and above this their own conscience cannot but accuse them of many actual transgressions, yet imagine that they may draw near to Jehovah as if nothing had taken place to provoke His just displeasure. What dishonour to the law of God is this! What contempt of the wisdom of God, as manifested in the cross of Christ, is this! The acceptable people then have made a covenant with Him by sacrifice. What all is implied, on their part, in so doing? There is, first of all, an acknowledgment of sins, an acknowledgment that they are transgressors, that they have broken the law of God. Men in their natural state may imagine that they can despise the claims of the law of God and yet live in peace with God. They are only dreaming, and God, when they shall awake in judgment, shall mock at their dream; for in the outpouring of a wrath, in comparison with the weight of which the mountains and rocks were easy to bear up under, shall He plead with those who unrepentingly trampled upon His statutes. But here there is an acknowledgment of transgression in drawing near to make a covenant only by sacrifice, an acknowledgment that without an atonement for transgressions there is no access unto Jehovah. They have in one word realised the dishonour which sin puts upon God. But these covenanters honour not only God's law; they honour His gospel also. God is glorified when His law is honoured; He is also glorified when His gospel is honoured. And by whom is His gospel honoured? Is it by those who refuse to seek acceptance in the Beloved, in whom the Church have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins? Not at all. His gospel is most of all honoured by those who, having the deepest sense of the ruin sin hath wrought in them, accept and rest most assuredly upon the Lord Jesus Christ, in order that those purposes for which the Son of God was manifested may, through Him, be fulfilled in themselves. Now, He was revealed to put away sin; to remove every cause of separation between man and God; and they who enter into covenant with God by this sacrifice of the Lord Jesus, have set to their seal that God himself hath found out a means by which sin may be put away. There is on their part a hearty appreciation and reception of the atonement which Christ made. Now, in the very knowledge of Christ crucified, I mean, in the saving knowledge of "the just who suffered for the unjust, *that He might bring us to God*," which the Holy Spirit imparts, there is a drawing near unto God, and a consequent entering into covenant with Him.

But this covenant is not one-sided. It is not only that believers, in this transaction, enter into covenant with God, become His, as by marriage the bride becomes the bridegroom's; but God also enters into covenant with believers; He too becomes their God. "Behold the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah.

Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers, in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: and they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.”—(Hebrews viii. 8-12.) Has God then, albeit we use great boldness in thus speaking of the Eternal, in entering on His part into this covenant, respect to the sacrifice of which we have been speaking. Yea, verily. “He sent forth His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and *for sin*, and condemned sin in the flesh, *in order that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us* who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit.” In the death of Christ there was not only the removal of legal barriers which stood between men and God; there was also the implementing on Christ’s part of the conditions of an eternal covenant into which He had entered with the Father, and in which it had been promised Him, that when He implemented the conditions of that covenant He should surely see His seed; that all His children should be taught of the Father; that their graves would be opened; that they should be taken out of their graves; and an heart given them to know Him that He is Jehovah. Thus we see that the new covenant which Jehovah makes with His people must be regarded by us as coming under the larger category of the covenant of grace. It was included in the eternal covenant of grace, which was between the Father and the Son, as one of its promises. It is a fruit of Christ’s death. Christ by His death implemented the conditions of the covenant of grace, therefore does God and the Father come forth by His word and Spirit in search of the children of the promise, while they as yet are dead in trespasses and sins. This is that grace spoken of by the Apostle, when he says that “God who is rich in mercy for the great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in sins hath quickened us together with Christ.” Not only is it agreeable to the honour of God and the Father that all those who shall draw near unto Him by Jesus Christ shall be accepted of Him, but in the covenant of grace, it has pleased Him, even Him who cannot lie, to promise, and swear by an oath that on account of Christ’s obedience unto death, a company, whom no man can number, of every people and kindred and nation and tongue shall infallibly be a living covenant people unto Him, the living and covenant-keeping God. Thus those who enter into covenant with Jehovah, seek Him, because He first sought them. For Christ’s righteousness’ sake, God opens their graves and brings

them out of their graves, and gives them an heart to know Him that he is Jehovah. It is in this knowledge they are justified. (Is. liii. 11); in this knowledge they have life eternal (John xvii. 3) it is the excellency of this knowledge that hath led them to count everything besides as loss and dung. In this very knowledge Jehovah made to them a revelation of his covenant; and at the very time that they were captivated with the power and with the wisdom of God, revealed in this covenant, Jehovah was promising with an oath to be their God to all eternity, and they were made eternally willing to enter into this covenant, and to be His people. Henceforth this is what they would be at:—

“One thing I of the Lord desired,
And will seek to obtain,
That all days of my life I may
Within God’s house remain.
That I the beauty of the Lord
Behold may and admire,
And that I in His holy place
May reverently enquire.”

III. Let us now in the third place briefly consider the saintship here referred to, “Gather My saints.” Why are they spoken of as saints? It is because they are sanctified. What are we to understand by their being sanctified? There is a sanctifying which is the work of the Holy Ghost in the hearts of God’s people “whereby they are renewed in the whole man after the image of God, and are enabled more and more to die unto sin and to live unto righteousness.” But there is a sanctifying which is, according to the Scriptures, distinguishable from this, a sanctifying which is essentially the work of our High Priest. Even under the Aaronic priesthood there was through the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer, a sanctifying which was to the purifying of the flesh. But Christ, in doing the will of the Father is said to have sanctified His Church in a much higher sense than that. By this blood of Christ it is said our conscience is purged from dead works, that we may serve the living God. It is from this point of view that saints, or the sanctified, are to be understood by us in the present instance. The saints are such, because they have made a covenant with God by *sacrifice*. Now let us observe what it is that Christ wrought in sanctifying His Church. Under the ceremonial law, every leper, and every one that had an issue, and whosoever was defiled by the dead was commanded to be placed outside the camp of Israel.—(Numbers v. 1-4). But the ceremonial law itself provided for the purging of these, the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctified them in this sense that, being by these means cleansed from ceremonial defilement, they had liberty of access into the camp. While they were outside the camp they had none of the privileges which those had who were in covenant with God, according to the covenant that He made with them in the day in which He brought them up out of the land of Egypt.

But now through this sanctification, which was possible to the Aaronic priesthood, they entered into the rights and privileges of the covenant people. Well, just as the blood of bulls and of goats was a shadow of the blood of Christ, as the covenant which He made with them in the day in which He brought them up out of the land of Egypt was a shadow of the new covenant, so the sanctification which was through the Aaronic priesthood was a shadow of the sanctification which is through the priesthood of the Son of God. They who are sanctified enter into the rights and privileges of the covenant people, a people with whom He hath made an everlasting covenant, even the sure mercies of David. What are the privileges of this new covenant? In one word this, to draw near unto God, or in other words, to have the light of God's countenance. This is that one thing the Psalmist, as we have been observing, sought after. "Many say, who will show us any good? Lord lift Thou up the light of Thy countenance upon us."

Nor let any say that in thus emphasising the work of Christ in sanctifying His people we are undermining the doctrine of sanctification of which we have a definition in our Shorter Catechism, and to which we have already referred; on the contrary, we are establishing it. The sanctification which is the work of God's grace, whereby we are renewed in the whole man after the image of God, and are enabled more and more to die unto sin and to live unto righteousness, has its roots in this sanctification which is essentially a priestly function. What is the effect of Christ's death? By it the unjust are brought nigh unto God. They that were far off are said to have been brought nigh through the blood of Christ. Christ known savingly is known as one who by His sufferings brought us near unto God. This is the light of the knowledge of the glory of God which shines in the hearts of believers. There justice and mercy meet, righteousness and peace kiss mutually. Now be it observed that there is a power in God's countenance which enables the most enslaved sinner to hate every sin, whereas such as have not in some measure known the light of His countenance cannot hate all sin. They may apparently hate many sins, but they will still have some darling idol which will in the end be their everlasting destruction. But the Lord's people, when they behold as in a glass the glory of the Lord, the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, are thereby changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord. Thus does the Holy Spirit carry on the work of sanctification in this second sense in the hearts of His people. "He shall glorify Me, because He shall take of Mine, and shall show it unto you." It is by taking of Christ; it is by showing unto believers what blessings Christ has by His death secured for those that believe; it is especially by leading them to understand that when the just suffered for the unjust, this blessing

was procured for the unjust, even nearness unto God. It is by so doing, we say, that the Holy Ghost, according to the Scriptures, enables believers to die unto sin and to live unto righteousness. It is important that this should be insisted upon. In a proper understanding of it is the liberty of the children of God realised.

If we hope to bring forth much fruit, let us seek much of God's countenance. Upon what ground do believers upon earth have access unto God? Is it because of the progress they have themselves made in holiness? By no means. It is by Christ we have access unto this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. It is in virtue of the priesthood of Christ, who is said to have sanctified the people with His own blood, that we draw near unto God. And to imagine that this approach could be on the ground of our personal holiness, were as though we should place the fruit which the branches bear in place of the vine which bears the branches. Yea, throughout all eternity, when believers shall be perfectly holy, it is not because they are now spotlessly holy that they have that ineffable nearness of communion with God and the Father, which is theirs. "They have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. *Therefore* are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in His temple; and He that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more, neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

IV. Let us, in conclusion, draw your attention to the purposes for which the command is given, "Gather My saints together unto Me." This command is given to others, and only *concerning* His saints. He calls to the heavens above and to the earth, for He can make every creature in heaven and on earth subserve the interests of His own Church. This gathering is for various purposes. We shall refer only to two.

(1) It is ~~for~~ purposes of instruction. The Lord's covenant people albeit that they have a saving knowledge of God and of His Christ, yet stand much in need of being still taught by Himself. Much of this divine instruction is imparted in the verses that immediately follow our text, verses in which the covenant people are taught as to what is the nature of true piety, and warned against falling into the error of supposing that after having begun in the spirit they should be perfected through the flesh. "Offer unto God thanksgiving, and pay thy vows unto the Most High. And call upon me in the day of trouble, I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify Me."

The life of the true people of God is very largely made up of these three things. They call unto God out of their distresses. God appears to deliver them. They praise Him as the God of their salvation.

(2) Another reason for this gathering is with a view to their final separation from the wicked. When heaven and earth shall pass away, then the children of His servants shall endure, and their seed shall be established before Him. All others shall be driven far from Him in that day, but His saints, because they have made a covenant with Him by sacrifice, shall be gathered unto Him. It is in order that they be for ever with Him. Now shall the days of their mourning for ever be at an end. Now shall those words find their fullest accomplishment: "He will swallow up death in victory, and the Lord God will wipe away tears from all faces. And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us; this is the Lord; we have waited for Him; we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation."

Memorandum of the late William Sinclair of Wick.

WE hereby give our first extract from the memorandum of the late William Sinclair, as promised in last issue. This memorandum was written during his last illness, and the writer begins with a sketch of his early experience and past life. It is hardly necessary to say to those who knew Mr. Sinclair, that even these personal writings only give an imperfect impression of him.

BROWN PLACE, PULTENEYTOWN, *June, 1883.*

Having been weak for several months, unfit to walk or talk much, and being advised by doctors to take rest, I have resolved to write of the gracious dealings of the Holy One with me spiritually and temporally. My aim would be, praise of His worthy name.

I was born in Camster, parish of Wick, in November, 1819. I was the servant of sin, and free from righteousness until 1840, when I was delivered out of the kingdom of darkness and brought into the kingdom of His dear Son. As far as I can now remember I had some chiding of conscience and terror of punishment during my wildest days, but not sufficient to restrain me from the most daring sinning on Sabbath and week days, so that I was a fear to all my friends, especially to our own family, who were sore tried by my mischievous deeds. And yet they bore wonderfully with me, especially Alexander and Janet, and I did feel that their example had considerable influence in condemning me. Tender and careful they were of me when they observed me retiring with my Bible to secret, but did in no wise flatter me. I also remember the pleasure the change gave to my dear father and mother, the latter being afraid it was too good to be true. When I would then hear father at family worship, how different I felt under it from the wearisome thing it used to be. One day I remarked to

Alexander, that surely father is much better than he used to be, but he said, he observed no change. In regard to my convictions, I was stirred by awful dreams about judgment and eternity, and by hearing awakening sermons. One Sabbath I stayed at home during the forenoon to get myself made gaudy, after the others went out to the meeting at Milton. While thus engaged against the striving of conscience, these words came like a shot—"Neither hath the Lord chosen this." I believed the Lord had chosen some of our family, and that I was left a reprobate, and justly so, as I had despised all means of recovery. And, oh! I did realise the sovereignty of Jehovah in choosing whom He will. I then went tottering out to the little stone house at the corner of the garden, that there unheard, I might bewail myself, and there I lay tossing on the floor, while the ten commandments which I confessed I had broken, were denouncing, "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things that are written in the book of the law to do them." One threatening after another came rushing in upon me, till at last my mouth was wholly shut by thinking that the prayers of the wicked are an abomination to the Lord. When thus debarred from His presence, I felt the pains of hell taking hold upon me, even the approaching blackness of despair. Helpless and hopeless there I lay, acknowledging that He was righteous in whatsoever He was pleased to bring upon me, because I had destroyed myself by rushing forward in the broad way. O! how terrible were these moments! Nothing but a fearful looking for of judgment from a holy and angry God. But when my mouth was seemingly for ever closed, and while lying prostrate, the sweat dropping from my body, oh, wonder of wonders! suddenly and sweetly the name, Intercessor, was revealed to my soul, and was as life from the dead. He was revealed that intercedes for transgressors, whom the Father heareth always, and who is able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God through Him. I then felt there was room for hope. How I adored the Intercessor, and the love of the Father as revealed in Him! I cannot describe how these three hours shortly passed there that day. I returned to the dwelling, joyful and glad of heart, very broken and tender, believing I was for ever done with sinning against such a God and Saviour. I did not then understand that I had passed through a saving change, but on reading the Rev. Ralph Erskine's Gospel Sonnets on Law-work and how the Bride was won, I was led to believe that I had experienced the true change. These days, the Bible was always carried about with me, and secret prayer and praise were my desire and delight. But I was afraid that one would take notice of me lest I might not walk worthy of a profession. Yet I was very anxious to let others know the open door of the blessed gospel of the grace of God, and how lovingly the greatest rebel is received. I soon found that the want of others was not ignorance of the words that to me were the joy and rejoicing of my heart, but blindness and indifference,

which I could in no way remove. They seemed unwilling to be disturbed, enjoying the darkness rather than the light, being ignorant of the light of the glory of God, of love and salvation as revealed in the face of Christ Jesus, who is the brightness of the Father's glory. Alas! the god of this world had blinded their minds as mine had been for over twenty years, although daily hearing and coming in contact with the Word, more, however, by force than choice. For I hated the company of the godly, and avoided family worship as frequently as possible, knowing that I had no part or lot in the matter. Yet, if I knew that any of those people were in need of aid, I would willingly supply them, if in my power, preferring, however, to send it to them than meet with them.

After being turned, I firmly resolved that the Lord's people should be my people. And being afraid to offend the least or tenderest of them, I laid aside my ornaments, and sent some of the most fashionable clothes to my tailor to get them made plain, which, he said, was most absurd, not knowing my motives. I also found that my plain appearance aided me in getting rid of my former loved companions, which was not easy, they affirming that I had lost myself uselessly. I remembered Moses' choice, rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. "He endured as seeing Him who is invisible." O blessed vision! Some persons seem as if they would serve God and mammon. Hence they are poor dwarfs in their profession, good for nothing. After separating from my worldly companions, I met one of the right stamp, Mr. A——. He and I drew together and had many years of sweet fellowship at home and at ordinances through the country. On such occasions it is reviving to meet friends from all parts. Their fellowship in private houses often united them more and more, while they rehearsed the wondrous acts of God, and His kindness to Israel, and the grace bestowed on the fathers and mothers gone before, often acknowledging their own barrenness as if they had only a name to live, yet those who had eyes with the scales off, could see them to be the trees of the Lord's vineyard, yielding fruit of rare quality and savour.

I was two or three years struggling ere I obeyed the command, "Do this in remembrance of me." I had fears regarding unworthy walking, and not as dear children walking worthy of such a God, and also the fear of appearing bold, as several whom I believed to be far before me refrained from taking such a high position. However, I had no peace while neglecting what is plainly commanded. I went to our minister (the late Rev. Wm. Taylor), and he encouraged me and told me to come forward on Saturday. When the time arrived, my courage failed. But I felt the matter keenly when the opportunity seemed past. After a little time, George Leith, one of the elders, came enquiring why I had not come to get a token. I told him my fears and misgivings, and also anxiety to obey, but I thought I had missed the

opportunity for that time. He said he would give me one, and so he did. But how I trembled to touch or carry such a mark of being dead to the world, alive unto God by Christ Jesus, and a child of promise, to be for ever in glory. I sat at the table, but, through my excitement and fears, I had not the communion I expected. But after going home I had a sweet time in secret. Since then I have had the clearest views of the things unseen while at the Lord's table, and my soul filled with wonder, love, and praise.

Interesting Letter from a Scottish Canadian.

SYMPATHY WITH THE FREE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

THE writer of the following letter, Mr. George Forrest, communicated some time ago, through the Rev. J. R. Mackay, Gairloch, with the Presbytery of our Church, and expressed, on behalf of himself and others in Canada, hearty sympathy with our body's separation from the Free Church in 1893. Mr. Mackay was instructed to acknowledge this expression of sympathy. The following, which we take the liberty of publishing, is Mr. Forrest's reply, in which he gives an interesting account of the somewhat trying position occupied by a faithful but scattered few in Canada, who are compelled for conscience sake to stand aloof from the Presbyterian Church there, and whose only minister is the aged Rev. R. D. Mackay, referred to in this letter. Their circumstances call for our deepest interest and sympathy.

BRUCEFIELD P.O., ONTARIO, CANADA,
26th May, 1896.

MY DEAR SIR,—Your kind and welcome letter was received in due time, and I may say that it was most highly appreciated by the friends here. We feel that in having the sympathy of your Presbytery we are not quite so much alone in the world as some of us were before. Some of the friends here desire me to write you again, and give you a more detailed account of our position; and, however ill fitted I may be for such a task, I feel a pretty strong inclination to comply with their request. For, although, I have never seen you, and in all probability never will see your face in the flesh, yet we feel ourselves in closer relationship to the Free Presbyterian Church than to any other body that we are acquainted with; for the banner for truth that you have been honoured to display in Scotland, we think, is the same as we in a feeble way have been trying to hold up in Canada.

Well, as you are aware, there have been two unions of Presbyterians in Canada. The first was between the Free Church and the United Presbyterians in 1861. They were then called the "Canada Presbyterian Church." Rev. L. Macpherson, whom I mentioned in my last letter, and a large portion of his congregation refused to enter into that union because of the compromise

in favour of Voluntaryism contained in the basis of the union. But Mr. Macpherson had some members of his session who were strongly in favour of the union, and on that account there was no end of trouble in the session; and, as there was no Court to appeal to where the troubles could be heard and settled, he, at last, yielding to the force of circumstances, joined the Canada Presbyterian Church. But in a very short time after he did so, the agitation for the second union began, so that in trying to get out of one trouble he got himself into another and greater. In another part of the country there was quite a number of people that did not go into that union, but they had no minister. The second union was between the Canada Presbyterian Church and those connected with the Established Church of Scotland. That union was consummated in Montreal, on the 15th of June, 1875. The Voluntary principle had been gaining ground all this time, and as it has been said, "Extremes meet," so in this case. The Erastianism of the "Old Kirk" party meeting with the Voluntaryism of the U.P.'s, buried our Free Church out of sight. In the first attempts at this union there was great difficulty in getting a basis on which they could all agree, on account of these conflicting principles. So much was this the case, that, in the first draft of the basis, the Lord's name was not mentioned at all. But that was so obnoxious that quite a number of ministers of the Canada Presbyterian Church would not submit to it. Then a most cunningly devised preamble was attached to it, that in a kind of a way declared that Christ is King of Zion, but made no mention whatever of Him as King of Nations. This was not by any oversight, for when attention was called to the omission they would not remedy it. They rather let us leave their communion than insert a clause to that effect. When the final vote was taken in the Canada Presbyterian Assembly, there were over 200 yeas, and only 4 nays. The latter were the Rev. L. Macpherson and his elder, Donald Fraser, and Rev. J. Ross and myself. I am the only one of the four now living; Mr. Fraser died in 1884, Mr. Macpherson in 1886, and Mr. Ross in 1887. Within a few weeks after the union, we organised as a Presbytery, and as a goodly number of both congregations held with their ministers (although quite a number left them and went in with the union), they continued in charge of their respective congregations. In the summer of 1883 Mr. Macpherson, on account of failing health, had to resign his charge. In the meantime, the people that did not go into the first union united with us, and, though at a great distance from us, both the ministers went to preach to them alternately, once a month, or as near to that as they could. About the time that Mr. Macpherson had to resign his charge, Rev. R. D. Mackay, who for his loyalty to Free Church principles, had been living in obscurity since the time of the first union, came out of his retirement, and took charge of Mr. Macpherson's people. At his age it is not to be expected that he can go much abroad to

supply the wants of others, but he has been the means of keeping that congregation together. But, on the other hand, on the death of Mr. Ross, his people got supply of ordinances by retired ministers of the Union Church, and the result of that is that about a year ago they went over in a body to the Presbyterian Church of Canada (which we call the Union Church), with the exception of five or six that meet in a hall for worship on the Sabbath. There are five or six other places where there are little companies in very similar circumstances, only we in Brucefield are among the smallest in number.

It is our scattered condition that makes us so helpless. If we were within such distances of each other, that we could by any possibility meet together on the Sabbath, and form one congregation, we would then be able to maintain a minister. But it is not of any use to murmur or complain, neither would it be right to do so. We are situated as God in His all-wise purpose saw fit, and if He, by His grace, enables us to act properly in those places, and we strive to honour and glorify His name, all will be right. For the Lord is not confined to any temple made with hands, but has promised to be where two or three are met in His name. And I don't think it is too much to say that we have sometimes found it more refreshing to be in those little gatherings, than we many a time did in the large congregation. Not that I would disparage the large congregation by any means, but rather point out the difference that we feel in a place or company where our conscience feels free, than when we feel that we are being dragged along by the crowd in a way that we believe is not sanctioned by the Word of God, which ought to be our rule and guide, especially in all acts of worship.

But it is hard for us to hold our ground against the powerful influences that are against us, for the young people are allured away from us by the attraction of fashion and persuasive arguments, and we feel powerless in the face of such influences. We are small and despised, and practically without any organised existence. While the young people are allured away, our old people are being removed, one by one, by the hand of death, so that it sometimes appears to us as if the cause was about to die out. But this is our infirmity, and we would fain do as the Psalmist did, "Remember the years of the right hand of the most High." For whatever may become of us, the cause of truth is the Lord's cause, and it must prevail in the end.

It gives us great comfort to hear of the progress of the truth in dear old Scotland, our dear native land. It is now 50 years since I left it, but what memories are stirred up at the remembrance of it! We read with no small degree of interest the account of the ordination and induction of Mr. Sinclair, in Glasgow, and it would have been a great pleasure to have been present with you on that occasion. But seas roll between, and at my time of life I cannot expect to cross these seas again. I was 20 years old at

the birth of the Free Church in 1843, and in all likelihood will soon have to cross another river, and it is very important that I should be ready for that event.

But I must draw to a close lest I weary you. We would be very glad to hear from you again, but I hesitate to ask you to write, as I know that your time is fully occupied. May He that is the keeper of Israel keep you and make you an instrument in His own hand in building up His own cause in dear old Scotland. —I remain, your sincere friend, GEORGE FORREST.

Sacramental Address.

(II.)

BY THE LATE REV. JONATHAN R. ANDERSON, GLASGOW.

THE feast, intending communicants, to which you have come is emphatically a feast of love. It is love that provides the refreshments which it offers to the pilgrims of Zion. "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins." It is love that issues the invitation on which you have this day come to the banqueting house. "Come," says the Heavenly Wisdom, "eat of the bread and drink of the wine that I have mingled." It is love that furnishes the guests with all that is needful to prepare them for receiving or relishing the good that is here presented. "But God who is rich in mercy, for the great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in sins hast quickened us together with Christ." It is love, which, like a golden chain, binds together the guests, and the whole to their heavenly King. "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if you have love one to another." In this dark and sinful world, what a marvel is it that a feast of this description should be provided, and that the guests invited to it should be those who by nature are hateful and hating one another? To those of you, intending communicants, whose hearts are duly affected towards your Lord, this feast will appear quite congenial to your feelings, and you may, perhaps, be disposed to say with the Church, "Stay me with flagons; comfort me with apples for I am sick of love." But it is possible there may be some of you who know and believe that it is a feast of love, but who, instead of finding comfort in this reflection, are only the more distressed by it, because of your own coldness and carnality. In the ordinary occupations of life, and in intercourse with your fellowmen, it may not be matter of very deep or sensible distress that your hearts are so full of vanities and distraction; but it is a burden and a grief to you to come with such hearts to a feast where all that you see, and hear, and handle, and taste, impresses you with the fact that it is a feast of love. You may even question whether you ought to take the privilege of sitting down at the table of the Lord, and appearing as witnesses for Him. But

whether should one that is carnal go but to Him who is the fountain of life? Where will you get your hearts melted, if not under the beams of the Sun of Righteousness? How will your affection be drawn out towards heavenly things, but by communion with Him in whom they dwell.

Oh! beware, intending communicants, of marring the sweet solemnity of this service by any inclination, however secret, to try expedients of human device for quickening, enlivening, and fixing your hearts. The greater your sense of unworthiness, the more you need the worthiness of the Lamb; the livelier your consciousness of guilt, the more urgent should be your application to the Lord our Righteousness; the stronger your bonds of iniquity, the more speedily should you betake yourselves to Him who gives deliverance to the captive. Let it be your simple aim, your sincere desire, now to have the love of Christ so manifested and applied to your souls, that you shall be constrained to say, "We loved Him because He first loved us." For it is only the apprehension by faith of the Redeemer's love that can awaken and sustain the grace of love in your cold hearts. He is the life and nourishment of yours, and as well may we suppose that flowers shall expand their beauties and emit their fragrance without the influence of the sun, as that the grace of the Spirit shall thrive and blossom without Christ. Whatever then be your case, seek in this service, to come under the hallowed influence of the Lord Christ, and hearing His voice, though dead, you shall live; touching His garment, though diseased, you shall be healed; receiving His salvation, though hungry, you shall be filled with food.

Have you, communicants, at all realised the service of communion as a feast of love? Then does it not become you to bear testimony to Christ, who instituted it by walking in love? To this appeal your hearts may at this moment cheerfully respond, for where, if not at the table of the Lord, are all wrathful and discontented feelings subdued? But do not imagine that you will be able to retain your present impressions or to keep your present frame of mind without a struggle. The well of carnality within you is very deep, and though the stream may for a little be checked, yet be assured it will again burst forth, and that too at an hour when you are little aware. Yet, be not cast down or perplexed by this, for have not the Scriptures said, "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." Let it be fixed on your mind that while the grace of love in you may change, at one time strong as a furnace, at another time weak as the glimmering of a taper, while carnality may seem for a season to prevail against you, yet the love of Christ changeth not. Hasten, therefore, to Him and abide closely with Him, that the power of sin within you may be kept in check and subdued, and that faith and love may be maintained in strength and purity. The feast of love at which you have now been entertained lays you under the strongest

obligations to lead a life of love. Let the love of God be shed abroad in your hearts by the Holy Ghost, and keep yourselves in the love of God by praying in the Holy Ghost; and see that you cherish an unfeigned affection to the whole household of faith, and "love one another with a pure heart fervently;" and as to the world at large, ever regard them with the benevolence due to the creatures of God, and with the compassion which you owe to those who are still in the condemnation from which, by sovereign mercy, you have been delivered. Nor let enemies be denied a place in your regards. "But, I say unto you," says our Lord to His disciples, "love your enemies, bless them that curse you, and pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you." To maintain this spirit and pursue this walk it will be needful that you live habitually by the faith of Him who is at once the pattern and source of Christian love. In vain will this holy flame be preserved if it be not continually fed with nourishment from Christ Jesus, the head and fulness of all grace. Would you then walk in love? Be exhorted to walk by faith; for it is only when you act faith in Christ that this or any other Christian grace can thrive or grow strong. Be exhorted also carefully to avoid all which tend to damp the flame or abate the fervour of holy love. Be on your guard against the world, for the influences which come from that quarter are most hostile to the grace of love; they may engender envy, bitterness, strife, and contention, but never will they produce love. Live near to the God of love. Draw largely from Christ the fountain of love. Commune habitually with the Spirit of love and associate cheerfully with those who shew that they are Christ's by loving Him and all the saints. Whatever be the difficulties you encounter in the maintenance of this principle, they will soon, very soon disappear, and you shall be transported to that happy world where love holds a universal and endless reign. "For now abideth faith, hope, and love; but the greatest of these is love."

A United States Minister on the Scottish Churches.

AN aged minister of the Presbyterian Church in Kansas, United States, writes the Editor of the *Bulwark* thus:—"I am greatly troubled over the state of things in the Churches in my dear native land. It does seem as if dear old Scotland had broken loose from her honoured ancient moorings, and was fast drifting into German Rationalism and open infidelity. The great doctrines of the gospel, 'the truth as it is in Jesus,' the evangelical principles in the maintenance of which our honoured fathers of blessed memory fought and bled and died, are gone by the board. Can it be that Scotland is going back on her glorious record, and is about to furl the banner displayed for Christ's crown and covenant and trail it in the dust? Alas! that it should seem so."

Letters of the late Rev. Hugh Martin, D.D.

(II.)

LASSWADE, 20th April, 1875.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—Please do not be alarmed at my replying so quickly to your last welcome letter, nor think that I expect similar promptitude. The fact is, that my correspondence is so voluminous, that, if I did not reply almost immediately, I would get quite blocked.

I returned from Glasgow communion a good deal fatigued, not having had scarcely any repose since I saw you, and my doctor tells me I must rest from preaching for a time, after the last few months' work. But, as I cannot be absolutely idle, I begin a work to-day which I have been contemplating for some time, that of preparing for the press a volume, consisting of a series of discourses preached more than twenty years ago. The title of it is, "The Shadow of Calvary." How solemn these words! Although thinking of them before, this is the first time I have written them, and how weighty I feel them to be! There will be sixteen discourses, five treating of our Lord in Gethsemane, three on His arrest, and eight on His trial. They will be very far from what I would wish; and, though I intend revising them carefully, they are but a feeble contribution towards the elucidation of this wonderful theme. Still, I desire to offer this little tribute of service to our adorable Lord, and may He bless the truths set forth in the book (if it come into existence), and accept my humble attempt to speak of His blessed name.

I am not to make this a long letter, but I must notice your question, "How can I expect to receive and enjoy that 'healing of conscience,' of which you wrote in your former letter, while my heart, helped by Satan, keeps whispering to me, your love of sin is unchanged?" Well, you ought to know what I would answer to that. I would answer, "You must, you can receive and enjoy that healing, though conscious of sin and Satan raging." Let me point you to Romans 7th. Study the two "I's" there. In me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing," no "hatred of sin," which is certainly a "good thing." Again, "It is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me." It is no more *I* that loves sin, it is the *sin* that dwelleth in me; and that bears no hatred to itself. Paul took his stand between these two "I's"—*I*, my sin-inhabited flesh, and *I*, my willingly spiritual mind, and he made a clean and certain cut between them. "The captive exile hasteth that he may be loosed." Now, therefore, do not allow yourself to be fettered in this snare of unbelief, that, because you are not what you would fain be, you have no right to Christ and His benefits. I think you work too much trying to unravel these snares, instead of taking the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God, and bringing it to deal with them. It has cut, and can cut many a harder knot than that you mention. The Lord give you understanding.—Yours, &c.,

HUGH MARTIN.

Open Letter to Rev. Alex. Whyte, D.D.

REV. SIR,—A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid. The chief minister, therefore, of the principal congregation of the Free Church cannot hope to escape observation, especially if his books, lectures, and public appearances have been in any way notable.

The language of eulogy is perhaps the most usual address that obscurity makes to eminence, but criticism also, if it be candid and pertinent, may, on occasion, justify itself. Suffer me, therefore, a little to vent my candour, while I pass in brief review some phases of your public speech and conduct. In the first place I must needs inform you (though you probably know it already) that to the legitimist party, *i.e.*, to Free Churchmen who have kept their first estate, your public career has not been altogether palatable. It is true you have not figured much as an ecclesiastical politician, preferring a less turbulent sphere of church life; but your activity in other ways has been considerable, and the impression left is that of a man not well affected to the sacred original principles of the Free Church. Inconsistency is a familiar charge for us to advance against the men of your school. It is a charge which I think can be made good against you. Strictness of official creed and laxity of official conduct, solemn forswearing of all divisive courses at the beginning of your ministry, and thereupon a steady adherence to the unbrotherly programme of Principal Rainy, which has rent the Church into fragments—these have been salient features of your career. This sort of thing has no doubt been epidemical in your time; but covenant-breaking does not justify itself by becoming general.

The Free Church, as you knew her first, was a well-found institution, with a code of doctrine, worship, and polity, in all respects clearly defined. The simple scriptural form of the Church you knew; the venerable character of her doctrine and worship consecrated by the lives and sufferings of men of whom the world was not worthy, you also knew; the zeal and jealousy of many members of the Church for the exact maintenance of her constitution in all its parts you might easily have known; the sacred character of the oath binding all the officers of the Church you knew, and knowing all this, you accepted office in the Church. In view of all that has since taken place we may enquire, Was this well done? Was it well for such a volatile spirit to pledge himself to walk in this strait, jealously defined pathway? "It is better thou shouldst not vow than that thou shouldst vow and not pay." Be not deceived, neither feasting with Home Rulers, nor exchanging courtesies with Romish Cardinals, nor dabbling in Disestablishment, nor giving the right hand of fellowship to the exponents of a godless criticism, nor swallowing instrumental music, nor rescinding Fast days, are at all permissible to the

sworn liegeman of the Calvinistic Church of '43, to the professed devotee of the Westminster Confession of Faith.

But it is likely you object to this use of the Confession as a prosaic foot-rule method of limiting the motions of the human spirit. It is likely you affect a certain largeness and superiority of mind, as if you would be the patron of all the creeds and not the servant of any. If you be a man for this sort of largeness and superiority, hear, I pray you, what a recent author says while discoursing on the fall of Solomon. He is descanting ominously on the shipwreck that Solomon made, and he speaks thus (I adapt his words slightly):—"There was (in Solomon) what the inspired text calls largeness of heart—very much what we would in our day call openness and breadth of mind, hospitality and catholicity of mind, even to sympathy and symbolism with beliefs, with ways of worship, and with ways of no worship, against which it had been the divine call and whole ministry of Rutherford, Bunyan, Owen, and Shepard, to warn and protect Christian people. Such proceedings as those must give a shock to the more conservative and sober, and thoughtful and religious and far-seeing minds in Scotland." Further on the lecturer says:—"Solomon's largeness of heart soon ended in flesh itself. His wisdom, as his life went on, descended not from above. The wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable. We see it every day, we see men absolutely revolting against all smallness of heart. They loathe all your bigotry and narrowness, and hardness, and suspicion, and superstition. They see a soul of good, especially in things evil. They fraternise with men and movements that their fathers abominated. They pare down and prune away the decalogue and the creed, and the catechism, and the books of discipline of their godly upbringing. They rehabilitate and reinvest names that were a shame and reproach in their father's house." My author (a well known Edinburgh divine, whose name I believe is Dr. Whyte) means, I think, to say that the moral situation of people who do these things is full of peril. It is a word in season to you, sir, and to many of your fellows, which I hope you will have self-respect enough to regard.

Certain Puritan names have been inserted into the above extract from the lecture on Solomon. But you will not object to this for you exhibit a great fondness for the Puritans, even the very chief. You canvass the Puritan divines at a great rate even as if you were the sole agent for their wares; but many of us are looking on with a puzzled air, and asking why you do it? Not that we would forbid any man to bring as much honour and popularity to the Puritan divines as he can, but we cannot see how it is consistent for you to do this. The fitness of things must be observed, the laws of congruity must not be violated. The old law forbade the plowing with an ox and an ass together, and there are certain proprieties which common sense will not suffer to be traversed. We say, therefore, exploit the Puritans if you

like, but in the name of sincerity and good form leave off eulogising Cardinal Newman and all that tribe. The bosom friend of Samuel Rutherford cannot be the faithful henchman of Samuel Rutherford's mortal foe. The disciple of Thomas Shepard cannot also be the scholar of Welhausen. Say not of Professor George Adam Smith, "he is my brother;" and then of Dr. John Owen, "he is my father;" for the one believes that he may saw Isaiah asunder, the other (who is godly after the primitive manner), would for such a fault disown his own child. You understand, I hope, what our meaning is. This easy lumping together in a morning's discourse of Rutherford, Newman, Owen, and Dr. Dods is fairly nauseous to us. Your theological ways are altogether too versatile. We like originality, wide reading and culture, but we suspect the sincerity of the man who can profess an equal relish for John Bunyan and Cardinal Newman.

The mention of Cardinal Newman calls up a matter whereat we do well to be angry, viz., your holiday visit to that dignitary. You tell us that whilst yourself and two friends were touring in England, you turned aside by way of variety to pay your respects to Cardinal Newman, "to whom you were so much indebted." Here truly was a dishonourable business—you not only thereby compromised your own honour but the honour of your congregation, and the honour of all the members of the Free Church. Three bad boys playing truant will sometimes wind up the day by robbing an orchard; but your escapade was far wilder than that. When you turned down the path to Newman's house did you not see the angel with the drawn sword barring your progress? Then beyond all peradventure you were blind. Did you hear no voice behind you saying "this is *not* the way, walk ye *not* in it?" Then the heavens were silent to you, and that is a bad sign. The church of which you are a minister had this as one of the articles of her testimony. "The Pope is that man of sin and son of perdition, and his communion the synagogue of Satan." You swore that you accepted the truth of these statements, and yet you, the representative that day of the Free Church in England, thought it good form to go with an olive branch to the Pope's principal agent in that kingdom. Some things are lawful but not expedient, but of things neither lawful nor expedient no good can be said. If you had no fear for yourself you should have had some for the young men and women who are under your influence. The whirlpool that swallowed Newman is not to be trifled with, or to be made less a terror by indiscreet familiarity with the victims of it. If you do not fear the seductions of the Church of Rome, you have too little fear in your composition. You may be far from intending to land yourself or others into it, but by your courting and coquetting with the seducer you break down that wholesome dread of the enemy which we have inherited from our suffering sires, you pave the way for the overspreading of the abomination that maketh desolate.

But you say you have benefitted much by Newman, whom you esteem the prince of English preachers. Yes, if the infusion of a bad unbiblical theology be a benefit, you have certainly something to thank Newman for. Not without result have you consorted with Newman. The scholar has learnt something from the master. Take for example your lecture delivered on 21st March of this year, on Solomon. David's heart smote him because he cut off the skirt of the garment of the Lord's anointed, even Saul; but you without compunction have cut off Solomon's hope, yea, blotted his name from the book of life. Who taught you to call Solomon a "reprobate," a "castaway"—the "greatest castaway in the Bible." Was it not Newman? Newman called Solomon a "grey-haired apostate," and after he had launched that shaft against Solomon's good name you thought yourself at liberty to say all manner of evil against him. But if any man speak of Solomon, let him speak as the oracles of God. For the mouth of the Lord spake concerning him, as if to anticipate the scandal which his fall would cause, "I will be his Father and he shall be my son. If he commit iniquity I will chasten him with the rod of men and the stripes of the children of men; but my mercy shall not depart away from him, as I took it from Saul." 2 Samuel, vii. 14-15. Solomon's name therefore is written in the book of life. It is God that justifieth; who is he that condemneth? We behold the man beloved of his God and healed of all his backslidings, and can say nothing against it, let Drs. Whyte and Newman rail as they please. The truth is, Newman has a bad unbiblical theology, and any man that will drink from his stream will contract the taint.

Other Old Testament characters handled in your recent lectures receive also very questionable treatment. David is not indeed excommunicated, but pains are taken to divest him of the halo which he wears in the popular mind. You say, the devout psalm-singing David which we conceive of, was not the man that Absalom knew. You bring your historical imagination to bear on the subject, and reveal to us that sensuality was the way and manner of David and all his household. At your bidding, Absalom says, "The life we all led in our several stews quite turned me against my father." You say, the state of matters in the city of David was barely better than a Mohammedan harem. These are wild exaggerations and in very bad taste. We need not scruple to admit that things fell out in the lives of these Old Testament worthies that are painful to think of; but the sacred writers do not elaborate and harp upon the sins of pardoned saints. They are related simply and impartially, and then left to the meditation of the wise in heart. But they do celebrate and set out the riches of the grace that passed over and put away such aggravated offences. It is not exhibitions of the ugliness of sin, but manifestations of the glory of grace that will do men any good. There is, methinks, too little of the latter element in all

your lectures. You describe and anatomise the human heart in the way of the dramatist or realistic novel writer, but you seldom escape to the higher themes of thought. This is not well done for a doctor of divinity. Apologising for my plainness of speech, —I am, yours, &c.,

NEMO.

Professor Johnston, Aberdeen, and his Students.

THE PROFESSOR TO BE ASKED TO RETIRE.

THE inquiry by the Aberdeen University Court into the charges against Professor Johnston in his conduct of the class of Biblical Criticism was resumed on August 18th. The complaints (practically formulated by a majority of the students of the class) were to the effect:—(1) That Professor Johnston was unmethodical in his treatment of the subject of which he is Professor; (2) That his treatment of it was inadequate; (3) That his treatment of the class was such as to make it absolutely impossible for the students to give him due respect. The inquiry was conducted by the Court in committee. Professor Dove Wilson (law) presided, and the other members of the Court present were:—Lord Huntly, the Lord Rector; Principal Sir William Geddes, Professors Niven, Stephenson, and Matthew Hay, Sir David Stewart, Rev. Dr. James Smith, Dr. Dey, and Dr. Beveridge. Mr. Henry Peterkin, president of the Society of Solicitors, conducted the inquiry; and Professor Johnston appeared on his own behalf.

Several ministers who had been recently students in Professor Johnston's class, and also Rev. Dr. James Cooper, Aberdeen, were cited as witnesses to give evidence. Rev. W. D. Morrice, assistant, Parish Church, Forfar, said that the Professor gave a very full and adequate treatment of the subject. He might at times be rather diffuse, but his treatment of the subject was not wanting in method. As to his conduct of the class, he might have been somewhat lax in discipline. He never saw anything eccentric in the Professor's behaviour in the class-room. He thought that his loss of the sympathy of the students was due, perhaps, to the fact that Professor Johnston was extremely orthodox.

Rev. Ebenezer Ritchie, Belleisle, Ireland, in the course of his evidence, said that Professor Johnston was methodical, and that, so far as he could judge from one session's attendance, the Professor's treatment was adequate.

Rev. Dr. Cooper said he had heard one of Professor Johnston's class lectures. The subject was the authorship of Isaiah, and there was a great deal that was of value in the lecture. There were several points of considerable weight, and which were new to him, and he thought a good deal of it was of value to the students. He sympathised entirely with the Professor's view, and got a good

deal of light and instruction from the lecture. The manner of the Professor's delivery, however, was not such as would enable students to take notes, being desultory in the extreme, and he observed that the students were not taking notes to any extent. Their behaviour was not good at all. They had evidently lost respect for their teacher. Very few were giving attention, and some of them let fall their sticks—he had a suspicion that this was done intentionally. The Professor was unable to keep order. He admitted there was nothing calculated in a right-minded student to excite ridicule. But the students apparently had little expectation of getting anything from the Professor; and this resulted, not so much from inadequacy, as from want of method.

Rev. John Mackay, Carie, Killin, Perthshire, said he did not think the Professor's treatment unmethodical or inadequate, and he never saw anything in his treatment of his class that was calculated to cause the students to lose respect for him. The class was very far from attentive—their conduct was unruly and shameful, utterly unbecoming divinity students. They did not behave so in other classes, because they would not have dared. If Professor Johnston failed in anything, it was in not being a disciplinarian, and in not being firm. He should have reported the thing to the Senatus at once. When cross-questioned, Mr. Mackay affirmed that the bulk of the students showed want of godliness, and that he had seen Bibles thrown across the benches, adding the remark, "I cannot conceive of students calling themselves students of divinity doing that."

Three other students gave evidence, one of whom, Mr. J. H. M'Hardy, M.A., Tomintoul, was unfavourable. He said he was able to take verbatim notes of the other Professors, but not of Professor Johnston, who was very confused in his explanations. The students being unable to follow him, lost attention, and gradually their respect for him got less. This having closed Mr. Peterkin's evidence, he then read a certificate from the Vice-Convener of the Synodical Board to the effect that students who had passed the B.D. Examination were exempted from the Synodical Examination, except in the subject of Biblical Criticism, the reason being that the students were found ill-grounded in that subject. The Court then adjourned until the following day to hear the evidence of the other Professors in Divinity and of recent Professors as to the character of the students. This evidence was throughout favourable to the character of the students.

Mr. Peterkin, solicitor, who conducted the inquiry, then addressed the Court, summing up the evidence. He contended that the charge of want of method had been completely proved. The evidence of the students could not be taken as proving the alleged inadequacy of Professor Johnston's teaching, and he recommended that the Professor's lectures should be submitted to experts for examination and report on this point.

Professor Johnston afterwards addressed the Court. In the

course of his address he argued that there was a conspiracy in the class during last session, and that even pressure had been brought upon students to bear testimony against him. In regard to the taking of notes, he urged that the students were not unable, but unwilling. He did not profess to be perfect, but he had no hesitation in saying that he had given no just ground for the hostile treatment he had received. He maintained that he had done nothing to forfeit his appointment, and he asked from the University, not leniency, but simple justice.

On Friday the 22nd, the University Court met to receive the report of the committee. The report stated, that the first complaint made against Professor Johnston, that he was unmethodical in the treatment of his subject, had been established. That the committee were satisfied that a main cause, if not the sole cause of the unfortunate state of matters which had prevailed in the class of Biblical Criticism during the three years since the appointment of Professor Johnston, was that he, whatever other merits he possessed, failed almost entirely to possess the first essential for a teacher, namely, the faculty of communicating knowledge in such a form that the students could benefit by it. That they regretted the disorderly conduct of which some of the students were guilty, but that there was no foundation for the charges of conspiracy, ungodliness, want of principle, and the like. The report concluded, that "the Court in committee are satisfied that after Dr. Johnston having had three full sessions' experience in three separate years, during which no improvement in his method of teaching has taken place, there is no probability that at his time of life there will be any sensible improvement for the future. After due investigation, the Court in committee find that sufficient cause for the step has been shown, and they recommend to the Court accordingly, that in the interests of University Education, the Court shall require Dr. Johnston to retire from his office—he always being allowed a suitable retiring allowance."

It was agreed to meet on 15th September, to consider the report.

The *Scotsman* thus concludes an article on Professor Johnston's case:—"The most interesting feature of the case is the light it throws on the orthodoxy of the rising generation. The students of divinity are all now-a-days become 'higher critics.' They are followers of the Smiths, and they flatly refuse to listen to a Professor who is not a 'higher critic.' It may be that if Professor Johnston had been a more competent lecturer and a better disciplinarian his students would have heard him more respectfully; but all the evidence goes to indicate that the students of the present day are so permeated, before they reach the Divinity Hall, with the newer views of Biblical critics, that the old orthodox teaching has no chance of being received by them with credence or respect. The fact is suggestive of the extent to which the religious revolution has gone in this country. It may pretty

safely be assumed that the doctrines taught by Professor Johnston are—whatever may be said as to the form and method of their presentation—substantially the doctrines that were taught in all our Colleges a generation ago, or even less. Now they are so discredited that the Professor who endeavours to inculcate them has the Bible flung at his head. Orthodoxy in Scottish Colleges has been turned upside down since Professor Robertson Smith lost his Chair for teaching views as to the books of the Bible, which Professor Johnston is now condemned for endeavouring to controvert."

An t-Ollamh Whyte ann an Dornoch.

BHA laithean aig an Eaglais ann an Dornoch anns an robh fianuis air a togail air taobh na firinn. Bha eadhon a' ministear òg a tha 'san Eaglais Shaor 'an sin an drasd aon uair ann an Comunn 'nam foghlumach anns a Cholaiste a rinn coimhcheangal eadar iad fein rach cuireadh iad suas le mearachdan na h-Eaglais Saoire.

Mo thruaighe! bha cuid dhiubh neo-dhileas anns a' ni sin, ged sheas cuid eile.

Ach ged a thilg an Eaglais Shaor an fhirinn a bha i ag aideachadh bun os ceann, agus ged a luidh ministear Dhornoch maile ri moran eile fuidh na mearachdan dubha a rinn Eaglais Dhaor dheth an Eaglais Shaoir, agus a chur i fo spoig luchd-aicheadh na firinn, dh' fhag moran anns an sgìre an comunn ùr so a thainig a stigh le teagasgan ùra, agus a chùm gu cealgach ainm na h-Eaglais mar a bha sin roimhe gu bhi dalladh suilean an t-sluaigh air eagal gu'n teicheadh iad a mach mar theich Israel as an Eiphit. Coma leat, bha moran anns an sgìre so aig an robh breithneachadh gu tuigsinn a ghnothaich. Thog iad so bratach an Athleasachaidh agus an Dealachaidh air leth leo fein ann an tigh-coinneamh nam Birichean. Tha e coltach gu bheil moran de na dh'fhag iad, a nis ullamh air a bhi ag òl mearachdan na h-Eaglais Saoire coltach ri eoin bheaga ann a' nead a shluigeas na h-uile rud a bheir an t-eun mor leis na ghob. 'S ann mar so, co dhiu, a ghabh cuid ann an Dornoch ri Dr. Whyte. Is ann 's an t-Soisgeulach Thuathach a tha iomradh air a thoirt air an t-searmoin aige. 'Se so paipeir ùr a tha cuid dhiu fein a cur a mach air son nan Gaidhil, agus a chionn gu bheil Dr. Whyte air a mholadh air son na searmoin tha e soilleir nach eil iad a cur breugan air. 'S ann air Iacob aig Peniel a bha Dr. Whyte a teagasg, agus 's e cheud ni a thubhairt e mu'n phrìomh-athair dhiadhaidh, nach robh urnuigh, no seinn, no diadhachd aige fad nam fichead bliadhna 'bha e ann am Padan aram. Ciod e am fios' tha aigesan? Tha e coltach nach d' rinn e ach a ni ud a shnìomh a mach a eanchainn fein, agus nach eil aige ach breugan anns a ni a tha e cur as leth Iacob. Nach iomadh ni' tha iad an dingh a cur as leth an duine choir? Nuair a bha

Iacob a dol do Phadan-aram, labhair Dia ris ann an doigh sonruichte, agus thubhairt e ris gu'n gleidheadh e Iacob anns gach aite do'n rachadh e. Ann an sin, chaidh Iacob fo bhoidean do Dhia. Bha mar so an coimhcheangal air ath-nuadhachadh do Iacob, agus gheall Dia gu'm bitheadh E na Dhia dha, mar a bha E do Abraham agus do Isaac. A nis, ma bha Iacob diadhaidh a nuair sin, mar a bha, ciamar a chailleadh e an diadhachd air son fichead bliadhna, agus a bhiodh e fo bhuaidh "ana-creideamh an ana-creidmich" air son na h-uine sin, mar a tha Dr. Whyte ag radh? Sud agaibh teagasg nan Arminianach ann an cubaidean na Gaidhilteachd fo sgeoid an Achd-cur-an-ceil a rinn an Eaglais ann an '92. A thuilleadh air an t-sealladh ghloirmhor a fhuair Iacob air a thurus, aig Betel, tha iomradh air sealladh eile a fhuair e ann am Padan-aram fein, anns an d' thubhairt Dia ris: "Is mise Dia Bheteil, far an d' ung thu 'n carragh, far an do bhoidich thu dhomhsa boid." A rithis, nuair a throd Laban ris air son falbh gun fhios, fhreagair e mar so:—"Mur biodh gu'n robh Dia m' athar, Dia Abraham, agus Eagal Isaac maille rium, gu cinnteach chuireadh tu nis air falbh mi falamh." Nach robh an fhirinn aige? Cha do chur Laban na aghaidh anns a ni so, oir bha fios aig' air a chosg gur e duine diadhaidh 'bha ann an Iacob, agus gur iomadh urnuigh a chur e suas ri Dia eadhon fo dhruhd na h-oidhche fad nam bliadhnaibh anns an d' rinn e seirbhis gu goirt. 'S ann dìreach an deigh do Iacob an t-aideachadh onaireach so a dheanamh a d' fhoilsich Dia e fein dha a rithist aig Peniel. Na 'm b' urrain Laban cur' an aghaidh Iacob 's a phuing so, cha bhiodh e mall gu dheanamh. Tha e coltach gur ann 'o'n t-Satan a thainig a bheachd a tha aig Dr. Whyte mu'n chuis so.

Tha puinsean salach an taobh deas air a sgaoileadh a nis gu pailt 's an taobh tuath, ach tha an luchd-faire mar chòin bhalbh nach urrainn comhartaich, a thaobh gu'n deach glas-ghuib a chur orra leis an *Declaratory Act*.

Tha cuid eile ann agus cuiridh sodalachd an Ollamh Whyte a chodal iad do bhrìgh gu bheil e moladh Dr. Ard, agus a cleachdadh nam briathra so mu thiomachal:—"M' athair ann an Dia." Nach e Phapanas a thainig fagus oirnn mu dheireadh a nuair a tha leithid sin a chainnt air a radh ri Dr. Ard no neach eile!

Ciod e an la 'rug oirnn a nuair a tha an sluagh a dol an deigh leithid sin agus ga mholadh!

Agraidh Dia sin orra aig an la mhor.

A. M.

MR. DONALD BEATON was licensed to preach the gospel at a meeting of Presbytery, held at Inverness, on 6th July.

A MEETING OF SYNOD will (D.V.) be held in Inverness, on Tuesday, 29th September.

Notes and Comments.

A SIGNIFICANT TESTIMONY.—*The Christian News*—the organ of the Evangelical Union (otherwise known as the Morisonians), says that the Free Church Declaratory Act embodies the (Arminian) doctrines which have been contended for in the columns of that paper for the last fifty years.

MORE LABOUR IN THE FIRE.—Arrangements, we understand, have been made by the Free Presbytery of Edinburgh to conduct a ten days' evangelistic mission in that city. Forty-three ministers outside the bounds have promised to assist. Let the forty-three however do their best, the result will be the same, viz. :—nothing. Free Church Presbyteries who essay evangelistic enterprises, must be admonished that there is a previous question which stands in the way. Before they attempt to evangelise others, let them evangelise themselves. Let the heads and chiefs of the Church repent of their manifold backslidings since 1863, or earlier, when they lapsed into Voluntarism, and after that, swallowed hymns and organs, and finally, perfected their fall by giving place in the Church to those who rob Christ of His glory and destroy the foundation of all evangelistic work. It is in vain to affect zeal for the salvation of souls, while those who insult the majesty of Christ sit in the high places of the Church. There is no other Christ to save souls in Edinburgh but the Christ who has staked His infallibility on the Mosaic account of the fall, or Isaiah's true and proper authorship of the whole book which bears his name, and as long as Professors Henry Drummond and Geo. Adam Smith are calmly allowed to give Christ the lie in these respects, it is perfectly in vain for the Free Church to play at evangelistic work in Edinburgh or elsewhere.

A DECEITFUL INTERPRETATION.—The Rev. W. J. Dawson, the editor of the *Young Man*, replying to a correspondent, informs him that St. John's declaration—that the "whole world lieth in wickedness" is merely a historical note describing the condition of society in the Roman Empire. Things, he intimates, have much improved since the apostle penned the words, and to read them as if they applied in all their force to our refined and civilised age, would, he says, be quite a mistake. This is a very deceitful interpretation, but nevertheless the only one which the editor of the *Young Man* could well make. For the religion which he represents lives, moves, and has its being in the world—a refined artistic world it may be—but still the world which is not of the Father. The Christ whom this modern religious world worships is a Christ who can agree well with wholesale novel reading and sensuous worship, but this is not He that was revealed to Bunyan, Augustine, or Rutherford. This is not the Christ that was burnt at Smithfield or beheaded in the Grass-

market. Let Mr. Dawson distinguish as he may the nineteenth century from the first, it is certain the depravity of the last age is as deep and deadly as that of the first. To the true Christian it is still the world that lieth in wickedness, the world where our Lord was crucified, and the world which is still at mortal feud with all that savours of vital religion.

CARDINAL MANNING'S FANATICAL ZEAL.—The Rev. Hugh Price Hughes, writing on the Cardinal in the *Methodist Times*, says:—"I was simply horrified at the calmness with which he [Dr. Manning] declared that *he would be willing to deluge the whole of Europe with blood in order to destroy the unity of Italy, and recover the Temporal Power of the Pope*. He also expressed a conviction that the German Empire was very insecure, and would probably be shattered in the course of the great war which he prophesied would destroy both the unity of Germany and the unity of Italy in order to restore the Pope to the throne of Rome." We thus learn what the Papacy is evidently bent on bringing about, viz., a Continental war, in the interests of the Temporal Power. Luther, in one of his sarcastic pieces against the Pope, says, "I salute thee Peter, King of Sicily and fisherman at Bethsaida." We quite believe the loss of his temporalities is an irksome thing to the successor of St. Peter. Nor with such a cause of offence ranking in his mind is the peace of the nations at all secure. It is the part of a wise man to have an awe of the power—the real superhuman power which is lodged in the Papacy. We firmly believe a day of trial is hastening on for Protestant Churches and Protestant States, when they will once again have to rescue their liberties at a costly rate from this destroyer. Nor will the shallow, lukewarm, ill-instructed Protestantism of the most part of Protestants avail in that struggle, for the river of temptation will be deep and strong, and all the patrons of a sensuous worship, all lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God, all degenerate Protestants who have schemed and plotted how to make money instead of to grow in grace, shall be drawn in and overwhelmed either by reason of their lusts or their fears, and none shall stand the trial save they who have a real spiritual revelation of Christ.

THE CASE OF PROFESSOR JOHNSTON.—The decision of the Aberdeen University Court Committee has been adverse to the Professor, and wholly in favour of the students. The sole charge, however, established against him is want of method in his lectures, while the complaint of inadequacy, a much more important one, has failed. Several witnesses of good standing testified that his lectures were both methodical and adequate, while they also bore testimony to the unruly and disgraceful behaviour of the students. One witness especially, Rev. John Mackay, Carie, Killin, gave very decided evidence in favour of the Professor and against the students. Notwithstanding all this,

the committee have recommended the Court to ask Professor Johnston to retire, and that solely upon the ground of lack of method in his lectures, which they construe as an incapacity in the part of the Professor to teach. This construction is a very questionable one, for it is almost impossible for the most highly skilled Professor to compel students to accept views they are prejudiced against. And even if the Professor lacked method, is not the loss of his chair too high a penalty? Would not some friendly advice be the better way to meet the case? But the root of the whole matter is just this, that Professor Johnston is too sound in the faith, and too decided an opponent of modern rationalistic views to be tolerated by our new divinity students, or for that matter, new divinity professors. On the other hand, if he had been an adept at tearing the books of the Old Testament into a hundred fragments, and assigning to each an imaginary author, after the manner of the "higher" critics, he would have been extolled as a great light, and nothing would have been heard of this case. The matter, however, is not yet finally settled, and it is to be hoped that the Established Church will refuse the unprecedented distinction, or rather—dishonour, among the Churches, of consenting to the ejection from her staff of theological teachers of a man, whose greatest sin is his steadfast adherence to one of the fundamental principles of her own standards, viz., that the Bible is from beginning to end the infallible Word of God.

OPENING OF NEW CHURCH AT OBAN.—We omitted to state in our last number that the new Free Presbyterian Church at Oban, was opened on Friday, 3rd July. The edifice, which is neat and comfortable, is capable of containing 240, and has a hall adjoining to seat about 60. The cost is about £800. The opening services were conducted by the Rev. J. R. Mackay, Gairloch. Mr. Mackay also preached on the following Sabbath. There were good attendances at all the services, and the collection on both days amounted in total to £66 12s.

The Farmer and the Romish Relic-Monger.

IN the year 1644, a very interesting book was imprinted by Robert Bryson, and sold at his shop, at the sign of Iona, in Edinburgh, entitled, *A Historie of the Church of Scotland*. This book records a curious incident which occurred "a little before the death of George Wischard" (Wishart) the martyr. We give this incident as contrasting the shrewdness of a Scottish farmer with the duplicity of a Romish preacher.

On a certain holiday a number of the inhabitants of a village near Haddington were gathered around a man, whose sun-browned countenance and peculiar garb indicated that he had been a

traveller in some foreign land. The man had been to Rome, and had brought home with him "very many holy reliques and new things of great virtue, as he gave out; but the things were not to be had, nor any benefit by the sight or touching of them, without moneys." Around this "Romish Pedlar" stood the greater part of the villagers, listening with the greatest attention, and with astonishment and admiration plainly depicted on their countenances although here and there an expression of doubt might have been detected.

Among the marvellous things which were presented to the admiration of the simple villagers, there was a bell, which the relic-monger eulogised as possessing the most extraordinary virtues, especially this, that it was an infallible detector of falsehood or perjury. "For," said the man, elevating his voice as he spoke, "thus shall it be made known whether what a man sweareth be false, or whether it be the truth which he sweareth. When any one sweareth laying his hand on this bell, if he swear true, he shall, after the oath sworn, remove his hand easily from the bell without any change to the bell; but if he that sweareth, having his hand upon the bell, sweareth falsely, his hand will stick to the bell, and the bell will rive asunder. And look you, my masters," continued he, pointing with one of his fingers to a small crack in the bell, "here is a rift which was made when one did falsely make oath, having his hand upon this bell."

This statement of the pedlar made, as might be expected, no small impression upon his auditory. But while the pedlar was in the height of his triumph, a plain but thoughtful-looking man, a farmer of the neighbourhood, stepped forward, and laying his hand upon the pedlar's arm, asked him to let him have the bell in his hand to look at it more nearly. The man glanced a little uneasily at the farmer's face, and then at the faces which looked intently at him, and probably concluding that the farmer was a man of some local influence, he with an air of triumph, which yet hardly concealed a shade of anxiety, placed the bell in his hand. The farmer took the bell, and examined it with the greatest attention.

"Truly," said he, "this is a marvellous bell—a bell of rare virtue. And how sayest thou, that if any man shall swear falsely upon this bell, it will rend? Truly 'tis a wonderful bell. And now I bethink me I have a matter, a very weighty business, which lieth heavily upon my mind. 'Wilt thou, my good master,' said he, turning suddenly with a searching look towards the man, who was intently watching him, though apparently well pleased with the farmer's eulogy of the bell, 'wilt thou suffer me to make oath on this weighty matter which troubles me, in the presence of these people, having my hand on this bell that so it may be made clear that I swear truly?'"

"Yea," said the man, with some little hesitation, for he could not well refuse, and yet did not much like the trial.

"Then, good people all," said the farmer, speaking with a bold, strong voice, "ye see, before I swear, the rift that is already in the bell, and how big it is, and that I have nothing upon my fingers to make them stick to the bell." So saying he showed them his open hand, and then laying it upon the bell, he continued, in a clear, solemn tone, "I swear, in the presence of the living God, and before these good people, that the Pope of Rome is anti-Christ, and that all the rabble of his clergy, cardinals, archbishops, bishops, priests, monks, with the rest of the crew, are locusts come from hell to delude the people and to withdraw them from God. Moreover, I promise they will return to hell." Then lifting up his hand, he exclaimed, "See friends, I have lifted up my hand freely from the bell; and look unto the rift in the bell, it is one and the same without change. This showeth, according to the saying of this merchant, that I have sworn truth."

The discomfited merchant, who had tried to interrupt the farmer in his harangue, but in vain, stood for a moment or two irresolute. "Villain! heretic!" he muttered through his closed teeth; but a glance at the altered countenances around him (for the farmer's speech had thoroughly accomplished its object) convinced him it would be prudent to bridle his wrath; so, hastily gathering up his wonderful bell and other curious articles and relics, lest in their revulsion of feeling the people should seize upon and destroy them, the relic-monger, with lowered head and scowling brow, strode away as rapidly as possible. "Then," says the old history, "this poor fellow went away, and never more was seen in Scotland, nor any other of his kinde who brought reliques or other like toyes from Rome."

The farmer stood for a few minutes with folded arms gazing after the "Romish pedlar," and then, turning to the people said: "Beware, friends, of the man of sin; turn away your eyes from beholding the lying vanities of papistry; and read ye and reverence ye God's holy word, and may it guide ye all in the way of life." And having said this, without waiting to listen to the congratulations of his friends, the farmer hastened to his home.—*The Gospel Echo.*

"BUT," say ye, "I would yield unto Him if I knew that He would accept of me or the like of me." Oh high blasphemy! To say that thou wouldest, He would not; to say that thy insignificant love would go beyond His infinite love; for He chose us before we chose Him; He loved us before we loved Him. His love has helped many and drowned their iniquity—many who were loath to come to heaven. Hell, devils, and men have tried His love, but they have never yet found a crack or a flaw in it.—*William Guthrie.*

Inconsistency of Free Church Ministers.

QUOTATION FROM MR. SPURGEON.

A FRIEND has sent us the following letter which appeared in the *Signal* for April, 1889 :—

DEAR SIR,—Apropos of much that has appeared lately in the pages of the *Signal* regarding the inconsistency—I might say the immorality—of some of the ministers of our Church, who now openly question the genuineness of the Scriptures, though at their ordination they avowed them to be the infallible Word of God : of others who ignore the Confession of Faith, and want it altered, although when they entered the Church they subscribed their approval of it ; and of others still who openly proclaim themselves Voluntaries and agitate for disestablishment, though they are fully aware that these are contrary to the constitution of the Free Church, I send you the following extract from a recent sermon of Spurgeon (than whom there is no better or sounder authority) on the text, “Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile.” Would that we had more Nathanaels and fewer Judases in our Church !

“The Christian man in whom there is no guile *is true to his convictions*. This is an age in which convictions are sadly rare, and where they do exist they are singularly sleepy and torpid. I take it as a Christian man and minister, that I have no right to occupy the pulpit of a congregation if I do not believe those doctrines which I professed to believe when I became the pastor of the Church. I have no right to undermine the basis upon which the Church was formed. As a private member of a Church, I have no right to be a member of a Church whose doctrines I do not accept, indeed I ought not to regard it as a possibility that I could remain to profess what I do not agree with. I am responsible as a member of a Church for all that is taught and all that is done by that Church in its Church capacity, and if I am protesting in my heart, and yet in my proper person continue part and parcel of that Church, I am not acting truthfully to God. We want, in this century, a class of men who are endowed with a double portion of conscience to what is generally exhibited by professors ; for there are many of them who have got enough conscience to make them miserable and disagreeable, but not enough to make them honestly quit their positions. They have enough conscience to make them feel uncomfortable, but not enough to force them to act bravely for what they believe. Who wants to have a conscience that will only be quiet by being drugged? Trifling with conscience, though common enough, is one of the most deadly sins against a man’s self, of which he can be guilty.”—I am, etc.,

VIGILANS.

EDINBURGH, 18th March, 1889.