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## Some Features of Present-Day Preaching.

*(Continued from page 363.)*

6. The work of the Holy Spirit is ignored or defectively exhibited. "There are three persons in the Godhead, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one God, the same in substance, equal in power and glory." According to the covenant of grace, each divine person performs a special office in the salvation of men. It is the Father who purposed salvation in a past eternity, it is the Son who procured it in the fulness of time, and it is the Holy Spirit who in due season applies it to every individual for whom it has been purposed and procured. The office of the Spirit is manifestly one of prime importance, one that cannot be ignored without evil results of a far-reaching character. An eminent Christian once said—"Although I should hear that the Father gave a people to Christ to be ransomed by Him, and that Christ finished the work of their redemption on the cross, yet, if I knew no more, I might perish for want of knowing that redemption must be applied to my soul by the Holy Ghost." It is evident, therefore, that to ignore or underestimate the work of the Spirit in the professed preaching of the gospel is a fundamental error. And yet this is one of the most prominent errors in the preaching of our time. Multitudes of discourses are delivered, and one wonders if their authors ever heard of the Holy Spirit. They appeal to their hearers as if they could believe in Christ, and perform every spiritual duty by their own native ability. Other preachers again make mention of the Spirit's work, and yet give it a far more subordinate place than belongs to it. They ascribe some spiritual power to the creature, and bring in the Holy Spirit only as a mere aid or helper. Here also is a serious mistake. Why is the work of the Holy Spirit thus treated? For two reasons: erroneous views of man's spiritual needs, and misguided interpretations of the Scriptures on the Spirit's work.

(1) Let us notice the current erroneous views of man's spiritual needs. Man is now almost universally regarded by preachers as

only a partially defective creature. Many hold either that the fall was only partial and left some spiritual life in man, or that Christ's death procured some spiritual life for every creature of the race. According to either view, man is born with something spiritually good in him, so that he is not totally depraved and spiritually helpless. Man therefore only needs some aid or stimulant so as to do all that is necessary for salvation. Others again go in for the evolution theory in moral and spiritual life. They believe that every individual of our race is a shoot on the great tree of humanity, the growth of which is ever upwards. They believe not in the fall of man, but in the "ascent of man." Thus every individual is at a lower or higher stage of moral or spiritual development. Total depravity is not known here. The most depraved of mankind are buds on this tree. The consequence is that none can be other or better than they are. It is difficult here to charge any with guilt for moral delinquency or wrong-doing. Sin, which is transgression of a law, or lack of conformity to a fixed moral standard, cannot be recognised under this system. In fact, it is doubtful if the system admits of morality far less religion. If there is no such thing as sin, there cannot be in the nature of the case its opposite holiness. The advocates of this theory necessarily deny man's original holiness and purity, and total fall, so as to be dead to all that is spiritually good. The whole scheme of redemption is also foolishness in their eyes, and the work of the Holy Spirit in the application of redemption to the soul by regeneration and union to Christ, they know nothing of. The law of evolution is sufficient for the whole work of redeeming and regenerating mankind. If the Spirit of God gets any place in their theory, it is largely a nominal one. All these views tend to shut out the true doctrine of the Holy Spirit from the pulpits of our day.

In contrast with these views, the Scriptures teach us that man now in his natural state possesses no spiritual life, but that he is "dead in trespasses and sins."—(Eph. ii. 1.) He was once alive, but is now totally dead. He was once holy, but is now unholy. Sin has deprived him not only of all spiritual good, but has filled him with all moral evil. "The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked: who can know it?"—(Jer. xvii. 9.) So great is his depravity that he has become a deliberate enemy to the law of God, yea to God himself. "The carnal mind is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be."—(Rom. viii. 7.) This spiritual death and moral depravity appear in still darker colours in such passages as the following, "No man can come unto me except the Father which hath sent me draw him."—(John vi. 44.) "And ye will not come to me that ye might have life."—(John v. 40.) Here we see that man is not only opposed to God and every thing spiritually good, but that he cannot, and will not, forsake that estate of opposition and death, nor come to Christ for salvation unless he is drawn of

God. In one word, he requires a new birth, for it is written, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God."—(John iii. 5.) In view of these passages it may be seen that the fall is a complete and total one, and that the work of the Holy Spirit in the soul must be correspondingly powerful and comprehensive. The aid of the Spirit is good in its own place, but much more is needed in regeneration.

(2) Let us now look at the current views of the Spirit's work in contrast with the Bible views of it. The former we have already to some extent indicated. Preachers go upon the supposition that man is born with some spiritual life in his soul, or to put it in more familiar language, that there is something good in all men, no matter how depraved in conduct. They, therefore, hold forth that all that is needed is the aid of the Spirit, and they even appeal to their hearers to co-operate with the Spirit and avail themselves of the Spirit's help. Now we observe, first, that there is such a thing as the common operation of the Spirit, whereby He moves in the hearts and consciences of men, convincing in some measure of sin, and inciting to that which is spiritually good. But these motions of the Spirit do not produce any real change in the creature. They may and do keep him back from rushing into the more heinous and open violations of God's law, and they may and do prompt him to the performance of the external duties of religion. They, however, implant no new principle of spiritual life in his soul, and, therefore, he is in heart quite the same as before. The common operations of the Spirit are highly useful, and we are indebted to the unspeakable mercy and grace of God for them, but it is a sad delusion to substitute them for the special regenerating work of the Spirit of God. Now, our modern preachers, and indeed Arminians in all ages attribute nothing more to the agency of the Spirit than we do to His common operations. According to their view, all that men need is stimulus and help, and if they make use of the stimulus and help proffered by the Spirit, whereby to believe in Christ, then they are converted and saved.

But we observe in the second place that there is a special regenerating work of the Holy Spirit, and the exposition of this work, and the intimation of its necessity, are conspicuous by their absence in present-day preaching. The doctrine of the Spirit on this point ascribes the whole of conversion to God. "Salvation is of the Lord." Salvation is of the Lord as surely in the communication of it to the soul as it is in the purchase of it by Jesus Christ. Believers are spoken of in the Scriptures as brands plucked from the fire, as souls delivered from going down to the pit, as prisoners taken out of a pit in which there is no water, all of which expressions intimate that their conversion is solely of God. They were exposed to death and destruction, were utterly unable to save themselves, and would have perished eternally if it were not for the almighty power of God. Again, we are told

that they undergo a new birth. Who ever heard of a child bringing itself into existence? A natural or a spiritual birth is the fruit of a cause entirely outside itself. Souls that experience the new spiritual birth are "born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."—(John i. 13.) In the face of such a passage as this, one wonders that Arminians can ever hold up their heads. The will of man is entirely excluded. God is the author of the new birth. It is this new birth that makes believers of unbelievers. Further, the Lord Jesus said to Nicodemus, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God."—(John iii. 5.) The Spirit is the special person in the glorious Godhead who performs this work. "Not by might, nor by power, but my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts."—(Zech. iv. 6.) It was after the Lord Jesus had set before Nicodemus the doctrine of the new birth, that he spoke of faith. Faith is its immediate fruit. Faith, therefore, is the gift of God as it is the direct off-spring of the new birth. It is also written, "According to his mercy, he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost."—(Tit. iii. 5). "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things have passed away; behold, all things are become new."—(2 Cor. v. 17.) Here the work of the Spirit is described, not as a little improvement of the old man, but a work of renewal, a new creature, a new man in Christ Jesus. One other, but one very important passage on this subject we shall quote. In the first chapter of Ephesians, the 19th and 20th verses, the Apostle describes the extent of Divine power exercised in the souls of them who believe: "And what is the greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead." It was the mighty power of God that was manifest in the resurrection of Christ, and nothing less will do to give dead souls a spiritual resurrection, and so the Apostle follows up this teaching in the opening words of the second chapter—"And you hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins." It is by misunderstanding and misinterpreting such passages as these that men think the mere assistance of the Spirit all that is necessary to secure faith in Christ. Truly they prove themselves very ignorant of the Spirit's own teaching.

But, what of man's responsibility? some may object. Is that to count for nothing? Nothing in the question of spiritual death and inability. All rational creatures are responsible. The devil is rational and responsible, but he is nevertheless totally dead in sins. His intelligence is remarkably great, and his responsibility also, but he is not proved to possess one spark of spiritual life for all that. We strongly insist upon man's responsibility under law and Gospel, and the penal consequences that follow the rejection of both, but we do not, in the least, insinuate thereby that he possesses spiritual power either to keep the law or obey the Gospel. In fact, the preacher may use man's responsibility as an

instrument by which to show his moral depravity and inability. He is under righteous and reasonable obligation to love God with all his soul and strength, and yet he will not and cannot do it. He is under righteous and reasonable obligation to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and be saved, and yet so great is the depravity of his nature that he will not and cannot do it. The Gospel command sets forth our responsibility and at the same time exhibits our unspeakable depravity and inability. We will not come to Christ for salvation though commanded by God himself, and though the issues be everlasting happiness or everlasting woe until we are drawn by the mighty irresistible power of the Holy Ghost. Let then, by all means, our responsibility be set forth, but let our total depravity and helplessness be also declared. And it is when we realise unspeakable depravity and unspeakable guilt, that we will come to know the Saviour who, by the Holy Ghost, quickens the dead, and casts the glorious robe of His eternal righteousness over the guilty. It is ruinous to the highest interests of immortal souls that present-day preaching should in the vast majority of pulpits either ignore or defectively exhibit the work of the Holy Spirit.

## Outlines of Sermons.

BY THE LATE REV. JOHN SINCLAIR, BRUAN, CAITHNESS.

PREACHED ON 15TH, 22ND, 29TH MARCH, 1840.

(Continued from page 170.)

*"Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink, thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water."*—JOHN IV. 10.

**YOU** will remember the three things for which God gave the gift of His only begotten Son in covenant:—

I. To fulfil the requirements of the covenant of works by price. "He was made under the law to redeem them that were under the law."

II. To deliver them by power out of the state of spiritual death and bondage. "For a covenant to say to the prisoners, Go forth."

III. To be a new covenant surety to keep them by grace from falling away again. "The surety of a better testament" or covenant.

The first of these the Son has already finished for all who shall be saved. "By one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified." "It is finished." But no one can know whether the Son has finished the work for him in particular, till He do the second. When He has opened the graves then "ye shall know that I am the Lord." Now we mentioned several steps by which He brings them out in the day of power,

and as they are not the same steps in every respect in all, we gave some marks to be found in all.

I. A true hatred of sin. This is a sure mark because we naturally love sin, and until renewed, we have no hatred of sin. "The carnal mind is enmity against God." "All they that hate me (wisdom) love death," not death directly for itself, but sin which brings death. They "love darkness." It is not sin, but the love of sin which destroys the soul. So when Paul could say, "What I hate that do I," then he could also thank God through Christ that he would be delivered from sin at last. None are delivered fully from the being of sin here, for no man living sinneth not, but the believer is delivered from the love of sin. "What have I to do any more with idols?"

We find the following marks upon them who hate sin truly. (1) They hate all sin. "I hate every false way." This must be, because they have a respect to all the commandments written in their hearts, and they have a love to all holiness. They desire to be "whiter than the snow." They desire not merely what would make them escape hell and attain heaven, but they desire to be altogether holy. (2) They hate what the world calls little sins, such as sins of heart. "I hate vain thoughts." They have to hate what the world hardly thinks to be sin. "Flee also fleshly lusts which war against the soul." They have to cry, "My soul is weary because of murderers." This must be, because the heart is the fountain of sin, "Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, etc." No hatred of open sin will evidence the new work, because a new heart is required. Hence they are groaning when others think them eminently holy. (3) They have a holy self-jealousy of secret sin which they never saw. "Cleanse me from secret faults." They have found "the heart deceitful above all things." They cannot easily appeal to good intentions. While some sin is prevailing they think they are given over to sin for some unknown evil. Hence they are constantly examining themselves, and crying for light to see themselves. "Oh, what if I am deceived?" Even Paul was afraid lest he should be a castaway. (4) They mourn for sin even when in hope of pardon, and after some tokens for good they are ashamed. "O wretched man that I am!" In Christ, they are not condemned. Yet they are filled with shame and self-loathing. They say not, "I have paid my vows." The nearer they get to the cross of Christ in hope, the more of this hatred of sin, though less bondage of fear. A fearful pardon that makes sin sweet! "They shall look upon him and mourn." The blood of Christ is good to cool a burning conscience, but fearful sugar to sweeten sin. Fearful that His blood should be counted an unholy thing and employed to give peace in sin. (5) They hate sin in others. "Rivers of waters run down from mine eyes, because they keep not thy law." Hence it is an evil saying, "They do hurt to none but themselves." Is any sin no injury to God? Does it not damn an immortal soul? Then it is

not a light thing. That sight of sin is of the right kind when it brings sighs and cries. Christ had a burden because of this. He sought the glory of God, and they have the mind of Christ. They have the Holy Ghost in them. (6) They hate the company of sinners. "I have hated the congregation of evil doers and will not sit with the wicked."—(Psalm xxvi. 5.) There is something in their very spirit that rises against it, and further than the transaction of business, the discharge of duty, or the obligations of relationship, they cannot enjoy the company of the wicked. Not merely have they a sight of the inconsistency of mixing in their company, but a feeling of the hurt to God and the soul at the time and afterwards. (7) They have as great a desire to be freed from the dominion and pollution of sin, as from its guilt and condemnation. —(Psalm li. throughout.) Christ died not merely to free the soul from guilt, but also to sanctify and cleanse it. He took hold of them for this purpose, and they press to apprehend that for which they are apprehended. Salvation from guilt would be but half. He saves from sin as well as wrath. (8) They have greater fear of sin than of suffering. "If any man come to me and hate not father and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren and sisters, yea and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple."—(Luke xv. 26, 27.) So with Joseph, Moses, Daniel, Shadrach, Meshech, Abednego, Paul, and other disciples. The words include not only great men, but "If any man, etc." They consider sin whatever the word marks to be sin.

II. Separation from self-righteousness. "As many as are of the works of the law are under the curse." Then, unless severed from dependence in these we can have no salvation. We are thus separated: (1) If fully convinced of the insufficiency of our own righteousness. "All our righteousness but filthy rags," not some but all. Not one clean rag. Sin mixed with all. And if clean, it would be but a rag, imperfect. They are as much afraid of being left in duties as in sins. They have a sight of the unbending justice of God, and see that only what is perfect will do. True, imperfect duties will evidence grace, but will not satisfy justice. And theirs are only marks and preparations, no satisfactions to justice. (2) If bent after the righteousness of Christ by faith. So Paul, "not having mine own righteousness, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith."—(Phil. iii. 9.) Persons may see they are wanting righteousness, and yet are not seeking it. But when real want is seen, nakedness to righteousness and judgment, it will make them look about them for a shelter. (3) Therefore, they are put on duties, not to rest in them, but to find Christ. "I press toward the mark." They seek to find Him by God's appointed means of finding. Here no known duty is omitted, as no known sin is committed. They are not free from sin, and so duties are not perfectly performed. But as they would be perfectly free from

sin, so they would perfectly perform duties, if they could. "Then shall I not be ashamed, when I have respect unto all thy commandments." "Walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless," not omitting any. (4) If Christ be the only food in them to the soul. So they go not only to God's altar but to Himself. "I determined to know nothing among you save Jesus Christ and him crucified." The cross of Christ is of high value now. He is all in all. Ignorant, guilty, polluted, captives: what can meet their case but Christ? All is lost empty dishes without Him to a thirsty and hungry soul. When the child is seeking the breast, all toys are dashed away. So here. (5) If delivered from building on the applause of others. "How can ye believe who receive honour one of another?" They do not value the approbation of men, except as rested on the Word, and then in virtue of God's own authority. "Whose praise is of God."

III. Deliverance from our own faith. Seeing the fulness of Christ, we think there is nothing to do but believe. And indeed faith is all that is necessary, but we have it not. Many are perishing here. Now faith is the gift of God. It is of the operation of the Spirit, and that operation of almighty power, such as wrought in Christ Jesus when God raised him from the dead. But all say they are seeking the Spirit. Therefore, let us examine first, whether we have been convinced of the sin of unbelief and our inability to believe. "Of sin because they believe not in me."

*Ninth Outline.*—The first work for which Christ was given is completely fulfilled. "It is finished." The second is going on. He is sitting at the right hand, "to give repentance and the forgiveness of sins." He is continually making intercession for His people. He is still loosening prisoners by giving repentance and issuing pardons in new cases and to them already brought in. Hence it is written, "Thy seed shall endure for ever, and thy throne to all generations."—(Ps. lxxxix. 4, 29-36.) Hence, when the gates of hell seem opened to swallow up all, they shall not prevail. The psalmist in haste said, "All men are liars." Learn (1) Some men are good even now. The Church may be low, but not extinct. All are not hypocrites. (2) "Try the spirits." Take them not on credit. Many false spirits are gone out into the world. Wolves put on sheep's clothing. Try them by the Word. (3) Join the true people. "We will go with you." "The Lord hath spoken good concerning Israel." Better to be among fleeing Israel than with time-triumphing Pharaoh. (4) Be one of them. Not a foolish virgin, shut out when the door is shut. "Let us join ourselves to the Lord in a perpetual covenant." "The servant abideth not in the house for ever, but the Son abideth ever."

The third work for which Christ was given is to be a covenant, a better covenant for them. This is begun when He, having said to them, Go forth, from the love of sin, self-righteousness, natural faith and their own spirits, brings them as self-destroyed, helpless, hell-deserving sinners to rest on Christ alone for salvation on His



own terms. When the Spirit's almighty power brings them to this, the work will never end. Among the privileges they receive are the following:—

I.—Justification. This we find joined to repentance. “For to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins.” “Repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations.”—(Luke xxiv. 47.) Also it is written, “Whom he called, them he also justified.”—(Rom. viii. 30.) Justification contains two things: (1) The pardon of all sin. “In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace.”—(Eph. i. 7). “Thou hast covered all their sin.”—(Ps. lxxxv. 2.) “Who forgiveth all thine iniquities.”—(Ps. ciii. 3.) This must be because they receive a whole Christ, and all their iniquities were laid on Him. From this time forward not one sin is laid to their account, as against the covenant of works, so as to bring condemnation. “There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus.” (2) The imputation of righteousness. They are “made the righteousness of God” in Christ. They are not only held innocent, as if they had never sinned by breaking what the law forbids, but as righteous in covenant, as if they had fulfilled all the law's commands. This is wonderful. Their pardon and righteousness both depend entirely on Christ, and these blessings are received by faith. Works are the evidence, not the ground, of their justification. They are “kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.”

II.—Peace with God. “Being justified by faith, we have peace with God.” Justification by faith is the root of all the other privileges. The convinced sinner knows he is guilty, and that “God is angry with the wicked,” the unjustified, “every day.” But now, the guilt being removed, there is peace. (1) It is a *solid* peace. “My peace I give unto you.” It rests on Christ's peace with the Father. The Father was angry, but now His anger is turned away. It is a very sure peace. “For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee.”—(Is. liv. 10.) This is because “the chastisement of our peace was laid upon him.”—(Is. liii. 5.) Therefore Christ is called the Prince of Peace. (2) A *friendly* peace. “Ye are my friends.” “Henceforth I shall call you not servants but friends.” God will do good to them by all things as their friend. The treaty is not one of mere forbearance but of the purest friendship. (3) A *loving* peace. “The Father himself loveth you.” Sometimes they have drops of this love shed abroad in their hearts, other times it is concealed from them. The Lord said, “My dear son, Ephraim,” even when seemingly angry. (4) An *everlasting* peace. “I will not be wroth with thee any more.” He may chasten them, but only to keep the peace, not to break the peace. (5) A *fruitful*

peace. This it is in three things, to "bruise Satan" (Rom. xvi. 20), to "sanctify you wholly" (1 Thess. v. 23), and to "make you perfect."—(Heb. xiii. 20.)

III. Adoption into the family of God, never to be put out. "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will."—(Eph. i. 5.) Adam was the son of God by creation, but he lost the image of God. In Christ's adopting flesh His people are adopted to an inseparable union. (1) It is a rightful adoption. "To as many as received him to them gave he power (a right) to become the sons of God." No creature can object. Only receive the Son of God, and then you have a right to become a son. (2) A fruitful adoption. 1. They receive *the nature* of children. "And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father."—(Gal. iv. 6.) It was at the time of deepest distress that Jesus so cried (Mark xiv. 34). And so also see Romans viii. 15-26. The Spirit brings them in distress to Him as their only refuge. "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life." The child in its trouble goes to the father. 2. *The nursing* of children. "As new born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word that ye may grow thereby." The doctrine and the promise of the Gospel are the two breasts to feed them.—(Isa. lxvi. 11). Others may feed on any trash, but not so the children. 3. *The education* of children. "They shall be all taught of the Lord." They have the guidance of the Spirit into all truth. None else but the Spirit can teach so as to make the soul to learn. He not only gives the lesson, but power to learn it. "And I will give them an heart to know me, that I am the Lord: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God."—(Jer. xxiv. 7). If He would not give this heart, they would be "ever learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth." 4. *The correction* of children. "If ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards and not sons." "As many as I love I rebuke and chasten."—(Rev. iii. 19.) First, their correction is from love. It is not in wrath, though they may think and fear it is so. "Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth." Chastisement is a mark of His love. Secondly, it is for profit. He chastiseth "for our profit." He never gives a stripe or stroke too many, nor in a wrong way. Thirdly, it is to make us partakers of His holiness.—(Heb. xii.) He corrects them only to fit them for heaven. He learns them His law so that they may not go astray. In faithfulness to their souls, He rebukes by His Word and chastises by His rod. 5. *The inheritance* of children. "If children, then heirs, heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ." On His right, they enter into the inheritance and abide there for evermore. He hath said, "They shall sit with me on my throne." He has prepared many mansions for them, and they are begotten to "an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away."—(1 Peter i. 4.)

IV. Communion with God. He hears their prayers. "Truly our fellowship is with the Father and his Son Jesus Christ." "We have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." He hears their prayers because:—(1) They have an advocate. The advocate knows their case. And as an advocate He does not plead only according to His client's knowledge, but according to His own knowledge of the law. (2) He pleads His own merits, not theirs. He pleads His own blood. "I have glorified thee on the earth, I have finished the work thou gavest me to do." (3) He does not always tell them of His success at the time. He hears long, but keeps them in waiting upon Him. (4) So He sends forth His Spirit in their hearts, the Holy Ghost. It is good hearing on His part that keeps praying on theirs. (5) But He will come speedily, as birds flying, though He tarry long. What! Tarry long, and yet come speedily. He will come at last in surprise when they think all is gone, and He will hear no more.

V. Sanctification. Christ is made of God unto us sanctification.—(1 Co. i. 30.) This work is laid in conviction of sin, sorrow, and denial to self-righteousness and their own spirit. They seek to get free of all sin, and to attain to all holiness. (1) They were chosen to salvation through sanctification of the spirit. (2) The will of God is their sanctification. (3) It is the end of Christ's coming. (4) It is His prayer. (5) The desire of angels. (6) The desire of good men. (7) Their own desire. Their cry is, "Cleanse me, wash me, purge me." None are against it but the devil, the world, and the flesh.

May the Lord, in mercy, enable me to amplify and apply the above, and to apply Himself by the Spirit for Christ's sake, and to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost be all praise through Christ. Amen.

*Tenth Outline.*—In speaking of the third thing for which God gave the gift of His only begotten Son, namely, to be an everlasting covenant to them who are made by the mighty power of the Holy Ghost to believe in Him according to that word, "By so much was Jesus made the surety of a better testament" or covenant, which is an everlasting covenant, we said—I. He is made their justification. This in two things. (1) The pardon of all sin. His blessed being was laid in the balance against all their sins, as if they had done what He did. (2) The imputation of perfect righteousness. They are "made the righteousness of God in Him." Their justification is complete. It does not rest on anything in themselves either before or after they believe. Therefore Paul, long a believer, desires to be found in Christ's righteousness. Here the exercise of faith keeps the looks clear, and the exercise of a spiritual mind keeps the peace. Then II. Peace with God. III. Adoption. IV. Communion with God. V. Sanctification.

VI. Some things in which He is available in covenant to them in death. (1) As to natural or temporal death, they shall not die till He sees fit. "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and behold,

I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and death."—(Rev. i. 18.) In the covenant of works, no sinner has any assurance of life, of being out of hell for a moment, according to Deut. xxviii. 66, but since Christ suffered eternal death in effect for His people, He has the keys of hell and of death. All power in heaven and earth is given to Him. No accident, no sickness, no disease can befall them till His time. "The very hairs of their head are all numbered." Further, "Thou shalt be in league with the stones of the field; and the beasts of the field shall be at peace with thee."—(Job v. 23.) He promises to "make a covenant for them with the beasts of the field, and with the fowls of heaven, and with the creeping things of the ground" to be at peace and to supply them (Hosea ii. 18.) Though they know not the time of death, He knows and watches. (2) They shall not die till they are ready. So it is written, "He will present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, but holy and without blemish."—(Eph. v. 27.) They may die sudden or lingeringly, and as in themselves without actual preparation, but not as in Him without habitual preparation. (1) He prepares them Himself. So He sanctifies, cleanses, washes them. (2) He makes them prepare. "Prepare thyself." "The Lamb's wife hath made herself ready." "They have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." They do these things by employing Him, and so they say, "Thou hast wrought all our works in us."—(Isa. xxvi. 12.) "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God which worketh in you."—(Phil. ii. 12, 13.) The Holy Ghost applies Christ's blood and righteousness to their souls, and keeps them applying the same by faith.

(3) He takes out the sting of death. "O death, where is thy sting?" It is on the subject of Christ's rising from the dead that the Apostle sings over death. The arm of the holy law pierces the soul of every unbeliever with sin, giving him an everlasting lease of sin, the poison of wrath, ever gnawing the soul. But there is no sin for the law to fix on in them.

(4) They die in Christ. 1. They die in His blood, free from guilt. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus." It is then the full efficacy of His blood will be known, when their garments are made white. 2. In His righteousness. When they come thither, they will be clothed not in their own filthy rags, but in the wedding garment. Neither Father, Son, Spirit, law, angel, nor saint will refuse admission to one robed in Christ's righteousness, the livery of heaven. 3. In His loved and loving embraces. "Arise up, my love, my fair one, and come away." He loved them with the love of salvation when in their sins, but oh, what sweet embraces of love when His fair one will have no spots or blemish, either imputed or inherent! 4. They shall die blessed. "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord." They are blessed of the Father, of the Son, and of the

Spirit. All the angels and saints bless them. Then who can curse whom He has blessed? Balaam could not, even when they were on the earth.

VII. The last thing we mention in His being an everlasting covenant for them is their confirmation through Him in holiness and happiness through all eternity. "Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me; for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world." See John xvii. 21, and following verses. Here the union between the Father and the Son, and the love between them are compared to the union and love between Christ and believers. He says, He gives them His glory. What will He deny them that is for their good?

We observe—(1) They shall never sin any more, "As in Adam all die, so in Christ all shall be made alive." He is their covenant head, and not themselves. As they were one with Adam, so now they are one with Christ. Christ stands for them. The enemy attacked Adam as the head, but now he will be bound for ever and ever. They shall carry no fragment of the old sinful nature with them thither. Nothing that defileth can enter there. Not only nothing unclean, but no thing that defileth, no inclination to sin. They are conformed to Christ, like Him in soul and body, "His servants shall serve Him." They shall be capable of keeping the whole law as Adam's seed would have been, if he stood. The time of trial for him is over, and their time will be over at death. There can no tempter enter heaven. He is cast into hell. They have nothing to defile them with themselves, no carnality, not a wandering thought. They cannot become rebels as the fallen angels did, because "they are partakers of the divine nature." This nature is begun in their souls here, and it never sinned. "It is no more I that do it." There shall be no sin dwelling in them to excite to sin. If it were not for the old nature, they would not sin here, but there will be no old nature there. Nothing but a pure stream of the water of life, and fruit every month. No forbidden fruit will be there, only the tree of life, none of good and evil. Their drawing continually and eternally new supplies from Him keeps His nature in them, and them safe.

(2) They shall suffer no more in soul or body. "There shall be no more curse."—(Rev. xxii. 3). "Nor death, sorrow, crying, pain."—(Rev. xxi. 4.) No more fear in the understanding, guilt in the conscience, nothing to cross the will, to cause the affections to loathe, to annoy the memory, to harass the imagination. There will be no pain or sickness in body. "The inhabitant shall not say, I am sick."—(Isa. xxxiii. 24.)

(3) They shall serve Him fully. They shall keep all the commandments. These are written in their hearts, and there will be no law in the members warring against them. Their bodies shall never weary, and their souls shall never be cloyed.

(4) They shall enjoy Him in unutterable felicity. "Eye hath

not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them who love him." His power shall then be glorious to them, His wisdom satisfying, His holiness sweet, His justice full of comfort, His goodness filling, and His truth most precious. All the Divine attributes shall just be what they would wish in Christ. The place and the company will be their delight. All this they shall enjoy for ever.

Application I. Is any afraid of death? Hasten to Him who has the keys of hell and of death. It is easy to be hardened against fear while health and strength last, but remember death made the Mediator to be in agony, very sorrowful, and very heavy. Now He has made it light for His people. All the gates of death are open till we are brought to Him. No gate but will be the gate of hell, unless we are in Christ. Be sure you are in Him by the new birth. II. Be ye ready also. Those He makes ready, He makes themselves prepare. (1) Try to put your house in order, and seek that it be kept in order. (2) Finish your work whatever relative duty to God or men. Be diligent to be found in peace. (3) Seek to be in the exercise of faith. Have your loins girded, and garment on. (4) Let your lamps be burning, examining evidences and promises. III. Get free of love of sin, the sting of death. All that hate Christ love death. A carnal mind is death. Apply to Him to take away the curse, and seek deliverance from "the house of the wicked."

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

(Third Notice.)

IT is one of the conditions of the Gifford lectureship that the Bible is not to be quoted as a special supernatural revelation, and Professor Bruce manifestly finds himself in entire harmony with this condition. In the seventh lecture, which treats of "The Power making for Righteousness," he brings before us certain witnesses on this subject—Greek poets, Chinese sages, Butler, Carlyle, Arnold, Strauss—and then proceeds: "The Hebrew prophets may be admitted along with the rest, on the same footing, *i.e.*, giving evidence based ultimately on observation. This is really their position. They looked round on the world, and this is what they saw: a power at work in the interest of righteousness, causing this man or nation to prosper because they did right, bringing ruin on another man or nation because they did wrong. Their testimony is to be taken for what it is worth. No authority need be claimed for it except such as is due to *superior powers of observation, sharpened by exceptional interest in the subject.* It may be that they have stated the case *too strongly*,

*too unqualifiedly, and run into a certain onesidedness. That is apt to be the way with prophets.* Be that as it may, in any case it would be foolish and flippant to disregard their testimony as that of persons not worth listening to, at this late epoch. To the present hour none have appeared in the world more worth listening to on this matter. All competent judges of all creeds—theistic, pantheistic, and agnostic, are agreed about that.”—(p. 174.) The italics are ours. We take no exception to the fact that the prophets had “superior powers of observation” and “an exceptional interest” in the movements of the God of righteousness in the earth, yet to assume, as Professor Bruce does, that this is all the worth and authority of their testimony, is to evacuate it of its chief glory and strength. It was God who opened their ears to hear His voice, their eyes to behold His goings, and their mouths to declare His righteous judgments, and, if it were not for divine enlightenment and inspiration, their sayings might have been but vain babblings. Their words, it is admitted, have an intrinsic value apart from their divine authority, but to assume that “superior powers of observation” were sufficient to produce their whole testimony is an entire ignoring of the facts. They themselves declared that they were messengers of the Lord of hosts, and sanctioned every statement with the words—“Thus saith the Lord.” Their evidence is therefore not based ultimately on mere natural observation of the world, as Professor Bruce insinuates, but on supernatural observation exercised by mental powers irradiated with the light of the Spirit of God, observation that had respect to the special voice of God from heaven as well as the movements of events in the world. Here is the secret of the superior excellency of the testimony of the prophets: they were men inspired of God. Professor Bruce gives no place to this idea. In fact, he lets out that he thinks the prophets were in some respects mistaken. “It may be that they have stated the case too strongly, too unqualifiedly, and run into a certain onesidedness. That is apt to be the way with prophets.” No believer in the divine inspiration of the prophets could have penned such irreverent sentences as these. The Apostle Peter says that “prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved of the Holy Ghost.”—(2 Peter i. 21.) But Professor Bruce, whatever his professions, shows little respect for prophets or apostles. As for reverence for the Scriptures as the infallible Word of God, he seems to have parted company with that long ago.

Farther on in this lecture, Professor Bruce describes the origin of the moral law according to his evolution theory, and a barbarous origin it is. “Primitive men, living together in social groups, could not be very long in discovering some of these moralities, such as ‘Thou shalt not lie,’ ‘thou shalt not steal,’ ‘thou shalt not kill.’ It might take longer to arrive at the important moral generalisation embodied in the precept: ‘Thou

shalt not commit adultery,' and there may be some foundation for the assertion that the first stage in the relation of the sexes was a state of promiscuity. But even here nature and the exigencies of social well-being might teach men the needful lesson sooner than theorists imagine. At all events, it is certain that one of the most urgent tasks imposed on men associated together would be to think out, with all possible expedition the rudiments of social morality. A *Decalogue*, so to speak, would be as necessary for them as a language. . . . It is likely that a tolerably complete table of relative duties had been constructed for itself by each social organism at a very early period. . . . Shall we not own that primitive man wrought out his table of duty not without the assistance of the Being whom Mr. Arnold calls, 'A Power not ourselves making for righteousness.' Israel believed that she received her *Ten Words* from God on Mount Sinai. If that be true in any real sense, then there can be no doubt at all as to the Divine interest in righteousness. . . . It is a great affair for any people when it has got the length of having its Decalogue! Israel's faith that her law was God-given was but a due recognition of the supreme value of a code of fundamental duties, and of the truth that when such a code written or unwritten has taken its place in the consciousness of a nation, it is for that nation a veritable revelation of God as a moral Governor. . . . A Hebrew Psalmist claimed for his countrymen that they were the only people to whom God had shown his statutes. His claim may seem to some extravagant, but at least he was not wrong in congratulating Israel in possessing the privilege, whether it was peculiar to her or common to her with others."—(p. 179-81).

These words need little comment, they speak for themselves. There is here of course reckless disregard as usual of the Scripture record of man as originally created in God's image with the moral law stamped on his soul, and of that law as promulgated from Mount Sinai. In regard to Israel, all that our author will admit is that she "*believed* that she received her *Ten Words* from God on Mount Sinai," and he interprets this belief as merely "a due recognition of the supreme value of a code of fundamental duties, and of the truth that when such a code, written or unwritten, has taken its place in the consciousness of a nation, it is for that nation a veritable revelation God as a moral governor." According to this theory, there was no divine supernatural revelation of the law of God to Israel. She and other nations made with the mere assistance of the Most High moral laws for themselves, and every social organism, to begin with, constructed for itself its own table of duties. Professor Bruce also manifestly sympathises with the opinion that a Hebrew Psalmist made an extravagant claim for his countrymen, when he said that they were the only people to whom God had shown his statutes. He believes that other nations had divine statutes as well as Israel.

In the eighth lecture, our author treats of "Historic Dawns" and



"Historic Days." Under the former head he deals with the early beginnings of the ancient Indians, Persians, and Hebrews, and of the Arabs and Germans in later centuries, and professes to see more or less of the workings of God in their respective religions, and under the latter he estimates the services of Greece, Rome, and Israel to the higher interests of mankind. The whole tendency of the argument is to show that God is in all religions, and that the religion of Israel had no special supernatural origin of its own. Some of the ideas that are insisted upon may be gathered from the following quotations:—"Neither in the moral nor in the rational sphere can God, however willing, do everything for man. Man must be a very real and earnest fellow-worker with God. Human nature must be allowed to retain its river-like fluidity, whereby it tends to wander hither and thither at its own will; and the Divine action must be like the gentle coercion of the banks which constrain the wayward stream to move on, though in a circuitous course, till it find its way to the sea."—(p. 203.) According to this view, man does not require absolute regeneration: he has some power for good, and must be allowed to take his own way. All that he requires is a little gentle coercion or constraint to keep him right. The Scriptures teach that man is dead in sins, and carried about according to the course of this world, and that the whole of human nature requires to be changed. The river of human nature is running towards the dead sea of destruction, and the Divine action must be, not like gentle coercion, whereby its course is slightly changed to the right or left, but like a mighty, portentous upheaval that stops its course and turns it in the very opposite direction. Such was the experience of Saul of Tarsus and the Philippian jailor, and, however less startling the outward circumstances, such must be the experience of every one who enters upon the narrow way to life. "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." Again we quote: "The Beni-Israel (children of Israel) have just escaped from Egypt, where they have sojourned for generations in a state of bondage, and they are on the way to a settled abode in Palestine, under a leader called Moses. The hero of the Exodus, like Zoroaster, is a man of prophetic insight, and he is contemplating the arduous task of turning a *horde of slaves* into a nation of law-abiding, self-respecting men. He has two things to teach them: that God is one, and that right conduct is the prime need and interest of life."—(p. 209.) Moses is here set forth as the sole teacher of Israel, not God by him. "Mohammed did for the sons of Ishmael what Moses did for the children of Israel."—(p. 213.) Mohammed is put on the same level with Moses. "Christ, as we all know, gave to God the name 'Father.'"—(p. 241.) He speaks of the Saviour as if He were a common contributor to theological learning. In the ninth lecture, which deals with "Providence in the Individual Life," he says, on the subject of immortality: "On the whole subject 'we see through a glass darkly.' In absence of a sure

authoritative word of God, we must, with Socrates and his companions, sail through life on the frail raft of the most probable opinion."—(p. 280.) Is the Bible no "sure authoritative word of God," and is there not there unspeakably more than a mere "probable opinion?" It tells us of eternal life and everlasting destruction, of heaven and hell. It tells us all that we need to know of these great realities, and it would be well that learned professors as well as illiterate artisans would lay its instructions to heart, lest the immortal life that is before them be not one of happiness but of misery.

The tenth and eleventh lectures treat of "Providential Methods: Election and Solidarity." On the subject of "Election," Professor Bruce has some strange ideas. In speaking of the different races of mankind, he refers to theories of their origin. The Scriptural account he describes as "the Hebrew tradition of the common descent of all men from one primal pair."—(p. 285.) He defines election in the following manner—"Signal fitness for an important special function constitutes election."—(p. 288.) This means that if an individual or a nation is eminently fitted for doing some special work, then that is an elect individual, or an elect nation. But here the whole idea of election is subverted. If the doctrine of election teaches anything, it teaches that God chooses individuals and nations for a special work, irrespective, to begin with, of any fitness on their part, and that His choice embraces not only the objects of it, but also the means whereby they may be equipped for doing His will. It is not the fitness which constitutes election, but the election that provides the fitness. What constitutes election is "the good pleasure" of God's will. Saul of Tarsus, and John Bunyan by nature had signal fitness for advancing the kingdom of darkness, and it was only in virtue of the election of grace, which took place before the world began, that they were in due time laid hold of by the Spirit of God through Jesus Christ, and made partakers of a "signal fitness" for the "important special function" of proclaiming the glorious gospel of the blessed God. Similar are the ways of God with all individuals and nations whom He chooses to employ for His own purpose. His decree of election selects the objects and provides the fitness. Professor Bruce's definition puts man first, and God second, but it is the opposite order that stands the test of Scripture and common sense. There is one passage in this lecture with which we agree in part, though not by any means from the same point of view. He says: "Churches are as liable to the defects and vices of the elect as are nations or individual historic characters, and they enjoy no protection from the penalties. We must always contemplate as a possibility that any given ecclesiastical society may become a savourless salt, and be treated with contemptuous neglect. Such a result would not necessarily be a disaster. It might mean the setting free of the Spirit of Christ for a new career of wide unfettered blessing, influencing the whole of human life, and

inspiring men for every form of noble activity without seeking to bring them under any strict rule. That may be what is before us in the centuries to come."—(p. 308, 9.) He is dissatisfied with the Churches, but why? Simply because of their rules, their creeds, and confessions. He longs for the time when the Spirit of Christ will be so free as not to bring men "under any strict rule," and suggests that that may be the privilege before us in the centuries to come. The confessions of Christendom are a grievous yoke to those who wish to get rid of Bible authority, and what we fear is that Professor Bruce and others like him are willing to be rid of strict rules, because they are willing to be rid of the authority of the Word of God.

(To be concluded in our next.)

## Press Opinions on the Impending Union.

"GLASGOW HERALD," 4th February, 1898.

THE first portion of what may be termed the committee stage of the negotiations for the union of the Free and United Presbyterian Churches has been overtaken. For two days a committee representing the two bodies has been sitting in Edinburgh, and dealing with the reports presented by sub-committees of its own appointing. The meetings were held in private, but information was given yesterday to the effect that satisfactory progress had been made in adjusting these reports for presentation to the Synod and Assembly. Outsiders, however, would like to know what has really been done about the Formula before they can be expected quite to endorse the official announcement that "satisfactory progress was made." The Formula will, if this statement be correct, become the Creed of the United Church. In such an event, one would like to know what place in that Creed will be occupied by the fundamental doctrine of the Free Church—at least of the Free Church of Chalmers and the Disruption—that the nation is bound to recognise religion in a regular, official manner. Or has this doctrine been abandoned? If so, there should be no talk of union in the ordinary give-and-take sense of the phrase. On the contrary, it should be stated outright that the object of the present negotiations is to place Dr. Rainy at the feet of Dr. Hutton, and to bind the Church of the Disruption to the car of Voluntarism. One can understand that if such a surrender has been arranged, "satisfactory progress" has actually been made. It is, of course, quite possible that when the representatives of the two Churches actually come to see each other face to face, and not darkly through committee glasses, the provisional arrangements will be upset. At any rate, it is hard to believe that we have heard the last of the Highland opponents of the Declaratory Act, the more

especially as they have now such an opportunity of asserting themselves as they have not enjoyed for a very long time. Their conduct has, however, been of late disappointing in the extreme, for their brave words have invariably been followed by the weakest possible action. Indeed, it would not be at all surprising if the union negotiations were rushed through after a fashion that is calculated to make Dr. Begg turn in his grave.

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“GLASGOW EVENING CITIZEN,” 5th February, 1898.

THE question of Union between the Free and United Presbyterian Churches, which has been practically in abeyance for the past year or two, promises to provide the *pièce de résistance* for the coming United Presbyterian Synod and Free General Assembly. During the past few months active negotiations have been in progress on the subject, the various sub-committees and the joint-committee having been busily engaged in preparing a report to be laid before the Supreme Courts of both denominations. All along it has been what is termed the Constitutional party in the Free Church which has been the main stumbling block to the carrying out of the proposed union. The real leaders of the Free Church, the Rainys and Ross Taylors, have been distinctly—nay, as regards Principal Rainy even enthusiastically—in its favour. Recent developments have shown, moreover, that the Constitutional party is by no means so important, either as to numbers or general influence, as had been supposed, so that we may expect that “Constitutionalism” will be put to one side, and “Union” become the order of the day when the Assembly meets at the end of May, under the Moderatorship of Dr. Whyte, of Free St. George’s, Edinburgh. And a like result is almost certain to attend the deliberations of the Synod on the subject. Hitherto a rock of difference between the two denominations has been the question of the recognition, by the Free Church, of the Voluntary principle, but as this principle was adopted, if not in so many words at least in effect, by Principal Rainy and his friends when they entered the ranks of the Disestablishers, its recognition to-day is really little more than a simple matter of formula. Whether Mr. Archibald M’Neilage and the party he represents will accept a Unionist resolution, as proposed, say by Principal Rainy and seconded by Dr. Ross Taylor, remains to be seen; but really Mr. M’Neilage and his Constitutionalists are but a handful when compared with the Free Church as a whole. As regards the larger questions of Disestablishment and Disendowment, which are really at the bottom of Free and United Presbyterian Union, these, it may safely be predicated, are not yet within the range of practical politics. The Church of Scotland is still the Church of Scotland, just as the Dissenters are Dissenters, and each is likely to continue what it is for some considerable period to come.

## **The late John Macdonald, Fort-William.**

WE are convinced that those who knew the subject of the following brief sketch will justly be dissatisfied with our weak effort, as we are conscious that the impression which may be formed falls far short of the living man. Our apology for gathering together these small crumbs is twofold :—(1) It is not the natural man we have endeavoured to depict, but the grace of God which so conspicuously shone in the man's life and conversation. (2) Those who held sweet fellowship with him will hail with delight anything that should tend to remind them of the days of old, and the years that are past, when they went with him to God's house with the voice of joy and praise.

John Macdonald was born in the Parish of Kilmallie, Argyle-shire. Of his parents we are not in a position to say much. He repeatedly told that his mother used to take him with her to the prayer meetings held by the men when he was very young. From the manner in which he used to speak of her, she must have been a pious woman. He had prickings of conscience for sin since he could remember. From his early boyhood his conscience gave him little rest in sin. Though these convictions were believed by himself to have been the saving work of the Holy Ghost, yet he observed that these strivings were more directed against some particular sins than against the sinfulness of his nature, with all the polluted streams which issue from it. He compared it to hill pasture set on fire, a little flicker here just now, and there again to die away in turn, leaving the spectator in doubt whether it was to burn or get extinguished. So in conviction, one thinks sometimes that all has been extinguished, while at another time one feels keenly the fire of the holy law. At the periods in which he had no convictions in his mind, he felt himself becoming as dead and carnal as ever. At last a spark was thrown into John's mind, which caused the whole to become one sheet of flame, causing a dense cloud of smoke. The Rev. Francis Macbain, late of Fort-Agustus, was the instrument in the hand of the Holy Ghost to awaken fully his conscience. The commandment came with power, sin revived and John died. His reverence for this godly man was such that he called one of his sons "Francis" after his name. Such were his mental trials at that time, that he thought it would be just for the civil authorities of the nation to proceed against him in order to execute God's quarrel with him. He felt himself such a terrible sinner that he was afraid he would be the cause of bringing down the judgment of God upon the whole parish. He often spent nights and days out in the hills alone, deploring his forlorn and lost condition. The law was so terrible to him that he gave up all hope that there was any possibility of a deliverance from its curse and penalty. Not a blink of the light of the gospel of Christ shone into his guilty soul for many months. After being a long time in this state, he heard the Rev. John

Macrae (Big Macrae) preach, and that seems to have been the dawn of the morning, and the rising of the sun of righteousness upon poor John's benighted soul. From that day, Christ and Him crucified, and the mercy of God by Him, became John's song. Many might be able to arrange their words in better order, but he was by far the most spiritually minded man we ever met with. Worldly matters found a very small place in his conversation. Satan's subtle and deeply laid plots, along with the readiness with which he perceived the carnal mind and desperately wicked heart to embrace his insinuations, caused John to be always on the watch. His faith in the Word of God as the only instrument to vanquish Satan was strong. He might be truly called "a good soldier of Christ," for his thoughts and words were on the conflict of faith continually.

In prayer, his deep insight into the depravity of men's nature by sin would be poured forth in clear and very convincing expressions. The subtle temptations of Satan would be most unsparingly exposed. In describing Christ's victory over all the powers of darkness; his love to the law and justice of God, and also to the souls of guilty men, and the fearful consequences to those who should despise the gospel, he often held large audiences spell-bound for more than half an hour. His reverence and godly fear was very conspicuous in all he spoke. Except when quoting scripture, we very seldom heard him taking the name of the Most High into his lips. He instead used the phrases—"O Heaven!" or "Thou Holy One." We often heard some of the Lord's people say that they would walk twenty miles to hear John pray. He was a man who fought much in secret striving against sin, and who obtained many victories. At communion seasons he spent much time in secret places among the hills and valleys. In a certain place he was seen coming from the hills by a young man who went to meet him, expecting to get some hint of what the conflict in the hill might have been about. John said, "Do you know the hottest place Satan ever met with?" The young man said, "I cannot say." "When Satan comes between the God of all grace, and grace in the soul of the believer, that is hotter for him than hell."

At the Friday question meetings his remarks were often helpful to them who had to say, "Our signs we do not now behold." We have been told that the first time the late Dr. Kennedy of Dingwall heard him speak to the question, he said, "I seldom heard a man speak with whom my soul joins more than with that man." Upon one such occasion, he said, "Have you been at Mount Sinai? and have you seen the fire and the smoke, and heard the voice of words? Have you trembled there thinking that you should be consumed? Have you prayed there that God should not speak to you except through a mediator? Have you been brought to Mount Sion, and into the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the

general assembly and Church of the first-born, which are written in heaven, and to God the judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaketh better things than that of Abel? This is where true godliness begins, and there the godly shall spend their eternity with Christ." At another time—the question being the love of God to His people—John said, "I have heard much to-day from the brethren concerning the love of God to His poor people; but the poor look for proofs of that love. When the children of Israel came to the Red Sea, and saw Pharaoh and all his hosts at their heels to destroy them, they could see nothing before them but death. The Lord gave them a proof of His love and faithfulness that night, in opening a way through the Red Sea for them, and in drowning Pharaoh and his host, that caused them to sing a song in the morning. So it is with the Lord's people yet in their struggles and marvellous deliverances."

Meeting with the late Rev. Alexander MacColl, of Lochalsh, whom John held in great veneration, one morning he said to him, "What news to-day?" Mr. MacColl said, "Good news, John, Jesus Christ died for sinners." "I have," said John, "better news than that myself, that He rose again." Being asked if he saw any sinners awakened at that time on his travels through the country, "There are," he said, "two kinds of awakening. One shoots up with a sudden flash, and as quickly dies away. While the other may be compared to a seed of corn cast into the ground, which begins to grow under the thick clod, but the clod meets it here and there, causing it to wind its way hither and thither until at long last it gets its head above the earth, and grows up into the full corn in the ear. That is the kind of conversion I like." One expressed in his company that portion of scripture, "I am like a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke." He said, "I will give you a practical illustration of that text. A certain gentleman, on whose land I then lived, had a bullock, and the brute became dangerous, so that it was decided that a board should be fixed on its horns. All the servants went to get this done. After we caught him, he freed himself from the grasp of all the rest, but I held on till he fell exhausted, and then they came and fixed on the board. Next morning it was observed that the board came off, and they went again to fix it on, but they could not manage to get near him. At last they sent for me, and so soon as the bullock saw me he stood trembling, and did not move out of the same spot until the board was fixed on his horns. That is the way with those who have been conquered by the law, whenever they see it they tremble." Being asked, "Which is the best way to break the head of the dragon?" John answered, "Faith in the Word of God." On a certain occasion he was told that Dr. Kennedy was expected to officiate at the Kilmallie communion, he began to tell the people that the Dr. was to come. One said to him, "What is the use of his coming, for they say that his preaching is so profound, that we

in Lochaber cannot understand him?" "Why?" John said, "There are men in Lochaber who will not leave a bait on his hook." We may mention that John was a fisherman. He told a friend that one of his boys became seriously ill, and that he went to plead with the Lord in secret for the child's life, and that he thought the Lord gave him a promise. He communicated this to his family. The doctor was called in, and told him that the child could not recover. The boy was getting worse and worse, but John said, "I was nibbling at the promise and the boy got better." About a year before his end came he was attacked by a severe illness. After he got better, he said, "Some thought that I was to have been taken away with my last sickness; but the Lord gave me a promise that I should go yet round the walls of Jericho blowing the trumpet of ram's horn." After this he went north to Applecross, and several places, and returned home to go no more beyond the boundaries of the Kilmallie congregation.

He had no toleration for the disgraceful fickleness of the ministers and elders who, after all they said to the contrary, swallowed the infamous Declaratory Act, and all the heterodoxy in that Church. He used no varnish when he sketched the picture of the present generation, especially those who led the people astray. He often said that the Most High in judgment blinded the eyes of those who led the people, and that that was a clear sign of impending judgment to this nation. To a friend he said, "The ministers are blinded so that they do not perceive how the Devil ruins the cause of Christ through their inventions. How can they know the enemy's work in the Church when they never discerned it in their own souls?" "Few," he said, upon another occasion, "in any generation had the gift which God bestowed upon the sixty valiant men who kept Solomon's bed, who could see through the thickest darkness when others could see nothing. I think there are only three or four of such men in this generation." "The old divines," he said, "set all the blessings of the covenant of grace before perishing sinners, and stated distinctly man's lost condition; but the so-called divines of this generation entertain the minds of men with astronomy and philosophy to their eternal ruin in hell fire." One of our ministers met him about the time they were ejected from their manses and Churches, to whom John said, "You may be sure that you shall not be without a house to dwell in, for the Word of God says, 'Ye are his house,' and if you are his house he shall be a house unto you."

The profanation of the Sabbath day by this generation vexed him grievously, and he faithfully admonished Sabbath breakers of the fearful vengeance that would be taken by the Lord of the Sabbath upon their sacrilege. At one time he along with other men were trenching a piece of land for a certain proprietor. On Saturday evening all the men went home except John, who remained over the Sabbath in the bothy. On Sabbath afternoon, the proprietor came on horseback to view the work done, and



rode through the newly trenched ground in the saddle. Coming upon a bog, down went horse and rider, and both stuck there in the mud. His cries brought John upon the scene. He succeeded by his utmost efforts to extricate, first the gentleman, and afterwards the horse. After rubbing some of the mud off both, the gentleman mounted the saddle—John holding bridle and stirrup—and thanked him. John said you are not going away till I speak to you, “You have profaned the Lord’s holy day, and you may be very thankful that He did not cast you into hell. Therefore you will not get away till you promise me faithfully that you will never do the like again.” This he did, and John let him go. Shortly before he died, he said, “O Heaven! They are in this generation selling the holy Sabbath to the Devil.” A more true and faithful friend than John can very seldom be met with. During the last few years of his life, he visited the greater part of the congregations of our Church upon the mainland. He said, “Abraham was commanded by the Holy One to go to search out the land of promise, and I am doing the same, for His people are God’s heritage, and I am doing my utmost to see as many of them as I can before my departure.”

His health began to decline seriously a few months before he died, but he was not many weeks confined entirely to his bed. One went to see him on his deathbed, who said to him—“How do you feel?” He answered that he felt comfortably; that he was going in his mind through the heritage of God. “That will keep your mind busy enough,” his friend said. “Yes,” he said, “and I tell you that there is not a soul in whom Christ dwells, but grace in the believer will find Him out, as the wise men led by the star found Him in Bethlehem.” Further on, he said to this gentleman, “However low this poor cause may come, be you sure that you will not turn your back upon it; for it is the Lord’s cause, and He will take care of it.” To some who had the privilege of visiting him, he spoke of his hope of an eternal victory over sin, Satan, and all his enemies, through Christ, and of a glorious immortality beyond death and the grave. At family worship, shortly before he died, one who was present heard him making use of the following beautiful metaphor—“The soul of the believer, when nearing the haven of glory, is like unto a ship which in the storms outside had to take in all her reefs, but getting into the mouth of the harbour, the wind getting weaker, begins to loose out the reefs and enters under full sail, dashing the waves before her bow.” He died on the morning of the 13th July, 1897, and was buried in the Kilmallie Cemetery on the 16th, many friends being present to show their last respect to his mortal remains. His brave countenance, and his head of bushy and snow-white hair, we shall not see any more. On the last day he shall certainly stand in his place at the right hand of the Judge. The vain and godless people of Fort-William and Kilmallie will, on that day, “discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth Him not.”

N. C.

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

(XVI.)

MONTROSE, 8th June, 1880.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—I was glad to see your handwriting again, and to know that you found cause of thanksgiving and praise, as well as of mourning and sorrow in the recent dispensation with which you have been visited. Believe me, or rather believe the Word of the Lord, "Yet God is good to Israel."

I am sending you by this post a small treatise I have written and published, "The Prophetical Office of Christ," the proof sheets of which you saw last winter. I myself see no merit in the little work except perhaps its catholicity. All the leading doctrines of Christianity may be gathered from it, yet not one word indicating to what branch of the visible Church the writer belongs. That is something, and something attained without being thought of or aimed at by me when writing. But the treatise itself is simply a shell from the shores of the ocean of divine truth. The glory of Christ's prophetical office—the combination of Word and Spirit—which is truly and fully just Christ Himself as the ever-living and ever infallible Teacher in His Church, is far too little regarded in present-day thinking and teaching. Ah! it is when the Church hears Christ's own voice in and through the written Word, that she will have a testimony for Him to give such as shall convince an unbelieving world—a testimony the voice of which is "Whom having not seen, we love, in whom, though now we see Him not, yet *believing*, we rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory."

I am not to write at length to-day, for I am troubled with rheumatic pains which flit down even to my fingers. And yet you were carving out more work for me. Well, if spared and able, I should like next to bring out something on Christ's kingly office; if only the thoughts were God-given. A running commentary on the kingly Psalms would be the line I should like to adopt. For example, the 2nd, the 8th, the 24th, the 45th, and the 89th. Then the 90th, and those that follow with their repeated anthem, "The Lord doth reign." Next would come, "Grace reigns," a glorious theme, and lastly, "*They* shall reign, they who receive grace and the gift of righteousness, they shall reign in life by one, by Christ Jesus."

Do you know I sometimes think I hear the words said, "Ye ought to be strong, and to remember the infirmities of the weak?" Who are to help "the weak" if such do not who have been long fed and watered in the pastures of divine truth? Is it right to be expecting to be always nursed and dandled, taking up, as it were, the time of the Great Physician with simply one's own case, when the professing Church and a world lying in wickedness need Him so sorely? Who are to help "the weak" if they do not who

have again and again received help at the Lord's gracious hands? His word to His followers was, "Freely ye have received, freely give." Are we prepared to turn round and say, "Lord, we did not receive very freely, we did not receive very much, we will wait until we receive more fully and more largely before we endeavour to give out." Truly, if that is our way of it, we need not wonder although we are left to be useless and unsavoury; "That which was kept of the manna until the morning bred worms, and stank." Therefore, while we ought to wait on the Lord for the opportunities and the encouragements to engage in His service, we ought to be ourselves in our hearts and lives that very workmanship which would glorify Him, and which might be a means of blessing to others. We ought to be His witnesses, witnesses to the power of His grace and truth; and we ought to be His remembrancers giving Him no rest till He arise and build up Zion, and make her a praise in the earth.

What did you think of last Assembly? It appears to be forgotten that some of the views now called "new" were known and debated in the Church centuries ago, so that our young critics seem to me like so many relics of the middle ages!

But I am not to begin another sheet, so conclude at present.  
—Yours, &c.,

HUGH MARTIN.

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## Two Women of Piety.

THE LATE MRS. HARPER, THURSO.

DURING the past winter, the cause of truth has lost some of its attached friends in the county of Caithness. One of these was the late Mrs. Harper, Thurso, who passed away on the 14th October, 1897, at the age of upwards of 70 years. She was brought up in a pious home. Her father was John Murray, Thurso, son of the godly David Murray, of Kildonan. It is related of the latter that he called his children around his bed when dying, and said—"If I find you at the left hand on the great day, I will put my Amen to your condemnation." John Murray was a kind, hospitable man, and had an open house to the godly, who held many meetings there. He put his children through the Shorter Catechism on Sabbath evenings, and, if there was a smile on one of their faces, that child was dismissed from the room. The mother was Ann Sinclair, one who (in the language of an esteemed correspondent, from whom we quote throughout this sketch) "set an example to her family of humble and sincere piety." Her father again was William Sinclair, Kirkton, Sutherlandshire, and her brother Alexander Sinclair, Thurso, both eminently pious men, whose names are recorded by Mr. Auld in the "Ministers and Men in the Far North." We cannot refrain from inserting here an incident in the life of Ann Sinclair, which is worthy of note on several accounts. She was on one occasion very ill, and her family thought

she would be taken away, and were all weeping at the bedside. Her brother Alexander came in, and said to her, "Is there anyone you would like to see?" She replied, "Mr. Munro, Halkirk, but it is Saturday and he cannot come." Mr. Sinclair took a machine and went for Mr. Munro. As he was coming in at the door, he said aloud—"You are not to die at this time, Annie, you are to be a long time a comfort to your family yet. Did you ever confess Christ openly at His table?" "Oh, no, I never felt myself worthy to do that," she replied. "Well, you are to promise me when you get better that you are to fulfil all commanded duty." She made the promise, and when she got better went to Halkirk, where she, for the first time, sat at the Lord's table. The incident is instructive, as shedding light on the spiritual life of those highly favoured days in the north.

The subject of this notice was one who, for a long period of her life, followed the footsteps of the flock that had gone before. In her early youth, as we have heard her acknowledge, she was very light and foolish, like numbers of her age, but the Lord did not leave her in that condition. "She became the subject of deep soul-concern a few years after her marriage to Mr. John Harper, baker, Thurso, which event took place about forty years ago. Husband, children, friends, and the comforts of life became for a time empty and unsatisfying. She was then an adherent of the West Free Church, Thurso, but one Sabbath that she was in much distress of mind it occurred to her to go to hear Dr. Taylor, of the First Free. As she entered the Church, he was reading these words in the opening psalm—"O set ye open unto me the gates of righteousness." An impression took hold of her that here her relief was to be found, which the sermon that followed confirmed. Her anxieties were gradually relieved, and, after a season of alternating hopes and fears, she entered into the light and liberty of the Gospel. Her attachment to, and appreciation of, Dr. Taylor's ministry ever after were unbounded, and she more than once said that eternity alone could disclose her indebtedness to him as the messenger of spiritual good to her soul. We are glad to record, also, that all this did not shut her eyes to the defections of the Free Church, and whatever respect she cherished for Dr. Taylor did not hinder her from showing her warmest sympathies with those who endeavoured to raise the banner of truth in a backsliding generation. The first occasion Rev. Mr. Macdonald, Shieldaig, visited her, she exclaimed in her own warm enthusiastic way to a friend present, "Open the gates that the righteous nation which keepeth the truth may enter in." She was long confined to the house in delicate health, and never had an opportunity publicly to join with those whose hands she desired to uphold in the cause of truth. On the last occasion such an opportunity occurred, namely, the Wick Sacrament of April, 1897, she had quite prepared to go there when she took suddenly ill, and had to keep the house ever afterwards to the end. "After her husband's death, in 1883, Mrs.

Harper carried on his business for behoof of herself and family, and, amid all the vicissitudes incident to merchandise, conducted it creditably and honourably. Her regard for the Sabbath was a feature not only in her personal but in her business character. No preparatory work for Monday, not even the setting of an oven fire, was allowed. The Sabbath was the day of rest to her own soul, and she would have it so in all the relations of life." On one occasion an aristocratic family residing at Brawl Castle, near Thurso, sent in for bread on Sabbath. But she said to the messenger, "Tell your master, if it were possible or needful, I would serve him on my bended knees during the week, but not on the Lord's day." The words, we are glad to say, were well received. Mrs. Harper, also, never posted a letter on Saturday night, an example that merchants and all others would do well to follow. "Her hospitality to the Lord's people was another marked feature of her character. Many happy and edifying meetings for prayer and fellowship have been held under her roof, and she was herself a secret wrestler for the cause of Christ and the coming of His kingdom. The Word of God was her delight, and she often quoted the words which, indeed, her life exemplified—'My comfort and my heart's delight thy testimonies be.'"

As already indicated, delicacy of health kept her much confined to the house for the last few years. She spoke in terms of high appreciation of Dr. Kennedy, Dingwall, Mr. Christopher Munro, Strathy, and other deceased ministers, honoured in the service of the Gospel. "When the end came, it was sudden. She was spared the bitter pang of bidding farewell to her orphan children, for, owing to failure of the heart's action, she gently fell asleep on the 14th October, 1897." "Them that sleep in Jesus will God bring with him."

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#### THE LATE BARBARA MACBEATH, THURSO.

WE regret to record the death of Barbara Macbeath, Sutherland's Cottages, Thurso, at the advanced age of 86 years. This godly woman was one of the true type of lively God-fearing Christians. She had been for the last five years on a bed of weakness, but well attended to in all her trouble by a friend beloved.

In her youth she received training in the truth under those who feared the God of Israel. We believe that in early life she became impressed with the sad truth of her lost, ruined, and undone state, through the fall of Adam; but under wise and godly teaching, was led to the way of recovery through faith in the finished work of Christ.

As was generally the custom in times past, so in her case the manuals of instruction employed were the Larger and Shorter Catechisms, and the Confession of Faith, books despised in this day, but books in which the doctrines of grace are set forth in accordance with the unerring Word of the living God.

Barbara was led in very early years to respect the people of God, to love their company, to follow in the footsteps of the flock, and to reverence those eminent fathers called the "Men," and the dearly beloved mothers in Israel. She retained a good recollection of Rev. Messrs. Finlay and Archibald Cook. In her youth it was not considered a hard task to travel long distances, to hear those and other eminent ministers of Christ, preaching the everlasting gospel to sinners, whose labours were blessed to many a soul in the county of Caithness. She continued until the last to cherish a love for the truth as formulated in the Westminster Standards, and as Churches and ministers drew back from displaying loyal adherence to the doctrines stated therein, she felt precluded from holding fellowship with them. Her convictions were deep, though she did not give much expression to them in words. Her judgment of the truth was clear, and discernible of the testimony, power, and glory of the word of salvation; but the truth otherwise altered to suit the sinful propensities of learned, carnal minded men, that she could not endure.

Barbara's life was not one of high sounding profession, rather, it was an endeavour to walk humbly with her God. Her delight was in the law of the Lord. "And in His law she meditated day and night."

During the last days of her life, she endured much suffering, but she did not repine, and gradually her strength ebbed till she breathed her last on the evening of the 4th January of this year. To her to die we feel assured was gain. Her remains were interred in the Dorrery churchyard, on the 7th January.

J. M.

## Letters of the late Rev. Archibald Cook.

(III.)

DAVIOT FREE MANSE, 23rd February, 1853.

MY DEAR SIR,—I long much to hear from you—I hope I have not offended you—and also to hear how your sister is, whether she is getting better. We here are in our ordinary state, attending on our different callings. The command is, "Occupy till I come." He says this to all—all have some different calling in which they may do good or evil. There is fear put in the gracious soul of his being found a barren branch, also a sense of coming behind in all things he does. He often thinks, if a spiritually minded person were in my place how much good he might do. This keeps the gracious soul about the door of mercy. He has nothing to plead but "Be merciful to me a sinner." This keeps him low in his own eyes, keeps the people of God highly esteemed, as to have something of the spirit that washes their feet, that covereth their infirmities, that would relieve their wants, that chooses to suffer with them, and to enjoy their company

through eternity. I have been going through the people in the way of catechising, from the beginning of November till last week, and have about eight weeks work yet. At times I feel it heavy as to body and mind. At other times I feel it very sweet and refreshing even to my body. Indeed, I do not believe I would live long if I were idle. Was ten times last week more tired than when engaged the whole week. Yet, after all, I see myself doing nothing; so little fruit seen after my labours that I often consider myself a barren tree, a cumberer of the ground; and were it not that the Saviour is able to save to the uttermost, and there are the free call and offers of the gospel, I would have no hope, but He is able to save, and has a fellow feeling with sinners. "He having suffered, being tempted, is able to succour them who are tempted." "He has the tongue of the learned that He should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary." "When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Jacob will not forsake them." They will be made to find the faithfulness of these words. His love depends not on their feelings, and they will be made to confess it. The church said, "The Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me;" but, "Can a woman forget her sucking child that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, they may forget, but I will not forget thee. Behold, I have graven thee on the palms of my hands." This is very unlike the experience of the church at that time, thinking her Lord had forsaken and forgotten her, yet, "I have graven thee on the palms of my hands." What could be nearer and more visible to Him than that? Those of the saints who went home to their eternal rest were made to go through a weary wilderness, wrestling with unbelief, hardness, barrenness, vain and sinful thoughts, unthankfulness, disobedience, a corrupt nature which cleaved to created objects, so that they considered themselves the chief of sinners. Yet they found the Saviour always unchanged, faithful to His promise, full of fellow-feeling, condescension, and love, as to be at times as the dew in their retired corners, nearer to them than they expected, a present help in times of need, worthy of the name of a Saviour, a hiding-place, the shadow of a great rock in a weary land; His word always new, refreshing, supporting, healing, raising Himself up in their heart and affections. And they must at last confess that He is the same, and worthy of being trusted with their souls. Grace be with you.—Yours sincerely,

ARCHD. COOK.

"Behold, I stand at the door and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me."—Rev. iii. 20.

## Tus Comhàirle an Ònaidh.

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

(Continued from page 395.)

(3.) Is e thuirt Doctair Chalmers ris an Ard-sheanadh :—

“Ann an toirt thairis ar dàimh ris an Stàta, agus mar sin, ar dealachadh féin o a leithid a dhàimh, feudar a ràdh mu ’r deighinn gu ’n do sheas sibh an aghaidh buairidh ;—mòr-bhuairleadh a chum peacaidh, ann an aon chrutb ; ach tha sibh ann an cunnart a bhi air ’ur giùlan air falbh le buairleadh ann an cruth eile ; agus buairleadh co-ionnan a chum a’ pheacaidh cheudna. A roghainn air a bhi air ’ur tàlaidh air falbh o aon do ’r ceud bhunaitibh is mò, thug sibh thairis aon chùl-taic talmhaidh. Ach biodh aig gach aon bhunait a h-obair iomlan ; agus biodh cùram oirbh, air eagal gu ’m bi sibh air ur buairleadh gus an aon is lugha do ’r bunaitibh a thréigsinn, la gealltanais, no tàlaidhean o chùltaic talmhaidh eile. Bithibh ’n ’ur faicill nach toir sibh thairis, air gheall, aon eile do ’r teagasgaibh no do phuingibh a’ chreidimh—aon airson an d’rinn Eaglais na h-Alba i féin ainmeil o cheann ghoirid, leis an dìon chur i oirre—’s e sin, ùghdarras Chrìosd thairis air Rìghribh agus Rìoghachdaibh na talmhainn, agus an leth-bhreac dleasdanas, a’ bhuineas do ’n Ard-riaghladh, eadhon, diadhachd a chumail suas ’s an t-saoghal. Bithibh air bhur faicill, tha sinn ag ràdh, nach toir sibh thairis, le co-ghéilleadh, no le strìochdadh, sin is e bhur bunait eile. Feudar a ràdh gur i so is lugha, na ’n aon eile. Ach na dì-chuimhnicheamaid an ni tha ’n Bìobul ag ràdh mu ’n dream a bhriseas an aon a ’s lugha do na h-àitheanta—eadhon, gu ’n goirear dhiubh an dream a ’s lugha ann an Rìoghachd nèimh. Dh’fheudadh iadsan a tha ’n ar ’n aghaidh, air an dara puing so, foisneachadh air an aon stéidh luachmhor ruinn féin. Is daoine iad ris am bheil sinn air eadardhealachadh ; agus gidheadh ri ’m feud sinn còrdadh gu eadardhealachadh. Dh’fheudadh iad a bhi ’n an co-luchd-saothrachaidh anns an obair mhòr sin, eadhon, ann an toirt an t-sluaigh ’n ar Tìr fo ghairm an t-soisgeil. Ach cha bhris sinn, eadhon airson an càirdeis, iomlaineachd ar bunaiten ; ni mò a strìochdas sinn ’s an aon a ’s lugha dhiubh. Chum a bhi ni ’s so-thuigsinn, bitheam ni ’s eagnaigh. Tha na Saor-thabhartaich no na Féin-thoilich ’g ar togail gu mearachdach, ma tha iad a’ saòilsinn, gur Féin-thoilich sinne. Tha sinn a’ seasamh ri dleasdanas uachdaranachd na Rìoghachd, ann bhi a’ tabhairt theachd-a-stigh o mhaoin na Rìoghachd airson cumail suas ministreilachd an t-soisgeil ’n ar Tìr. Agus ’s i ar ’n-ùrnuigh, gu fosglar an sùilean chum gu fòghluimeadh iad coinnus is còir dhoibh iad féin a chleachadh mar luchd-didein do ’n Eaglais, agus cha ’n ann mar luch-truaillidh, no mar àin-tighearnaibh oire. Tha sinn ag ùrnuigh gu biodh peacadh



Ussiah, anns an do thuit iad, air a' mhaitheadh dhoibh, agus gu 'n tigeadh gu h-aithghearr làithean úd an t-soluis agus a' bheanachaidh, 'n uair a bhios 'Rìghrean 'n an oideachan-altruim, agus ban-rìghinnean 'n am màithrichean altruim do Shìon.' Ann am focal, tha sinn a' meas, gu 'm bu chòir do gach earrann agus dreuchd do' n Choimh-fhlaitheachd a bhì fo bhuaidh na diadhachd; agus gu 'm bu chòir do gach fear-dreuchd, o 'n aon a' s isle, 'n an gairmibh fa leth, gach nì a tha 'n an comas a dheanamh, a chum gnùis a thòirt, agus cumail suas do 'n Eaglais. Sin ri ràdh ged dh' fhàg sinn an Eaglais Stéidhichte, gidheadh, thàinig sinn a mach air a' bhunait air 'n do shuidhicheadh i—Dh'fhàg sinn Eaglais Stéidhichte' air a truailleadh; ach dheanamaid gairdeachas ann am pilltinn ri aon a bhiodh fìor-ghlan. Ann an cainnt eile,—tha sinn 'n ar luchd-tagraidh airson aideachaidh rìoghachdail, tre ùghdarras-riaghlaidh, agus cumail suas rìoghachdail do 'n diadhachd—agus cha 'n 'eil sinn 'n ar Féin-thoilich (Voluntaries)."

So earail a thug an duine ro urramach ud doibh aig an Dealachadh; ach a tha air a cur an neo-shuim an duigh, le mòran.

'Tha e fìor' gu bheil e dligheachd do 'n Riaghladh aimsireil a laghanna féin a dheanamh, agus an cur an cleachdadh le 'ùghdarras, féin; ach cha 'n 'eil so a' togail dheth an dleasdanas a bhuineas da do aobhar agus do Eaglais Chrìosd.

Ged tha mòran eile ri ràdh air a' Cheann so; gidheadh 's éigin duinn dol air aghaidh gu beagan a' ràdh air an dara Ceann.

II. Tha 'n dara Ceann mu theagasg ro-chudromach—eadhon, teagasg na Réite, a rinneadh le bàs Chrìosd airson a shluaigh féin. Ma tha sùil aca ri aonadh air dheadh-stéidh, bu chòir gu 'm biodh iad comasach air làn-riarachadh a thoirt air fallaineachd na h-Eaglais ud, 'n am beachd air an teagasg so. Bha e air aithris gu coitchionn, agus chuir cuid diubh féin an céill e gu follaiseach, gu bheil beachdan mu 'n teagasg ghlòrmhor so a' buadhachdadh 'n am measg a tha air am meas a bhì an aghaidh Fhocail Dhé. Agus tha cuid dhiubh-san a rinn so gu follaiseach anns a' Chomunn-Aonaidh. Ach ciod am beachd a tha air aithris a tha 'n am measg, agus a tha air 'aideachadh le cuid dhiubh féin? Tha e air a chumail a mach gu bheil dàimh dà-fhillte aig an Réite rinn Chrìosd le 'fhuil féin,—aon dàimh ris a' mhuinntir thaghta, agus dàimh eile ris a' chinne-dhaione gu léir. Bha 'n teagasg so air a sgaoileadh 's an Fhraing le fear, Maois Amirauid, agus, mar an céudna, *Eoin Camaron*, a bha 'n a Ard-fhear teagaisg an sin, ach a rugadh an Glascho. Rè nan cùig bliadhna fichead mu dheireadh, bha beachdan air an Réite, a bha air an dìteadh roimhe sin, air an toirt am fradharc a ris; agus bha na beachdan so air an cur ann ann leithid so do bhriathraihh:—Riaraich Chrìosd ceartas Dhé airson pheacaidhean a chinne-dhaione gu léir; agus gu 'n tug e éiric airson nan uile. Bha e air a chumail a mach, gu 'n d' rinneadh Chrìosd 'n a pheacadh, ann an seadh-éigin, air son nan uile; agus gu'n d' thug e riarachadh airson pheacanna nan uile

dha bheil e air a' thairgseadh anns an t-soisgeul ; gu'n do bhàsaich e, ann an seadh, airson nan uile dhaoine, agus gu'n do phaidh e fiachan nan uile ; agus g'un d' thug e riarachadh air an son do Dhia. Bha ministear diubh féin, aig an robh na beachdan so, a chur iad a mach as a dhreuchd. Ach 'n uair a bhris na beachdan mi-fhallain so a mach a ris, 'nam measg, cha d' rinn iad an àicheadh le smachd-Eaglais a chur an gnìomh, mar rinn iad roimhe. Agus bha dà Ard-fhear-theagais na diadhachd 'n an Eaglais a' toirt àite do na beachdaibh so. Thachair na nithe so an taobh-sa do dheich bliadhna fichead. Agus tha na beachdan ceudna air an creidsinn 'n ar làithibhne. Bha sgriobhadh, tre litrichibh, eadar Doctair Wood an *Dumfries*, agus ministear do 'n Eaglais Chléireil Aointe, air a' bhliadhna so chaidh, mu 'n teagasg so ; agus bha an duine sin gu soilleir a' dion nam beachdan ud. Tha ministear do 'n Eaglais ud 's a' Chomunn-Aonaidh, an t-Olla Marshall, *Coupar-Angus*, a ghnàthaich na briathraibh a leanas, 'n an Cléir féin ann am Peairt, o cheann dlùth do thrì bliadhna, agus a bha air an clo-bhualadh ann an dà phàiper-naidheachd,—fear diubh am Peairt, agus am fear eile an Dun-Eidin, o cheann còrr is dà bhliadhna. “Cha bhìodh,” ars esan, “soisgeul againn r' a shearmonachadh do 'r co-pheacaich mur b' urrainn mi shearmonachadh gu 'n d' ulluich obair Chrìosd slàinte do pheacaich gun eadar-dhealachadh, air dàimh choitchion obair Chrìosd.” Anns a' bhliadhna 1841, bha ministear ann an Kilmàrnoc, do 'n Eaglais ud—Seuman Morraston—a' teagasg a' bheachd mhi-fhallain ud, agus a' bhliadhna 'n a dhéigh sin, bha 'athair, ministear ann am *Bathgate*, air a dhìteadh airson an teagasg cheudna. Bha iad le chéile air an cur a mach as an dreuchd. Chuir iad ri aghaidh an dà Ard-Fhir-theagaisg (*Professors*), aig an Eaglais ud, gur h-iadsan a bha 'n an innealan gu 'n treòrachadh chum nam beacdan ud a thogail—ni a dh' aidich fear dhiubh. Ged bha e aithnichte gu robh na beachdan so aig na dhaoinibh ud, a bha teagasg dhaoin' òga, chum dreuchd na ministreilachd, gidheadh ghiùlainadh leò gu latha am bàis. Bha iad a' cumail a mach gu follaiseach, gu bheil a' mhuinntir nach 'eil do 'n taghadh ann an staid 's am feud iad a bhi air an tèarnadh ; gu 'n robh Chrìosd, ann an seadh, 'n a fhear-ionaid airson na h-uile dhaoine ; gur h-ann an co-cheangal ri rùn Dhé chum tèarnaidh a tha slàinte air a deanamh cinnteach ; gidheadh gu 'n d' fhosgail bàs Chrìosd dorus tròcair airson nan uile ; agus gu bheil e a' cur na h-uile peacach ann an staid 's am feud e bhi air a shaoradh ; agus gu bheil e leagadh bunait airson thairgse uil-fharsuinn do 'n t-soisgeul. Le leithid so do bhriathraibh, gidheadh, fhuair na daoine so as ; agus thàinig an Ard-Chùirt Eaglais aca, gu cò-dhùnadh, gu robh aonachd 'n am measg, gu h-àraidh air an dà shealladh, anns an robh teagasg na Réite air an cur fa 'n comhar. Thogadh eachdraidh inu so mòran rùim, agus, uime sin, cha 'n fheud sinn leantuin air.

Sgriobh ministear do 'n Eaglais ud—Maghistear Scot, Camusnethan—leabhran, anns am bheil e ag ràdh—“Ann an ceud

eachdraidh ar n-Eaglais, sheas ministear 'n a aonar, agus bha e air a dhruideadh a mach o dhreuchd na ministearachd airson saobh-theagasg; eadhon, réite do na h-uile; agus an déigh sin, bha cùis-dhithidh, gu sònruichte air a' phrìomh-phuing so, air a toirt an aghaidh dhream àraidh dhiubh; ach air dhoibh dol tre 'n chruaidh dheuchainn sin, tha e coltach gu bheil an teagasg so a nis air a cheadachadh; agus cha 'n 'eil gleadh mu shaobh-chreidimh r' a chluinntinn ni 's mò, an taobh a stigh d' ar n-Eaglais, ged chluinnear air uairibh monmhor o 'n taobh a muigh dhith." So an fhianuis tha cuid dhiubh féin a' toirt, mu 'n àit a tha 'n teagasg mearachdach so a' faotainn 'n am measg; agus gidheadh tha 'n Comunn-Aonaidh a' toirt cinnt air, gu bheil còrdadh eatorra mu 'n teagasg so; ach cha 'n 'eil iad ag innseadh ciod an stéidh air an d' thàinig iad gu còrdadh air. Thàinig Seanadh na h-Eaglais Chléireil Aointe gu còrdadh a thaobh bheachdan nan daoine ainmeil ud, an t-Olla *Balmer* agus *Brown*. Ach am b' ann air dheadh-stéidh?

Tha cuid aca ag ràdh nach b' urrainn iad tairgse shaor, iomlan, do Chrìosd a thoirt do pheacaich, mar b' urrainn iad a ràdh gu 'n d' bhàsaich Chrìosd ann an seadh coitchionn air son nan uile. Thaobh so, cuiridh sinn breth dhaoine urramach fa 'r comhair. Sgrìobhadh leabhraichean le àrd fhear-teagaisg na diadhachd an Ameria, an t-Olla *Hodge*. Anns an Roimh-ràdh cho-aontaich na h-urramaich, na h-Ollamah Cunningham, Candlish, Macrie, agus Simington anns na briathraibh a leanas:—"An àite gu bheil am beachd sin," ars 'iadsan, "eadhon, gu bheil Réite air son nan uile, 'g ulluchadh stéidh is fèarr airson tairgse an t-soisgeil;—'s ann a tha ni 's mò do bhuaidh aige gu atharrachadh nàduir an ni a ta air a thairgse, 's e sin ri ràdh, ann e bhi 'n a thoirt a stigh, air soisgeul eile. 'S e so a tha toirt dreach do-iomchair do 'n phuing a tha iad a' tagradh; agus air an aobhar so, 's còir do dhaoineibh a bhi air am faicill, o bhi buintinn ri teagasg, a tha cho mùirneach agus naomh. Ruigidh na toraidhean, a shruthas o a leithid sud an ni a dheanamh, ni 's faide na shaoil iad féin (an fheadhainn aig am bheil am beachd ud), an toiseach, no bhiodh taitneach leotha."

Tha 'n fhianuis so fùghail air aire 'thoirt dith, gu h-àraidh, ann an linn 's am bheil daoine cho caochlaidheach 'n am beachdaibh; agus anns am bheil a leithid do neo-shuim do theagasgaibh cho cudthromach. Ann am Focal Dhé tha tairgse 'n t-soisgeil air a bonntachadh air stéidh shoilleir, dhearbta, agus neo-theagmhach—eadhon "Imichibh agus searmonaichibh an soisgeul do na h-uile dhaoineibh." Am bheil iad a' saòilsinn gur h-urrainn iadson a cur air bonn is fèarr na so? Ach gu pilltinn ris a' cheist, 'N do bhàsaich Chrìosd airson nan uile, no 'n ann a mhàin airson a shluaigh féin, a thug an t-Athair dha? Seall, Eoin x. 26; xviii. 9; Isa. liii. 4-6, agus iomadh eile.

A thaobh na puinge so, chi sinn anns a' Chunntas a thug an Co-chomunn a stigh, na briathran a leanas: "Sònruichte a thaobh farsuinneachd na Réite, an déigh mìneachaidhean a thabhairt

agus fhaotainn, bha e gu soilleir air fhaigheil a mach, gur e a mhàin dòighean eadar-dhealaichte a tha na h-Eaglaisean uile 'tha 's a cho-labhairt a' coimhead, air an fhirinn a chur an céill, a tha anns na briathraibh coitchionn a tha air an gnathachadh, ni 's mò no ni 's lugha, air a' phuuing so, anns na h-Eaglaisibh uile, eadhon, gu bheil an Réite ni 's leòr airson nan uile, agus freagarrach do na h-nile, agus gu bheil a sochairean air an tairgseadh gu saor do na h-uile dh' ionnsuidh am bheil an soisgeul air tighinn." Faodidh Arminianach no Morisònianach sam bith aonta 'chur ris a bheachd so.

So an co-dhùnadh gus an d' thàinig iad, mu'n teagasg ro chud-thromach so : agus tha e 'g ar fagail cho dorcha 's a bha sinn roimhe, ciod am beachd th' aca mu fharsuingeachd na Réite,—an dearbh phuuing a tha iad a' tagradh. Tha iad ag aideachadh gu bheil eadar-dhealachadh cainnt air a' ghnàthachadh, ann a bhi a 'cur na firinn so an céill. Feudaidh eadar-dhealachadh cainnt a bhi a giùlan eadar-dhealachaidh beachd, oir is ann air a' mhodh no 'n t-seòl-labhairt air puing sam bith, a dh' fheumas sinn breth a thabhairt. Tha sinn ag ràdh gu 'm feud iad beachd sam bith is àill leo bhi aca, fo 'n cho-dhùnadh ud, eadhon, "Tha e ni's leòir do na h-uile, agus freagarrach do na h-uile." Cha 'n 'eil aon smid an so mu 'n phuuing-theagaisg mu 'm bheil sinn ag iarraidh riarachaidh uatha. Tha iad ag ràdh gu bheil iad a' còrdadh mu 'n phuuing so. Ach ciod an stéid air an d' thàinig iad gu còrdadh,—cha 'n aithne dhuinn ; agus cha 'n 'eil cinnt sam bith anns na briathraibh ciod am beachd a th' aca. Na 'm biodh an còrdadh mar tha iad ag ràdh,—c' airson a tha am beachd air an dearbh-phuuing air a cumail am folach? Agus c' airson nach d' thugadh a mach gu soilleir, saor, e, a chum gu 'm biodh làn fhios aig na h-uile, ciod e am beachd ; agus mar sin, gu 'm biodh làn-riarachadh aig na h-uile? Ach cionnus is urrainn so a bhi, agus cuid a tha anns a' Cho-chomunn Aonaidh ag ràdh, gu 'n do riarach E ceartas an Athar air son nan uile dhaoine, agus gu 'n d' fhosgail E dorus tròcair do 'n a h-uile dhaoineibh gun eadar-dhealachadh?

'Cuiridh sinn, a nis, a' phuuing-theagaisg mu 'm bheil sinn ag iarraidh riarachaidh, ann am briathraibh cho aithghearr 's a 's urrainn sinn ; agus ann a bhi deanamh sin, cuiridh sinn 'n ur cuimhne o Fhocal Dhé an lagh neo-atharraichte a leanas :—"Tha 'n ti a shaoras an t-aingidh, agus an ti a dhìteas am firean, araon 'n an gràineileachd do 'n Tighearn." Gnàth. xvii. 15. Tha 'n lagh so stéidhichte ann an nàdur na Diadhachd, agus tha e neo-atharraichtc. A nis, an urrainn neach a bhi air a dhìtheadh, no, air a chur gu bàs a réir ceartais a tha naomh, airson peacaidh nach robh air a mheas dha? Cha b' urrainn. 'S éigin, ma ta, ma bhàsaich Criosh airson nan uile, gu robh peacanna nan uile air am meas dha ; oir cha b' urrainn e bhi air a chur gu bàs, mur biodh e 'n a chiontach, aon chuid ann am meas, no, ann an nàdur. Cha b' urrainn e bhi mar sin ann an nàdur. Mur b' urrainn, 's éigin gu robh e mar sinn ann am meas, no, ann an cunntas lagha is

ceartais Dhé, airson nan uile, ma bhàsaich e airson nan uile. Tha sinn a' saòilsinn nach gabh iad orra a' ràdh gu robh peacanna a' chinne-dhaoine-gu léir air am meas dha, no air an cur as leth, Chrìosd. Mur robh, cionnus a b' urrainn e a bhi air a chur gu bàs air an son? Mur robh e 'n a pheacach ann an aon do 'n dà sheadh a dh' ainmich sinn, b' eucoir a chur gu bàs; agus am bheil eucoir maille ri Dia? Oir "tha araon an ti a shaoras an t-aingidh, agus an ti a dhiteas am firean 'n a ghràineileachd do 'n Tighearn." Uime sin 's éigin gur h-ann airson pheacanna a shluaigh féin a dh' fhuiling e 'm bàs; do bhrìgh gur h-iad sin a mhàin a bha air am meas dha.

## Notes and Comments.

545 GUINEAS.—This was the price paid at an Edinburgh book sale on 7th February, a sum sufficient to build a serviceable Free Presbyterian meeting-house. The article acquired was a copy of the first Kilmarnock edition of Burns' poems. Considering that a better edition can be had any day for elevenpence halfpenny or less, this feat of book-buying may well seem a fresh instance of the old adage concerning a fool and his money. It is notable to remark the length to which the Burns craze is being carried. But lately since all the Burns clubs were in session, and were pouring forth songs, speeches, and libations to the poet's dubious memory. As the age sinks in degeneracy, men are losing their balance of mind, and are wreaking themselves without stint on all manner of whims and follies. Some speakers at these gatherings were not only extolling the poet's genius but were almost making him out a kind of saint. It is a law of the moral world that the worshipper becomes assimilated to the character of the being whom he admires or worships. In this view, the selection of Burns as an object of hero worship is rather unfortunate. His is a garment spotted by the flesh, and, while his career may be moralised or mourned over, by no means should it be celebrated and made the theme of heroic speeches. The apostle has said—"Hath not the potter power over the clay, to form one vessel unto honour and another unto dishonour?" and when we contrast Burns with another man who was a contemporary of his, we find a notable example of the Divine sovereignty. In those days and years of the last quarter of the eighteenth century wherein Robert Burns was running his mad, lawless course, in places not far from the haunts of the poet, John Love, one of God's elect, a man also of capacious and gifted mind, was seeking the kingdom of heaven through various experiences of light and dark. Robert Burns, it may be, was penning a wild rhapsody to "Scotch Drink" while John Love, afterwards the eminent divine and preacher, was writing in his diary such sentences as these—"I lay me down at

the ocean side of everlasting, sovereign, self-moving love, to see what He will do with me." (See Dr. Love's Diary, vol. ii., p. 265). Oh unhappy poet! oh happy seeker of God! the one chasing the delights of sin down many forbidden paths, and finding sorrow and premature death as his reward; the other schooled in his youth by hard experiences of the strait gate and the narrow way, that he might read his name in the book of life and shine forth eternally in the kingdom of his Father.

**FATAL AFFAIR ON THE RAILWAY.**—Barassie, near Irvine, on the Glasgow and South-Western Railway, was on Monday morning, 4th February, the scene of a dreadful occurrence. Two trains, going at the rate of 40 miles per hour, met each other almost directly in the teeth. Seven lives were lost, and there was great destruction of property. Goethe, the famous German litterateur, is reported to have said that "all experience goes to shew that the severe God of the Hebrews is the God of providence." Certainly the goodness of the Almighty is abundantly manifest to every reflecting mind, but also His severity is not hidden. "Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name?" And yet, alas, the depravity of the human heart is a match for all such outward manifestations. "Lord, when thy hand is lifted up they will not see." To-day, it may be, we are silent and impressed, to-morrow our frivolity and whole-heartedness return.

**THE IMBECILITY OF INVERNESS.**—During the month of January the readers of this town took 1741 novels from the Free Library. Their Theological reading from the same source was 51 volumes, a proportion of 34 to 1.

**GOOD CONDUCT OF DUMBARTON.**—The authorities of Dumbarton have refused to let the Burgh Hall for a Sabbath concert.

**THE ANTI-JEWISH MOVEMENT IN FRANCE.**—Readers will have noticed that some ferment is at present going on in that excitable country. The immediate matter is the case of Dreyfus, an Alsatian Jew, once an officer in the army, who was accused of revealing the secrets of the war office, and was imprisoned for life. His friends deeming him innocent have brought about a reopening of the case. The affair has been the signal for an outbreak of the smouldering animosity against the Jewish people. One Jewish authority says that but for the strong restraining hand of the Government the populace in the French towns would perpetrate another St. Bartholomew massacre. Jews have been murdered in the French colony of Algiers. The alien people are hated for their ill-gotten excessive wealth. The vileness of the French press is attributed to them. "Our present state of decadence," says one of their prominent accusers, "with its filth, its vice, its swinish literature can be traced to Jewish sources. Not content with robbing us of our worldly goods, they have attacked the

ramparts of our virtues, our morality, and our religion. But the day of reckoning will come." It is likely the Jew is a cunning unscrupulous person in France as elsewhere. But that he is responsible for the decadence of France we do not for a moment believe. Let the French people get back to the first principles of religion and morality and take vengeance on their own impieties, instead of wreaking insane wrath on their Jewish neighbours. Nevertheless, the hand of the God of recompence is to be marked in this new tribulation of the Jew. The powerful curse which they invoked upon themselves is not yet spent. "His blood be on us and on our children," said they in their madness. Nineteen centuries have well nigh passed, and still their children are draining the cup of vengeance. As usual the Romanist section of the community are foremost in this virulent outbreak against the Jew. They, forsooth, are the custodians of Christ's honour, and they will prosecute this quarrel against His old enemies, the whilst they themselves are His worst enemies, and their hands, as a church, are yet unpurged from blood of the deepest dye. It is an exhibition of gross hypocrisy.

THE NEW CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY FOR IRELAND.—Lord Salisbury's Government is not committed to this proposal, but it is shilly-shallying with it. A debate on the subject was held in the House of Commons on 16th February. The leader of the House (Right Hon. A. J. Balfour), though technically opposed to the measure, gave it in spirit and substance his earnest support. Mr. John Morley, a prominent member of the opposition, famous for his literature and learned unbelief (in his youth he spelt God with a small "g"), has, with the usual fidelity of his sort to the wrong side, given the scheme his support. Colonel Saunderson, the well-known conservative Irish member, in opposing the measure, said—"When the gentlemen of the opposition swallowed Home Rule, they swallowed more than they bargained for; they also swallowed denominational education for Ireland. The Maynooth grant first, and second, the disestablishment of the Irish Church, were to remove the grievances of the Irish Roman Catholics, now they wanted a University to be established at the expense of the State, and to be ruled by Roman Catholic priests (Nationalist cries of 'No!') A Roman Catholic University in Ireland must of necessity be governed and managed by the priests. The Roman Catholic Church claimed the right to control, not only the spiritual part of men's minds, but also the moral part, which they said applied to politics. The clergy said they were willing to have a majority of laymen in the governing body. He dared say, but that meant nothing. A Roman Catholic gentleman wrote to him that, that safeguard would be utterly worthless, because if any one on the governing body ventured to differ from the bishops he would be set down as a rotten sheep, and an enemy to the Church, and would be got rid of with all convenient speed.

Nothing could be more calculated to shatter the majority of the Government than the proposal."

**ANOTHER STARTLING AFFAIR.**—On Tuesday evening, 15th February, a United States Warship, the "Maine," blew up in Havana Harbour, and sank at her moorings. It is reported that 255 seamen are drowned, and 90 injured. There is a swaggering, pugnacious spirit abroad among the people of the United States just now, and it is to be hoped this judgment will have a chastening effect. Brave and humane efforts were made by the officers and crew of the neighbouring Spanish war vessel, Alfonso XII, to rescue the perishing seamen. The wrecked vessel was almost new, and cost over half a million to build.

**THE WAR CLOUD.**—At the time we write (21st February), a condition of strained relations subsists between this country and our neighbour, France. The bone of contention is the part of the Niger basin in West Africa known as the Borgu Kingdom, inhabited by natives who have placed themselves under the protection of Britain, and alleged to be fairly within the British sphere of influence. In the present electrical condition of the political atmosphere, it is possible that a war flame might be kindled at any moment which would devastate the civilised world. The United States and Spain are also, just now, almost at daggers drawn. Every nation is multiplying soldiers and increasing its war material. There is reason to believe that the prosperity of Britain has long been an eyesore to all the great powers, and they would secretly rejoice to see her humiliated. Certainly our multiplied national iniquities and revoltings from the living God are such as well deserve a sword, and it would be well if, while we are looking to our material defences, we would also strive to prevent the strong hand of judgment by repentance and amendment of our ways. The fear of God is, however, marvellously withdrawn from the hearts of all classes, and their trust in time of need is in warships and human strength, forgetful how puny and powerless are all these swift ships and huge guns when the God of judgment takes the field to chastise rebels.

**A NOTE ON DR. WHYTE.**—"The Rev. Dr. Whyte, an eminent minister in the Free Church of Scotland, who presides over a large congregation in Edinburgh, is, we regret to see, delivering a course of lectures in commemoration of a number of Roman Catholic characters selected from history, and has published a volume in immoderate praise of a Spanish "saint" known as Teresa, who has pretended to be the subject of apparitions of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the apocryphal author of various "miracles." Dr. Whyte's is a deplorable example of the defection from Gospel teaching now traceable in the Free Churches."—*The Gospel Magazine.*