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Some Features of Present-Day Preaching.

(Continued from page 405.)

7. All doctrinal belief is but slightly insisted upon. The cry that issues from the majority of pulpits is that it matters little what you believe, much what you are; creed is of minor importance, the grand thing is conduct. This sentiment has an air of plausibility about it that catches the popular ear. It embodies a modicum of truth, and this paves the way for its more ready acceptance. But, nevertheless, there stands in the forefront of it a subtle error that is playing havoc with the professing churches of our day, and we would do well to be on the watch against it.

It is our intention, first, to analyse the above sentiment, and expose the error it advances; and secondly, to point out the scriptural importance of doctrinal belief.

(1) The current sentiment on the present subject contains, as already indicated, a mixture of truth and error, the latter having the preponderating influence. Where then, it may be asked, lies the element of truth? The truth lies in the affirmation that it matters much what our personal character and conduct are. Character and conduct are things of the greatest importance, and our weal or woe in eternity depends on them. No murderer, drunkard, liar, or unclean person shall enter the kingdom of heaven. Such will have their portion in the lake of fire. But it is they who are washed from their sins in the blood of Christ, and bring forth the fruits of holiness in life and conversation that shall enter the kingdom of heaven. "Blessed are they that do his commandments that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city." Character and conduct are therefore things that require to be emphasised in the preaching of the gospel. Where lies the error? The error is to be found in under-estimating the value of doctrinal belief. No one that rightly understands the gospel will give doctrinal belief anything less than a place of prime importance. It is our belief that determines our conduct. The Mohammedan, the Red Indian, the Papist, and the Protestant frame their conduct

according to their belief. We may as well separate a stream from its fountain as to separate the former from the latter. Much is talked now-a-days of right conduct, to the disparagement of doctrinal belief. But no one that would value a stream of water would treat with contempt the fountain of it, and therefore we have serious doubts about the wisdom and worth of the men in our day who cry up conduct and cry down belief. They show themselves fools in divine things.

Further, the opinion we are criticising under-values the importance of a sound creed. A sound creed is a form of belief consistent with, and expressive of the revealed will of God. God has spoken to man, and committed His words to writing, and it is our bounden duty and high privilege to say with the Psalmist, "I will hear what God the Lord will speak." It is of inestimable importance, therefore, that we should hold forth as our creed the whole counsel of God. To treat a sound creed with contempt is to treat the word of the living God with contempt, and that is no ordinary sin. This erroneous view also makes no distinction between a natural and a spiritual belief of Christian doctrine. It under-values both. Spiritual belief is eminently important, because it involves a change of heart and living union to Jesus Christ: it is the instrumental cause of the soul's salvation. One's everlasting happiness or misery depends upon the possession or not of spiritual belief, or in other words, saving faith. This faith is the spring of all holy thought and action, and therefore to say it matters little what you believe, in this sense, is nothing short of the greatest absurdity. Further, we are by no means to despise a natural or intellectual belief of Christian doctrine. The spiritual belief would not come into existence without the intellectual. It is vain for men to say that they believe the gospel spiritually, but deny its doctrines intellectually. The natural or intellectual belief of the truth is the letter of the Gospel accepted by the natural understanding, and that is the seed which the Holy Ghost quickens so as to produce spiritual life in the soul. It is very important we should give an intellectual assent to the truth as it is in Jesus. Such an assent won't save us, and it is fatal to rest in it as a foundation for eternity, but it is a suitable preparation for the saving work of the Spirit of God in the soul. The existence of it, indeed, proves the common operation of the Spirit already there. On the other hand, they who refuse to give even an intellectual assent to the truth prove themselves to have nothing but heart opposition to God and the gospel, while they who, in addition to this, welcome, believe, and propagate erroneous and unscriptural doctrine show themselves the deliberate and open enemies of the truth of God. Some of these may console themselves with their good moral character and diligence in certain forms of religious service, but these things in such cases are hollow, and will not survive the light of eternity. In fact, there is more hope of the ultimate conversion of such as are now open

transgressors of the moral law, but whose intellect and conscience assent to the truth, than of the conversion of the highest professors of religion whose understandings are under the dominion of error, and whose work it is to disseminate views contrary to the Word of God. It is the direct tendency, however, even of an intellectual belief of the doctrines of gospel to produce good moral conduct, and all Christian countries bear testimony to the truth of this. Take away this belief from society, and you will find dishonesty, immorality, and all manner of wickedness in the ascendancy. We think, therefore, that they who talk of creed and belief in the doctrines of the gospel as of little importance wot not what they say. A sound creed is indispensable as the seed of right conduct, both moral and spiritual.

(2) Let us now point out the Scriptural importance of doctrinal belief. It is written, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."—(2 Tim. iii. 16, 17.) The very first thing which the Apostle, by the Holy Ghost, tells us, is that the Scripture is profitable for doctrine. And he mentions doctrine first, because it is the basis of all the other things stated. He is addressing Timothy, a preacher of the gospel, and instructs him to utilise the Scripture first for doctrine. All preaching then that is not based upon doctrine is not in any sense right preaching. But above all, let the doctrine be founded upon and agreeable to the Word of God. The present generation of preachers are more madly atheistic than any of their forefathers: they are anxious to throw doctrine, good or bad, to the winds altogether. They wish to have no guiding star at all, but to sail in the dark among the changing and conflicting currents of their own restless imaginations. The Scripture is profitable for doctrine "that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." No perfection, no good works of the right stamp, without first scriptural doctrine. And again to Timothy, "Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them; for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee."—(1 Tim. iv. 16.) It is most clearly affirmed here that doctrine is a necessary means to salvation, and let those dispense with it who can treat the Word of God with contempt. These passages ought to be laid to heart by preachers, for they shall either save or destroy for eternity themselves and their hearers by the doctrines which they preach.

Let us, lastly, observe the nature of the connection established by God in His Word between doctrinal belief and the soul's conversion and salvation. The first work of the Spirit in converting a soul is to convince of sin. When He is come, He will "convince the world of sin." This work is not done without the sinner's understanding being called into exercise, or without faith in the truth of God. The Spirit by gracious enlightenment

causes the sinner to believe his obligation to keep the whole law, his absolute responsibility for obedience or disobedience, his actual disobedience by sin, and his righteous exposure to the penalty of the law. All these things are revealed to us in the Word of God. They are great realities, but yet, as expressed in words, they are commonly termed doctrines. Take away then these doctrines concerning the law of God, man's responsibility, man's sin, and man's exposure to the curse, and where are the instruments for producing a sound conviction of sin? The Spirit uses the holy law and the truths of the Word for this purpose. Let us be assured of this, that no one has ever attained to a right knowledge of sin apart from the doctrines of God's Word. Sin is in the heart of man, sin is in the whole world, but sin is hid from the carnal eye. It is by the doctrine of the truth that sin is discovered to the sinner. "Without the law sin was dead." "But the commandment came, sin revived, and I died." If sin cannot be discerned without doctrinal belief, sin that has been our bosom companion all our life long, assuredly Jesus Christ and the benefits of redemption cannot be discovered without it. It is in the written Word that Christ is revealed, and all that we can know of Him is expressed in words and doctrines. The sound doctrine concerning the person and work of Christ is just the whole truth on these great subjects as stated in the Scripture. This truth must be believed and accepted by us, otherwise we shall err fundamentally.

Who then can over-estimate the value of right, scriptural views concerning Christ and His work? If we go wrong here we are ready to make shipwreck for eternity. Our eternal salvation depends on whether we know Christ or not. To believe in a false Christ is to be lost for ever. It is the work of the Spirit to enlighten the darkened understanding of the sinner in the knowledge of the true Christ, the Christ that is exhibited in the written Word of God. Men, by sin and corruption, are not disposed to accept the whole truth concerning Him. They are ready to take and leave as much of the truth as they choose themselves, and so the Spirit is necessary. Remove, however, the written Word and the doctrines it contains concerning Christ, and there is nothing but an absolute blank as to the knowledge of Him and the way of salvation. This proves the fundamental importance of doctrinal belief. But some may object, "Have not good men differed on points of doctrine, and yet have manifested equal piety?" We admit that good men have differed on some points, and why this should be so may seem mysterious to us, but we are not asked to unravel all the mysteries of Divine providence. One thing we require to attend to is that we accept the whole counsel of God for ourselves, and we have this encouragement, that it was they who accepted this in the past who did, by grace, the most for the glory of God in the world. Others might have done some good, but it was mixed with evil,

whose fruits have continued from generation to generation. They themselves shall be saved yet so as by fire; many of their works shall be burnt. But at the present time it is not merely certain points of doctrine that are denied, but fixed doctrinal belief in general is ready to be cast overboard. Every man is allowed to believe as he likes, and there is little doubt but most of the professing churches will soon be wrecked on the rocks of believe-anything and believe-nothing, superstition and atheism.

Notes of Lecture

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Josiah's Reformation.—2 CHRONICLES xxxiv. 1, 2.

THE Word of God gives us the history of His cause in the past. Sometimes it was very low, and when it was so low that there was none to help His people, then the Lord began to revive it. In the days of Josiah it was very low. His grandfather, Manasseh, had brought this about by his sin against God. Hezekiah, his father, had left the cause in a flourishing condition at his death. And in this condition it was delivered to Manasseh when he succeeded his father on the throne. Manasseh was bound to keep it in this condition, but this he did not do. Instead of doing so, he began to set up new ways of worship to suit his own taste. Perhaps he would not say that Hezekiah was not a godly man, but he would contend that the things that suited in his father's time would not do in his generation. So he pulled down what his father had set up. He set up another order of things instead, and he borrowed his new order from the idolatrous customs of the heathen around him. He set up the image of Baal in the house of the Lord. Not only was it the case that he went as far as the heathen away from God, but he actually led his people further away from God than the very heathen.

Let us now see how he acted when he found out that the way of transgressors is hard. He took pains to pull down what he had built up with his own hands. He had first been at the pains of pulling down what his godly father had built up, and these he had built up according to his own inventions. Now, however, he had to pull down what he had spent a lifetime in building up, and to build up what he had spent his days in pulling down. Such are the troublous ways of sin. Matters would have been all right had he continued them as he had found them.

Though Manasseh got repentance, and his soul was saved, the Lord kept his sins in remembrance, and though he did his utmost after his conversion to build up, yet his son Amon followed the evil example of Manasseh's earlier days, and pulled down the cause of God again. Men in this generation are busy at work pulling down what our fathers built up. See, although Hezekiah left the cause of God prosperous, others pulled it down. So with the men of this age, after our fathers laid the foundations, their sons attempt to raze them. That Manasseh got repentance and pardon cannot afford them the slightest excuse for their conduct. He got repentance, and is in glory, but the evil of his rebellion against God continued after his death, and many poor souls were brought by its means to the pit of ruin.

Amon succeeded Manasseh, and he reigned for only two years, yet he spent them in doing what he could to injure and to overthrow the worship and kingdom of God. Satan did not know how short Amon's reign was to be, but had he known it he could not have asked him to undertake any work worse than what he put his hands to. For he spent his short reign in trying to overthrow the cause of God.

But when the Lord has a work to do, He raises up fit instruments to do it. It is a bad sign for the generation when wicked kings are raised up. Saul was given to the children of Israel in judgment. On the other hand, when good is intended for a country—when a kingdom is to be reformed—the Lord raises up men in high position to do His work. The poor and humble ones do not reform whole kingdoms. They may be owned and blessed for local reformation and the advance of Christ's cause in their own neighbourhood, but a national reformation is not a case of rain falling on one city and not falling on another. The shower is general all over the land when the land is to be turned to God.

From the time of David and Solomon, Israel had not the privilege of godly rulers. On the death of Solomon the ten tribes revolted from the house of David and followed Jeroboam and his sin. It was a great blessing that Judah enjoyed when the Most High raised up over the southern kingdom a number of godly kings, and after times of decay and backsliding He raised up reforming kings. Of these was Josiah.

There are two things which are worthy of notice regarding this good king: his personal character and the good work he did in his day.

There is a very high character given him in the Word of God. "And like unto him there was no king before him that turned to the Lord with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his might, according to all the law of Moses, neither after him arose there any like him."—(2 Kings xxiii. 25.) "And he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, and walked in the ways of David his father, and declined neither to the right hand, nor to

the left.”—(2 Chron. xxxiv. 2.) This is the character given him, not by himself or by a fellow-creature, but by the Lord who knows the heart. There were other good kings in Judah, but none like unto Josiah, either before or after him. He was made good, and then he did good. “He did that which is good in the sight of the Lord.” It is taken notice of that he declined neither to the right hand, nor to the left. He followed the Lord in the straight way of His commandments. “The ways of the Lord are right, and the just shall walk in them.”—(Hos. xiv. 9.) It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps, but the Lord led him, and kept him. Josiah was born into the world like other men, a sinner, but he was “born again” when young. Many of those whom the Lord makes eminently useful in the church and kingdom are converted in their youth. Indeed, the most of those saved in any generation are effectually called before they are old. Comparatively few are brought into the kingdom of grace when they attain to old age, though the door of mercy is open, so far as we know, till death. Josiah began to reign when he was eight years of age, and whatever secret strivings he may have experienced in his boyhood, not till he was sixteen years do we see any indication of a saving change. At that age we are told that “he began to seek after the God of David his father.” Though the son of a wicked father, who set a bad example before him, the Spirit of God found access to his soul, and began a good work in him. The Spirit works by the use of means and instruments. Although the book of the law was lost, it is probable that there were extracts of it among the people whereby the young prince might acquire as much knowledge of his lost condition and the way of salvation as was blessed to him. Besides, there were at least two eminent prophets in the land—Jeremiah and Zephaniah—whose teaching he may have heard. “Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God.” One thing we may be sure of that the Word of the Lord was used in his conversion. There was oral teaching by the prophets, besides what was written in the book of the law. The prophets spake by the inspiration of the Spirit. The first indication of the work of the Spirit in Josiah was that he, like Saul of Tarsus, began to pray. “Behold, he prayeth.” There were many others in the land of Judah who prayed to gods who could neither hear nor help them, but this young king prayed to “the God of David his father.” He not only prayed to Him for mercy, like the publican, but he sought after Him, sought to know Him as his covenant God, to love and obey Him. The secret of his success afterwards lay in his unfeigned piety, his knowledge of God, and his love to Him. He was made good before he was used to do good. Those whom the Lord makes instruments for good to others, whether they are kings or ministers of the gospel, He prepares them by His grace. Kings need grace for their work as well as prophets. “He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of the Lord.”—

(2 Sam. xxiii. 3.) Josiah began to rule over men, and he ruled in the fear of the Lord. He is a good example for all young people to follow, whatever station in society they occupy, whether they be kings or subjects. And it was a great privilege to the Church and the State that a God-fearing king was set over them. The cause of the Lord in a nation is very much according to the people composing the nation, and a great deal depends upon the rulers of the people. When there was a good king in Israel and Judah the cause prospered, but when there was a bad king it declined. And so it is still. Rulers have a great influence over the people either for good or evil. When the glorious days, or rather years, of the millennium shall come, kings shall be nursing fathers, and queens nursing mothers to the Church.

Josiah was not only a man of eminent piety, but he was a man who gave himself wholly to the work to which he was called. All he did, he did it "with all his heart," his heart was in the work as well as his hand. "And with all his soul," his whole soul was in what he did. "And with all his might," he spared not himself, but exerted all the spiritual and natural energy that the Lord bestowed upon him. He was willing to spend, and be spent for the cause of truth and righteousness. The rule by which he did everything was the will of God made known to him in His Word. So it is recorded of him that "he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord." He was not actuated by public opinion, but by "thus saith the Lord." Many do some good actions—good as to the matter of them—that they may receive the applause of their fellow-men, but Josiah acted so as to receive the approval of God. He acted in his responsible calling as one who had to give an account of his stewardship. "We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ."

If the people of God knew that they were to have a ruler who feared God for such a time, it would be a source of great comfort to them. They would be pleased that a long reign was before him. When he was only eight years on the throne he began to seek the God of David his father. It was a beautiful sight to see the youthful king praying at the age of sixteen, not to idols, but to the Lord God of his fathers. The Word of God gives no good report of those that do not seek God whether they are old or young. Its command, and the example of such as Josiah, have this message, however, to convey—"Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near." This godly king at the age of sixteen was an example to old and young alike. It would cheer and comfort his heart to hear of others, whether old or young, that were seeking the Lord. Such was the mind of John when he said that he had no greater joy than to know that his children walked in the truth. He ought to be an example, not only to people in general, but also to rulers. Most of them, however, fail to profit from his example. They prefer in our times to lead the people to all kinds of vanity and folly. This

was not the course Josiah pursued. He was not alone concerned for his own personal salvation. He was concerned about his example and its influence. He prayed as Saul of Tarsus prayed for himself, but this did not satisfy him. In the calling in which he was called, he put the matter thus to himself—"I must act according to my opportunities. They are many, and I am responsible for the use I make of them. I will put them to the best advantage. I must rule in the fear of God." His godliness broke out in the calling in which he was called. He began to be concerned for his people that they too should fear God. He looked to see how they were, and he found the whole land full of idolatry. The love of Christ works like itself in all ages. When it sets a soul aflame he begins to ask himself, "How are my friends? How are my neighbours? How is my country?" Before you were converted your thought corresponded with Cain's words, "Am I my brother's keeper?" but now you look to see how godliness fares in the town or country in which you live.

When he looked out and saw the state of the land he had cause to rend his clothes and weep. In the days of Manasseh or Amon, the king might look to see if the people had theatres, public parks, and places of amusement. Josiah's interest, however, was in other things. He came out among his people to see how the cause of God prospered among them. When he did look, he saw, like Paul at Athens, many altars, but they were not to the God of Israel. If you read the twenty-third chapter of Second Kings you will see in what a terrible state the land was. Its state, however, did not check his reforming good. He did not begin to say, "I must not begin to meddle with matters as they are, or I shall displease men everywhere. He said rather, "I must break down every altar and abomination within my kingdom."

When he undertook the task of reforming his kingdom his work was two-fold. On the one hand it was destructive, on the other hand it was constructive. Some might be disposed to say to him—"You may set up the worship of God without pulling down these idols." His reply would be—"What concord is there between Christ and Belial, between the temple of God and idols?" Had this course been adopted idolatry would soon be set up again, for so it was in the reigns that went before. You see the altar of Jeroboam at Bethel had not been pulled down during all the preceding reigns. Idolatry is like a tree. Its branches may be whipped off, but unless it will be uprooted it will still live and grow.

Josiah did not send other people to do this work and stay himself idly at home. No, he did not trust this work to his servants. He burned the bones of the priests on their altar, and you may see he himself was present by the account of his coming to the grave of the prophet that came from the land of Judah. He told them to let this grave alone. As surely as it is the duty of fathers to see to the promotion of the fear of God in their

families, so surely is it the duty of kings to attend to the cause of Christ in their kingdoms. But if Josiah had lived in our days he would get many a minister to say to him—"You have no right as a civil magistrate to take anything to do with the house of God. You have as much right to keep up the Papacy or Mohammedanism as the cause of Christ." Josiah was not a disestablisher. Any argument will satisfy those who have not the cause of Christ at heart. Cain said—"Am I my brother's keeper?" as though he had required that to be told to him. "No one," he said, "said to me that I was my brother's keeper," and so he slew him. Josiah was thorough-going in his reform. When Manasseh repented, he threw out of the city the idols and altars which he had made in the days of his ignorance, but Josiah beat them into small dust, and went with it to Bethel, as though he said—"It was here idolatry began, and I am now throwing the dust of your idolatry in your face." There are places in this land that were centres of declension from God, and from generation to generation you scarcely hear of a soul converted in these places. Why? The wrath of God rests upon them. Take you good care that forsaking God will not begin at your house lest His wrath settle down upon your house and family.

When the Spirit searches out sins He goes to the root. He goes to the garden of Eden where sin began. "By one man's disobedience many were made sinners." By the sin of one many have fallen. Some might merely say, "How wicked the land is." Another might add, "I remember when there were only two idols in it," but Josiah went behind present appearances to the sin of Jeroboam, who made Israel to sin all these sins. If that was a fountain poisoned, and you saw some who drank from its streams and were poisoned, you would not halt at the streams, you would trace the poison to the fountain. So he who first set up idolatry was the fountain of the nation's idolatry. However small the sin may be in its beginning, the Lord will bring back the ashes of idolatry to that place. When did such declension begin in this land? When men began to introduce uninspired hymns into the worship of God. We would seek to bring the ashes and cast them upon those that began the sin. Josiah would carry his own share of the ashes, and so do you. Young men, young women, old men, old women, and say to those who would lead you astray, "Do not come any nearer me."

Josiah, however, did not stop at the idols. He went on to the teachers of the people. When the displeasure of God is shown to a people, unfaithful teachers are placed over their heads. In Josiah's time religious leaders were unfaithful. Before his time there had been such also. There were the living and the dead, and they were each dealt with after their own fashion. In times of declension any sort of teachers will do, men that will not be too hard on us or rebuke us. I heard of a certain minister who conciliated the young men of his congregation by appearing

among them on the first Saturday afternoon he was among them to join in their silly sports. This conduct would suit Manasseh and Amon very well.

Do you ask, however, "What shall we do when we have no godly ministers in our midst?" Why, keep to the praying men. Have nothing to do with men who will suffer you to trample on the Lord's day. This is full of instruction alike for speakers and hearers. Some who were not of the tribe of Levi had been put into the priesthood. What did Josiah do with them? He killed them, and burned them upon the altars. God commanded him to do this, but this is not now to be done literally. Only God will burn such offenders eternally. In reforming the Church, it is right to condemn not only those who are still alive who had a hand in corrupting it, but also those who are dead. We are not, indeed, to raise their bones out of the grave and burn them literally, as this king did, but to raise them from their graves by bringing to the remembrance of our hearers the evil they had done to the cause of God, and burning their bones by the fire of God's Word. "Is not my word like as a fire?"—(Jer. xxiii. 29.) What did he do with the sons of Levi? He put them out of their office, but showed his mercy in this that he ordered them to be fed while they lived. They were in office only for their back and belly, and what they wanted they got, but they got no authority to put their finger to the cause of Christ. If he lived to-day he would find many ministers and elders he might put out of office. Many are in office that they may get a piece of bread, and if they get their bread they are content. If a Josiah were to rise up in our land, many, if they got their living, would be content to give up their office. When people call such men to be their pastors, they virtually say, "We ask you to keep us from escaping from the devil's camp. We ask you to come to keep us from Christ, and to make sure that we will be lost for ever."

But were not some of these deceivers dead? Yes. So the next question arose, "Where are their graves?" Perhaps some old man led Josiah to their graves. Their bones were raised up. "Where now are the altars where they sacrificed?" They are in yonder town. The bones must be brought there and burned on their altars. There was one grave undisturbed, that of the prophet from Judah who had prophesied about the altar. "He cried against the altar in the word of the Lord, and said, O altar, altar, thus saith the Lord; Behold, a child shall be born unto the house of David, Josiah by name; and upon thee shall he offer the priests of the high places that burn incense upon thee, and men's bones shall be burnt upon thee."—(1 Kings xiii. 2.) The wicked king tried to kill him, but was prevented. Three hundred and fifty years had now passed since the time that God told by his prophet that Josiah should arise and do these things. In the meanwhile there had been several small reformations in the land of Judah, but none so thorough as this one.

He now comes to the temple. What did he find there? Men were worshipping the sun, moon and stars. There were prophets in Judah, Jeremiah, &c., but see how low a land may come in a short time. Leave Skye for a hundred years without the Bible, and you would find it at the end of that period like a heathen land. What should this teach you and me? "Hold fast that which thou hast that no man take thy crown." But Josiah turned all idols out of the house of God, for "Thou shalt have no other gods before me." What did they find in the house? The book of the law of God. The Highlands of Scotland were long without the Scriptures, and how were they then? In utter darkness. This was not like the ark. It was lost among the Philistines, but the book of the law was lost in the house of God. It is a fearful thing when the law of God is lost in the Church. Until this happened idolatry could not be set up in the temple. When the rule was lost, the worship went astray. Had the law been kept these things could not take place. Here is teaching for us. In a sense the Bible is lost in our days. People may say we have the Bible, we did not take a part of Isaiah or the Song of Songs away. They might say the same thing. The law was *in* the temple, but at the same time it was lost there. It was lost under the rubbish that was heaped over it. It is hid from the eyes of many in our time, but the Lord be praised, not from the eyes of all. You may ask who have lost it? The higher critics have. More also have lost it who misinterpret its teaching about man's fall, and his hopeless ruin in an undone eternity and other fundamental doctrines. We don't know how the book of the law was lost. Some think it was hid to preserve it, others that it was thrown away. I believe the latter to be the true explanation. Though it was lost, it was not lost irrecoverably, for the Word of the Lord endures for ever. So it was found again. By whom? By Hilkiyah, a godly man, who found it, and was delighted with what he found. Who will recover the Bible when it is lost? The very class of men by whom it was lost. The Almighty, as it were, says to Satan, "If your ministers lost my word, I will find it by my ministers." Luther was one of those that found the lost Bible. Hilkiyah found the book, and not the men that were removing the rubbish. If ministers were the means of losing the book, other ministers found it. When was it found? Not in the days of Manasseh, not in the days of Amon, not till they began to clear the rubbish out of the temple. It will be found again in Scotland and England when men will begin to cleanse the house of God.

If the Lord will have mercy on your soul, it will be with you as it was with Hilkiyah. You will have to say, "I have found the word of God." This book was brought before the king, and he rent his clothes. If you found this word, you did like Josiah, you looked back upon your way in the valley and rent your clothes. Josiah then gathered the elders, and they decided that all the

people, small and great, should be gathered into the purified temple. Why was this decided on? In order that the king might read it to the people. How beautiful! Had there been plenty copies of it, he would have handed one to all the young. But is this what our rulers have done to the young? Alas, no. They have taken the Scriptures out of their educational code. Is it not tolerated in the schools? Yes. But it has no fixed standing place in our public training system. A minister told us that once at the end of an examination he proceeded to conclude with prayer, but the inspector tried to stop him. He shook him off, and prayed. When he was done, the inspector asked him, "What have you now done? You have made me break the law."

The late Dr. Wylie, who was a keen observer of how the nation was forsaking the Lord, mentions in his writings that a certain statesman said that there was a large tree with three branches which would require to be cut down before any good could come to the nation. The tree was "Protestant ascendancy," and two of its branches were, (first) the place the Bible had in the schools, and (second), the establishment of the Protestant religion. These branches were to be cut down, not simultaneously, but one at a time. So the first was attacked, and the Bible was put out of the schools. This branch was cut off. Is this from God or from Satan? The Bible is only tolerated or suffered to be in a corner—will the Lord not take vengeance on such a nation as this? Men are now busy sawing at the second branch, but have not sawn it yet. When the first branch was being hewn off, ministers of the gospel went hand in hand with the ungodly. "If you cannot tear the Bible out of the children's hands we will help you." I knew a godly minister who had a hand in this work. When after the change, he went to examine a school and found ignorance, where once on a time he would find intelligent acquaintance with the Scriptures, he sat down and wept at the fruit of the policy he had supported.

What a black cloud overhangs this nation, now that the Bible is out of the hands of the children! What has been given in its place? Vain songs instead of the psalms of David are sung by the children. But Josiah went into a covenant along with the whole of the people. We endeavoured to do the same in our day—we entered a bond that we would have nothing to do with anything but the Word of God. Many cried out against this and even ministers from the pulpits spoke of the evil. But what was the evil? Was it because, like Josiah and the people, we were going to follow the Lord according to His word, to keep His commandments and His testimonies, and His statutes, with all our heart, with all our soul, and with all our might?

Application.—Those people whom we have been considering, are long since in eternity. Several in everlasting happiness, others in everlasting misery. The kingdom of Judah has no existence among the nations of the world. To us the passage of Scripture

we have been endeavouring to meditate upon speaks. It becomes us then to ask,—What is the state of our nation? What is the state of our Church? and what is the state of our souls? These are important questions, but they are questions which we must face now if we would, as responsible creatures, render our account with joy at the last day. And there is none of these questions but we are bound to consider whatever our station in society is.

(1) Then, what is the state of our nation? We as a nation have been like Israel and Judah, highly favoured by the Lord. Has He not delivered us from the heathen idolatry under which our forefathers had been before the light of the Gospel shone on our land? Our forefathers worshipped all the hosts of heaven before the Lord in His sovereign mercy sent us His Word, and servants to show us the way of salvation by Jesus Christ. Has not this nation been constituted, through the power of the Gospel, a Christian kingdom, whose laws have been founded on the Word of God? Have we not entered into a solemn covenant with God that we would keep His commandments, His testimonies, and His statutes? What are we now? Just like Israel and Judah—covenant breakers, and trampling upon the laws of the Holy One of Israel. This nation is guilty of making new laws to profane the holy Sabbath of God, and other commandments, which they vowed to keep. The surest way of pulling down a house is to undermine the foundation. The law of God is the foundation on which our kingdom has been established; and when we see the rulers of the nation doing all in their power to undermine that foundation, we may expect that the superstructure will fall. Unless we as a nation return to the law of the Lord, as sure as the kingdom of Israel and Judah fell, we shall fall. The Bible has been the means of making the British Empire so great and powerful. The same book will make it small and weak, if national repentance prevent not.

(2) What is the state of our Church? I do not mean by the Church any one branch of the visible Church, but the visible Church as a whole, and especially the several branches of it in our own kingdom. We are interested in the cause of God throughout the world, but we must begin at home. Unless we are right at home little good can we do abroad. Then what is the state of the several branches of the Church in our nation? The state of any Church may be known by the place the fundamental doctrines of the Word of God have in its teaching. Now it is evident that in many denominations these important doctrines have not the same place in their teaching which they once had. Are the doctrines concerning the state of man by nature, as dead in trespasses and sins, the vicarious death of Christ in the room of His people, the work of the Holy Spirit in applying redemption, justification by faith through the righteousness of Christ alone, the final perseverance of the saints and the electing love of God from which all covenant blessings flow,

are these doctrines held forth on the banner the Churches set up before the people? And what also of the infallibility and inspiration of the Scriptures as the word of the living God? On the contrary, these are denied, and men are following on almost every hand Popish and rationalistic doctrines and tenets. "Remove not the old landmark: and enter not into the fields of the fatherless: for their redeemer is mighty; he shall plead their cause with thee."—(Prov. xxiii. 10, 11.)

(3) What is the state of our souls? "What shall it profit a man, if he gain the whole world and lose his soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul." He that knew the value of the soul put this question to show how trifling all earthly things would appear when the soul is lost. Man's soul by nature is full of corruption and idolatry, and requires to be inwardly purged and renewed by the Holy Ghost. Let us ask ourselves seriously and in the sight of God, has this change taken place in us. If so, all shall be well at last. If not, now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation. "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?"

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

(Fourth Notice.)

THE twelfth and last lecture is entitled "Progress by Sacrifice." Professor Bruce here enlarges upon a view of things which is made much of nowadays, and from which some very dangerous and unwarrantable conclusions are drawn. The view referred to, and the tendency of the conclusions drawn from it, may be gathered from the opening words of this lecture: "Perfection by suffering is a great moral law of individual life. Progress by sacrifice is not a less outstanding law of social life; progress of the many by the sacrifice of the few. Sacrifice is the cost of progress and the instrument of redemption; not otherwise is real advance attainable. Some devoted one must give his life a 'ransom' when signal benefit is to be procured for the many." Now, it has been said that the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church, and there is a truth contained in the saying. It must, however, be very carefully guarded. The mere fact that there were martyrs in one generation does not necessarily secure the prosperity of the cause for which they contended in the immediately following generations. France was deluged with the blood of the Huguenots in Reformation times, but the French people continued largely careless in regard to the faith of Protestantism. Sacrifice and martyrdom, in the cause of religion, will not produce any adequate fruits apart from the Spirit of God. It is He alone who begins and carries on the good work, and unless He bless the examples of the persecuted

and martyred servants of Christ by an effusion of His power in the hearts of men, there will be no "progress by sacrifice." Professor Bruce entirely overlooks the work of the Holy Spirit in this lecture. Examples of self-sacrifice, no doubt, have a powerful influence towards the advance of any enterprise. But it must always be kept in mind that the cause of Christ cannot be effectually advanced by mere human agency, however vigorous: the mighty irresistible power of the Holy Ghost is needed.

It is quite apparent that Professor Bruce here enters the arena in defence of our modern reformers, or innovators. He speaks of Christ as "the great Innovator." He enumerates some of the obstacles that stand in the way of reformers, such as worldly interest and reverence for the past, and one cannot fail to see what he is aiming at in the following passage:—"Everything pertaining to religion—worship, creed, practice—tends to become an affair of routine, ceremonial, formula, mechanical habit. Fetters are forged for soul and body, for every faculty of our nature—for hand, tongue, mind, heart, conscience—and by such as are in bondage, it is regarded as a point of piety and sanctity to wear with scrupulous care all these grievous fetters. Woe to the man who attempts the rôle of emancipator!"—(p. 353.) Here and in succeeding sentences he pours out his contempt on those who stand fast in this land for the Scriptural creeds and formulas of the Reformation, and no language is contemptuous enough to heap upon them, while those who despise these creeds and formulas, and tear the Bible and Confession to pieces, are lauded as emancipators of society, and pioneers of reform. But at this time of day we see no need for Professor Bruce's wrath against the believers in creeds and formulas, for he and his party have the whole tide with them in the so-called Churches of the present. He mentions, to use his own words, "the fate of Socrates and the tragic story of Christ" as the "best-known object lessons illustrative of the malign power of conventional reverence." Conventional reverence is not the only enemy to Christ: unscriptural licence is also one of His enemies. It is in the interests of the latter Professor Bruce has embarked. The case of Socrates also tells against our new reformers. Our author himself wonders how Socrates, a man of some noble principles, could have been treated so badly "in a community rich in artists, poets, philosophers, statesmen, and all without exception, lovers of political freedom." The right conclusion to draw is that men of genius and learning may be persecutors of the truth as well as the common people. The present day bears witness to the fact. The worst feature of this chapter is the idea that it is by sacrifice on the part of men that "the world is redeemed and regenerated." The redemption of sinners is not the work of Christ alone through His atoning sacrifice. Redemption is accomplished by the martyrs of the world, and Christ is simply their Captain. Professor Bruce says:—"It would crown the apology of Providence

if we could conceive God, not merely as an onlooker, but as a participant in the vicarious suffering by which the world is redeemed and regenerated. This we may do under the doctrine of immanence. If God's relation to human experience be one of immanence (indwelling), then He is more than a spectator of the self-sacrifice by which progress is promoted: He is in it, a fellow-sufferer. Still more clearly is this true if in Christ God be incarnate. That conception may labour under metaphysical difficulties, but on the ethical side it is worthy of all acceptance. It makes God a moral hero, a burden-bearer for His own children, a sharer in the sorrow and pain that come on the good through the moral evil that is in the world. The noble army of martyrs have the comfort of knowing that the Eternal Spirit is at their head. Christ is the visible human embodiment of His leadership—the Captain of the army of salvation—exposed not less than every soldier to wounds and death; not indeed the only sufferer, but the chief sufferer.—(p. 369.) "It is possible to conceive of Providence as a Moloch demanding victims to appease his wrath—death, mere blood-shedding, his delight. This is the error of ancient theology."—(p. 371). We see in the first quotation that the Most High is spoken of as "a participant in the vicarious suffering, by which the world is redeemed and regenerated." All good men are redeemers by suffering, and God is a partaker with them in the work of redemption. Christ is the chief sufferer in the army of martyrs, and therefore nothing more than the chief Redeemer. The second quotation shows us what Professor Bruce thinks of the doctrine of the atonement. The error of ancient theology, the theology which he is bound by his ordination vows to teach, is that God is represented "as a Moloch demanding victims to appease his wrath." This is the offensive manner in which scoffers have been accustomed to sneer at one of the fundamental doctrines of the gospel.

It is not our intention here to enter into a full defence of the doctrine of the atonement. Suffice it to say that it has been always held in the Christian Church as a fundamental doctrine of the Scriptures that God's justice demands the punishment of the guilty, and that Jesus Christ—the surety of guilty sinners—suffered and died that justice might be satisfied and redemption procured on behalf of His sinful people. God did not delight in mere blood-shedding, and the ancient theology never asserted that He did. God delights in righteousness. He did not delight in the sufferings and blood of His Son in themselves, but He delighted in the obedience and righteousness they expressed. Unto the Son He saith—"Thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity, therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows." God does not delight in the sufferings of the lost in the place of woe, He delighteth not in the death of him that dieth, but He does delight in the righteousness and justice of which these sufferings are the manifestation. It is vain,

therefore, to charge the ancient theology with any pagan ideas of God's justice. Sad, however, it is to think that men should have risen up in the professing Church who see no excellency in the atoning work of Christ. It was on the basis of, and in dependence upon, this glorious work that all the saints of God entered into heaven in the past. They sing there, not of the sufferings and death of Stephen, James, Peter, or Paul—as their co-operative redeemers—but only and solely of the sufferings and death of the one Redeemer, the Lamb, in the midst of the throne. We would do well to seek grace to follow in their footsteps, and not to be led astray by any false light such as the modern idea here expounded of "Progress by Sacrifice."

We are now done. This book is one of the most dangerous that could possibly fall into the hands of any. It has no doubt been read by almost all the rising ministers of the day, and those things that are relished and digested in the study come out in the pulpit. Heavy is the responsibility that lies upon the Free Church in allowing such men as Professor Bruce and others to teach in her theological halls. They do their work without reproof, and with approval. The evil results are unspeakably great.

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

(XVII.)

MONTROSE, 3rd July, 1880.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—How are you? "Faint," perhaps, "yet pursuing," the Lord doing you good. I mean doing you good to your obvious perception thereof, for He cannot do you other than good, world without end.

I wish to tell you that you may help me to praise the Lord for it, that during the past few weeks He has been graciously pleased to be revisiting and reviving my poor and needy soul. Humbly let me say it, yet to the honour of His grace, He has been leading me to the green pastures and beside the still waters, and restoring me in the paths of righteousness for His own name's sake. Therefore, "extol the Lord with me, let us exalt His name together."

In considering what were the *means* which the Lord was pleased to employ, and through which He drew near, I may say it was in connection with that too much neglected and despised invitation of His Word. "Turn you at my reproof, behold I will pour out my Spirit unto you, I will make known my words unto you." O! do we realise the exhaustless supply there set before us, and to which we are bidden welcome? Do we realise the wondrous privilege of being warranted yea encouraged "to turn?" Do we realise the greatness of the blessing promised by Him who cannot lie, "I will pour out my Spirit unto you, I will make known my words unto you?" It is in substance the same blessing as was

held out to the woman of Samaria. "If thou hadst asked of Him He would have given thee living water." Are we, therefore, dry and parched as we may be, but on the warrant of God's own invitation "turning" and "asking" these blessings which He has been pleased to declare He is willing to bestow? In speaking thus, it is with myself I am reasoning, though it may not be inapplicable to you too.

I have also been thinking lately of that glorious foundation of all our blessings—the death of Christ. How ashamed we should be of our low and superficial views of that blessed mystery into which even angels desire to look! Christ in and by His death defeated and destroyed death—the death that was the penalty of His people's sins. He was even in death a powerful triumphant conqueror, a slain Lamb yet a living Priest. His death, although it was the separation of His soul from His body, was the separation of neither from His Godhead or from Himself, for His personality is in His Godhead. He was the Living One while vanquishing the death due to His people in and by His own death. He also went to the grave; not His dead body merely, "Come see the place where the Lord lay." He likewise rose from the dead; not merely "was raised," but re-uniting His paradisaically-blessed soul and His lifeless body, He arose. "The Lord *is risen* indeed." And all this He did as His people's surety, and this triumph they will share with Him, He the first fruits and afterwards they that are His. Pity poor Unitarians and praise God for a *Divine* Saviour! I have expanded these thoughts in an article I have written for next issue of the *British and Foreign Evangelical Review*, and shall send you a copy when it is out.

I have also an article in this month's issue on "Justification by Faith." It may not be relished by those who hold erroneous views of the atonement, but if any seekers after scriptural views of it are benefitted or helped, I don't care should a thousand whipper-snappers call me "an old wife." I have an impression that my writing days are nearly over, that the time is not very far off when Christ shall be, not to my fitful faith, but to my endless enjoyment, the "Pearl of great price." Indeed, with my broken health, it will be but a fight to the end, but in the hope that the end will end the fighting, all is well. Write soon.

Yours affectionately,

HUGH MARTIN.

(XVIII.)-

MONTROSE, 20th July, 1880.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—I have been "learning my questions" according to your authoritative directions, but to be fair to me, was it not on the supposition of continued broken health that I spoke as I did? I am also ill of a disease without something of which

I could hardly keep up any sense of self-respect, viz., a grumbling and grudging over my uselessness in the Church and in the world. That sense of uselessness along with my broken health affords little reason why I should wish to live away. But the Lord's will be done. If He is pleased to give me health wherewith to serve Him and His Church a little longer, I am willing; although as regards our own Church, alas! the more abundantly I love her the less I am loved!

Did it strike you that I have been too rash and ready of late, to say things that indicate an assurance of my own personal salvation? It may have been so, but you know I have been, as a rule, so sorely kept down, that if the Lord has been pleased to give a faith's glimpse of what He has provided for His children, surely a little bit of joyous scamper towards the confines of that everlasting inheritance may be allowed? especially when all is seen to be the provision of Grace, when Christ Himself is seen as the gift of that Grace, ready, fit, yea, waiting to be received by the poor sinner that has nothing, not the least coin wherewith to purchase the least blessing. We may think we ought to give, if not a price, at least some return for blessing received, but I have come to feel myself so strengthless, so helpless, so empty and dependent, that even if I had something to give (which I have not), I have not strength to give it. *Giving*, therefore, can no longer be my investment, it must be *taking*. And in the measure in which the freeness, the fulness, and the all-sufficiency that is in Christ is apprehended by faith, in that measure will I become content to take at God's hand what He is pleased to give, and to say "Even so, Lord, be it unto me as Thou wilt."

But I am writing too much about myself. It is, however, almost my settled persuasion—although I am not saying anything about it to any one—(what good would that do?)—that I shall not long be able to hold intercourse with you. For one thing, I see truths with which I have been familiar from my childhood in a new light, the light of eternity. When reading this morning the first chapter of Genesis, where it is written "the evening and the morning were the first day, the evening and the morning were the second day," &c., &c.; it occurred to me that men do not reckon time as God reckons it. He says, "The evening and the morning are a day," we say "from the morning till the evening is a day." But soon we shall reckon as God reckons. We shall begin our reckoning in the "evening" of this mortal life, looking back on all its darkening clouds and deepening shadows, on all its precarious paths, and sorrowful stumblings, and we shall end our reckoning in the "morning" of the bright rising of the "Sun of Righteousness," whose glorious beams shall usher in the full noon-day light of glory. Of that glorious noon-day we may reverently say that it shall be "infinite, eternal, and unchangeable."

Yours, dear friend, until its dawning,

HUGH MARTIN.

Interesting Letter.

BY THE LATE DUGALD BUCHANAN, THE GAELIC POET.

To a Mr. Wallace on the death of his Daughter.

DEAR SIR,—I received a letter from Mr. Caw, acquainting me with the death of your daughter, Miss Jenny. How it affects me I cannot so well describe as Mr. Caw described the mournful scene of distress in which your whole family is plunged on this melancholy occasion. But, he writes me, that Mrs. Wallace has been wonderfully supported under this severe trial of her faith and patience. This is the doing of the Lord, who commonly stays His rough wind in the day of His east wind. What an alleviating circumstance in your trial is it, that you have no reason to “mourn as those who have no hope?” How many live to see their children and relations cut off in the prime of life by diseases that are the just effects of vice and intemperance? How many darts and throes must pierce their hearts; what additional gall and wormwood is mixed in their cup, which the relations and parents of pious children are strangers to! Patience under God’s afflicting hand, and a resignation to His Divine will, are not only the chief supporters of our faith, but the only means within our reach, in the day of affliction, whereby we can glorify God. Could you hear your dear departed child adopting the language of her Redeemer, and saying, “If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I am gone to the Father.” Oh, how backward are our hearts to this duty of rejoicing! Our passions often get the better of our understandings, as well as of our faith, and our memories are ever faithful here, and earnestly treasure up all the amiable qualities of our departed friends in a long succession, and tear open our wounds to bleed afresh. Nay, our imaginations are set to work, and stuff up their empty garments in their former shape and size, when we miss them at bed or board. It is surprising, that when our understandings and judgment are fully convinced of the equality of God’s ways, and that His whole paths are not only truth, but mercy also, to such as fear him, and when our faith is unable to read invisible designs of that love and mercy in our trials, that it has so little influence in silencing the inward murmurs of our souls. But surely it must be an object pleasing to God himself, who knows our frame, and remembers we are dust to look on us surrounded with all the weakness of the flesh, and those frailties that are inseparable from human nature in its perfect state, lying low in dust, and weeping with a feeling smart of our pain and loss, and at the same time acquiescing in His whole disposal of us and ours, striving to imitate Christ’s prayer, “Not my will, but thine be done.” But if, instead of a constant poring upon our wounds and refusing to be comforted, we had the blessed art of letting our faith trace out our friends in the regions of bliss and immortality, where (to use the words of Milton)

"they walk with God, high in salvation and the climes of bliss," we would rejoice in their felicity. It is true, that the partition which divides us from the eternal world is impenetrable, except what is revealed. But revelation informs us, that the state of the righteous is a state of happiness beyond what eye hath seen, or ear heard, or it hath entered into the heart of man to conceive. Yet as to what it really consists in, or the manner of their various employments, we are left much in the dark, as perhaps not fit to be revealed in this state. But surely it is pardonable to be casting some guesses or conjectures over this wall that divides us for a while from our friends, as it is impossible to confine our active souls under the canopy of the sun, moon, and stars; and, except where relation here and there gives a hint of the heavenly state, analogy is our next best guide into those scenes which eye hath not seen.

I remember long ago, to have read a book of Dr. Watt's called *Death and Heaven*, where he has happily indulged his fancy in assigning various employments for the blessed. He thinks there may be some solemn stated periods of worship in heaven beyond what is their common service either to commemorate some of the past transactions of the Godhead, or to celebrate some new discovery of God. And truly, considering the infinite nature of God, and His glorious works of creation and redemption, and the finite nature of the highest order of created beings; there must be new discoveries of God made to the blessed through all eternity, as they can only receive such discoveries in succession, and it is highly probable that some of the past acts of Jehovah shall be commemorated at stated periods to endless ages; and perhaps some such manifestation or discovery has been lately made—unknown till now in heaven itself—and perhaps there has been a new song composed on this occasion, either by Michael, Gabriel, Moses, or David, or by some other masterly hand, to celebrate this discovery, and that the concert was incomplete till a messenger was sent for your dear child to assist in singing the chorus, as her sweet melodious voice was so well tuned before to the songs of Zion.

Our Lord once entered into Jerusalem with a grand retinue, and He had a demand for an ass to ride upon, that He might fulfil an ancient prophecy concerning Himself. A messenger was despatched for the ass, and if the owner quarrelled he had positive orders to tell him that "the Lord had need of him." If your heart grudge or quarrel that your child was so soon loosed from you, saying "Why was my dear child so suddenly snatched from me in the bloom of youth, when I expected she would have been the comfort of my old age, and soothed my pains in distress?" Why, the same answer stands in record for you, "the Lord hath need of her." He had need of more virgins in the train, and your dear child was pitched upon; therefore rejoice in her honour and happiness. Our Lord has gone to heaven to prepare

mansions for His people, and He sends His Spirit to prepare His people for their mansions; and after they have served an apprenticeship to their employments that they may be fit to act agreeably to the great end of their calling, and fill their thrones to the honour and glory of that God who hath called them to honour and glory, He then crowns them with endless happiness. Some have a longer time of probation than others. If I were to reason from analogy, I might ask Mrs. Wallace: When she was with child of her departed daughter, if she desired to keep her in that close union with herself any longer than her full time was come, that is, when the child was perfectly formed for this world, and fit to exercise her senses upon the various objects which this world affords? Nay, did she not wish for the happy moment of separation, though she knew the pangs and throes of child-bearing? And why should Mrs. Wallace or you, who rejoiced so much at her first birth, mourn at her being admitted into the number of the spirits of the just made perfect, when it is certain that many who rejoiced with you at her first birth, hailed her arrival on the coasts of bliss. Among those who rejoiced with you at her first birth, and saluted her on the heavenly shore, we may safely mention Mr. and Mrs. Hogg, and others of your pious relations and neighbours who have got crowns on their heads and palms in their hands since her first birth; but this subject would lead me beyond the bound of a letter. I have only to add, that from my very soul I sympathise with you and your whole family in your loss, which is her gain and glory. May the Lord bless your remaining children, and preserve them to be the comfort of your age, and form them to be vessels fit for the Master's use, and fill your own soul with those consolations that flow neither from wife, child, nor friend, nor anything this world can give or take away, is the sincere prayer of—Yours, &c. DUGALD BUCHANAN.

Augustine on the Pleasures of Sense.

THERE is another evil of the day, and I wish the day may be sufficient for it. We refresh the continual ruins of the body by food, till this corruptible shall put on incorruption. Thou hast taught me to use aliment as medicine. But while I am passing from the uneasiness of hunger to the rest of satiety; in the very passage the snare of concupiscence is laid for me; and the bounds of innocence are not easily defined, and a pretence for indulgence is made on that very account. These temptations I daily endeavour to resist, and I call on thy right hand for my salvation, and make known to thee my agitations of soul, because I am not yet clear on this subject. I hear my God, "let not your heart be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness." The latter is far from me, let it not approach me; the former sometimes steals upon me, keep it at a distance from me. Who is there,

Lord, that is perfectly temperate? Whoever he be, let him magnify thy name. But I am not he, I am a sinful man. However I magnify Thy name, and He who overcame the world, and numbers me among the weak members of His body, intercedes for my sins.

The pleasures of the ear have deeper hold on me. I find, even when I am charmed with sacred melody, I am led astray at times by the luxury of sensations, and offend, not knowing at the time, but afterwards I discover it. Sometimes guarding against this fallacy, I err in the other extreme, and could wish all the melody of David's Psalms were removed from my ears and those of the Church, and think it safer to imitate the plan of Athanasius, bishop of Alexandria, who directed a method of repeating the psalms more resembling pronunciation than music. But when I remember my tears of affection at my conversion under the melody of Thy Church, with which I am still affected, I again acknowledge the utility of the custom. Thus do I fluctuate between the danger of pleasure, and the experience of utility, and am more induced, though with a wavering assent, to own that the infirmity of nature may be assisted in devotion by psalmody. Yet when the tune has moved me more than the subject, I feel guilty, and am ready to wish I had not heard the music. See where I am, and mourn with me, ye who are conscious of any inward feelings of godliness. I cannot expect the sympathy of those who are not. Thou, Lord my God, hear and pity and heal me.

The pleasures of the eye I find to entangle me from time to time. But thou deliverest me, sometimes without pain, because I fall into them gently; at other times with pain, because I stick in them.

Letters of the late Rev. Archibald Cook.

(IV.)

DAVIOT FREE MANSE, 11th November, 1852.

MY DEAR SIR,—I long much to hear from you. There is an old proverb, "Out of sight, out of mind." I hope it is not the case with you. The Lord said—"I heard the groanings of my people which are in Egypt." Their groanings moved the sacred bowels. He is the same Saviour still, easily touched, though at times He seems as it were to forsake and forget them, yea seems to turn to be their enemy and to fight against them; to frown upon them; to shut out their prayer; to cover Himself with a cloud, and leave them in the hand of their enemies, to do with them as they please. But His love was unchangeable. When they were humbled, and brought to see their deceit, to acknowledge their offences, to justify His dealings with them, deliverance was not far off. We see His people in Egypt and in Babylon,

when they thought their case was desperate. "Then He said unto me, son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel; behold they say our bones are dried and our hope is lost, we are cut off for our part," hence He promises to open their graves and cause them to come up out of their graves and bring them to the land of Israel. "Then shall ye know that I am the Lord," the unchangeable one in love and mercy. He promises to take the third part through the fire, to purify them as silver, to try them as gold, then they shall call upon Him and He shall hear. He will say—They are my people, and they shall say, The Lord is my God. To come to this is worth enduring many trials, from without and from within. The creature in his natural state thinks he has no more to do, but seek the Lord any time he thinks, but when he is brought to concern about his future state, his former sins and ways brought to his remembrance, a sense of the alienation of the heart given, then the Lord appears far off. He will see the Lord sovereign and at liberty to deal with him as he sees meet, to leave him through eternity far off, bound in his chains, and will see it a wonder he could ever come so as to call Him his own, to enjoy His favour. But being once brought to enjoy the smiles of His face, taste the sweetness of the promises, then he will feel himself well paid for all his trials. I long much to hear from your sister. I only had one letter from her since she went home. Let the Word of Truth be your rule in all you do. I shall expect to hear soon from you.—Yours sincerely,

ARCHD. COOK.

(V.)

DAVIOT FREE MANSE, 22nd June, 1853.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—I received your kind and welcome letter, and I would have answered it sooner, but last Sabbath the communion was dispensed in the other parish, Strathdearn, that I had no time, having so much to do. This week I am to assist at Inverness. The communion is to be there Sabbath first, so that I have very little time to-day for writing. Our own communion is to be in this parish, if the Lord will, on the third Sabbath of July, and Stratherrick, the next Sabbath after that, or the fourth Sabbath of July, that perhaps you might take a jaunt and see us at that time. From what I hear of your dear sister, I fear she may not be able to accompany you. You did not repent of coming last year, and perhaps you may find some refreshing this year also, that will carry you on a stage. "Who passing through the valley of Baca make it a well, the rain also filleth the pools. They go from strength to strength, every one of them in Zion appeareth before God." I see that your father has been taken away; by what I learned from your sister, it appears he has been concerned about his last end for some time past; this ought to be a consolation to

you. The salvation of sinful creatures depends not on their assurance, but on the nature of their faith. If their faith be the work of the Spirit of grace, though no stronger than the first movement of a child in his mother's womb, according to the condition of the covenant of grace, it will land them safe in glory. "He that believes on the Son hath everlasting life." You said that the Lord appeared to yourself as an angry judge. Those who get glimpses of Him in that way going through the world, will find Him a Saviour in their time of need, when neither flesh nor blood will comfort.

I find my time so limited that I cannot enlarge. Let me hear from you whether we may expect you or not. Two of my children have been very poorly for four or five weeks, but they are this week much better. My dear brother continues poorly. I must, if well, go to assist him at the sacrament. My love to your dear sister. Accept of the same yourself.

Yours sincerely,

ARCHD. COOK.

What Prince Bismarck said in a Speech.

"I CANNOT conceive how a man can live without a belief in a revelation, in a God who orders all things for the best, in a Supreme Judge from whom there is no appeal, and in a future life. If I were not a Christian I should not remain at my post for a single hour. If I did not rely on God Almighty, I should not put my trust in princes. I have enough to live on, and am sufficiently genteel and distinguished without the chancellor's office. Why should I go on working indefatigably, incurring trouble and annoyance, unless convinced God has ordained me to fulfil these duties? If I were not persuaded that this German nation of ours, in the Divine order of things, is destined to be something great and good, I should throw up the diplomatic profession this very moment. Orders and titles to me have no attraction. The firmness I have shewn in combating all manner of absurdities in the past is solely derived from faith. Take away my faith and you destroy my patriotism. But for my strict and literal belief in the truths of Christianity, but for my acceptance of the miraculous groundwork of religion, you would not have lived to see the sort of chancellor I am. Find me a successor as firm a believer as myself and I will resign at once. But I live in a generation of pagans. I have no desire to make proselytes, but am constrained to confess my faith. If there is among us any self-denial and devotion to king and country, it is a remnant of religious belief unconsciously clinging to our people from the days of their fathers. For my own part, I prefer a rural life to any other."

Tus Comhairle an Aonaidh.

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

(Continued from page 437.)

THA so 'g ar treòrachadh gu a nochdadh gu 'n do bhàsaich E mar Fhear-ionaid a' shluaigh, a thugadh dha ann an coimhcheangal sìorruidh. Tna Fear-ionaid a' ciallachdadh aon a tha a'deanamh gnòthuich, no a' fulang, ann an àite agus airson neach eile. Cha 'n fheadadh e bhi gu pearsanta fo fhiachaibh air bith do 'n lagh air a shon féin. Agus dh' fheumadh e bhi air a dheanamh fo 'n lagh anns an aon nàdur riu-san, agus air a chur anns na dearbh dhàimh bh coimhcheangail agus lagha anns an robh iadsan airson an do ghabh e os làimh a bhi 'n a Fhear-ionaid. Dh' fheumadh àite mar cheann coimhcheangail, agus mar fhear-ionaid, bhi do chomharrachadh an Athar; agus air a ghabhail gu toileach leis a' Mhac, Eabh. v. 4, 5. Salm cx. 4. Fo 'n lagh, bha 'n lobairt air a toirt suas ann an ionad an ti a bha 'g a tairgseadh. Bha beatha na h-lobairt air a toirt air falbh air son a' chiontaich. Mar so, bha 'm fear a bha 'g a tairgseadh a' leagadh a làimh air ceann na h-lobairt—gnìomh a bha samhachadh gu robh a pheacanna air am meas agus air an leagadh air an lobairt-réite. Lebh. i, 4, iii. 2, xvii. 21. "Shaor Chrìosd sinne o mallachadh an lagha, air dha air a dheanamh 'n a mhallachadh air ar son." (Gal. iii. 13; 1 Peter iii. 18; Rom. v. 19; Isa. liii. 5.) Dh' fhuiling e am bàs mar an dàra h-Adhamh a réir a' choimhcheangail. Uime sin, 's éigin gu 'm bi iadsan, airson an d' fhuiling e 'm bàs, air an cur saor; oir mur bi, bithidh na rinn agus an d' fhuiling e air an son gun bhuannachd dhoibh. Ach ma bhàsaich Chrìosd airson nan uile dhaoine, 's éigin gu 'm bi na h-uile dhaoine air an cur saor. Ach cha 'n 'eil iad ag ràdh gu 'm bi na h-uile air an cur saor; mur bi, cha do bhàsaich Chrìosd air an son mar am Fear-ionaid; oir cha bhiodh e réir ceartais gu 'm bàsaicheadh iad le chéile; agus 's ann mar fhear-ionaid a mhàin a b' urrainn e a bhi air a chur gu bàs. Nochd sin cheana, gu'n rohh e 'n aghaidh laghà, riaghlaidh, agus nàduir naomha Dhe, gu 'm biodh neach air a chur gu bàs, mur biodh peacadh r'a chur as a leth. Cha robh peacanna na muinutir chaillteair am meas do Chrìosd; uime sin, cha d' fhuilinge air an son.

Ris, bhàsaich Chrìosd mar Urras. Ciod na cumhachan fo 'n deachaidh e mar Urras air an son? Is iad sin, gu 'n gabhadh e nàdur an duine, ach as engmhais peacaidh; gu 'm biodh e air a bhreith le mnaoi, agus air a dheanamh fo 'n lagh; gu 'n gabhadh e air féin, agus gu 'n coimhlionadh e gu h-iomlan, airson a shluaigh, na cumhachan uile a bhriseadh leo-san; agus na fiachan fo 'n d' thàinig iad fo choimhcheangal beatha. Gal. iv. 4, 5; Mat. v. 17, 18. Coimhlion e na cumhachan so gu h-iomlan, le làn ùmhlachd do uile àitheantaibh an lagh, agus le e a ghiùlan air féin an làn pheanas a thoill am peacanna, Sam xl. 8; Isa. xlii. 21; liii. Air an làimh eile, chaidh an t-Athair, a taisbeanadh 'n a Diadhachd

gu h-iomlan, ann an coimhcheangal sìorruidh, fo chumhachaibh do 'n Mhac, ann an dreuchd Eadar-mheadhonair. B'e aon do na cumhachaibh sin, gu 'm biodh iadsan air son an robh e 'n a Urras, agus air son an do bhàsaich e, uile air an tèarnadh agus air an cur ann an làn sheilbh air beannachdaibh a chosnadh, "Do shaothair 'anama chi e, agus bithidh e toilichte," (Isa. liii). Am bi e toilichte ma bhios aon diubh sud cailte? "Gach ni a tha 'n t-Athair a' toirt dhomhsa, thig e m' ionnsuidh, agus an ti a thig a m' ionnsuidh, cha tilg mi air chor sam bith a mach e. Oir thàinig mi nuas o nèamh, cha 'n ann a chum gu 'n deanainn mo thoil féin, ach toil an ti a chuir uaith mi. Agus is i so toil an Athar a chuir uaith mi, nach caillinn a bheag sam bith do 'n uile a thug e dhomh; ach gu 'n togainn suas e a ris air an là dheireannach." (Eoin. vi. 37-40.)

Is iomchuidh dhuinn a nis a chur 'n ur cuimhne an t-aonadh a tha eadar Criosd agus a shluagh féin—ni a tha leigeadh ris dhuinn gu soilleir rùn shìorruidh Dhé ann an obair na Rèite. An toiseach, sheas Criosd mar Cheann coimhcheangail dhoibh, agus mar am Fear-ioniad ann. Bha aonadh agus dàimh coimhcheangail eatorra. Mar so, tha e air a ràdh, gur e 'n ceud Adhamh samhladh an ti ud a bha ri teachd, mar chi sibh Rom. v. 14, gu crìch a' chaibidil; 1 Cor. xv. 22, 45; "Tre chionta aon duine thàinig breitheanas air na h-uile dhaoineibh chum dithidh," "An an Adhamh tha na h-uile a' faigheil a' bhàis; is amhuil sin mar an ceudna a nithear na h-uile beò ann an Criosd." Mar bhàsaich a shliochd nàdurra uile anns a' cheud Adamah tre bhriseadh a' chend choimhcheangail, is amluidh a tha shliochd spioradail uile air an deanamh beò ann an Criosd mar cheann an dàra coimhcheangail. Ann an lorg an aonaidh coimhcheangail agus an dàimh nàdurra a bha eadar an ceud Adamah agus a shliochd, bhàsaich iad ann, ann an lagh, agus gu spioradail, 's e sin, tre mheas céud pheacaidh Adhamh dhoibh, thugadh a mach orra a' bhinn bàis a bha air a bagradh; agus bhàsaich iad gu spioradail ann an call iomhaigh Dhé mar an ceudna. Chaill iad araon còir air beatha shìorruidh, agus air freagarrachd a bhi aca air son a mealtuinn. Nis, ann an lorg an aonaidh agus na dàimhe a tha eadar a shluagh féin agus Criosd mar an Ceann Coimhcheangail, ann an obair na h-Eadar-mheadhonaireachd,—'n a bhàs, bhàsaich iad, 'n a aiseirigh, dh' éirich iad—dh' àrdaicheadh iad, agus shuidhicheadh iad ann an ionadaibh nèamhaidh ann an Iosa Criosd. "Tha mi air mo cheusadh maille ri Criosd; gidheadh tha mi beò," Gal. ii. 20; Col. iii. 1-3; Rom. vi. 8-11; 2 Cor. v. 14; Eph. ii. 5, 6. Tha Criosd 'n a Cheann beò, spioradail, d' a shluagh mar an ceudna, Eoin xiv. 19, 20; 1 Cor. xii. 13, 27. So an dàimh shònruichte anns an do sheas e, agus anns am feumadh e bhi d' a shluagh, chum gu freagradh e a' chrìoch airson a theachd chum an t-saoghail, agus a bha anns an rùn shìorruidh. Ciod an seadh anns na do bhàsaich e airson dhaoine ris nach robh e anns na dàimh-ibh, no anns an aonadh ud? cha 'n ann duinne a bhuineas sin a

mhìneachadh; ach dhoibhsan a tha 'g ràdh gu 'n d' rinn se e; ach nach urrainn gu bràth a' dhaingneachadh o Fhocal Dhé. 'S cha 'n ioghnadh ged nach urrainn; an aghaidh cumhachan agus geallaidhean Dhé; agus tha e 'n aghaidh nàduir, agus lagh', agus riaghlaidh naoimh Dhé.

Their iadsan, a tha a' bonntachadh tairgse an t-soisgeil air bàs Chriosd *air son nan uile*, ris an anam iomagaineach, mu a chor caillte, gu 'n do bhàsaich Chriosd air son nan uile; agus do bhrìgh gu 'm bheil esan do na h-uile, gu 'n do bhàsaich Chriosd air a shon féin. Mar sin gu 'm feud e comhfhurtachd a ghabhail o so. Ach, ars an t-anam sin, am bi na h-uile air an tèarnadh ma ta, do bhrìgh 's gu 'n do bhàsaich e airson nan uile? O, cha bhi. Mur bi, feudaidh mise a bhi caillte, mur bi do stéidh agam ach sin. Is e a riaraidheas an t-anam ud,—tèarnadh sònruichte agus pearsanta; agus cha 'n e ni coitichionn, leis nach robh, 's nach bi, neach air a tèarnadh.

Tha Focal Dhé a' labhairt air an aonadh a tha eadar Chriosd agus a shluagh fo shamhladh a cheangal-phòsaidh, Isa. liv. 5; Dàn Shol. v.; Eph. v. 23-32. Cha 'n 'eil a rùn oirnn labhairt air so, ach a mhàin a' cheist a chur: Am bheil e mar fhiachaibh air an fhear-phòsda ann an lagh, na fiachan a ta air mnàithibh eile a phàidheadh, no dhioladh, mar tha e flachaichte air fiachan na té a tha 's an dàimh phòsda ris, a dhioladh? C' arson nach 'eil? Dreach, do bhrìgh nach eil e anns an dàimh riu anns am b'urrainn an lagh 'agradh air an son. Mar sin, do bhrìgh nach robh Chriosd anns an dàimh ris na h-uile anns an robh e ri a shluagh sònruichte féin—a chéile,—cha b'urrainn lagh no ceartas Dhé na fiachan a bha orra-san agradh airsan—'s e sin, cha d'rinn e réite—cha do dhiol e ceartas Dhé, ach airson a mheud a' 's bha ann an dàimh-coimhcheangail ris.

Tha Focal Dhé a' labhairt mar an ceudna air Chriosd mar Bhuachaille. Tha so a' nochdadh na dàimhe a ta eadar Esan agus a shluagh féin eadar-dhealaichte o mhuinntir eile; agus gu robh treud air an toirt dha leis an Athair, as an t-saoghal, airson an saoradh—a bheatha leigeadh sìos air an son, agus cùram àraidh ghabhail dhiubh, Eoin x. 1-30. "Is mise am buachaille maith; leigidh am buachaille maith 'anam sìos airson nan caorach," ver. 11. "Ach cha 'n 'eil sibhse a' creidsinn; oir cha 'n ann do 'm chaoraich," ver. 26.

A nis, chi sinn gu 'bheil an Réite co-ionann ann an farsuingeachd ri Eadar-ghuidhe Chriosd. "Air an son-san tha mi a' guidheadh; cha 'n 'eil mi a' guidheadh air son an t-saoghail, ach air son na muinntir sin a thug thu dhomh; oir is leat-sa iad," Eoin xvii. Cha 'n e impidh is nàdur do eadar-ghuidhe Chriosd, ach fìr thaisbeanadh air an Réite féin fa chomhair an Athar. 'S éigin, uime sin, gu 'r Réite air a co-chur gu h-éifeachdach riu-san uile, agus riu-san a mhàin, air son an d'rinneadh i, do bhrìgh gu bheil eadar-ghuidhe Chriosd air an son sin; agus gu bheil i a ghnàth uile-bhuadhach. Ach ma bhàsaich Chriosd airson muinntir nach

bi air an téarnadh, 's éigin gu bheil an Réite ni 's farsuinge na 'an eadar-ghuidhe; ach cha 'n 'eil i mar sin; oir bhiodh sin an aghaidh Fhocail Dhé. Agus ma their iad gu bheil iad co-ionann, an sin, 's éigin gu bheil iad le chéile neo-éifeachdach air son tèarnaidh nan uile air son an do bhàsaich Crìosd. A nis, nach fheum sinn a ràdh, gu 'm bu toibheumach a bhi a' cumail a mach a leithid so do bheachd; agus gurneo-theàruinte am bonn sodothairgse 'n t-soisgeil.

Ann an innleachd na Slàinte 's e dreuchd agus obair an Spioraid Naomh toillteanas agus éifeachd bàis Chrìosd a chàramh gu h-éifeachdach riu-san air son do bhàsaich E. A nis, mur bi 'n Réite, a tha do luach agus do thoillteanas neo-chrìochnach, air a co-chur riu-san uile airson an do bhàsaich E, nach éigin gu bheil so a' cumail a mach aon chuid, nach 'eil an comas aige, no, nach 'eil e réir a thoile, no nach do rùnaich e a dheanamh. Nach b'eas-urramach do 'n Spiorad Naomh gu 'n d'thugadh sinn àite do bheachd a chuireadh a leithid so do eas-urram air an Aon Naomh ud? Nach 'eil so a' treòrachadh gu fhèdraich, C' arson nach robh tìodhlac an Spioraid ni bu phailte air a chosnadh le Réite a bha do leithid do luach, chum co-chur ni b'farsuinge a' dheanamh dheth? Treòraichidh a' cheist so gu ceist eile, eadhon, Ciod a tha a' cur crìoch ri co-chur bàis agus Réite Chrìosd ri daoineibh? An e deadh-thoil-àrd-uachdaranach Dhé tha a' cur crìch ris, no 'n e toil an duine? 'N e rùn sìòrruidh Dhé, no 'n e toil an duine tha a' cur crìch ris? Ma their sinn gur e toil an duine, an sin, bithidh sinn a' bonntachadh tèarnaidh an duine air a thoil thruaillidh féin, agus a toirt gnùis do theagasg mhi-fhallain luchd-leanmhuinn Arminiu, no, eadhoin Phelagiu. Ma bhàsaich Chrìosd airson muinntir a bhios caillte, 's éigin gu robh a bhàs neo-fhoghainteach air son an tèarnaidh, no, gu 'n d' thàinig an Spiorad Naomh gearr ann an co-chur éifeachd a bhàis. Saoil, an gabh iod orra aon chuid diubh so a' ràdh? Cha shaoil sinn gu 'n gabh; oir bhiodh e da rìreadh maslach araon do Chrìosd agus do 'n Spiorad! A nis, ma ta, 's éigin do so a bhi 'n crochadh air toil duine, no, air rùn sìòrruidh, no, toil àrd-uachdaranach Dhé. Ma bhonntaicheas sinn e air rùn no toil Dhé, cumaidh sin ceart sinn, a thaobh na puinge; ach ma 's ann air toil an duine, 's éigin gu 'n tilg e bun os ceann innleachd na Slàinte o thùs gu deireadh.

Ann am focal, their sinn na 'm biodh an teagasg so, a thaobh nach d' fhuair sinn riarachadh sam bith ann an "Iomradh" a Cho-chomuinn, fìor, gu 'm biodh e a' cumail a mach gu bheil gràdh coitichionn aig Dia, obair choitichionn aig Crìosd, agus feartan coitichionn aig an Spiorad Naomh, a tha, airson éifeachd no toradh sam bith, an crochadh air toil an duine féin. Tha leithid so do bheachd mu theagasg na Réite, 'n am biodh e fìor, a' tilgeadh bun os ceann obair Chrìosd mar Fhearionaid a shluagh féin—a' tilgeadh bun os ceann ciont a shluaigh a bhi air a' mheas dha-san, no 'fhìreantachd a bhi air a meas dhoibh-san; agus tha e a' deanamh a' chreidimh 'n a chumha tèarnaidh, an àit e bhi, mar is e fhìor àit, 'n a inneal gabhail ri Crìosd, agus beò-aonaidh ris.

A thaobh earranna do Fhocal Dhé, anns am bheil iomradh air an t-saoghal uile, agus na h-uile dhaoine, mar their Eoin i. 29, iii. 16, i Eoin ii. 2; i Tim. iv. 10; tha caochladh do sheadhaibh anns am bheil am focal "*Saoghal*" r' a ghabhail: saoghal do ain-glibh, agus do dhaoineibh, agus saoghal nan spiorad, agus iomadh ni eile. "Ghràdhaich Dia an Saoghal." Cha 'n e aingle, nach do ghléidh an ceud inbhe. "Feuch Uan Dhé, a tha a' toirt air falbh peacaidh an t-saoghail." Cha 'n e na h-uile duine fa leth do'n chinne-dhaoine; ach daoine do uile chinnich an t-saoghail, ann an coimeas ri fine nan Iudhach, a bha do 'n bharail, gu 'm b' ann doibh féin a mhàin a bhuineadh sochairean na slàinte. Air uairibh, cha 'n 'eil am focal "*saoghal*" a' fillleadh ann ach earrann bheag dheth. Eoin xii. 19: "Am faic sibh nach 'eil sibh a' buannachadh a' bheag 's am bith? feuch, tha an saoghal air dol 'n a dhéigh." Ach 's e earrann ro bheag do 'n t-saoghal a bha a' dol 'n a dhéigh. A rìs, "Slànuighear nan uile dhaoine, gu h-àraidh nan creidmheach." Tha e soilleir, gur h-e Fear-coimhead, Fear-fuasglaidh, is e Fear-cobhair nan uile dhaoine, tha so a' ciallachadh; ach gu 'm bheil so ann an seadh sònruichte air son nan creidmheach, eadar-dhealaichte o 'n t-saoghal, a tha a' sealbhachadh caoimhneis san fhreasdal. Ach cha cheadaich rùm tuilleadh a ràdh air so.

Crìochnaichidh sinn so le earrann ath-aithris á leabhran a sgrìobh an t-Olla *Candlish* air an Réite. Anns an fho-sgrìobhadh, *Nota E*, chi sibh: "Tha," ars 'esan, "claonadh 's am bith 'n ar measg-ne, o bheachd eagnaich, no chrìochnach air farsuingeachd 'n a Réite, 'n a aobhar uamhuinn, agus aslachaidh airson a bhi air ar coimhead uaithe le ro iomagain; do bhrìgh gu bheil e a' nochdadh gu h-aona-ghnàthathach ach beag, aomadh dìomhair gu àrd-uachdaranachd gràis Dhé a chur gh h-iomlan an amharus; agus tha e air fhaotainn gu gnàthaichte a' fosgladh doruis gu tuil do mhearachdaibh nam Pelagianach agus nam Arminianach a thoirt a steach d' ar n-Eaglaisibh."

A Pulpit Effort of Dr. Whyte.

(To the Editor of the F. P. Magazine.)

DEAR SIR,—A prominent feature of the *British Weekly* of 17th February, is a sermon by Dr. Whyte, of Free St. George's, Edinburgh. As the editor in his opening article pronounced it to be a great sermon, I was curious to see what might be its style and substance. My taste may, perhaps, be a perverted one, but having read the sermon I was unable to relish it. The title of the sermon is—"The woman and the hem of his garment."—(Luke viii. 43.) Was it "Mr. Lachlan" who gave the advice—"Do not be always talking of your sins and infirmities? The Most High likes better to hear of His own good things than of your bad things." Dr. Whyte has not entered into the spirit of this advice,

for his sermon is greatly taken up with elaborate details of sin, meant to be very candid and humiliating, but with a strong suspicion of oratorical display. Is Dr. Whyte not afraid of the home thrust which Bunyan makes at the penitence which is too cheap, easy, and profuse? He introduces Christian and Talkative discoursing of the work of grace in the soul, and Talkative proceeding to give marks of true conversion says—"When true grace comes into the heart *it raiseth a great outcry against sin.*" Bunyan is in favour of sound conviction of sin, but he is evidently not very sure of the "great outcry."

What makes Dr. Whyte's elaborate studies of sin to be the less acceptable is the fact that it is his own sin which he is always obtruding on our notice. Three times over in this sermon, Dr. Whyte takes a fit of advertising what a bad, miserable man he is. "I am not dead, but I often wish I were. For I, too, am sick unto death, and I have tried everything, every preacher, every author, every discipline, every medicine, and I am worse to-night than ever I was. This woman envied the ruler's dead daughter, and so do I. Luther had no proper pleasure in his children because of his sin, and neither have I;" with more of the like sort. Perhaps Dr. Whyte thinks that because Paul penned a seventh of the Romans so should he, but Dr. Whyte should rather cultivate modesty and self-repression.

But not only are Dr. Whyte's attainments in penitence and self-knowledge very great and notable, but his attainments in faith are also, it seems, equally notable. For further on he says—"She felt in her body that she was healed of that plague, and so do I. I would die every day if I did not touch the hem of His garment many times a day. Not on Sacrament days only, but still more on other days, what that miserable woman said and did on that street that day, that same, I, a thousand times more miserable, do on the streets of your city and in my own house day and night. I touch the hem of His garment. I not only touched the hem of His garment in this house last Sabbath, I actually ate His flesh and drank His blood till I felt, all the time I sat in my seat, as if I were almost healed of my plague like her." To touch the hem of Christ's garment for the cure of the daily running sores of sin is doubtless a blessed experience, but that conscious communications of the virtue of Christ, such as Dr. Whyte indicates, are so numerous or so attainable by the free will of the sinner, as he seems to find them, I doubt extremely. In this age of decayed spirituality especially, God's elect are nearly all saying, "Verily thou art a God that hidest thyself, oh God of Israel the Saviour." The common experience of real saints, I think, is that iniquities prevail against them, and the Comforter that should heal their souls has withdrawn Himself and is gone. Dr. Whyte's experiences are, therefore, I am afraid, largely the outcome of emotion and imagination, and he is misleading his hearers as to the true character of the Christian life. In fact, though we hear

much about sin and a little (in a poetic way) about Christ, we hear nothing at all about the grace and working of the Holy Spirit, without whom there can be no communication between Christ and the sinner. That "the Spirit applieth to us the redemption purchased by Christ by working faith in us and thereby uniting us to Christ in our effectual calling," is a line of teaching very little insisted on by modern preachers like Dr. Whyte.

He professes to be able to touch the hem of Christ's garment many times a day, but for the impotent needy soul who feels himself as unable to do this as to clutch the stars, he has no advice or information but to stir up his dead heart into some mighty fervour, and in the midst of this, somehow or other, he will find himself in touch with Christ. For a pattern of patient waiting for the special heavenly operation of the Divine Spirit, see the Diary of Dr. Love, and observe there how unable he felt himself to touch the hem of Christ's garment, and how determined he was not to be content with any but the true communication of Divine grace, though he should wait all his days for a visitation from on high.

Dr. Whyte's egotistical pulpit appearances are certainly quite out of keeping with the best traditions of Scottish Christianity, and I think, however novel and fetching they may prove at the moment, they will not stand the test of time and reflection.

I am, yours,

J. M'N.

Notes and Comments.

THE LATE ALEXANDER FRASER, DORES.—It is with much regret that we record this month the sudden death of Mr. Alexander Fraser, Dore, which took place on the 15th March. Deceased was a highly esteemed elder in our congregation at Inverness, and the loss to them and the Church at large is very great. Mr. Fraser was eminently a man of prayer, a wise and prudent counsellor, and adorned the doctrine of Christ by a walk and conversation becoming the gospel. He leaves a widow (sister of Mrs. Macdonald, Shieldaig) and young son, to whom we desire to extend our deepest sympathy. We expect to have a fuller notice in next issue.

GOLD AT KLONDYKE.—The discovery of gold in the remote north-west of Canada has led to feverish adventurers flocking thither from many places, near and remote. 1,200 persons are reported to be waiting at Dyer and Skagway until the approach of spring has made the mountains passable. The passion for gold is one which certainly begets diligence and enterprise; but it is likely there is little leaven of spiritual mindedness in all that army of gold seekers who are invading Klondyke. Nevertheless they are fulfilling a part in the divine scheme, and the gold of Klondyke that is now, we fear, instrumental in destroying souls, shall doubtless one day be a happy means to promote a nobler

end. The exalted Mediator has need of gold, and it is written that He shall get it. "For he shall live, and to him shall be given of the gold of Sheba." "Surely the isles shall wait for me, and the ships of Tarshish first, to bring thy sons from far, their silver and their gold with them."

MR. M'CASKILL'S STRANGE DEVELOPMENT.—The *British Weekly*, of 17th February, is pretty circumstantial on the subject of the union negotiations. We give the excerpt bearing on the matter, by which our readers will see the surprising figure that the F.C. Minister of Dingwall, and others are making. "The Joint Union Committee of the Free and United Presbyterian Churches spent the greater part of two days last week in considering the reports of sub-committees on the formula, finance, and the training of students. The last subject did not occupy much time. It was agreed that there should be in the united Church three colleges, with six professors each in Edinburgh and Glasgow, and five in Aberdeen. More time was spent on the formula. The questions in connection with which divisions took place were very much questions of phraseology, a strong desire being manifested to have nothing introduced which should either impose new obligations on the united Church or hinder anyone from advocating principles there which he is allowed to maintain in the community to which he at present belongs. Finance, too, gave rise to a good deal of conversation, the systems in the two negotiating churches being in some ways very different. The matter has been recommitted. At the meetings the attendance was very large. On the Free Church side the chief speakers were Dr. Rainy, Dr. Ross Taylor, and Mr. Taylor Innes; on the United Presbyterian side Dr. Hutton, Dr. M'Ewan, and Dr. Orr. Mr. M'Caskill gave valuable assistance, and is said to have impressed all by his loyalty and good sense. Dr. Winter's acquaintance with the subject was again in evidence. The spirit pervading the conference was admirable." The "loyalty" of Mr. M'Caskill seems a somewhat doubtful quality. We are not quite sure to what or to whom he is loyal—certainly not to his former self, certainly not to the memory of his predecessor in Dingwall. It seems the chiefs of the constitutionalist party are bent on proving in a conclusive manner the necessity and propriety of secession from the degenerate majority, the necessity at least, if a good conscience and a good profession were to be conserved. Mr. M'Caskill and his friends stood at the parting of the ways and took the wrong turn, and now having gone a mile with the enemy he is compelling them to go twain.

LAST WORDS OF CRIMINALS.—Recently we observed in the newspapers farewell letters by two criminals about to undergo the last sentence. Several things appeared in these letters that were to us objectionable from a religious point of view. But the following words especially struck us with rather a painful shock: "I have made my peace with God." We need hardly

tell our readers that this is quite an unscriptural expression, and betrays a totally unsound view of things. No sinner can make his peace with God. It is Christ alone who made peace between God and guilty men, and we cannot add anything to His finished work. What is needed is that we obtain faith to accept of and rest upon Christ as our peace. But the above expression is entirely on the lines of the covenant of works, and manifests a lamentable ignorance of the facts that "by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified," (Gal. ii. 16), and that Christ has "made peace through the blood of his cross."—(Col. i. 20.) But some of our readers may exclaim, "What can you expect from poor ignorant criminals but wrong views of religion?" We might answer that their ignorance is culpable with an open Bible in a Christian country. But sorry we are to say that the blame of the ignorance must be shared by persons who should know unspeakably better. These criminals wrote their letters under the eye of prison chaplains, ministers of the gospel, who are appointed for the very purpose of instructing them in the right way. In one case, the chaplain read out with evident approval the prisoner's letter, and delivered a prayer expressing the very same religious ideas as it contained. We hardly know who to pity more, the chaplains or the prisoners. The former will have to account for more at the great day than the latter. They will have to answer for sending poor ignorant men into eternity with a lie in their right hand. Truly our country is in a pitiable state of religious degeneracy. Delusion finds its way everywhere. The very men who should know the gospel best are as ignorant of it as the Hottentots, and are thus ruining the souls of thousands.

NO SABBATH TRAINS.—There are still some railways in the kingdom where no trains run on Sabbath. The Great North of Scotland is one of them. At the meeting of this company on Wednesday, 16th March, Lord Saltoun urged the institution of at least one Sabbath train, but the chairman, Mr. Ferguson, resolutely put his foot down. He would never assent to Sabbath trains, he declared, and he believed he would be supported by the bulk of the directors. He was, and not only by the directors, but but by the shareholders. Mr. Ferguson bases his Sabbath policy on the propriety of providing a weekly day of rest to all the employees. By the way, the record of the Great North of Scotland Railway in recent years has been one of continual progress. Has (asks the *Westminster Gazette*) that anything to do with its Sabbath policy?

CLAP-TRAP PULPIT ADVERTISING.—The following pointed letter on the above subject appeared in the *Scotsman* of 26th March. A sad day has come upon Scotland when such levity and irreverence have invaded the pulpit. Clap-trap advertisements are now very common in the south:—

"SIR,—You often render a valuable service to the cause of religion by exposing in your columns the clap-trap and humbug

resorted to by many preachers of the present day in advertising their Sabbath wares. I have just come across a remarkable illustration of this, and perhaps you or some of your readers may be able to explain to me by what particular chemical process the extraordinary result referred to in the advertisement, a copy of which I send to you, is effected. The advertiser is a Free Church minister in one of our Border manufacturing towns, and the advertisement, which appeared last week in one of the local newspapers, is as follows:—

— Free Church.

To-morrow, 11.15 and 6.

Rev. —

Evening.—The marriage ring; how it may be burnished into brightness and how it may be darkened into cold iron.

Strangers cordially invited.

I have always understood that marriage rings were of gold, and if that be so, here we have a bit of clerical conjuring proposed to be done: the changing—no, the darkening, which makes the trick all the more mysterious—the darkening of gold into cold iron! Imagine a minister of the Gospel trying to catch hearers with such utter rubbish as this! Is it any wonder that the pulpit is regarded by many with feelings of contempt and ridicule when men who occupy it resort to this sort of thing?—I am, &c.,

DEMETRIUS."

Literary Notice.

DAYS OF DARKNESS AND OF LIGHT APPROACHING: Two Sermons by the late Rev. Lachlan Mackenzie, Minister of Lochcarron, Ross-shire. Glasgow: John M'Neillage, 65 Great Western Road.

These sermons were preached at Lochcarron in 1803. They run in that prophetic vein which was characteristic of their eminent author, and contain things both new and old. He tells us in the first sermon, which is on Isaiah lx. 2, that "Popish, Pagan, and Mahometan delusion shall universally prevail for some time previous to the millennium." This state of things is to spring up in the professedly Protestant Church, and we fear we are now seeing the beginning of it in the delusions of our times. The true witnesses will be subject to tyranny, intolerance, and persecution. The second sermon, which is based upon Psalm lxxii. 8, and Isaiah lx. 9, speaks of the glorious days at the end of this sad period, when "the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." Mr. Lachlan deals with both subjects in a clear lively manner, and establishes his conclusions on sound scriptural premises. One particular thing has recently taken place which he looked forward to, "a communication between the Mediterranean and the Red Sea," by the making of the Suez Canal. These sermons ought to be in every household.