

T H E

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The Assemblies.

(Second Notice).

THE ESTABLISHED CHURCH.

AT the opening of this Assembly, on 19th May, a resolution of sorrow and sympathy in regard to Mr. Gladstone's death, couched, in our opinion, in far too eulogistic terms, was adopted.

On the 20th, the report of the Colonial Committee was discussed. Dr. Sprott, North Berwick, a leading ritualist, said that "in India too often Scottish regiments had no Scottish chaplains, but had to put up with a make-shift chaplain—the missionary of some dissenting body in England—who, according to the tenets of the Church of Scotland, was not a commissioned ambassador of Christ at all, and under such conditions it was no wonder that the soldier often changed his religion." Here there is a strong tinge of that kind of Episcopacy, bordering on Romanism, which denies the validity of the commission given by dissenting bodies to their ministers. Dr. Sprott took care not to condemn Episcopal orders, which are much more inconsistent with Presbyterianism than those in practice in many of the dissenting bodies in England.

The ritualistic movement in the Established Church further appears in the report given in by Rev. John Paton of the Committee on Aids to Devotion. The report stated that, while the sales of the publications were steady, it was to be regretted they had been so small. The Committee had carried out the instructions of last Assembly, to prepare a new edition of "Prayers for Social and Family Worship," and they had also prepared a small prayer book for soldiers. The report was adopted. Truly, it is fearful work to be wrapping up perishing souls in the grave clothes of formal prayers, and thus endeavouring to make sure that they will slide comfortably into hell!

On Friday, 27th May, the Archbishop of Canterbury delivered an address on Temperance. It is rather strange that this dignitary condescended to enter a Presbyterian Assembly, and we are quite sure that some of his High Church brethren would not

have done so, holding, as they do, the vain and extravagant notion that no body outside the Episcopal—with exception, probably, of the erroneous Romish and Greek bodies—is entitled to be considered a Church. But what we are most concerned about is the danger to which the Established Church herself is exposed. There is a large section of her ministers that is lusting after Episcopal and Romish forms, and the appearance of the archbishop, as more than one expressed, tended to draw the two Churches closer together. It is doubtful if our reforming forefathers would even give a hearing to an archbishop, and one thing is certain, that if they knew he was both a ritualist and an evolutionist—as the present Archbishop of Canterbury is—they would not allow him to open his mouth for a moment in their Assembly.

In the evening, the debate was resumed on the report of the Sub-Committee of the Committee on Legislation on the Constitution of the Church. It submitted a draft bill to declare the jurisdiction of the Church of Scotland in spiritual matters. On Tuesday previous, Dr. Mair moved a deliverance stating that the Assembly were satisfied of the independent and exclusive jurisdiction of the Church in spiritual matters, but, having regard to the desire for a Declaratory Act on this subject, and the conscientious difficulties of many, they—in the event of its appearing that a considerable body of opinion outside the Church were in favour of such a bill as the above—should undertake or further the promotion of it. The meaning of the above, in plain language, is that there are a number in the Church willing to smooth the way for the return to its fold of upholders of the establishment principle in the Highlands and elsewhere. These persons have difficulties as to whether or not the Church is free from State control in spiritual matters, and the above bill is an attempt to meet these difficulties. The motion had several objectors, some who seemed determined to remove no difficulties, and others who regarded the terms of the motion as too hasty. It was carried, however, in a thin house, by a majority of 16. Rev. Robert Macdougall, Resolis, strongly supported the motion. He said “there were tens of thousands in the Highlands who held the principle of establishment as strongly as he did, and they should show them that they were in favour of a union on Scriptural principles. It would be a sad thing if these people got a slap in the face, and he hoped something would be done to show that the Church of Scotland as a whole was ready to do everything possible for a union with the Free Churchmen who held the principles of 1843.” We sympathise with the good intentions of Dr. Mair and Mr. Macdougall, but see quite plainly that their Church is not prepared to make sufficient concessions. She is not prepared to admit that the claims of the Free Church in 1843 were right. More than that, Dr. Scott stated—“He would accept no bill which threw the slightest reflection upon their predecessors in the Church of Scotland who so nobly fought

the battle, nor would he allow the slightest reflection to be placed by any bill in Parliament upon the decisions of the Court of Session or the decisions of the House of Lords." What is this but a re-affirmation that the moderates at the disruption were a band of noble men that did their duty, and that the decisions of the Court of Session and House of Lords, which had largely to do with compelling our fathers to disrupt, are not in the least to be condemned? In the face of such sentiments as these, held by the vast body of this Church, no consistent supporter of the principles of 1843 can enter its pale. Above all this, much more is needed to make the way clear. Unsound doctrine, innovations in worship, and a lax ministry are greatly in the ascendancy in this Church. Some people talk of leaving the Free and entering the Established Church, but, in our humble opinion, this is the same as—to use a homely phrase, slightly changed—"going out of the fire into the frying-pan." By all means go out of the fire, but don't leap into the frying-pan.

The last thing in these discussions calling for criticism is a speech of Dr. Story's, on the subject of the admission of ministers into the Church, wherein he made some unjust reflections on the status and education of F.P. ministers. We notice this speech in a separate article.

This Assembly was closed by an address from the moderator, Dr. Leishman, which contains a peculiar mixture of old and new ideas, the new spoiling the old.

FREE CHURCH.

A resolution of sorrow and sympathy in connection with Mr. Gladstone's death was also adopted by this Assembly. The retiring moderator, Dr. Macmillan, and the new moderator, Dr. Whyte, indulged in excessive praise of Mr. Gladstone. Dr. Macmillan, in his opening prayer, made reference to that day being Ascension Day, an allusion to the Romish and Episcopal calendar quite unworthy of a Presbyterian minister. Too much, altogether, has been made of Mr. Gladstone's religious character. If he did any good in his lifetime, he also did much evil. Any temporal benefit he may have secured for the masses can never compensate for the harm he did in encouraging dangerous ritualistic practices in the Church. The generality of the men whom he appointed during his ministry to office in the Church of England were such as favoured Ritualism and Romanism. He was never known to nominate a thoroughly evangelical bishop.

On the 20th May, Mr. Howie (Govan) gave in the statistics of Church membership. There was an increase in the Highlands. "The figures indicated that in the Lowlands there was a growing tendency among the young not to join the membership of the Church, but that in the Highlands there was an increasing proportion of those above 18 years of age in the membership of

the Church. Last year, there were in the Highlands 3,420 adherents above 18 years of age per 1,000 members; this year there were 2,358. The corresponding figures in the Lowlands were 196 last year and 200 this year. If there was in the Highlands the same proportion of members to adherents above 18 years of age as there was in the Lowlands, the figures meant that the membership of the Church in the Highlands—which amounted to 28,667 at 31st December—would be 90,530, showing that, although last year the increase of the membership in the Highlands per 10,000 of the population was 14, as against an increase of 2 in the Lowlands, there were still marvellous possibilities of further increase of members in the Highlands, in view of the very large proportion of the population adhering to the Free Church who were above 18 years of age." In whatever way the present tendency among the young in the south not to join the Church may be accounted for, a clue is easily found to the opposite tendency now reported as prevailing in the north. In the Highlands, a large number of people, old and young, have of late left this so-called Free Church, and the ministers in it have necessarily been more diligent in securing additions to their communion rolls. Having got rid of "impracticable elements"—such as faithful and conscientious elders and members—they, with their kirk-sessions, have been admitting young people to the Lord's table who would not dare to take such a solemn step in better days. The increase of Free Church membership in the Highlands is a witness there to the decrease of true piety in pulpit and pew. The south is notorious for opening the doors of sacred communion to almost everybody and anybody, and, if the ambition of Mr. Howie and other leaders is to bring down the Highlands to the level of the Lowlands, they are manifestly bent upon a universal work of demoralisation in the Free Church. Let them not boast, but hang their heads with shame!

On Tuesday, the 24th, the moderator, Dr. Whyte, welcomed in enthusiastic terms corresponding members of the U.P. Church. He said he felt in his own heart as if the union were accomplished, though he could not assume it was. He made reference to the life of Ebenezer Erskine, and to all intents impressed upon the Assembly the idea, as was pointed out in our last issue, that the present U.P. body is the representative of the Church of the Erskines. No greater delusion could be cherished. Dr. Whyte should know very well that the Original Secession Church is the only rightful claimant to that connection. He is equally wrong in another matter, about which he should know better. When any person from England asks him about the Free Church, and wishes him to define their existence and where they stand, he refers them to the "Ten Years' Conflict," the "Life of Dr. Chalmers," and the *Witness* articles by Hugh Miller. Now, any person who knows the present position of the Free Church must inevitably fail to find in her the Church of Chalmers or of the "Ten Years'

Conflict." 'The two Churches are at an immeasurable distance from one another in everything but the name.

In the union debate of the 26th, referred to in last issue, Principal Rainy dismissed objections to union as if they were unreasonable prejudices and dislikes, and urged that, as union was coming, objectors should make it as cordial and edifying as possible. Under the feet of such imperious declarations, the poor "Constitutionalists" are now humiliated, and so demoralised in spirit have they become that it appears that, rather than throw off the yoke of slavery by stepping out into liberty like Christ's freemen, they are willing to wait as long as the slaveholders care to bind the yoke on them. Witness Mr. Galbraith, Lochalsh:—"He was not going to leave the Free Church. He was a Free Churchman, and to speak of a Free Churchman going out of the Free Church was about the most absurd thing to say. Therefore, he proposed to stand on the principles he held, and stand to the last as long as there was an inch of ground to stand upon, and if they put him out of the Church he could not help it. Until then he would not go, and, if he must go, then perhaps he would not go alone." Now, these words appear to us childish in the extreme. It is our firm opinion that the Free Church ceased to exist in 1892, when the Declaratory Act was passed. The present body simply retained the name, along with its separate organisation. But now, in the proposed union, name and separate organisation are to disappear altogether. When this union is consummated, Mr. Galbraith, even from his own point of view, will surely have not an inch of ground to stand upon, and it will be seen then whether he will act the part of a Free Churchman. He talks about being put out of the Church, and, if it is physical compulsion he requires, let him be assured that, not until he renounces the corrupt ecclesiastical courts which he at present acknowledges, will he be ejected from Church and manse as Messrs. Macfarlane and Macdonald were. He must allow the claims of principle and conscience to have their due effect upon his conduct, otherwise they will never put him out, but will pat him on the back and allure him deeper and deeper into the snares of voluntarism.

Dr. Henderson, Crieff (the junior clerk), in the course of a speech, discussed the question addressed to candidates for office, in respect of the Claim of Right and the principles contained therein. He pointed out that this question only bound office-bearers to the spirituality and independence of the Church of Christ, and that the Union Committee had found there was really no difference between the U.P. Church and them in regard to this question. The whole drift of Dr. Henderson's contention was that the present question, addressed to office-bearers in the Free Church in regard to their acceptance of the Claim of Right of 1843, did not bind them to the doctrine of State acknowledgment and support of the Church, but bound them only to the Church's spirituality and freedom. But this is mere Jesuitical

sophistry. The Claim of Right was a claim to be the Church of Scotland. The Claim of Right was a claim to be that Church, freed from the unlawful and tyrannical interference of the civil magistrate in spiritual matters. The Claim of Right admits and maintains that "the magistrate hath authority, and it is his duty, in the exercise of that power which alone is committed to him—namely, 'the power of the sword,' or civil rule, as distinct from 'the power of the keys,' or spiritual authority, expressly denied to him—to take order for the preservation of purity, peace, and unity in the Church." The Claim of Right proceeds from beginning to end upon the principle that the union of Church and State is a lawful one, and appeals to the State, in the exercise of its own authority and power, to protect the Church from the infringement of its rightful spiritual claims and functions. In view of all this, which is plainly exhibited in the Claim of Right, one cannot but feel amazed at the audacity of men who try to delude people into supposing that the establishment principle is not in the Claim of Right, and that the formula doesn't bind office-bearers to that principle. Of course, the Claim of Right necessarily lays special emphasis upon Christ's headship over the Church, as that was the peculiar contention of the time, but to imagine for one moment that it ignores Christ's headship over the State, and the State's duty to Christ's Church, is to make a big mistake with one's eyes open. In the closing part of the debate, Principal Rainy admitted that the Church, in the Claim of Right, claims establishment as well as freedom, but got out of the difficulty as follows:—"That being so, of course, the Claim of Right remains as one of our hereditary documents. We are not bound to our hereditary documents. This is one of the superstitions of the Scottish Churches." Here, under the odious name superstition, he contemptuously throws away the constitution of the Free Church. The only conclusion one can draw is that, nowadays, it is a superstition to be bound to any document whatsoever that you solemnly swear to believe, maintain, and defend. In letting go this kind of superstition, you let go not merely religion but common worldly morality. Principal Rainy also made it clear that, in both Churches, they did not impose the Confession on anyone apart from their Declaratory Acts. These Acts, he said in his former speech, were so nearly parallel that they presented no difficulties in the matter of divergence.

Dr. Rainy's motion for union was carried by 486 to 41 for Mr. Galbraith's. The "Constitutional" party are truly in a sorry plight. We fear that if even the 41 were sifted they would not be all true-blue Presbyterians. Has the Church of Christ come so low that it cannot exist apart from connection with Dr. Rainy and his down-grade followers? "Come out from among them, and be ye separate."

On Friday, 27th May, Principal Rainy submitted the report on Church and State, and moved in favour of disestablishment in

these terms—"The General Assembly, in conformity with the findings of many previous Assemblies, afresh declare that the present alliance of Church and State in Scotland ought to come to an end, in the interest alike of public justice, of ecclesiastical freedom, and of the unity, welfare, and efficiency of the Presbyterian Church in Scotland." Rev. Dr. Thomas Smith seconded. He did so on the ground that the present Established Church was not entitled to the immunities and emoluments of the Established Church of Scotland. Dr. Smith still professes to be a believer in the establishment principle, but how he can reconcile his present conduct—in supporting Principal Rainy's motion, which is opposed to any Established Church, however good—with that belief, and with his own past support of the late Drs. Begg and Kennedy in better days, we cannot understand. Dr. Smith's conduct is just a phase of the compromising spirit that has taken hold of the 'Constitutional' party at large.

The discussion on Romanism and Ritualism, which took place on Monday, the 23rd, revealed the weak-kneed character of the Protestantism of many in the Free Church. Indeed, we have no faith in its Protestantism as a whole, for it cannot be strong or consistent in its opposition to Rome as long as it tolerates so much error within its own borders. Dr. Ferguson, Kinmundy (elder), said "he had long felt that there was a great deal of almost persecution in some of the methods that had been adopted with reference to this subject. He knew a great many good Roman Catholics, and was very intimate with some of them, and he found that there were a great many among them just as good Christian men and women as any of those present could possibly be."—(Applause.) Dr. Ferguson emphasised the ignorance of Romanists, and concluded by seconding the report.

Faithful exposure of Romanism is here rated "almost persecution," while a great many Romanists are extolled in high terms for their personal goodness. We believe many of them, considering their light, are much better than some in the Free Assembly, but that doesn't say a great deal. Another elder, Mr. W. M. Maclean, Paisley, went further than Dr. Ferguson. He took exception to the first paragraph of the deliverance, which bore that the Assembly was gratified to learn that the membership of the Roman Catholic Church was diminishing rather than increasing. He did not think they should give vent to such a sentiment as objecting to an increase of membership in another Christian Church. They differed from that Church, but it could not be denied that it was a branch of the Church of Christ. (Cries of "Question.") He also objected to deploring the accessions gained by the Scottish Episcopal Church from Presbyterian sources. Their Church, in his opinion, was a good deal to blame for that; it arose from denying to their people the reasonable æsthetics of worship (voices, "No, no," and "Order"), anything that made the services more attractive.

However, notwithstanding the above voices, the paragraphs objected to were modified to suit the ideas of the un-Protestant part of the Assembly.

This Assembly was closed by an address from Dr. Whyte, the moderator, on "The Minister in his Pulpit and Pastorate." This address, a very objectionable one from many points of view, we notice elsewhere.

A Sermon.

BY REV. JAMES S. SINCLAIR, JOHN KNOX'S, GLASGOW.

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*"How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?"—HEB. ii. 3.*  
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THE apostle in the opening chapter of this epistle points out that the same God who spoke in ancient times unto the fathers by the prophets hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son. He then proceeds in the majestic language of the book of Psalms to enlarge upon the divine glory and meditorial sovereignty of the Son of God. This glorious person is infinitely exalted above men and angels, and is destined to reign until all His enemies are made His footstool. After giving expression to these lofty views concerning the dignity and glory of Christ as the Messenger of the Covenant, he is led to speak of the responsibility of those who were privileged to hear the Word of God from Christ's lips or the lips of His servants. "Therefore, we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we let them slip." And he impresses this obligation with a powerful argument. "For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward, how shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation." That is to say—If the word spoken by the instrumentality of angels in former ages failed not of fulfilment, and every act of disobedience to that word received in due time just punishment, how shall we, who have heard the word spoken by the Son of God, the King of angels, possibly escape deserved judgment if we neglect so great salvation? These are the weighty considerations which the apostle by the Holy Ghost here presents to the Hebrews, and such are the considerations which require to be impressed upon all who hear the gospel to the end of time.

In speaking on these words for a little, we shall, in dependence on the Spirit of God, direct attention to:—

I. The great salvation.

II. The neglect of it.

III. The warning here given to all neglectors.

I. Let us consider the great salvation. Salvation is the central

theme of the gospel message. Salvation is the great need of man's soul. Man in his present condition is far from blessedness. The Scriptures tell us he was created a holy and happy being, who continued for a time in the favour and converse of his Creator, but eventually fell from that high estate by sin. He incurred the righteous curse of God, exposed himself to all the miseries of this present life, and to the pains of hell in the life to come. He is now manifestly in a wretched condition, and it is to proclaim a salvation adequate to meet his case that the gospel of Christ has been sent forth into the world. Not that all men who hear the gospel will inevitably be saved by it, for multitudes, to whom it comes, with amazing blindness reject it against themselves. Nevertheless, God in His eternal purpose has determined that it shall be the means of saving a company which no man can number, a company that shall be made willing in the day of His power. The gospel shall not fail until all the elect of God are gathered in from the north, south, east, and west, and are made partakers of the great salvation procured for them by Jesus Christ.

We now proceed to point out some of the things that exhibit the greatness of this salvation :—

1. The greatness of the Saviour who procured it.

(1) Observe His divine greatness. He is infinitely exalted above all created beings ; He is the Son of God ; He is co-equal and co-substantial with the Father and the Holy Ghost in the undivided Godhead ; in one word, He is God. The apostle dwells at large upon this glorious truth in the preceding chapter. He tells us that the Son is the heir of all things, the creator of the worlds, the brightness of God's glory, the express image of His essence, and the upholder of all things. He was once in this world purging away the sins of His people. He is now at the right hand of the majesty on high. The apostle quotes several passages from the book of Psalms wherein the Messiah is set before us as the Son of God, yea, as God himself. "Unto the Son," he (the Father) saith, "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever ; a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom." So great then was the need of sinners that no less exalted a person than the great God required to come into this lower world for their deliverance' sake. Men or angels were insufficient to act the part of a Saviour. But God in His infinite mercy and wisdom found within Himself the very person that such as we required. The only-begotten Son who is in the bosom of the Father came forth to perform the work, and we may well admire the greatness of the gospel salvation in the light of the infinite greatness of Him who procured it. He is "the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ." (2) Notice His human greatness. The Word who was with God and was God, was made flesh.—(John i.) He assumed a perfect humanity into union with His divine person. The Son of God became also the Son of man. As the Son of man, He is incomparable among the sons of men. He had no blemish or

imperfection. He was holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners. He combined in matchless proportions awe-inspiring majesty and winning meekness, unerring wisdom and purest guilelessness, immovable rectitude and tenderest sympathy, perfect holiness, and richest love. He was great in all the excellencies of perfect manhood. He was perfect man as well as infinitely perfect God. "Thou art fairer than the children of men."—(Psalm xlv. 2.) (3) Notice He is God and man in two distinct natures and one person for ever. All divine and all human greatness subsist together in the one person of the Son of God. No wonder though the Church in the Song of Songs should exclaim, "My beloved is white and ruddy, he is the chiefest among ten thousand," "Yea, he is altogether lovely."—(Song v. 10, 16.)

2. The greatness of the price the Saviour paid for this salvation. (1) He paid a life of humiliation and suffering. It was no little thing He did when He condescended to assume our nature, to dwell in this lower world, and to veil His divine glory for a season. He "gave his life a ransom for many." He lived more than thirty years a life of humiliation. He who was the King eternal became a servant. He who was the sovereign Lawgiver was made "under the law." He who knew no sin was made sin. He who knew no suffering "suffered the just for the unjust." He obeyed and suffered in the room of sinners. His whole life was occupied with this work of obedience and suffering. By the latter He satisfied divine justice for the sins of His people; by the former He wrought out a positive righteousness on their behalf. "With his stripes we are healed."—(Isa. liii. 5). And "by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous."—(Rom. v. 19.) "Christ also loved the church and gave himself for it."—(Eph. v. 25.) He suffered much during His life. He was despised of men, tempted of the devil, and bruised of God. Every groan that came from His lips, every weary step He trod, every pang of suffering He endured, went to make up the ransom price of His people's salvation. Hear His own words:—"I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep."—(John x. 11.) (2) He paid the penalty of an accursed death. We have already spoken of His life of suffering, we now speak of His death of suffering. Sin deserved death, justice required death. Nothing less than a death of unspeakable suffering could meet the demands of God's justice. The guilty cannot go unpunished, and as the Son of God stood as substitute for the guilty, He must needs suffer even unto death. The apostle says, "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us."—(Gal. iii. 13.) His people were under the curse of God's law, and would have suffered that curse throughout eternity, had He not shed His blood for them. When the Bible speaks of the blood of Christ, it intends His suffering both in body and soul. He suffered unspeakable shame and pain in His body. He also

"poured out his soul unto death."—(Isa. liii. 12.). God the Father as a righteous Judge hid His face from Him, and caused His holy wrath to descend upon His soul. Witness the greatness of His heartrending agony upon the cross. Here is holy ground indeed. Men and angels may well tremble in the innermost depths of their being at this awful sight. The eternal Son cries—"My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Again He cries—"It is finished," and gives up the ghost. The full price is paid. It is good measure, pressed down, and running over. "Ye were not redeemed with corruptible things such as silver and gold, . . . but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot."—(1 Pet. i. 18, 19.)

3. The greatness of the deliverances it brings.

(1) It delivers from sin. Sin is the great root evil. All the other evils that have befallen our race have flowed from it. Sin destroyed the image of God in man's soul. Sin brought death spiritual, temporal, and eternal upon the human race. Now, this salvation brings deliverance from the guilt, the dominion, and, finally, from the very being of sin. There is nothing that degrades man like sin, nothing in fact that degrades him but sin, and therefore to be freed from this soul-debasing and soul-ruining evil is one of the most precious things in this "great salvation." "The blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanseth us from all sin." (1 John i. 7.) (2) It delivers from Satan. This evil spirit is "the prince of the power of the air, the spirit which now worketh in the children of disobedience." The salvation that is in Christ procures deliverance from his mighty grasp. The believing soul passes from under the thralldom of Satan into the kingdom of God's dear Son. The Son of God took flesh and blood that "through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil," and so everyone who is made a partaker of the redemption purchased by Christ is emancipated from the devil's yoke. He may molest, but he cannot destroy. He himself shall be in the end completely crushed. "The God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly."—(Rom. xvi. 20.) (3) It delivers from the curse of God. All are by nature under His righteous curse. "Cursed is everyone that continueth not in all things that are written in the book of the law to do them." But the apostle says, speaking for the Church, "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law." It is an awful thing to be under the curse of God, our Creator. The displeasure and enmity of all wicked men, and all the devils in hell, are nothing to this. Behold, then, the glory of this salvation. There is freedom in it from the curse of the great God of heaven and earth. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus."—(Rom. viii. 1.) (4) It delivers from the everlasting miseries of hell. The psalmist tells us that "the wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God."—(Ps. ix. 17.) The Lord Jesus proclaims the same truth with greater power and

vividness than any of His prophets or apostles. Witness His testimony concerning the rich man who lifted up his eyes in hell, being in torments, and also the man without the wedding garment who is cast into outer darkness where there is weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth. It is from the same mouth we hear the words—The wicked “shall go away into everlasting punishment.”—(Matt. xv. 46.) O my friends, people nowadays seem to have forgotten that there is such a place as hell, but it exists all the same, and multitudes are hastening with ceaseless rapidity to its devouring flames. Surely it is glad tidings to hear of a way of deliverance from this awful danger. How gladly we should welcome the very thought of a salvation such as is offered in the Gospel! Salvation from everlasting woe! Glad tidings of great joy indeed, and truly they are to be pitied who do not realise these tidings to be so. The psalmist knew their value, and sang—“For great is thy mercy toward me; and thou hast delivered my soul from the lowest hell.”—(Ps. lxxxvi. 13.)

4. The greatness of the blessings it confers.

(1) A new spiritual life. We are by nature dead in trespasses and sins, and need a new life. To the soul made sensible of this by God's spirit, the Gospel salvation, when it comes with power, is life from the dead. The soul feels a new power pulsating through its faculties, is taken up with new objects, and moves in a new world. United to Jesus Christ, the light and life of men, the quickened soul enters upon a life of faith which ends in a life of glory. “Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.”—(2 Cor. v. 17.) (2) A complete justification. This blessing consists in the pardon of sin and the imputation of righteousness. The soul is freed from its filthy garments, and clothed with white raiment. It enjoys peace of conscience, and acceptance before God. It rests its hope for eternity on the finished work of Christ, and glories in His righteousness alone. “Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.”—(Rom. v. 1.) (3) A loving adoption. The great salvation also holds forth the offer to the sinner of a loving adoption. If he accepts the offer, he is admitted into God's family. In other words, the criminal who deserves to lie with the devil and his angels throughout eternity is taken from his prison cell and made to sit as a son at the table of the King of kings. “But as many as received him, to them gave he power (or right) to become the sons of God.”—(John i. 12.) (4) A sure sanctification. Christ is made unto His people sanctification. The new-born soul begins to grow in holiness. Sometimes the growth is retarded by opposing forces, sometimes it is hastened by special effusions of God's quickening grace. The Spirit of God will eventually complete the work, and at death the soul will be freed from all sin, and perfectly conformed to the image of Christ. The partakers of this salvation will be at the end of the

day "a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing."—(Eph. v. 27.) (5) A glorious inheritance. We deserve an inheritance of never-ending misery and shame, but here is offered an inheritance of never-ending happiness and glory. You may be at present on the verge of everlasting ruin, but if, as a lost helpless sinner, you accept of the gospel offer, you shall immediately be an heir of everlasting blessedness. This salvation is so great that it raises poor sinners from the lowest hell here to the highest heaven hereafter. Come then, and you are welcome at the free offer of Christ to "an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away."—(1 Peter i. 4.)

The remainder of this discourse will (*D.V.*) appear in next issue.

Professor Story on the Status and Education of F.P. Ministers.

ON the closing day of the Established Assembly, 30th May, the subject of the admission of ministers from other Presbyterian bodies was discussed. Professor Story supported an overture from members of the house on this subject. The overture desired that Act 4, 1896, should be so amended as to apply only to persons who could produce satisfactory evidence of their having received a certain education in Arts and Theology. Dr. Story remarked that since the passing of Dr. Cunningham's Act there had arisen a new body—the Free Presbyterian Church—which claimed the right and privilege of that Act of having their licentiates recognised by other Presbyterian bodies. The new body which "hived" off the Free Church on the occasion of the passing of the Declaratory Act, consisted originally of two ministers and one elder, and Dr. Story expressed doubt whether such a body could canonically grant ordination. It is here stated that the Free Presbyterian Church claimed the right and privilege of having their licentiates recognised by other Presbyterian bodies. No one, we hope, will understand this to mean that our Church has formally claimed the recognition of the other Presbyterian bodies for her licentiates. She has never asked their recognition in one way or another. But if Dr. Story means that our Church by claiming in her standards to be a Presbyterian Church, inferentially claims for her licentiates an equal footing with those of other Presbyterian bodies, he is quite at liberty to draw the inference. Dr. Story goes on to say that "the new body consisted originally of two ministers and an elder." Of course, our learned professor is profoundly oblivious to the fact that ours is not a new body at all, but an old body, namely, the Church of Scotland Free. His ignorance, however, does not change in the least the

actual state of the case. To say that it consisted originally of two ministers and one elder, gives the wrong impression that there was only one elder in it. The fact is that forty elders would be much nearer the mark. No doubt in our Deed of Separation the name of only one elder occurs along with the two ministers, for one was quite sufficient to make up a Presbyterial quorum. Professor Story, in his endeavour to bemean our body as much as possible, expresses the doubt whether it could canonically grant ordination. We fail to see the ground for the doubt. A regularly constituted Presbytery of two ministers and one elder has all the rights and privileges of a Presbytery in the Christian Church, as much as a Presbytery containing ten times as many office-bearers. Dr. Story's expression of doubt suggests the conduct of the jester rather than that of the serious man of business.

He further says:—"Some of the men engaged in the ministry of the new Church were men without the educational qualifications which the Church of Scotland regarded as necessary." Now this is a statement that Dr. Story would require to have very good ground for making, and where he has got his information we cannot tell. We are in a general way aware of the requirements of the Established Church, and do not know any of our ministers whose education is behind its standard. Recently one of them joined the Establishment, but we are certain he cannot be pointed at as an instance of inferior scholarship. At present we have six ministers who have been ordained since this body was constituted. Of these, two were very distinguished students in Arts and Theology, and have the degree of M.A., while the other four passed through a regular course of study in the two departments mentioned, some of them taking a high place in several of their classes. We have no desire to boast, but make these statements solely for the sake of truth.

Professor Story concludes by saying:—"It is quite within the competence of the Free Presbyterian Church to ordain some of the crofters who did ministerial work, but who have no more education than was given at a village school, and so soon as that was done, these licentiates were eligible to any parish in Scotland. The possibility was rather serious. He moved in the lines of the overture." Here the professor doesn't venture to say our Church has ordained or will ordain men who have had only a village education, but, by suggesting its competence to do so, throws out the insinuation that this is a very likely thing to take place. We emphatically protest against the idea that our Church has given any ground for such suggestions or insinuations, and affirm that she has paid careful attention from the beginning to the education of her ministry. Certainly she has employed, apart from the regular ministry, worthy men as catechists and exhorters, who have been conducting meetings on the Lord's day, but these have never infringed on the ministerial office. We have yet to learn that the employment of these men is contrary to the laws of the ancient

Church of Scotland. Well it would be for the present Established Church if she had as many ministers of sound attainments in Christian knowledge and piety as we have of catechists and exhorters.

In conclusion, we remark that pity mingles with indignation at the zeal displayed by Dr. Story and his friends for intellectual education in the ministry, while they have to all appearance little concern for the overwhelmingly more important qualification, sound piety. What is all the education in the world without the new birth? An educated but an unregenerate ministry is the greatest curse that can befall any country, and that is what poor Scotland is largely afflicted with in these days. We fear most of the Scottish Churches are being wrecked on the rock of education. If a man is fairly well educated, has a little touch of literary culture, and is comparatively moral in his life that is all that is required. He may be as dead as a stone spiritually, may not be able to preach a word without paper, or utter a prayer that is not a piece of laborious formalism, and yet he is counted a man of satisfactory education for the Gospel ministry. He has got the minor literary education, the dead external accoutrements, but the spiritual life and understanding to employ them aright for the glory of God and the good of souls, he is utterly destitute of. There is a danger even that the Scottish Churches at their best may err in this matter. We must be guided by the Scriptures in this as well as the other affairs of the Church of Christ. Witness the apostles. Were they men of learning and high educational attainments? The most of them in this respect were "unlearned and ignorant men." The apostle Paul himself, the most learned of them all, was very chary about giving prominence to man's eloquence, wisdom, philosophy, and science in the declaration of the Gospel. Let us, therefore, beware of rushing into an extreme on this point. Some ministers in the past who were highly honoured of God in the conversion of sinners, and the edification of saints, were men of only moderate education. In England the same thing has been exemplified. Our modern worshippers of the god of learning would have very effectively shut out from the ministry of the Gospel such men as John Bunyan and C. H. Spurgeon. These, it may be replied, were men of great natural gifts, suitable for the work. But the point is, they had not what is commonly rated learning, and therefore would have been excluded from the ministry by Professor Story. We believe piety and natural gifts to be two essential qualifications, but we protest against this invariable demand for a formal standard of mere book learning.

"BE not deceived: God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting."—(Gal. vi. 7, 8.)

Diary of the Rev. Alexander Macleod, of Uig and Rogart.

(Continued from page 59.)

UIG, April 30th, 1826.—Preached from the 32nd of Jeremiah, 40th verse, on the Everlasting Covenant.

1st, Considered the awful state of those who are under the broken covenant,—under the curse in every duty, and their seeming blessings given to and enjoyed by them under the curse.

2nd, The properties of the new covenant (1) eternal, (2) of peace, (3) of promise, (4) new, (5) well-ordered, (6) made sure in all things, etc.

3rd, The Administrator of the blessings of the covenant who gives the legacy to the legatees, even to the elect of God. (1) He does this in the capacity of a prophet, witness, and interpreter. He explains His own testament, and executes and administers the same. (2) He acts as an advocate or prevailing intercessor in whose hands no case has ever failed. (3) He acts as a powerful king. He administers conviction, justification, conversion, life, light, power, sanctifying grace in every duty and trial, sanctification and eternal life.

I have this day preached on the Everlasting Covenant, and have cause to be thankful that, notwithstanding the trouble and uneasiness of mind I had through the week, the Lord delivered me on His blessed day from distracting cares and unnecessary and unavailing anxiety. Holy One, support Thy children in the midst of all the trials they may meet with, in whatever direction they may come their way, and prepare me for new trials and new duties. If I suffer, let me do so in thy name and for thy name-sake, and do thou acquit thy people in thine own good time from the aspirations and groundless allegations of their enemies. Who shall condemn them? It is Christ that died for their sins, and rose again for their justification.

June 4th.—Our meetings are continued, and our young converts are making progress in knowledge and experience. One of them under sharp conviction, in stating his case to me, said that he thought every single letter in the Decalogue was as the continual noise or sound of a tremendous trumpet against him, and that he felt himself often so near the vengeance of the holy law to be executed against him, that he imagined there was not the thickness of a leaf of paper between him and the immediate execution of all the threatenings of Sinai against himself. In remarking a rebuke that one of the brethren gave him and others, he said, making use of a military term of chastisement, "O what a blessed flogging we got to-day; it levelled me with the ground as a sword would do." "O how much we need such close and

faithful dealings, and not building us up on our own self-righteousness," he added. Another of these, who began to pray publicly, when praying for those missionaries who left their native land and their all for the spread of the gospel, said, "Lord, be with those who went to distant lands to promote the interests of thy kingdom with their portion of the world (meaning the Bible) in their pockets." "The Bible," he said, "is their bank, their castle, their lands and possessions, their all. Lord be with them, be their all."

6th.—Although we have carried on our public meetings here for a considerable time past, we have had no private meeting. We have regretted exceedingly that we have not had it conveniently in our power to establish such a meeting hitherto. But to-day a private meeting was opened in the parish, which I trust will be countenanced by the Lord of the vineyard, and to which He will vouchsafe His special and effectual blessing. The regulations of this meeting are not yet fully drawn up, nor are they intended to be drawn up but as time, circumstances, and experience may call for additions to them. The first resolution is that none will be admitted as members of the meeting but such as are in the opinion of the Church partakers of real grace. They are to be examined upon their faith, change and experience, and though in the opinion of Christian charity we might receive scores into this meeting, yet, this being the first private meeting ever opened in the parish in the memory of man, we intend to form a precedent for our successors, namely, to receive none into this meeting but such as give evidences that they are decidedly pious, and thus we exclude all others from this meeting, however promising in their first appearance. But if they are found to grow in grace, knowledge and conversation becoming the gospel of Christ, the meeting is always open and its members are ready to receive such with the open arms of joy and consolation. But whilst we exclude the generality of professors from this meeting, the public meetings are still continued and a general invitation is given to all to attend them. May the Lord make their members living members, and greatly bless us.

July 11th.—This day I again preached from Jeremiah xxxii. 40, on the Everlasting Covenant, when I only enlarged upon the circumstances in which the Surety of this covenant for the Church was placed with regard to His relation to angels, saints, the world and hell. They had nothing for this Surety to pay the debt. The Father also was to hide His face, and the Holy Spirit was not to have full scope, until this glorious Surety paid all the debt by magnifying the law through His life and ignominious death.

January 1st, 1827.—The years of time pass away unexpectedly, but the years of eternity shall never end. Blessed be Thy holy name that there are better years and a better country reserved for all Thy faithful followers. Enable me to be active in the line of duty, that with my loins girt and my lamp burning I may be ready

at the coming of the Son of Man. Be praised for Thy wonderful kindness to me and mine during the past year, and renew my age in Thy service at the commencement of this year, and during my days on earth. Thy merciful interpositions and Thy defence from my inveterate enemies, and those that hate Thee, O Lord, will be recorded by me in praises of Thee during my pilgrimage on earth.

March 27th.—Since the 3rd of February last I have not been able to preach. It has been Thy holy will to visit me with sickness that threatened to terminate my life on earth. But when despaired of by all human witnesses that saw my low condition, Thou hast been pleased to rebuke my complaint and to withhold the rod. Nothing is impossible for Thee, O Lord. I thank Thee for the special care thou hast taken of me during this part of Thy striking visitation. Thou hast been pleased to remove my bodily pains in the time of need, and Thou hast kept my mind serene and composed, looking for the coming of the Bridegroom, and expecting that it was the fixed time of my departure. When that hour may arrive, O grant that I may be prepared, and may the remaining part of my life be more improved than ever in making my calling and election sure. I thank Thee for the interest Thy people have taken in me during my sickness, and their prayers on my behalf. I thank Thee for the natural conviction that ungodly people have, that I have not preached or laboured in vain, and that my conversation has (through grace), been in any measure agreeable to my profession to the conviction of all. To Thy name be praise! Grant that the dispensation may be eminently blessed to me, that I may be refined out of the furnace and made more spiritually minded and more zealous in Thy service and useful in my generation. And O grant that it may also be blessed to my people and to all concerned in this island, that the visitation may not be unto death, but for Thy glory and for the good of immortal souls.

(To be Continued.)

Dr. Whyte's Assembly Addresses.

IT may seem to some of our readers that we are in the habit of taking too frequent notice of the sayings and doings of the gentleman whose name heads this article. Our chief apology, if apology is required for this frequency, is the fact that Dr. Whyte is regarded by a vast number of people as "the greatest power for good" in the Scottish pulpit. While admitting that he is a preacher of exceptional gifts, and occupies, as pastor of Free St. George's, Edinburgh, a position of great influence, we have quite a low estimate of his power for good, and are disposed to think—not without valid reasons—that he has been the instrument in his

time of considerable evil in our land. The recent addresses he has delivered, as moderator of the Free Assembly, confirm our opinion. They are examples of a defective theology and of great inconsistencies. He begins with laudation of Newman, the pervert to the Romish Church, and finishes up with that of Ebenezer Erskine, who regarded Rome as Antichrist, "the man of sin and son of perdition." It is also the vainest talk, as we have remarked more than once, to characterise the U.P.'s as "Ebenezer Erskine's children," and everyone who knows the distinctive testimonies of the Original Secession and United Presbyterian bodies will corroborate our statement. There are many things open to criticism in Dr. Whyte's addresses, but we forbear at present. We have happened on a rather unexpected critic. The editor of *The British Weekly* begins an article on Dr. Whyte's addresses with unbounded praise, but proceeds to criticise his discourses in general, and points out defects in them which take away all their glory. Let it be noted that this critic is a promoter of modern religious ways, a devoted admirer of the Free Church, of which he was at one time a minister, and withal a lover of Dr. Whyte, and it may be seen that his criticism is all the more valuable. For a writer in an antiquated production like the *Free Presbyterian Magazine* to write severe things of Dr. Whyte is counted only the offspring of ignorance and narrow-mindedness, but what is to be said to the highly cultured editor of *The British Weekly* when he rises up to wield the sword of adverse criticism? The quotations given hereafter we endorse in their salient features, but are not committed to everything in them, such as the idea that Dr. Whyte is one with the Puritans in their view of the evil of sin and the claims of righteousness, for we think he is defective here also.

"Dr. Whyte is in a certain sense a Puritan, but only in a very narrow sense. He begins where the Puritans begin, and his whole heart and conviction are with them so long as they insist upon the evil of sin, on its presence in every heart, even in the heart of the regenerate, on its presence to the very last. He is also with them wholly in their insistence on the inexorable requirements of the Divine law. He is aware, as they were aware, of the gulf that separates the holiest believer in the world from the perfect fulfilment of righteousness. And he is with them also in the fullest sense in their glorification of Christ, and almost exceeds them in his reverence for the saints and for the triumph of grace in their hearts. But he is not at all with them, in the same sense, when it comes to what was the central part of their thought and experience, the Divine plan of redemption and salvation. Between sin and the likeness to Christ, the Puritans put the atonement and the work of the Holy Spirit. The whole force of their intellects and their hearts was spent in tracing the steps of the way of salvation. Take, for example, such a great treatise as Owen's 'Death of Death in the Death of Christ,' and his 'Dissertation on

the Divine Justice.' Owen starts with sin, and he ends with the final perfection, but his concern is mainly with the road between the two. For the Puritan theologians Christ did not come so much to reveal what sin was as to remove it, and reveal how it was removed. And so the Puritans set the atonement in the midst of their minds, and let it tinge and colour all their thoughts and beliefs, so that the sun in their sky was Jesus dying in their room and place and stead, and the ascended Lord Himself was always the Lamb slain and immaculate in the midst of the throne of God. They believed that the Christian revelation as to the work of Christ and the interpretation and succour of the Holy Spirit showed the steps by which sin might be completely and unchangeably pardoned, and also how it might be subdued, even though not wholly eradicated in this life. They believed in the victory of grace, here and in these conditions, and in the joy that results from victory. Their genuine disciples have always followed them in this, as indeed they followed the New Testament. Even so great an exponent of the doctrine of the old and new nature co-existing as Rabbi Duncan would say that he did not care to speak strongly against the doctrine of Christian perfectibility in this world. 'I have less quarrel,' he said, 'with a man holding the doctrine of perfection, but I would not like to see the man who thinks himself perfect.' The true Puritan theologian is altogether devoted to the investigation and explanation of the redeeming grace of God in Christ Jesus, and his eyes are always fastened on the saving obedience of Christ from the arms of Mary to the arms of death. What is pre-eminently needed in these days is the help given by such men as Dale and Spurgeon in translating into current speech and into the terms of living Christian experience their conclusions. In this Dr. Whyte has not given the smallest help. He has most searchingly enforced their doctrine of the corruption of man's heart, but we have no doubt that the Puritans themselves would have deemed his doctrine of sin as it stands by itself as strangely morbid, unreal, strained, and exaggerated, as applied to the possibilities and the demands of the Christian life. We do not hesitate to say that on this point there would be a complete consensus of the Puritan theologians, and we should like an opportunity of proving it. Not that Dr. Whyte rejects their formal doctrine. Far from it. He accepts it humbly and fully. He may even have made it a living part of himself, but he has not made it a living part of his preaching. What would be more characteristic alike of his strength and his weakness than the list he gives of the subjects he would now preach from? 'Pascal's profound inquietude'—yes, but not a mention of Christ and Him crucified or of the Holy Spirit. They are there by implication, no doubt, but is that enough?

"The absence of clear and definite views of the work of the Holy Spirit leads to the chief omission in these addresses—the want of a clear distinction between Nature and Grace."

Brief Notes of Sermons.

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

V.

"When the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept."—(MATT. xxv. 5).

I. A testing time to the Church: "When the bridegroom tarried."

II. The condition of the Church during this time, or the result of the tarrying: "they all slumbered and slept."

I. The testing time for the Church extends from the time of first profession till death. Who are the wise and the foolish virgins spoken of in this parable? The wise are those who entered on a profession after a work of grace was wrought in their souls, and the foolish those who entered on that profession graceless. As to what things are they to be tested? They are to be tested as to three things—a work of faith, a labour of love, and the patience of hope.

1. A work of faith, or life of faith; what does it imply? It implies the realising of things eternal and unseen, on God's testimony regarding them: "Thus saith the Lord." It further implies a depending trust in the Lord Jesus for all needed supply, and a seeking of divine help to reach the grace that is stored up in Christ. Faith in the Word of God is a testing thing. By nature we are inclined to believe only what we see and touch. The flesh craves things palpable, but faith takes things on divine testimony. Trusting in the Lord is a trust of dependence. By nature we are altogether averse to being indebted to anyone for what we need. Our great desire is to be even independent of God. To be indebted to divine, free, sovereign grace, that is against the grain indeed. But faith feeds on Christ; it leans on Him. If the work of faith is in us, we will feel that we have no power to come to Christ. Our cry will be—"Draw us, bring us." Our pride of heart will rebel against this feeling of utter weakness.

2. Labour of love. What is that? Work done out of love to the Lord. Why are we here to-day? You will say—"Coming to the house of the Lord is work for the Lord." But why are you here? Because I was here last Sabbath, because it is the habit to come. And is that labour of love? No. Labour of love implies or requires self-denial. We must be nothing, that the glory of God may be seen. We must be willing to lose our honour. What is our honour compared to the glory of God? We must have no will of our own: "Not my will but thine be done." That was the way with the Master. He did and suffered the will of His Father. He could not take to suffering, as suffering, and we are not called upon to do so. But He could and did say—after saying, "If it be possible, let this cup pass from me,"—"Not my will but thine be done." In times of prosperity we are prone to

take our ease and our own way. Where is this man's zeal now? He has gone back, the stupor of worldliness is on him. And, when trial comes, where is the faith, the trust? O when, in our espousals, we thought the time was to be short, we looked not for this wilderness journey. But the Lord tarries to test us. This trial has come, and it tests us whether our joys are to be found in this world. A good season comes for the farmer or the business man, and a prospect of more gain. But trial has come, one of the family cut off, or business gone wrong, and we are overcome with sorrow. It ought not so to be. If our home is here, then our loss or sorrow when trouble comes is a home sorrow. But if our home is above, we ought not to sorrow as if we had no hope. If for a home we looked to being "for ever with the Lord," sorrow would not overwhelm us. We must be without strength of our own in front of this labour of love. If we have the glory of God as our great end in view, we will be without strength. As honest men, God's people will feel utterly weak in front of great work. What am I before such work? In the sight of God, what am I or what can I do? But worm Jacob will not creep back from the work, he will hide in the hollow of the hand of the God of Jacob, and in His hand will thresh the mountains. "Oh," you will say, "If that is to be the way, I have had enough of such work." Men who have entered on a life of profession, without grace, will be tested here.

3. The patience of hope. If we have in us the patience of hope, we will have our joys in heaven. This is not our rest. Are your chief joys to be found in conversation with heaven? This is not our home. We have the hope, when our life and work are over here, of going to be for ever with the Lord.

II. The result of the bridegroom's tarrying. In conclusion, I have time only to indicate what I meant to say about the result of the testing time. "They all slumbered and slept"—all the wise as well as the foolish. Dr. Macdonald once said, in speaking from these words, "If the wise had not slept, it had not been so easy for the foolish to sleep on the pillow beside them." They waxed self-confident, because of cold indifference to the glory and presence of the Master, and the stupor of sleep, the want of grace in exercise, came upon them. O, to be awake and ready when the Bridegroom cometh! O, to be up and doing while it is called day!

VI.

"So shall we ever be with the Lord."—I THESS. iv. 17.

There are three classes apart from Christ who have no hope in death. The first is those who are asleep in carnal ease, who forget that they must die; the second, those who shrink from death in slavish dread; and the third, those who are intoxicated by a vain hope. But who are those spoken of in the text?

I. Those who, united to Christ, have a right to heaven.

II. Those who, conformed to Christ, are being prepared for heaven.

III. Those who, having communion with Christ, rejoice in the hope of heaven.

IV. Those who look for rest, joy, and glory in heaven, in being for ever "with the Lord."

I. Those who, united to Christ, have a right to heaven. No one can be united to Christ without the regenerating power of the Spirit. Why do I speak of the working of the Spirit? First, because Christ preached it; second, because His apostles preached it; and, thirdly, because a work of grace is needed as surely as a word of grace. Christ preached both. To be united to Christ is to be one with Him, a member of His, and to have in Him a right to all the provisions of the everlasting covenant. There is nothing for any sinner apart from the covenant of grace, and Christ is its head. Therefore, united to Him, as the head of that covenant, we have a right to all it contains. On the very day of our union to Him we have a right to heaven. He secured it for us by His righteousness, and clothed in His righteousness, imputed to us, we have a right to heaven.

II. Those who, conformed to Christ, are being prepared for heaven. To be conformed to Him is to be made holy. "Without holiness no man shall see the Lord." There are some who dream of heaven without holiness. But the heirs of glory not only long for perfect holiness there, but pant for grace here to enable them to serve the Lord. They pant for grace for serving and suffering here. There is a promise of sanctification, and they long for its fulfilment. Some expect heaven without that grace. God's presence in heaven demands that holiness should be there. "Evil shall not dwell with thee, nor fools stand in thy sight." Awful is the glory of the divine presence; perfect must be the holiness where He manifests His glory. But God's love demands it. Heaven is the home of God's children, and His love demands that they be holy, that they may enjoy that home. They shall be presented at last "without spot or wrinkle or any such thing."

III. Those who, having communion with Christ, rejoice in the hope of heaven. What hope of heaven can we have, but as we have communion with Christ? The purity of heaven fills me with fear, but, as I get near Christ and cast myself on Him, I know He can make me clean, and His promise—"I will, be thou clean"—comforts me. Heaven seems new and strange to the soul. The things which are unseen and eternal are strange to us, however much we think of them. To see in heaven those who were near and dear to us by the ties of nature and Christian brotherhood won't make heaven to us. But the Lamb will be there—our Brother, Head, loving Friend, Shepherd, and Guide—and then that will be heaven where He is. He with whom we held loving fellowship here by faith, He will be there.

IV. Those who look for rest, joy, and glory in heaven, in being for ever "with the Lord." If I saw not the Lord in the text as Jesus Christ, then might my soul fear the presence of God. But the Lord Jesus, the Lamb who was slain in my nature, whom I can recognise as Him who spent thirty-three years on earth, who rejoices in the songs that go up continually to God from His blood-bought ones, to be with Him for ever, *that* will be joy and rest. Yes, for it is the fulfilment of all my expectations, the goal of all my desire. This is rest. Yes, for there we are in full possession of all the provision of God, and Christ dispenses it as "living fountains of water." He can do justice to the Father's stores, and will act well to His blood-bought people. This is glory; yes, the highest that can be given to man—to be for ever "with the Lord." It will be joy also to see the ministering spirits who have done so much for us here. It will be joy to see all the redeemed of God. What can be wanting to perfect joy for ever?

Have we the hope of being ever with the Lord? I hear one say—"I don't care." I lay a summons on each of you all this day to prepare to quit the body. To some I say—"When they say, Peace and safety, sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail on a woman with child, and they shall not escape." I hear one say—"I will not obey the summons till I ask Christ about it. I came and cast myself on Him, and He said, 'Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.'" I hear another say—"I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day." May He grant thee thy hope! Amen.

The late Mary Cameron (Allan), Strontian.

THE natural beauty of Strontian, with its surroundings, is one of the finest views upon which the eye can feast in all the Highlands of Scotland. A panorama of hills and mountains encloses it right round, leaving an opening towards the south where the Strontian river falls gently into Lochsunart. On the east side of this river, laid out in beautiful parks, is the home farm, while on the west the humble cottages of the crofters are strewn for the distance of four miles on the hill side. On the west side, about a mile and a half up the valley on a beautiful green mound, stands a modest little cottage. Within this humble dwelling lived, latterly, two sisters, Mary Cameron and her sister Chirsty, who survives her. It is a model of cleanliness. The affection of these two sisters towards one another was boundless. Mary was a woman of known piety for more than fifty years. The most of the lilies of Christ's garden are to be found, not among the mighty and noble of this earth, but among the poor. God passes by the stately mansions of the proud, and makes His abode with the poor in spirit. "For thus saith the high and

lofty one that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is holy : I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones." 'That such was the case in this humble cottage is without the least doubt. Many a time we could say in it, "It is good for us to be here."

Mary Cameron was born at Strontian in the year 1820. Her parents were much respected by all who knew them. She lived without God and without the hope of the gospel until she was about twenty-three years of age. The Spirit of God then caused her to incline her ear to the truth of God spoken by that most eminent servant of Jesus Christ, Rev. Alexander Macintyre, a man whose tears were abundant, bearing forth precious seed, and whose sheaves shall be heavy as his crown of rejoicing in the day of Christ. The change in Mary was most real and durable. From that day forth her great and chief concern was how she might live consistently with her profession, and glorify God in her daily walk and conversation. By grace she was enabled throughout her long life to do this above many of the Lord's people, as all who intimately knew her can testify. She was a woman that read a good many of the works of sound theologians, and being possessed of a clear intellect and a very retentive memory she could quote *verbatim* not only sentences but paragraphs of their profoundest thoughts. Her mind was well balanced towards, and her judgment very matured with, the soundest conclusions regarding the doctrines and principles of the Church of Christ. She concluded nothing definitely but by the Word of God. Being a woman of exemplary modesty she spoke very sparingly in company, especially among men, but alone with intimate friends she was, in spiritual matters, both very inquiring and communicative. She was so entirely acquiescent in the sovereignty of God, and was so reconciled to His ruling both in spiritual and temporal matters, that when one complained to her about her own dark and forlorn state, she said, "While we can say, 'Who knoweth if He will return yet and leave a blessing behind Him' we should not complain." She set a very high value upon the public means of grace, and walked long distances to hear the Word preached. This was, in her case, a great effort to fulfil a duty to her own soul, to her fellow-creatures, and to the glory of God, for she was quite crippled on one foot. This defect arose through a severe fall she got in her infancy. At home she had to walk two miles to church, and this she performed regardless of wind and rain. None, while she had health and strength, could be more regularly in the house of God than she. The interval between the services she spent in the wood near the church. This she did to the regret of the people who are exceptionally kind and hospitable. Mary had always the company of one or another of those who loved and valued her in these secret haunts. Private prayer was her natural

element. Even while in company we often noticed her lips moving in supplications and prayer. This was the strong fort to which she ever resorted. The Sabbath day was her delight, and she honoured it as the holy of the Lord. The early hours of that blessed day found her at the grave, like Mary, seeking the fellowship of Christ. Her pleading there for the true ministers of Christ, and for the people of God throughout the whole world, as well as for those whom she knew and ardently loved, was both sincere and persevering. In her latter years she was unable to walk any distance from her house, but her interest in everything pertaining to the cause of Christ did not abate in the least degree. She grieved much for the growing darkness around her, and for the people whom she saw getting careless and vain. On being told of one who at one time showed some respect for the means of grace but had now quite ignored them, she expressed her grief by remarking that such "counted themselves unworthy of eternal life." The flood of declensions and errors which has filled the Free Church caused her much grief. She was in full sympathy with those who separated from that body for the sake of truth and conscience. She loved the principles of the Church of the Reformation too dearly to abandon them for Satan's devices. The Free Presbyterian Church has lost in her one who wrestled much for its prosperity at the throne of grace.

As a friend she was most faithful. Nothing could surpass her hospitality. Though she was never possessed of much of this world's goods she had always something to spare for others, and from the bountiful way she gave, things looked as if her store was inexhaustible. So it was, for the Lord liberally supplied all her needs to the end. Her removal has caused a great blank, not only among her neighbours, but also among her many friends and acquaintances throughout the land. Her amiable disposition and sterling value as a friend endeared her to many who understood not where her great strength lay. Her neighbours were like brothers and sisters to her, for which indefatigable kindness may they be rewarded of the Lord God of Israel, and for which we desire to thank them in the name of all Mary's friends in the Lord. We feel deep sympathy for her poor sister bereaved, in her old age, of such a precious companion.

Mary Cameron was a woman of delicate modesty even in her reproofs, of great carefulness and watchfulness in her daily walk and conversation, of unchanging and ever increasing affection for the true people of God, of an ever deepening sense of her own unworthiness and sinfulness by nature, of an ever growing realisation of the preciousness of Christ, and of an ever enlarging earnest desire that all the kingdoms of this world should become the kingdoms of the Lord and of His Christ. She has gone to be with Christ, and with many of His people whom she loved so well on earth. May the Lord in His infinite mercy raise up witnesses for Himself in this dark and cloudy day. N. C.

The Union Debate in the Free Assembly.

QUOTATIONS FROM "SCOTSMAN" ARTICLE.

BY a majority of 486 to 41, the Free Church Assembly adopted Principal Rainy's motion in favour of sending the question of Union with the United Presbyterian Church down to the Presbyteries. This is an important step in the direction of union, but the last stage on the road thither is not yet entered upon. It is only the stage of widespread discussion and controversy that is now begun. Every Presbytery in the country will in the course of the current year become an arena of discussion, if not of controversy. Then provision is made in the motion for the communication of the proposals for Union by the Presbyteries to the kirk-sessions, and every session may become an arena of discussion and controversy. The Free Church, like other Presbyterian Churches, enjoys representative government, and its constitution contains no plebiscite or referendum. The laity of the Church will not be directly consulted; but it will be within the power of sessions, if they please, to call congregational meetings, and it may be that in some or even many cases the controversy will spread to the congregations. On the other hand, if, as seems to be the common belief, the Church generally is very little interested in the proposed Union, the Presbyteries may be left to deal with the question as they please without popular influence and guidance. Hitherto the Union has been purely a clergyman's question, and so it may remain to the end. Supposing—what is practically certain—that a majority of the Presbyteries express approval of the general scheme, it will remain for the next General Assembly to approve of an Act—or what in Parliament would at that stage be called a Bill—formulating the terms of Union; and this Act must be sent down to the Presbyteries next year for approval or disapproval. If approved by a majority of the Presbyteries, it would come before the Assembly of 1900, and might then be adopted and become the law of the Church. . . . There is one question, for example, on which the two Churches are at discord, and are drifting daily farther apart. The United Presbyterian Synod has declared strongly for secular education in Board schools, and the Free Church is resolutely wedded to Use and Wont. The differences between them as to the Claim of Right, and what Principal Rainy calls the vague phrase, the Establishment principle, are not very clear to the minds of the majority of people in either Church. But when it comes to be clearly understood in the Free Church that Voluntarism inevitably involves the exclusion of the Bible as well as the Shorter Catechism from Board schools and training colleges, that will furnish a point—in deference to Principal Rainy we shall not call it a principle—of which the unsophisticated mind can take a clear grasp, and it may prove a greater obstacle to Union than any abstract principle or doctrine. . . . The

proposed fusion has not on the face of it the semblance of a union for the sake of union. It has on the face of it the appearance of an alliance for the sake of contention. We know that Principal Rainy would call this a perverted view of it. But there is a world of truth in the saying attributed to an eminent United Presbyterian minister, that the combination of the two Churches will make "a gude fechtin' mixture." It is because the public, rightly or wrongly, regard the proposed union as a union springing from rivalry, jealousy, and deep-seated enmity, and tending towards future ecclesiastical and political turmoil and battle, that they cannot regard it with enthusiasm.

There is another obvious reason for the lack of enthusiasm in the Free Church. Not all Principal Rainy's eloquence and subtlety of reasoning, aided by the Junior Clerk's new reading of Free Church history, can disguise the fact that the union is to be attained by the elimination of all that was distinctive in the testimony and principles of the Free Church. . . . The people of the Free Church can hardly be expected to become jubilant or enthusiastic over a surrender. They know that they are going to pull down their old flag and march over to the Voluntaries. The Voluntaries are not coming over to them—are not going to budge one step to meet them. The United Presbyterians are to concede nothing, unless it be a concession to receive the Free Church with some of its impedimenta, some scraps of its formulas divested of their peculiar meaning, and some of its superstitions, like its attachment to Use and Wont in schools.

Letters of the late Rev. Archibald Cook.

(IX.)

DAVIOT FREE MANSE, 5th January, 1854.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—I received your two letters since I wrote you. I feel obliged by your sending me notice of Martha's death. The dear person has been taken away from the vale of tears to the mansions of bliss and rest. She now enjoys what she saw by faith, by means of His own Word, but infinitely above what she could comprehend. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." Your excellent ones are getting fewer, and the world is becoming more and more a wilderness. Your refuges are getting fewer, but the Saviour remains the same. Perhaps this is only the answer of your prayers. I am sure you often pray that He would take all your refuges from you, that you might come to Himself as a little child. It is precious to have one to whom a person may open his case with some liberty and confidence, yet he must be put off these breasts and come to Himself. "It was but a little that I passed from them, but I found him whom my soul loveth." We must

allow the Sovereign to act according to His own will. "What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter." I know things may appear dark to you in various ways, but the Saviour will bring light out of darkness and order out of confusion. Jacob thought when Joseph was taken from him, then Simeon, and at last Benjamin, that all these things were against him, but they were all working together for the fulfilment of the promise. So will all the dark providences that will meet the gracious soul till death. Many things must come out of the heart before one comes to be as a new-born babe, desiring the sincere milk of the Word. When they come to die, they must say that all they met with was little enough to wear out the love of sin and to bring back the love of the soul to God, therefore this should be the desire of the creature, the sanctified use of all. This is the end for which these things are sent, but it is only by little and little this may be expected. "Cast all your care upon him, for he careth for you." Let all your requests be made known to God, and the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your heart and mind through Christ Jesus.

I wish, when this storm is over, that you could come and remain with us for a week or two. Write me soon. I shall be happy to hear from you.

Yours sincerely,

ARCHD. COOK.

(X.)

DAVIOT FREE MANSE, 22nd March, 1854.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—I long much to hear from you, and to know how you are. . . . I am full of infirmities. Some of these are known to myself, and others are hidden from me, but the Saviour knows them all infinitely better than any creature, and yet He bears with His poor, broken-hearted ones, sympathises with them, covers them, yea, looks on them in His own love, perfection, and unchangeableness. "Thou art fair, my love, thou art fair, there is no spot in thee." But the Church said, "I am black, for the sun hath looked on me." It is the rising of the Sun that will reveal these to any person in himself, so as to create self-loathing, and the nearer He comes the clearer these will appear, so as to affect the spirit of the creature. It is thus any person comes to know experimentally that he has lost his original blessedness and loveliness, and how far he is removed from God and holiness. This being revealed, he must die to self-love and esteem, and begin to loathe himself in dust and ashes. Something will now appear in the Gospel offers, and in these words, "Except I wash thee, thou hast no part in me." This brings him about His feet. The Saviour begins to open Himself as the fountain of grace and holiness, and the creature begins to act faith on Him, looking for some drops from Him that would go through him and make him holy. It is

now that he knows the value of the promises, creating hope that these may some time be fulfilled. Abraham received the inheritance in the promise, yet had not the breadth of his foot of it. He was fully persuaded that He was able to perform what He promised. He got such power in the promise as to make him believe that God would do what He said, and so was brought to a dependence on Him, barren as he was. The Lord appointed that His own people be thus brought to live on the promise, and, through the promise, on Himself in this world. As soon as they begin to live, there is in them a desire to be at once holy, free from sin, but will feel their progress in this depends on the sovereignty of God and not on their diligence in the means. Though the Lord appointed means of grace—and these are precious when they are blessed—yet they often think that instead of becoming more holy that they are becoming greater sinners. Yet, in proportion as they are becoming greater sinners, they see all must be of free grace and mercy, and, before they are fit for eternity, there will be nothing to boast of but grace, grace, mercy, mercy. I think I am this night ten times more needful of mercy than I was thirty years ago, and may the Lord make me a greater sinner, until I wholly die to myself and live wholly on Himself, and in Himself as my eternal all.

My dear B—— is to be married to-morrow. May the Lord bless her and make her a blessing. All the rest of the children are well. We had the sacrament at Stratherrick last week: things went in their usual way. My brother is enabled to preach every Sabbath, but is very delicate, and to all appearance will soon follow the way of all the earth. I have not been so strong for some time past, but I am enabled to follow my calling. I see my happiness consists in submission to the will of God, that I may not have any will but His. At times I feel this difficult. Many harassings I went through, yet I feel the old man is still strong. I would like much to see my friends in Glasgow. I understand the cholera is appearing to be severe there. The Saviour takes care of His own. Write me soon: I long to hear from you.

Yours sincerely,

ARCHD. COOK.

The late Hugh Stewart, Glasgow.

NOT till the great day of judgment will it be seen how much the Most High blessed the labours of the godly catechists of the Highlands of Scotland. Some of them were men of uncommon gifts and piety. The crop of witnesses, which sprang up under the teaching of these godly men, headed by not a few faithful ministers, have the stamp till their dying day of the pure milk of the Word of God, by which they were fed in their childhood. The milk-and-water doctrines which have become the plague of poor Scotland for the last thirty years have drawn many

a bitter tear from the eyes of those who, as lambs, were reared among the flock which fed in Bashan and Gilead. Give a lamb good milk, plenty of it, and plenty of sunshine in spring, and you may expect a sheep that will stand to old age the battling of the elements; but let the upbringing of the lamb be the opposite of this, and vitality, courage, and power of endurance will be greatly lacking. The former part of our illustration is exemplified in the life of those godly men, and the latter in that of the weaklings that in many cases rose after them, who are now filling (but only in name) the place held by the godly men that are fast disappearing from our land. The doctrines of the Shorter Catechism, expounded by men filled with the Spirit of God, laid a foundation in the minds of these men, a stone of which the devil, with his vast host of scoffers, could not raze. The subject of the following remarks was one of these noble men.

Hugh Stewart was born in Branault, Ardnamurchan, Argyllshire. His parents were most respectable, and had a large family. About the time that Hugh reached early manhood, a most pious catechist—Mr. Kenneth Ross, a native of Lewis—was sent to Ardnamurchan by the "Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge throughout the Highlands." Many were the blessed fruits of the labours of this godly man. Hugh was among them. Not long after this he left home for Glasgow, where the most of his life was spent. He became an elder in the MacDonald Free Church. His brother, Allan Stewart, was also an elder in the same congregation. He was also a man of eminent piety, and, though younger than Hugh, predeceased him two years. He left the Free Church in 1889, on account of the innovations introduced into it from year to year, and eventually became a member of St. Jude's Free Presbyterian Church, Glasgow, as soon as that congregation was formed in 1893. These two brothers "were lovely and pleasant in their lives, and in their death they were not divided." They left together the MacDonald congregation when their present minister voted for the first time in favour of disestablishment in the Free Church Presbytery of Glasgow, and they went to Hope Street Gaelic Free Church. They held that the establishment principle is Scriptural, and that settled the matter with these brave men. Voluntaryism, with its destructive and demoralising tendencies, had no place in their creed or principles. One who had the privilege of holding fellowship with them handed us the following statement, which we give in full:—"We must confess that the most precious moments we have had on earth were spent in the company of Hugh Stewart, and of his brother Allan. There was a group of men at that time in MacDonald Free Gaelic Church, *i.e.*, Hugh Stewart, Allan Stewart, John Campbell, John Macdonald, Archibald Macintyre, with the holy man of God, Mr. Logan, as their minister, whose labours some of us will not forget while we have a being. Hugh Stewart was a man who would convince anyone having the least

of the discernment of the Spirit, and having the least knowledge of his life in private or in public, as one who underwent the great change from darkness unto light, and from the kingdom of Satan unto God. He was mighty in prayer, and often caused others to feel that he had the ear of the King. He felt and knew the powerful influences of the carnal mind, and that it was of a truth enmity against God and the salvation of his own never-dying soul. He knew the depth of iniquity in his own heart, not because he was worse than others, but because the light of the Spirit of God had illuminated his mind to perceive it above many. The body of sin and death was his daily burden, which caused him to be a wretched man in himself. One could know easily when he got access into the holiest of all through the new and living way, for the joy upon which his soul then feasted could be seen beaming in his countenance. The class of professors to which Hugh Stewart belonged is fast disappearing from our midst."

Hugh Stewart was a very charitable man, and therefore could not bear that which is evil, either in himself or in others. We were often struck by the comprehensive sympathy manifested in his prayers, both in public and in private. Once on a Sabbath day, in a town on the west coast of Argyllshire, he had to engage in prayer in church, and a friend who was present sends us the following:—"He wrestled most earnestly with the Lord that He would have pity upon the low state of His own cause, and upon the great dishonour done to His name, especially by those in high places in the Church, who were busy distorting the truth and putting it out of joint. He then, with great fervency and weight of Spirit, said—'If it is not Thy blessed purpose to have mercy upon them, grant that their folly may be made manifest to all men.'" He often exclaimed in prayer, "O the hope of Israel, the saviour thereof in time of trouble, why shouldest thou be as a stranger in the land, and as a wayfaring man that turneth aside to tarry for a night? Why shouldest thou be as a man astonied, as a mighty man that cannot save?" Another petition often presented by him before the throne was—"Remove, in Thine infinite mercy, this hard rock out of our breasts."

He was a man highly thought of by all the Lord's people who had the privilege of knowing him. At the question meetings he spoke very concisely, and very much to the point. A few of his remarks on one occasion have been sent us, which were spoken in connection with a question based on Heb. vi. 18:—"Who fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us." "Christ, as the holiest, entered into the holiest of all as forerunner; He entered the door of righteousness. This door He keeps open for the entrance, after Himself, of all that believe in His name. Fleeing for refuge from the wrath to come, His people needed a strong foundation for their hope. This foundation is made up of two natures, and the two natures appear in the Scriptures in such places as the storm on the Sea of Galilee, where at once the

manhood and the Godhead of the Redeemer are clearly set forth. As long as they were dead, this people could not flee. When He first found them, He found them dead. He did not leave them so. 'You hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and in sins,' quickened together with Christ, and saved by grace. Now that they are alive, they flee. With life came feeling, and with feeling a sense of their deserts, their state, and their needs. Under the saving teaching of the Spirit regarding their needs, they have to cry—'Draw me, and we will run after thee.' He who has gone before them has prepared a place for them, and will yet come and take them to His rest. He will not leave them to the wild beasts of the wilderness. He has created a thirst in their souls that cannot be satisfied unless they, even now, get moments on the bosom where there is eternal rest. By His dealings with them, He has left them poor and weak, and has created desires in them which communion with God alone can satisfy. They are now emptied vessels. He has spoiled on them the filthy rags of their own righteousness. He has taken them from a fearful pit, and set their feet on the Rock, and has given them a new song, even praises to Him who loved them. If they get but one breath drawn from the bosom of the Father, what boundless joy they have, but this they do not get without its being followed by the waves and tempests of unbelief and darkness."

He lived continually under the Scriptural impression of the shortness of our time on earth. He called his life on earth "the few minutes he was to be here." None felt more their need of being kept from evil than he. This caused all his sayings and doings to have something real in them, as he felt himself hastening to an endless eternity, and looked upon temporal things as mere shadows. He was very humble, and very seldom mentioned any duties in which he engaged, but his humility did not prevent him from warning most faithfully those who held lax views of the Word of God, and of the sanctity of the Lord's day. For the last five years he felt so frail that he could not leave the house (his son's—the Free Church Manse, Inveraray) to come to Glasgow. About a year before he died, a friend who had called to see him asked him, "What have you to say about the conflict of faith?" He replied, "I am convinced that all my enemies will be drowned in the Red Sea." He had no bodily pain up to the last; for this mercy he was devoutly thankful to God. He was up and going about the day previous to his death. An hour or two before the end came, he said—"Oh, how precious to be on the Rock! I am safe there." He then fell asleep for a very short time, and, on awakening, said—"Thou fairer art than sons of men; Thou wilt receive me to glory." The last audible words heard from him were, "Thou wilt not leave me—no, never." Thus, at the ripe age of 78 years, passed from our midst last spring one of those whose absence makes the world poorer and colder to the strangers throughout the land. His remains were interred in the Inveraray

burying place, there to await the morning of the resurrection and the coming of Christ upon the clouds of heaven. For true, unfeigned humility, few equalled him; for sincerity about the cause of Christ in the world, the salvation of his own soul and that of others, none could doubt him; for consistent detestation from first to last of the fickleness of some men in this land about the truth of God, the subordinate standards of the Church of Christ, and their own vows, all gave him the highest credit; and for genuine charity towards, and fervent love of, the true brethren and sisters in the Lord, Hugh Stewart was in the eyes of all eminently distinguished. "The righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance."

N. C.

The Shorter Catechism Commemoration.

IT is 250 years since the completion of the Shorter Catechism, and the commemoration of its fifth jubilee has been publicly celebrated during the year by several of the Churches. A special service for this purpose was held in St. Giles' Cathedral, on Sabbath, 22nd May, during the sittings of the Assemblies. The peculiar significance of this service was the fact that there took part in it Rev. Drs. Mair and Macgregor as representing the Established Church, Rev. Dr. Whyte, Moderator of Assembly, and Principal Rainy as representing the Free Church, and Rev. Professor Orr, as representing the U.P. Church.

The Rev. Dr. Macgregor, in the course of an address on "The Shorter Catechism and its Historical Aspect," complimented the Catechism as one "which, for its intrinsic excellence and beneficent influence in the world, was probably the greatest ever written." But he also took occasion to describe what he considered its defects. He proceeded thus—"To say that the Shorter Catechism was not without its blemishes was simply to say that it was a human production. There were things in it which would be better out of it; there were things out of it which he greatly missed. If it owed its excellence it also owed its value to the stormy character of the age which produced it. It lacked tenderness; it lacked also emotion and fire. It was as clear as a mathematical demonstration, but it was often nearly as cold. It appealed to the head, rarely to the heart. . . . A work, however, which lay to their hand was the authoritative revision of the Shorter Catechism by their Presbyterian Churches of Scotland—Church of Scotland, he should rather say, or better still, the Presbyterian Church of the world—the removal of its defects of omission and commission, and its adjustment to the likes and needs of this better-informed and milder time. In spite, however, of its defects, he knew of no other book which he could recommend to his countrymen as of equal value next to the Bible."

It is all very well to shower verbal praises upon the Shorter Catechism, there is a much better way to commend it to which

Dr. Macgregor and others would do well to take heed. That is to enjoin its gracious life-giving doctrines from the pulpit. This better way, however, is not being adopted, for the most of Scottish preachers are doing their very best at present to drive away evangelical truth from our midst. It is, therefore, mere nonsense for one to go into ecstasies over the value of the Shorter Catechism, while he is at the same time, in practical work, treating its doctrines with neglect and contempt. Dr. Macgregor suggests a revision of the Catechism. We are truly afraid that when all is out of it, and all is into it he and his friends would desire, it will do much evil and little good.

Tus Comhairle an Aonaidh.

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

An Ruadh-Steidh air am bheil iad aig Iarraidh Aonaidh.

(Continued from page 75.)

THA sinn a' faicinn iomchuidh gu 'm biodh an stéidh air am bheil iad a nis a' g' iarraidh aonaidh ri Eaglaisean eile, air a chur fa chomhair ar luchd-dùthcha. Tha còir aig buill agus luchd-leanmhuinn ar n-Eaglais gu 'm biodh fios aca air so, agus mar sin, gu 'n d' thugadh iad breth air an son féin. Chuir an t-Ard-Sheanadh a nuas a chùis so chum nan Cléireah air a bhliadhna-sa gu 'm beachd a thoirt air, agus sin a' dheanamh aithnichte do 'n Ard-Sheanadh air an ath-bhliadhna. 'S iad na briathraibh anns am bheil so air a chur,—“Am bheil, ann am prìomh-fhìrinn no 'm bunait, aobhar-bacaidh air aonadh air stéidh Leabhar Aidmheil a Chreidimh anns an t-seadh anns am bheil e air a ghabheil no air a' thuigsinn leis na h-Eaglaisean fa leth a tha 'g iarraidh aonadh.” Cha 'n 'eil an stéidh so nì sam bith nì 's fèarr nan suidheachadh air an robh e roimhe air chur fa 'r comhair, mur 'eil nì 's miosa. Roimhe bha nì-éigin do bheachd againn ciod a bha iad ag iarraidh, ach anns an oidheirp so cha 'n urrainn duine sam bith innsa ciod is ciall da. Ciod an seadh anns am bheil Leabhar Aidmheil a Chreidimh air a ghabheil le cuid de na h-Eaglaisean, cha 'n 'eil sin air a dheanamh aithnichte dhuinn, agus dh' fheudhadh nach 'eil e nan comas innsa dhuinn. Cha 'n 'eil eadar-dhealachadh sam bith eadar so agus an nì a bha air iarraidh roimhe—'s e sin, Gu 'm biodh na puingibh mu 'm bheil eas-còrdadh eadarainn air an deanamh nan ceisdean fosgailte—'s e sin, Gu feudadh a bheachd féin a bhi aig gach neach air an t-seadh anns an gabh no 'n tuig e Leabhar Aidmheil a Chreidimh, no, gu h-àraidh, cuid de na teagasgan a ta ann, agus nach biodh e 'n

comas Chùirtean na h-Eaglais a thoirt gu cunntas air a shon, do bhrìgh gu feumadh so a bhi na earrann de shuidheachadh na h-Eaglais, air a dhaighneachadh le h-ùghdarras féin. Ma bhios an t-athrachadh so air a dheanamh ann a suidheachadh ar n-Eaglais, cuiridh sin dlòn air neach sam bith o smachd-eaglais, ciod air bith a bheachd a bhios aige; oir cha 'n fheud i an toirt fo smachd an aghaidh a suidheachadh féin. Cha b' urrainn atharrachadh a bhi air a dheanamh ann an stéidh ar n-Eaglais is cunnartiche na so, airson dorus fhosgladh do mhearachdean no do theagasgan mifhallain; ach gu 'm biodh Riaghailt Aidmheil ar Creidimh air a chur air cùl gu h-ìomlan.

Tha caochladh do bheachdean mearachdach air an sgaoileadh am measg an t-sluaigh araon ann an Coinneamhean follaiseach agus ann an Leabhraìn a tha air an sgaoileadh a' measg an t-sluaigh, gu inntinnean an t-sluaigh a dhorchachadh air na fìor aobhàirean comhstri a ta eadarainn; agus cuiridh sinn 'n ar lathair iad air an dòigh a leanas:—

1. “Am bheil am Baisteadh na cheisd fhosgailte 'n ar n-Eaglais no nach 'eil?” Tha e air a chraobh-sgaoileadh a' measg an t-sluaigh gu bheil. Nis, tha sinn a' feòraich no cuir na ceisd riutha, C' uin a bha 'm Baisteadh air a dheanamh na cheisd fhosgailte? Nach fheum fios a bhi aige na daoine 'tha sgaoileadh nam beachdan so nach 'eil firinn ann. Anns an Eaglais Shaoir cha 'n 'eil, 's cha robh, ach an aon riaghailt a thaobh òrdugh a Bhaistaidh air a dhaighneachadh le h-ùghdarras na h-Eaglais. Agus airson so a thuigsinn ni 's fèarr, feumidh sinn an seadh anns am bheil na foclan so, ceisd f-hosgailte, air an gnàthachadh a nis, a' mhìneachadh beagan ni 's farsuinge. 'S e tha air a chiallachadh le ceisd fhosgailte anns an t-seadh anns am bheil iad ag iarraidh sin a thoirt a stigh a nis do 'r n-Eaglais, gu biodh sin air a dheanamh le làn-ùghdarras na h-Eaglais, agus gu 'm biodh e o sin mach, na earrann de stéidh na h-Eaglais, agus na bhunait-shuidh-aichte da feumadh a luchd-dreuchd agus a buill a bhi umhail. Nis, tha sinn a ris a' cur na ceisd, C' uin a rinneadh am Baisteadh na cheisd fhosgailte san t-seadh so; agus so an seadh anns an urrainn na briathribh so a bhi air an co-chur ri aobhar na comhstri, agus cha 'n ann an seadh sam bith eile.

2. A ris, Tha iad ag ràdh gu bheil na Laoidhean nan ceisd fhosgailte 'n ar n-Eaglais. Cha 'n 'eil so co-sheasmhach ri firinn. Cha robh iad riaghailt air an deanamh mar sin le h-ùghdarras na h-Eaglais, agus cha b' urrainn iad a bhi air an deanamh mar sin air dhòigh eile. Nach 'eil e leigadh ris, aobhar sam bith a dh' fheumar a chumail suas le leithid so a réasanachadh mealta, nach 'eil e airidh air earbsa chuir ann, agus gu bheil ni-éigin nach 'eil ceart aig a fhreumh. Their iad gu bheil ceisdean fhosgailte againn cheanna 's an Eaglais. Ma tha, b'e ur gliocas iad sin féin a chur ceart an 'toiseach, mu 'n d' thugadh sinn a stigh tuilleadh dhiubh. Ach tha sinn ag ràdh rithis, nach 'eil so fìor.

Ma 's e earrann do Fhìrinn Dhé a tha iad ag iarraidh a

dheanamh na ceisd fhosgailte, agus b' e so beachd ar n-Eaglais o àm an Athleasachaidh, co thug ùghdarras doibh ceisd fhosgailte dheanamh dhith? 'S e Dia a mhàin do 'm buin so; agus cha bhuin e do Eaglais no do chumbachd sam bith eile. Agus mur d' thug Esan ùghdarras doibh gu sin a dheanamh, ni nach d' thug, is ni da rìreadh an-dàna do Eaglais no do chumbachd sam bith a leithid so a shaorsa a ghabhail dhoibh féin. A thuilleadh air so, is firinn i ris a' bheil glòir Chrìosd mar Eadar-mheadhoinear agus mar Uachdaran rìghrean na talmhainn ceangailte; agus ma dhruidas sinn a mach i o Fhlanuis fhollaiseach ar n-Eaglais, no, mas firinn i a dh' fheudar aideachadh no àicheadh, mar thogras daoine, 's éigin gu 'm bi daoine cionteach de an-dànadas ann am buintainn ri a ghloir ann an rathad a dh' fhagus iad fosgailte do chomharaidhean a dhiomb.

Tha ni eile 'tha iad ag ràdh nach 'eil co-sheasmhach ri firinn. Tha iad ag ràdh gur h-iad na Féin-thoilich (*U.P.'s*) an fhìor, mhuinntir a tha taisbeanadh agus a lean suidheachadh nan ceud *Seséders*, na Erscons, Fishers, Wilsons, agus Moncreifs, ris an robh mòr-chomhfhulangas aig Boston Urramach. Bha iad so nan daoine ainmeil a' dhealaich ri Eaglais na h-Alba o cheann faisg air ceud gu leth bliadhna (1733), cha 'n ann airson ni sam bith a bh' aca 'n aghaidh stéidh no buinaitean na h-Eaglais, ach airson an droch riaghlaidh a bha innte aig an àm sin. Thug iad so an t-ainm so dhoibh féin, "An Seanadh Communeil" (*Associate Synod*). Bhuanich iad so nan aon bhuidhean gu ceithear bliadhna déug an deigh sin (1747). An sin thàinig roinn eatorra, agus dhealbhadh iad nan dà Eaglais. B' e aobhar an Dealachaidh eadar-dhealachadh beachd a dh' éireich eatorra a thaobh earrann de bhòid a bha mar fhìlachaibh air saor-dhaoine de Shaor-Bhaile ann an Alba a' ghabhail,—'s e sin, "Gu 'n robh iad ag aideachadh an fhìor aidmheil diadheachd no creidimh mar a bha sin a nis air aideachadh anns an rìoghachd, agus air a dhainghneachadh le h-ùghdarras a laghanna." A bhuidhean aig an robh saorsa a bhòid so a' ghabhail dh' ainmich iad *Burghers*, agus iadson a bha 'n aghaidh so *Anti-Burghers*. Rè h-uine dhluth-lean iad le cheille ris an Achd agus an Fhianuis a bha 'g a ceangal ri buinaitean Eaglais Ath-leasaichte na h-Alba. Ach thoisach iad ri clàonadh o so, agus a cuir an ainm ri 'n Riaghail-Leabhraichean fo mhìneachadh. Bha 'n caochladh a bha air teachd air am beachdan air a dheanamh follaiseach ann a Leabhran a bha air a chlo-bhualadh o cheann ceithear fichead bliadhna 's a deich (1780). Bha na beachdan so a' sgaoileadh 'n am measg araon, agus thugadh gu follaiseach e fa chomhair Seanadh na *Burghers* cuig bliadhna déug an deigh sud, no, o cheann trì fichead bliadhna 's a cuigdéug (1795), ag iarraidh briathre Leabhar Aidmheil a Chreidimh agus a Bhann-riaghailt atharrachadh air dhòigh a bhiodh freagarrach ris na beachdan ùra 'bha teachd a steach 'n am measg. Ceithir bliadhna 'n a dheigh sin (1799) bha Bhann-riaghailt air a h-atharrachadh co-fhreagarach ris na nuagh-bheachdan aig a mhòr-

àireamh. Bha àireamh bheag dhiubh nach d' aontaich ri so, agus a dhealaich iad féin riu, a thug an t-ainm so dhoibh féin, Burghers an t-Sean Sholuis (*Old Light Burghers*). Aig an àm cheudna bha 'n caochladh ceudna dol air aghaidh ann an Seanadh nan *Anti-Burghers*, agus bha 'n "Eachdraidh 's an Fhianuis" air an daighnachadh le 'n Seanadh anns a' bhliadhna 1804, leis an robh an "t-Achd 's an Fhianuis" aig na ceud *Seseders* air an cur air cùl. Chuir a chùid a b' fhearr 's bu chomasaiche de ministeiran an aghaidh so le 'n uile dhìochal, ach bhuaidhaich an àireamh bu mhò, agus rinn iad an "Eachdraidh 's an Fhianuis" na cumha commuinn. Agus air a bhliadhna 1806 dhealaich na h-Urramaich Macrie, Hog, Bruce, agus Aitcen riu; agus rinn iad Cléir dhuibh féin. Ach 'n uar a chunnaic na h-Antiburghers so, rinn iad an sgaradh o'n dreuchd 's o'n gairm; agus a thaobh an duine ainmeil, urramach, Dhr. Tomas Macrie, cha d' fhodhainn so leo, ach rinn iad mar an ceudna mallachadh Eaglais air: agus sin, do bhrìgh gu robh e ni b' onoirach agus ni bu chogaisaiche na iad féin. Bha e soillear a nis gu robh na Burghers agus na Antiburghers air claonadh o 'm buinaithean, agus anns a bhliadhna 1820 (o cheann trì fichead bhliadhna 's a deich) dh-aon iad ri cheile fo 'n ainm An Eaglais Dhealachaidh Aonaichte (*United Secession Church*).

Bha Eaglais eile ann ris abradh iad Eaglais Saorsa (*Relief*), a bhris o'n Eaglais Stéidheichte mar an ceudna. Bha 'm prìomh-fhear-togail aice air a chur a mach as an Eaglais, (airson nach suidhaichadh e ministear an aghaidh toil a chomhthionail, anns a bhliadhna 1752; agus rinn e féin agus ministear eile iad féin a dhealbh nan Cléir 's a bhliadhna 1761. Bhuaich iad so mar sin gus a bhliadhna 1847,—ceithir bliadhna 'n deigh Dealachadh na h-Eaglais Saoire o'n Stàta. An sin dh' aon iad féin agus an Eaglais Dhealachaidh Aonaichte, agus thug iad mar ainm dhith, An Eaglais Chléireil Aointe (*U. P. Church*). Nis, 's o an Eaglais a tha iad ag ràdh gur h-i Eaglais nan Ersines agus na Fishers; ach feudaidh an leughadear breth a thabhairt am bheil so fìor, no nach 'eil. Ach tha sinn ag ràdh nach i Eaglais nan ceud *Seseders* ni 's mò na 's i 'n Eaglais Stéidheichte, mar tha i o àm an Dealachaidh, Eaglais Ath-leasaichte na h-Alba. An aon fhocal, air a phuig so, Am bheil e réir fìrinn no Eachdraidh na h-Eaglais ud gur h-iad so a tha taisbeanadh bunaithean nan ceud *Sheseders*? Tha sinn ag ràdh, gun agadh, nach iad. Tha sinn ag ràdh gur h-e Doctair Macrie agus na leann e fìor luchd-leannmuinn nan ceud *Sheseders*; agus gu 'n do dh' aon iad so ris an Eaglais Shaoir anns a bhliadhna 1852.

Tha iad ag ràdh gu bheil *Voluntaries* cheana 's an Eaglais Shaoir, agus uime sin, nach éigin agus nach iomchuidh gu 'n aonadhmaid ri Eaglais a tha mar sin. Na 'm biodh Comunn Cheannaichean ann a chuir iad féin 's an t-suidheachadh sin fo 'n bheachd gu robh iad gu léir nan daoine onorach, creidasach; agus gu 'n d' fhuair iad a mach a dhéigh laimhe gu robh cuid dhuibh a bha mi-onorach; ach aig an àm cheudna, gu robh Comunn eile a bha gu h-ìomlan ach beag mi-onorach ag iarraidh

aonadh riu ; am biodh e na dheagh aobhar airson an Comunn ud gu h-ìomlan a leigadh a stigh maille riu, do bhrìgh gun robh cuid a stigh ma thrà ? O, ma tha, nach cuir sibh a mach an fheadhain a tha stigh, ma 's urrainn sibh. Ged 'nach urrainn sinn an cur a' mach airson aobhar nach ruig sinn leis aithris, gidheadh, cha 'n aobhar maith sin airson an tuilleadh a leigadh a stigh. Ach na 'biodh iad onorach, rachadh iad féin a mach. Ach, ged nach b' urrainn sinn am beagan a bha stigh a chur a mach, cha bhiodh sin na aobhar maith airson an t-ìomlan de 'n Chomunn eile a ghabhail a stigh.

Notes and Comments.

Corrections.—In last issue, on page 42, "tenderness" (in line 9) should read "tendencies," and "troubles" (in line 34) should read "truths."

An American Insult to Britain.—O'Donovan Rossa, the notorious Fenian leader, was lately appointed Inspector of Weights and Measures to the City of New York.

Mr. Joseph Leiter.—This is a young American gentleman, who lately overreached himself. Having command of some money, he proposed to make a "corner" in wheat, *i.e.*, his purpose was to buy up all the available wheat in the country so that he might sell it again at his own price. This form of commercial gambling sometimes results in a profitable haul, other times the result is not so happy. In Mr. Leiter's case, the wheat did not behave as was anticipated, consequently he came to bankruptcy with a crash. His father, however, who has also a bank account, saved the situation by paying away an odd million pounds sterling. This, we hope, may prove a deterrent to other immoral schemers in the same line. A turn of events like this is refreshing to one's sense of justice, and we are taught by the Scriptures to look for such occurrences in the course of providence. "The Lord is known by the judgment which he executeth ; the wicked is snared in the work of his own hands."

The Benefices Bill.—This is a Bill presently under discussion in Parliament, the object of which is to extend the powers of the Bishops in dealing with presentees to ecclesiastical office. If such presentees have been proved guilty of certain misdemeanours, the Bishops shall have power to bar their appointment. The class of misdemeanours chiefly contemplated is, we understand, that relating to the simoniacal practices prevalent in the English Church—the buying and selling of sacred offices which goes on. But to certain members of the House, it appears that the Bill only touches the fringe of a grave subject. The flagrant violation of the Protestant Constitution of the Church of England by the Romish practices so freely indulged in by thousands of her clergymen, seems to them a matter to be looked to in any reformed scheme of Church management. Sir William Harcourt, Mr.

Samuel Smith and several other members have exerted themselves earnestly to point out the criminality of a multitude of English Church officials, both in lower and higher grades, who have run riot in all manner of ritualistic mummeries. They desire that indulgence in these illegal and traitorous practices should be a lawful reason for barring preferment. But the raising of this question has proved most distasteful to certain persons of superior enlightenment. Mr. John Morley, the agnostic philosopher does not like it. The leader of the House (Mr. Balfour) throws cold water on such an agitation, and professes to see no harm to the Church of England from the ritualism which is in it, which he esteems to be very limited in amount; whilst newspaper editors like those of the *Scotsman* and *Glasgow Herald*, seated on a lofty intellectual eminence, treat all such "no Popery" demonstrations as fit themes for banter and ridicule. Nevertheless the situation is serious. The fetters of superstition which our fathers burst at the expense of their lives are being forged over again. Men sworn to defend the faith of the Reformation are assiduously undermining this faith, and leading many souls over the brink. The quarrel over such a matter is a good quarrel, and we are glad that it has got into Parliament.

Church-going Past and Present.—Upwards of two months ago, the centenary of Wick Congregational Church was celebrated with special services. At a meeting on Monday evening, 18th April, several ministers of the town took part. One of these—Rev. F. M. Harper, of Martyrs' Free Church—spoke some truthful words concerning the deficient church-going of the town, as compared with that of past times, notwithstanding the number of new attractions in worship. It is so rare to get admissions of the following kind from a certain class of Free Church ministers that we have pleasure in quoting Mr. Harper's remarks. He said that the Congregational Church began with psalms, not with hymns or paraphrases, and he believed it would be as well if to the present day they were singing psalms instead of hymns or paraphrases. Notwithstanding all the fine things they had got in Wick at the present day—things which would have perfectly amazed their forefathers—notwithstanding the fact that they were sinking their differences, and going in for many other things which the young people desired, he appealed to the audience whether it was not the case that during the last fifty years there was no time that the churches were so badly attended as at the present day. He knew that the older people present would homologate that statement. It was not only in Wick, but he understood it was the same in other places. It was a curious thing that the more fine things they were getting, the grander and more comfortable their churches were becoming, the more hymns and paraphrases they were using, and above all the more they were merging their differences, the less the people were attending the churches. He supposed when their differences were completely merged, then they might shut the doors of their churches altogether.