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The Union Movement.

THE Union of the Churches is one of the great enthusiasms of the present day. A widespread desire exists that all religious bodies should draw closer and closer together, and that in certain cases an incorporating union should speedily take place. This tendency is regarded by many religious leaders as one of the most excellent fruits of Christianity in modern times, but we have a different opinion of it. So strongly has the desire for union taken hold of many minds that they are seeking for it at any cost. A diverse principle or two here or there is counted nothing, and must stand aside in order to the attainment of so great an object. This spirit largely animates the union movement in connection with the Free and United Presbyterian Churches.

The present article will be devoted to a few general remarks on the subject of union among professing Christians previous to a more minute examination of the basis of union as proposed between the Churches named. It is our intention, therefore, first, to make some remarks on the idea of union; secondly, to state the right basis of union; and thirdly, to expose the causes that lie at the root of the present union movement.

1. Some remarks on the idea of union. Union between professing Christians is at once a scriptural and highly desirable thing, if it can be rightly obtained. That it shall eventually be obtained during the glorious days that are yet to come we have not the slightest doubt. It is, therefore, the duty of all to labour and pray for this consummation in the use of all divinely approved means. Division, though necessary at certain times, is not desirable for its own sake, and is not to be resorted to except when there are clear scriptural grounds for it. It is that undesirable thing, however, which all true lovers of union are called upon to employ for the maintenance of the truth in our degenerate times. Not that every division, professedly in the interests of truth, is to be approved of. There are two extremes into which erring

mortals are ready to fall. There is, on the one hand, a spurious charity that will incorporate all men of almost any kind of religious belief in one body, and there is on the other a schismatic faithfulness that will divide the Church of Christ into fragments upon the smallest points of difference. Both these extremes are to be avoided. We, as a Church, were preserved from either. It was for no little differences that we were compelled to take up a separate position. The saving truths of the Gospel, yea, the very fundamental doctrines of religion were at stake. When these are being destroyed by evil men, the Scriptures leave no alternative whatsoever, and call with mighty voice, "Come out from among them, and be ye separate." In such cases, the schismatics are the parties who compel the faithful to leave their society. The Free Church is the schismatic body, and not the Free Presbyterian Church. We hold, therefore, that we are the true lovers of union. But union no more than division is desirable for its own sake except when the basis of it is right. The union of light and darkness, the righteous and the unrighteous, truth and error, cannot be justified, and even no proper union can subsist between good men unless they are clearly of one mind in the truth. It is our firm opinion that a large body of men holding diverse opinions about the doctrines of religion is much weaker to combat the evils of the world than a small body of men having one mind about their doctrines. The former has an external unity, but not an internal—by far the more important—and is weak, the latter has both, and is strong. Union to give strength must be among men of one mind, and union for the advance of the cause of Christ must be union in the truth, and not in error. Union in error is the mark of hell. Union with men who trample upon the Word of God is union with the most dangerous agents of the devil.

2. The right basis of union. (1) The right basis is a basis of fixed principles. There are such things as fixed principles in matters pertaining to religion as well as to society. God has not left us ignorant of these principles. He spoke directly from heaven to prophets and apostles, and their message is infallibly recorded for our instruction. He did more than speak, He sent His beloved Son into the world to suffer and die so as to purchase eternal redemption for an innumerable company of Adam's guilty race. Before all cavillers against the sufficiency of the Scriptures we bring forth the person and work of Jesus Christ. If God did so much for guilty sinners as to send His son to die for them, did He leave the same persons, who are ignorant as well as guilty, without any sure word to inform them of His will for their salvation? Verily not. Just as the Son secured an infallible salvation for His people, so the Holy Ghost secured an infallible record of it in all its aspects. We are not then left in doubt as to the principles of true religion. As the nineteenth Psalm shows us, the word of the Lord gives light to the spiritual world as the sun

in the natural world. "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul," and it gives light to all that are in the house. The reason why the greater number of persons don't see the glory of the Scriptures is because they are spiritually blind, but yet there is enough excellency about them as should convince our reasons and consciences, though without the Spirit they cannot change our hearts. We hold, therefore, that men who have no fixed principles are not believers in the Scriptures, nor spiritually taught. They are carried about upon the changeful sea of human opinion, and ought to have no place in the visible Church. When you hear them say that persons may have a hundred theories of the atonement, the resurrection or the inspiration of the Bible, and yet may be all right for eternity, you have reason to conclude that they who say such things have no fixed principles, and cherish little regard for the Word of God. The difference between many errorists in the professing Church of former times and many in it to-day, is that the former had fixed principles which they based on the Scriptures, but the latter have not. Wesleyans and Arminians in general professed to believe in the Bible as the Word of God, and held there were right and wrong views of truth upon which men's prospects in view of eternity depended, but in our age men have so much lost hold of all fixed principle, that they will affirm that there are no certain views on the most momentous subjects, and that twenty persons may be right, though the opinions of everyone of them are as wide apart from each other as the poles. This vague believe-anything religion is destined to do no good in the world. It is only destined to send many a precious soul into a lost eternity. There is a Word of God that will stand fast for ever, and that will make the man of God perfect and thoroughly furnished to all good works. This Word provides us with glorious principles, as immovable as the Rock, Christ Jesus, He in whom they are embedded, and it is given to sinful erring creatures to lay hold of them, to employ them for the glory of God, and to maintain them before the world. It is not because there is no sun in the spiritual heavens that men are driven to and fro by every wind of doctrine, but because they prefer their own vain and vapoury notions to the impregnable truth of God. It is admitted that many a system has fixed principles which are not agreeable to the Word of God, and that fixed principles are not necessarily true principles. But nevertheless it is a sure mark of utter degeneracy when men have no fixity of principle at all. This is a more degrading state of things than Popery itself. Let us then be assured of this, that if a union is established between religious bodies with no fixed standard of belief, that union is unscriptural, unreasonable, and not worthy the name. A right basis for union must at the very least be a basis of fixed principles. "The testimony of the Lord is sure."

We hope to resume the subject again.

A Sermon.

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*"Not to me only but unto all them also that love his appearing."*—2 TIM. iv. 8.  
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THERE are not very many who believe the preciousness of the day of grace. There are millions to-day in hell that shall be through eternity saying, "O, if I had another day!" They would go on their knees to the utmost ends of the earth for one offer of mercy, and there are many this day on the earth that will yet have this cry, "O, if I had one day more of the means of grace!"

The apostle, after having gone through many severe conflicts, is now speaking with victory; "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day, and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." From the day the Lord met with him on the way to Damascus until now he had to set his face to affliction after affliction, to temptation after temptation, to trial after trial; but O, it was he that got the song at last: "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day;" and he adds this, and has left it on record for strengthening the Church of God to the end of time, "Not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."

When we were speaking formerly on these words we said we would give some marks of those who "love his appearing," or the second coming of the Lord. And also, that we would mention some of the things that shall be manifested at Christ's second coming which shall make "his appearing" pleasant and precious to His Church.

In speaking of the marks of those who "love his appearing," we said that before one could do so he must have given his consent to the way of salvation revealed in the gospel, must have been persuaded that salvation is only in Christ, and must have been brought to apply to Him like the leper, who said, "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean." It was no great faith that was there, but there was a hope, a "who can tell?" Now the soul that comes to that, we must not, according to the Word of God, say that such a soul shall be lost, but we have no warrant to say but that if one comes *no further* he may yet be in hell. Again, they that love His appearing, we said they were concerned to get evidence of their interest in Christ, and were using the means of grace so as to obtain such evidence. But none shall come to be assured of their interest in Christ until other things

are made empty to them, for as long as a creature has anything in which his heart rests, he will not concern himself much to find his rest in God.

We shall now take up the second thing proposed—what are some of those things that shall make Christ's second coming pleasant and precious to His Church?

I.—There will be given "at that day" a wonderful revelation of the glory of creation. All that God did from the beginning of time and from the days of eternity, He had it in His view to glorify Himself in the sight of holy intelligent creatures. There is not any holy creature but has delight in viewing the works of God, but we are so blinded by sin that we can see very little of God in any of His works. And thus the Holy Spirit in the Scriptures compares man to the beasts that perish (Ps. xlix.) There is a mystery of glory in all that God has created, especially how He has left His own stamp on everything that He created. If we could see the stamp of God on the blades of grass and on the herbs of the field, we would feel it difficult to trample on them. But, by reason of our spiritual blindness, we are stout and strong, and can perceive little of God's glory in creation, yea, can even abuse His creatures—the common mercies with which we are surrounded. We read that when God had finished the work of creation the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy. Why? Because of the revelation God had given of His own glory thereby. But sin has disordered all the works of God in the world, so then the creation in itself is as if corrupted, and so we are told that heaven and earth shall flee from before the presence of the Lord, that the earth and all that is therein shall be burnt up when He appeareth, and this is because sin lies on them. Indeed, when we see the enmity and ferocity of the irrational creatures one to another, we cannot think it was so from the beginning, but that the sin of man took effect on them, so that the very brute beasts witness for God against the sin of man. The misery that sin has brought on the beasts that perish have a cry against man—the sweat and sighs and groans of these creatures have a voice that God understands and which shall yet bring sparks of wrath on unregenerate man.

Also, there shall be a revelation given "at that day" of the glory of the state in which man, the highest creature, was made. Man was made such an excellent and wonderful creature as that we are not able to comprehend the least of that excellency. He was made in the image of God. There is not a person on the earth but that, if he could comprehend the glory of his original state, he would be ashamed to exist. God formed the body of man out of the dust of the ground, and into that body He breathed the breath of God, and man became a living soul; and He formed such an intimate and mysterious connection between body and soul that, let the soul be absent for one moment, and the body becomes as dead and lifeless as the dust from whence it was made. This

soul of man God formed in His own image, and the glory of that image shone out through the body in a wonderful way. The soul saw with the eyes of the body, heard with the ears of the body, and the stamp of God upon the soul so manifested itself through the body as that all creation apprehended it and became subject to man. God took delight in man, as His own workmanship, and as bearing His own image, and as the channel of communication between God and all creation; and, as one of the saints said, "God viewed man also as that created form which Eternal Wisdom prepared to take unto Himself." And this delight man returned, he loved the God who gave him his being, and communed with Him as the fountain of blessedness. Now, something of the glory of that state, and of the glory due to God from man in that state, shall be disclosed "at that day." Alas, how sin has defaced this glory and brought dishonour on the creation of God, so that even the irrational creatures perceive it, and fail in reverencing man as at the beginning. Yea, the elements of nature frown upon man because of sin, for were it not that Christ stood in as the surety of His people, the sun itself would withhold its light. Thus we read that when Christ was enduring the desert of His people's sin, the sun was darkened—"there was darkness over all the earth."—(Luke xxiii. 44). O, man that thy horse and cow are made subject to thee, it is from the death of Christ that proceeds.

II.—What is implied in man being brought into covenant with God shall be disclosed "at that day." How wonderful that the Eternal Jehovah should come so near the creature of His hands as to make Himself over to him to be his portion and the fountain of his happiness, and that upon a covenant foundation. What foundation was this? Just obedience to God. God covenanted with man that, if he continued in his present state of love and obedience, he should enjoy the everlasting favour and fellowship of God. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind." Now this belonged to man, should there be no covenant. It belonged to man to give obedience to Him who gave him being, and it belonged to him to love and reverence God because of the excellency that is in Him—an excellency capable of bestowing everlasting blessedness on all His creatures. But there was more than this, also, in the covenant into which God entered with man. There was not only the promise of everlasting life on his continued obedience, but there was added a threatening of death should he rebel and disobey. "In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Now, it is here that the nature of sin is truly understood—how man not only disregarded the favour and fellowship of God, but how he despised also the threatening of God, and endangered his eternal happiness for a vile thing; how he brought himself into misery by shutting himself out through his sin from the fellowship and communion of God; and, further, how through

his sin he lost the capacity for that enjoyment of God's favour and fellowship which he formerly had. For God is holy, but man is now a sinner; God is love, but man is now enmity; God is light, but man is now in darkness. What was seen in man being driven out from God's presence in the Garden of Eden, and a flaming sword turning every way to keep the tree of life, but man's being banished from the favour and fellowship of God, and never more capable of obtaining it on the ground of anything in himself, yea, justly liable to eternal death. O, what a view the saints will get "at that day" of the state into which sin brought all creatures, the distance from God to which it banished them, and that not only on account of its guilt but also on account of its pollution. They will see, as they never could see in this world, how they were defiled and loathsome, cast out like an infant in its blood in the open field, with no eye to pity it and no hand to help it. No, not in all the creation of God is there anything that can help a lost sinner, but everything in the universe has this voice to a sinner—"No help for thee in me." And, when this shall be opened up "at that day," will there not be a song from the redeemed that shall exalt free grace throughout eternity? And you that desire to be happy for ever, see that you be brought to understand something of this in time.

III.—The nature of the mystery of God's electing love shall be disclosed "at that day." The Scriptures reveal to us that there is such a thing as the decrees of God, such a thing as election, but it is very little we can conceive of such a thing in this world. We read of elect angels also. What can we understand of that? But the sovereignty and the omniscience of God shall "at that day" be revealed in a wonderful way. It shall then be seen that the election of all those that are saved was from eternity, that there was nothing in the world but was the opening of the womb of God's eternal purpose—"the womb of the morning." God foresaw from eternity man lying in sin. Every sin of every creature was exposed to His omniscience. Nothing is new with God. You there, sinner—a hard rock—you were thus in His view from eternity, and the sovereignty of God's dealing with sinners shall come to light "at that day;" how He took one from this quarter and another from that, how He took some in one generation and some in another, in whom and by whose salvation all the attributes of His Divine majesty should be glorified. For, had God left all to perish because of sin, the excellency of the state in which man was created would never be perceived; and, on the other hand, if all men were saved, that woe and endless misery which is the fruit and desert of sin would not be known; but, oh, the sight that shall be given "at that day" of the sovereign, free, and undeserved love and mercy of God, as a fountain the depths of which shall not be fathomed throughout eternity. "O," they shall say, "what moved God to this?" "What moved Him to compassionate me?" "Was there anything in me to draw forth His love more than in

those who are justly in the place of woe?" May not a soul see, as it were, his own ghost in the spirits now in hell, and say—"O, I was once living in the sins that took these there; what saved me? Just the free love and mercy that is in God." And they shall see what end God had in view towards them in their salvation, that He would save them from sin and make them holy as He is holy. He must have them not only freed from misery, but conformed to His own holy image which they lost by sin, and made meet for communion with Himself through eternity. Jehovah, who is the fountain of all blessedness and happiness, is infinitely holy, and all creatures that shall be perfectly and eternally happy must be perfectly and completely holy, for it is their being unholy that is the cause of all the misery and wretchedness of sinners. Hast thou the toothache, sinner? Thou hast cause to fear that it is but the earnest of an everlasting sting—the earnest of "the worm that dieth not, and the fire that shall never be quenched." But God having purposed to save His people from sin and misery, and to make them perfectly and for ever holy and happy, His infinite wisdom devised a way whereby this should be brought about, and this leads us to mention another mystery that shall be disclosed "at that day," and which is—

IV.—The mystery of godliness, God manifest in the flesh. "Great is the mystery of godliness, God was manifest in the flesh." In this world God's children assent to that mystery by faith, and they also get the benefits flowing from it, but oh, the sight they shall get of it "at that day," when they shall see all the love, and grace, and wisdom, and power, and holiness, and justice, and truth that is in God, getting a resting-place in Christ as the Mediator, and flowing out to them through that wonderful channel. We learn from Scripture that there are three Persons in the Godhead who are one in nature and equal in power and glory. Now, it shall be disclosed "at that day" that the Second Person of this glorious Trinity undertook the salvation of immortal souls, and for this cause He who was immortality became mortal, He who was eternity became "a child born," He who was "God over all, blessed for ever," became "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief;" yea, the God against whom man had sinned, and whose holy displeasure man had awakened, freely and willingly condescended, not only to deliver man from his lost condition, but condescended to deliver him in the only way in which he could be delivered, which was by His own humiliation. "God sent forth his Son made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law." The Son of God became bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh, and took upon Himself also all the infirmities of our nature without sin. He was hungry, thirsty, wearied, and grieved. The Holy One was for the space of thirty years in the world, hidden, as it were, from man's view. It has pleased the Holy Spirit to draw a veil over those years, but they shall be opened up and manifested "at that day"—what He

learned of obedience in those years, what He suffered dwelling among sinners in those years, how He grew up despised and dis-esteemed, for we are told that His own brethren did not believe in Him. Moreover, it shall be disclosed "at that day" how, when He came forth on His public ministry, what "contradiction of sinners" He endured, how He was oppressed and afflicted until at length He was rejected and set at nought, and condemned to be crucified. And it shall be seen how the hand of God was in all this, how He was "wounded for his people's transgressions and bruised for their iniquities, how the chastisement of their peace was upon him, and by his stripes they were healed." He went forward to suffering, to shame, to agony, to death, and the grave, because without shedding of blood there could be no remission, because the pardoning love of God could not reach His children except the sentence passed upon them as transgressors be righteously removed. And so He delivered Himself for our offences, and was raised again for our justification. Yes, the death of Christ, and the merit that was in His death, puts the saints in possession of everything that they shall be enjoying throughout the ages of eternity, and so their song shall be—"Thou wast slain and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood." You that have ever got a taste of this love, it is no wonder you should desire "his appearing."

Also, in taking the human nature to Himself, and in taking His people's sins upon Himself, the Saviour constituted between Himself and them an intimate and mysterious union, which He speaks of as that between the vine and the branches, between the head and the other members of the body. Federally it is a union of person that is in it, and also a union of nature—a union that takes place when they are brought to believe in Him for the forgiveness of sins—a union by which His righteousness is made theirs as their sins were made His. Christ is now in glory and His poor people are on the earth, yet there is a close, a spiritual, a living union between Him and them, His Spirit, as the fruit of His death and intercession, coming to them and forming this union and sustaining it in them by faith till He brings them to be with Him where He is. O you, professor, that know nothing of union to Christ and fellowship with Him, you are no better than a wooden leg destitute of the life of the body! But you that have got, through union to Christ, a drop of the love of God going through your soul, you shall yet drink of the ocean of divine love to your everlasting satisfaction! "That the love wherewith thou hast loved me," Christ says, "may be in them and I in them."

V.—Another matter that shall be disclosed to God's people "at that day" is the providences that they were meeting with in the world, and the mysteries connected with these. Many a providence that was not only dark but mysterious they met with, but all shall be made plain "at that day," so that they shall have to say, "He made all things very good." Indeed, they shall see

that were things otherwise, they would still be very good, but as they were, they were working together for their everlasting good. God has in His providence appointed the way and method by which He is pleased to deal with any soul. And when He is coming to arrest a sinner in his career, He causes that sinner to know that he is away from God, and that there are means revealed through which he may return to Him, and that these means he must use if he wishes to find God. Also, the sinner sees that if he continues as he is, and neglects or abuses the means of seeking after God, it shall end in his eternal separation from Him. And so he begins to use the means—to read the Bible, to pray, and to attend public worship. Thus the Lord honours His own appointed means. But the sinner does not usually find in the means what he expected, for God has it in His purpose to teach him that not of himself can he find, even in the means, that which his soul needs, so he is left to weary himself with his own endeavours till he come as a poor helpless creature to the feet of divine grace, confessing his condition, and asking for free sovereign mercy. It is the work of the Holy Spirit now to make known to the poor suppliant the way of salvation by Jesus Christ and through His mediation. Free grace in the Third Person of the Godhead moves Him to this, so He is called the Spirit of grace. The Spirit reveals Christ as the alone Saviour of sinners, and fixes the eye of the soul on Him for salvation. The light of nature cannot do this. The light of nature and of reason cannot bring a sinner so to see Christ in the glory of His person and of His grace as that he will venture all upon Him for time and eternity. This is the work of the Spirit of God. Now, in making known Christ and His salvation, although in one sense His children all get the same teaching, yet in another sense they are not all led by the same steps. Some get in youth tokens of the Spirit manifesting the Saviour within, and giving them a taste of His love, so that they can say in looking back, what the apostle said, "I know in whom I have believed." Others get not so clear a persuasion of Christ as the Saviour, and so are harassed with doubts and fears, being all their life subject to bondage. The Lord is sovereign in this. We read of "weak hands and feeble knees," and although it is not to their comfort to be in this state, yet if their expectation is only upon God for their deliverance, they are as safe as those who are getting freer access to the fountain of love. Again, there are some of God's children, and no sooner do they get a little consolation in the Word of God or in secret prayer, but there is something connected with their earthly state that robs them of it. Perhaps a cross in their lot, perhaps a temptation from the world, perhaps a lust in their nature. Thus it is that infinite wisdom keeps them low, keeps them down so that they are ready to lose hope, and say with Rebecca, "If it be so, why am I thus?" And they will be looking on this as tokens of God's anger against them for, perhaps,

their old sins. But whatever be the cause, if it keeps them of broken spirit and tender and watchful, the Lord will yet get glory from them in bringing them through, should they go broken and bruised creatures from day to day. Also, some of God's children are kept poor in the world, living from hand to mouth, and others may have much worldly comfort. Some may be kept so empty as that there was nothing that they looked for satisfaction from, but a worm was at the root turning it into a cross. And those that have abundance of this world will find that to be so, as sure as the poorest creature, for if they are the Lord's children, He must make the world become a wilderness to them. Yes, my friends, the carnal world was appointed by the Lord from eternity to be a trial to a gracious soul, yea, the devils themselves were appointed for the trial of every creature in whom the life of God is. But let a spark of the love of Christ be seen in thus weaning His children from the love of the world, and fitting them for the enjoyment of Himself, and their murmuring against His providences will be put to silence, and O, will it not be precious at the end of the journey to be able to say, "I have fought the good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day?"

VI.—Another thing that shall be disclosed "at that day" is how the people of God were *exercised under* these providences, how the Lord was dispensing to them grace according to their need. The Saviour, when He was in the world, Himself went through these dark steps. He obtained a fellow-feeling with His children in all their afflictions, and out of the fountain of that fellow-feeling He lets out drops of compassion towards them, and these drops of compassion, coming to them as the fruit of His own sufferings, are very precious. The gracious soul must be broken from the love of sin, and bruised because of sin, and the Lord sends crosses and chastisements on him for this end. The Lord may let loose one sin on a creature to break the power of another sin, one temptation to weaken the strength of another temptation. And O, when it shall be disclosed "at that day," how He thus kept them from destroying themselves, how He thus kept them poor and needy at His own feet, how He thus kept them from utterly grieving away His Holy Spirit by their transgressions, yea, how He kept them from bringing themselves to eternal perdition, O, how they will be lost in praising Him! And also how they were exercised under their afflictions shall be brought to light, that although the stroke was often sharp and severe, yet that they endured it with submission, justifying the Lord and taking shame to themselves, yea, they were brought to say, "He did all things well." Was it well when He took the world from thee? Yes, it was well. Was it well when He took thy child from thee? Yes, it was well. Was it well when He laid His hand upon thy body and took thy health from thee?

Yes, it was well. But what when He withdrew His presence from thy soul, and left thee weeping over a hard heart, a corrupt nature, and a proud spirit, was it well then? Yes, it was well, for He was in all these things fulfilling His own word. "I will bring the third part through the fire and will purge them as silver is purged, and try them as gold is tried, they shall call on my name, and I will hear them, I will say, It is my people, and they shall say, The Lord is my God." Therefore all that meets them is working for their good emptying them of themselves, and of all created things, and bringing them nearer to Christ to live only on Him and on His fulness. Yes, my friends, there shall be disclosed "at that day" not only all the troubles and trials that met them in this world, but also the way in which they endured these—the faith, the hope, the patience, the submission which they were enabled to exercise under their trials. And when these graces of the Spirit, dwelling in them but often hidden in this world under the clouds of sin and sorrow, shall be made manifest, all heaven and earth shall put their Amen to the sentence of the righteous Judge, that they get possession of the crown. And, on the other hand, when the enmity to God and to His people that is in the heart of the ungodly shall be opened up "at that day," and when their hidden things of darkness are brought to light, all heaven and earth shall say Amen to the sentence of the righteous Judge, when He shall say "Depart from me." O, you that are haters of God's poor people, such is their union to Christ that when you draw a sigh from one of them you are in danger of drawing a sigh from the heart of God, and of adding a drop of wrath to your own cup. Man or devil is not capable of touching a gracious soul to their hurt without touching God Himself. Better to have all the powers of Britain pursuing thee than to have a poor child of God complaining against thee at a throne of grace to his Father in heaven.

Lastly, to conclude, let us all remember that this is not our dwelling-place. You, poor believer, the nearer you are to the end of your journey, the nearer you are to your everlasting happiness. Follow on, get the love of sin mortified, cry to the Lord for repentance, for self-denial, for a broken spirit, and eternity will be long enough for God to wipe away all tears from your eyes. Be not content without finding Christ Himself in the Word, in the means of grace, and in His providences toward you, for a moment of His fellowship is the earnest of your enjoying His love throughout the endless ages of eternity.

And oh, sinner, you that are taken up wholly with the things of time, when the grim messenger death lays his hand on you, your doleful cry shall be—"Hast thou found me, O mine enemy?" You are now wholly taken up about the things of the body, but what comfort shall these afford you in the world of spirits to which you are hastening? You are now wholly taken up with the things

of the world, but how will you feel when you see it in flaming fire about you? These are awful words—"Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst good things, and Lazarus evil things, but now he is comforted and thou art tormented." Yes, perhaps just when you have settled down to reap the fruit of your toil in the world, when your nest is warm, then you are summoned to an undone eternity. O eternity, eternity, when millions of years shall have passed, it will be still the same. Now, although you as a sinner are not capable of changing your own nature, yet under the Gospel you have as much light as to see that there is sin cleaving to you, which, as a reasonable creature, you ought to abandon, and it is as a reasonable creature God deals with you. Therefore, cry to Him for grace, to enable you to begin to war with sin and to flee to Christ for salvation. And you, hypocrite, that are living in known sin, and yet keeping family worship, you are only mocking your own soul. Yes, you that are harbouring known sin and yet following the means of grace, you will not, while in that state, experience the Divine power in the means, should you follow them to the day of your death. O, do not trifle with sin. Be sure your sin will find you out, and, if you do not forsake it, it will find you out in the depths of hell and be a sting in your soul, calling down upon you the everlasting wrath of God! O be wise, and do not sell a happy eternity for a vile thing. Be wise, and turn from sin unto God, for the wise shall shine as the sun, and as the brightness of the firmament in their Father's kingdom for ever and ever.—Amen.

Rev. Alexander Macleod, of Uig and Rogart.*

A SKETCH OF HIS LIFE AND TIMES.

THE memory of the just is blessed, and those who were fathers in Christ are well worthy of having their record made known to generations that knew them not. There are few names more revered and regarded in the Northern and Western Highlands than that of Mr. Macleod. Though it is now almost thirty years since he died, those who knew him in his lifetime have kept his memory fresh, and have not failed to tell others what manner of men the Highlands possessed in their days.

Mr. Macleod was born in the parish of Assynt in the year 1786, in the village of Balachladdich, in the district of Stoer. In his youth he had a careful upbringing, and in his early manhood he enjoyed the inestimable blessing of the ministry of the Rev. John Kennedy, afterwards of Redcastle. At a comparatively early age

* In next issue we hope to publish the first instalment of an interesting diary kept by the late Mr. Macleod during his early ministry in the Island of Lewis.

he was brought to concern about his soul's salvation, and came to know for himself that the Lord is gracious. After this crisis in his history, his mind was directed to study with a view to the ministry of the gospel. With this object he made his way to Edinburgh, and, though he had no means to carry him through his course of preparation, his way was opened up step after step, until at last he entered the ministry at Dundee. He did not spend much time there, but though not long there he was sufficiently long to gain the esteem of the Christian people of the town. On his leaving, he was by them presented with an English pulpit Bible, which I have seen. It is in our meeting house at Birichih, in the parish of Dornoch. From Dundee he went to Cromarty, to the Gaelic charge there, but was not suffered to remain long, as another field of labour claimed his attention. In the early part of 1824 he was appointed to the parish of Uig, in Lewis, which had a short time before become vacant. The island of Lewis was then in a most interesting state. A blessed awakening had begun some time before at Galson, in the parish of Barvas. The Word of God was declared in simplicity and purity by John Macleod, a devoted Gaelic teacher. His labours were greatly blessed, and he was much helped and encouraged in them by the arrival of Finlay Munro. This awakening spread to other parts of the island, and influenced three of its four parishes. The fourth, Uig, however, was but slightly affected. Some appearance of concern about eternity was to be seen in the island of Bernera, in that parish. Hitherto the Gospel had seldom sounded in the pulpits of Lewis, and just before this time the ministry had been very dead.

When Mr. Macleod began his work in Uig he soon found out how ignorant his people were. They were poor and out of the way, but their state was one of semi-heathenism. A vessel wrecked on their coast was a great prize, and Mr. Macleod came to know it. He intimated a prayer meeting during the week, and at the meeting called on one of the elders to pray, for the parish had its session and communicants. The man complied, and, among other petitions, presented one desiring that a ship might be wrecked on their coast. This of itself was enough to show how deplorably ignorant and dark the people were. Yet every person come to years of discretion was a communicant. The Bible was a book almost unknown, and almost wholly uncared for. But this state of matters was not to continue. The night was now to flee, and day dawn had come. Faithfully and diligently the minister instructed his people in the truths of God's Word. For two years he did not hold a communion service, until there should be some appearance of life among the dead. When he did hold it, instead of finding a whole parish ignorantly communicating, he found that only a handful of seventeen or so came forward. At this communion the congregation was immense, and there were many in it who truly feared the Lord. The number of communicants would have been much greater but for two reasons. One of

these was, that diffidence on the part of the young converts in Uig prevented many of them from professing Christ. When the Sabbath's services were over, many of them bitterly regretted the course they had taken, and afterwards the communicants in Uig might be taken as an index to the number of serious Christians in the parish. Another reason that accounted for the fewness of communicants was this: though there were many earnest Christians from Ness—the fruits of the first awakening—present, they were at this time excommunicated. The Gaelic teacher, whose labours were blessed among them, sometimes held meetings on the Lord's day, when service was being conducted in the parish church many miles away. For this offence the parish minister secured his dismissal, but the people were so attached to him that for a space of two years they maintained him at their own expense. This brought it about that they were excommunicated. They were loyal to the Church of Scotland, and exemplary, earnest believers, yet they were treated as outcasts. Their loyalty to the Church of Scotland was not untried, for when it was natural that dissatisfaction should prevail among them, Baptist emissaries came to visit them, but failed to secure any following. Not until Mr. Finlay Cook was settled as minister of Cross was this excommunication removed. Mr. Cook at this date had not come to Lewis, so these people were still under the Church's ban, and could not get it removed in any parish but their own.

The time was a time of blessing and refreshing, and for long years Uig communion was much resorted to. Sometimes Dr. Macdonald of Ferintosh officiated, sometimes Mr. Finlay Cook, at other times other eminent ministers. But Mr. Macleod saw to it that not only should the Word be preached, but also that a number of pious Gaelic teachers should be secured for the parish, that his people might learn to read. These men were worthy fellow-labourers. Among these was John Macleod, the dismissed teacher of Galson, who was appointed to two places in succession in Uig, at Mr. Macleod's request, by another society. These places were Tolstachaolais and Brenish. In the latter of these places this worthy man passed away. Another of these teachers was, like Mr. Macleod himself, a native of Assynt—one Donald Macleod. Whether he was the fruit of Mr. Kennedy of Redcastle's ministry in Assynt or not, Assynt was at this period a sort of spiritual nursery for the West Highlands. A number of excellent men came forth from it as Gaelic teachers and catechists. Among these were Alexander Mackenzie, who was Mr. Macleod's catechist in Uig, and Murdo Mackenzie, who was a Gaelic teacher in the parish of Lochs, in Lewis, and whose labours were not unacknowledged there. Of this Murdo, it is told that on the Saturday of Mr. Macleod's first communion in Uig he was present in a company of worthy people, when Alexander the catechist came to them with a message from the minister, asking them to remember him in prayer in connection with the duties of the

following day. When Murdo heard this request, he expressed his thankfulness to God that there was so much life in the ministry yet. "I know," he said, "all the ministers from Sandside in Caithness to Lochcarron, and I do not know one that would give anything for the prayers of the people." Alexander the catechist was himself a man of mark. His brother James was catechist in Stoer, and died only a few years ago. Alexander, however, is long dead. He was a correspondent of Norman Macleod, who had started opposition services to Mr. Kennedy in Assynt, and afterwards emigrated to America, and thence to New Zealand, with a large number of his followers. In their early years, Norman and Mr. Macleod of Uig were very intimate, and were very much of the same mind. When Alexander refused to follow Norman in his excesses, the friendship came to an end, but still Norman corresponded with Alexander Mackenzie, and showed his interest in the after career of his old companion. But I have wandered a little from my subject. I was writing of the teachers Mr. Macleod had in the parish of Uig. Donald Macleod, from Assynt, was a very much esteemed man. His station was at Loch Roag. The first fellowship meeting held in Uig was presided over by the minister. The service was something new in the parish, and so, when a passage of Scripture was asked for as a basis for conference, a passage not very suitable for the occasion was proposed. The young man who gave it out was very promising as a Christian, and though Mr. Macleod did not see very well how to accept it as a ground for discussion, he did not wish to injure the feelings of John Macdonald. The passage was in the book of Revelation, the first verse of the last chapter—"the river of the water of life, clear as crystal." There was no question clearly stated, and Mr. Macleod did not know very well what to do. So he turned to Donald Macleod and asked what he should do. Donald, too, felt the unsuitableness of the passage, but, in order to avoid injuring a brother's feelings, he suggested that enough could be had to speak about as to what they knew of this side of the river. So the matter was taken up and discussed. The awakening in Uig reached all classes and all ages; from extreme youth to extreme age there were some who were called by grace. One of the most notable cases was that of Norman Macleod, an old soldier who had lost his eyesight in the Egyptian campaign under Sir Ralph Abercromby. Now, however, when home in Lewis, he got his spiritual eyes opened, and lived a life of exemplary piety. From the depth of his poverty, his liberality towards the cause of Christ abounded. Mr. Macleod secured, as parish teacher in Uig, Mr. John Macrae—afterwards so well known as Big Macrae. He frequently officiated for the minister, and even at this early stage of his career was regarded as a giant among preachers. Though Macrae was still unlicensed, it is told of him that at a communion service either in Uig or in Lochs, where Mr. Macleod and the Rev. Robert Finlayson officiated, after the table services Mr.

Macrae was asked to exhort the people. "Wait now," said Mr. Finlayson, "till he makes chaff of all we have been saying here to day." Another of the parish teachers that Mr. Macleod got for Uig was the late Mr. Maccoll, of Lochalsh. He held this position in the disruption year. In May, Mr. Macleod was in Edinburgh, and as soon as the disruption took place he sent word to Mr. Maccoll and Angus Maciver, the well-known catechist, to go through Lewis telling the people what had taken place, and keeping them faithful to the principles of the old Church of Scotland. This Mr. Maccoll and Angus Maciver did, and their tour was not fruitless. Not only, however, were there pious parish teachers got for the parish by the minister of Uig, he also started a sort of training school for Gaelic teachers, under the care of John Finlayson, a native of Skye, and afterwards minister of Cross and Bracadale. At this school Angus Maciver, Malcolm Macritchie, John Martin, and such men were trained, who were useful in their own day and way in the western islands and highlands of Scotland. This work was not, however, carried on without opposition. A moderate presbytery attempted to interfere and to hinder it. The presbytery consisted of four ministers, of whom Mr. Macleod was one. On one occasion his co-presbyters tried to trouble him. He thought himself in a hopeless minority of one to three, and so made the remark that, if One was on his side, it did not matter much who opposed him. The moderate minister of Lochs was at this time moderator of presbytery, and when he heard this remark he thought that *one* must surely be the moderator, as he had a casting vote. He interpreted it as a bit of compliment to himself, and took it so well that he said at once—"Never fear, I will be on your side, and the rest can't do anything then." So Mr. Macleod escaped a bit of petty persecution. The minister of Stornoway at this time was Rev. John Cameron, who preached evangelical doctrine, though he was a moderate in church politics. He had been presented to Stornoway on the recommendation of Dr. Macdonald of Ferintosh and Mr. Kennedy of Redcastle. The pious ladies of the Seaforth family deferred to these worthies in the distribution of the patronage which the law of the land then placed in their hands. Mr. Cameron continued a sound preacher, though a moderate, and with him, before any other Gospel minister came to Lewis, Mr. Macleod used to co-operate. They disagreed, however, and so for a year or two Mr. Macleod was left pretty much alone. The occasion of their disagreement was this. In 1827, when already there were many zealous young Christians throughout Lewis, Mr. Macleod came to assist Mr. Cameron at Stornoway communion. In Stornoway the old order of things still held. The scandalous were not excluded from the Lord's table. There was a very general disposition on the part of the young Christians not to communicate, unless discipline was exercised. Mr. Macleod took their side and advocated this view to Mr. Cameron. The latter refused to listen,

and the contention grew so hot that Mr. Macleod on the following day went home to Uig. This was on Friday. There was a prayer meeting in the church that morning, and, when it was about to dismiss, Mr. Cameron went into the pulpit and intimated that Mr. Macleod had gone home—any of them that had come to hear him might also go. There was no fellowship meeting in the church that day, but in the evening there was one held in the old rope-work in Stornoway that is now demolished. This was presided over by Francis Macbean, and the discussion was closed and summed up by John Macrae, both of whom were at this time in Lewis between their sessions at college. When Mr. Macleod went to Lewis first, he went as a stranger. A man in good position in Stornoway invited him to his house, and afterwards, when he had occasion to be in Stornoway, he stayed in this house. His host, however kind he was, was not a man of irreproachable character. Mr. Macleod, however, did not know this. One day Murdo Macdonald, a noted Christian, met him in the street in Stornoway. They saluted each other. Murdo said—"I see a speck on your coat, Mr. Macleod." Mr. Macleod looked to see if he could see it. "That's not what I mean," said Murdo, "people are not pleased that you go to such a house in Stornoway when you might easily consort with those who fear the Lord." He then told him his host's character, and told him of Alexander Macfarquhar—a young man, a true Christian—who was both able and willing to accommodate him. In these warm days, Christians were careful of their every movement, and also of their brethren's good name.

Under Mr. Macleod's ministry, Uig, which he found a wilderness, he left a garden of the Lord. There were many lively Christians in it, and here he probably received most of the seals that were attached to his ministry. He spent a period of about twenty years in Lewis, as he came to it in 1824 and did not leave it until after the disruption. He was on the best of terms with the Christian people. The only coolness that existed arose from the position he took up with regard to Finlay Munro. During life, Finlay had much obloquy to undergo, and even persecution, and that from evangelical ministers too. After his death, however, the treatment they had given him became a cause of regret to such men as Mr. Macleod. He found out that he had been misinformed about Finlay, as even in that day talebearers and sycophants were not wanting. From Uig, Mr. Macleod was called to Lochalsh. His ministry here was brief, but it was owned of his Master. From Lochalsh he was called to Rogart, in Sutherlandshire. This was his last charge. He was settled at last, and in this charge he stayed longer than in any other. From 1846 to 1869 he laboured among an attached and faithful people. By the old worthies of Sutherlandshire he was held in the highest esteem. Sometimes, too, he was visited by old friends from Lewis. On one occasion he visited Lewis again, and his greeting was of the heartiest

description. Beloved himself, he visited a people he loved, and a loving welcome he received. In his native Assynt he was highly regarded. On one occasion, in harvest, he drove to Stoer. The people were harvesting, but as soon as he was recognised they hurried to the roadside to greet him, and many a sheaf of corn was offered to his horse in token of regard for its master. His old neighbour in Lewis, Rev. R. Finlayson, came to be almost a neighbour again by his removal to Helmsdale, and the veterans who had worked hand in hand in early days co-operated again in the eve of life. The exercised people of God found Mr. Macleod's ministry very profitable. He had known their troubles and trials, and the consolation he had received he was enabled to impart to them. Several striking instances might be given of the almost marvellous manner in which his public utterances found their mark in the experience of his hearers. He, as it were, knew the corners they were in, and told them alike their duty, their danger, and their hope. He was a man of splendid physique, standing over six feet in height. Along with this, his breadth of shoulder and strength of body marked him out as a man fitted to face toil and trouble. His intellectual powers were good, and, though they were not equal to those of several of his contemporaries, yet they were so sanctified by grace, and so richly anointed from above, that his preaching was very savoury to the people of God. Many of them used to come from other parishes to hear him. As in his Lewis days some used to go from Ness to Uig occasionally to hear the Word of God from his lips, so in Sutherland many—some of whom are yet alive—used to walk long distances to enjoy the benefit of his ministry. The doctrines that he dwelt chiefly on were the glory of the person of Christ, the virtue and efficacy of His sufferings, the perfection of His finished righteousness, and the love of God revealing itself in these. He believed, and therefore spake. In his young days there were four special occasions when he tasted the bliss of fellowship with God. Once at Reef and once at Ullapool in Lochbroom, on another occasion in Durness, and again at Dingwall at a communion in Dr. Stewart's days, where he thought he got Benjamin's portion of Joseph's feast. In his later years he sought to impress on his hearers the surety righteousness of Christ, in His obedience unto death, as their only hope. Christ magnified the law and made it honourable. This was his own standing ground for acceptance, and he besought them to have it as their own too. If he preached the love of Christ, he loved to hear of it too, and so on one occasion, when closing a question meeting at Creich, he said—"Shame on you, men of Sutherland and Ross, that I have heard so little from you to-day of the love of Christ."

"Meek in his own concerns, in his Master's bold," as was written of John Blackader, was true of him. He died in 1869, in the eighty-third year of his age and the fiftieth of his ministry. He rests from his labours, and his works do follow him. May it be ours to follow him as he followed Christ.

J. M.

Declaratory Act Movement in the Established Church.

SOME time since the society of ministers and others of the Established Church known as the National Church Union met in Glasgow. They unanimously agreed to move in the direction of getting the present subscription to the Confession of Faith modified by a Declaratory Act, and resolved to bring the matter before the first General Assembly. It was in accordance with this resolution that Rev. George D. Macnaughton, Ardoch, moved in the Auchterarder Presbytery, on 30th March, an overture in favour of a relaxation of the formula binding ministers to the standards of the Church. A discussion ensued, when the motion was defeated by 12 votes to 3. One might regard this as a good omen if it were not that the majority opposed the motion simply upon grounds of carnal expediency. Dr. Rankin, Muthil, a leading man in this Presbytery, delivered a speech against the motion, a speech characterised by his usual levity. He said that all sensible people accepted the Confession generally omitting certain parts. That with him there was no love lost with regard to the Confession of Faith. He would far rather never had the Confession—he would much rather have had the General Confession of 1560, and added to it the Apostle's Creed and the Nicene Creed. He did not care what became of the Westminster Confession—he held to the substance of it, and it was on these lines he deprecated raising the question at all.

The Scotsman had a pointed article on the subject which we feel constrained to give in full:—

“There is always something stirring in the Presbytery of Auchterarder. It had a good deal to do with bringing on the Disruption, and now an active and ebullient section of it wants to demolish the creed, and put in its place ‘the living faith and practice of the Church.’ The proposal was made yesterday, but came to naught. It was defeated by twelve votes to three, an overwhelming majority on the side of let well alone and whatever is—if it is not right, it is at least too good to be disturbed. It is all very well for Dr. Rankin to take up that position. He is now no longer young. He has learned to adjust himself to the Westminster Confession, and he has perhaps forgotten the pains and difficulties of the process. He has made for himself a comfortable bed by his own weight and by quietly kicking away whatever tended to make him uneasy, and he does not realise the position of those young men who are called upon to stretch themselves for the first time upon so awkward and antiquated a piece of theological furniture as the Westminster Confession. He cannot see why they should not roll themselves into an easy position, and go to sleep upon it as sweetly and innocently as he can do. It will be no fault of his if they do not acquire the art. He makes no secret of how it is done. The whole mystery of

adjusting one's self to the Confession is—adjust the Confession to one's self. You have got to declare that you accept its whole doctrine as the Confession of your faith, but you make the declaration like a man of sense. That is to say, you hold yourself no further bound by it than is convenient to you. The things that you can't believe you don't believe, and there's an end of it. In professing to accept the whole doctrine of the Confession, you really only mean to accept it generally, and to make your own deductions. That may be excellent sense, and perhaps it is sound morality, but it is a little startling. It may be the morality of the Church, but one does not see how it would work in the world. The world's affairs could not be conducted on Dr. Rankin's lax and easy principles. When a man puts his hand to a document, by which he incurs certain specific obligations, he is not allowed to say afterwards that he only accepted them generally, and held himself free as a man of sense to make deductions from them according to his own judgment.

"The young men of the Auchterarder Presbytery may be excused if they find it a little difficult to adopt the principles and the practice of Dr. Rankin. It will only add to their perplexity to be assured that he has no more love for the Confession than they have. He would far rather never have had it at all, and now he does not care what becomes of it. But there it is, and to seek to get rid of it is to commit 'a needless breach of the peace,' and to show one's self indiscreet. There are many other questions now before the Church, and this little question of theoretical honesty counts for nothing in comparison with them. There is, for instance, as Mr. Hunter, of Crieff, reminded his brethren, the question of Church and State. When the walls of the National Zion are being assailed by the rebel Voluntaries, is this a time to unsettle the minds of its defenders with questions of conscience? Let them rather build up the walls with a trowel in one hand and a sword in the other, and leave theology and morality to look after themselves till a more convenient season. The ministers of Ardoch and St. Fillans were outvoted, but it may be doubted if they were convinced. It is certain that they spoke for the younger men of the Church. This is the season of the year when the host of youthful B.D.'s come fresh from their books and their lecture halls, believing themselves full of the 'newer light,' to receive licence at the hands of the Presbyteries, and not one of them believes the whole or nearly the whole of the Confession of Faith. The Presbyteries require them to begin their career as ministers of the Gospel by making a solemn declaration that they accept as true what their judgment and conscience reject—what their acquired knowledge assures them is in large measure not true. Is it good that fathers of Presbyteries, like Dr. Rankin, should tell them to put their scruples aside and sign the Confession like 'sensible persons,' each of them making his own little mental deductions? That is really a serious question, and it does

undoubtedly press heavily on the minds of young men. It was said yesterday that it keeps able men out of the Church. That may be. A worse thing is that it forces those who enter the Church to become casuists at the very threshold. It is a small matter—though, perhaps, they do not so regard it—that a wicked press should point the finger of scorn at them. The pity is that they should be compelled to feel that they deserve scorn, and that the first act of the ordaining Presbytery should be to sear their young consciences with the hot iron of a hateful and insincere subscription.”

A Sabbath Desecration Society.

THE enemies of the Lord's Day in this country are beginning to marshal their forces for the conflict. Recently an organisation was formed in Edinburgh, entitled, "The Edinburgh Sunday Society," whose avowed objects are "to provide for the people on Sundays sacred and classical music, lectures on interesting subjects in science, literature, history, and art, and generally to promote the rational observance of the Sunday." This Society held its first meeting on the evening of 5th April, Mr. J. B. Sutherland, S.S.C., in the chair. There was an attendance of probably about sixty ladies and gentlemen.

The chairman and other speakers averred that the scheme of the Society was conceived in no spirit of antagonism towards existing religious agencies or the churches in general, but was intended for the elevation and improvement of the masses. Councillor Cranston, on the motion of another Councillor, Mr. John Jamieson, was unanimously elected president. Rev. R. B. Drummond, the minister of the Unitarian chapel, also took part in the proceedings. The chairman, towards the close, intimated that the membership of the society was now 260, and that the Marchioness of Tweeddale had consented to become an honorary member, and that the committee had already made partial arrangements for a course of lectures and concerts next season. Councillor Jamieson said they hoped to have a Sunday Concert even before the summer.

It is a lamentable state of matters that a society for such a wicked purpose should have come into existence in our once Sabbath-loving Scotland, and we have reason to be humbled at the event. The promoters of the Society hold out the profession of non-interference with the work of the churches, but this, when examined, amounts to very little. It is quite easy to be in line with most of present-day churches, and go very far from the paths of truth and righteousness. Musical entertainments and discourses of a secular tendency are the staple food provided for the perishing masses in those places where the Gospel of Christ in purity and fulness should be preached. The fourth commandment says, "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy." The

moral law of which this commandment is an integral part is unchangeable, and you may as well say that to steal, kill, or commit adultery is not a crime as to affirm that disobedience to the fourth commandment is not the same. The change from the seventh to the first day of the week alters not the holy character of the day: it simply adds a still more impressive and glorious sanction to it. The Sabbath is the day on which God rested after the work of creation; its holy observance has been enjoined by Him from the beginning, and it is the day which commemorates the glorious resurrection of Jesus Christ. They, therefore, who interfere with its sanctity are denying God as creator, law-giver, and redeemer, and proving themselves to be nothing better than atheists.

It was quite in keeping with the inauguration of this Society that a Unitarian minister, who denies the divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ, should be present to give it his approval and to take part in its work. Unitarianism is evidently thoroughly carnal and materialistic, and the bitter foe of all spiritual religion. But we cannot understand what the Marchioness of Tweeddale has to do with breaking down the sacred character of the Lord's day. Her husband, the Marquis of Tweeddale, was recently twice the Queen's Lord High Commissioner at the General Assembly of the Established Church of Scotland, and the Marchioness accompanied him on those occasions. Both are doubtless members of that church. Where is the consistency then in this noble lady becoming an honorary member of a society, whose object, whatever may be its profession, is to profane that day which is one of the great bulwarks of Christianity and morality, and which, according to the Confession of Faith, still the chief subordinate standard of the Established Church, is "kept holy unto the Lord, when men, after a due preparing of their hearts, and ordering of their common affairs beforehand, do not only observe an holy rest all the day from their own works, words, and thoughts about their worldly employments and recreations; but also are taken up the whole time in the public and private exercises of his worship, and in the duties of necessity and mercy." It is no duty of necessity and mercy to provide music and secular lectures on the Lord's day. The masses will never be raised by those things. The highest attainments in music, science, and art, are quite consistent with the lowest attainments in religion and morality. It is rather ominous for our country's future when her nobility is giving encouragement to the forces that make for immorality. Let the 260 who form this Society clearly understand that, if they imagine their efforts will improve the moral condition of the lapsed masses, they show their ignorance of history, and shall, if they live long enough, see most clearly that they have helped on, to the best of their ability, our country's retrogression into the slough of Paganism and Popery out of which it was taken at the glorious Reformation.

Brief Notes of Sermons.*

BY THE LATE REV. DR. JOHN KENNEDY, DINGWALL.

(Taken by a Hearer.)

I.—A SERMON TO THE YOUNG.

"And there were four leprous men at the entering in of the gate; and they said one to another, *Why sit we here until we die? If we say, We will enter into the city, then the famine is in the city, and we shall die there: and if we sit still here, we die also. Now therefore come, and let us fall unto the host of the Syrians: and if they save us alive, we shall live; and if they kill us, we shall but die.*"—2 KINGS vii. 3, 4.

I. Who are they? Poor lepers.

II. Where are they? At the gate of the city.

III. What are they doing there? Sitting.

IV. What do they resolve to do? Arise and go to where plenty is to be found, in the camp of the Syrians.

I. Who are they? They are lepers. They are persons covered with a loathsome disease and unclean, so that, with their upper lip covered, they must cry, "Unclean, unclean." They are outcasts, shunned by all. They are shut out of the city, and dare not enter the temple. Such by nature are we all. We are covered all over with the disease of sin. Born in sin, we are unclean, and we are outcasts. So long as we are under the power of sin, God must keep us at a distance. Sin and Satan both keep us at a distance from Him.

II. Where are they? At the gate of the city. All souls by nature are at the gate, outside the city of refuge. They are out of Christ. They are out in the desert of sin.

III. What are they doing there? They are sitting.

1. The soul is sitting on *the sluggard's seat*. A well cushioned seat it is. Feathers are used to stuff cushions. Well, Satan drops feathers from the birds of hell, vain thoughts, idle words, to stuff the cushion on which poor souls may sit. Wool is used to stuff seats. Well, the sheep of God, like sheep passing through briars, if they are unwatchful, if they speak lightly, or do what they ought not to do in the hearing or sight of poor sinners, leave behind material which they use as wool to stuff their seats of sloth. "Oh, that is a good man. He did that. I may do that and more, and suffer no harm."

2. The soul is sitting on *the toiler's seat*. A very rickety one it is. We have seen a man sitting on a stool, and the legs of that stool were so rotten, they soon gave way. Up he got and away to a wood where all the trees were rotten, and took a branch and

* These brief notes give but an inadequate idea of Dr. Kennedy's preaching, yet, such as they are, will, no doubt, be welcomed by our readers. We are indebted to the same hearer for notes of four other sermons that will (D.V.) appear in due course.

put it under his stool. But soon it brake and fell, and he broke his bones. So it is with those who think to work out righteousness for themselves. They add works of sin to the sin already in them, and think to make a righteousness of that. But no: it will but break their bones. I wish their bones were broken, for then would they cry for help to raise them up.

3. The soul is sitting on the *excuser's seat*. This is not an easy one. They are in sin, they know that, but say, "Time enough yet, they are not so bad as many others," and so on. Will staying longer under the power of Satan make you more willing to come to Christ? Assuredly not. May you find yourselves hopeless and helpless in yourselves; and cry for help to Him who can and will save all who come to Him.

4. The soul sits on the *slave's seat*. A hard uneasy one. He knows his danger and feels his chains, but he will not come to have them loosed. He only makes chains to bind him faster to his seat, and Satan helps him, so that he will not arise and flee for his life.

IV. What do they resolve to do? They resolved to rise and go to the camp. They say, "If we stay here, we shall die; if we go, we may be saved alive, if not, we can but die." They think of hosts lying in between them and the plenty. So in regard to souls. Hosts lie in between them and the plenty of God's provision in Christ. Sin lies in, the world lies in, and the hosts of hell lie in. These are much stronger than Ben-Hadad's army. As God had much to do ere he could get these lepers and the provision together, so has He much to do ere the soul and Christ come together. Sin, He has made an end of it. The world, He has overcome it. Satan, He has bruised his head. He says, "Come unto me, and I will give you rest." "Him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out."

II.

"*Blessed are they that mourn; for they shall be comforted.*"—MATT. v. 4.

I. The description here given of the true Christian. He is a mourner.

II. The privilege connected with his mourning. He is blessed for he shall be comforted.

III. The connection between the character and the privilege.

I. Some think that, if a man mourns, he must be unblessed. The world does not think a true Christian can be happy, because what it sees most about him is that he mourns. What is most present to the men of the world about a Christian is that he mourns, and knowing only "the pleasures of sin" which are for a season they keep aloof from the mourning Christian, and think in doing so they have the advantage. Others think mourning is inconsistent with the state of believers. Are they not told to

rejoice evermore, and can they mourn? Some think mourning inconsistent with Bible descriptions, Bible statements, and Bible injunctions. "Rejoice always and again I say, Rejoice." "Rejoice in the Lord." As to their state, they have joy in the Holy Ghost, "joy unspeakable, and full of glory." And can such people mourn? Yes. Christ says, "Blessed are they that mourn." They mourn for three reasons—(1) because they live; (2) because they love; and (3) because they have a good hope through grace.

(1) They mourn because they live. They live spiritually. A dead soul cannot mourn. If one lie unconscious, while under a sore disease, he will feel no pain, his breath will not even express itself into a sigh. No groan will escape from his lips, no cry come from his heart. But when he revives, life returns, and with life the power to feel pain. Then he will sigh, and cry, and groan as he feels the pain. The nearer he approaches to health the more acutely will he feel pain, and so with the soul. In the measure in which the soul lives, will it mourn and groan, until, like Paul, with one foot planted on the threshold of the Father's house, it cries, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

(2) They mourn because they love. The hand that works because the soul loves is ill pleased with its service. Loveless souls are easily puffed up with service that is vile, as vile as the corruption of an unrenewed heart can make it. Because they love, they desire to hold communion with the object of their love, and they mourn when that communion is disturbed and broken up. How few mourn because communion with God is disturbed! How many think communion with God endurable only when lost in the crowd of a congregation. But communion with Him in secret, alone with God, how few are mourners because of short communion thus held! The true mourners because they love Christ, long to be conformed to the image of the loved One, and they mourn because they feel how far away in heart and life they are from being thus conformed.

(3) They mourn because they have a good hope through grace. Mourning because hoping, surely that is strange! Hope in the opinion of some shuts out mourning. Not so with the good hope through grace. If they have hope, they have faith, and having faith, some argue, they cannot be mourners. Ah, faith and joy go together, and unbelief and mourning, do they? No. Faith they have in Christ crucified, and in the name of God as seen in the face of Jesus Christ. They have been at the cross of Christ, and being there they cannot but mourn. They see the glory of God there displayed in the death of His Son, and they mourn for all they did to bring that Son to death, all they have done against the Son of God. True faith thus makes mourners of the people of God. The hope they have is in Christ, through His death and by His life, and having this hope they purify themselves. They long

to have their hope fulfilled and they mourn what far-off pilgrims they are from the Father's house.

II. The privilege. Only on the earth could the Lord have mourners, and He must have them to show forth His glory as the God of all comfort. In no other way could the tenderness of God be seen than as the God of all comfort. Ah, then, I may be content to be a mourner here, when I have God to comfort me. No fear of these mourners, the Holy Ghost is the comforter, and the word of truth the comfort. "Thy word of truth my comfort is in mine affliction." But no comfort can we find in the word of consolation without the Comforter. Sweetness, such as angels cannot know, do these mourners taste in the grace of God. If it be to show forth God's glory, surely we may be content to be mourners here. "The light affliction which is but for a moment." "The light affliction," balance that against the weight of glory. "For a moment," count that against eternity.

A word or two in conclusion. Some of you are taking time to laugh now, but remember God has appointed you a time to mourn. Your time is like yourself small, but God's time is like Himself, eternal, infinite. A word to those who mourn, but go not to God to comfort them. Poor souls, no comfort, but in Christ. Out of Him there is no comfort for you. Blessed are the true mourners. Yes! They shall be comforted, so that they shall be beyond the need of comfort for ever. God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes as they enter into the Father's house there to abide.

Letters of the late Rev. Archibald Cook.

(VI.)

DAVIOT FREE MANSE, 26th July, 1853.

MY DEAR SIR,—I received your letter at Stratherrick. We all expected you till Saturday night. After that we feared what your letter informed us of, that your sister was not better. I feel, and so did all of us, the cause of your being detained at home. I am not in the least surprised at your anxiety at your dear sister's health. It would be a fearful evidence of a hardened state and insensibility of mind if otherwise. I, however, trust you see the propriety of having your fears regulated by submission to the will of God. He doeth all things well, whether we believe it or not. He doeth His will among the armies of heaven, and the inhabitants of this world, and who can say unto Him what doest thou? Has not the potter power over the clay? So has the Saviour the same right to do with His own what seemeth Him good, and His will is regulated by an infinite sovereign wisdom

and love. I have no doubt of your dear sister being His in two ways, whether she believe it or not. She belongs to Him by creation like all others, but she belongs to Him by redemption. His redeemed ones are infinitely dearer to Him than if they had been merely His creatures, the work of His hands. In the creation of all His creatures, infinite wisdom, power and goodness are displayed, merely by His Word, let them be created and they were created; but in the work of redemption, He was four and thirty years a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, and at last gave Himself a ransom for them. Though in His obedience and death there is enough to redeem an elect world, yet no less than His obedience and death could redeem any individual of them. Though there had not been but one individual to be saved, no less than His death could save him; yet there was merit enough in His death to redeem the whole elect world—"Without the shedding of blood there is no remission;" it then implies that by shedding His blood there is remission. In each of them then He sees the "travail of His soul and is satisfied." He sees this in the first acting of faith through the promises in Himself; and at the first acting of repentance there is joy in the presence of the angels for one sinner that repents, much more in His soul; indeed their joy is only the fruit of His; but He sees this at their death and at their resurrection when His prayer is answered—"Father, I will that they whom thou hast given me be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me." He then sees in each of them the fruit of His suffering and is satisfied. He then may say, "Behold I and the children whom God hath given me." Thus dear friends who die in the Lord will meet to part no more while their soul has a being, and that will last as long as Himself. I believe your dear sister is one of these little ones, to whom it is the good pleasure of the Father to give the kingdom. Then, my dear friend, seek submission in regard to her body; though her bodily presence was a comfort yet the Lord has more to do with her than leaving her with you, and has also a greater right to her than you. Abraham gave freely to Him his only son, then the Lord gave his son back to himself again. The Lord is the same now as He was then. Doubtless if we were ever to give Him our Isaacs, He would return them to us with a double blessing. We, however, need something above ourselves, before we will or can freely give anything, especially things which may be dear to us. Saul spared the best of the flock and herds, and this is natural to man, but there is in Christ what can make sinners able and willing. When created comforts were taken from Job, he cheerfully submitted; he fell down on the earth and worshipped saying, "Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return; the Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord." Hence afterwards a double blessing was given to him.

We now have the communion at Stratherrick over. We had with us from different parts of the country, far and near, a goodly number of the excellent ones of the earth. Much unity appeared to exist among these pious persons, in their public and private meetings, each seemed to put the other before himself. Without such a disposition existing among the people of God, their meetings together cannot be profitable. It is heaven begun, and heaven would not be a heaven without it. If it is so sweet here, what must it be when they come to perfection? "That they all may be one even as we are one, I in them and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one." We got through without offence, I hope. I came home in the evening.

I intend to set off next week for Reay to assist my brother at the communion in his parish. The journey is long, being 150 miles, and the thought of the journey is a burden. I am often engaged in public and need some bitter drops in various ways to keep me from becoming formal, and on the other hand from becoming secure—a drone, a cumberer in the Church. Give my love to your sister; I do not forget her. Some here remember her also, I believe John Campbell remembers her, but the great Advocate with the Father is better than them all. Write me soon and let me know how she is. Grace be with you.

Yours sincerely,

ARCHD. COOK.

A Bohemian Protestant Missionary.

THE following is an interesting extract from a letter to a friend in Glasgow, by Mr. Anton Chraska, a native of Bohemia, who is engaged in Gospel and Protestant work among the Slavonic people in South Austria. The letter shows the difficulties in the way, and the commendable manner in which Mr. Chraska desires to meet them:—

"As to our work, we are still doing only some preparatory work. The soil is very hard here, and we must wait for the Lord, who alone is mighty to open the hearts and make them a good soil for his own Word. Indeed, if I had known two years ago, how difficult it will be to get access to this people, I would hardly have gone to these parts. The people are afraid to come into any contact with Protestants. They regard us as bad as the Mohammedans. Their knowledge of Protestantism is very poor, since it comes only from the priests. And the priests are obliged in their own and in 'the Holy Mother Church's' interests, to speak as badly of Protestants as possible. You know quite well how much power the priests possess over the consciences of men by the Auricular Confession. Some months ago a student came too late to Church for the confession. His fellow students were already assembled

waiting for the appearance of the Father Confessor. Although the Confessor was not yet present, the overseeing priest noticed the late arrival of the student, and at his motion the directors of the school enjoined a penalty of 20 florins upon the student simply on account of his being behind the appointed time. The student was too poor and could not pay the penalty, so he was obliged to leave the school. And this came to pass in a State school. What tyranny must there be in those schools which are entirely in the power of the 'Holy Mother Church!'

This and other stories of the tyranny of the priests, caused me to write a tract about the forgiveness of sins and the Auricular Confession. It was published just three weeks ago, and so I don't know of any results. In any case the priests will be very angry, for since the time of the Reformation nobody here tried to overthrow their power by the Word of God. And they are afraid before the power of the Word. Some weeks ago they wrote in a clerical paper the following:—"We find that there are being distributed at Laibach, books, tracts, and leaflets full of Lutheran errors. It seems as if somebody were about to poison our people by Luther's false doctrine. We warn our people not to read any such books, and if anyone will get any such book, he is to bring it to his spiritual Father, etc." My name was also given in this notice, and they wrote:—"One fool is able to do more harm than ten wise men are able to amend." This is a hopeful sign. If the priests themselves fear the results of the reading of the Scriptures, it shows that their position is after all very weak. Surely the entrance of God's Word giveth light.

We have, as yet, not been able to start a meeting at Laibach, so we do not know if we shall stay here very long. If the Lord will not give us an access to the people here so that we might start a regular meeting, we shall go to Trieste, Pola, or Fiume, on the Adriatic. It seems that the work would be more easy in these places. Last November we made a trip to Pola, and found there a few Roman Catholics desiring to hear the Word. We are hoping that one family of those we met there, is very near the kingdom of God. In any case we shall stay at Laibach till May. It may be there, meanwhile, a door will be opened for the preaching of the Word."

NOMINAL PROFESSION AND TRUE GODLINESS.—Isaac said to Ishmael, "I have Abraham for my father." Ishmael, "So have I." Isaac, "I am the child of many prayers." Ishmael, "So am I." Isaac, "I have received the seal of the covenant in circumcision." Ishmael, "So have I." Isaac, "But I got a deliverance from heaven." Ishmael, "So did I." Isaac, "Yes, but I got my deliverance *through sacrifice*, and you by a drink from your mother's bottle."—(Gen. xxi. 19.)—*Alexander Gair, "Ministers and Men."*

Tus Comhairle an Aonaidh.

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

(Continued from page 471, Vol. II.)

CHA 'n urrainn aonadh a bhi air a dheanamh air deadh-stéidh, gus am bi an teagasg so air chur air bonn a 's fèarr, na tha e, fathast.

Tha mòran shochairlean agus thròcairean aimsireil air an seal-bhachadh fo fhrithealadh fhad-fhulangais Dhé, ach ciod an t-aobhar is urrainn so a thoirt do 'n bheachd gu 'n do bhàsaich Criosd air son muinntir a bhios caillte, ged bhiodh iad 'n an luchd-seilbh air na nithibh ud anns an t-saoghal so.

Ach 's éigin duinn beagan a ràdh air a' Chùigeamh Ceann. V. —Lagh agus gnàtha nan Eaglaisean a thaobh an aoraidh fhollaiseach.

Fo 'n Cheann so tha 'n "t-Iomradh" ag ràdh, gu bheil mòr aonachd eatorra; agus gu bheil sin air a' chur an céill a réir na h-earrann do 'n Leabhar Aidmheil (caib. xxi.) tha a' labhairt air an teagasg: "Tha 'm modh aoraidh a tha taitneach do 'n fhìor Dhia, air a chomharrachadh le Dia fèin, agus crìocha air an cur ris, le a thoil fhoillsichte fèin, air a leithid do dhòigh, 's nach fheud aoradh a bhi air a dheanamh dhas-sa réir mac-meanmuinn agus innleachdan dhaoine, no cogairsich Shàtain, fo shamhladh faicsinneach 's am bith, no air sheòl 's am bith eile, nach 'eil air a' shònruachadh anns an Sgrìobtur Naomh."

Faiceamaid, a nis, am bheil an còrdadh cho mòr 's a tha cuid a' cumail a mach. Tha iad "ag aontachadh gu 'm buineadh do aon dòigh aoraidh air fad bhi air a leantuinn, cho fad 's a mheasas an Eaglais sin feumail chum foghlaim, no togail suas." Chi sinn 's na briathraibh so, gu bheil an aon dòigh aoraidh gu bhi air a leantuinn, ach a mhàin cho fad 's a mheasas na Eaglaisean so a bhi chum oilean do 'n Eaglais; agus ma mheasas iad e a bhi air a chaochladh do dhoigh, no ma chaochlaidheas iad am beachd, cha 'n 'eil so 'g an ceangal gu leantuinn ris an aon doigh aoraidh ni 's faide.

"Tha còrdadh a thaobh brìgh eatorra uile," tha iad 'ràdh, "ann an cleachdadh na h-ùrnuigh follaiseach, ann an rian an aoradh fhollaiseach, anns na dòighibh airson molaidh Dhè a sheinn, agus ann an dòigh frithealaidh òrduighean a' Bhaistidh agus Shuipèir an Tighearna." Ach tha iad ag ràdh mar an ceudna, "Gu bheil eadar-dhealachadh éigin cleachdaidh ann an rianaibh aoraidh co-cheangailte ri coimhead nan òrduighean so; agus thaobh gnàthachadh gèarr-mhìneachaidh (ann an ranntachd) no laoidhibh ann an aoradh follaiseach." An so b' éigin doibh fèin aideachadh gu bheil eadar-dhealachadh eadarainn; oir tha 'n còrdadh a thaobh brìgh; ach sin fhad 's a tha e a' dol. Agus a ris, gu bheil eadar-dhealachadh-éigin ann; ach cosmhuil ri puingibh cud-thromach eile, air an d' fhuair iad thairis, cha 'n 'eil iad air am

meas leo 'n an aobhar gu bacadh a chur air aonadh. Gheibhear thairis air na h-uile nì air son aonaidh, ciod air bith cho cud-thromach 's a bhitheas e. Agus cha chumar ri briathraibh Leabhair Admheil a' Chreidimh; ach cho fad 's nach cuir e bacadh air aonadh.

Ach nach bochd an nì, gu 'm biodh laoidhean a tha do dheanamh dhaoine, air an cur an àite Shalm Dhaibhaidh a tha do dheachdadh an Spioraid Naoimh. Aig cuid do na daoineibh a rinn na laoidhean, cha robh aca cliu 's am bith air son na diadhachd. Agus ged bhitheadh; cha bharrantas sin airson àite thoirt doibh ann an aoradh Dhé. Tha eadar ceithir agus cuig ceud Laoidh 'g an seinn, cheana, anns an Eaglais Chléireil Aointe; agus tha àireamh mòr do dhaoineibh 'n ar Eaglais féin ag iarraidh laoidhean a thoirt a stigh le ùghdaraibh an Ard-sheanaidh gu bhi air an seinn anns an aoradh fhollaiseach. An e so an gnè leantuinn ri briathraibh Leabhair Aidmheil ar Creidimh a bhòidich sinn a dheanemh? 'S fad ma 's e; ach nithear na h-uile nì, a bha air a mheas mòr roimhe, cho beag 's as urrain daoine a dheanamh, air eagal 's gu 'n cuir e bacadh air an *aonadh*. Mar, so, 's éigin, ma 's urrainn iad, laoidhean a thoirt a steach, chum an rathad a réiteach airson *aonaidh*. Ach bu toigh leinn a cheisd a chur riu, An d' thug Dia Saltair eile, no Leabhar Salm eile, eadhon, anns a Bhlobul, gu chliù a sheinn anns an aoradh fhollaiseach 's an Eaglais, ach sailm Dhaibhaidh? Mar d' thug, cionnus a tha dhànachd aig daoine bàrdachd de 'n deanamh féin a thoirt a stigh do aoradh follaiseach Dhé. Nach feudar earrannan de 'n Bhlobul a chur ann an ranntachd chum a chliù a sheinn 's an aoradh fhollaiseach, no, earrannan deth a tha cheana ann an ranntachd a' gnàthachadh mar sin? Ciod sam bith mar tha sin, cha d' thug e dhuinne ach Leabhar nan Salm airson an aobhar ud. Ach, nach 'eil laoidhean agus dàna air an ainmeachadh 's an earail a tha Pòl a' toirt do 'n Eaglais ann an Ephesus v. 18, 19? "Ach bithibh air 'ur lìonadh leis an Spiorad: a' labhairt ribh féinn ann an Salmaibh, ann an laoidhibh, agus ann an dànaibh spioradail;" agus cha 'n e feadhainn air an deanamh le daoineibh. Chi sibh, mar an ceudna, gu bheil laoidhean air an 'g ràdh ri cuid do na Salmaibh. Cha 'n e mhàin so, ach tha iad anns an Eaglais Chléireil Aointe a tha làn deas airson inneala ciùil a thoirt a stigh d' an Eaglais, mar tha aig Eaglais na Roimh agus 's an Eaglais Shasunnaich. Cha 'n 'eil fuireach no dàil air so, ach an co-fheitheamh a tha iad a' deanamh, gus am faic iad an tachair an *t-Aonadh*. Ach mur biodh so anns an rathad, bhiodh iad air an toirt a stigh do chuid a chothionalaibh, roimh so.* Criochnaichidh sinn ann earrann so an tráth-sa leis a' cheisd "Ciod tha 'n dara h-àithne ag iarraidh? Tha 'n dara h-àithne 'g iarraidh gach uile ghné aoraidh agus òrduigh diadhaidh a' dh' àithn Dia 'n a fhocal,

* Tha cheana cuid do chothionalaibh na h-Eaglais Chléireil Aointe air feadh Shassun a gnàthachadh innealan ciùil ann an aoradh fhollaiseach.

a ghabhail thugainn, a choimhead againn, agus a ghleidheadh *glan agus iomlan*. Tha mòr iarrtus ann ar làtha-ne air nithibh ùra agus neònach a thoirt a stigh do aoradh; nithe a' ghluaiseadh an aignidhean nàdurra; ach aig nach 'eil buaidh naomhachaidh air bith air an anam. Theid sinn a nis air aghaidh gu beagan a' ràdh air an t-Séathamh Ceann.

VI. Meud an eadar-dhealachaidh a tha anns na h-Eaglaisibh mu Fhòghlum na h-*òige*, le stùil àraidh ri cuideachadh o Riaghladh na Rìoghachd air son an aobhair sin.

'S ann bu chòir an Ceann so a thoirt a stigh fo 'n Chéud Cheann, a thaobh gu 'm buin e gu h-àraidh do 'n teagasg a tha ann. Ach dh' fheudadh nach faic cuid cho grànda a' chùis, le a dhealachadh ris a' Cheann sin. Tha iad féin ag ràdh 's an "Iomradh" (2) "A thaobh an àit a bhuineas do 'n Stàta a' ghabhail ann an ulluchadh teagaisg diadhaidh do 'n òigridh, gu bheil eadar-dhealachadh beachd am measg nan Eaglaisean a tha co-labhairt (no ag iarraidh aonaidh), cosmhuil ri sin, a tha fo 'n Cheud Cheann, a thaobh cuideachaidh Stàta, airson cumail suas òrduighean Eaglais Chrìosd. Agus ciod e am beachd a thaobh cuideachaidh a thoirt á ionmhas na Rìoghachd leis an Ardriaghladh airson cumail suas òrduighean an t-soisgeil anns an Rìoghachd? 'Se 'm beachd, nach buin e do 'n uachdaranachd sin a' dheanamh,—gu bheil e mì-laghail,—agus gu bheil e an aghaidh òrduigh Chrìosd. Mar sin, 's e 'm beachd-san nach 'eil còir aig Riaghladh na Rìoghachd, ann an deanamh, no a' tabhairt lagha, òrdugh a thabhairt airson fòghluim diadhaidh, no am Bìobul a bhi air a theagasg anns na Sgoilibh, a dh' fheudas a bhi air an cumail suas air chosd na Rìoghachd. Gur e mhàin na bhuineas do 'n Riaghladh a thaobh fòghluim na h-òigridh, fòghlum talmhaidh a thoirt doibh—a leithid 's a tha, Leughadh, Sgrìobhadh, Cunntas; ach ulluchadh airson gu 'm biodh am Bìobul anns na Sgoilibh, agus duais aig an Fhear-theagaisg air a shon, tha na Saor-thabhairtch no na Féin-thoilich gu h-iomlan ag àicheadh, gum buin e do Riaghladh na Rìoghachd, sin a dheanamh. Tha iad ag ràdh gu 'n cuireadh pàrantan, agus feadhainn eile a dh' fheudadh a bhi 'nan luchd-coimhead thairis air na Sgoilibh, am Bìobul agus teagasg diadhaidh annta. Cha 'n i so a' phuig mu 'm bheil sinn a' strì idir; ach coid e dleasdanas agus còir Riaghlaidh na Rìoghachd a thaobh so. Ciod am barrantas a tha againn gu 'n cuir pàrantan no luchd-coimhead sgoilean, am Bìobal annta, no gu 'm bi fòghlum nan sgrìobtuirean air a chomh-pàirteachadh annta. Ma bhios an t-àireamh is mò do 'n luchd-coimhead, no do na pàrantaibh, 'n aghaidh a' Bhìobuil, no fòghlum Sgrìobtuireil, a bhi air a theagasg annta, bithidh e 'n an comas am Bìobul a dhruideadh a mach as an Sgoil; agus co d'am buin a chur annta, ma thachras sin; mur buin e do 'n Riaghladh gnothuch a ghabhail ris? Agus a thuilleadh air so, feudaidh sinn a ràdh, gu bheil mìltean anns an rìoghachd a dhruideadh a mach am Bìobul as na Sgoilibh, na 'n ceadaicheadh Riaghladh na Rìoghachd dhoibh. Ach ciod an

ceud Leabhar bu chòir do Riaghladh Rìoghachd a chur ann an làimh leinibh no iòchdaran 'sam bith, chum gu fòghlumadh e a dhleasdanas do Dhia, do dhuine, agus do luchd-riaghlaidh? Nach saoiladh sibh, gur e 'm Bìobul agus a theagasg? Ach a réir beachd na h-Eaglais ud, 's e 'm Bìobul, an t-aon leabhar nach buin da chur ann. Nach cianail, 's nach ìosal, an beachd so, air òrdugh a chuir Dia air chois? "Is esan seirbhiseach Dhé chum maith dhuit." Ach tha e leo sud air a dhruideadh a mach o'n mhaith so dheanamh dhuit, eadhon, am Bìobul a chur ann a d' làimh, no sgillinn do airgiod na Rìoghachd a thoirt airson a theagasg. A thuilleadh air so, cha bhi e fiachaichte air a mhaisteir-sgoile, a réir a bheachd ud, am Bìobul a theagasg, ma bhios e fuidh phaighadh na Stàta; agus mar an ceudna, cha 'n urrainn iad a thoirt air a dh' aindeoinn, a theagasg aig uair eile.

Tha iad ag ràdh gu 'm fàg iad a' phuuing so, agus nithe eile, 'n an *ceisidibh fòsgailte*—'s e sin, gu feudadh am beachd féin a bhi aig gach neach mu 'n a puingibh ud. 'N an tachradh so, cha bhiodh aon riaghailt sheasmhach againn! cha bhiodh feum air Leabhar Aidmheil Creidimh idir; cha bhiodh ann am bòideachadh, no an ainm a chur ris, mar Aidmheil an Creidimh féin. Agus dìon a chur air na teagasgaibh a ta ann, an aghaidh na h-uile mearachd, gu là ar bàis; ach atharrais no cleachdadh gun seadh; agus mar an ceudna, cha bhiodh na teagasgan ud ni b' fhaide 'n an earrann do Fhianius fhollaiseach na h-Eaglais Saoire, mar bha i riamh aig Eaglais Ath-Leasaichte na h-Alba. Ach, fàthast:—Am fàg iad 'na ceisd fhosgailte, na beachdan eadar-dhealaichte ud, mar tha iad ag ràdh? Tha e soilleir nach fàg. Ged bhiodh e mar so ann an cainnt, cha bhiodh e mar sin ann an gnìomh, no ann an cleachdadh. Oir an uair a bha Achd Pàrlamaid air iarraidh, air a bhliadhna so féin, air son ulluchadh a dheanamh air son meadhonaibh fòghluim a mheudachadh air feadh na Rìoghachd, rinn iad aithnichte nach robh i 'n a ceisd fhosgailt' aca-san; ach 'n a ceisd ro dhùinte. Oir thàinig an Eaglais Shaor cho ìosal 'na h-iarrtus, 's nach d'iarr i mu dheireadh, ach gu 'n cuireadh a' Phàrlamaid ann an Roimh-ràdh an Achd, gu 'm biodh am Bìobul anns 'na Sgoilibh, a réir "*gnàths agus cleachdaimh*" na h-Alba, a thaobh nan Sgoilean; agus ged nach b' urrainn so a chur 'n a lagh orra, do bhrìgh nach biodh e ann an cumhachibh-lagha an Achd; gidheadh, cha 'n aontaicheadh iad ris, fo 'n leisgeul gu 'm feudadh e, ri h-uine, a bhi air a dheanamh 'n a lagh suidhichte. Bhiodh sud cheana 'n a fhianuis air Riaghladh na Rìoghachd a bhi a' toirt gnùis do theagasg Fhocail Dhé anns na Sgoilibh, mar bha e riamh ann an Alba; ach cha robh so 'g a dheanamh 'n a lagh orra-san. Agus gidheadh cha 'n 'eil Buidhean-Aonaidh na h-Eaglais Saoire a' faicinn bacadh 'sam bith air aonadh fo 'n cheann so, nach fheud a bhi air thoirt as an rathad gun mhòr thrioblaid. Tha e soillier nach 'eil mòr thrioblaid aca-san faighinn thairis air bacadh 'sam bith, air sgàth *Aonaidh*, ciod sam bith trioblaid a tha aig muinntir eile dheth.

Notes and Comments.

Correction.—At page 445 in last issue, seventh line from bottom of page, "these" should read "then."

Rev. Angus Galbraith and Dr. Whyte.—It was reported in the *Inverness Courier* that Dr. Whyte, Edinburgh, was expected to preach in the Free Church, Lochalsh, on Sabbath, 17th April, and that at the cordial invitation of Mr. Galbraith. We all know the position Mr. Galbraith occupies as a leader in the "constitutional" party in the Free Church, and may enquire where principle and consistency have gone, when he asks or permits Dr. Whyte, a prominent figure in the revolutionary and down-grade party, to occupy his pulpit.

The Free Church and the Sustentation Fund.—At present an alarm is being sounded in the Free Church by Dr. Ross Taylor, that the Sustentation Fund is on the decline, and that "there must be an effort all over the Church if the threatened crisis is to be averted." *The Scotsman* of 8th April had a long and able article on the subject, in which it was pointed out that the financial crisis is due to the unfaithfulness of the Free Church to her original testimony. The article concludes as follows:—"The crisis in the Free Church is, as has been said, not a mere financial crisis. It is the great crisis of dying and entering into a new and changed life. The process of dying as 'the Church of Scotland Free' is being hidden under the process of union with, or rather absorption in, Voluntarism. The claim to be—as opposed to an Erastian Church on the one hand and the Voluntary Churches on the other—the true national Church of Scotland is openly laid aside. Half the testimony of the Free Church, and that the distinctive half, is abandoned. We merely state the fact, and not in the way of blame. The Free Church had to make its choice. Its own position as the witness for spiritual independence on State Church principles had become untenable. There is now equal if not greater independence in the Church of Scotland. It had to choose between reunion with the Church of Scotland, and the step which it had shrunk from with horror at the Disruption of going over to Voluntarism. The ground on which it had stood as a distinct Church was gone from under its feet. So it determined openly to fling away what it had come to regard as the worser half of its testimony and live the purer with the other half. One inevitable consequence has been the loss of the loyalty of the few who hold to the original testimony of the Free Church, and this has told upon the Sustentation Fund, though less perhaps than the spread of 'congregational isolation' which the *Monthly* admits and bewails, but which is itself an inevitable consequence of the loss of the distinctive testimony which gave cohesion to the Free Church."

On the Track of the Ritualists.—Mr. Kensit, the Protestant publisher in London, has been showing his zeal for purity of worship in a very practical way. On the day called "Good Friday" (which is supposed to be the anniversary of the crucifixion), some very ritualistic pranks were in process at St. Cuthbert's, Kensington. An idolatrous service called "Veneration of the Cross" was being conducted. Mr. Kensit stood up in his place and protested against the provocation. He was charged before the West London Police Court for wilfully disturbing divine service. It was argued for the defence that the service was not a divine service within the meaning of the Act of Parliament, and the vicar acknowledged that it was a service not in the Book of Common Prayer, and one not allowed by the bishop. Nevertheless Mr. Kensit was fined £3, with the alternative of seven days. We do not look for any other result in our time than more and more overspreading of the abomination that makes desolate, and, as Antichrist grows great, it is likely he will have power to put the true witnesses to the sharp alternative of sinful compliance or perilous protesting. Mr. Kensit's action, which required some nerve and zeal, is a faint preliminary skirmish before the great battle.

Fire in Spurgeon's Tabernacle.—This noted meeting house, one of the famed resorts of London, was burnt down on Wednesday, 20th April. It was built in the year 1859, specially for the late Mr. Spurgeon, and cost £35,000.

War at Last.—After much diplomacy and hesitation, the United States and Spain have appealed to the sword. On Wednesday, 20th April, President M'Kinlay sent an ultimatum, demanding the withdrawal of all Spanish troops from Cuba—demanding, in fact, that Spain shall relinquish her last foothold in the new world. A very humble nation would hardly brook such domineering treatment, much less the Spaniards, who are a mere compound of pride and poverty. Wherefore, despite the unequal circumstances, Spain will fight for her ancient possession. In days when Britain was small, Spain was the dictator of Europe, and the supreme power in the two Americas. Deceit and violence, however, have brought her low, so that she is now the basest of kingdoms. When the Reformation was passing through Europe, and all the western nations stood at the parting of the ways, Spain more recklessly than any other people turned her back on the Bible. She said—"As for me and my house, we will serve the Pope." She has been blind enough to the consequences, but all intelligent observers can see that her portion has been dishonour, decay, and the stigma of blood and cruelty. What a crimson record she has made with her Inquisition, her manifold oppressions in the Netherlands, and across the seas! She has found Popery a dishonourable, losing game. Regarding the merits of the present quarrel, the oppression and cruelty of Spain in Cuba

certainly deserve chastisement. However, there are other than moral motives at work in the American mind. The lust of conquest is strongly operating. Cuba has been a coveted object for a generation back. As a nation, the United States have cast off the fear of God, and abandoned themselves to greed and swagger. It will be a just thing, on the part of Heaven, to sicken this unchastened people with the quarrel which they have too easily provoked. Nevertheless, we cannot doubt that the issue will be loss and grief to Spain. Darkness will be on that seat of the beast, and they will gnaw their tongues for pain.

A Romish Firebrand.—On Monday, 12th April, a meeting was held at Cork to commemorate the events of the Irish rebellion of 1798. Messrs. Healy and Tanner, Members of Parliament, and several Councillors and dignitaries were on the platform. The principal feature, however, was a priest, Kavanagh by name, who delivered a seditious lecture which in any other organised community in the world would have landed him in prison. This gentleman was, of course, made a Christian in infancy by the magical rite of Roman baptism, otherwise, comparing him with Paul's description in the 3rd of the Romans, we should have taken him for a full-orbed example of unregeneracy. "His mouth is full of cursing and bitterness." "The poison of asps is under his tongue." His speech was an unveiled advocacy of force and bloodshed. The following is an extract:—"The Irish wolf dog is waiting his time patiently, for long suffering has taught him patience. He believes he sees the day drawing nigh when the European menagerie, with the huge grim bear at its head will surround the British bull dog, the thief and bully that has troubled it so long, and with menacing growls, with bare tusks and extended talons will demand restitution and satisfaction, and when these are made, little, if anything, will remain of the British bull dog. (Cheers.) It is my firm conviction that the Gordian-knot which was tied by the craft of England cannot be loosed by the gloved finger of our own Parliamentary representatives. Force alone can undo the work of craft, but the sword which severs it must first cleave asunder the huge and bloated imposture called the British Empire. Many Irishmen, I am aware, still fondly claim that the grand panacea for all our evils is to be found in the British Parliament. In my humble opinion they are mistaken, for if we look well into the matter we shall find we have really got nothing from Parliamentary action. Catholic Emancipation was granted by a Tory Government rather than risk civil war, as the Duke of Wellington acknowledged; the Protestant Church was dis-established by the men who blew up Clerkenwell, as Mr. Gladstone confessed; the Irish Land Bills were passed by the energetic action adopted by our Land League." The energetic action referred to by his reverence was the scheme of assassination and outrage carried out by the Land Leaguers. These remarks

breathe the very spirit of rebellion and impudence, and the British lion in his old age has surely become inert, flabby, and toothless, when such an inflammatory character is not promptly laid in jail.

The Late George Muller's Testimony.—"I also state to the glory of God, as His witness, that in my inmost soul I believe that all the books of the Old Testament, and the Gospels, Epistles, and Revelation of the New Testament, are written by inspiration. This I have to the full believed ever since my conversion in the beginning of November, 1825. Before that time, though brought up from my earliest days to be a clergyman, I cared nothing at all about the Bible, and, from my fourteenth year to the twentieth, never read a single chapter of it."

The Church Walking with the World.

THE Church and the World walked far apart,
On the changing shores of Time;
The world was singing a giddy song,
And the Church a hymn sublime.
"Come, give me your hand," cried the merry World,
"And walk with me this way;"
But the good Church hid her snowy hand
And solemnly answered, "Nay,
I will not give you my hand at all,
And I will not walk with you;
Your way is the way of endless death;
Your words are all untrue."

"Nay, walk with me but a little space,"
Said the World, with a kindly air;
"The road I walk is a pleasant road,
And the sun shines always there;
Your path is thorny and rough and rude,
And mine is broad and plain;
My road is paved with flowers and gems,
And yours with tears and pain.
The sky above me is always blue;
No want, no toil I know;
The sky above you is always dark;
Your lot is a lot of woe.
My path, you see, is a broad, fair path,
And my gate is high and wide,—
There is room enough for you and for me
To travel side by side."

Half shyly the Church approached the World,
And gave him her hand of snow;
The old World grasped it and walked along,
Saying, in accents low—
"Your dress is too simple to please my taste;
I will give you pearls to wear,
Rich velvet and silks for your graceful form,
And diamonds to deck your hair."

The Church looked down at her plain white robes,
And then at the dazzling World,
And blushed as she saw his handsome lip
With a smile contemptuous curled.
"I will change my dress for a costlier one,"
Said the Church with a smile of grace;
Then her pure white garments drifted away,
And the World gave in their place,
Beautiful satins and shining silks,
And roses and gems and pearls;
And over her forehead her bright hair fell
Crisped in a thousand curls.
"Your house is too plain," said the proud old World;
"I'll build you one like mine:
Carpets of Brussels, and curtains of lace,
And furniture ever so fine."
So he built her a costly and beautiful house—
Splendid it was to behold;
Her sons and her beautiful daughters dwelt there
(gleaming in purple and gold;
And fairs and shows in the halls were held,
And the World and his children were there;
And laughter and music and feasts were heard
In the place that was meant for prayer.
She had cushioned pews for the rich and the great
To sit in their pomp and pride,
While the poor folks, clad in their shabby suits,
Sat meekly down outside.
The Angel of Mercy flew over the Church,
And whispered, "I know thy sin;"
The Church looked back with a sigh, and longed
To gather her children in.
But some were off in the midnight ball,
And some were off at the play,
And some were drinking in gay saloons;
So she quietly went her way.
The sly World gallantly said to her,
"Your children mean no harm—
Merely indulging in innocent sports."
So she leaned on his proffered arm,
And smiled, and chatted, and gathered flowers
As she walked along with the World;
While millions and millions of deathless souls
To the terrible pit were hurled.
"Your preachers are all too old and plain,"
Said the gay old World with a sneer;
"They frighten my children with dreadful tales,
Which I like not for them to hear:
They talk of brimstone and fire and pain,
And the horrors of endless night;
They talk of a place that should not be
Mentioned to ears polite.
I will send you some of the better stamp,
Polished and gay and fast,
Who will tell them that people may live as they list
And go to heaven at last.
The Father is merciful, great and good,
Tender and true and kind;
Do you think He would take one child to heaven
And leave the rest behind?"

So he filled her house with "cultured" divines,
 Gifted and great and learned;
 And the plain old men that preached the Cross
 Were out of the pulpit turned.

"You give too much to the poor," said the World,
 "Far more than you ought to do;
 If the poor need shelter and food and clothes,
 Why need it trouble you?
 Go, take your money and buy rich robes,
 And horses and carriages fine,
 And pearls and jewels and dainty food,
 And the rarest and costliest wine.
 My children, they dote on all such things,
 And if you their love would win,
 You must do as they do, and walk in the ways
 That they are walking in."
 The Church held tightly the strings of her purse,
 And gracefully lowered her head,
 And simpered, "I've given too much away;
 I'll do, sir, as you have said."

So the poor were turned from her door in scorn,
 And she heard not the orphan's cry;
 And she drew her beautiful robes aside,
 As the widows went weeping by,
 The sons of the World and the sons of the Church
 Walked closely hand and heart,
 And only the Master, who knoweth all,
 Could tell the two apart.
 Then the Church sat down at her ease and said,
 "I am rich and in goods increased;
 I have need of nothing and nought to do
 But to laugh and dance and feast."
 The sly World heard her, and laughed in his sleeve,
 And mockingly said aside,
 "The Church is fallen—the beautiful Church,
 And her shame is her boast and pride!"

The Angel drew near to the mercy-seat,
 And whispered, in sighs, her name,
 And the saints their anthems of rapture hushed,
 And covered their heads with shame.
 And a voice came down, through the hush of heaven,
 From Him who sat on the throne;—
 "I know thy works, and how thou hast said,
 I am rich; and hast not known
 That thou art naked, and poor and blind
 And wretched before My face;
 Return, repent, lest I cast thee out,
 And blot thy name from its place!"

MATILDA C. EDWARDS.

FAITH brings love, for it makes a golden spout through the
 riven side of Christ Jesus, and brings down the rivers of love upon
 thee; then arises thy love to Him, and thou desirest no more
 consolation but to get leave to love God, and to sound His praise
 all the days of thy life.—*John Welch, of Ayr.*