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Some Features of Present-Day Preaching.

(Continued from page 283.)

5. The atonement of Christ is but little emphasised or wrongly interpreted. Many preachers appear to see little glory or efficacy in the substitutionary work of Christ on behalf of sinners, and it has little or no place in their preaching. They preach sermon after sermon in which there is nothing but a harangue of dry morality, and "Jesus Christ and him crucified" is scarcely mentioned. Not so with the Apostle Paul. He said to the Corinthians—"I determined to know nothing among you save Jesus Christ and him crucified." The death of Christ is the central theme of the Gospel, and when this is forgotten the Gospel is not preached. Others omit all reference to the atonement, because they are bold enough to deny that Christ made an atonement for sin. They say that God did not require any satisfaction to His justice, but that He pardons sin freely out of His love to men. They are even profane enough to characterise the idea of propitiation or satisfaction to justice as barbarous and heathenish. This is an attack of the truth at the very foundation. They who indulge in such a view are manifestly enemies to the righteousness of a holy God. They also set aside the whole revelation He has given of Himself in the Scriptures. For, if there is one truth more than another that is stamped upon the Word of God, from Genesis to Revelation, it is this—"Without shedding of blood there is no remission of sins." What mean the flaming sword at the gate of the Garden, the firstlings of the flock offered by Abel, and the whole system of bloody sacrifices directly appointed by God under the ceremonial law, if no atonement for sin or satisfaction to offended justice is required? They who deny propitiation must throw overboard the Old Testament. More than that, they must also throw overboard the New. The Apostle Paul clearly points out in the Epistle to the Hebrews that the sacrifices of the old economy were but shadows of good things to come, and that they typified and foreshadowed the sacrifice of

Christ. "This man after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God." If these ancient sacrifices were but pagan rites, as even professors in Presbyterian churches will not hesitate to say, then they could not have been even a shadow of good things to come. The shadow must correspond exactly to the reality, otherwise it is not a shadow. It is deadly work, therefore, to despise the ceremonial sacrifices as pagan, for they who do so trample under foot the blood of the Son of God, and esteem it a common thing. Notice further the testimony of John the Baptist, the forerunner—"Behold, the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." The figure "lamb" refers us back to the lambs slain as ceremonial sacrifices. Christ is the true Lamb who, by His obedience and death, "taketh away the sin of the world." The penalty of sin intimated by God in Eden was death, and nothing less than the taking away of this penalty could effect the redemption of sinners. The Lamb of God obtained eternal redemption for His people, and therefore, in His sufferings and death, must have borne the penalty due to their sins. He Himself says—"The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many."—(Matt. xx. 28.) Again, at the Last Supper, taking the cup, He said—"This is my blood of the new testament [or covenant] which is shed for many for the remission of sins."—(Matt. xxvi. 28). These and many other passages show that Christ's sufferings and death were a real atonement for His people's sins, and they who scorn the propitiation of justice by blood as a relic of paganism are guilty of casting no ordinary dishonour upon the Son of God.

Many preachers who wrongly interpret the atonement of Christ are forward to represent Him as a martyr. They look upon His sufferings and death as simply the reward which holiness of life and conversation receives at the hands of wicked men. In their eyes He is nothing more than the head or leader of the great army of martyrs who have suffered in all ages for righteousness sake. It is from this view of Christ that many preachers at the present time enlarge upon the self-sacrifice that shone forth conspicuously in His life and death. They can see nothing more in it than a mere surrender of comfort and life and an endurance of pain and death rather than to submit to the false principles and practices of men. They therefore miss the chief excellency of the death of Christ. How does this come about? Why do men prefer to consider Christ simply as a martyr, and refuse to look at Him as an atoning sacrifice? Just because of the pride of the unregenerate heart. They prefer to consider Christ as a martyr, because martyrdom is possible to ordinary men, and thus they bridge the distance between Christ and them, and thus their pride is flattered. They prefer to consider Him as a martyr, because, realising no need of Him as an atonement for their sins, they expect salvation simply by attempting to follow Him. And yet we

have never heard of any martyrs produced by this kind of doctrine. All the martyrs were believers in the atoning sacrifice of Christ. Why do so many dislike the doctrine of the atonement? Because it abases man in the dust. There is nothing that strikes at the pride of the creature so much as the cross of Christ. It bears a clear testimony to the sinfulness of our fallen estate. It tells us we are sinners deserving the severest punishment, even suffering unto eternal death. It tells us that we cannot save ourselves, nor can any or all of our race save us. It tells us that men and angels combined could not atone for the guilt of one soul. It tells us that sin was so great an evil, and incurred so great a punishment, that nothing less than the sufferings and death of the eternal Son of God—one who was both God and man—could satisfy justice for it. All this bears witness to our sinful and guilty state, and so men who are stout-hearted and far from righteousness, and have never been taught that they were sinners, shrink from the doctrine of the atonement. They will have Christ as a martyr, and as that alone, but they will have nothing to do with Him as the atoning Redeemer, dying the just for the unjust. Let us not be understood as implying that Christ was not a martyr in any sense, and that He is not an example to us in this respect. He was certainly a martyr for righteousness sake, and left an example to His people to follow in His footsteps, if called upon to suffer. But this was not His chief, primary end in coming into the world. He would never have come on this account alone. To come for this alone, without coming as Redeemer, were to mock poor fallen creatures. Without redemption there cannot be regeneration, and without regeneration there cannot be the least attainment in holiness, and without holiness there can be no conformity or obedience to God. Sin, therefore, must be taken away by redemption before there can be regeneration, and there must be regeneration before there can be martyrs. Redemption must first be purchased, then applied, and after that comes the noble company of martyrs. So in the work of Christ. He was first a Redeemer and then a martyr. We must know Him as a Redeemer before we can follow Him as a martyr. It is the merest mockery, then, for men who profess to preach the Gospel to talk at large about the self-sacrifice of Christ, without first laying the foundation of the super-structure in the justice-satisfying, redemption-procuring atonement of Christ.

THIS free, genuine, unforced inclination of the mind and soul, evenly and universally, unto all that is spiritually good, unto all acts and duties of holiness, with an inward labouring to break through and to be quit of all opposition, is the first fruit and most pregnant evidence of the renovation of our natures by the Holy Ghost.—*Dr. John Owen.*

A Lecture.

BY REV. ALEXANDER MACRAE, KAMES, KYLES OF BUTE.

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*PSALM XXI.*  
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THE Book of Psalms contains a summary of all the doctrines unfolded in the Word of God. In language of exquisite beauty it describes the loveliness and excellency of Him who is the sum and substance of it all, without whom the Scriptures would be absolutely meaningless. Christ is their central theme, for a Christless Bible is no Bible. As He is the Truth, all Scripture centres in Him. The Book of Psalms is thus designed to be a fountain of consolation to the Church of Christ in all ages. Whatever their case may be, they will find something to correspond with it in the Psalms. In some, Christ is described in His state of humiliation as suffering on behalf of His people, enduring the Father's wrath, and forsaken by God. He is prominently represented in His prophetic, priestly, and kingly offices. But He is also set forth in His resurrection and ascension, and in His coming to judge the world at the last day. The psalms are full of Christ. They contain "wine that maketh glad the heart of man, oil to make his face to shine, and bread which strengtheneth man's heart." They have been the means of nourishing, refreshing, and invigorating the "poor and needy" ever since they were given by inspiration of God, and a sign of sad and woeful declension it is to substitute for them in the public worship of the sanctuary uninspired hymns of human composition.

In this psalm, Christ is represented as the ascended and exalted King of His Church. It was penned by David, to whom—in a typical sense—it has reference, as seated on the throne of the kingdom of Israel. When the Lord rejected Saul, David was anointed king. But he did not sit and reign as king till after a season of suffering and affliction which culminated in a complete victory over his enemies and in his advancement to regal power and authority. David was thus a signal type of Christ, so that the real and proper subject of the Psalm is Christ in His exaltation. Him the Father "set at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named not only in this world, but also in that which is to come." When David began to wield the sceptre of the kingdom of Israel, he, as the type, pours forth his heart in acknowledgment of the goodness of God to him. He owes the victory, elevation, and the salvation he was favoured with to the omnipotent arm of Jehovah. Deeply impressed with a sense of his own weakness, and of the favour and goodness of God in sustaining him and carrying him through to victory, he magnifies

and praises the name of the Lord. "The king shall joy in thy strength, O Lord; and in thy salvation how greatly shall he rejoice!" Further impressed with the greatness of the honour conferred upon him in his exalted Head, he expresses his acknowledgment of it in the words—"Honour and majesty hast thou laid upon him. For thou hast made him most blessed for ever: thou hast made him exceeding glad with thy countenance." As by grace he was enabled to confide in the Lord in the past, so now he looks forward to the future in the hopeful expectation that his enemies, instead of ever being able to overthrow his government, shall all be crushed under his feet. "Thine hand shall find out all thine enemies; . . . thou shalt make them turn their back, when thou shalt make ready thine arrows upon thy strings against the face of them."

Christ, the proper subject of the psalm, is represented as addressing the Father in it, to whom He expresses thankfulness for triumphs obtained on His exaltation to the throne of glory. The psalm is divided into two parts. The first part contains a thanksgiving for victory, and in the second part the Lord Jesus expresses confidence of further success, and the certainty that all His enemies shall become His footstool.

The victory celebrated in the first part of the psalm is that obtained by Christ for His people over him who had the power of death. In having spoiled principalities and powers, He took the prey from the mighty and delivered the lawful captive. In order that liberty might be proclaimed to the captives, He willingly consented to come under covenant engagements on their behalf from everlasting. The fallen, ruined, and lost state of man was from the beginning present to His all-seeing eye. From that ruined mass, God—in sovereign grace, mercy, and love—elected some in Christ Jesus to eternal life, that they might be as trophies of Christ's victory. By sin they were shut out from the presence of God, and were cast forth into the open field polluted in their own blood. They were all led captive by Satan at his will, and were children of wrath even as others. Because of their breach of the covenant, they were held under the condemning power of the law and exposed to its awful curse. Justice showed its zeal for the law's honour and stood against them as a flaming sword threatening, yea, demanding eternal vengeance upon them for their sin. Their case seemed to be utterly hopeless, and in themselves they were absolutely helpless. But, as the victory celebrated in this psalm indicates, Christ engaged to become their Representative, their Surety, and their Substitute, and in the fulness of time actually entered upon the work of accomplishing redemption for them. He thus became their kinsman. Sin must be infinitely punished in the very nature in which it was committed, justice must be satisfied, the law must be magnified, all the glorious attributes of the Godhead must be honoured and glorified, and in human nature the head of the serpent must be bruised. That

such a glorious consummation has been brought about, the song of praise and thankfulness for victory celebrated in this psalm afford ample evidence. To be fully furnished for accomplishing redemption for His people, the Father prepared a body for Him; the Holy Spirit miraculously conceived it; Christ assumed it and brought it into an inseparable union with His divine nature; and to Him the plenitude of the Spirit was communicated. He is thus represented as having left the Father's bosom. "Inasmuch as the children were partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death." The Father gave Him great and precious promises to help and to uphold Him in His sufferings. In the promises of the Father He trusted. "The Lord God will help me; therefore shall I not be confounded; therefore have I set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed." When He bare the awful load of the sins of an elect world, met the law's infinite curse, and endured the heavy strokes inflicted by the sword of Divine justice, how wonderfully was He upheld! "Behold, my servant, whom I uphold." When He had to drink the cup of infinite wrath presented to Him, when all comfortable influences were withheld, and the light of His Father's countenance withdrawn, He was sustained by the power of His eternal Godhead; and when He had to grapple with all the hosts of darkness, with the world, with Satan and myriads of evil spirits, with death and the grave, He was supported by His almighty power and triumphed eternally over them all. When He had thus by Himself purged the sins of His people, He sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high. From this throne of honour and glory, Christ—as exalted—resounds, in the words of this psalm, the praises of Him who set upon His head a crown of purest gold.

"The king shall joy in thy strength, O Lord," are the words with which He begins His thanksgiving for victory. He is the King eternal, immortal, invisible. In His exaltation He executes the kingly office as He did in His humiliation. As God over all, He is King of kings and Lord of lords. He is also so as Mediator; for "at the name of Jesus every knee must bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and every tongue must confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." As seated on His kingly throne, invested with absolute authority and universal dominion, He is represented as joying in the strength of the Lord. Before the foundation of the world a joy was set before Him. For it He "endured the cross and despised the shame." He had the joy of glorifying the Father, and of saving His people. "Father, glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee." The glory of God was His great concern, and in this He has left His people an example. He had a joy in the prospect of magnifying the Father's law, which He infinitely loved, and of making it honourable. He

had a joy in the prospect of satisfying the Father's inflexible justice on the accursed tree, of making atonement for the sins of His people and expiation for their guilt, of exhausting the law's curse and appeasing the Father's wrath, of finishing transgression and bringing in an everlasting righteousness. Thus "truth met with mercy, righteousness and peace kissed mutually." He also joyed in the prospect of purchasing a peculiar people for Himself, whom He loved with an everlasting love, and redeemed with His blood. He joys in the Father's promise that He shall see of the travail of His soul, and shall be satisfied. But here He is said to joy in the strength of the Lord. Let us remember that Christ as Mediator is both God and man. As God He is omnipotent, His power cannot be limited. Consequently, the strength in which Christ joys is that which was communicated to His human nature and that upheld it in the awful sufferings it endured as He was purchasing redemption for the objects of His love. To them His strength shall be matter of joy for ever. His arm brought salvation to them. By the power of His Spirit they are created anew in Christ. In Him they are preserved and kept, and the faithfulness of a promise-giving and promise-keeping Jehovah will secure to them actual possession of the promised inheritance.

He rejoices, as the exalted Mediator, not only in the strength, but also in the salvation of God." "In thy salvation how greatly shall He rejoice!" As David passed through much affliction and suffering to sit on the throne of the kingdom of Israel, in like manner, the Lord Jesus entered into His glory through a sea of trial and suffering altogether unparalleled to be clothed, as the Church's Head, with the garments of salvation. Hence, He is represented as saying, "I will take the cup of salvation." Christ may and does suffer in His public cause and in the members of His mystical body, but He shall no more suffer in the body the Father prepared for Him. In it He is glorified and liveth for ever. "Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over Him." His exaltation by the Father is a salvation in which He rejoices, for He is made a Priest after the power of an endless life. But He likewise rejoices in the salvation He obtained for His people as their Redeemer. He rejoices in it as the salvation of God. The Father contrived it, and in working it out He was strengthened and upheld by Him. He rejoices in the effectual application of it to the souls of those whose sins He bare and for whom He died; and, again, He rejoices in it as it ultimately secures to His people complete redemption from sin. He prays that they may be with Him. Christ, holy angels, and glorified saints shall rejoice for ever in the salvation of God now freely offered to sinners of every description in the Gospel. The Church on earth rejoices in it. "We will rejoice in thy salvation; in the name of the Lord we will display our banners."

In His song of praise He acknowledges that the Father satisfied

His desire and answered His request. "Thou hast given him his heart's desire, and hast not withholden the request of his lips." He is represented as having requested certain things, and on these the desire of His heart was set. He desired them, as the Mediator, for His people, and whatever He asked was granted. These requests He made from everlasting in the counsel of peace that was between them both. For His people He asked for all the blessings of grace. He asked for glory and eternal life, and "thou didst not withhold from Him whatever His lips did crave." He thus received gifts from the Father for the rebellious, that the Lord God might dwell in their midst. He mentions in the fourth verse that He asked life of Him and He gave it, "even length of days for ever and ever." For Himself, as man, when He was about to lay down His life, He asked life. He asked that He might be raised to life again, and the request of His petition was granted. "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. . . . I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father." The Father has given Him, as Mediator, life. He gave Him power to take again the life that He laid down, so that He did not leave His soul in hell, neither did He suffer His Holy One to see corruption. Hence He says, "I am he that liveth and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore." To His people God gives spiritual and eternal life. That life is in the Son. To Him it was given by God for them. Christ has thus power to bestow eternal life on as many as the Father gave Him, and these shall live and reign with Him for ever. The Father granted Him the petitions of His lips when on earth. "Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications, with strong crying and tears unto him who was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared." As the Advocate with the Father, His petitions on behalf of His people are heard and granted. His intercession is effectual and all-prevailing. Satan desires to have them that he may sift them as wheat; but He prays for them that their faith fail not. He prays that they may be with Him where He is, and there they shall see Him as He is and be made like unto Him. He observes how speedily His requests were answered. "Thou preventest him with the blessings of goodness." Literally, to prevent signifies "to go before." To prevent Him with the blessings of goodness may, therefore, denote that they were freely and immediately bestowed, or, as some say, before He could well ask for them, or before He had done requesting them, they were given to Him. He got these blessings from the Father. They are temporal, spiritual, and eternal blessings for His people. They were given by God in Christ before the world began. But now Christ is exalted, a Prince and a Saviour, to dispense the blessings He received as the fruit of His obedience. "Thou hast made him most blessed for ever;" that is, "Thou hast set him to

be blessings for ever." This cannot be said of Him as God. As God He "is over all, blessed for ever," and obviously cannot be made so. But, as man and Mediator, He is made "most blessed for ever." As Mediator, the fulness of the Godhead dwells in Him bodily. He has a fulness of grace. "Of his fulness have we all received, and grace for grace." He received from the Father a fulness of blessings and gifts, to be bestowed by Him upon the rebellious. All blessings and gifts are thus treasured up in Christ, as Mediator. In Him boundless riches are laid up to meet the needs and necessities of His afflicted and tried people. "My God shall supply all your needs according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus." There is, therefore, in Him a sufficiency of grace and strength. "My grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness." By and through Him the blessing of remission of sin is bestowed upon the Church. "The blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth us from all sin." The blessing of repentance is also dispensed by Him, for He is "exalted . . . to give repentance to Israel and remission of sin." Again, the blessing of peace with God is through Christ, the Mediator. "Being justified by faith we have peace with God through the Lord Jesus Christ." As He is made to His people wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption, the Father has set Him to be blessings for ever. In Him they have everlasting righteousness and strength. To have Christ, then, is to have the blessings and gifts which He, as Mediator, received from the Father to be bestowed by Him upon "the poor and needy" in the exercise of His mediatorial functions. "If Christ is yours, all are yours."

But He is "made most blessed for ever," not only as He has a right to bestow the blessings purchased by Him upon His people, but as a crown of pure gold has been set on His head by the Father. "Thou settest a crown of pure gold on his head." The Church in heaven is represented as wearing a crown. Their crown is a crown of life. "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." It is called a crown of glory. "When the chief shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away." It is also termed a crown of righteousness. "Henceforth, there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day." But here is a crown set on Christ's head. The Church is said to crown Him. "Go forth, O ye daughters of Zion, and behold King Solomon with the crown, wherewith his mother crowned him in the day of his espousals, and in the day of the gladness of his heart." Christ wears many crowns. All the redeemed will set on His blessed head the crown of their salvation; so that "worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing." He wears a crown that the Father set on His head. He is crowned as King. Naturally, He is the King eternal, bearing universal sway and

exercising unlimited authority. Mediatorially, He is crowned as "King of kings and Lord of lords," as King of nations, and the only Head and King of His Church. "Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." The Father thus set a crown on Him as King of His mediatorial kingdom, and "the crown that he doth wear upon him flourish shall." When David captured Rabbath, he took the king's crown from off his head, and it was set on David's head. So when Christ bruised the head of the serpent, triumphed over Satan, the world, sin, death, and the grave, and was received up into glory, the Father is represented as setting on His head a crown of purest gold. He addresses Him in the words—"Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever; a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom." He is thus enthroned at the right hand of the Majesty on high, amidst the acclamations of myriads of holy angels and spirits of just men made perfect. "Sing praises unto our king, sing praises; for God is king of all the earth." The Father now invested Him with all power in heaven and in earth; He conferred on Him the promised reward; He put into His hands all the gifts and graces of the Spirit to give to men; and He ordained Him Judge of the quick and dead. It is a crown "of purest gold," denoting the purity, glory, and perpetuity of His kingdom. As thus exalted, He is made, exceeding glad with the Father's countenance. As the wisdom of God, He was with the Father from eternity, and ever had an unceasing consciousness of His presence. "I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him." But now, after undergoing the painful experience of the withdrawal of the Father's countenance and the accursed death of the cross, He again beholds His face in righteousness and is made glad with the light of His presence. With Him the Father has ever been well pleased. He gave Himself for His people an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savour. With His sacrifice the Father was infinitely satisfied, so that He is now made full of joy with His countenance. He is thus anointed with the oil of gladness above His fellows. All His garments smell of myrrh, and aloes, and cassia, out of the ivory palaces whereby they have made Him glad. In His glorified human nature He is filled with a fulness of joy. All things are put under His feet, and at the right hand He shall have pleasures for evermore. The crowning of Christ is a pledge to His people that they also shall be crowned. As surely as He is now made glad with the Father's countenance, all the members of His family shall yet drink, in their measure, out of the same fountain of blessedness. When they awake they shall be satisfied with His likeness; for He shall receive them unto Himself, that where He is, there they may be also.

In the second part of the psalm, confidence of further success is expressed. David was made to trust in the name of the Lord. The name of the Lord was to him a strong tower, and he had the

assurance that through the mercy of the Most High he would not be moved. His enemies frequently attempted to dethrone him, but the Lord brought their counsel to nought, and made their devices of none effect. He thus continued to sit, rule, and reign as king in spite of them all. In like manner, Christ, the King eternal, shall never be dethroned. He shall reign for ever and ever, in spite of the malignant opposition of men and devils to Him. To Him the Father said—"Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool." The heathen rage and the kings of the earth set themselves against Him. Their rulers take counsel together to break His bands from them and cast away His cords. How awfully foolish is the course on which the enemies of Christ are bent! He to whom the Father says, "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever," is opposed by mere worms of the dust. The nations are as a drop of the bucket to Him, and they are counted as the small dust of the balance. The inhabitants of the earth are as grasshoppers before Him. He brings their princes to nothing, and He makes their judges as vanity. As He sits on His throne in the heavens, He holds in derision the wicked designs of His enemies against Him. He is omniscient and omnipotent, so that His hand shall find out all His enemies, and His right hand shall find out those that hate Him. He knows them all. Many of them go under the mask of an outward appearance of godliness, and these are more powerful instruments in the hand of Satan to advance his kingdom, than even those who live in open sin. They are described as a generation of vipers, for whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever. The Pharisees and Scribes who would not have Him reign over them were more bitterly opposed to Him than even the publicans and harlots, and He tells them that these would enter into the kingdom of God before them. His foundation, therefore, stands sure, and it has the seal that the Lord knows them that are His. His right hand shall find out those that hate Him. His right hand denotes His omnipotence. "Thou hast a mighty arm; strong is thine hand, and high is thy right hand." All His enemies shall be made subject to Him. They shall become His footstool; for He is the Most Mighty, on whose thigh His sword is girt with glory and majesty, and His arrows shall be sharp in the heart of His enemies. In His majesty He rides prosperously, and His right hand shall teach Him terrible things. None of them can escape. They all shall be dragged before His tribunal to receive the awful doom, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." His indignation shall be revealed against all unrighteousness and ungodliness of men. He shall thus make His enemies as a fiery oven in the time of His anger. They cannot go unpunished. The wrath of the King shall kindle against them and shall overtake them, "He shall speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure." His wrath is compared to an

oven or furnace of fire into which His enemies shall be cast, on whom, the Scriptures declare, He "shall rain snares, fire and brimstone, and an horrible tempest," which shall be the portion of their cup for ever. How sadly blinded are His enemies in their course of determined opposition to Him! Flee to Him for mercy now, while He waits to be gracious. He is now in much long-suffering and forbearance willing to show mercy, and exhorting His enemies to flee to Him for salvation. He delights in mercy; judgment is His strange work. But though He is long-suffering, He is not all-suffering. His patience, which He exercises long towards His enemies, shall be exhausted, and the day of the wrath of the Lamb shall surely come. He shall appear as the Lion of the tribe of Judah, and at the blast of the breath of His nostrils "the wicked shall be turned into hell and all the nations that forget God." There is thus a time fixed when His anger shall overtake His enemies, upon whom the vials of His wrath shall be poured forth. It is said that "He shall swallow them up in His wrath, and the fire shall devour them." Let all Christ's enemies remember that "the day cometh that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble; and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch." Their fruit shall be destroyed from the earth, and their seed from among the children of men; for soon Christ shall be heard saying, with all the terrible-ness that the words convey, "Those mine enemies which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me." In vain, therefore, they resist His authority. His enemies are in His hands; and if they obey Him not, He shall break them with a rod of iron and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel. Christ shall rule in the midst of His enemies; and as He already, through death, bruised the head of the serpent and spoiled principalities and powers, He shall surely subdue under Him all who are now inimical to His kingdom, government, and authority. They are represented as intending evil against Him and imagining a mischievous device which they are not able to perform. So they did when His holy body had lain in the bosom of the earth. They sealed the stone and set a watch over the grave; but they were not able to perform their wicked intentions and mischievous devices. In like manner, they devise mischievous things against His cause and people. "They said in their heart, Let us destroy them together." The wicked thus plot against the just. They draw out the sword to cast them down; but the Lord will cause their sword to enter into their own heart. Christ is the exalted King of His people. Their enemies are His enemies, and He shall defend them and preserve them from all evil. He shall cause their enemies to turn their back when He shall make ready His arrows upon His strings against the face of them. They shall turn their back and flee to the dens and rocks of the mountains to hide themselves from the face of the Lamb.

A day has been fixed in which judgment shall be publicly pronounced upon them. Before the glory of Christ's second advent their hearts shall melt with fear, as wax melts before the fire. He shall thus be revealed from heaven in flaming fire to punish His enemies with an everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power. He shall then make His arrows ready upon His strings against the face of them. He shall set them as a butt against which the arrows of His wrath and vengeance shall for ever be directed. Thus the arrows of the Almighty shall stick fast in them, and the terrors of God shall set themselves in array against them throughout an endless eternity. Christ shall, therefore, sit and reign as King for ever, and all His enemies shall be made His footstool. He shall be exalted in His strength when His malicious foes shall be consigned to outer darkness, where the smoke of their torment shall ascend for ever and ever. His saints, who have made a covenant with Him by sacrifice, shall be gathered together unto Him, that, in entering eternally into the joy of the Lord, they may unceasingly sing to the praise of His grace. As all His and their enemies shall thus become His footstool, they are represented as saying—"So shall we sing and praise thy power."

In conclusion, admire and adore the riches of free and sovereign grace exhibited in this psalm. The exaltation of Christ secures to His people all the blessings of the everlasting covenant, and it is a pledge of their exaltation. Contemplate the love that moved God to make provision in Christ Jesus for a perishing world. He "so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Seek that you may receive a saving interest in Him who brought life and immortality to light by the Gospel, and whose exaltation to the right hand of God is so touchingly described in this precious psalm. He who endured the ignominious death of the cross is now seated on a throne of glory, clothed with majesty most bright. An eternal blessedness awaits all who have, in any measure, been enabled to behold by faith His excellency and loveliness. But let them who are still enemies to Him and to His people give heed lest He come forth against them in judgment, to cut them asunder, and appoint them their portion with the hypocrites. He still sits on a throne of grace, and, ruined and hell-deserving as you are, He graciously invites you to flee to Him for mercy, that you may eat of His bread and drink of the wine that He has mingled. "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."

SOME who, to decry other important mysteries of the Gospel, do place all Christianity in the imitation of Christ, do yet indeed in their practice despise those qualities and duties wherein He principally manifested the glory of His grace.—*Dr. John Owen.*

Professor Bruce's New Book: "The Providential Order."

(Second Notice).

IN his third lecture entitled "Theistic Inferences," Professor Bruce exhibits very strongly his fear of the doctrine of special creation. The question has naturally arisen among evolutionists as to the cause that started the evolutionary process. Many of them have been compelled by natural reason, in spite of the atheistic tendency of their theory, to take up the position that this cause was the hand of God. They have admitted that a transcendent Divine interposition required to take place at the start. But Professor Bruce is so much afraid of anything approaching a Divine interposition that he shrinks back from the conclusion and declares he will not pronounce any "confident judgment" upon it. This is certainly evolutionism of a remarkably extreme type, and to us it appears no better than atheism. He seems, however, to have a peculiar view of the operation of God. For we find that neither at the origin of physical life, nor conscious life does he feel any need of "immediate Divine interposition." He holds that "the true conception of God's relation to the universe is—*God always dwelling in the world and ever active there.*"—(p. 62). He admits that God is above the world, but he lays great emphasis upon His incessant activity in it, and is not prepared to say that at any period in its history was there "transcendent Divine action." He appears to us to favour a form of the Pantheistic system which asserts that everything is God. If there has never been any such thing as "transcendent Divine action" exerted to produce effects beyond the power of natural causes, and if God is "always dwelling in the world and ever active there," according to Professor Bruce, then God has ever been under the reign of natural causes, yea, is Himself a natural cause. The transcendent and self-existent Creator is hereby identified with the natural processes which He himself has instituted. A supreme First Cause is therefore not to be found in the universe. If there is no such Cause, then there is no God. From the whole trend of his reasoning we fear that Professor Bruce is not far from Pantheism, however he might stoutly deny it. Pantheism which makes everything God is a degrading theory highly dishonouring to the Creator of heaven and earth, for it reduces Him to an equality with physical matter. It is equally as bad as Materialism, which accounts for everything by matter without God. Both theories are really but two different forms of atheism.

Our author, whilst very tender to everything that favours the extremest evolutionism, is always ready to give a blow to the Scriptural doctrine of creation. He tries to disparage the doctrine that God created all things at the beginning by the word of His

power, by pointing out the danger of Deism, which affirms that God exerted His power at the creation, but has ever since stood afar off and allowed the world to take care of itself. But no one that has the least understanding of the truth would fall into this error, and the older theologians are not responsible for it. Witness Dr. Owen: "God did not create the world to leave it an uncertain event; to stand by and to see what would become of it; but the same power and wisdom that produced, still attends it, powerfully pervading every particle thereof."

We now proceed to the sixth lecture, entitled "The Worth of Man," where Professor Bruce introduces us to, among other things, what is known as pre-historic man. Our readers are, no doubt, aware that evolutionists have incurred the very hard task of supplying the history of man's development from the lower animals. How is the historic gap between the lower animals and man to be filled up? Here is the way our author introduces the subject. He has been speaking of man at the lowest and the worst, and he says:—"I leave the savage and the criminal on one side meantime, and purpose to speak a kindly word for the primitive man, whose unrecorded life filled up the long blank space of thousands or tens of thousands of years before civilisation and history began, whose religion was *Animism* (a belief in spirits everywhere), whose tools were made of flint and stone, and who was slowly learning to say "I." Theologians have hardly begun to recognise his existence yet, and are even gravely in doubt whether they can afford to do so. Whether he lived on this earth is still a debated question. Science, geology, and anthropology affirm; *theology, interested in traditional dogmas, denies*. I do not presume to judge authoritatively between them. I only venture to express the hope that theology does not need, in the interest of the Christian faith, or of a high esteem of the Scriptures, to foreclose the question, but *can afford to treat it as a simple matter of fact*. It is always best when faith is able to take up this attitude; and it has happily been found possible to do so in many cases in which at first it was supposed impossible. I shall go on the assumption that this case will turn out to be no exception, and provisionally take for granted that "primitive man" is not an imaginary being, but from the most recent tertiary period to the earliest dawn of history has been an actual denizen of this earth."—(p. 158, 9.) After speaking of the language, morality and religion of this primitive man, he goes on to say:—"We do not despise the primitive man; no one imbued in any measure with the modern scientific spirit can despise him. Does God then despise him? Must we conceive God as too holy to be able to contemplate with complacency the rudimentary rational and moral state of primitive humanity? To some such feeling is probably due the tenacity with which the religious spirit clings to a conception of the pristine state as one of perfection, the first man bearing God's image, not only potentially, but in full realisation,

in respect of knowledge, righteousness and holiness. It is specially natural to cherish this view as of vital moment when man is viewed as a direct product of the immediate creative causality of God."—(p. 194, 5). At the beginning of our first quotation, Professor Bruce takes for granted the existence of the primitive man. He then tells us that there is a controversy between science and theology on the subject, and he finally winds up by expressing the hope that theology can afford to treat primitive man as a simple matter of fact. He affirms that it is "theology interested in traditional dogmas" that denies. This is the way in which he speaks of that theology which he himself has vowed to assert, maintain, and defend. But we have to say that it is not traditional dogmas only that contradict the theory of primitive man, but the Word of God from beginning to end, without which there would have never been any theology worthy the name. Will any one that cherishes "a high esteem of the Scriptures" be prepared to treat the account of the creation given therein as a mere fable? And yet this is what Professor Bruce does.

The Scriptures tell us, in language of unmistakable clearness, and without dubiety, that God created man at the beginning, male and female, in the fully developed powers of mind and body. Adam and Eve are acknowledged throughout the Scriptures as the parents of our whole race. To introduce, therefore, primitive pre-historic man is to subvert the doctrine of man as taught in the Word of God. If this Word is wrong on this fundamental matter it cannot be right on anything else. The doctrines of sin and salvation are subverted by this theory. We are told in the Scriptures that "by one man sin entered into the world," and "that in Adam all die," so that the whole race was bound up with Adam to stand or fall with him. Further, the Lord Jesus Christ is spoken of as the second Adam, the head and representative of a spiritual seed. It is evident, therefore, that the Scriptures must be accepted or rejected as to their doctrine of man, and they who reject that doctrine also reject the whole system of divine truth concerning sin and salvation. In fact, it would appear to us that the evolution theory, with its myth pre-historic man, was invented to undermine this whole system. It postulates a progressive development from the very lowest form of life up to primitive man at his lowest, and thence through a marvellous stretch of years up to man as he is found on the first pages of history. It is perfectly evident, therefore, that upon this hypothesis there cannot have been any original state of perfection, and as a natural consequence, there cannot have been any fall by sin from that state. It is further clear that there cannot have been any such thing as sin, for sin is a departure from a fixed moral standard, and if the evolutionary process still continues, there cannot be such a thing as sin now. As evolution or development is the order of things or the law of being, then it is impossible to depart from that order, and no man or woman can be charged

with guilt for being anything other or better than he or she is. These are some of the consequences of this evolution theory which Professor Bruce advocates. In the second quotation above given, he tries to explain away the Scriptural doctrine of the first man as bearing God's image. He ascribes this doctrine to the religious feeling that God is too holy to view with complacency anything less than a perfectly holy creature. Whence, however, did this feeling spring? It sprang from God himself speaking in His Word, and it is because Professor Bruce prefers the voice of so-called science to the voice of God that he does not cherish the same feeling. He regards God as looking with complacency on man in the early primitive stage when he was a rude immoral savage. This is surely subversive of moral order to the last degree. It intimates that God had no regard for moral order, and that He appointed man to pass through thousands of years of immorality before He should reach civilisation. If this does not make the Creator the abettor and approver of immorality we know not what does. In conclusion, we have to say that no real scientific grounds can be adduced for the existence of this primitive man. Professor Bruce says his life is "unrecorded." Surely his history is then a fictitious one. We cannot found a history where all records are absent. And further, if the period of primitive man occupied tens of thousands of years, is it likely there should be no records? What was he occupied with during that period, which is four or five times the length of the whole space of our race since the beginning? We say that to accept the primitive man is to accept an irrational piece of imagination. The Scriptures are our most ancient and reliable records, and prehistoric man is not to be found there.

In speaking of depraved men, Professor Bruce evidently has very confused and erroneous notions of depravity, and of God's power to deal with it. He says: "That degeneracy may go to a hopeless point even for God may be possible, but it very often seems to have reached that point in the judgment of men when, to the Divine eye, there is still some redeeming feature; under the hard rocky substance of evil habit, a store of water that reached, by the boring tool of pain, might spring up an Artesian well of eternal life." Again, "God loves the human, and His omniscient eye wistfully searches for some small remnant of it, even in men whose life seems wholly bestial or diabolic."—(p. 169). What a mongrel theology is this! On the one hand he thinks it possible that degeneracy may go too far for God to cure, and on the other there is hardly any creature but in which there is something for God to love. Redeeming features and wells of eternal life are hidden in the hearts of sinners whom the Scriptures describe as dead in trespasses and sins. Here is salvation by natural goodness, without Christ, regeneration or redemption. All that is needed is "the boring tool of pain." But this is no adequate instrument for the work, for pain as well as pleasure

hardens the soul unless blessed by the Spirit of God through the Gospel. Our author, however, goes a step still lower. He says, "God loves the human," and if "some small remnant of it" is left, that is enough. Truly this is low indeed. Those in the place of woe are still human. They cannot lose possession of their immortal souls nor become brute beasts, though Professor Bruce insinuates the possibility of this, and, therefore, upon his own principle God also loves them, and we think he holds out that there is hope for them also, for he adds to that already quoted concerning the love of God: "He shows His love, not by attempting to make such men happy—that is neither possible or desirable—but by conducting them through a hell of misery to wise reflection and penitent resolve. Let the wicked forsake his way," etc.—(p. 169).

In concluding this article we cannot refrain from saying that there is not a page of this book but to which exception may be taken, and that Professor Bruce seems to be far out of sight at almost every point of a sound Biblical theology. We hope to conclude our criticism in next number.

A Noble Woman Martyr.

A STRIKING EVIDENCE OF THE POWER OF DIVINE GRACE.

HER name was Prest; she dwelt near Launceston, and was the wife of a man in humble life. Her husband and children were greatly addicted to popery, and grieved and persecuted her; they drove her to mass, to confession, and to return thanks for the re-establishment of Antichrist's kingdom in our land, but after long trouble for conscience sake, and earnest prayer to God for help and direction, she was led to forsake all, and throw herself out of house and home, rather than dishonour the Lord by such idolatrous conformings. Accordingly she departed, taking nothing with her, but by labour and spinning earned enough to support herself, still openly declaring her mind where ever she could. At length she was accused of heresy, and cited before the Bishop of Exeter, who thus addressed her, "Thou foolish woman, I hear say that thou hast spoken certain words against the most blessed sacrament of the altar, the body of Christ. Fie! for shame! thou art an unlearned person, and a woman, and wilt thou meddle with such high matters which all the doctors in the world cannot define? Wilt thou talk of so high mysteries? Keep to thy work, and meddle with that thou hast to do. It is no woman's matter, at cards and tow to be spoken of; and if it be as I am informed, thou art worthy to be burned." She replied that she was but a poor woman, earning a penny truly, and giving part of what she got to the poor. On being asked whether she had a husband, she replied she had a husband and children, and *had them not.*

So long as she was at liberty, she refused neither husband nor children ; "but now, standing here as I do, in the cause of Christ and his truth, where I must either forsake Christ or my husband, I am content to stick only to Christ, my heavenly Spouse, and renounce the other." Here she quoted the words, "He that leaveth not father and mother," etc., but the Bishop interrupted her, saying that Christ spake this of the holy martyrs who died because they would not sacrifice to false gods. "Surely, sir," she answered, "and I will rather die than do any worship to that foul idol which with your mass ye make a god." The bishop, in a rage, asked if she would so call the blessed sacrament of the altar? She replied, "Yea, truly, there never was such an idol as your sacrament is made of priests, and commanded to be worshipped of all men, with many fond fantasies, when Christ did command it to be eaten and drunk in remembrance of his most blessed passion for our redemption." After some railing from the bishop, she asked leave to give a reason for refusing to worship the sacrament, and he replied, "Marry, say on ; I am sure it will be a goodly gear."—"Truly, such gear as I will lose this poor life of mine for," said she. 'Then you will be a martyr, good wife !'—"Indeed, if the denying to worship that *bread* god be my martyrdom, I will suffer it with all my heart." The bishop desired her to say her mind, and after requesting him to bear with her as a poor, unlearned woman, she thus spoke—"I will demand of you whether you can deny your creed, which doth say that Christ doth perpetually sit at the right hand of His Father, both body and soul, until He come again, or whether He be there in heaven, our Advocate, and do make prayer for us unto God, his Father? If it be so, He is not here on the earth in a piece of bread. If He be not here, and if He do not dwell in temples made with hands, but in heaven, what, shall we seek Him here? If He did offer His body, once for all, why make you a new offering? If with once offering He made all perfect, why do you, with a false offering, make all imperfect? If He be to be worshipped in spirit and in truth, why do we worship a piece of bread? If He be eaten and drunk in faith and truth, why do you say you make His body and flesh? and say it is profitable for body and soul. Alas ! I am but a poor woman, but rather than I would do as you, I would live no longer. I have said, sir." The only answer the bishop could give was, "I promise you, you are a jolly heretic. I pray you in what schools have you been brought up?" She replied, "I have upon the Sabbaths visited the sermons, and there have I learned such things as are so fixed in my breast that death itself shall not separate them."—"O foolish woman !" rejoined the bishop, "who will waste his breath upon thee, or such as thou art? But how chanceth it that thou went away from thy husband? If thou wert an honest woman thou wouldst not have left thy husband and children, and ran about the country like a fugitive." "Sir," she replied, "I laboured for my living, and as my Master, Christ,

counsellmeth me, when I was persecuted in one place I fled into another."—"Who persecuted thee?" "My husband and children, for when I would have them to leave idolatry, he would not hear me, but he and my children rebuked me and troubled me, because I would be no partaker of that vain idol, the mass; and wheresoever I was, as oft as I could, upon Sundays and holy days, I made excuses not to go to the popish church."—"Belike then," said the bishop, "thou art a good housewife, to flee from your husband, and from the church."—"My housewifry is but small," answered the simple, faithful creature, "but God gave me grace to follow the true church!"—"The true church," repeated the bishop: "what dost thou mean?"—"Not your popish church, full of idols and abominations; but where two or three are gathered together in the name of God, to *that* church will I go as long as I live."—"Belike then you have a church of your own," observed the bishop: "well, let this mad woman be put down to prison until we send for her husband."—"No," she replied, "I have but one Husband, who is here already in this city, and in prison with me; from whom I will never depart."

Blackstone, the Chancellor, with others, laboured to persuade the bishop that "the poor creature was crazed;" which was no strange thing, seeing how the wisdom of God appears foolishness to the carnal mind. They then agreed among themselves to let her have some liberty, and directed the keeper of the bishop's prison to give her employment in his house as a servant; this service she cheerfully performed, having leave to go out when she would, and finding many who delighted to talk with her. However, her bold speaking against mass-worship annoyed others, and a party of priests took it in hand to persuade her from her heretical opinions, but without success. She told them the sacrament was nothing more than *very bread*, and *very wine*; that they might be ashamed to affirm that a morsel of bread should be turned by a man into the natural body of Christ; bread which doth corrupt, and mice oftentimes do eat it, and it doth mould, and is burned. "And," said she, "God's own body will not be so handled, nor kept in prison, or in boxes, and such-like. Let it be your god, it shall not be mine; for my Lord and Saviour sitteth on the right hand of God, and doth pray for me. And to make that *sacramental* or *significative* bread, instituted for a remembrance, the very body of Christ, and to worship it, is very foolishness and devilish deceit." They answering, said, "The devil had deceived her." "No," she replied, "I trust the living God hath opened mine eyes, and caused me to understand the right use of the blessed sacrament, which the true church doth use, but the false church abuse." Then stepped forth an old friar, asking her what she said of the holy pope? She answered, "I say that he is Antichrist," whereat they all laughed. "Nay," continued she, "ye have more need to weep than to laugh; and to be sorry that ever ye were born to be chaplains of that harlot of Babylon. I defy the pope

and all his falsehood. And get you away from me; ye do but trouble my conscience. Ye would have me follow your doings: I will lose my life first. I pray you depart."—"Why, thou foolish woman," said they, "we come to thee for thy profit and soul's health." She asked what profit could arise by them who taught nothing but lies for truth; or how could they save souls who preached nothing but lies dangerous to destroy souls? "You teach them to worship idols," she said, "the works of men's hands; and to adore a false god of your own making out of a piece of bread; and ye teach that the pope is God's vicar, and hath power to forgive sins; and that there is a purgatory after death, whereas God's Son hath purged all. You say you make God, and sacrifice him, whereas Christ's body was a sacrifice once for all. And do ye not teach the people to number their sins in your ears, and tell them they be damned if they confess not all? when God's holy word of truth saith, "Who can number his sins?" Do ye not promise them trentals, and dirges, and masses for souls, and sell your prayers for money, and make them BUY PARDONS, and trust to foolish inventions of your own imaginations? Do ye not altogether against God? Do ye not make holy bread, and holy water to frighten devils? Do ye not a thousand more abominations? And yet ye say ye come for my profit, and to save my soul. No, no; *One* hath saved me. Farewell you, with your salvation," And no better entertainment could they get from this dauntless confessor of her unshaken faith. However, from this time she was laid fast in prison, and allowed no more indulgence. Many came to see her during her imprisonment, and all received instruction. To one who had been an earnest preacher in King Edward's days, but recanted through fear, she addressed strong and affectionate exhortations to be more bold and fearless in Christ's cause. Among others, came a wealthy and accomplished gentlewoman to visit her, favourably disposed towards the truth; to her Mrs. Prest recited the creed, and on coming to the words "he ascended into heaven," she there paused, and bade the gentlewoman seek His body in heaven, not upon earth; telling her plainly that God dwelleth not in temples made with hands; and that the sacrament was for nothing else than to be a remembrance of the Lord's passion; whereas, as they used it, it was but an idol, and far wide of any remembrance of Christ's body, "broken for you" (1 Cor. xi. 24-26): "so take it, good mistress." The gentlewoman, on returning to her husband, said that she never heard a woman of such simplicity to behold, talk so godly, so perfectly, so sincerely, and so earnestly; adding, "Insomuch, if God were not with her, she could not speak such things, to the which I am not able to answer her, who can read, and she cannot."

While the adversaries assailed the character and afflicted the body of this steadfast witness for the truth, the Lord mightily strengthened and aided her, giving proof to many who conversed with her of her great wisdom in spiritual things, and accurate

knowledge of the scripture, though in other matters incompetent ; and at last, tired of fruitless attempts to shake her faith, they brought against her a new charge, and had her again before the bishop. She was sent from one prison to another, and being urged to make a submission, she answered, "With my death I am content to be a witness for Christ, and I pray you make no longer delay with me ; my heart is fixed ; I will never otherwise say, nor turn to your superstitious doings." Then the bishop observed, "the devil did lead her."—"No, my lord," quoth she, "it is the Spirit of God which leadeth me."

At last being willing to get rid of her, judgment was pronounced against her, and she was delivered up to the secular power. When the sentence was read, detailing the manner of her approaching death, the faithful martyr lifted up her voice, and praised God, saying, "I thank thee, my Lord, my God ; this day have I found what I have long sought." Great mockings and jeerings then assailed her, which she meekly and patiently bore ; then again they affirmed that if she would recant, her life should be spared. To this she replied, "No, that will I not : God forbid that I should lose the life eternal for this carnal and short life. I will never turn from my heavenly Husband to my earthly husband ; from the fellowship of saints to mortal children ; though if my husband and children be faithful, then am I theirs. God is my Father ;—God is my Friend most faithful."

She was then delivered to the sheriff, and in the sight of a great concourse of people was led to execution without the walls of Exeter. Again the priests troubled her, but she desired to have no further conference with them, and went on, praying aloud, "God be merciful to me a sinner : God be merciful to me a sinner." Her cheerful countenance and lively manner shewed her as one prepared to attend the marriage-supper of the Lamb ; and to Him she went, having long had sharp trial of cruel mockings and imprisonment, and afterwards of burning flames of fire ;—but the Refiner sat by, to watch the precious metal, and secure it for himself.—*The Gospel Banner.*

SINNERS can do nothing but make wounds that Christ may heal them, and make debts that He may pay them, and make falls that He may raise them, and make deaths that He may quicken them, and spin out and dig hells to themselves that He may ransom them. Now, I will bless the Lord that ever there was such a thing as the free grace of God, and a free ransom given for sold souls ; only, alas, guiltiness maketh me ashamed to apply Christ, and to think it pride in me to put out my unclean and withered hand to such a Saviour ! But it is neither shame nor pride for a drowning man to swim to a rock, nor for a ship-broken soul to run himself ashore upon Christ.—*Samuel Rutherford.*

The late Mr. John Hamilton, Oban.

IN this frozen age, wherein carnality, self-love, and all iniquity increase, and love to the saints decreases and waxes cold, as the Lord forewarned His Church, the least spark of the love shed abroad by the Holy Ghost in the heart of a sinner towards God, His cause, truth, and people ought to be highly valued. The few remarks which follow are given to the public against the expressed mind of the subject of them. He asked a few days before his end came that all the notes of sermons, &c., left by him should be burned, and that no notice should be taken of him in our Magazine. Knowing his true humility and hatred to ostentation or flattery, we have decided that what we intend to write would not be in the least against his mind; but his request has caused us to curtail very materially what we at first intended to insert. In these circumstances our friends will understand that many things which might be published have, in deference to the wish expressed above, to be withheld; but we hope that the few remarks recorded may not be without interest to our readers.

Mr. John Hamilton came under concern for his immortal soul's salvation when he was a young man in the city of Glasgow. It seems his struggles were long, and that like many others of the Lord's people he thought at first he should be able to hold the company of his former sinful companions and get peace of conscience. In this he failed. When the Lord begins the good work He will carry it on till the day of Christ. In very few did the work of the Spirit of God appear more clearly than in him. He lived a most exemplary life, and his private conversation was almost entirely given up to spiritual concerns. He at that time made up his mind to give up his trade—for he was a joiner—and to study with a view to the ministry. He attended the Glasgow University and got successfully through some of the classes, but owing to the failing condition of his health he had to give it up. Few were so faithful in the pulpit as he. He spoke directly to the reason and conscience of the sinner, and pressed home the imperative duty of closing in with Christ upon the terms of the gospel. To the Lord's people, both in his prayers and preaching, he was very helpful, and caused many who were faint-hearted to take courage. In nothing was he more conspicuous than in the fear he had of sin. He almost in every prayer used the words of the Psalmist, "Thy word have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against thee." For the last few years especially, none could be much in his company without having the impression that his time here would not be long. For several years he had been a missionary among the Highlanders at Clydebank, where he was loved and admired by all who came in contact with him. In the year 1893 he married, and sometime thereafter he left Clydebank, and went to Oban. He officiated to our congregation there, giving the greatest satisfaction, until in the autumn of 1896 he was laid aside

through the effects of a severe cold. He never was of a robust constitution, and his friends were much afraid that he would not get better. We take this opportunity of expressing our appreciation of the noble manner in which that congregation dealt with him. For fifteen months he was unable to do anything publicly, and they continued to pay his salary to the end. Our apology for stating this fact is: "For even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my necessity. Not because I desire a gift: but I desire fruit that may abound to your account. But I have all and abound: I am full having received of Epaphroditus the things which were sent from you, an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well pleasing to God." We now give the following statements as we received them from Mrs. Hamilton as she had them from himself. He was for a long time under conviction of sin, and when he would go out of town on Saturdays with his companions, his conscience continued to gnaw at him for his conduct. The word of God in the hand of the Spirit would give him no peace. He often spoke of the faithful, but tender manner in which the late Rev. Mr. Urquhart of Hope Street, Glasgow, spoke to the young about the eternal concerns of their immortal souls. We heard him frequently speak with great reverence of this godly man. He seemed to have derived great benefit from his faithful ministrations.

"In his private life he was, especially for the last sixteen months, hanging upon the Lord in such a way that I often feared he should not be left long on earth. When he got a glimpse of the Saviour, or a little of His fellowship he was bright and happy; but when he lost sight of this he got depressed and low in his mind, felt the awfulness of sin, and that there was nothing in him but sin and back-sliding." This reminds us of the experience of David the sweet psalmist of Israel, "And in my prosperity I said, I shall never be moved. Lord, by thy favour thou hast made my mountain to stand strong: thou didst hide thy face and I was troubled." Of his love to the Lord's people much could be said without exaggeration. If he heard any one speak disparagingly about any of those whom he regarded as the Lord's people, he would rebuke and exhort such an one with much firmness. We have witnessed this upon more than one occasion. He had very strong attachment to those whom he regarded as the Lord's people. This love seemed to be growing in him from day to day. He was truly a companion of them who feared the Lord. In friendship he was most constant and sincere. He could never flatter anyone, and this may have caused a certain class of men to think that he was rather frigid in his manners. This impression was quite erroneous. When he got into the company of the godly he was very free and cheerful; but in the company of worldly minded men he was very cautious and spoke most sparingly.

The state of the Church in Scotland grieved him much. He looked upon formality in godliness as the most deplorable of all

delusions. Hypocrisy in religion he could not bear with at all. His concerns for the perishing souls of the young of this generation, but especially the young of the Oban congregation, were very deep and continued with him till his end came. His earnestness in pleading for their immortal souls cannot be expressed in more appropriate words than those of the Apostle—"Of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you."

"The Sabbath breaking in Oban, in the summer time especially, by visitors and some of the natives of the town, grieved him exceedingly. He was going to Church one Sabbath evening, and saw a large brake full of people standing at the door of one of the hotels going away for a drive, and he shuddered at the sight. That evening he spoke very strongly against such desecration of the Lord's holy day. He often warned the people of the heinousness of this sin against the eternal God. Another form of this deplorable sin which caused him much pain and grief, was that he saw some of the poor people putting clothes out to dry on the Sabbath day, and, should rain come, taking them in again. 'This is,' he said, 'even worse than Glasgow, for I never saw them doing this.' He deplored the selling of milk by carts and in shops on the Sabbath, and he said to me—'Mark these carts, and don't buy a pennyworth of their milk on the week days.'"

It is very deplorable how loose the people are in their observance of the Lord's day. Men may feign religion as they choose, but the Sabbath will be a sign between God and His people till time shall be no more.

"During the last fifteen months he was unable to go before the congregation except three Sabbaths. He felt somewhat uneasy for a while about his worldly affairs, but the Lord gave a full relief to his mind from such concerns. He was, at the same time, much tried with a sore temptation that it was against the Lord's mind he came to Oban, but about a fortnight before his end came, he said—'I believe now that it was the mind of the Lord that I should have come to Oban, for as He intended to lay His hand upon me, no other congregation would have dealt so nobly with me as the Oban congregation did.' He said, about six weeks before his departure—'If I could go out to speak, though it were but once every Sabbath, I think I would be more faithful in speaking than ever before. But O, I am afraid I am only back-sliding, and I am afraid that is why the Lord has laid His hand upon me.' Being much troubled with a severe cough, he said several times—'I should not be grumbling; if I could exercise patience the Lord would put all things right. Be you praying that the Lord would give me patience.' He fully realised that the time of his departure was at hand, but for the last three weeks of his illness he was much brighter than I ever saw him before. For up till this time he had a strong desire to get more time, that he might preach the Word of God to his fellow-sinners. When he came to understand that it was death, he said—'O, the

goodness of God to me! that He should have had mercy on me.' Again he said—'O, how foolish are they who neglect their soul's salvation till they come to their deathbed. This is not the time to begin to seek peace with God through Christ.' I said to him, 'If I were so sure of rest beyond death and the grave as you are, I would like to depart also.' He said, 'Don't say that, but seek preparation for eternity, and await patiently the Lord's time.' When I would sit down to read, and asked him which book shall I read? he said—'O, read the book of books, the Bible; the glorious Gospel of the precious Word.

'O that men to the Lord would give
Praise for his goodness then,
And for his works of wonder done
Unto the sons of men.'

These words he very often repeated. About ten minutes before he passed away, I said to him—'The Lord Jesus will stretch out His arm to bring you over the Jordan of death. Do you believe this?' With a great effort, he said, 'Yes.'

Thus ended a truly pious young man—being only forty years of age. His dust was laid by the congregation, and a great many of the people of Oban, in the Pennyfair Cemetery, to await the blast of the archangel's trumpet on the morning of the resurrection.

N. C.

Notes from Dr. Thomas Manton.

FAITH IN THE DARK.—In spiritual distresses, though you feel no comfort and quickening, yet you have His Word. Men cast anchor in the dark, and a child takes his father by the hand in the dark. Can you stick to God in the dark? Though you see nothing, yet can you cleave close to Him, and wait and stay upon His name? In the absence of the blessing there is room for faith. Can you take your father by the hand when you cannot see him? And when there is nothing appears to sense, can you stay upon the name of God? Christ may be out of sight, and yet you may not be out of mind. Sense makes lies of God: Ps. xxxi. 22, "I said in my heart, I am cut off from before thine eyes; nevertheless thou heardest the voice of my supplication when I cried unto thee." When to sense and feeling all is gone, God may be very nigh, if we had but an eye of faith to see him. In the midst of the miseries of the present world canst thou comfort thyself with thy right in the promises of the world to come? Though thou hast not possession thou hast the grant, and the deed is sealed; a man may buy lands that he never saw if he be well informed about them. Thus heaven and earth differ; heaven is all performance, and here is very little performance; here we have the first fruits and the earnest, enough to bind the bargain; thou hast the conveyances to show, and it is not a naked bargain, there is earnest given in lieu of a greater sum; now can you wait?

THE BELIEVER AND THE WORLDLING CONTRASTED. — A worldling hath much in hand, but he hath nothing in hope; he hath fair revenues and ample possessions, but he hath no promises. . . . Oh, it is a sad thing to have our portion here, and to look for no more; to have all in hand and nothing in hope. A Christian is not to be valued by his enjoyments, but by his hopes. Do not look upon the children of God as miserable because they do not shine in outward pomp and splendour, for they have meat and drink which the world knows not of—estate, lands and honours which lie in another world. It is better to be trained up in a way of faith than to have our whole portion here. A worldly man hath his present payment, that is all he cares for; but a Christian hath an ample portion—all the testimonies of God, and all His promises concerning this life and a better. And therefore he is a rich man, though stripped of all; his estate lieth in a country where there is no plundering, no sequestration, no alienation of inheritances. So that if he be stripped of all that the world can take hold of, he is a happier man than the greatest monarch of the world, that hath nothing but present things; because he is rich in bills and bonds, such as lie out of the reach of the world. Turn him where you will, yet still he is happy. Turn him into prison, the promises bear him company, and revive and cheer him there. Turn him into the grave, still God goes along with him, and will revive and raise him up again; his riches stand him in stead at death; then is the time to put his bonds in suit. When God comes to demand his soul he gives it up cheerfully, for then he comes to enjoyment, and to possess that which he expected; the best is behind.

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN FAITH AND OTHER THINGS.—*Presumption* has no bottom to work upon, but only some general persuasion that God will be merciful and gracious; but faith hath the Word of God, though it hath nothing else. *Presumption* is a rash confidence, it never looketh to the grounds of it; but faith, though it may be without things promised, yet it cannot be without the promise; it must have some solid grounds to work upon, and not fallible conjectures: 2 Tim., i. 12, "I know whom I have believed, and I am persuaded he is able to keep that which I have committed to him." It proceeds from knowledge and clear ground, and is not a trust taken hand over head. Again, we learn the difference between faith and *sense*. *Sense* must have something in hand, but it is enough to faith to have a promise. *Sense* cannot see, nor be persuaded of, nor embrace things till they are present. Faith, though it receive not the blessings, yet it sees them afar off, and is contented with a ground of hope. Again, we learn the difference between faith and *reason*. *Reason* looketh to outward probabilities, it observeth the clouds; but faith is contented with God's Word, how improbable soever things be. *Reason* sees things in their causes; but faith sees things in the promises, and rests upon the authority

of God's Word. Reason sees more than sense, but faith sees much more than reason, let the case be never so desperate, and things never be so far off. To sense a star is but as a spark or spangle, but reason considereth the distance, and knows them to be rare and great bodies. Faith corrects reason, and though there be no causes, no probabilities, no appearances, faith can see things to come. Again, we see the difference between faith and *conjecture*. Conjecture is but a blind guess, it may be so, or it may not be so; but faith is a certain persuasion, it shall be so, as the Lord hath spoken. Again, it shows the difference between faith and *opinion*, which is somewhat more than conjecture. A man verily thinks it is so, but there is *formido oppositi*, a fear of the contrary; but faith falls embracing and hugging the mercy, is persuaded of it, and rejoiceth and triumpheth as if the blessing were already enjoyed.

The Useless Search.—Luke XXIV. 6.

HE is not here ! the Buried One has risen,
 He gave His life to take it up again :
 Death could not keep Him bound in its dark prison,
 An empty cave but shows where He has lain.
 O faithless heart ! O eyes with weeping red !—
 Why seek the Living One among the dead ?
 He is not here ! behold the grave-clothes lying,
 The folded napkin laid with care aside ;
 No rifled tomb—its seals and guard defying,
 He rose a Conqueror as He had died,
 Crushing earth's powers in dust beneath His tread,
 The Living One no more among the dead.
 He is not here ! O loving ones but faithless,
 What means that grief o'er-burdening the breast ?
 The grave has left His frame unclogg'd and scaithless,
 'Twas but a couch whereon a while to rest—
 The night soon pass'd, morn dawn'd around His bed,
 The Living One awak'd Him from the dead.
 He is not here ! O weary souls that wander
 'Mong earth's dead things to seek a living Lord,
 Lift up your languid eyes, He dwelleth yonder,
 Within the skies the Saviour adored—
 Sin hath your wearied footsteps far misled
 To seek a Living One among the dead.
 He is not here ! not dead but living ever,
 His people's life, the first fruits of the grave :
 To Him by faith united nought can sever
 The Son of God from those He came to save—
 The living members of the living Head
 Shall rise, like Him, in triumph from the dead.

—From "The Christian Treasury," 1880.

Tus Comhairle an Aonaidh.

LE A. MACCOLLA, MINISTEIR NA H-EAGLAIS SAOIRE,
ANN AN CILLE-CHUIMEAN.

(Continued from page 357.)

Le Riaghladh Rìoghachd a dhùnadh a mach, mar dhreuchd fhollaiseach, o dhiadhachd no o aoradh fhollaiseach Dhé a' chumail suas, agus a chur air aghaidh, 's an Rìoghachd, tha iad a' toirt àite do bheachdaibh a tha a' filleadh annta gnè àicheidh air Dia, agus air diadhachd. Air do chuid dhiubh féin so fhaicinn, anns na laithaibh anns an robh comhstrì chomharraichte eadar iad agus daoine ainmeil 's an Eaglais Stéidhichte—eadhon, o cheann sè no seachd bliadhn'-deug thar fhichead, cha ghabhadh iad orr' dol cho fad sin le 'm beachdaibh. Cha 'n ann air luchd-riaghlaidh, mar chriosduidhibh uaigneach eile, a tha sinn a' labhairt; ach air 'n an dreuchd fhollaiseach. Is ann leis an dà ni so a mheasgachadh le chéile, tha iad a' cur folach air an fhìor stéidh air am bheil iad a' seasamh. Anns na làithibh a dh' ainmich sinn, bha a' chùis-thagraidh air a cur anns na briathraibh so: "Gur e'n Riaghladh aimsireil òrdugh Dhé, co dhiubh dh' amhairceas sinn air, ann an solus lagh' ar cruthachaidh, no ann an solus foillseachaidh an t-soisgeil; gu 'n robh e a' cur mar fhiachaibh air luchd-riaghlaidh Rìoghachd, fìor aoradh glan Dhé a chumail suas, agus a' chur air aghaidh, do bhrìgh gu feum iad cunntas a thoirt Dha-san d' am buin na h-uile cumhachd, agus o 'm bheil an t-ùghdarras agus an cumhachd aca—gu 'n d' rinn Dia a thoil fhoillseachadh, agus anns an toil fhoillsichte sin, nach 'eil ni air bith, a tha 'g atharrachadh no a' cur a thaobh, a phrìomh lagh' fo 'n robh òrdugh an Riaghlaidh air a shuidheachadh. Fo fhrithealadh Mhaois gu robh e 'n a dhleasdanas fiachaicht' orra, aoradh follaiseach Dhé a chumail suas, agus a chur air aghaidh." Ach thòisich iadsan air a ràdh nach robh so ceangailt' oirne a choimhead fo 'n Tiomnadh Nuadh. B' e 'm freagradh a bha air a thoirt doibh, "Nach b' urrainn ùghdarras bu lugha na ùghdarras Dhé féin an ni a dh' àithn E féin, a' chur a thaobh, no thoirt air falbh; agus mar sin, na h-uil' àitheantan a thug E fo fhrithealadh Mhaois, gu bheil e mar dhleasdanas air Rìghribh agus air Rìoghachdaibh, an coimhead, ach a mheud 's a bha 'n an sgàilean a chuireadh air cùl, le iad a' dh' fhaotainn coimhlionaidh, no, dh' aithn E, anns an Tiomnadh Nuadh, a thoirt air falbh. Agus a rithis, gu robh reachdan 's an 'fhrithealadh a thaobh dleasdanas luchd-riaghlaidh nach b' urrainn e choimhlionadh, ach le 'ùghdarras agus a chòmh-nadh a thoirt do chreidimh Chrìosd, no do aobhar Chrìosd."

Thòisich iad air a' ràdh, mar their cuid 'n ar latha fèin, gur h-ann an lorg dàimh eaglais ris an Stàta a thainig mearachdan agus truailleidheachdan a steach do'n Eaglais. Ach bha e air dhearbhadh gu buadhach, gu 'n d' thàinig iad a steach innte roimh sin;

agus gu 'm b' e 'n suidheachadh saor-thabhartach féin a b' aobhar do chuid diubh theachd a stigh innte. Ach cha téid duine tuigseach 's am bith, a reusonachadh an aghaidh feum ni sam bith, o 'n mhi-fheum a dh' fheudas a bhi air a dheanamh dheth.

Tha iad ag ràdh, gur h-e òrdugh Chrìosd, gu 'm bitheadh 'aobhair air a chumail suas agus air a sgaoileadh le tabhartais saor-thoile o bhuill na h-Eaglais. Cuiridh na h-uile an aonta ris, gur e dleasdanas buill eaglais, saor-thabhartais a thoirt seachad airson cumail suas aobhar Chrìosd. Bha so ann an làithibh nan Abstol, agus an déigh sin; agus mar so, tha 'n Eaglais Shaor air a cumail suas. Ach an e so an aon dòigh laghail, agus a dh' òrduicheadh le Dia airson so? Tha e soilleir o 'n Fhìrinn nach e; mar a dhearbha sinn cheana. Tha sinn, a ris, ag ràdh, gur e dleasdanas Rìghrean agus Rìoghachdan a tha 'g aideachadh creidimh Chrìosd, 'aobhar-san a chumail suas, agus a sgaoileadh; ach cha 'n 'eil creidimh Chrìosd a' toirt gnùis 's am bith do gheurleanmhuinn. Nis, an dleasdanas a tha fiachaichte air gach ìochdaran fa leth anns an Rìoghachd, tha e fiachaichte, mar an ceudna, air an iomlan diubh, mar Rìoghachd, agus 's ann tre 'n riaghladh a tha iad air an taisbeanadh. Ach, 's ann a thaobh Fìrinn agus Eaglais Dhé a tha sinn a' labhairt. Bu chòir éadar-dhealachadh a choimhead, a ghnàth, eadar a' chòir a ta aig ministear Chrìosd air cumail suas, agus an dleasdanas a tha fiachaichte air an t-sluagh, cumail suas a thoirt dha, co dhiubh 's ann le saor-thabhartas, no tre 'n riaghladh, mar cheanah, a tha 'g an taisbeanadh. Tha saor-thabhartais dleasdanasach a ghnàth; ach cha 'n 'eil e ni 's leoir airson cumail suas òrduighean Chrìosd ann an dùthchaibh ro-bhoichd, agus anns am bheil an sluagh caoin-shuarach mu 'n aobhar, no cho aingidh 's nach toigh leo ni a thoirt seachd air a shon. Tha e soilleir nach robh e an comas na h-Eaglais Chléireil Aointe i féin a shuidheachadh agus a leudachadh ann an àitibh ro bhoichd, mar tha Ghàidhealtachd agus na h-Eileanean, a dh' aindeoin am fialachd.

An so, bheir sinn fa 'r comhair, gu bheil sinn gu h-iomlan an aghaidh an stéidh, air am bheil Eaglais Stéidhichte na h-Alba, o àm an *Dealachaidh*. Ann an nithibh spioradail, tha i gu h-iomlan 'n a tràill d'n Riaghladh aimsireil, 'n a riaghladh, 'n a h-òrduighibh, agus 'n a smachd-eaglais, ma's àill leo chur an cleachdadh, 'n uair dh' fhalbh an Eaglais Stéidhichte o 'n bhunait air 'n do shuidhicheadh an toiseach i. Is amhluidh a thréig an Eaglais Chléireil Aointe, an stéidh air 'n do dhealbh an Aithrichean i, 'n uair a dhealaich iad ri Eaglais na h-Alba. Tha sinne ann an cunnart, mar an ceudna, seadh, cheana, air tì-claonadh o na bunaitibh air 'n do dhealaich sinn ris an Stàta, agus ris an Eaglais stéidhichte.

Bha 'n Eaglais Shaor, o àm an *Dealachaidh*, ag iarraidh gu faicilleach dà mhearachd chronail a sheachnadh; gus an d'éirich iarratus ann am mòran diubh airson aonaidh ri Eaglaisibh eile. A'cheud mhearachd a sheachain i, Teagasg luchd-leanmhuinn Erastuis;—Léigh a bha 's a' Ghearmailt, o cheann thrì cheud

bliadhna. Thuilleadh air mearachdan eile, bha e a' teagasg so, gu 'm b'e 'n riaghladh aimsireil ceann na h-eaglais; gu 'm buin da riaghladh ann an nithibh spioradail co mhaith ri nithibh aimsireil; gu 'm buin da riaghladh thairis oirre 'n a h-òrduighibh, 'n a riaghladh spioradail, agus 'n a smachd-eaglais. Ghéill an Eaglais Steidhichte ann an Alba dha so; ged nach furasda leo so aideachadh; agus ged dh' aobharaich so an Dealachadh. Is i a' mhearachd eile a sheachain i, Teagasg nan Saor-thabhartach (Voluntaryism). Tha iadsan a' dùnadh a mach gu h-ìomlan an Riaghlaidh aimsireil o ghnòthuch a bhi aice ri creidimh no ri Eaglais Chrìosd, mar tha e air a chur an céill leo 'nam bunaitibh eadardhealaichte, a dh' ainmich sinn cheana.

An aghaidh nam mearachdan so, thog an Eaglais Shaor Fianuis fhollaiseach barrachd is aon uair, o 'n dhealaich i ris an Stàta. Is ni deacair do rìreadh gu 'n clonadh i o 'n Fhianuis urramaich so, a thaobh na h-Eaglais féin, agus a thaobh na Rìoghachd mar an ceudna. Ach ciod an dòigh a tha iadsan a tha 'g iarraidh aonaidh ris an Eaglais Chléireil Aointe, a' comhairleadhadh dhuinn, gu faotuinn thairis air na doirbheachdaibh sin, a tha a' seasamh anns an rathad air aonadh? Tha iad ag iarraidh Ceist fhosgailt a a dheanamh do na teagasgaibh mu 'm bheil eas-aonachd. Ciod is ciall da sin, Ceist fhosgailte? Is e so, a bheachd féin a bhi aig gach ministear is neach eile, mar is miann leo; agus nach feudadh na puingeann mu 'm bheil an eas-aonachd a bhi ni s faide 'n an earrann do Fhianuis fhollaiseach ar 'n Eaglais; agus mar sin, gu leigtheadh ri làr a' Bhratach ghlòrmhor agus bhuadhach a bha Eaglais Ath-leasaichte na h-Alba a' cumail suas o cheann thri cheud bliadhna. Ach, ma thachras sin, gu feud a' bheachd féin a bhi aig gach neach, cha bhi feum air Leabhar Aidmheil Chreidimh idir. Cionnus a tha sud co-sheasmhach ri Leabhar Aidmheil a' Chreidimh? Tha ministeirean, agus luchd-dreuchd eile, a' cur an ainm, gu sòluimte' ris, aig àm an cur air leth airson an dreuchd; agus a' bòideachadh na teagasgan a tha ann a' choimhead agus an dìon gu latha am bàis! Bha iad a' faicinn gu 'n robh an doirbheadas so anns an rathad, agus dh' fheuch iad r'a dhearbhadh nach robh na puingeann mu 'm bheil eas-aonachd idir ann an Leabhar Aidmheil a' Chreidimh; oir bha iad a' faicinn, ma bha iad ann, mar gu 'm bheil, gu 'm bitheadh iadsan a chuir an ainm ris ciontach do bhòidibh eithich. Bha so do-ìomchair. Ach, an do dhearbhadh iad sin? Cha do dhearbhadh, agus leigtheadh seachad e.

Ach, mar thubhairt sinn, ma dh' fheadas am beachd féin a bhi aig na h-uile fear, ciod am feum a bhios air Leabhar Aidmheil a' Chreidimh? oir cha 'n urrainn smachd-eaglais a bhi air a chur an gnìomh air neach air bith, ciod 'sam bith am beachd a bhios aige. Agus mar sin, cha bhi samhladh fìrinneach nam briathran fallain air a choimhead ni 's mò.

Tha aobhar againn a bhi co-dhùnadh gu bheil cuid anns an dà eaglais iarrtunach air atharrahadh a dheanamh air Leabhar Aidmheil a' Chreidimh féin. Ach 's ann a ghnà' 'n uair a bha

beachdan mifhallain a' faotainn àit anns na h-Eaglaisibh a bha a leithid so a dh'iarrtus 'g a nochdadh féin 'n am measg. Tha so r'a fhaicinn ann an Eachdraidh Eaglais na h-Alba. O cheann còrr is ceithir fichead bliadhna dh' éirich buidheann innte, a bha do 'n bheachd nach bu chòir iarraidh air ministearibh, no air luchd-dreuchd eile, an ainm a chur ri Leabhar Aidmheil a' Chreidimh. Is ni mi-ghealltanach 'n ar latha gu 'm biodh daoine deònach earrann sam bith do na teagasgaibh luachmhor a tha anns an Leabhar urramach agus iongantach sin, a dhubhadh a mach as, no a thréigsinn, no eadhon, a 'mheasadh iad mi-fheumail no mi-ìomhchuidh e bhi ann.

Ach, fo 'n Cheann so, tha sinn a' faicinn ìomhchuidh beagan a ràdh air na Cumhachaibh Còrdaidh,—Is iad sin, na puingean teagaisg air am bheil na Buidhnean-Aonaidh ag aideachadh a bhi do aon inntinn. Ach is ann a dh' fheumas sinn na Puingean so a' thuigsinn anns an t-solus anns am bheil na puingean, 's am bheil iad a' mi-chòrdadh, 'g an cur. Mur dean sinn sin, cha bhi e furasda a thuigsinn am fìor sheadh anns am bheil iad air an gnàthachadh, ann an co-cheangal ri beachdaibh nan Saor-thabhartach, no, 's an Eaglais Chìeireil Aointe. Anns na briathraibh a leanas, tha iad a' labhairt air an Riaghladh aimsireil: —“Mar Chriosduidhibh eile, 'n an ionadaibh agus 'n an dàimhibh, is còir da mar Fhear-riaghlaidh, ann an deanamh gnothuich 'n a shuidheachadh follaiseach, leas aobhar no creidimh an Tighearna Iosa Chriosd am measg ìochdaran, a chur air aghaidh, anns gach rathad co-sheasmhach ri a spiorad agus a reachdan.” Tha na briathra deireannach 's an earrann so air an eadar-theangachadh 's an “Iomradh” Ghaelic, “A tha réir spiorad agus àitheantean fhìrinn Dhé.” Cha toigh leinn a' bheag a 'ràdh mu 'n eadar-theangachadh so; ach their sinn, gun robh saorsa air a gabhail leis an Eadar-theangair, nach buineadh dha. 'S iad na briathra mar tha iad anns a Bheurla, “Gach rathad co-sheasmhach ri spiorad agus reachdan *creidimh Chriosd*.” A nis, c' arson chuir Buidheann na h-Eaglais Cléireil Aointe an gné ghàraidh is dhìon so air am beachdaibh no 'm bunaitibh? Tuigear so ni 's fèarr le 'm briathraibh féin a chur 'n 'ur cuimhne. Tha iad ag ràdh, “Cha 'n 'eil e laghail d' an Uachdaran aimsireil suidheachadh dùthchail a thoirt do aobhar no do Eaglais Chriosd, le uachdaranachd na Rìoghachd; agus nach 'eil còir aige, agus nach dleasdanas e tha fiachaicht' air, sgillinn a thoirt á ionmhas na rìoghachd airson cumail suas no craobh-sgaoiladh an aobhair sin.” A nis, gabhaibh na briathraibh so an coimhcheangal ris na briathraibh eile, mu 'n do chòrd iad; eadhon, “Gu 'm buin dha chur air aghaidh anns gach dòigh a tha co-sheasmhach ri a spiorad agus a reachdan;” agus ma ni sibh so, nach fheum sibh a cho-dhùnadh gur h-e seadh nam briathra so, Gu bheil spiorad agus reachdan creidimh Chriosd, a réir am beachd-san, a druideadh a mach an riaghlaidh aimsireil o ghnòthuch sam bith a ghabhail ri Eaglais agus ri Fìrinn Dhé, ach an cead a leigeadh leo, no a bhi gun àit idir, mar a nochd

sinn cheana ; ach a mhàin a dìon o ainneart, mar ni e do chomunn choitcinn air bith eile de iochdaranaibh. “ Is còir dha,” arsa’ iadsan, “ leas aobhair Chrìosd a chur air aghaidh mar Chrìosduidhibh eile ’n an ionadaibh agus ’n dàimhibh.” Am bheil crìosduidhean uaigneach eile ann an ordugh an Ard-riaghlaidh? Mur h-eil, is ann mar Chrìosduidhibh uaigneach a tha iad a’ labhairt orra ; agus ma ’s ann, am bheil ni sam bith fiachaichte air luchd-riaghlaidh Crìosdail ’n an dreuchd a thaobh Eaglais agus Fhìrinn Dhé ach na tha fiachaicht’ air Crìosduidhibh eile? Feudaidh Crìosduidhean eile, ’n an àitibh agus ’n an dàimhibh, aobhar Chrìosd a chur air aghaidh le ’n eisimplir agus am maoin, le ’n comhairle, agus an ùrnuighibh, agus mar sin ; ach am bheil ni sam bith air agradh o ’n Ard-uachdaranachd aimsireil, mar ghairm fhoillaiseach, ach na dleasdanaidh ud a tha fiachaichte air crìosduidhibh uaigneach eile? Mur ’eil, tha ’n t-Ard-riaghladh aimsireil, òrdugh a chur Dia air chois a chum a ghèire féin, air a dhruideadh a mach o ghnòthuch air bith a bhi aige ri Eaglais agus Fìrinn Dhé ; ach an cead a leigeadh leo, no ’n coimhead o ainneart a bhi air a dheanamh orra, mar ni e do mhuinntir air bith eile ; agus nach buin da, ghnòthuch a ghabhail ri ’n leas Spiordail, eadhon, ann a bhi ’g a chur air aghaidh. So dìreach stéidh-bheachd nan Saor-thabhartach. Tha iad ag ràdh gur còir do ’n Fhear-riaghlaidh a ’bhi, ’n a ghiùlan, ’s ’na riaghladh, a réir Fhocail Dhé, ann an deanamh agus ’am frithealadh lagha. Ach a réir am beachd-san, ’s ann chum an Dreuchd-Riaghlaidh a’ dhruideadh a mach o ni sam bith a’ dheanamh airson aobhair no Eaglais Chrìosd.

A thaobh òrduigh na Sàbaid, agus Láithibh airson ioraslachaidh agus buidhearchais, tha iad a’ cumail a mach còrdadh a bhi eatorra. Ach tha fios againn nach ’eil a’ chùis mar sin. Tha iad ag ràdh mar so, “ Feudaidh am Fear-riaghlaidh laghanna a dheanamh, a thaobh an coimhead o ’n leth mach ; agus dìon a chur air an t-sluagh, ann an seilbh air sochair na fois o oibribh làithean na seachduin, agus an latha chaitheamh ann an cleachdaidhean aoraidh dhiadhaidh uaigneach agus fhollaiseach.” Saoilidh daoine, nach ’eil eòlach air beachdaibh nan Saor-thabhartach, nach ’eil an seadh anns am bheil iad a’ tuigsinn nam briathraibh so, cho eadar-dhealaichte, o ar beachd-ne ’s a tha e : ’se ’m fìor bheachd-san, nach ’eil còir aig an Fhear-riaghlaidh ach a mhàin dìon a chur orra-san, ’n an sochairibh, leis am mainn an t-sàbaid a choimhead. Ma tha neach ’n a dhragh d’ à choimhearsnach air an t-Sàbaid, gur còir dìon a chur air, o ’n dragh sin ; ach ’n an còrdadh iad féin, mu ghnàthachadh air dhòigh eile, nach buineadh dha ghnòthuch a ghabhail riutha. Dhiùlt iad a’ ràdh gu ’m bu chòir àiteachean a ta air am fosgladh, no a tha cuid ag iarraidh fhosgladh, airson caitheamhaimsire, no sùgradh, a dhùnadh no an cumail duinte, le ùghdarras an riaghlaidh, air an t-Sàbaid, air stéidh a b’ àirde na gu ’m feudadh e bhi ’n a dhragh do luchd-àiteachaidh sìtheachail ; agus nach bu chòir dha Bùthan a dhùnadh

air ghrunnd a b' àirde na 'n t-ana-ceartas a bhiodh ann dhoibh-san nach leigeadh an coguis leo am Bùthan fhosgladh air an t-Sàbaid; na 'n leigeadh e leo-san, a bha ullamh gu 'm fosgladh air an latha naomha sin, am fosgladh, agus buannachd sheachd làithean na seachduin a bhi aca: agus nach biodh aig càch buannachd shèa làithean. An uair a bha e air fheòraich dhiubh, N'an aontaich-eadh uile luchd-àiteachaidh baile, no cèarna air bith do 'n dùthaich le chéile, an t-Sàbaid a dheanamh 'n a latha airson gach seòrsa do riarachadh feòlmhor, no a mhi-naomhachadh gu follaiseach, "Am bu chòir do 'n Fhear-riaghlaidh aimsireil sin a cheadachadh, o nach robh neach sam bith 's an àite do 'n robh e 'n a aobhar uamhuinn, agus gu robh iad a dh' aon inntinn?" Dhiùlt iad freagradh a thoirt, co dhiubh bu chòir, no nach biodh. Anns a' Chomunn-Aonaidh chuir iad rompa, nach abradh iad gu 'm bu chòir dha bacadh a chur air mi-naomhachadh na Sàbaid, mar Shàbaid. 'S e mhàin an gnìomh-riaghlaidh a tha iadsan a' meas dligheach dha, dìon a chur orra-san le 'n àill a coimhead, agus gun tuilleadh gnothuch a ghabhail riu. Tha so co-sheasmhach ri 'm beachdaibh eile.

A thobh làithean irrioslachaidh agus buidhheachais airson fàsg-laidhean no saorsinnean comharraichte air an deònachadh le Dia 'n a fhreasdal do 'n Rìoghachd; no, airson comharraidhean a dhìomb a bha a' briseadh a mach na h-aghaidh; cha 'n eil iad a' dol ni 's faide na, gu'm *feudadh* an t-Ard-raighlaidh cuireadh a thoirt d'a iochdaranaibh gu leithid sin do làithibh a choimhead mar is toigh le. Ach an gairm gu sin, le h-ùghdarras an Ard-riaghlaidh, chum an coimhead, tha sin air a mheas leo, neo-sheasmhach r' a dhreuchd. Tha iomadh ni anns am bheil iadsan agus sinne a mi-chòrdadh, nach comasach sinn a chur ann an rùm cho beag. Ach chi sinn, ciod a tha air a' ràdh ann an (1) Leabhar Aidmheil ar Creidimh mu 'n phuig theagaisg a tha 's a' Cheann so. (2) Agus anns an Tagradh-shòlunte 'chuir ar n-Eaglais air beulaobh an Ard-Sheanaidh aig àm an Dealachaidh; agus, mar an ceudna. (3) Anns a' Chàinnt 's an do labhair Doctair Chalmers, mar Cheann-suidhe, ris a' cheud Ard-Sheanadh do 'n Eaglais Shaoir.

(1) Leabhar Aidmheil a' Chreidimh, caib, xxiii, 7:—"Aig an Fhear-riaghlaidh aimsireil tha ùghdarras, agus 's e a dhleasdanas òrdugh a ghabhail chum fìrinn Dhé bhi air a gleidheadh glan agus iomlan; chum gach uile thoibheum agus shaobh-chreidimh bhi air an cur fodha, gach uile thruaillidheachd agus mhi-ghnàthadh ann an aoradh agus smachd-eaglais a bhacadh no ath-leasachadh, agus gu biodh uile òrduighean Dhé gu h-ìomchuidh, no réir riaghailt, air an suidheachadh, air am frithealadh, agus air an coimhead."

(2) "An Fhianuis-shòluimte" (Protest).—"Fadheòdh, am feadh a tha sinn a' tagradh gu seasmhach gur e còir agus dleasdanas an Ard-fhirriaghlaidh aimsireil, suidheachadh diadhachd (no eaglais Stéidhichte) a dhaingneachadh agus a chumail suas, a réir Focail

Dhé ; agus ag agradh còir dhuinn féin agus dhoibh-san a thig 'n ar déigh air strì a dheanamh leis gach uile mheadhoin laghail, mar bhios cothrom air a thoirt ann am freasdal maith Dhé, gu coimhlionadh fhaotainn air an dleasdanas ud, a réir nan Sgrìobtur, agus ann an co-gheall reachdan rìoghachd na h-Alba, agus cumhachean an Nasgadh-Aonaidh eadar an dà rìoghachd, mar a bha iad air an tuigsinn le ar n-aithrichibh agus leinne."

The Faith of Abraham.

HE owned the omnipotency of God as able to produce inconceivable effects. He did not limit God as they did in the wilderness, as the Psalmist at large describes their unbelief (Ps. lxxviii. 19, 20, 40, 41). He rested in this that the power of God could extend itself unto things by him past finding out and incomprehensible. This was the life and soul, as it were, of the faith of Abraham : he believed that the power of God was infinitely sufficient to secure his truth and veracity in his promises, though he could neither conceive nor understand the way whereby it was to be done. And this is the life of faith at present in all that truly believe. Everything in the world seems to lie cross unto the accomplishment of divine promises, which are most eminent in themselves, and in which the Church, next unto things eternal, is eminently concerned ; but yet, though things are very dark and dreadful, they are not in such a dismal strait as they were when the father of the faithful had his knife at the heart of him on whose life the accomplishment of all the promises did depend. Yet he rested in the power of God to secure his own veracity ; and so may we do also at present. Wherefore, Abraham still firmly believed the accomplishment of the great promise, although he could not discern the way whereby it should be fulfilled. Had his faith failed herein, his obedience had been needless and useless. And this is the last anchor of faith. It cleaves unto and rests upon the truth of God in His promises, against all objections, temptations, and oppositions, although they are such as reason, in its highest exercise, can neither conflict with nor conquer. And unto this end, God who permits such objections to rise against it, or what He hath promised, yea, disposeth such trials and difficulties unto it as shall be insuperable unto all the rational powers of our souls, giveth security in and for Himself alone against them all. God, who cannot lie, hath promised (Titus i. 2). And in farther confirmation hereof unto us, He swears by Himself (Heb. vi. 13). And that faith which cannot rest in God Himself, and the consideration of His properties engaged for the accomplishment of His promises, without other helps or corroborating testimonies, yea, against all conclusions and determinations of sense and reason, is weak if it be sincere (Is. l. 10).

DR. JOHN OWEN.

Calvinism Often Misapprehended.

I CHEERFULLY admit that there is what some account a hard—certainly an unpopular—side to the doctrines of Calvinism. That they are greatly misapprehended, and often misstated by those who differ from us, is universally felt among our more intelligent writers, teachers, and preachers. This, however, could hardly be otherwise; for that especial and distinctive aspect of thought which marks our Confessions of Faith, which contain our standard definitions, and by which alone our views ought, in fairness, to be judged, is perhaps more liable to misconception than that aspect of thought which distinguishes others, just as, if I may venture the illustration, many statements of St. Paul give rise to more objections and misconstructions than any of those of St. James and St. John.

How frequently are our standards, concerning God's eternal foreordination of all things, quoted thus, viz.: "God, from all eternity did, by the most wise and holy counsel of His own will, freely and unchangeably ordain whatsoever comes to pass;"—and here the quotation stops, the three following fundamental qualifications of this general proposition being altogether omitted, viz.: (1) "Yet so as, thereby, neither is God the author of sin; (2) nor is violence offered to the will of the creatures; (3) nor is the liberty or contingency of second causes taken away, but rather established." See *Westminster Confession of Faith*, chapter iii., sec. 1.

So also, in regard to the so-called decree of "Reprobation" (an expression that is not found in our standards), there is often an omission, by our critics, which changes the whole aspect of the matter, as it is given in the Confession of Faith—they quote the Confession as teaching that God, *arbitrarily* without just cause, ordained the non-elect to destruction, whereas the language is: "The rest of mankind God was pleased, according to the unsearchable counsel of His own will . . . to pass by, and to ordain them to dishonour and wrath *for their sin*, to the praise of His glorious *justice*; or, as the *Westminster Larger Catechism* has it, "*to be for their sins inflicted*, to the praise of the glory of His justice."—*Westminster Conf.*, chap. iii., sec. 7.—*Larger Cat.*, Ques. 13.

And again, in reference to human depravity and inability, our standards are quoted, as though they taught that the natural man is wholly incapable of any virtue or good, according to a human standard; whereas they teach that, owing to the corruption of his nature, "he is utterly indisposed, disabled, and made opposite unto all that is *spiritually* good, and wholly inclined to evil, and that continually;"—"Man, by his fall into a state of sin, hath wholly lost all ability of will to any *spiritual* good accompanying salvation, and dead in sin, is not able, by his own strength, to convert

himself or to prepare himself thereunto;" while it explicitly declares that a "natural liberty" belongs to the will of man, so that "it is neither forced, nor by any absolute necessity of nature determined to good or evil." See *Westminster Larger Catechism*, Question 25, and *Westminster Confession of Faith*, chapter ix., secs. 1, 3. All we claim for our standards is, that they be allowed to speak for themselves, and that the Scriptures, by which their propositions are supported, be respected, not as the authority of the Church, but as the authority of the infallible *Word of God*.—*Thomas H. Skinner, D.D., in Christian Treasury, 1880.*

Notes and Comments.

ORDINATION AT STORNOWAY.—The Northern Presbytery met at Stornoway on the 18th January, and ordained the Rev. George Mackay, probationer, to the pastoral charge of the congregation there. Rev. John Macleod, M.A., Ullapool, preached and presided. After sermon on Psalm lxxviii. 18, Mr. Macleod gave the narrative of the steps taken in proceeding with the call. He then put the questions to the pastor-elect, who, having signed the formula, was solemnly ordained by prayer and laying on of hands to the pastorate of the congregation. Rev. John R. Mackay, M.A., Gairloch, addressed pastor and people as to their respective duties. There was a large congregation present. The call to Rev. George Mackay has been signed by 107 members and 589 adherents.

AN OLD THEATRE-GOER CONDEMNS THE STAGE.—Mr. Clement Scott, a dramatic critic of thirty-seven years standing, having been interviewed, gives the following testimony:—"He said that he was the worse for his thirty-seven years of playgoing; that actresses are not, as a rule, ladies, nor pure, and that their prospects frequently depend on the nature and extent of their compliances; that the theatrical profession induces the vain and egotistical that is in all of us to a degree that would scarcely be credited by the outsider; that whilst the pit and gallery retain the old faith, the men who write and criticise are freethinkers; that Ibsen is an atheist; and that whilst Cardinal Manning at one end of the religious scale hated the theatre, and the Puritan, Wesleyan, or Baptist minister detests it at the other, the philosophic man of the world, with an equal knowledge of human nature, stands between them and says they are each right."

Mr. Bernard Shaw, another dramatic critic, corroborates as follows:—"Mr. Scott might have said a great deal more on the same side, and yet been well within the mark. He might, for example, have said that no member of the theatrical profession ever dreams of believing any statement made by any other member of it; that a tradesman will give credit to any professional

man more confidently than to an actor of equal standing ; that disloyalty, often operating as what a trade-unionist would call shameless blacklegging, excites neither surprise nor disapprobation in the green-room ; that theatrical agreements are perhaps the riskiest securities in the world ; and that the extent to which modern industrial developments are daily throwing masses of money into idle, irresponsible, ignorant, and immature hands, has made the stage probably more corrupt at present than it has ever been in the history of the world before. In short, Mr. Scott has erred, as he always errs, on the side of good nature."

THE MISCHIEF IN BROAD BAY, LEWIS.—An indignation meeting was held in Stornoway, on Wednesday evening, 5th January, to protest against the illegal trawling in Broad Bay and Loch Roag. The apathy of the Government in not policing the waters properly was noted and condemned. The contrast was remarked between the sharp measures taken to protect the rich man's salmon waters and the poor man's fishing grounds. Owing to the poaching practices of trawlers the take of fish in Broad Bay was reported to have fallen from 9,000 odd tons in 1895 to 4,000 tons in 1897. The fishermen in these parts have a distinct grievance, and we hope the Government will see their way to terrorise more effectually the evildoers who are impoverishing so many respectable families.

PAINFUL EVENT IN GLASGOW.—On Tuesday, 4th January, ere the New Year festivities of the citizens were well over one of those sharp visitations, like the fall of the Tower of Siloam, took place in the city. At a fire in Renfield Street an explosion occurred which brought down a roof on which a number of the fire brigade men had mounted. Four of these brave men were killed in the burning ruins. Their corpses were found in the course of the day. The event caused profound grief and pain through the whole community, and yet, except in the case of the sorrowing few, the impression is now worn away, and business and pleasure chase each other as recklessly as before.

DR. WHYTE AND GENERAL BOOTH'S ARMY.—Dr. Whyte evidently believes in the Army. On Monday evening, 24th January, he lectured to the members in their Hall, Nicolson Street, Edinburgh, on "John Bunyan, his genius and services to the Church of Christ." It is true, if Dr. Whyte is going among these people in the capacity of a physician, and believes that a dose of John Bunyan would do them good, he can justify his proceeding, as they stand sorely in need of remedial measures ; but if, as is most likely, Dr. Whyte regards the Army and John Bunyan to be Christian workers of the same spirit but slightly differing in some non-essential things, he shows lamentable ignorance.

"THE SCOTSMAN" AND PRESBYTERIAL VISITATION IN THE ESTABLISHED CHURCH.—*The Scotsman* is no safe prophet to follow ;

but sometimes Balaam speaks the truth. In reference to a motion by Dr. Scott in the Established Presbytery of Edinburgh in favour of the visitation of Presbyteries throughout the Church—a leading article in the above newspaper of 27th January, thus concludes:—“The principal effect of Dr. Scott’s movement so far has been to give life to the suggestion that the Church should revive the old institution of superintendents. Dr. Scott has no patience with the suggestion. It makes him almost as angry as the stab of a letter in the newspapers. He would rather go farther back and have real bishops. . . . Let him beware of the goal he is driving or drifting towards. His bishop of shreds and patches may beget the superintendent, and the superintendent may beget the bishop, and the bishop the cardinal, and the cardinal the pope; and before he is aware our Scottish Zion may be an idolatrous Babylon, and the scarlet woman may flaunt her furbelows, and practise her harlotries even among the shades of the martyrs in the Castle Hill of Edinburgh.”

Literary Notices.

THE STRANGE BUT PLEASANT LIFE HISTORY OF JOHN STEVENSON.
Glasgow: John M’Neilage, 65 Great Western Road.

This is a cheap reprint in neat form of an excellent autobiography by one of our covenanting forefathers. Its ancient title was “A Rare Soul-Strengthening and Comforting Cordial for Old and Young Christians,” and a little taste of the cordial will bear testimony to the truthfulness of the commendation. Worthy John Stevenson thought he would leave to his children and grandchildren a record of the Lord’s goodness towards him in perilous times, and the record is one that cannot fail to be precious to those who fear the Lord in every generation. Indeed, so remarkable are its details of providential deliverances and hair-breadth escapes, that it should be read by all our young people with great avidity. The chief aim of John Stevenson is to exalt “glorious Christ,” and we trust the Spirit of God will bless his “Strange but Pleasant Life History” to this end in the hearts of all who read it. It is to be hoped that such a rare and attractive book will have a speedy sale. The publisher’s efforts to advance the interests of sound literature ought to be encouraged.

MURDOCH GORDON: or, THE MAN WHO WANTED BAPTISM AND WHO DID NOT WANT IT. Glasgow: John M’Neilage, 65 Great Western Road.

The striking story of Murdoch Gordon is one that conveys lessons to parents far and wide. Murdoch came to the late

eminent Rev. Angus MacBean, asking baptism for his child, and thought he had a right to get it without much discussion. But Mr. MacBean, who was a faithful ambassador of Christ, carefully examined him and refused his request, the result being that Murdoch left the manse in a rage. A remarkable providence overtook him on his way home, and two days afterwards he returned and told the minister that he didn't want the baptism—"I'm no fit for it," he said. This was the beginning of a good work in the heart of Murdoch Gordon. It would be well if many parents who ask baptism for their children would also be brought to see themselves as unworthy sinners, and realise their need of a Saviour. Fearful will be the condemnation of spiritually ignorant parents, failing to fulfil their important obligations. And baptised children also will find that their baptism in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost will prove a blessing or a curse according as they make a right improvement of it or not. We wish this tract a very wide circulation.

JOHN KNOX TRACTS, No. 42. "The Lame Victorious."

These are notes of a sermon preached by the late Rev. J. R. Anderson on 14th March, 1852. The text is Isaiah xxxiii. 23 (last clause), "The lame take the prey," and is treated in the author's usual clear and able style. Towards the close, remarks are made which indicate the divided state of feeling in Knox's congregation at the time the sermon was delivered.

NOTES OF DISCOURSES BY THE LATE REV. GAVIN PARKER, IN ST. ANDREW'S CHURCH, DUNDEE. Aberdeen: G. Cornwall & Sons.

These discourses were delivered by Mr. Parker in 1824, and treat of the important subjects set forth in Rom. viii. 15-22, which series of passages begins with the words—"Ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the spirit of adoption." The notes now printed were taken by a hearer. They embody valuable truth, sound doctrine, and Christian experience that much require to be disseminated in these degenerate times.

Don't you think that "Christian," at the sight of the cross, feeling his burden fall off, might well give three leaps? Why? Because of the love of a three-one God entering his soul—the electing love of the Father, the redeeming love of the Son, and the sanctifying love of the Holy Ghost.—*John Tait, "Ministers and Men."*