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**Explanatory Criticism of the Declaratory  
Act.**

THE third section of the Declaratory Act now presents itself for our consideration. It is couched in the following terms:—

“III.—That this Church disclaims intolerant or persecuting principles, and does not consider her office-bearers, in subscribing the Confession, committed to any principles inconsistent with liberty of conscience and the right of private judgment.”

This clause was framed, we suppose, with reference to the relation between the Civil Magistrate and Christ's Church, but as neither the name nor office of the former is once mentioned, the clause may be taken in its most general application. The consequences of this we shall show further on. In the meantime let us consider the bearings of the clause upon the powers of the civil magistrate. The language in which the clause is expressed reminds us of an Act passed by the Church in 1846. The Free Church at that time thought it necessary, in view of the tyrannical claims put forth by the State, and for which some even adduced the support of the Confession of Faith, that something should be said on intolerance and liberty of conscience in the preamble to the formula to be signed by office-bearers. It was therefore stated that “the General Assembly think it right to declare that, while *the Church firmly maintains the same scriptural principles as to the duties of nations and their rulers in reference to true religion and the Church of Christ for which she has hitherto contended*, she disclaims intolerant or persecuting principles, and does not regard her Confession of Faith, or any portion thereof, when fairly interpreted, as favouring intolerance or persecution, or consider that her office-bearers, by subscribing it, profess any principles inconsistent with liberty of conscience and the right of private judgment.” In this statement the Church, while disclaiming intolerant principles, and freeing the Confession from the false charge of favouring such, takes the utmost care to express her firm maintenance of “the same scriptural principles as to the duties of nations and their rulers in reference to true religion and the Church of Christ for which she has hitherto contended.” On the other hand, the Free Church of 1892 in this clause of her

Declaratory Act, while using somewhat similar language about intolerance and liberty of conscience, makes no reservation at all in favour of the duties of nations and rulers to the Church of Christ. It is quite evident, therefore, that the Church here tacitly abandons the principle of national religion, one of the most important principles in her constitution. It also appears, from the terms used, that she reckons this principle an intolerant one, and is of the same mind with the Voluntaries who have always affirmed that the establishment of the Church of Christ is an act of intolerance.

To prove that the principle of national religion, so far from being one that ought to be renounced, is a principle that is clearly revealed and insisted upon in Scripture, we need simply refer our readers to the many passages that speak of God's sovereignty over the nations and their corresponding duties of allegiance and service to Him. In Psalm ii. 7-12, the Father promises the Son the uttermost parts of the earth for His possession, and thus gives Christ, as mediator, dominion over the nations of the earth. As a suitable application of this doctrine to the conduct of men, the injunction is added, "Be wise now therefore, O ye kings, be instructed, ye judges of the earth. Serve the Lord with fear."

The rulers of the world are here addressed not as mere units of the human race, but as endowed with certain offices, and, therefore, the obligation is imposed upon them of serving the Lord in wisdom and fear in their public as well as their private capacity. Again, in Psalm lxxii. we have many promises and predictions of Christ's reign over the nations, "Yea, all kings shall fall down before him: all nations shall serve him" (verse 11). If they are, therefore, to serve Him in the ways that He has appointed, it is manifest they must have respect to His revealed will. What then does the Word of God say in regard to the relation of rulers to the Church of Christ? It speaks of it as follows: "Kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and queens thy nursing mothers."—(Isaiah xlix. 23.) Now this relation of things is not spoken of as a bare event foreordained, and certain of accomplishment, nor as a future calamity to the Church of Christ. Far from it; it is promised and foretold as a prominent element in the prosperity of the Church and of Christ's cause in times when the divine standard of relationship between Church and State will be fully reproduced and exemplified in the world. Again, in Isaiah lx. 9-12, it is declared that when the Gentiles shall be gathered in, their kings shall minister unto the Church, and the solemn warning is given to nations that neglect this important duty; "the nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish; yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted." The word "thee" here refers to the Church, and the dire consequences of neglecting to acknowledge and support her are put on record as a lesson to coming generations. Some are ready to say that such passages only apply to the Jewish people under the old economy, but the merest

glance at those now quoted, shews that they unmistakeably refer to Gentile nations in Gospel times. In the New Testament, also, we have much that supports the doctrine of national acknowledgment of Christ and His Church. Christ himself after His resurrection assured His disciples that all that was spoken of Him "in the law of Moses, in the Prophets, and in the Psalms" must be fulfilled. These passages, therefore, already adduced must be fulfilled. The persons who labour to prevent their fulfilment by declaring that the establishment of Christ's Church is the fruit of intolerance, are running contrary to the purposes and promises of God, and will find this to be so one day to their shame and confusion. We find further, that Christ exhorted His disciples "to baptise all nations" which clearly means that His disciples were to have respect to the evangelisation not simply of individuals, but of nations. If, therefore, nations are to be baptised in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, does not that prove that nations as such are expected to give allegiance to God and His Son Jesus Christ? If so, it is their incumbent duty to acknowledge and support Christ's truth and Church in the world. Other passages may be quoted, such as Philippians ii. 5-11, in which it is said that "at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father," and Colossians i. 16, where we are told that by the Son "were all things created . . . whether they be thrones or dominions, or principalities or powers; all things were created by him and for him." These passages, we think, clearly set forth the subjection, not only of individuals but of all nations to Jesus Christ, both as Creator and Redeemer. We have made quotations sufficient to indicate that the principle of a national acknowledgment of Christ and His Church is highly Scriptural and is one with which the honour due to Christ and the prosperity of His Church are intimately associated.

It might also be added that this principle is a highly reasonable one. Is Christ not to be acknowledged by corporate bodies as well as private individuals? If not, then an open door is given to infidelity and atheism. A man may be a good Christian at home, but when he appears in society he must forget God, and ignore His cause. It will be clearly seen that when the Voluntary principle is carried to its logical issue it leads not merely to the disestablishment of Churches, but to national forgetfulness of God; in a word, to national atheism. The same principle leads, as already hinted, to social atheism. When the religious bonds which alone can bind society firmly together are broken, disorder and anarchy must be the disastrous result. On the other hand, the establishment of Christ's Church is a divinely appointed means of cementing together society in friendly union as well as for bearing national testimony to the being, government, and claims of God.

A word or two as to objections. It is objected by Voluntaries that Christ says, "My kingdom is not of this world (John xviii. 36).

Now, these words refer to Christ's immediate purpose in His estate of humiliation. He did not come to set up a temporal or earthly kingdom, nor to advance His cause by the sword. While, however, he did not then set up an earthly kingdom, nor does yet advance the interests of His cause by carnal weapons, He still claims to be "the Prince of the kings of the earth" (Rev. i. 5). As Prince and King He claims the allegiance of all earthly potentates. We are also told that "there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and His Christ, and He shall reign for ever and ever." One could hardly wish for a clearer and more vivid intimation of the duties of nations to Christ, and of their ultimate subjection to Him. Another objection that is raised to the principle of national religion springs from belief in what is called *religious equality*. This is a dangerous phrase. We know of no respect at all in which there can be said to be equality amongst religions. All religions differ in some respect from one another. The meaning, however, appears to be that all religions should be regarded as on an equality by the State. The consequence of this is that the State is no more bound to acknowledge Christ than Antichrist, Mohammed, or Buddha. That such a principle should have any footing in a country that has enjoyed the light of Christianity is solemn to contemplate. It is, nevertheless, on this principle that atheists, infidels, and papists are admitted into the Government of this country, and it is on the same principle that the clause of the Declaratory Act under consideration has been framed.

It is evident that the Free Church, by relegating the principle of national religion, as is done in this Act, to the class of intolerant or persecuting principles, clearly sells her birthright, for she claims in her public documents to be the Church of Scotland Free. She is also prepared to give into the hands of its enemies the last remnant of the memorable Reformation by doing, as she has done for a number of years, her utmost to overthrow the present Established Church of Scotland. We have no sympathy with the corruptions of that Church; but we hold that it is our bounden duty to maintain the connection between Church and State to the last. There is no fear, however, for the ultimate triumph of the principle of national religion, for just as surely as Christ will subdue all things under His feet so will the kingdoms become His. In conclusion, we observe that the terms of this clause are such that liberty is given to all to accept or reject what doctrines in the Confession they please. For it is said, the Church "does not consider her office-bearers, in subscribing the Confession, committed to any principles inconsistent with liberty of conscience, and the right of private judgment." No exclusive reference is made to the doctrine of the civil magistrate. It is, therefore, clear that all who care to cherish any views divergent from the Confession may have full liberty to do so.

## A Sermon

BY THE REV. JONATHAN RANKEN ANDERSON.

PREACHED IN KIRKFIELD CHURCH, GLASGOW, 6th DECEMBER, 1835.

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*"My soul cleaveth unto the dust: quicken thou me according to thy word."*—PSALM cxix. 25.  
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THE whole design and tendency of the dispensation of grace administered by the Divine Redeemer is to deliver men from the earthliness in which by nature they are immersed, and to elevate them to the knowledge, and love, and enjoyment of objects that are pure and spiritual. And wherever this dispensation takes effect by the powerful application of the Holy Spirit, this design is, in a greater or less degree, accomplished. The soul is loosened from its attachment to the things which are seen and temporal, and set upon the pursuit of those which are unseen and eternal. But the tendency of the dispensation of grace thus displayed is counteracted by a strong opposing force in the influence of corruption within, and temptation without. The flesh, or old nature, though crucified, is not destroyed, and therefore does it withstand and retard the operation of the gracious principles implanted by the Holy Ghost, and prevent those who are the subjects of them from advancing in spirituality of mind so rapidly as they otherwise might do: "The flesh lusteth against the spirit . . . so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." The world comes to the aid of this internal enemy of a believer's progress, and by a thousand arts endeavours to divert him from the things that are heavenly, and to entangle him with those that are earthly. The consequence of the united influence of these hostile powers is to bring the servant of God into the state described by the psalmist in the words of the text: "My soul cleaveth unto the dust," and to constrain him to offer the prayer which he presented, "Quicken thou me according to thy word."

I.—The first thing which offers itself to our consideration in the text is the state of a believer as set forth by the expression of the psalmist, "My soul cleaveth unto the dust." We say the state of a believer, for it is to him, and to him only, the description will apply. It is no doubt true that the soul of every child of Adam cleaves by nature to the dust, but this, instead of being to the unregenerate a ground of complaint, is sometimes a ground of boasting, and always a matter of indifference. "For many walk," says the apostle, "of whom I have told you often . . . that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ, whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things." But we need only to read the words of the text, or to look at the experience of a true believer to be satisfied that with him it is far otherwise. When his soul cleaves to the

dust he is grieved and ashamed, nor can he get rest and comfort until his prayer is answered, and he is quickened according to the Divine Word. Now, when may it be said that the soul of a true believer cleaves to the dust. I answer—

1.—When he has not a vivid perception of Divine things. The effect which immediately follows the quickening act of the Holy Spirit in regeneration is a discovery of the importance and excellence of eternal realities. "For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." When this discovery is first made, the soul is filled with astonishment and awe, and feels as if it could never again think of anything but the objects which now engross its thoughts. But it knows not that there are shut up within its dark recesses a huge mass of carnality and sin, which, like clouds that obscure the brightness of the sun, may rise up, and envelop in a temporary gloom the whole of the spiritual firmament. The consequence is that when the visions which then engage and gladden his heart pass away, when the glory of the Divine character, as it is exhibited in the person of the only-begotten and incarnate Son of God, disappears, when the fulness, and preciousness, and freeness of the great salvation are hid from his view, the believer concludes that his former experience was all a dream, and that he is still wrapped in the darkness of his natural condition. He has recourse to the means which were formerly blessed for shedding the light of life upon his benighted understanding, but he may, for a season, fail to derive any benefit from them. He reads the Holy Scriptures, but they are as a sealed book to him. He bends the knee in prayer, but he enjoys neither light nor liberty. He repairs to the house of God, but it is like the temple without the Shekinah. The outward furniture is there, but the glory has departed. In the bitterness of his spirit he may say, "Oh that it were with me as in months past, when the candle of the Lord shined upon my head, and when by his light I walked through darkness."

But this is not all. The soul must be occupied with something, and if there be not a clear and impressive apprehension of spiritual objects, those of the world rush in and fill the thoughts. The soul, even after it has been quickened and renewed, tends strongly to the dust—that is to the mean and perishable objects of time: for well may they be called dust, which cannot be touched without defilement, which, as compared with eternal things, are absolutely worthless, and which even perish with the using. When the Spirit brings near the glory of Christ and His salvation, and when the mind is closely occupied in the contemplation of Him, this tendency is sensibly checked, and for a short time may not greatly annoy the child of God. But like the tide it never rests, and therefore, though it has been made to ebb by the force of heavenly things, it forthwith begins to flow, and silently and secretly does it advance till the spiritual

perceptions of the believer are weakened, and the soul is deluged with vain imaginations. The tendency of the soul to the dust then distinctly shows itself. For when the believer would bring back his wandering thoughts to Christ, their proper object, he finds that they refuse to yield and cling to the world, and the things of the world. He opens the Word of God, but he scarcely knows what he reads, and while he seems to dwell on its sacred truths, he finds that his thoughts are roaming on the mountains of vanity. He tries to get access to the throne of grace, but he is like a bird that has lost its wings, he cannot fly. He comes to public ordinances, but amidst the stillness and solemnity of the house of prayer, his mind is filled with the bustle and confusion of the world. The attempts he makes again to realise the glorious objects that once engrossed his thoughts are often so fruitless that he is ready to give up in despair. He hears his Lord remonstrating with him, "How long shall thy vain thoughts lodge within thee?" But notwithstanding all his efforts to banish them from his mind he has still to complain, "My soul cleaveth unto the dust."

2.—The soul of a true believer cleaves unto the dust when it does not act a vigorous faith on the things of God. By the grace of faith, wrought in the heart through the power of the Spirit, is the soul first lifted above the dust, and brought into contact with the heavenly world. For so long as unbelief continues to hold dominion over the soul, time is everything, and eternity nothing. And as it is by the exercise of faith that the soul first rises from earth to heaven, so just in proportion to the vigour of its actings is the heavenly world brought nigh. "We walk," says the apostle, "by faith, not by sight, and faith is the evidence of things not seen, the substance of things hoped for." Now there are seasons when this important grace is very strong and lively, and then the believer has as clear a conviction and as firm a persuasion of all which the Word sets before him, as if he saw them with his bodily eyes. Of Moses, who was under the influence of this principle, it is said, "he endured as seeing him who is invisible." "For our light affliction," says the apostle, in the same spirit, "which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding even an eternal weight of glory, while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen, for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal." The believer in these cases has the dust of the world beneath his feet; he sees and admires a glory which completely eclipses the glory of earthly kingdoms. His soul dwells on objects that are grand in their nature, as they are durable in their existence. But, brethren, faith is not always in such lively exercise, it frequently grows languid and feeble, and then the soul instead of rising to the realising contemplation of heavenly things, cleaves to those that are earthly. The believer for the time feels and acts as if the present were the only state of things, at least as if it were the most important, and instead of seeking, as he generally does and

as he always ought to do, first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, he seeks first what he shall eat, and what he shall drink, and wherewith he shall be clothed. When he acts faith in the promise he can trust to God for the welfare of himself and his family, for the continuance of active employment, for the enjoyment of health and strength, and every other thing needful for him. But when his soul cleaves to the dust, he is careful and troubled about many things, he takes the management of his affairs into his own hands, he trembles with anxiety for the success of favourite schemes, he is cast down and enervated by what appears to blast his hopes. Nor is it always that he can at once escape from this frame of mind. When he would confide in his covenant God, when he would rest in the Divine Redeemer, when he would look forward to his heavenly home, he finds that they are like distant objects, indistinctly seen, and lightly felt. His soul continues to adhere to the dust, and under a felt conviction of his abasement and his insufficiency to rise, he exclaims, "My soul cleaveth unto the dust."

3.—The soul of a believer may be said to cleave to the dust when he does not realise his interest in the blessings of the new covenant. The things of God are in themselves infinitely worthy of a believer's attention, and in their evidence fitted to impart the strongest confidence to his heart. But he has a still closer relation to them than what arises from their truth and excellence. In Christ Jesus, and by virtue of His mediatorial work, they are His possession, His portion. "We have received," says the apostle, "not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God, that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God." And when he walks in the Spirit, when he acts faith in the word of promise, when he sees Divine realities in Divine light, he feels that he has the deepest interest in all which he contemplates and admires. By this means he anticipates, in a measure, the visions of future glory, and enjoys a foretaste of eternal blessedness. "Whom, having not seen ye love, in whom, though now ye see Him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of glory." What Thomas exclaimed on seeing his Lord, is represented as being realised by many through the power of faith. "My Lord and my God," said the delighted apostle. Jesus answered "because thou hast seen, thou hast believed, blessed are they who have not seen, and yet have believed." Now, it generally happens, that when the soul cannot rise to this appropriating exercise of faith, it cleaves to the dust. We say, *generally*, for we are aware there are numerous instances to the contrary. The things of time and sense take such hold of the affections, that they are incapacitated from rising to the things that are above where Christ sitteth, so as to embrace and rest in them as their own. The influence of earthly objects may not be so great as to prevent the believer from fixing his thoughts upon those that are heavenly, or to preclude his believing in their reality



and certainty. And yet, it may not admit of the high act of faith by which the soul can call them all its own. We hence find, that when the believer is entangled with the cares of this life, when his soul has been deadened by the influence of the world, he speaks of himself in terms of self-reproach and self-abasement, and dares not venture to use the exulting language which he employs when he is in a spiritual frame of mind. "I am cast out of thy sight," says Jonah, "yet will I look again toward thy holy temple." "I have gone astray like a lost sheep," says the Psalmist, "seek thy servant, for I do not forget thy commandments." "Turn thou me," says Ephraim, "and I shall be turned, for thou art the Lord my God." How different this from the language used by the saints when faith is strong and hope triumphant. "Whom have I in heaven but thee, and there is none in all the earth whom I desire besides thee: my heart and flesh faileth, but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever." "My soul shall rejoice in the Lord, behold God is my salvation, I will trust and not be afraid, for the Lord Jehovah is my strength and my song, he also is become my salvation."

4.—The soul of a believer may be said to cleave unto the dust when he does not actually enjoy the blessings of the new covenant, in the measure in which they are dispensed in the present state. The spiritual world is full of objects that are fitted to solace and satisfy the heart, and it is the will of God that believers enjoy the good thus provided for them. When they are in a right frame of spirit they accordingly enter into the possession of the good things of God's house, they obtain the peace which passeth understanding, and the joy with which a stranger doth not intermeddle. But their souls do often cleave unto the dust, and then, instead of saying, "Lord, lift upon us the light of thy countenance," they for a season, and to a certain extent, join in the silly cry of the world, "Who will shew us good?"

By the insidious influence of worldly joys, their taste for those which are heavenly may be blunted, their desire after them enfeebled, and their delight in them interrupted. The very men who once seemed to dwell in the third heavens, to eat of the hidden manna, and to drink of the rivers of pleasures that are at God's right hand, and who appeared to be so taken up with these celestial dainties, as utterly to despise the choicest of this world's entertainments, may be so abased and corrupted, that they shall be seen feeding greedily upon the husks of earthly pleasure. How deeply, brethren, did David fall, how strongly did his soul cleave to the dust, when, instead of being ravished with the heart-stirring themes to which he was wont to tune his harp, he wallowed in sensuality and crime! And even when the believer awakes from his delusive dream, and feels that he has been hunting a shadow and neglecting the substance, and when he sets himself to return to his former joys, he finds that his soul sticks fast to earthly things, and for many a long day may he experience

the bitter fruits of his folly in comparative darkness and discomfort. When believers forsake the fountain of living waters, they are usually compelled to swallow many a bitter draught before they get back to it. The psalmist, after his grievous sin, prays, "Make me to hear joy and gladness that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice."

II.—The second point in the text which claims our notice is the prayer of the psalmist, "Quicken thou me, according to thy word." We must here consider the petition he offers, and the plea by which he supports it. The petition is, "Quicken me."

1.—The psalmist was sensible of the state he was in, which no natural man can be, for while he is earthly and of the earth, he is dead in sin and the uncircumcision of his flesh, and therefore, like the church in Laodiceæ, he often imagines that he is rich and increased with goods, and has need of nothing, while in fact he is poor, and miserable, and wretched, and blind, and naked. But in the psalmist, and in every true believer, there is a principle of spiritual life, and however it may for a season be overborne and depressed, yet it at last shows itself in the conviction, the real and practical conviction, which he entertains of his carnal condition. The psalmist, in the exercise of this principle, felt and knew that his soul cleaved to the dust. And as he was sensible of it, so he was free to acknowledge it. The confession, indeed, was very mortifying, as every confession of sin is. For how was it that his soul had sunk into this state. Not surely because there was not power in God to support him, or grace to attract him, or fulness to bless him, or beauty to engage his admiration. No; but because he had forsaken his covenant God, had listened to the voice of the tempter, had yielded to the power of corruption, and had given way before the world which he had professed to renounce. But painful and humiliating as the confession was, he scrupled not to make it, for well did he know that if he covered his sin, whether of heart or of life, whether of nature or of practice, he could not prosper. Whereas, if he confessed and forsook his sin, he might obtain mercy. "I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord, and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin." He did not, however, content himself with a mere acknowledgment of his depravity in that his soul cleaved unto the dust, but he entreats that it might be effectually subdued: "Quicken me according to thy word."

When the soul of a believer cleaves unto the dust, it is in what is usually called a dead state, for although the vital principle be not extinct, yet its power is cramped, and its influence checked, so that the soul, as compared with what it might be, and what it ought to be, is dead. We thus see how it is that the psalmist entreats that the Lord would quicken him. For, as the work of grace begins with an act of quickening, and the production thereby of the principle of spiritual life, so is it carried on, revived, and matured by a similar operation. The true believer

is taught the way in which the Lord begins and carries forward His work. He knows that whether in the commencement or progress of the divine life, He acts upon the springs of thought and affection, and thus regenerates the soul which is dead, and revives the soul that has been decaying. The natural man may acknowledge that there is much amiss in his temper and conduct, and may wish that the pruning knife were applied to them to lop them off; but he overlooks altogether the root of the evil in the corrupt state of his nature. Were he therefore to make his case the subject of prayer, he would ask that vain thoughts might be banished from his mind, that vicious habits might be reformed in his life, but as to the quickening of his soul, it never once occurs to him as at all necessary. The true believer proceeds in a very different manner. He is led to trace his backsliding, his worldly-mindedness, his unprofitableness to the decay of the vital principle implanted in his soul, and therefore, like the psalmist, he prays, "Quicken me."

In this prayer the psalmist desires that the Lord would put forth the power of His almighty arm in giving new life and energy to the inner man, that He would raise up what is drooping, stimulate what is languid, and strengthen what is feeble. We cannot describe, because we cannot comprehend, how it is that the Lord acts upon the soul in fulfilling this petition, but we know, and are assured that He does act upon it in His mighty power. The apostle prays for the Ephesians that they might know "what was the exceeding greatness of his power toward them who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead." But the effect of the forthputting of this power is to raise the soul from the dust, to free it from the entanglements of earth, to restore to it the light, and liberty, and comfort of the children of God. "Thou which has showed me great and sore troubles shalt quicken me again, and shalt bring me up again from the depths of the earth. Thou shalt increase my greatness, and comfort me on every side."

In this short petition will be found all which he needed, because all which is opposed to the state of carnality into which he had sunk. For how was it that he was to recover his vivid perception of Divine things, to return to the vigorous actings of faith in them, to realize anew his interest in them, and once more to draw refreshment and satisfaction from them? It was by the principle of grace which had been implanted in his soul receiving new life and activity. How is it, brethren, that darkness is to be dissipated, but by the return of the light of the Sun of Righteousness? How is it that unbelief is to be subdued, but by faith putting forth greater power and vigour? How is it that earthly things are to be made to sink into their native insignificance, but by those that are heavenly appearing in their proper greatness and glory? Now, the result of Divine quickening is to bring the soul

into suitable exercise towards Christ and his kingdom, and then it no longer cleaves to the dust, but mounts up with wings as an eagle; it runs and is not weary, it walks and is not faint.

We are not, however, to conceive of this act of Divine power in quickening the soul as put forth absolutely, but with respect to the covenant, and in connection with Christ Jesus, the Covenant Head. "But God, who is rich in mercy," says the apostle, "for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." The souls of believers were federally quickened with Christ, when He was raised from the dead, for just as He then lived to die no more, so the title to life was made sure to all His seed, so sure that they never could be brought into condemnation. But they also are actually quickened with Him, when united to Him by the power of the Holy Ghost they become partakers of His life-giving virtue, and because He lives in the fulness of grace, they ever live, according to the measure of His gift. "I live," says Paul, "yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." And as it is in union to Christ that the soul is at first made alive to God, so is it in communion with Him that it is restored to activity, when, through the power of corruption, it has cleaved unto the dust. Of this mystery the psalmist and other saints of the old economy were not ignorant. We may argue this from the means which they employed to obtain quickening to their souls. For prayer was offered by them with a distinct reference to the tabernacle or temple, and to the institutions of their ceremonial worship, all which prefigured the Mediator, Christ Jesus, through whom prayer is now offered, and in whom quickening grace is to be found: "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly."

The agent by whom the act of quickening is directly performed is the Holy Ghost, sent of the Father through His Son, Christ Jesus. Without His agency the soul never can be raised from the death in sin in which by nature it lies. For "except a man be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." But His work does not stop here. The life which He implants He habitually maintains, and when it has grown languid and inactive, he revives and quickens it. "I will be as the dew unto Israel"—a beautiful and significant emblem of the Holy Spirit. "He shall grow as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon." But what is it that immediately precedes this gracious promise? "I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely: for mine anger is turned away from him." From which it evidently appears that it is the especial work of the Spirit to quicken those who have backslidden, or, in the language of the text, whose souls cleave unto the dust. And what says the psalmist after his grievous fall in the matter of Uriah? "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.

Cast me not away from thy presence, and take not thy Holy Spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation, and uphold me with thy free spirit." We must thus consider the prayer of the text, as presented to and answered by the God of salvation, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

2.—We have now only to glance at the plea by which the prayer is supported: "Quicken me according to thy word." The Word of God, in its most comprehensive sense, may be said to be an expression of the mind of God in the covenant, made with, and ratified by, the blood of His Son, Christ Jesus. In this view it furnished the psalmist with a valid and very powerful plea in offering up the petition, "Quicken me," for the blessing which he thus craved was in entire accordance with its whole spirit and design. Why was it, brethren, that the covenant of redemption was framed at all, but that God might glorify Himself, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, in the quickening of those who were dead in trespasses and sins? Why was it that in this covenant the glorious Three undertook distinct parts of redemption work, but that the purpose of giving life to men might be revealed, executed, and applied? Why was it that the constitution and provisions of this covenant were committed to writing in the inspired record, but that, through the power of God, the Word might be effectual in quickening the spiritually dead? Why was it that a standing ministry was appointed for the opening up of this Word, but that those who are quickened might be preserved, and built up, and perfected in the Divine life?

The psalmist, it is true, had but a small portion of the Divine Word, and that involved in comparative obscurity, but brethren, in that portion, small as it was in size, and dim as it was in light, the covenant of mercy was substantially revealed, and therefore it was that the psalmist laid hold of it with a vigorous faith, and pressed it with an importunate earnestness. The very first sentence in the revelation of mercy contained the whole of the covenant in embryo. "The seed of the woman shall bruise the head of the serpent." And, therefore, if the psalmist had possessed nothing more than this he might, with perfect confidence, have said, "Quicken me according to thy word." For while, to the eye of human reason, there is nought in that first promise which has even the resemblance of a remedy for a soul that cleaves to the dust, to the eye of faith there is the glorious remedy which it took 4000 years to develop, and the whole of the Scriptures to describe. The faith of Divine operation has in it a holy ingenuity and a strong penetration, and thus it is that in a brief sentence, sometimes in a single word, it discovers a world of light, of grace, and of blessedness. For, brethren, faith has for its direct object the blessed Redeemer, and so strong is the attraction which He possesses, that even when out of sight, faith discovers His presence, and realises His influence, like the needle, which requires not to be brought within

sight of the magnet to turn itself towards it, let it only be placed within the sphere of its influence, and it will tell at once that the magnet is there. In like manner, true faith embraces Christ wherever He is, be He revealed in a type, or shrouded in a ceremony, or set forth in a dark prophecy. And when faith recognises Christ it recognises Him as the life of the soul, He who has life in Himself, who has procured life for His people by His death, who offers life to them by the Word of the truth of the gospel, who imparts, maintains, and perfects life by the power of the Holy Spirit. Now, as the Word of God sets forth the covenant, and Christ-the Covenant Head, through whom, and by whom, quickening grace is imparted to believers, the psalmist might warrantably pray, "Quicken me according to thy word."

In this language he may also have respect to the circumstance that it is by the Word as an instrument that the Lord quickens the soul, whether at first in regeneration, or subsequently in restoration from backslidings. As to the former, the apostle distinctly teaches that "Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first fruits of his creatures," and as to the latter, the psalmist himself acknowledges, "This is my comfort in my affliction, for thy word hath quickened me." And does not the experience of every believer accord with this statement? For when their souls cleave to the dust, through the influence of worldly cares and worldly employments, they have often been quickened by the reading or hearing of the Word of God. "I will never forget thy precepts," says the psalmist, "for with them thou hast quickened me."

*Application.*—I. Are there any of you, brethren, who say with the psalmist, Our souls cleave unto the dust, who feel that vain thoughts fill and distract your hearts, that worldly cares intrude into your most sacred exercises; and that, when you would rise to the contemplation and enjoyment of heavenly things, you are entangled and engrossed with those that are earthly? We beseech of you not to rest in this state. Consider from whence you have fallen, and how aggravated is the guilt you have incurred. Be assured that the fault is all on your side; if your minds have not been assailed and corrupted by outward objects, they have been ensnared and oppressed by indwelling sin: "Your iniquities have hid his face from you, that he will not hear." With a conviction of your carnality and guilt hasten to the throne of mercy, and tell to Him who sits upon it what you have often said to yourself, and to your companions, "My soul cleaveth unto the dust." But do not rest at this, proceed to offer the prayer of the psalmist, "Quicken me." Seek from him a cure as radical as is your disease. Be not content with anything short of the subjugation, and in due time the total destruction, of that which has so often made your soul cleave to the dust. And lay hold of the plea which the psalmist made use of, and urge it with unwearied importunity, "Quicken me according to thy word."

The word of God, the tenor of the covenant, the mediation of Christ, the agency of the Spirit, the invitations, the promises, the very commands of the gospel may all be pressed into your service. For each and all of them tend to one point, the quickening of the dead, the restoration of the fallen, the recovery of the diseased. Do we require to use arguments to induce you thus to proceed? Oh think, brethren, of the degradation and misery of cleaving to the dust, as compared with a state of enlargement and comfort. "The joy of the Lord is your strength." Be instant, therefore, in prayer, that he would restore your souls and make you to walk in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake.

2. But some may say, our souls do indeed cleave to the dust, and we have confessed, and prayed, and entreated, but we are as dead as ever we were, yea, if there be any difference, we are worse. I daresay you sometimes think you will be obliged to give up in despair. But is it so, that the Lord hath forgotten to be gracious, that His word fails for ever? It cannot be. Perhaps you have been asking Him to quicken you, not according to His Word, but merely according to your desires, and views, and intentions. And no wonder that you have been unsuccessful. Go back to the mercy-seat and take some word with you, it matters not what it be, if Christ, the Quickener, be in it, with deep humility, yet with holy confidence plead it before the Hearer of Prayer, and sure we are you shall not need to wait long for an answer. He never did, and never will say to any of Jacob's seed, "Seek ye my face in vain."

3. We must not forget you, my hearers, whose souls are immersed in the dust, and yet you know it not, and lament it not. We would entreat you to consider what is the judgment which God pronounces upon your possessions and enjoyments. They are but dust, your talents, your occupations, your property, your wealth, make of them what you may, they are but dust. And how degraded must your souls be when they cleave to a thing so vile and worthless, and perishable! Like the offspring of the old serpent, the devil, you may eat dust now, and find it perhaps very grateful to your sordid and carnal hearts, but will you be able to carry this wretched fare to hell with you? No, poor as it is, you must leave it behind you. And what will become of it? What will become of your possessions, your wealth, your honours? We cannot tell. Perhaps they may be employed to keep up the reign of wickedness in this apostate world. But what will become of you? As you have grovelled with the devil among dust here, so must you be consumed in the fire prepared for him and his angels hereafter. Oh, that you, too, were roused to hasten to the throne of grace, that you were persuaded to take with you words, and turn unto the Lord, saying, "Take away all iniquity and receive us graciously." For laying hold upon Christ, the Alpha and Omega of the Word, you may warrantably say, "My soul cleaveth unto the dust, quicken thou me according to thy word."

## Diary of the late William Sinclair of Wick.

*(Continued from page 222.)*

NOVEMBER 8th, 1845.—I have just been looking over this book, and I think it might be very useful for me to write occasionally, for I had forgotten many things that are now brought to my recollection. We lost our retentive memories in the Fall, and now we require to take a little trouble to remember. We must earn our bread by the sweat of our brow. I have been endeavouring to acquire a knowledge of the Latin language for some time back, with Mr. George Bain, teacher. As to spiritual matters, I have been moving on pretty easily these few weeks bygone. I have nothing uncommon to record. The Sabbath School teachers meet for prayer every Sabbath evening. I need to prepare for to-morrow, it being the last Sabbath that I will be in the Sabbath School before the communion. 27th.—I have made so many resolutions, and broken them, concerning my writing, that I am beginning to think it useless to make any more. Yet I know I would enjoy looking over it in time to come. I am at present very busy at Latin. I am greatly at a loss to know whether it is my duty or not to be spending time with it. I am living under great guilt of conscience from several causes. I forget sufficiently to carry my profession into my business, also am too familiar with careless people, and in the habit of speaking so abominably light and frivolous, lacking that gravity, etc., Paul recommends young men to have. I see these and a great many more things to be wrong, and yet I do not use the means appointed for overcoming these sins, to wit—prayer, fasting, reading, and meditation, which I have always found sufficient, in a measure, so long as I continued to exercise them. I have been trying to serve two masters, and have been thinking to enjoy worldly society, when the command is “Come out from among them, and be ye separate.” A true Christian professing to have found a new life and a new way must not find his fellowship among those who care for none of these things. They cannot walk together, they are not agreed. I have found my desire for spiritual things getting very weak, and the beginning of it was, feasting with formal professors. I now find there are no opportunities coming in my way of doing good. In the Sabbath School I am not even interesting, as I am not acquiring any new light on the Scriptures. Thus I am not only dishonouring God, grieving the Holy Ghost, and putting Christ to an open shame, but I am also the cause of injuring my class, and I may say, all others with whom I meet, whereas, had it been otherwise, what might have been the good effect upon my own soul and, who can tell, upon that of others also? O how long will I be at ease in Zion! For Thy name’s



sake awaken me, lest I sleep my sleep outright. Turn me, Lord, and I shall be turned, for Thou art my God. On Sabbath before last the Sacrament was dispensed here. I did not communicate in consequence of guilt in the aforementioned respects. Rev. Archibald Cook of Inverness, preached on Saturday, from "What think ye that he will not come to the feast?"

November, 1846.—I was sorry that one of our true ministers went to keep the Sacrament with one who is a minister only in name, one who minds earthly things, whose conversation is not in heaven. I do not consider it right that converted ministers should join with them whom they do not believe are sent by Christ, for they are not fellow labourers, but soul destroyers, being of their father, the devil. I do not believe God will take Satan's children to be His ambassadors to beseech men to be reconciled. It is quite against the Scriptures, and therefore I am persuaded they ought not to be countenanced in any manner of way. When ministers hold fellowship with them the congregation think they can do likewise. 26th.—On this day the fast has been kept before the Lord's Supper. Dr. Macdonald preached from Rom. iv. 1-3. Many of the Church gathered, and there was much fellowship in public and private. Many of the Lord's people meet at such times that otherwise would never see each other's faces in the flesh. Happy, indeed, are the people redeemed by the Lord.

Sandy Gair said many a sifting word if I could only record them. He said, "When Saul was at war with his enemies he made a vow that he would not eat till he gained the victory; but Jonathan ate of the honey and gained the victory. If we were eating of the honey of the promise we would get greater victories over our spiritual enemies, but we have more of the spirit of Saul than of Jonathan." He made also a good comparison between a bad watch and a bad heart as to how to repair them. "A man had a bad watch which would work now and stop next time, so he sent it to Inverness, but it was as bad as ever when it came back. He then tried it at Aberdeen and Edinburgh, but with no better speed. One day he opened it and discovered the maker's name and address on it. He at once sent it there and got it back in perfect order. Do this with your heart when none else will do, send it to the Maker."

December 3rd.—I met with a rhyme by Baxter that bears out what I was thinking of, so I will pen it for future perusal.

"A proud unhumbléd preacher is unmeet,  
To lay proud sinners humbled at Christ's feet;  
So are the blind to tell men what Christ saith,  
And faithless men to propagate the faith.  
The dead are unfit means to raise the dead,  
Or enemies to give the children bread;  
And utter strangers to the life to come  
Are not the best conductors to our home.  
They that yet never learned to live and die,  
How can they preach to others feelingly?  
Oh, if they should preach others to salvation,

Unhappy men to preach their own-damnation !  
 What statues or what hypocrites are they,  
 Who between sleep and wake do preach and pray,  
 As if they feared awakening the dead,  
 Or were but lighting sinners to their bed ;  
 Who speak of heaven and hell as on a stage,  
 And make the pulpit but a parrot's cage."

6th.—Think on these things. "Resist the devil and he will flee from you." "Grieve not the Holy Spirit." "Watch." "Occupy till I come." "Intercessor." Do not think you are out of the power of Satan though you may be in the company of pious people. Resolutions are often first broken in their company, and the poor creature is left with an accusing conscience in consequence of not resisting the devil as much when with them as when in carnal company. It was when in Christ's company that the devil entered into Judas. May the Lord help me to bear this ever in mind ! I am still busy with Latin and grammar. 10th.—I was reading lines by Flavel, written in 1691. As they are so suitable to my own experience, I will write them down.

"Then did the sunshine of Thy face,  
 And sweetest glimpses of Thy grace,  
 Like April showers and warming gleams,  
 Distil their dews, reflect their beams.  
 My dead affections then were green,  
 And hopeful buds were to be seen ;  
 Oh joyful days, thrice happy state,  
 Each place was Bethel, heaven's gate.  
 What sweet discourse, what heavenly talk,  
 While daily I did with Thee walk ;  
 Mine eyes o'erflow, my heart doth sink,  
 As oft upon those days I think.  
 For strangers now have come between  
 My God and me, and may be seen ;  
 For what is now, and what was then,  
 'Tis just as if I were two men.  
 My fragrant branches blasted be,  
 No fruits like those now can I see ;  
 Some canker worm lies at my root,  
 Which fades my leaves, destroys my fruit.  
 My soul is banished from Thy sight,  
 For this it mourneth day and night ;  
 Yet why dost thou desponding lie ?  
 Like Jonah, cast a backward eye,  
 That God who made the Spring at first,  
 When I was barren and accurst,  
 Can much more easily restore  
 My state to what it was before ;  
 A word or smile on my poor soul  
 Would make it perfect, sound and whole."

12th.—I had a letter from Hugh Stewart, Auchingills, faithful soldier. He served in the Queen's ranks, and by his loyalty to the King of Nations, he is bound to "fear God and honour the King," and right happily he does it. How perfectly suited to the good of nations is the code of laws given in the Bible, and where

could there be found a nobler, purer morality than that delivered by the Apostle Paul to the Romans, in the 12th and 13th chapters of his epistle? Hugh says, "I have no news to send you at present. You may be sure a man staying on a dry hard hill will not have much sap himself. It will take a sheepee with very sharp teeth to pick so much as will reach her stomach. But you that stay on the side of Carmel will be fat and full of sap. There is a report among us that Dr. Macdonald, Ferintosh, is very low and not expected to recover his health in this world. But he may say with Paul that he has fought a good fight. My dear William, have you summer or have you winter, or have you temptation? My advice to you is to 'watch and pray lest you enter into temptation.' If it is summer with you, beware of going to sleep. If it is winter, watch lest you say as much as, God is a liar, not acknowledging that it is of the Lord's mercies we are not consumed. If you have temptation, watch lest you enter, and pray how to escape the entering. The meaning of entering is yielding or consenting, for without yielding to temptation it is not your sin. 'Some say, I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Cephas, and I of Christ.' There seem to be four persons speaking here, and the four may be wrong, whatever their standing may be. But Paul comprehends all in this, Christ crucified in me, Christ formed in my soul the hope of glory. Many may be planted in Christ by profession, and not of one spirit with him. Do not think that I am firing blank shot now."

"Love to all friends. There are twelve families in Wick and Pulteney that I call the roll for every day. Remember me to all that love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity and truth."

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## Flower and Fruit Services.

THE decoration of churches and chapels with flowers and fruits of the earth, as expressive of thanksgiving to the Lord of the harvest, is becoming exceedingly popular; but the question that arises in the mind of the child of God is: Have such displays any countenance from the Word of God? It may be useful to examine the matter.

First, as to floral decorations in connection with divine worship. The only instance found in the Bible is in connection with the worship of Jupiter as recorded in Acts xiv. 13-17: "Then the priest of Jupiter, which was before their city, brought oxen and garlands unto the gates, and would have done sacrifice with the people. Which when the apostles Barnabas and Paul heard of, they rent their clothes and ran in among the people crying out and saying, 'Sirs, why do ye these things? We also are men of like passions with you, and preach unto you that ye should turn from these vanities unto the living God.' Thus we see that floral decorations in connection with divine worship distinctly belong to the heathen age.

The supreme deity, Jupiter, whom these heathens worshipped, was, according to mythology, the brother of Ceres, the goddess of corn, *alias* Demeter, Mother Earth; hence the garlands of flowers in connection with the worship of Jupiter, and as expressive of thanksgiving to him as lord of all. But what was the reply of the apostles Barnabas and Paul? We "preach unto you that ye should turn from these vanities unto the living God." The apostles thus turned the minds of these heathen from their religious worship with floral display to the living God who had given them "rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling their hearts with food and gladness." Thus were the minds of these heathen turned away from their mode of rendering thanksgiving to the harvest deities with dead and decaying flowers, and their attention directed to the living God as the source of every blessing, who naturally requires worship consistent with His nature. "God is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."

Secondly, as to the fruits of the earth being offered to God as expressive of thanksgiving, it is imagined by the advocates for such offerings that they are justified by Holy Scripture, as they regard them in the light of Jewish first fruits. They quote Deut. xxvi. 2: "Thou shalt take of the first of all the fruits of the earth which thou shalt bring of thy land, that the Lord thy God giveth thee, and shalt put it in a basket, and shalt go unto the place which the Lord thy God shall choose to place his name there." But any careful reader of this verse will see that such first fruits are commanded to be taken "unto the place which the Lord thy God shall choose to place his name there." This place could only be the Temple in Jerusalem. (2 Chron. vi. 20): "That thine eyes may be open upon this house day and night, upon the place whereof thou hast said thou wouldst put thy name there." Now, if the first part of this verse requires to be literally carried out to-day, why do not the pleaders for the presentation of first fruits literally carry out the latter part of the command and take their fruits to Jerusalem and present them in the temple there, if they can find it? Where is the consistency in attempting to carry out the first part of the regulations and omitting to fulfil the latter? Does not the verse teach us that, since there is no Jewish temple to receive the first fruits and no land of Canaan in possession of the Jews to yield the first fruits, such regulations belong to a dispensation which is past and gone?

Let us, however, go a step further back to the original command with regard to "first fruits." Turn to Exodus xxii. 29, 30: "Thou shalt not delay to offer the first of thy ripe fruits and of thy liquors: the first-born of thy sons shalt thou give unto me. Likewise shalt thou do with thine oxen and with thy sheep; seven days it shall be with his dam; on the eighth day thou shalt give it me." Thus we see that the original commands are not limited to the first of the ripe fruits, but Israel was also commanded to offer

the first of his liquors, that is, oil and wine, as produce of the land. In verse 30 we find a similar command concerning the oxen and the sheep, and this is equally as binding as the preceding verse, for it is introduced with the word "likewise." Hence the young of the oxen and the sheep were to leave their respective dams after seven days, and on the eighth day to be given to the Lord. Again, we ask, where is the consistency in attempting to obey the command with regard to the first of the fruits, and omitting as of no importance the equally binding regulations, and part and parcel of the same command, with regard to the first of the liquors and of the first of the cattle? Surely it is a great perversion of Holy Scripture to turn a place of worship into a horticultural show, alleging the divine institution of such a show, without at the same time making it an exhibition of oil and wine, and also of cattle. How different was the manner in which the Jews presented the first fruits of the harvest in the temple! Instead of the modern display at the harvest festival, one single sheaf was waved before the Lord on the morrow after the Passover Sabbath.—(Levit. xxiii. 10, 11). This was intended to be a type of the crucified and risen Christ, of whom the apostle declares: "Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the *first fruits* of them that hath slept." Is it not blasphemy when the type has been fulfilled in the risen Christ to copy from a Jewish ordinance with such a designed significance? Why not to-day go back to Judaism at once and offer a lamb, notwithstanding the fact that the Lamb of God has been offered once for all? In point of time the offering of imaginary first fruits at the modern harvest thanksgiving is entirely wrong, for such a service, being at the end of harvest, constitutes last fruits rather than first fruits.

If the people want to return to the Jewish methods of expressing harvest thanksgiving they should really keep the feast of tabernacles, which was the feast instituted by God to be observed when the Israelites had "gathered in the fruit of the land,"—(Leviticus xxiii. 39-42), and consistently, such Judaisers ought to dwell in booths or tents seven days. But the principle for which the martyr Stephen died decisively proves that the coming of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ was to put an end to all the Jewish rites. "This Jesus of Nazareth shall destroy this place and shall change the customs (rites) which Moses delivered us."—(Acts vii. 14.)

This is the truth enunciated in the New Testament, and fully argued out in the letter to the Hebrews, where it is shown that the whole of the Mosaic ritual was temporary and transitory until Christ should come. The sand-glass of time for these rites and ceremonies ran out its last grain when Christ appeared and finished His work, for He fulfilled the types in Himself, and inaugurated a new and higher dispensation which is entirely spiritual in its character.

The direct contrast between the old and new dispensations

may be seen in the twofold division of the Bible into the Old and New Testaments. With regard to the former, the ceremonies are distinctly described as "carnal ordinances" imposed on the worshipper "until the time of Reformation." But Christ being come, He inaugurated as "a new and living way," He has ratified by His blood a new covenant in which all blessings are secured by Himself, the surety, and He has revealed a new way of spiritual worship consistent with the character of the new dispensation.

In our Lord's conversation with the woman of Samaria He tolls the death-knell of the former state of things, and declares that "the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth; for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is (a) Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." Such a revealed regulation concerning worship repeals the former and settles the character of the new, allowing the would-be worshipper no other choice but that which the will of God has made; therefore all other worship not in harmony with the above principle, is will-worship. Consistent with this announcement no place of worship or building can claim a monopoly of the Divine Presence. In fact, in the New Testament no material building is ever called the house of God. This expression belongs exclusively to the spiritual people who only are called "the house of God," and where these living souls are gathered the presence of the Lord is vouchsafed "in the midst." Consistent with this fact the way of expressing thanksgiving can only be spiritual. "By him, therefore, let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God; continually, that is, the fruit of our lives, giving thanks to his name." The New Testament supplies no other regulations as to thanksgiving and to invent a way of our own outside the beaten track which God's saints have trod, and to improve upon "spiritual worship," is simply will-worship and a revival of the heathen manner of expressing thanks to the Giver of all. The only material things, as outward and visible signs instituted by Christ, are water and bread and wine, and to exceed these limitations is to proceed on a principle which is dangerous and capable of expansion *ad infinitum*, according to the eccentricities of man and the varieties of climate. Further, can it be doubted that the real decorations of "the house of God" are not the decaying fruits of a blighted earth, strangely inconsistent with the spiritual worship of the living God, but the "fruit that shall remain," and the sheaves of living souls patiently awaiting their removal to the heavenly garner? Meanwhile, "let us walk by faith, not by sight."—*The English Churchman*.

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COMMUNION SERVICES.—The Communion will (D.V.) be held in St. Jude's, Glasgow, on the second Sabbath of November, and in the Edinburgh congregation on the third Sabbath.

## Cuimhnich Uime sin cia Uaith a Thuit Thu, &c.

A CHUM aire luchd leughaidh thairuing a dhionnsaidh dilseachd na heaglaise aig am an dealachaidh, bheir sinn f'an comhair cia mur a dheilig Ard-Sheanadh na "Heaglaise Saoire" ri ministir a bha teagasg mhearachdan do'n t-sluagh. Chi sibh an t'eadar dhealachadh a tha eadar an ni a roinneadh aig an am sin, da bhliana an deigh an dealachaidh (1845) agus an doigh 's an do dheilig an Eaglais ri mearachdan Dr. Dods agus moran eile aig am bheil na beachdan ceudna bh'aige 'san. An aite, ann an dilseachd do dhanamaibh dhaoine, do dhfhirinn Dhe agus da ghloir, stad a chur air na teagasgan sin, agus an cur a mach as an Eaglais 's ann a roinn an Eaglais a Creud atharrachadh a chum 's gum biodh lan chothram aig 'na daoine sin an teagasgan sgriosail a sgaoileadh, le ughdaras na heaglaise, air feadh an t-sluaigh. Is uamhasach an ni bhi mealladh anama dhaoine le bhi cur rathad tearnaigh meallta f'an comhair; ach tha e nis ro-uamhasaiche bhi reubadh firinn Dhe, le bhi teagasg, a nise le ughdaras na heaglaise sin; gum bheil mearachdan anns a Bhiobull. Tha teagasgan an Achd-Mhinichaidh a toirt lan ughdaras to dhaoine na beachdan as mearachdaiche theagasg, is mo ni chall do dhanamaibh dhaoine, agus tha cur mo'r eusurram air firinn agus rathad tearnaigh Dhe anns an t-soisgeal, a bha riamh bho linn nan Abstol air an cumail mach as Eaglais Chriosd. Cha mhor gum bheil mearachd air son an do dhuing fianuisen Chriosd throimh an t-saoghal nach do dhfhosgail an t'achd ur so dorus dha. An aite, an dream a bha gabhail orra fein seasamh gu dileas air taobh na firinn, a bhi neochiontach anns an ni so, is ann a tha iad nis ciontaiche na cach; oir tha iad a feuchainn, cho math 'sa tha 'n an comas, an sluagh a chumail ceangailte ris na mearachdan so, agus ris an Eaglais a tha gan teagasg mar a creud, ged tha fhios aca gle mhath nach urrain iad dion a chuir air an fhirinn, no creud fhallainn, sgriobturail, fhagail 'n an deigh. Nan eireagh aon de dhfhianuishean an Athleasaichidh bho na mairbh, cha chreideadh e gum biodh daoine air an dalladh cho mor, 'us gum biodh iad a glaathaich ris an t-sluagh gu bheil an Eaglais an ni a bha i, nuair tha a teagasgan, cha mhor uile, air an tilgeadh bun bho 's ceann. Tha fhios, gle mhath, aig na daoine a tha ceangal sluaigh na Gaelteachd ris an Eaglais ur so, nach fag iad creud na heaglaise saoire aig a ghinealach a thig nan deigh; ach creud eile a roinneadh le Rainy agus leis a chuideachd a tha ga leantuinn—creud a tha cur nam breugan air Leabhar-Aidmheil a Chreideabh, agus, tre sin, air focal Dhe. Bheir sinn a nis a chuis a bha air beulabh an Ard-Sheanaigh ann an 1845 direach mar a tha sin ann am "Fianuis na Heaglaise Saoire":—"Choinnich an t-Ard-Sheanadh aig aon uair deug. Bha cuis ro-chudthromach mu'n coinneamh. Chaidh gearan a thoirt gu Cleir Ghlascho air

ministeir òg 's a' bhaile mhor sin, Mr. Scott, le cuid do luchd-dreuchd a' choimhthionail, gu'n robh e a' searmonachadh theagasg mhi-fhallain. Rannsaich a' chleir an gnothach, agus an deigh mòran saothrach agus foighidium, thug iad breth 's a' chuis—gu'n robh cuid do bheachdaibh, agus do theagasgaibh Mr. Scott. nach robh co-shinte ri firinn an fhocail. Thog esan a chuis chum an t-Seanaidh. Dhainguich an Seanadh breth na Cleire. Thog Mr. Scott a chuis an sin, gu breth an Ard-Sheanaidh. Thagair Mr. Scott a chuis fein gu dian, saothrachail, farsuing, ag oidhearpeachadh a dheanamh a mach gu'n robh poncan a theagaisg fein d' an dhfhuaireadh coire, a reir nan sgrìobtur. Thagair Cleir Ghlascho 'n a aghaidh, a' dearbhadh gu'n robh a bheachdan mearachdach; agus labhair Dr. Uillis, fear do 'n chleir, sin, gu h-anabarrach soillair, comasach, cothramach, air na puncaibh teagaisg anns am b' e beachd na Cleire gu'n robh Mr. Scott an am mearachd. Air do thagradh an da thaobh bhi crìochnuichte, thainig a chuis gu breth an Ard-Sheanaidh; agus a dhaon ghuth, gun aon duine focal a labhairt air taobh Mr. Scott—chuir an t-Ard-Sheanadh an gnothach a ris, ann an lamhan na Cleire, a' cur an ceill gu'n robh beachdan Mr. Scott mearachdach; agus mur tigeadh e gu a mhearachd aideachadh, agus a threigsinn, gu'm feumadh e bhi air a dhealachadh o 'n Eaglais Shaoir.

Cha robh ann ach an aon intinn, 's an t-aon ghuth, anns an Ard-Sheanadh mu'n chuis so; agus bu chuis chudthromach d' a rìreadh i. Chan 'n 'eil ni a 's eagalaiche do'n Eaglais, na beachdan 's am bith a bhi a' faotinn caidreimh innte, a measg a sluaigh, no a measg a luchd-teagaisg, nach 'eil a reir an Fhocail neo-mhearachdaich. Tha 's an la an dingh iomadh ni a' tighinn a stigh, ann an iomadh comunn a tha ag aideachadh Chrìosd agus an t-soisgeilmu thiomchioll am bheil luchd-aideachaidh na firinn o'n leth a muigh gu mor air an roinn, eatora fein, anns na comunnaibh fa leth ud. Cha'n 'eil ni as muladaiche na so. Agus bha, agus tha mor aobhar buidheachais aig ar n-Eaglais 's an dearbh ghnòthach so gu'n d' thugadh an aon intinn do gach aon reach bha 'n a bhall do 'n Ard-Sheannadh. Ach feudar a smuaineachadh le cuid do ar luchd-leughaidh, gur h-ion duinn a mhineachadh, ann an labhairt mu 'n gnothach so, nadar nam mearachd a chaidh a chur as leth Mhr. Scott. Dh'fheumadh so gu'n gabhadh sinn farsuingeachd labhairt air nach ruig sinn gu cothromach 's an am so; ach oidhirpichidh sinn, ann am focal na dha brìgh na cuise a leigeil ris. B' i so, ma ta, beachd agus teagasg an duin' oig ud d' an fhuaireadh coire:—Gu'm bheil gras a' chreidimh 's an anam 'n a ni, ged a tha e air a thabhairt leis an Spìorad Naomh—tha an duine thaobh naduir comasach a cleachdamh, e fein, na 'n cleachdadh e an comas a tha aige: Gur h-e an creidimh ceudthoiseachadh obair nan gras 's an anam; agus nach 'eil ni 's am bith do'n athghineamhuinn air a thoiseiachadh anns an anam, gus am bheil gras a' chreidimh air tighinn gu lan



chleachdamh: agus gur h-e nadur a' ghrais so, direach bhi ag amharc amhain air na nithibh fa leth a tha a nis air an creidsinn—no bhi a' mhain 'g an aithneachadh mar a ah' aithnichear nithe nadurra. An aghaidh so, is e teistas an sgriobtur, gu'm bheil na h-uile h-anam do shliochd Adhaimh marb gu spioradail a reir naduir, fuidh bhinn-ditigh an lagha, tre bhriseadh a' cheud cho-cheangail; agus nach'eil aon neach le an comas nadura fein comasach creidimh a cleachdadh air mhodh stainteil 's am bith; gu'm bheil an Spiorad Naomh, anns an dream tha air an gairm gu h-eifeachdach 'g an athghineamhuinn 's a' cheud aite, tre dhearbhb-shoilleireachd mu pheacadh, a thoirt dhoibh; agus gu bheil gras a chreidimh 'n a earrainn do'n athghineamhuinn so; ach nach e nadur a' creidimh bhi a mhain ag *amhare* air na nithibh tha air an nochdadh agus air an teagasg leis an Spiorad, ach a bhi deanamh an anama comasach a mhuighinn a nis a chur anns an Ti sin a 's e a mhain an t-aon Fhear-Saoraidh—an t-anam a' gabhail ris, agus ag earbsa as 'n a aonar air son slainte, mar tha e air a thairgseadh gu saor anns an t-soisgeal. Agus gu'm feum an creideamh bhi air a dhearbhadh bhi 'n a chreideamh firinneach, le a thoradh. Air an laimh eile, ma theagaisgear gu'm bhail e an comas a' chreutair fein bhi a' creidsinn, agus gu'm bheil creideamh slainteil a' co-sheasamh ann an aonta a thoirt do theistean na firinn—tha so ag ardachadh a chreutair; agus 'g a mhealladh; agus e a tighinn gu bhi 'n a ni eagallach daoine bhi smuaineachadh gras a' chreidimh bhi aca fein 'n uair nach 'eil toraidhean iomchaidh 'g a dhearbhadh bhi 'n a chreideamh firinneach air a thabhairt o Dhia, le e bhi a' glanadh a' chridhe, agus ag oibreachadh tre ghradh, agus a' toirt buaidh air an t-saoghal.

Ma bheirear, ann am maitheas an fhreusdail an cothram dhuinn, bheir sinn beachd air a' chuis chud-thromaich so fathast; oir is ni ro-chud-thromach e do rreamh. Cha bu mhaith leinn breth a thoirt air duine 's am bith, no a dhiteadh. Cha 'n'eil sinn ann an teagamh, 's cha mho bha aon bhall do 'n Ard-Sheanadh, nach robh an duine òg ud treibhdhireach 'n a bheachdaibh fein. Ach an uair chunnaeas a bheachdan a' dol gu soilleir an aghaidh riaghaill an fhocail, bha e mar fhiachaibh air an Eaglais, an cronachadh, agus an dealachadh uaipe fein. Thagair, gu'n teagamh, an duine òg, gu'n robh a bheachdan a reir nan sgriobtur, agus a reir Leabhar Aidmheil a' chreidimh; ach rinn e fein, 'n a thagradh, air beulaobh an Ard-Sheanaidh, ro-aithnichte, nach b' urrainn a bheachdan seasamh ri riaghaill an fhocail. Agus ged a thagair e gu'n robh e a' seasamh ri riaghaill creidimh na h-Eaglais; cha luaithe fhuair iad coire do a bheachdaibh anns a' bhreth a thug iad na dh'fhag e an Eaglais Shaor, agus cheangail se e fein ri buidhinn a tha gu soilleir ag aicheadh a' chumaidh-teagaisg sin a tha agus a bha, air 'aideachadh le Eaglais na h-Alba anns gach linn. 'S e a ghuidh an t-Ard-Sheanadh gu durachdach air, agus cuid de athrichibh urramach

na h-Eaglaise, gu'm pilleadh e, agus gu'n smuainicheadh e fathast air a' chuis, gu'n sireadh e fathast an treorachadh sin o 'n Tighearna leis am faodadh intinn bhi air a thabhairt, gu soilleireachd agus gu seasmhachd. Ach cha do mheas e gu'n robh feum aige air tuilleadh soilleireachd 's a' chuis, ach gu'n robh tuilleadh soluis aige fein na aig gach duine 's an Ard-Sheanadh an ceann a cheile."

"Ge b'e neach a bhriseas an lagh, agus nach fan ann an teagasg Chrìosd, cha'n 'eil Dia aige: an ti a dh'fhanas ann an teagasg Chrìosd, tha araon an t-Athair agus am Mac aige."

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

(IV.)

LASSWADE, 14th May, 1875.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—Your greatly liked letter I now acknowledge. It did me good to find you asserting so strongly spiritual death. It compels us towards Him who is "the resurrection and the life," who is the true God and eternal life, the eternal life unsealed to sinners spiritually dead, in and by the glorious sacrifice of Himself. The Lord Jesus approaches dead sinners in these words, "I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?"—(John xi. 25, 26.) Now, it is not merely that Jesus is the resurrection and the life, but it is that He Himself comes and tells us so, comes and tells us what are the immediate consequences to us in our spiritual death of His being the resurrection and the life, and then taking us by the hand and looking us in the face He says, "Believest thou this?" What a communion with Christ that soul might have who truly realised Him putting the question, and not to be put off with no answer or half an answer. What answer can or dare we give but this, "Lord, I believe, help thou mine unbelief?" Thou art the resurrection and the life, and Thou art not any less so because I have to cry, Help mine unbelief. Thou art on that account all the more precious to me, all the more needed by me. In spiritual death, as I am, I need exactly Thee, the resurrection and the life. And O suffer me, Lord, to say it, for it is true that Thou, as the resurrection and the life, needest dead souls. Thou canst not otherwise be the resurrection and the life. And it is to me that Thou hast been pleased to come and say "I am the resurrection and the life." It is between Thee and me, here and now, that this wondrous word is passing, and it is to me now Thou art saying, "Believest thou this?" Lord, why askest thou this question of me, unless Thou meanest me to know and feel that Thou dost really need dead souls in order that it may be possible for Thee to be truly and actually the resurrection and the life?

Yea, why askest Thou this of me, unless it be that so Thou mayest give me to understand that Thou needest dead and helpless me? It is useless to say, "Lord, I cannot believe, for I am dead," because if I were not dead, He who is the resurrection and the life needed not to have come to me. Lord, Thou knewest I was dead, and that is why Thou comest as the resurrection and the life, comest that Thou mayest meet my death and do away with it. Lord, if I am dead and Thou hast come to me as the life, what can I say or do, but just break down in wonder, in shame, and in thankfulness that it should be so! Yes, Lord, I break down, an unbelieving dead soul before Thee, and Thou as the resurrection and the life sayest, "Arise, live," and if Thou wilt that I, dead and helpless, should arise and live, what right, what reason have I to say, "Lord, I cannot." Cannot! even when the Resurrection says, "Rise." Cannot! even when the Life says, "Live." The soul that says so and sticks to it thereby says, "Lord, thou art not the resurrection, thou art not the life, I believe not this."

All the while it remains true, awfully true, that this is just the answer we will give unless the Resurrection and the Life do raise us. He cannot raise us against our will, nor without our will; not that He is limited in power, but because He cannot work self-contradictions and will not work unreasonablenesses. But again, therefore, comes this tender, loving, piercing question, "Believest thou this? Believest thou that I am the resurrection and the life?" And is the response? "Lord, I fain would believe, I dare not say thou art not what thou tellest me thou art." Then this believing acquiescence in His word is just the Resurrection raising you up, just the Life causing you to live. You rise by breaking down; you are raised by being broken down. He Himself became the Resurrection by dying; He Himself became the Life by rising again from the dead. And His people by breaking down, by dying to themselves, rise in Him. He breaks them down that He may raise them up in and with Himself. O what a life is that! the life that is obtained by dying and rising again, the life that passed through death and resurrection must be eternal life. The life to which entrance is gained by the gates of resurrection is life everlasting. What will all the splendours of the resurrection of dead bodies be at the sound of the archangel's trump, compared with what my Lord already is as the resurrection of dead souls? And as I hear Him say, "Arise, my love, for the winter is past, the rain is over and gone, death is ended, resurrection is accomplished, life for evermore is entered upon," does he not thereby cause me to know that a splendour of glory belongs to Him, even now, as the Resurrection and the Life, although I scarcely see the most distant tips of the fringe thereof? Ah! well, I think I see this, my great and overpowering need of Him as my Resurrection and my Life. . . . Yours, &c.,

HUGH MARTIN.

## Strange Words from a Cameronian Minister

REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN ORDINATION AT THURSO.

WE have always regarded with esteem the Reformed Presbyterian Church. Its historical connection with the martyrs of Covenanted Scotland, and its sound code of doctrines have, notwithstanding some differences of opinion, earned for it respect throughout our land. It has been, therefore, the invariable habit of one's mind to expect at least from the lips of its ministers scriptural doctrines as to sin and salvation, as well as a decided testimony against the declension of the times. This expectation has recently received a rude shock. The circumstances are as follows:—At the ordination of the Rev. James Paterson to the Reformed Presbyterian Church, Thurso, on 30th September, Rev. J. P. Struthers, M.A., Greenock, delivered the charges to minister and people. He expressed himself in terms, which we are sorry to say, resembled rather the strange language of Egypt than the pure language of Caanan. In his charge to the minister he began by saying, as the report of the *John o' Groat Journal* states, that he would give him the benefit of some of the mistakes which he (Mr. Struthers) had made in his ministry. He once, he said, had a visit from a drunk man, and learned then not to be too ready to show people to the door. But, he added, "the man who gloried over the faults of others, either in life or doctrine, who ever came with a bad story, and never with a good one, who gave the impression that the world was getting worse every day—let that man be shown to the door." If this is not a caricature with a sting in it, of those in our times who lament the widespread declension in religion, we have seldom met a better one from the lips of the scorner. Mr. Struthers seems to have taken a lesson from the leading articles of the *Scotsman*. But he doesn't stop at sneers of the above kind, he deals out very suspicious doctrine. "Sin," he says, "brought the Saviour to the Cross, and has darkened all eternity for God." The latter statement is one that strikes every sensitive mind with a shock. We know that sin has darkened all eternity for lost souls, but is anything dark for God? "He is light, and in Him there is no darkness at all." Does not the Psalmist say of Him, "The darkness and the light are both alike to thee?" Is it not the case that "He dwells in light that is inaccessible and full of glory?" How can sin have darkened eternity for Him? The very suggestion that it has is rotten to the core. It supposes that the unchangeable God who dwells in infinite blessedness is liable to be essentially affected by the actions of His creatures. This makes the Creator dependent for His blessedness upon the creature. This takes away His self-existent character. This changes God into a mere creature. Mr. Struthers' theology is wrong in regard to the being and attributes of God. It is, therefore, wrong at the very foundation.

If he thought he made a theological discovery by his new idea let him lay to heart the fact that, if it was new, it was like many other things, not true. So far has sin not darkened eternity for the Most High, it has not darkened it for His redeemed creatures. They are as full of light and holiness and happiness in heaven, as if there was no such thing as sin in the place of woe, and they will continue so to all eternity. Sin has not made eternity dark for them. Is it not blasphemy to say that it has made it dark for the eternal Jehovah, whose blessedness is immeasurably beyond that of any saint or archangel before the throne? If the Reformed Presbyterian Church retains any measure of the faithfulness to truth for which its ancestors were renowned, it will take Mr. Struthers to task for his erroneous doctrine.

We notice further some unwarrantable statements in Mr. Struthers' charge to the congregation. He says, "I believe there are more godly people in Scotland to-day than ever were in Scotland at any time in its history." This quite takes away our breath. More godly people in Scotland to-day than ever were! And never so little family worship, never so much theatre going, never so much ritualism and popery, never so much Sabbath breaking, never so much infidel blasphemy, and never so much tearing of the Bible to pieces! A more fond delusion than that cherished by Mr. Struthers seldom entered the heart of man. There are more professors of religion in Scotland to-day than ever were before we willingly believe; but as for godly people they were never so few since the Reformation. We do not profess to know their number, but anyone who has the least idea of what true piety is will corroborate our statement. Mr. Struthers, towards the close of his address, reduces the testimony of his own Church, for which martyrs died, to a mere shibboleth. He says: "It may be a great matter the difference between shibboleth and sibboleth, especially if you know which is the right pronunciation, but it is very largely a trick of speech, an accident of birth; a parrot can be taught it. The scholar, the hero, the saint, might have everything in the world worth having and yet not be able to say shibboleth." Is this the way the Cameronians of the past have been wont to speak of the testimony of Richard Cameron, Donald Cargill, and James Renwick? We trow not. We cannot follow Mr. Struthers into his bitter invective against "the narrow-mindedness, censoriousness, and ignorant pride" which he says has ever been the curse of his Church. We are reminded of the conduct of Ham to his father, but we will not enlarge. Somehow Mr. Struthers seems out of place in the Cameronian Church. Is there no corner for him elsewhere?

Before concluding our criticism we feel bound to refer to a former exhibition by Mr. Struthers, which proves the above is not isolated and unusual. In a paper which we heard read by him at the R. P. Convention, held last June in Glasgow, he made some startling statements. He took notice of Professor G. A. Smith, Free

Church College, Glasgow, who wrote in his book on Isaiah, of the covenants of Scotland as "covenants with death and hell." All Mr. Struthers had to say about this was that the Professor was "an accusing 'angel," not devil. Mr. Struthers is well aware that Professor Smith is one of the modern school of irreverent, rationalistic, Bible critics, and yet he thinks him an angel! But this was not all. Our new school Cameronian, in speaking of the glory of the Atonement, used the following unheard of language. He said it was the Atonement that determined the constitution of the Godhead, and made the divine attributes possible to be! Could there be a greater turning upside down of the fundamentals of religion, yea, of common sense, than this? A moment's thought will lead any sane mind to the conclusion that it was the Godhead, and the attributes thereof, that determined the Atonement, and not *vice versa*. And yet Mr Struthers gave forth this idea with such emphasis as if he had made a valuable theological discovery. We were glad that Professor Dick, Belfast, pointed out the error, but were sorry the Convention did not insist upon Mr. Struthers making a withdrawal of the same. We have now done with Mr. Struthers. The subject is a painful one. But it is earnestly to be hoped the R. P. Church will take measures to prevent such exhibitions of folly and heterodoxy in the future.

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## The Scottish Church Society.

THE *Bulwark* for October devotes an instructive article to the doings of the Scottish Church Society. This Society, consisting of a band of Established Churchmen, some of whom occupy a prominent place in the Church, appears determined to undo the work of the memorable Reformation, and to bring back the Church of Scotland to the doctrines and practices of the Romish Antichrist. An official report of a conference of this Society, held last year, has been published. One speaker at the conference, Rev. H. J. Wotherspoon, insisted that the visible church on earth is not only "an actual kingdom of God," but that we must consider "her sacraments His acts," and "her benediction His benediction." The visible church is, says Mr. Wotherspoon, "the Lord's body," and the Christian knows that he is a member "of it by his baptism," and he lives "in it by the Holy Communion." Here the distinction between the visible and invisible church is entirely set aside, and the Romish theory of the church fully accepted. The same speaker adds that "it is the consecration of our life" to know the church. If this is not Romanism we know not what is. Another speaker at this conference, Mr. J. H. Millar, advocate, declared that the "decline of churchmanship" in Scotland "may be attributed to the national result of the prevalence of evangelicalism," which he does not

hesitate to call "mischievous and uncatholic." Rev. E. L. Thompson, D.D., read a paper on "Church Fabrics," in which he prescribes the proper manner of church building. He wishes that new churches should be so constructed within that "the Holy Table may stand forth" on an elevation "before all the congregation." The purpose of this is to emphatically set forth "the fact that the celebration of the Holy Supper is the most distinctive act of Christian worship." The Romish Church has elevated the Lord's table into the superstitious and blasphemous rite of the sacrifice of the Mass, which is their central act of worship, and the promoters of this society are evidently following in the wake of Rome. Dr. R. Rowand Anderson recommended that the Lord's Supper should be celebrated "in a part of the building specially designed, furnished, and decorated" for the purpose, and that "at the end, raised on a dais, should be the Lord's table." On this raised platform the clergy are to stand, while the common people are to be seated beneath. Rev. James Cooper, D.D., Aberdeen, read two papers, which are evidently characterised, as the *Bulwark* states, by an unblushing advocacy of more or less of Popery. Dr. Cooper says that the Church should give due prominence on its forefront to the cross. This, however, is not sufficient. He also recommends *crucifixes!* "We might make," he said, "use of the sculptor's art if we set up outside, say above the great door of the church, as there is set on the portals of Rheims (Roman Catholic) Cathedral the figure of the Crucified." Is not this suggestion shocking from the mouth of a Presbyterian? In a paper on "The Celtic Inheritance of the Scottish Church," Dr. Cooper advocated the erection of "Iona crosses" in churchyards, and by the wayside. A further suggestion by the same speaker was to the effect that something was wanted to bid the congregation "stand up and bless the Lord," and he quotes, with evident approval, the means used by medieval architects for this purpose. "The medieval architects," he says, "strove to gain their end by introducing everywhere *figures of angels* harping on their harps, and thus, as it were, inviting those, to whom as the heirs of salvation (Heb. i. 14) they are sent to minister, to bear their part with them even here in the blissful occupation of eternity." It is perfectly clear that the aim of Dr. Cooper and his colleagues is to restore Romish doctrine, worship, and church fabric to Scotland. In some of the papers read at this conference, says the *Bulwark*, all the subtlety of Jesuitism is seen. Let the Established Church, yea, let the Scottish people be plainly warned that there is a band of men in their midst who are traitors to Presbyterianism and Protestantism, and whose efforts, openly and secretly, are directed to the restoration of the hideous antichristian system of Rome, for opposition to which our forefathers died on the scaffolds and in the fires.

## Two Days of the Son of Man.

A COVENANTERS' COMMUNION IN TEVIOTDALE DURING  
PERSECUTING TIMES (1677).

THE ordinance of the last supper, that memorial of His dying love till His second coming, was signally countenanced and backed with powerful and refreshing influences from on high.

"They had to place picquets of horsemen towards the suspected parts, and single horsemen at greater distances, to give warning, for the Earl of Hume, as ramp a youth as any in the country, had threatened to assault the meeting with his men and militia, and to make their horses drink the communion wine and trample the sacred elements under foot. Every means was taken to compose the multitude, and prevent any affront that might be offered to so solemn and sacred a work, when they had to stay three days together, sojourning *by the lions' dens and the mountains of the leopards*. . . . The place where we convened seemed to have been formed on purpose. It was a green and pleasant haugh, fast by the water side (the Whitadder). On either hand there was a spacious brae, in form of a half-round, covered with delightful pasture, and rising with a gentle slope to a goodly height. Above us was the clear blue sky, for it was a sweet and calm Sabbath morning, promising to be indeed one of the days of the Son of Man. There was a solemnity in the place befitting the occasion, and elevating the whole soul to a pure and holy frame. The communion tables were spread on the green by the water, and around them the people had arranged themselves in decent order. But the far greater multitude sat on the brae-face, which was crowded from top to bottom, full as pleasant a sight as was ever seen of that sort. At first there was some apprehension from enemies; but the people sat undisturbed, and the whole was closed in as orderly a way as it had been in the time of Scotland's brightest noon. And truly the spectacle of so many grave, composed, and devout faces must have struck the adversaries with awe, and been more formidable than any outward ability of fierce looks and warlike array. We desired not the countenance of earthly kings; there was a spiritual and divine majesty shining on the work, and sensible evidence that the Great Master of Assemblies was present in the midst. Though our vows were not offered within the courts of God's house, they wanted not sincerity of heart, which is better than the reverence of sanctuaries. Amidst the lonely mountains we remembered the words of our Lord, that true worship was not peculiar to Jerusalem or Samaria, that the beauty of holiness consisted not in consecrated buildings or material temples. We remembered the ark of the Israelites, which had sojourned for years in the desert, with no dwelling-place but the tabernacles of the plain.



We thought of Abraham and the ancient patriarchs, who laid their victims on the rocks for an altar, and burned sweet incense under the shade of the green tree. In that day Zion put on the beauty of Sharon and Carmel; the mountains broke forth into singing, and the desert place was made to bud and blossom as the rose. Few such days were seen in the desolate Church of Scotland, and few will ever witness the like. There was a rich and plentiful effusion of the Spirit shed abroad on many hearts. Their souls, filled with heavenly transports, seemed to breathe in a diviner element, and to burn upwards, as with the fire of a pure and holy devotion. The ministers were visibly assisted to speak home to the consciences of the hearers. It seemed as if God had touched their lips with a live coal from off his altar, for they who witnessed declared they carried more like ambassadors from the court of heaven than men cast in earthly mould. The communion was peaceably concluded, all the people heartily offering up their gratitude, and singing with a joyful noise to the Rock of their salvation. It was pleasant, as the night fell, to hear their melody swelling in full unison along the hill, the whole congregation joining with one accord, and praising God with the voice of psalms."—*Memoirs of Blackadder.*

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THE SECOND COMMUNION AT CAMBUSLANG DURING THE  
REVIVAL IN THE LAST CENTURY, 15th AUGUST, 1742.

"The second sacramental occasion did indeed much exceed the former, not only in the number of ministers, people, and communicants, but, which is the main thing, in a much greater measure of the power and special presence of God, in the observation and sensible experience of multitudes that were attending.

"All the ministers present at this solemnity appeared to be very much assisted in their work. Four of them preached on the Fast-day, four on Saturday, on Sabbath I cannot well tell how many, and five on Monday; on which last day it was computed that above twenty-four ministers and preachers were present. Old Mr. Bonar, though so frail that he took three days to ride eighteen miles, the distance between Torphichen and Cambuslang, yet his heart was so set upon coming, that he would by no means stay away; and when he was helped up to the tent, he preached three times with great life, and returned with much satisfaction and joy. Mr. Whitefield's sermons on Saturday, Sabbath, and Monday, were attended with much power, particularly that on Sabbath night about ten o'clock, and that on Monday; several were crying out, and a very great but decent weeping and mourning was observable through the auditory. On Sabbath evening, while he was serving some tables, he appeared to be so filled with the love of God, as to be

in a kind of ecstasy, and he communicated with much of that blessed frame. Time would fail me to speak of the evidence of the power of God coming along with the means, and I am in part prevented by what is noticed by Mr. Robe in his narrative.

"A vast concourse of people came not only from the city of Glasgow and other places near, but from many places at a considerable distance. It was reckoned that there were two hundred communicants from Edinburgh, two hundred from Kilmarnock, a hundred from Irvine, a hundred from Stewarton, and some even from England and Ireland. A considerable number of quakers were hearing, and many formerly of the secession, some of whom communicated. A young man, looking forward to the ministry, and who had been for some time under great temptation, as if the presence of God was to be no more enjoyed, either in the church or the secession, communicated here, and went home with great joy, and full of the love of God.

"There was a great deal of outward decency and regularity observable at the tables. Public worship began on the Lord's-day at half-past eight in the morning. My action sermon was, I think, reasonably short. The third or fourth table was a-serving at twelve o'clock, and the last was serving about sunset. When that was done, the work was closed with a few words of exhortation, prayer, and praise, the precentor having so much day-light as to let him see to read four lines of a psalm. The passages to and from the tables were kept clear for the communicants to come and go. The tables were filled so quickly that oftentimes only four lines of a psalm could be sung between. The tables were all served in the open air, beside the tent and below the brae. The day was temperate; no wind or rain sufficient to disturb.

"But the thing most remarkable, was the spiritual glory of this solemnity—I mean the gracious and sensible presence of God. Not a few were awakened to a sense of sin, and of their lost and perishing condition without a Saviour. Others had their bands loosed, and were brought into the marvellous liberty of the sons of God. Many of God's dear children have declared that it was a precious time to their souls—that they had been abundantly satisfied with the goodness of God in His ordinances, and filled with all joy and peace in believing. I have seen a letter from Edinburgh, in which the writer says, 'That having talked with many Christians in that city, who had been here at this sacrament, they all owned that God had dealt bountifully with their souls on that occasion.' Some who attended here have declared that they would not for all the world have been absent. Others cried out, 'Now let thy servants depart in peace, since our eyes have seen thy salvation here!' And there were who wished, had it been the will of God, to be removed while waiting on God in these ordinances, without returning again to the world or their friends, and so to be with Christ in heaven, which is far better.

"I thought it my duty to offer these few hints concerning this

solemnity, and so to record the memory of God's great goodness to many souls on that occasion. And, now, I suppose you will by this time find yourself disposed to sing the 98th psalm at the beginning, or the close of the 72nd, or some other psalm of praise. May our exalted Redeemer still go on from conquering to conquer, till the whole earth be filled with his glory. Amen, so let it be."—*From a letter of Rev. Wm. M'Culloch, Parish Minister of Cambuslang.*

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## Glasgow Sabbath Protection Association.

THE Annual Meeting of the Glasgow Working Men's and West of Scotland Sabbath Protection Association was held on 19th October, in the Religious Institution Rooms, Rev. Principal Douglas presiding. Mr. Robert Mackintosh, secretary, submitted his annual report, which stated that during the past year there had been a great increase of tram cars and omnibuses on the Sabbath day. It was to be feared that the feeble and faltering utterances of many within the Church on this subject were due to the fact that so many in their congregations made use of them. The running of brakes and omnibuses to country districts was a great means of desecrating the Lord's Day. All the leading railways in Glasgow run morning and evening trains on Sabbath. Few people in Scotland realised what a large amount of Sabbath desecration there was in this connection. Then there was the theatrical specials transporting theatrical companies on the Lord's Day, so that they might be able to appear at one place on Saturday night and be ready at another place on Monday evening. The number of Sunday passenger trains in Scotland in the year was 9,516. It was more difficult to arrive at correct returns for the Sunday goods traffic. In Glasgow, in connection with the underground railways, work had been incessantly carried on during the Lord's day, to the great annoyance and grievance of the residents, and it was now announced that trains were to be run on the Sabbath. The number of shops open in the city on Sundays was 2,861, as against 2,717 last year, an increase of 144. The ice-cream shop nuisance continued, and the results, at least, were plainly the outcome of a traffic in the hands of aliens who were allowed openly to shock and insult the feelings and customs of the community. It had led to the opening of shops. The tobacconists' shops now boldly opened from early morning till late at night, and some of these were owned by members of some of their churches. The ice-cream shop was a great temptation to Sabbath School children, not only to keep them from the School but to spend the mission box pennies there, and thus demoralise the children. They trusted that the new Town Council to be elected in November would take the matter into their serious consideration. It was deeply to be regretted, in the interests of

the Sabbath and of religion, that in some churches the element of worship had become so subordinate to the delights of music that it became difficult to distinguish the Church from the music-hall. Golfing, cycling and football—these modes of recreation and pleasure were becoming prevalent forms of Sabbath desecration. A close observer could not fail to note the dangerous inroads that had been made on the Lord's Day in their city within the last quarter of a century. If those encroachments were not checked the day might come when the religious quiet that formerly reigned in their well-ordered city would be changed into noise and turbulence; when the sound of the church bell would be drowned by the echo of the hammer, the tramway, the omnibus, and the cart; when the Bible would be supplanted by the newspaper and the magazine; when the votaries of pleasure would outnumber worshippers, and salutary thoughts of God, of eternity, and of the soul, would be checked by the cares of business, and by the pleasures and dissipations of the world.

## Signs of the Times.

### A REMARKABLE SCENE AT WICK.

REV. Arthur Macconachie was ordained on 9th October, to the pastorate of the Evangelical Union Church, Wick. The Evangelical Union which, we observe, has recently united itself with the Congregationalist body, is a Church that holds distinctively Arminian principles. By its creed it denies the doctrines of God's unconditional electing love, man's total depravity and inability, and need of irresistible grace in conversion, and affirms that God loves all, Christ died for all, and that men of their own power and choice are capable of believing in Christ unto salvation. Dr. Morison, the founder of this body, was deposed many years ago from the ministry of the U.P. Church for maintaining and preaching these views,—views that were contrary to the standards, not only of the U.P. and other Presbyterian Churches, but also of the Baptists and Congregational Churches. The times have strangely changed. A remarkable scene presents itself to our view. What do we find? At a soiree or social meeting in connection with the ordination of an Evangelical Union minister there were present, besides ministers of that body, Rev. Mr. Shearer of the U.P. Church; Rev. Messrs. Renny, Robertson, and Harper of the Free Church; and Rev. Messrs. Millard and MacLennan of the Baptist and Congregational Churches; while Rev. Mr. Clark, of the Wick Established Church, wrote regretting his absence. All these ministers wished the newly ordained pastor a long and prosperous ministry, and some of them spoke in highly laudatory terms of the Evangelical Union as a Church. Mr. Shearer as a U.P., said the theological differences between them were on the

surface. Mr. Renny of the Free Church affirmed, among other expressions of esteem, that "the E.U. Church had purchased to itself a good degree," and that "no church, considering its membership, had thrown to the surface men who had commanded the admiration of all the evangelical churches in the land more than the E.U. Church." Mr. Harper of the same body indulged in a number of unbecoming jocularities, apparently quite unconscious that he had more occasion to sorrow than to rejoice, in view of the fact that he and his brethren, by their presence at that meeting, were tearing into fragments their ordination vows as well as the distinctive principles of the Free Church. Lastly, Mr. Maclellan as a Congregationalist, declared that he preached the same views as Mr. Macconachie, the universal fatherhood of God, an atonement for everyone, and the Holy Spirit's working in every man's heart.

It is quite evident from the speeches of the Free Church ministers at this meeting that the attitude of the present-day Free Church towards Arminianism is a highly favourable one, and that the Declaratory Act of 1892 is no dead thing but a living reality. Twenty years ago no adherent of the Free Church would darken the door of a Morisonian place of worship, and the predecessors of the Free Church ministers of Wick, we are sure, would give no countenance to such conduct but rather sharply reprove it. Mr. Renny says that the questions of controversy in connection with the E.U. Church that were acute at one time are "not acute now." Greater is the loss to Scotland. Nowadays the conscience has become so dead that professors of religion are ready to accept almost any form of belief, while in former years persons of similar profession were much engaged in examining their faith before God in the light of His Word, and were afraid of accepting a false foundation in view of eternity. When religious questions become less acute, it is a sign the times are less religious.

We may add that Congregationalists and Baptists have no more reason to welcome Arminianism than Presbyterians. Among the former, where are the immortal memories of Dr. John Owen and Dr. Thomas Goodwin, the famous English Puritan divines, and Robert and James Haldane, the eminent Scottish evangelists? Among the latter, are the life and labours of Dr. Gill and C. H. Spurgeon entirely forgotten? These distinguished men believed the doctrines of Calvinism to be the doctrines of the Word of God, and their successors who prove unfaithful to their testimony will have to answer for it at the great day of reckoning. Our fickle memories may forget the life, labours, and testimony of our forefathers, but God has not forgotten them. He has written them down in His book of remembrance. We may choose forms of belief more palatable to the natural heart of man, but our choice will not make the truth of God of none effect. Times may change, but truth is unchangeable. "The word of the Lord endureth for ever."

## Notes and Comments.

**PASTOR CHINIQUEY TO VISIT THIS COUNTRY.**—The venerable Dr. Charles Chiniquy, the author of "Fifty Years in the Church of Rome," who is now in his eighty-eighth year, has once more crossed the Atlantic. He is at present in England and is expected to be in Scotland from the 14th to the 30th November. He will address meetings in connection with the Scottish Protestant Alliance, Glasgow, and the Scottish Reformation Society, Edinburgh. His presence in this country will be welcomed by all true Protestants, and we trust it will bear fruit in putting to shame the indifference and rousing into life the energies of multitudes who are only Protestants in name.

**ABERDEEN BIBLICAL CRITICISM CHAIR.**—The Aberdeen University Court have approved the appointment of the Rev. Paton Gloag, D.D., formerly of Galashiels, as Substitute-Professor of Biblical Criticism, pending the final settlement of the case of Professor Johnston. This appointment, we learn, is regarded with satisfaction by Professor Johnston himself.

**WHERE IS PRINCIPLE OR PROTESTANTISM?**—Rev. Dr. Rankin, Established Church, Muthil, Perthshire, said the other day at a meeting of the Auchterarder Presbytery, that if he were living in England he would "associate himself with the National Church of that country," and "if he were living, say, in Germany or France he would associate himself with the Roman Catholic Church."

**THE DEEPENING OF SPIRITUAL LIFE.**—Meetings for this purpose have lately been held in the Free Church, Pollokshields, Glasgow. No doubt the Scriptures were read at these meetings, and therefore some good may have been done; but we are extremely sceptical on this point. We remember to have read of a meeting which once took place—a small meeting, but one which resulted in a great deepening of spiritual life. It was in the case of the two poor men who walked on a Sabbath evening from Jerusalem to Emmaus. They were joined by a Stranger who knew them to stand greatly in need of a deepening of their spiritual life. Did He ply them with emotional hymns or sweet sounds from the throat of the organ? Not at all. He addressed Himself to their understanding, "Then," it is said "opened he their understanding that they might understand the Scriptures." "Beginning at Moses and all the Prophets he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself." But if the devout people of Pollokshields will say that they desire nothing better at their meetings than the presence of this Heavenly Stranger, then we may remind them that there are many reasons why He should not come. For is not this He whose spiritual worship they and their leaders have carnalised by organ music and other human devices? Is not this He whose Old Testament the chief men of the Free Church have declared to be stored with pious frauds, inaccuracies, and blunders; and have the devout

people of Pollokshields at all purged themselves from complicity with these anti-Christian teachers? Till they repair this dishonour done to the worship and word of Christ, we fear any supposed deepening of spiritual life which they may experience is only a delusion. Vainly at ordinary or extraordinary religious services will the Gospel be proclaimed. The hearers will make light of it—one will go to his novel, another to his merchandise; and, indeed, in the case of the services we have spoken of we have proof that one of the ministers assisting thereat betook himself shortly afterwards to the study of light literature. Concerning this matter see the following note:—

THE VERSATILITY OF DR. STALKER.—One of the speakers at the above-mentioned meetings for the deepening of spiritual life was Dr. Stalker, minister of Free St. Matthew's, Glasgow. This, of course, is all right, for is he not a Doctor of Divinity? Mark, however, the sequel. As we were passing along the street one day lately, we espied a poster announcing a meeting of a west-end society of literature and art. Dr. Stalker occupied the place of honour on this poster, being booked for a lecture on the opening night, and what, pray you, was his subject? "The gayer comedies of Shakespeare!" Here, thought we, is versatility, here is a man that can turn his hand to anything. Yesterday it was the "deepening of spiritual life," to-day it is the "comedies of Shakespeare." Shall we praise Dr. Stalker in this? We praise him not. If a Methodist preacher should be seen the one week immersed in revival meetings, the next week bustling about to organize a dog show, would not the neighbours think his conduct odd? Would they not ask themselves which is the real man, the dog fancier or the revival preacher? Even so, Dr. Stalker's wild transition from the deepening of spiritual life to the comedies of Shakespeare awakens questions of a significant character. If Dr. Stalker has a theory that the two spheres are quite compatible, and that it is quite proper for a minister of the Gospel to be busy in both, let him put the matter to the proof by transposing things a little. The next time he has a meeting for deepening of spiritual life on hand, let him, after devotional exercises, read and expound the "Merry Wives of Windsor," likewise the next time he is to address a west-end society of literateurs and artists, let him, after singing a psalm, give a Bible reading from the 8th of the Romans. Will he not become the talk of the town? Will he not be esteemed out of his wits? Let Dr. Stalker recollect himself a little. Nothing but harm can come from attempting to fuse together the Church and the world. Not a spiritualised world, but a secularised Church will be the result.

ROMISH INFLUENCE IN THE PRESS.—Archdeacon Sinclair, London, in an article in the *English Churchman* says:—"Never were Roman Catholics more active or more hopeful. Their influence in the London press is immense. It would be very difficult, if not impossible, for anything to be inserted in the

London newspapers which would damage or expose their policy. On the other hand, they are influencing the Church of England from within. Many of our clergy are in their service, and openly pray for the Pope; many others are in constant communication with them, adopt their dress, sustain themselves on their literature, are inspired by their policy, and teach their doctrines."

**AN AMERICAN ON PRESENT-DAY SCOTTISH DIVINES.**—The American correspondent of the *Bulwark* thus writes:—The cause of Protestantism and evangelical truth is not served by the men Scotland sends over here to visit our people and ventilate their rationalism. Your "kailyaird" literature, pathetic though it be . . . will not compensate for the rationalism and looseness of the views on inspiration brought here by your divines, who rush to tell benighted Presbyterian and Congregational students in Union, Yale, Auburn, and Chicago theological schools that the Old Testament is largely mythical, that Moses was not (in any sense intelligible to an Anglo-Saxon) the author of the Pentateuch, that David wrote few or none of the Psalms, that it matters not whether there were two or half a dozen of Isaiahs, that Daniel is an invention of the Maccabean age, John an allegory, and Zechariah a Janus with at least two minds. What good is this farrago of theological fancies to do in evangelising the great West or in ministering comfort to wounded hearts? If Scotland cannot send us men of faith, conservative of Bible truth, don't let her send us loose divines to unsettle the minds of simple Christians. In Germany these speculations are confined to the universities. Here they are blown as with trumpet blast into almost every Christian home. America has an ample supply of loose thinkers of her own, without needing to import more of them from Scotland. . . Keep the brambles of scholarly scepticism and anti-supernaturalism to yourselves.

**MEETING OF FREE PRESBYTERIAN SYNOD.**—The Synod met in Fraser Street Church, Inverness, on the evening of September 29th. Rev. Don. Macfarlane, as retiring moderator, preached from Hebrews viii. 8-12. The Rev. Alex. Macrae, Kames, was elected moderator. The chief business of general interest was a discussion as to the training of the Theological students connected with the Church. It was the opinion, if at all possible, they should be trained at home. Some suggested the immediate appointment of professors, and the names of Revs. J. R. Mackay, Gairloch, and John Macleod, probationer, were mentioned. This proposal was not formally adopted, but it was decided to appoint a committee to make provisional arrangements for the theological instruction of the students during the coming winter by the ministers named. Among other collections, one was appointed to be taken for Foreign Missions. The Synod was encouraged to do this in view of the fact that Mr. John Radasi, a young native of Kaffir land, South Africa, had been formally accepted as a student of the Church. He looks forward to mission work among his fellow-countrymen as his future sphere of labour.