

T H E

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No. I.

Introductory.

AT the beginning of a fourth volume we desire to express a note of thankfulness. It is now three years since this Magazine was started, and many were the fears and anxieties as to its success. It is, therefore, matter of gratitude to the Most High that it has been carried on until now in a manner that we think justifies its existence in our midst. We disclaim all credit on this account, and desire to be deeply humbled before God for His goodness and mercy.

The Magazine was established for the purpose of maintaining and defending the sound principles of the Church of Scotland, and it is this purpose we have endeavoured to the best of our ability to carry out in its pages. These principles, we believe, embody the great doctrines of the Word of God which constitute the stable bulwarks of the Church in all ages. They are such truths as living believers, by the teaching of the Holy Spirit, feed upon for their spiritual nourishment and growth in grace. The very life of the mystical body of Christ is bound up with them. A Church that does not believe in the infallibility of God's Word, the divinity and atonement of Christ, man's total depravity, salvation of free and sovereign grace, and pure Scriptural worship, is no real Church of Christ. Many professing Churches in our day are casting off these great fundamental doctrines, and it therefore becomes us to cleave all the faster to them, and proclaim them with our whole heart and whole soul. We have no reason to be ashamed of them. They are the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth. Besides the doctrines above-named, we feel specially called upon at the present time to emphasize the Scriptural importance of the truth that Christ is King of nations as well as King of the Church. Nations are under perpetual obligation to acknowledge Him as supreme Lord, and to be guided in their deliberations and enactments by a regard to His revealed will. The Bible provides directions for civil magistrates as well as for Church governors. The Parliament of this

country has fallen into a very corrupt condition, and is almost wholly guided by the will of the people whether that be good or bad. This does not alter our State's obligations in the least degree, and it is the duty of the Church to labour and pray for that time when the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and His Christ. In this work the Church is bound to set before the State the Scriptural standard of its duty, and to bear witness against all departures from that standard. It is very sad to observe professing Churches combining together for no better end than the work of dissolving the tie between Church and State. They have already done so in their constitutions, and their strongest efforts are put forth to dissolve the tie in actual reality, a tie our noble Reforming forefathers were honoured to form under the manifested favour and blessing of the King eternal.

It has been our object in "Notes and Comments" to criticise favourably or unfavourably passing incidents of the day. We regret that these incidents are such as call, in most cases, for unfavourable comment. The times are labouring under many evils, which constantly break out in varied forms. We feel it our duty to point out and condemn these evils, and while cherishing no malice towards individual persons, yet to write fearlessly and faithfully in condemnation of lines of conduct and action that are contrary to the Word of God. There is so much spurious charity abroad that we feel it increasingly necessary to use "sharpness for edification."

We would have preferred, had we been able, to provide more numerous original articles from writers in our own Church, but the lack in this direction is due to the many labours of our ministers, who have little time for literary work. It has been our effort to supply the deficiency by reprinting valuable sermons and letters of old divines, and also by inserting discourses, diaries, and other remains of worthy persons hitherto unpublished. We apologise to our Gaelic readers, who are in the vast majority, for the lack of current matter in their language, and hope something more may be done to meet this in the future.

In conclusion, we would ask for the prayers of all who fear the name of the Lord, for the maintenance and success of the Magazine. Our earnest desire is that it may be blessed by Him for the advance of His own cause in this kingdom. The age is departing more and more from the truth as it is in Jesus, and it would be good if the young, especially, were well grounded in the sound doctrines of the Word. We seek more than this; we seek that the truth should be blessed to the conversion of souls, and to the spiritual edification of believers. A dead, orthodox profession is a thing to be greatly dreaded. We are seeing many aged trees of righteousness being cut down by the hand of death amid our congregations. May the Lord in His infinite mercy raise up others in their place! He is "the same yesterday and to-day and forever" in His love and power, and

all who seek Zion's spiritual prosperity would do well to wrestle at a throne of grace for displays of the Lord's right hand in saving sinners from going down to the pit, and in making His own poor and drooping people to flourish in faith, and hope, and love, and all heavenly graces.

"O Lord, exalted be thy name
Above the heavens to stand :
Do thou thy glory far advance
Above both sea and land."

Sayings of the Rev. John Newton.

A CHRISTIAN should never plead spirituality for being a sloven ; if he be a shoe-cleaner, he should be the best in the parish.

My principal method for defeating heresy is by establishing truth.

ONE proposes to fill a bushel with tares ; now if I can fill it first with wheat, I shall defy his attempts.

I WOULD not give a straw for that assurance, which sin will not damp. If David had come from his adultery, and had talked of his assurance at that time, I should have despised his speech.

A SPIRIT of adoption is the spirit of a child ; he may disoblige his father, yet he is not afraid of being turned out of doors. The union is not dissolved though the communion is. He is not well with his father, therefore must be unhappy, as their interests are inseparable.

WE often seek to apply cordials when the patient is not prepared for them, and it is the patient's advantage that he cannot take a medicine when prematurely offered.

WHEN a man comes to me, and says, "I am quite happy," I am not sorry to find him come again with some fears.

I NEVER saw a work stand well without a check.

"I ONLY want," says one, "to be sure of being safe, and then I will go on." No ; perhaps, then you will go off.

FOR an old Christian to say to a young one, "Stand in my evidence," is like a man who has with difficulty climbed by a ladder or scaffolding to the top of the house, and cries to one at the bottom, "This is the place for a prophet—come up at a step."

A CHRISTIAN in the world is like a man, who has had a long intimacy with one, whom at length he finds out was the murderer of a kind father ; the intimacy, after this, will surely be broken.

"EXCEPT a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." A man may live in a deep mine in Hungary, never having seen the light of the sun ; he may have received accounts of prospects, and by the help of a candle, may have examined a few engravings of them ; but let him be brought out of the mine, and set on the mountain, what a difference appears ?

Searmoin.

LEIS AN URR. NEAL CAMERON, ST. JUDE'S, GLAS-CHU.

Is beannaichte an duine sin aig am bheil a neart annad-sa, agus iadsan aig am bheil do slighean 'n an cridhe. A dol troimh ghleann Baca ni' iad sin tobar ann: lionadh mar an ceudna an t-uisge na linntean. Imichidh iad o neart gu neart; nochdear gach aon diubh an lathair Dhe ann an Sion."—PSALM lxxxiv. 5, 6, 7.

THA leabhar nan salm lan de fhaireachdinean sluaigh Dhe. Anns an t-salm so tha mian an anam bheo an deigh meadainean nan gras air a chur ann an caint cho milis, druiteach as a tha ra fhaotainn anns an fhirinn. Tha farmad aig an t-Salmaidh is na h-eon a bha dluth do dh' altair Dhe ann an Ierusalem. Tha e gle choltach gun do sheinn Daibhidh an salm so, agus an lara salm thar an da-fhichead aig an aon am. Is e beachd na uid as fallaine do luchd-minichidh na firinn gur ann an uair a eigin da teicheadh roimh Absalom a mhac a ghluais spiorad an Tighearna e gus an da shalm sin a sgrìobhadh. Tha e na ni ongantach gur ann 'n am fogarach, agus bho gheurleanmhuinn a bha chuid bu mho do na daoine naomha a cleachd spiorad Dhe ann a bhi toirt focail Dhe do bhur nionnsuidhne. Chan e gearan Dhaibhidh anns an da shalm so, gun robh e air fhogradh bho a uchair rioghail, agus bho 'n a comfhartachdan a bha aige ann an Ierusalem, ach gun robh e air fhogradh bho thigh agus bho thluagh Dhe. "Na nithe so is cuimhne leam, agus tha mi dhortadh a mach m' anama leam fein; oir ghabh mi thairis leis a mhorchuideachd, chaidh mi leo gu tigh Dhe, le fuaim gairdeachais agus molaidh, leis a chuideachd a bha 'cumail la feille." Feudaidh e bhith gun robh a chuid bu mho dhuibh so air dol dhachaidh do'n t-siorruidheachd, ach cha burrainn Daibhidh an di-chuineachadh fhad sa bha e anns an t-soaghal. Am bheil thu 'n so agus t-intinn moran nas biothanta comhla ris a mhuinntir a chaidh dhachaidh, agus comhla ris an do chleachd thu bhi dol gu meodhainean nan gras anns na lathaibh a dh' fhalbh, na tha i comhla ris a mhuinntir a tha beo. Tha thu ga 'd fhaotinn fein mur ghealbhun beag air mullach tighe na aonar a feitheamh gu tealach air falbh an deigh chaich.

Tha ceithir puincean anns na briathraibh so a dhuinnsuidh am bu mbian leinn air n'aire, le suil ri comhnadh agus soillseachadh an spioraid naomha, a threorachadh air son beagan.

I.—Co e an duine beannaichte?

II.—Cait am bheil é aig an am so?

III.—Ciod a tha e deanamh?

IV.—Caite an crìochnaich e a thurus?

I. Tha da ni air an tabhairt fa bhur comhair anns na briathraibh so mu thiomchuil an duine a tha beannaichte.

1. An toiseach tha a neart anns an Tighearna. Cha neil so fìor a thaobh duine sam bith ann an staid naduir. Ma gabhas sin beachd air an fhirinn chi sin gu bheil daoine bho 'n mhealladh mhor gu bheil neart mor aca fein. Chi sinn an t-Abstol Paul, an uair a bha e fo'n mhealladh, gu de an neart a bha aige dheanamh uile ann a bhi seasamh an aghaidh aobhar Chriosd, agus a geurleanmhuinn a shluaigh. Ach bho 'n la anns an do choinnich Chriosd ris air an t-slighe gu Damascus chaill e 'a neart meallteach a bha 'n sin. Tha na h-uile creutair do shlioch caillte Adhamh a saoilsuinn gu bheil neart aige chum umhlachd a thoirt do lagh Dhe, agus a chum riarachadh a thoirt da cheartas, gus am fosgail an Spiorad Naomh a shuilean air naomhachd an lagha, agus air doimhne shiorruidh breth ceartas Dhe. Anns a cheart uair 's am faic an t-anam so tha e call a neart. Bithidh sluagh gun aireamh nach faigh a mach gun do chaill iad an neart gus am bi e tuilleadh as anmoch. "Ged iadhadh lamh mu laimh cha teid an taingidh as gun pheanas." Agus a ris "Is ni eagallach tuiteam an lamhan an De bheo." Nam fagadh an Tighearna neach air a dhusgadh leis an Spiorad Naomh gun fuaim bheannaichte an t-soisgeil a sheirm na chluasan, cha seasadh a reusan ris an uamhas cogais bho chionta peachdaidh anns an robh e. Far am bheil an Tighearna a lot anns an t-aoghalta tha E ga leigheas; ach an t-anam a bhuannaicheas na neo-churum gus an d'thig am bàs lotaidh Dia e gu sìorruidh ann an teine ifrinn far nach bi leigheas air a chuis. Tha 'n Tighearna toirt do na h-uile anam a tha E tearnadh creideamh gu amharc ri Iosa Chriosd agus Esan air a cheusadh. Annsan tha an creutair a faicinn an lagh naomh air a lan riarachadh, agus ceartus Dhe lan shàsuichte le bas Chriosd as leth na h-uile a chreideas. Tha creidimh air a thiolacadh air an anam chum dunadh ris a Chriosd a tha air a thairgse an am focal firinn an t-soisgeil. The neart Chriosd a deanamh greim air an anam, agus tre neart Chriosd tha 'n t-anam a deanamh greim air neart Chriosd. Mar sin is e neart Chriosd an neart a tha aig an duine bheannaichte. "Is urrainn mi na h-uile ni dheanamh tre Chriosd a neartaicheas mi." Is e so an neart air am bheil iomradh air a dheanamh cho soillear anns an aona caibdeil deug do litir nan Eabhrach. Tha feum aca air neart a reir nan naimhdean a tha aca ri choinneachadh. Tha an Tighearna cur deuchainn air an neart le iomadh ni. Bha Daibhidh air a cleachdadh ann a bhi marbhadh an leomhainn agus a mhadadh-alluidh mun deachaidh e a chogadh ri Goliath. Tha iad so uile ag imeachd ann an neart an Tighearna tre chreideamh. Tha iad a saltairt air an leomhan agus air an nathair-nimhe; tha iad a pronnadh fo'n cois an leomhan òg agus an dràgon. An neart mor so tha iad a faotinn bho Chriosd. "Feuch, tha mi 'toirt dhuibh cumhachd saltairt air nathraichibh, agus air scorpion-aibh, agus air uile neart an mamhaid; agus cha ghoirtich ni air bith air aon doigh sibh." Bha an neart so air fhoillseachadh anns an amhuinn theintich ann am Babilon. Be miorbhuill a

chum iad gun a bhi air an losgadh; ach be neart a chreidimh leis an do sheas iad an aghaidh bagradh an rìgh.

2. Is e an dara ni, "Agus aig am bheil do shlighean 'n an cridhe." Ciod i slighe Dhe? "Is i trocair agus firinn slighe an Tighearna." Tha trocair Dhe ann an cridhe an duine so. Cuin a chaidh trocair so Dhe a chur na chridhe? Anns an là 's an do mhaith Dia dha a pheacanan uile air sgath Chrìosd. An là 's an d'thug trocair Dhe anam a ifrinn. "Is mor do throcair dhomhsa Dhe, is fos o ifrinn shios thug thu saorsa do 'm anam bochd 'us thog thu e a nias." Nuair a thog E an t-anam a slochd uamhainn, a clabar lathaich, agus a chur E a chas air a charraig, agus a chur E oran nuadh na bheul. Thubhairt an t-anam an là sin, "Air trocair Dhe shior-sheinnidh mi, 'us ni mi oirre sgeul." Tha cridhe cloiche air a thoirt as fheoil, agus cridhe feola air a chur anns an taobh a stigh air am bheil lagh an Tighearna air a sgriobhadh, agus a reachdan air an cur anns an intinn. Is e trocair an aon ni as urrain cridhe cruaidh cloiche an duine a thaiseachadh. Tha e air aithris mu dheithinn nach a bha bho bhinn bais ann am prìosan 's an rioghachd so, bho 'n là bha e air a dhiteadh gus an d' thainig an la anns an robh e gu bhi air a chrochadh a reir na binn a thug am breitheamh a mach air, chan fhaca fear gleidhidh a phrìosain aon deur bho shuil. Trath air maduinn an là so thainig fear gleidhidh a phrìosain a stigh far an robh e. Shaoil leis-an gu 'm be an crochadair a bha 'n. Thainig fear gleidhidh a phrìosain a stigh, tharruing e paipir a mach as a phocait, agus thubhairt e ris, an deadh aire thabhairt do'n ni a bha e dol a leubhadh dha. Leubh e gun d'thug an rìgh o mhaithreas a dheadh thoile fein mathanas dha, agus gun robh e air a chur saor air ball. Shuidh an duine sìos agus shruth na deuraibh o shuilibh air leachdaibh an urlair. Thubhairt an duine ris, chan eil mi a tuigsinn ciod as ciall da so. Nuair a bha thu bho bhinn bais cha do shil thu aon deur, ach a nise nuair a thuair thu maitheanas agus do shaorsa thoisich thu air deuraibh a shilidh. Tha thu fuiciunn ars esan ciod a ni trocair. Tha mar an ceudna an fhirinn air a cur anns na h-uile cridhe dhiubh so. "Sgriobhaidh mi mo lagh air an cridhe." Tha gradh do dh'fhocal Dhe anns na h-uile cridhe nuadh. Cha'n urrain an creutair nuadh an gnothach a dheanamh as eugmhais na firinn. Tha an da ni bheannaichte so air an cur anns an anam anns am bheil Crìosd a gabhail comhnuidh tre chreideamh. Is e planntachadh an Spioraid a tha anna.

Tha an t-slighe 'n an cridhe air an doigh so mar an ceudna. Tha e coltach ri fear agus bean phosda aig am biodh gradh mor da cheile. Tha am fear ann an tìr chein, agus tha a bhean gus a leantuinn an sin air ball. Tha an t-slighe na cridhe a la agus a dhoiche. Ged a tha Crìosd ann an glòir shiorruidh, agus an eaglais anns an t-saoghal tha Crìosd comhla ris an eaglais trid a Spioraid agus fhocail, agus tha intinn na h-eaglais suidhichte air na nithean a tha shuas far am bheil Esan. An uidhir so an trath so mu'n duine tha beannaichte. Bheannaich Dia e le maitheanas

peachaidh, agus le thoirt dha fuaim aoibhneach an t-soisgeil aithneachadh. An uair a tha e lag ann fein 's ann an sin a tha e laidir anns a ghras a tha ann an Iosa Crìosd.

II.—Cait am bheil e aig an am so? Tha e ann an gleann Baca.

1. Ainmichidh sin da ni a tha ann am brìgh an fhocail so-Baca. An toiseach the e ciallachadh, gleann nan craobh smeur. Tha fhios agaibh fein de cho cronail agus a tha na drisean do na caoirich. Tha e na ni cumanta caora bhochd fhaicinn ann an dris, ach chan fhaca sinn gobhar riamh ann. Siomadh reubadh a gheibh a chaora bhochd bho na drisean. Bidh na buachaillean a gearradh nan 'drisean. Is ann mur sin bu choir do theachdairean Chrìosd a bhi gearradh le focal Dhe na h-uile dris a dhoadadh, aon chuid ann an puincean creideamh, no cleachdaidh, bhi calltach do'n eaglais. Tha an eaglais, no an t-anam grasmhor, air an samhhlachadh ri lili am measg droighinn. Tha sluagh an t-saoghail, ach gu h'araidh luchdaidich gun gràs nan drisean a tha toirt iomadh reubadh dhoibh. "Agus thubhairt mi och nach robh agam sgiathan! Mar choluman theichinn air itaig agus gheibhinn fois. Feuch shiubhlainn fad as; chomhnuichinn anns an fhasach. Dheanainn deifir gu dol as o ghaoith laidir, agus o'n doininn. S grios a Thighearna agus roinn an teanga; oir chunnaic mi foirneart agus connsachadh 's a' bhaile."

2. Tha ris brìgh eile aig an fhocal "gleann Baca." Tha e ciollachadh gleann nan deur. Tha da sheorsa broin anns t-saoghal so. Tha doilgheas an t-saoghail ag oibreachadh bàis ann am moran. Tha am bron diadhaidh ag oibreachadh aithreachas chum slainte de nach gabhar aithreachas ann an ro bheagan 's a ghinealach thruagh so. Tha iomadh aobhar broin aig an duine bheannaichte anns an t-saoghal so. Chi sinn anns a cheithir ficheadamh salm gum be staid iosal aobhair Chrìosd aobhar broin luchd eagail Dhe.

"Oir bheathaich thu do sluagh gu leir
le aran dheur 's broin;

'Us tomhas saoibhir thug thu dhoibh
de dheuraibh goirt r' an ol.

'Us rinn thu sinn mar aobhar stri
d' ar coimhearsnachaibh fein,

'N ar n-aobhar spors' 'us abhacais
d' ar n-eascairdibh gu leir."

Tha cheart ni fìor an duigh, gur e aobhair Chrìosd bhi air a shaltairt bho chosaibh dhaoine, agus sluagh a briseadh reachd Dhe ann an ainm dhaoine agus mhnathan diadhaidh, tha na aobhar oilbheum do mhoran a chum an call siorruidh, agus a tha na aobhar broin domhain do'n duine air am bheil eagail Dhe. Feudaidh aobhar broin a bhi agad ann ad mhac no ann ad nighinn; agus feudaidh a cheart aobhar broin a bhi aig mac na aig nighean dhiadhaidh ann a bhi faicinn athair, no mathair air an t-slighe chum truaighe. Tha gealladh luachmhor a bhuineas do 'n duine so, "Agus pillidh saordhaoine an Tighearna, agus thig iad gu Sion

le caithrean, agus aobhneas siorruidh air an cinn: gheibh iad gairdeachas agus aoibhneas, agus teichidh bron agus osnaich air falbh." "Is beannaichte iadsan a tha ri bron air gheibh iad solas." Ach feumaidh sinn dol air aghaidh a dhionnsuidh na treas puinc.

III.—Ciod a tha e deanamh ann an gleann Baca?

Tha e deanamh tri nithean anns a ghleann so. An toiseach tha e deanamh tobar ann; ris tha e ag amharc suas air son uisge gu bhi lionadh an tobair; agus a ris tha e ag imeachd o neart gu neart.

i. Ciod a tha sinn gu bhi tuigsinn leis an tobar? Tha an Spiorad Naomh a toirt an fhreagraidh so, "An uair a bhitheas am bochd agus an t-ainnis ag iarraidh uisge, agus nach bi e ann; agus a bhios an teangadh air tiormachadh le tart; mise Iehovah freagram iad; Dia Israel, is mi nach treig iad. Fosglaidh mi aimhnichean anns na h-ionadaibh arda, agus tobraichean ann am meadhon nan ghleann." An uair a thainig an t-am a runaich an Tighearna gum biodh tobraichean air am fosgladh anns na glinn anns an robh na Cinnich thruagh a dol bas a dheusbhaidh uisge na beatha, dh' fhosgail E tobraichean dhoibh le bhi cuir na firinn agus meadhainan an t-soisgeil d' an ionnsuidh. Chuir E daoine mach anns na h-uile ginealach gu bhi deanamh obair mu thiomchuil n'an tobraichean so. Ann an linn na'n Abstoil bha tobraichean air am fosgladh ann am iomadh gleann. Ri linn na 'n aoisean dorch a cha mhor nach robh na tobraichean air an dunadh. Thainig tuil thairis air eaglaisean na h-Asia nach dh'fhag urad agus comharadh na deigh gu 'n rohh a leithid as aobhair Chriosd riamh am measg an t-sluaigh. Air tir mor na Roinn-Eorpa bha na tobraichean air an lionadh le truailliachd na Papanachd. An am an Athleasaichidh thog Dia suas daoine chum no tobraichean fhosgladh a ris. Bha *Luther* agus *Calvin* air an togail suas air tir mor na Roinn-Eorpa, agus *Iain Knox* ann an Alba. Thoisich na daoine urramach sin ris na tobraichain a ghlanadh, leis na h-uile ni thug a phapanachd a steach do dh'aoradh Dhe nach robh a reir focail Dhe thilgeadh a mach. Thoisich troimhcheile anabharrach eadar na daoine diadhaidh sin, agus an dream a bhuineadh do Eaglais na Roimh. Na 'n statadh iad do cladhach bhiodh sith ann, ach cha robh e 'n comas dhaoine stad a chuir air an obair. Nuair a chunnaic na naimhdean so, thoisich iad air feuchainn ris an tobar, ann an Alba gu h-araidh, ghleidheadh bho bhi air a cladhach gu ghrund. Dheuch iad ri riaghladh eusbigeach, mar a tha anns an Eaglais shasunnaich, a shuidheachadh, ach b' fhearr le ar n-athraichean am bas fhulang ann an tuill na talmhuinn, no leis a claidheamh anns an achadh fhosgailte, no anns an teine, no air a chroich na gun geileadh iad anns a ghlanadh so gus nach biodh ni ann ach na dh' ordaich Chriosd agus na h-Abstoil. Cladhaich *Iain Knox*, *Andrew Melville*, *Alaster Henderson* an tobar ann an Alba gus an dth'rainig iad carraig na Firinn. Thilg iad a mach innleachdan an namhaid,

agus shuidhich iad an Eaglais anns an tir so air bunait nan abstol agus na' m faidhean air do Iosa Crìosd fein bhi na chloich chinn na h'oisinn'. Dh 'fheuch Iain Knox an toiseach ri eaglais na Roimh ann an Alba athleasachadh, ach cha deachaidh e fad air aghaidh nuair a chunnaic e nach bi eaglais na Roimh eaglais Chrìosd idir. An uair a thuig e so, ghairm e air feadh na rioghachd (1) gu 'm be am Pap' an t-anacriosda, agus gu 'm bi eaglais na Roimh a bhean a tha lan do ainmibh toibhean air clar a h-aodainn, agus a bha air mhìsg le fuil na 'n naomh. (2) Chuir e 'n ceill nach eil ann ach aon eadar-mheadhonair eadar Dia agus daoine, agus dhiult e fhulang gu 'm biodh ainglan, no naoimh, no sagartan a tighinn eadair peacaich agus Crìosd an t-Aon-eadar-mheadhonair, agus gur ann a dhionnsuidh Dhe troimh Chrìosd ann an dreuchd a shagartachd a bha peacaich air an gairm le aithreachas ag aideachadh am peacaidhean agus g' an treigsinn; agus nach robh ann ach a bhi fanaid air Dia agus air peacaich thruagh gun robh e an comas sagart na easbuig peacaidhean a mhaitheadh. (3) Theagaisg e nach eil eifeachd ann an oibribh a pheacaich gu coinneachadh ri agartasan ceartuis Dhe, "oir troimh oibribh an lagha cha bhi feoil sam bith air a fireanachadh am fianuis Dhe." Ghairm e daoine dh' ionnsuidh na firinn, gur ann triomh chreideamh air Crìosd agus air trocair Dhe air a foillseachadh ann-san a b-urrainn peacach a dhol as bho thruaighe ifrinn; agus gur ann mur a bha iad—na 'm peacaich chaillte—a bha Dia ga 'n gairm anns an t-soisgeul, gu bhi maitheadh am peacaidhean dhoibh gu saor air sgath Chrìosd. (4) Dhiult e gabhail ri ni sam bith nach gabh a bhi air a bhonntachadh air focal Dhe. Thilg e mach beul-aithris dhaoine, agus ghairm e air an t-sluluagh iad a leubhadh focal Dhe air an son fein. Bha am Biobul air a chumail bho 'n t-sluagh gus a so. Thoisich air n-athraichean air leubhadh na firinn, agus bha moran air an toirt gu eolas slainteil air Crìosd. Is e so am bonn is treise a th'aig eaglais na Roimh; oir nan leubhadh daoine an fhirinn gu cùramach air an son fein cha bhiodh iad fada gus am feiceadh iad mearachdan na papanachd. Tha an eaglais sgriosail sin a teagasg nach eil coir aig an t-sluagh ni sam bith a chreidsinn bho 'n fhirinn ach ni a tha reir teagasg na h-eaglais, agus gum bheil eaglais na Roimh neo-mhearachdach na puincean teagaisg. Tha so gan daingneachadh ann am mearachdan sgriosail a bheir truaighe shiorruidh air na h-uile bhunaicheas annta gus a chrìoch. (5) Theagaisg e gu'm b' iodhal-aoraidh iobairt na h-oirinn (*mass*). Gu'n robh e an aghaidh reusain agus firinn, gu'n robh an t-aran ann an suipeir an Tighearna le focal no dha bho bheul duine peacach, air an tionndadh gu fìor fheoil agus fuil Chrìosd, agus gu'n robh e an aghaidh nadur iobairt Chrìosd, a bha air a toirt suas aon uair a mhain, gu 'm biodh iobairt sam bith eile air a toirt suas gu siorruidh tuillidh air son peacaidh. Le bhi g-aoradh do'n bhitig arainn sinn an aite Dhe (Chrìosd) gu 'n robh iad na 'n luchd iodhail-aoradh, agus gu bhi air fhuathachadh leis na h-uile mar ni bha sgriosail do dh'anamaibh dhaoine. (6)

Rannsuich e an fhirinn a thuigsinn ciod an luchd-dreuchd a bu
choir a bhi anns an eaglais bho 'n Tiomnadh Nuadh agus dh'
fhoghlum e gur ann le seanairean (*Presbyters*) a bha eaglais
Chriosd air a riaghladh ri linn nan abstol. Chuir e an sin cul ri
easbuigean, sagartan, agus na h-uile ni bhuineadh do'n ordugh
riaghlaidh aig an eaglais phapanaich, agus shuidhich e eaglais
Chriosd ann an Alba, a reir na firinn, na h-eaglais chleireil. (7)
Theagaisg e nach robh ann am purgadair eaglais na Roimh ach
innleachd leis an Namhuid gu bhi mealladh anamaibh dhaoine;
gu'n robh na h-uile creideach ann an Criosd 'dol a dhiunnsaidh
gloir shiorruidh aig a bhas, agus gu'n robh na h-uile a bhasaiche-
adh gun Chriosd agus gun mhathanas peacaidh troimh fhuil-san
a dol do dh' ifrinn aig a bhas gu bhi caillte gu siorruidh. Ghuidh
e air a cho-pheacaidh pilltinn ri Dia troimh Chriosd le creideamh
agus aithreachas, agus gun iad a chur dochas sam bith anns a
mhealladh eagalach sin. (8) Dhiult e an teagasg sgriosail a tha
ann am moran de eaglaisean gus an la 'n diugh, gum bheil na
h-uile naoidhean air athghionmhuin le e bhi air a bhaisteadh.
Theagaisg e ged a bha 'm baisteadh a ciallachadh agus a seilach-
adh do na creidmhuin uile shochairan cunanta nan gràs, gur ann
tre focal agus Spiorad Dhe a bha anam sam bith air athghion-
mhuinn agus air aonadh ri Criosd. Chuir e cul ris na h-uile ni a
rinn an eaglais sin na shacramaid, ach an dithis a bha air an
suidheachadh le Criosd anns an eaglais—am baisteadh agus
suipear an Tighearna. (9) Thog e ghuth mar thrompaid an aghaidh
a chleachdaidh ghranail sin, nach feud sagart de 'n eaglais
phapanaich bean a phosadh, agus dhearbhadh e gum bheil iad
eagalach graineil na 'n caithe-beatha. Thilg e sios tighean nan
duth-chailleach (Nunneries) mur aitean a bha air an tabhairt
thairis do striopachas, mort naoidheanan, agus nan ifrinn air
thalamh, agus dh'aithn e, reir focail Dhe, gum biodh a bhean feir
aig gach fear a chum striopachais a sheachnadh. (10) Thilg e
mach ionnalan-ciuil a aoradh follaiseach an Tighearna mar nithean
nach buineadh do aoradh spioradail eaglais an Tiomnaidh Nuaidh.
Comhla ris na h-ionnalan so thilg e mach luidhean neo-dheachd
aichte, agus thoisich daoine air sailm Dhaibhidh a sheinn. (11)
Bha moran de laithean feile air an cuir suas, agus là na Sabaich
air a thilgeadh bho na cosaibh. Thog Iain Knox an t-sabaich
bheannaichte agus dhaithn e gum bu choir i bhi air a cumail a
reir aithne Dhe; ach a chionn nach dh'aithn an Tighearna aon
air bith do na laithibh eile bha air an cur air chois gum bu choir
cul a chur riuthe. Mar so chaidh an duine so, a bha air a thogail
le Dia gus an tir so ath-leachadh, air aghaidh a duilteadh innle-
achdan dhaoine agus a cur suas aoraidh a reir intinn Dhe air a
foillseachadh ann am focal na firinn. Bha eaglais na h-Alba air a
h-aideach, mar "Eaglais Athleasaichte Na h-Alba," le parlamaid
na h-Alba anns a bhliadhna 1592, ach cha robh i gu h-ìomlan air
a suidheachadh a reir ruin na 'n daoine diadhaidh sin gus a
bhliadhna 1638. Is ann ceithir bliadhna na dhuigh so a thoisich

iad fein agus na diadhairean urramach a bha an Sasunn ri “Leabhar Aidmheil a Chreideamh” a chur ri cheile. Bha e air a ghabhail mar chreud Eaglas na h-Alba anns a bhliadhna 1647. Bha mar so ar n-eaglais anns an tir so air a faicinn mar a’ mhaduinn, “Sgiamhach mar a’ ghealach, glan mar a’ ghrian, uamhasach mar shluagh le ’m brataichibh.” Bha mar so an tobar air a cladhach gus nach robh aon ni truailidh bho dhaoine air fhagail ann. Chaidh an riaghailt do reir an robh e air a cladhach a tharruing a mach, agus dh’fhag iad e gu bhi air a ghleidheadh do na h-ail a bha gu teachd. Is e “Leabhar Aidmheil a Chreidimh” an riaghailt so. Tha na h-uile puinc teagaisg, agus ordugh a tha anns an leabhar sin air a daingneachadh le focal na firinn. Tha an doigh anns an coir aoradh a thabhairt do Dhia a reir an sgriobtuir, le suil ri Crìosd mar an t-eadar-mheodhainear air an cumal fa chomhair pheacach ann cho soillear agus a bha e riamh ann an àm air bith do ’n t-saoghal. Ach do bhrìgh gum bheil an leabhar fughail so anns a chanain Ghailic, agus gum feud na h-uile a leubhadh air an son fein, cha n abair mi an còr mu dheithinn ann an so. Dhiarruinn a mhain ar naire a thabhairt a dhionnsuidh na puinc, gur e an leabhar so, mar a tha e air a bhonntachadh air focal Dhe, am bonn air am bheil eaglais na h-Alba air a suidheachadh, agus air am bheil sinne mar eaglais air ar suidheachadh.

Tha sinn a leubhadh anns an fhirinn gun rohh na tobraichean a chladhaich seirbhisich Abraham air an lionadh leis na h-Amoraich air chor ’us gun robh aig seirbhisich Isaic ri an cladhach a ris. Tha e na ni cho cinnteach gum bheil an tobar ann an Alba air a lionadh de nithean a bheir am bàs sìorruidh air na h-uile anam a dhòlas de an uisge phuinnsean leis an do lion daoine e, mar a tha an sgriobtur ag radh, “Ge be neach a bhriseas an lagh, agus nach fan ann an teagasg Chrìosd, cha ’n ’eil Dia aige: an ti a dh’fhanas ann an teagasg Chrìosd, tha araon an t-Athair agus am Mac aige.” Thoisich an Eaglais Shaor air truailleadh an tobair le laoidhean neo-dheachdaichte thoirt a stigh gu bhi air an seinn ann an aoradh follaiseach an Tighearna. Nochd iad le so a dheanamh gun robh iad air fàs sgith de Shailm Dhaibhidh, agus gun robh iad a toirt air ais aon do na nithean a thilg na h-athrichean a mach aig am an athleasachaidh. An ceann uine ghoirid na dheidh sin thug iad a stigh innealan-ciuil do’n aoradh fholleasach. Cha Cha b’urrainn iad aig an am sin na nithean so a dheanamh na’m pairt de chreud na h-Eaglais, oir chunnaic iad gu’n robh na daoine a bha seasamh na’n aghaidh cho dìleas agus gum briseadh iad an eaglais mun fuilgeadh iad a creud a bhi air truailleadh leis na nithean sin. Cho luath agus a thuair iad gum feudadh an gnathachadh lion iad an Eaglais anns an taobh deas dhiubh. Thoisich iad an sin air aonadh ris an Eaglais Chleireil Thoilich (U.P.). Bha creud na h-eaglaise so ann am mòran phuinnsean cudthromach calg dhìreach an aghaidh creud na h-Eaglaise Saoire. An deigh dhoibh deich bliadhna a thoirt a strì chunnaic iad nach geilleadh Dr. Begg, agus

Kennedy, agus moran eile don aonadh sin, agus leig iad leis car uine. Thoisich iad an sin air dìth-steidheachadh Eaglais na h-Alba, agus chum iad air glaothaich air son sin bho 'n uair sin (1873). Chi sinn anns an dara salm gun do chuireadh Chrìosd suas mar rìgh le Dia an t-Athair ann a dhreuchd mar an t-Eadar-mheadhonair, agus gum bheil uachdarain agus sluagh a' cur an aghaidh sin. Tha an Spiorad Naomh a toirt comhairle orra ann an deireadh an t-sailm, agus ag iarraidh orra ciall a ghlachdadh agus a bhi reidh ri Crìosd mun lasadh a chorruich nan aghaidh. Bha còraichean Chrìosd na bu luachmhoire ann an sealladh nan athrichean diadhaidh na gun diultadh iad aobhar a chumail suas mar rìgheachd, agus gum be fhocal a bu choir rìghrean agus sluagh a riaghladh. Bha iad a creidsinn gum buineadh na nithean sin do na h-orduighean a shuidhich Dia agus 'a bheir truaighe air gach rìoghachd a dhiultas gabhail riu. Ach se an t-aobhar bu mho a bha aig na daoine sgriosail ud, gum biodh a phuinc so air a briseadh sìos ann am bunait na h-Eaglaise Saoire chum gu 'm biodh i air a deanamh coltach ris an Eaglais Chleireil Thòileach, agus nach burrainn lagh na rìoghachd greim a dheanamh air maoin na h-eaglais do na doine a sheasadh air na bunaitean mar a bha iad.

Thoisich mearachdan uamhasach air a bhi air an teagasg, an toiseach anns na tighean foghlum, agus cha robh iad fad an sin nuair a thainig iad chum cluasan agus suilean dhaoine. Bha an leabhraichean, agus na teagasgan bho na cupaidean calg dhìreach an aghaidh focal Dhe. An aite na doine a thoirt gu aideachadh air am peachdadh, no an cur a mach as an eaglais is ann a bha iad air an cumail bho cheartas ann an cuirtibh na h-eaglais. Ghabh iad an sin misneach agus thoisich iad gu follaiseach air teagasg gun robh am Biobul lan do mhearachdan, agus gur e bha ann ni duilich gun do theagaisgeadh riamh gun robh e air a dheachdadh leis an Spiorad Naomh. Aig an Ard-sheanadh chaidh a thoirt air aghaidh gun robh nithean ann an Leabhair Aidmheil a Chreidimh nach b' urrainn cuid bòideachadh gun robh iad 'ga creidsinn, agus chuir iad ordugh sìos a dhuinnsaidh nan seisean cìod an t-arrachadh a bha iad ag iarraidh air an leabhar sin. Anns a Ghaelteachd bha na seannairean a dhaon ghuth nach robh iadsan ag iarraidh ni air bith arrachadh ann, ach anns a Ghalltachd bha cuid a dh' iarr nithean a bhi air an atharrachadh. Nuair a chaidh so air beulabh an Ard-sheannaidh chuir iad cuideach air leth dhuibh fein gu sealtuinn a stigh anns a chuis so, agus anns a bhliadhna 1891 thug iad an t-Achdmìneachaidh air beulabh na h-eaglais. Tha an t-achd so a tilgeadh air falbh teagasg an taghaidh anns a cheud phuinc; oir tha e cumail a mach gun do ghradhaich Dia na h-uile. Tha sin a ciallachadh gun do ghradhaich E Iudas leis a ghradh leis an do ghradhaich E Eoin agus an sluagh taghta uile. Is i an dara puinc ann nach do thuit an duine ann an Adhamh air a leithid do dhoigh agus nach robh iomhaidh Dhe air fathast, agus gun robh e comasach

air oibribh maithe dheanamh, agus gun robh eolas aige air Dia agus air a dhleasnas. Is i an treas puinc nach robh feum aig an duine ach air cuideachadh an Spioraid Naoimh ann a bhi pilltinn gu Dia. Tha so ag aicheadh feum an duine air a bhi air a dheanamh na chruthachadh nuadh ann an Criosd leis an Spioriod Naomh, agus eu-comas an duine air pilltinn dhe fein. Is i a cheathramh puinc nach eil gnothach sam bith aig luchd-riaghlaidh na rioghachd ri gnais a thoirt do dh' aobhar Chriosd, no ri bhi ga chumail suas. Is i a phuinc mu dheireadh gur i an eaglais, no an t-Ard-sheanadh, aig am bheil còir air breth a thoirt ciod e suim a chreidimh athleasaichte, agus gu de na puincean a tha an aghaidh teagasg na h-eaglais. Chi na h-uile gum bheil a chuid mhor de na mearachdan sgriosail a chaidh a thilgeadh a mach aig am an Athleasachaidh ann an Alba air an tabhairt a stigh a ris. Is ann a chum tur chul a chur ris na teagasgan uamhasach sin, agus a chum gun gleidheadh mid' creud sgriobturail na h-eaglais mar a bha i air a cuir sìos ann an Leabhar Aidmheil a Chreidimh, agus a chum an tobar mar sin a ghlanadh leis na h-uile truaill-eachd a thug iad a stigh a thilgeadh a mach cearta comhla, a dhealaich sinn ris na daoine sin. Thug sinn leinn na h-uile bunait agus teagasg a bhuineadh do dh-eaglais na h-Alba, agus dh'fhag sinn na h-uile beachd ùr agus doigh aoraidh neo-sgriobturail na'r deigh. Chi sibh gur sinne eaglais shaor na h-Alba.

Their mi focal no dha mu thiomchioll an aonaidh a tha gu bhi air a dheanamh an uine ghoirid eadear an da Eaglais sin. Is e fìor bhonn an aonaidh so Achd-mìneachaidh na h-eaglais a tha ga gairm fein an eaglais shaor air an aon laimh, agus Achd-mìneachaidh na h-eaglais Chleireil Thoileil air an laimh eile. Tha da Achd eile air an ainmeachadh—an t-Achd leis an robh Leabhar Aidmheil a Chreidimh air a ghabhail mar a creud le eaglais na h-Alba anns a bhliadhna 1647, agus Achd a bha air a dheanamh leis an eaglais shaoir trì bliadhna an deigh an dealachaidh. Tha so a dearbhadh gum bheil iad ag amharc air an Ach-mhìneachaidh mur ni a tha cho ceangailte air an eaglais agus a bha Leabhair Aidmheil a Chreidimh air an eaglais roimhe; ach chan eil an da Achd mu dheireadh a dheanmaich sinn a ciallach gu 'm bheil Leabhar Aidmheil a Chreidimh ann am bonn an aonaidh so. Na h-uile neach a dh'fhanas anns an eaglais shaoir air a bhonn air am bheil i nis, leig iad dhiubh bhi cumail suas teagasgan na firinn agus Leabhair Aidmheil a Chreidimh, oir tha bonn agus teagasgan ùra aig an eaglais sin nach b' aithne do na h-athraichean diadhaidh ann an Alba ach mar bhuinn agus theagasgan a dh' fhuilaing iad am bàs anns an teine, leis a chlaidheamh, agus air a chroich ann a bhi gan diultadh. Tha sinn cinnteach gu bheil moran do'n t-sluagh air am bheil so air a chumail am folach le daoine ag radh gum bheil iadsan a teagasg an t-soisgeil mar a bha iad roimhe; ach tha aig daoine ris an fhirinn a dhian agus a chumail suas mar an ceudna. Tha am bonn air am bheil an t-aonadh a nis gu bhi air a dheanamh moran n' as mearachdaiche na bha am bonn air

an robh iad a dol a dhàonadh roimhe, agus mar sin chan urrainn aon neach a bha an aghaidh an aonaidh roimhe dol a stigh leis a nis gun a bhi deanamh ciontach dhe fein : oir “Ma thogas mi ris an ni a leag mi tha mi deanamh ciontach dhìom fein.” Ma threigeas iad teagasgan na firinn, agus gum fàg iad an clann nan deigh ceangailte ri teagasgan mearachdach sgriosail bithidh sin air iarraidh air laimh pharantan air là mor a bhreàthanais. Shaoithrich daoine eile agus chaidh sinne steach nan saothair, agus ma chailleas sinn an soisgeul sìorruidh a mach a Alba feudaidh sinn a bhi air amharc oirn mar dhaoine amaideach da rìreadh. Ged a chailleadh duine na h-uile ni tha aige anns an t-saoghal agus focal Dhe a ghleidheadh faodaigh e bhi air a thearnagh, ach an neach a chailleas an fhirinn tha e caillte gu sìorruidh. “Ceannaich an fhirinn, agus na reic i.” Chan eil e ’g radh cìod an luach ; oir chan eil i tuilleadh as daor ged a dh’ fheumadh neach a ceannach le fuil a chridhe mar a rinn muintir eile.

2. Is e an dara puinc bho-n cheann so, gur h-ann bho shuas a thig an t-uisge gu bhi lionadh nan tobraichean. Tha an Spiorad Naomh ann am moran aitean do’n fhirinn air a chumail a mach bho-n t-samhladh uisge. “Doirtid mise uisge air an tartmhor, agus tuitlean air an fhearann chruaidh ; doirtidh mi mach mo Spiorad air do shliochd, agus mo bheannachd air do ghineil.” Tha e na ni ro-shoilleir bho-n fhirinn nach d’thoir an Spiorad Naomh a ghuis do’n bhreig. Is e claidheamh an spioraid focal Dhe. Bha mar so luchd-eagail Dhe anns na h-uile linn do’n eaglais a feuchainn ris an fhirinn a chumail, agus a sealtuinn ris a bheanneachd, eodhain an Spiorad Naomh a bhi air a dhortadh orra fein agus air an sliochd, air sgath Chrìosd. Nuair a chaidh a dhortadh air là na cuingis bha tobar a mheodhain air a lionadh air a leithid do dhoigh agus gun dh’ fhuair tri mìle anam a bha marbh anns a pheacadh bhi air an toirt beo. A ris ann an Alba, aig *Kirk of Shotts*, bha E air a dhortadh ann an tobair meadhonain nan gras ionnus gun robh cuig ceud anam air am beothachadh maille ri Chrìosd bho aon searmoin. Is ann mar so a bha iad a feuchainn ri bhi cumail an tobair cho glan’s a b-urrainn iad ; agus bha an Tighearna ann an arduachdranachd a grais a dortadh tuil de ’n Spiorad Naomh orra na am maith fein. Ma bha feum riamh air tuil de ’n Spiorad, tha feum da reireadh air anns an là thoibheumach, neulach, mhi-naomha so. Biodh ma ta do lamh a cumail an tobair glan, agus do shuil agus do ghlaodh ri caithir na trocair air son baisteadh leis an Spiorad Naomh, agus le teine.

3. Is e an treas ni bho ’n phuinc so, “Imichidh iad o neart gu neart.” Tha an fhirinn ag radh “mar do là is amhluidh bhitheas do neart.” Cha dean an neart fein fuasgladh sam bith dhoibh. “Bheir esan neart do’n anmhunn, agus dhoibhsan a tha gun luth meudaichidh e treise. Fasaigh na h-oigfhir lag agus sgith, agus tuitidh an oigridh thaghta gu lar ; ach iadsan a dh’ fheitheas air an Tighearna gheibh iad spionnadh nuadh ; eiridh

iad suas mar iolair air a sgiathaibh; ruithidh iad cha bhi iad sgith, siubhlaidh iad agus cha-n fhas iad fann.” Do bhrìgh gun dubhairt sinn began air an neart so fuidh ’n cheud cheann do’n fhirinn so, agus do bhrìgh nach urrainn sinn an còr a radh air aig an am so, thig sinn gu h-aithghear a dhionnsuidh na ceathramh earran do’n cheann teagaisg.

IV. Caite an crìochnaich an duine beannaichte so a thurus? “Nochdar gach aon diubh an lathair Dhe ann an Sion.”

1. Cìod a tha Sion a ciallachad? Tha an fhirinn soilleir air a phuinc so. Cha robh anns an t-saoghal uile ach aon aite, bho linn an t-Seann-Tiomnaidh, anns an robh làthearachd Dhe air a gealltuinn do dhaoine. Be Sion an t-àite sin. Bha an sin an t-ionad naomh anns an robh altar Dhe agus an t-ard shagart, agus an t-ionad bu rò-naomha anns an robh airc a chocheangail agus cathair na trocair far an robh làthaireachd Dhe air uachdar na cathair throcair. Thuigeadh eaglais an t-Seann-Tiomnaidh so gle mhaith. Cha robh anns na nithean sin ach samhladh air nithean neamhaidh mar a chi sinn bho dheachdadh an Spioraid Naomha anns an litir a chum nan Eabhrach ix. 8, “Air a bhi do’n Spiorad Naomha a’ nochdadh so, nach robh fathast an t-slighe chum an ionaid a bu ro naoimhe air a foillseachadh, am feadh a bha an ceud phaillium fathast na sheasamh: ni a bha na shamhladh do’n aimsir a tha ’làthair; . . . oir cha deachaidh Crìosd a steach do na h-ionadaibh naomha lamh-dheanta, nithean a tha ’n an samhladh air an fhìor ionad; ach do neamh fein, chum a nis e fein a nochdadh ann am fianuis Dhe air ar son-ne.” Chi sinn uaithe so gur e an t-aite anns am bheil Crìosd ga’ nochdadh fein am fianuis Dhe, Sion nan creideach.

2. Co tha air an t-slighe gu Sion? Cha neil neach air bith de ’n chinne-daone air an t-slighe so ach an neach a tha air a ghairm gu h-eifeachdach leis an Spiorad Naomh troimh fhocal na firinn. Tha a chor cailte ann an Adhamh air a thabhart dhachaidh air an duine so, agus cho cinnteach ’s tha e gum bi na h-uile anam a bhàsaicheas dealaichte ri Crìosd cailte gu sìorruidh. Tha lagh Dhe ga dhiteadh agus ga mhallachadh, agus ceartas Dhe ag agradh uaith làn dioladh air son gach peacadh ann am focal, smuain, agus ann an gnìomh. Tha e tighinn a dhiunnsaidh a cho-dhunaidh nach urrainn esan gu brath e fein a shaoradh bho ’n staid uamhasaich so. Tha an sin eolas air trocair Dhe ann an Crìosd a toirt ni eigin de dhochas dha gum feud e bhi air a thearnadh air sgath Chrìosd. Is i nis a thruaighe as truime nach urrainn e creidsinn ann an Crìosd, agus gur e eùcomas a bhios na aobhar sgrios dha gu sìorruidh. Tha so gu thoirt gu bhi ’g aideach gur peacach e, agus ga dhiteadh fein air son so tha e ga thilgeadh fein air trocair Dhe. Coltach ris a chis-mhaor a seasadh fad às, a bualadh air uchd, agus ag radh, “dean trocair ormsa tha nam pheacach.” Tha Dia a meas fireantachd Chrìosda dha, am maitheadh a pheacaidhean uile, agus a fosgladh suilean inntinn air Crìosd a bàsachadh air a chrann mhallaichte chum

esan a shaoradh, agus tha creidimh air Criosd air oibreachadh anns an anam, agus tha e anns an t-sealladh sin air a lionadh le gradh Dhe ann an Criosd, agus le sith ri Dia agus na chogais fein. Tha e tuigsinn a nis ciod e brìgh na fìrinn gu'm bheil Dia ann an Criosd a deanamh an t-saoghail reidh ris fein gun a bhi meas an cionta dhoibh. Is e so bhi dol a stigh tre chreideamh do shuaimhneas Dhe; agus is e so slighe na beatha bhi air a nochdadh do neach.

3. Ciod a tha deanamh cinnteach gu'n taisbeanar iad uile ann an Sion? An toiseach, gur e Criosd—an dara pearsa de 'n Trionaid—a ghabh bho-n Athair iad ann an comhairle na sìthe chum an tearnadh, agus a ghabh an nadur ann an coimhlionadh na h-aimsir chum gun d'thugadh E umhlachd don lagh agus làn riarachadh do cheartas nan aite; agus gum bheil E 'g radh "an dream a thug Thu dhomh cha do chaill mi h-aon dhiubh." Tha so air a dhaingneachadh le bàs agus ais-eirigh Chriosd. Tha a ris focal agus mionnan Dhe againn anns an fhirinn chum cinnteachd tearnaidh sìorruidh sluaigh Dhe a dhaingneachadh:—"Uime sin air a bhi do Dhia toileach air neo-chaochluidheachd a chomhairle 'nochdadh na bu phailte do oighreachaibh a' gheallaidh, dhaingnich e le mionnaibh e; chum tre dhà ni neo-chaochluidheach, anns an robh e eu-comasach gu'n deanadh Dia breug, gu 'm bitheadh againne comhfhurtachd làidir, a theich chum dèidin gu greim a dheanamh air an dòchas a chuireadh romhainn: ni a tha againn mar acair an anama, araon cinnteach agus daingean." Is e an treas ni gu 'm bheil oibribh Dhe uile gun aithreachas. Tha an t-Abstol ag radh, "air dhomh 'bhi dearbhta as an ni so fein, eadhon an ti a thoisich air deadh obair annaibh, gu'n coimhlion e i gu là Iosa Criosd." Chi sinn an comh-cheangal a tha anns na h-uile ceum de obair an tearnaidh ann an aon earrainn phrìseil de 'n fhirinn, agus le sin feumaidh sinn stad. "Oir an dream a roimh-aithnich e, roimh-orduich e iad mar an ceudna chum a bhi comh-chosmhuil ri iomhaidh a mhic, chum gu'm bitheadh esan 'n a cheudghin am measg mòran bhràithrean. Agus an dream a roimh-orduich e, ghairm e iad mar an ceudna: agus an dream a ghairm e, dh' fhireannaich e, mar an ceudna: agus an dream a dh' fhireannaiche, ghloraidh e mar an ceudna. Ciod uine sin a their sinn ris na nithibh sin? Ma tha Dia leinn, cò dh' fheudas a bhi 'n ar n-aghaidh?"

Obituary Notice.

WE regret to state that two of our esteemed elders passed away in April. Alex. Maciver, Knocksand, Stornoway, and George Sinclair, Halkirk, Caithness. Both were over 80 years of age.

"Help, Lord, because the godly man
Doth daily fade away;
And from among the sons of men
The faithful do decay."—Psalm xii. 1.

The Westminster Assembly and the Confession of Faith.

THERE is something peculiarly fascinating to every patriotic mind in those periods of a nation's history when her people are struggling for their birthright and contending for principles that appeal to the noblest sentiments of humanity, and are destined to win for her a place among the nations of the world. This fascination loses none of its power when those principles have relation to man's dearest interests in time and eternity. It is to such a period the Westminster Assembly belongs—a period embalmed with the heroic deeds of the patriot. It was the golden age of England's liberty. For a time, stillness brooded over the nation, and gave little indication of the storm that was soon to burst on the heads of Charles and his two hated ministers—Strafford and Laud. But the calm was not the calm of insensibility or that indifference which comes through despair; it was but the ominous calm that precedes the storm. At last the tempest of indignation burst—executions and the grim accompaniments of the scaffold became the order of the day, and even constitutional England did not shudder when a royal head fell by the axe of the common executioner. Charles and his two ministers had to learn by tragic experience how dangerous a matter it was for even kings to trample on a people's rights—the three ending their days on the scaffold as a satisfaction to popular justice. It may be supposed that a period of such contention and strife was scarcely a fit atmosphere for the existence and growth of vital religion. But such was not the case—it was the period of the Puritan ascendancy. Perhaps no other period in the Church's history can boast of such a distinguished band of experimental theologians. The Puritan divines are *facile principes* the theologians of Practical Theology. An age that could boast of an Owen—the spell of whose genius and learning was second only to Calvin's—of the great expository powers of Goodwin, of Charnocke, Adams, Brooks, Baxter, and others, may safely enough be described as an age of great spiritual fervour and deep piety. Any one who has read the writings of the Puritans cannot but be impressed with the great learning and deep spiritual insight which they display. True it is that their style may be somewhat tedious, and their method of dealing with texts somewhat cumbrous—an air of artificiality also may be found in some of their writings—but taking them all in all, history has seldom witnessed such a spectacle when learning borrowed her light from eternal truth and piety lent her grace to genius.

It was in June, 1643, that the Long Parliament, so famous in British history, passed an Act for the calling of an Assembly of divines and others, for the settling of the government and liturgy

of the Church of England. The Assembly met for the first time on 1st July, 1643—Dr. Twisse being Prolocutor or Moderator. A sermon was preached by Dr. Twisse from John xiv. 18, "I will not leave you comfortless; I will come unto you." Thereafter the Assembly was organized in Henry VII.'s Chapel in Westminster Abbey, but as the weather grew colder they removed to the Jerusalem Chamber. The original list of the Assembly consisted of 121 divines, 10 lords, and 20 commoners. Not a few of the men who composed it had been honoured to suffer in defence of the truths to which they clung, and many of them had the courage afterwards to brave suffering, insult, and poverty, rather than renounce their creed and their views of church polity and discipline. Dr. Schaff has said about the work of the Assembly, that "whether we look at the extent or the ability of its labours, or its influence upon future generations, it stands first among Protestant Councils." General Rudloff, a German historian, also acknowledges that "a more zealous, intelligent, and learned body of divines seldom ever met in Christendom."

Before commencing their great and solemn undertaking, each member had to take the following oath:—"I do seriously promise and vow, in the presence of Almighty God, that in the Assembly whereof I am a member, I will maintain nothing in point of doctrine but what I believe to be most agreeable to the Word of God." This oath was read to the members every Monday morning.

The Assembly first turned its attention to the revision of the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England, but on receiving an order from Parliament it turned its attention to the drawing up of a Confession of Faith for the three kingdoms, in accordance with the sentiment embodied in the Solemn League and Covenant. Baillie thus describes the method adopted by the divines in drawing up the Confession. "The divines," he says, "are divided into three committees, on one whereof every man is a member; no man is excluded who pleases to come to any of the three. Every committee, as the Parliament gives order in writing, to take any purpose into consideration, takes a portion, and in their afternoon meeting prepares matters for the Assembly, sets down their mind in distinct propositions, and backs their propositions with texts of Scripture. After the prayer, Mr. Byfield, the scribe, reads the proposition and Scriptures, whereupon the Assembly debates in a most grave manner. . . . No man speaks to any but the Prolocutor. They study the questions well beforehand, and prepare their speeches; but withal the men are exceeding prompt and well-spoken. When, upon every proposition by itself, and on every text of Scripture that is brought to confirm it, every man who will has said his whole mind, and the replies and the duplies and triplies are heard, then the most part calls 'To the question.' The vote being taken, should the Ayes be in a clear majority, the divines proceed to discuss the validity of

the proof texts for the doctrine in question." Working after the above manner, the first nineteen chapters of the Confession were completed and passed in September, 1646. On being presented to the Houses of Parliament, the Lords passed them unanimously, the Commons refraining their verdict until the whole Confession was finished. In December, 1646, it was completed and presented to both Houses. The Commons requested that the proof texts for the doctrines be sent up, and this was done. In May, 1647, Parliament began the consideration of the Humble Advice, as it was called, and completed it in March, 1648. The Commons objected to chapters xxx. and xxxi., dealing with the province of the magistrate in ecclesiastical matters.

The Westminster Confession was adopted by the Assembly of the Kirk of Scotland in 1647. In its adopting act we find the following words: "The Confession sent from our Commissioners in London to the Commission of the Kirk met in Edinburgh in January last, and hath been in this Assembly *twice* publicly read over, examined, and considered; copies thereof being also printed, that it might be particularly used by all the members of this Assembly, unto whom by frequent intimation was publicly made to put in their doubts and objections, if they had any." This Act accepts Chapter xxxi., section 2, with the explanation that it refers to churches without a settled ministry, and it is on this explanation that the Confession has always been received by Presbyterian Churches, and the same explanation is inserted by the Free Church Assembly in her Act of 1846. In May, 1690, "The Confession of Faith underwritten was produced, read, and considered word by word in presence of their Majesties' High Commissioner and the Estates of Parliament; and being voted and approved, was ordered to be *recorded in the books of Parliament*," thus becoming part of the famous Revolution Settlement, and not only the creed of the Established Church of Scotland, but part of the law of our native land.

From these statements it will be observed with what extreme care the Westminster divines, the English Parliament, the Scotch Assembly, and Parliament of Scotland proceeded ere they adopted the Confession. It was two years and three months in preparation. "No other symbolical book," says Dr. Schaff, "cost so much time and labour, except the Tridentine and Vatican Decrees, and perhaps the Lutheran Formula of Concord."

COMPOSITION OF THE ASSEMBLY.

The original list of the Assembly, as already stated, consisted of 121 divines, 10 lords, and 20 commoners. The Church of Scotland sent up some of her most distinguished divines, such as Rutherford, Henderson, Gillespie, and Baillie. The choice of members for the Assembly, it has been said, was strongly indicative of sectarian prejudices. How any one, with the facts of history so palpably declaring the contrary, could make such a

statement is hard for one to understand. Yet it has been seriously brought forward by one of the greatest thinkers of the new theology—Principal Fairbairn—in an article of his which appeared in the *Contemporary Review*. This charge has been ably answered, and its falsity exposed, in the introduction to the "Westminster Assembly Minutes," by the late Dr. Mitchell of St. Andrews, the greatest authority on the history and documents of the Westminster Assembly. The facts of the case are that Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Erastians, and Independents were invited.

I. Episcopalians.—In the original ordinance four bishops were named—Archbishop Ussher, Bishop Brownrigg of Exeter, Bishop Westfield of Bristol, and Bishop Prideaux of Worcester. The other Episcopalians invited were Drs. Featley, Hammond, Holdsworth, Sanderson, and Morley; the last two afterwards became bishops. With one or two exceptions they never attended. Ussher is said to have attended once, but though not present personally the highest respect was paid to his theological standing. Dr. Featley was the only Episcopalian that attended regularly. He was a learned Calvinist, and took prominent part in the debates. He was expelled by Parliament for revealing, contrary to pledge, the secrets of the Assembly to those who were in the king's confidence.

II. Presbyterians.—The Westminster divines, with the exception of the Scotch Commissioners and two French Reformed pastors, were Episcopally ordained, and were, as a body, not opposed to Episcopacy. The Presbyterians were divided into two parties. First, those who maintained the *jus divinum* of Presbytery, *i.e.* that Presbytery is a divine institution, such as the Scotch Commissioners and the party known as Smectymnuans. This word is made up of the initials of Stephen Marshall, Edmund Calamy, Thomas Young, Matt. Newcomen, William Spurston, and they were so called because they wrote a pamphlet against Bishop Hall's work on Episcopacy, which purported to be written by Smectymnuus. The other party held the *jus humanum* theory of Presbytery, *i.e.* that it is a human institution, such as Twisse, Gataker, Reynolds, Palmer, etc.

III. Independents.—Though not strong in numbers (there were only twelve of them) yet they were strong in learning, ability, and weight of character. They were led by Goodwin and Nye, and were known in the Assembly as the "Five Dissenting Brethren"—only five of them taking a prominent part in the debates of the Assembly. They contested the Presbyterian principles at every step. The most memorable of the debates was on the divine right of Presbytery, which lasted thirty days, and was afterwards known as the "Great Debate." This party rose to great prominence during the Commonwealth, Cromwell himself being an Independent. And the party who could boast of an Owen and a Goodwin could not be said to be lacking in that influence which

the spell of great names and theological genius gives to a cause, however weak it may be in numbers.

IV. Erastians.—The leaders of the Erastians were Selden, Lightfoot, and Coleman. It was their controversy with the Presbyterians that called forth George Gillespie's famous work, "Aaron's Rod Blossoming." This is one of the ablest books ever written in defence of the *jus divinum* of Presbytery. It is a masterpiece in its own province, and is all the more remarkable as being the work of so young a man. Another able work called forth by this controversy was Samuel Rutherford's "Divine Right of Church Government."

It has been said that the culture of this age demands a resetting of the doctrines of theology as presented by the Westminster Standards. An age that has no love to Christ has for its theological motto "Back to Christ," and the learned editor of the *Expository Times* has only lately informed us that it was left to the nineteenth century "to discover Christ." It is almost hopeless to expect that when the most sacred verities of the faith are treated with indifference, if not with downright irreverence, that the Confession of Faith should escape the attention of the sharpshooters of modern thought. A cry for revision is heard on every hand. The U.P. Church yielded to it many years ago, when she passed her Declaratory Act, and the Free Church followed suit by passing the Declaratory Act of 1892. The Established Church as yet has no Declaratory Act, but there is a party in the Church doing their utmost to broaden theological opinion and to widen the terms of subscription to the creed of the Church. They have formed themselves into a Society called the National Church Union. Their first meeting was held in Old Greyfriars Church, Edinburgh, sacred to the memory of the most glorious traditions of Scotch Presbyterianism—traditions that are strangely out of keeping with the Broad Church party of the Church of Scotland. Most Presbyterian Churches in England and the colonies accept the Confession with explanations. In our own country the Reformed Presbyterians, the Original Secession, and our own Church are honourable exceptions. In regard to this cry for revision, we cannot do better than quote the sensible words of Professor Mitchell of St. Andrews.

"It will be time enough," he says, "to think of change when a school of riper theologians of riper scholarship and more patient study, of higher culture and deeper piety, shall arise among us—not content to pick up their opinions, even on minor matters, at second hand, but qualified by acquaintance with the writings of these old divines and their true-hearted successors to do them full justice." His words on the character of the Westminster Standards will form a fitting conclusion to this article. "The Confession," he says, "is lined and scored with the marks of conflict, but the deepest and the broadest are those which run through all the Christian ages; which appear distinctly either in the creeds of the

early councils or in the writings of the greatest of the Latin Fathers, or which, if they are not found so prominently there, appear broad and deep in the teaching of the ablest theologians of the Middle Ages, and in a few instances are to be traced more certainly in the one or the other than perhaps in the teaching of Calvin, certainly than in that of Luther. The Assembly of divines which framed it may be said, humanly speaking, to have come just at the moment of time when such an Assembly was possible—when Conformist and Nonconformist were not yet formally separated—when men trained in the study of the Fathers, yet familiar with the principles and tendencies of the Reformation, were not so rare as they now are—when the Church was still under the influence of a marvellous revival—when the Word of God was felt as a living, quickening, transforming power, and preached not as a tradition, but as the very power and wisdom of God, by men of ripe scholarship and devoted piety, who have remained our models of earnest preaching and our guides in practical godliness even unto this day.”

D. B.

Martyrdom of John Lambert, 1538.

UPON the day that was appointed for this holy martyr of God to suffer, he was brought out of the prison at eight o'clock in the morning, unto the house of the lord Cromwell, and so carried into his inward chamber, where, as it is reported of many, that Cromwell desired him of forgiveness for that he had done. There, at the last, Lambert being admonished that the hour of his death was at hand, he was greatly comforted and cheered; and, being brought out of the chamber into the hall, he saluted the gentlemen, and sat down to breakfast with them, showing no manner of sadness or fear. When as the breakfast was ended, he was carried straightway to the place of execution, where as he should offer himself unto the Lord, a sacrifice of sweet savour, who is blessed in his saints, for ever and ever. Amen. As touching the terrible manner and fashion of the burning of this blessed martyr, here is to be noted, that of all others who have been burned and offered up at Smithfield, there was yet none so cruelly and piteously handled as he. For, after that his legs were consumed and burned up to the stumps, and that the wretched tormentors and enemies of God had withdrawn the fire from him, so that but a small fire and coals were left under him, then two that stood on each side of him with their halberts pitched him upon their pikes, as far as the chain would reach. Then he, lifting up such hands as he had, and his fingers' ends flaming with fire, cried unto the people in these words, “None but Christ, none but Christ;” and so, being let down again from their halberts, fell into the fire, and there gave up his life.—*Foxe.*

Outlines of Sermons

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

(PREACHED ON 5th, 12th, and 19th APRIL, 1840.)

(Continued from Vol. II., page 414.)

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

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Eleventh Outline.—We have ended to state some things in "the gift of God," and we may say, as Job, "Lo, these are parts of his ways; but how little a portion is heard of him?"—(Job xxvi. 14.) The eye can see much, the ear can hear more, the heart can conceive more, but all these cannot take in what is laid up for them that wait for Him. Unless we could know God's whole heart and whole soul; could, like the Holy Ghost, search the deep things of infinite Godhead that is in Christ Jesus; could dive to the bottom of the lake that burns with fire and brimstone for evermore, and tell the happiness of being delivered; could examine and reveal all the mysteries of Christ's work, by the Holy Ghost, in bringing all the elect out of the state of nature, and in saying to them, "Go forth;" and could measure all the glories of heaven, all the pleasures that are at God's right hand for evermore, we could not tell what is in "the gift of God" to the full. But when He says to the poor woman, "If thou knewest the gift of God," etc., the meaning is, "If thou hadest a true, though not a full knowledge of the gift; if thou hadest tasted, though not able to drink in this sea of bliss that is in Him; if thou hadest known what passeth knowledge, thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water." The knowledge here spoken of is not that head knowledge which "the princes of this world" may have in the understanding, but what "babes and foolish things" may have. Indeed, it is a being taught by the Spirit to seek the Spirit; but it is a knowledge or feeling of want and need, with some sight of the value of the object wanted and needed, and of its suitableness to that want and need—that it is the very thing which would answer and none else—and also a pressing necessity of having the object, from the danger of continuing without it and the happiness of possessing it.

But it is here said, not only "If thou knewest the gift of God," but also, "And who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink." So that it is not only necessary to know the gift, but that He who is speaking and present is the gift. A person might think, "Oh,

if I had known where Christ is, or that ever he spoke to me, I would have asked of Him," etc. Some would think, "If He were personally present, however far distant, they would go and consult Him—go to any part of the earth if He were on earth." Now we indeed need a personal call, but that is in our ears, which is general and particular. We intend then to show, if the Lord will, that Christ is speaking to us, and to each in particular.

I. He speaks to us in the Bible, the written word. "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, reproof, correction, and instruction in righteousness." And the very end of the Scriptures being written was to reveal the "gift of God." "These (things) are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name."—(John xx. 31.) Sometimes He spake in a supernatural way. "And the Lord spake unto me, saying." "The word of the Lord came unto me, saying." "Thus saith the Lord." So also "Spake as they were moved of the Holy Ghost." Again, He spake by audible voices; "Samuel, Samuel," "Saul, Saul." And He also spake personally on earth. But now He speaks by His Word. (1) It is given by Christ's authority. "The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." It is His letter, signed with His name, and sealed with His seal. Every soul now in glory is a seal. "Ye are my witnesses." Hence those who will not read the Word, though they can, despise that authority, and do what they can to seal Christ's mouth. This is fearful. (2) He never speaks but according to this Word. "To the law and to the testimony." If you have any impression, it must agree with the Word, or it is from darkness. This Word is more sure than a voice from heaven. (2 Peter i. 17-19.) Be not deceived with impressions. (3) He addresses it to all, and commands all to hear. "Search the scriptures." All are to read the Bible who can read. (4) He addresses it to every individual. "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink." "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." "If any man have ears to hear, let him hear." He speaks to every individual as certainly as if by name, "whether he hear or forbear." In the one case it becomes the gospel of salvation, in the other, of condemnation. (5) Every man is bound to receive the Word as to himself. "Hear ye him." If He speaks, every one should hear what He has to say, according to the character addressed, for He speaks to sinners, to those in spiritual graves, to cases of all kinds. (6) A man is safe in resting his case upon the Word. It is a "*sure*" Word. There is no deceit in the Word; and if we could rest there, then the case is safe in the hands of Him who speaks. He is not a deceiver. (7) It will judge every man, whether he receive it or not. "The same word shall judge him at the last day."—(John xii. 48.) Every man who has a Bible has his sentence already in his house if he continue unchanged.

II. He speaks to us in the word spoken or preached. "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." "How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?"—(Rom. x. 14.) I speak not for self but for your sakes, both for warning and encouragement. If they be real preachers, they are ambassadors for Christ. "Now then," says the apostle, "we are ambassadors for Christ." Their authority is not of themselves, nor of man only. They are sometimes very despicable in themselves and in the eyes of others. Some of them were of humble occupations, such as fishermen. Others were, in character, blasphemers, injurious persecutors, from hell's fireside. Yet being sent, they represent Christ. They act by orders; then the words are His words, not theirs, so that He speaks, not they.

Twelfth Outline.—Here are two things specified as necessary to be known in order to a sinner's asking the "living water," namely, "the gift of God" and who it is that calls. Unless we have His authority we cannot ask in faith. We have spoken of the first thing, "the gift of God." We observe further concerning the gift—(1) It is a most valuable gift. We may say that, when God would give a gift to man, He went to the cabinet of His jewels and gave the most precious diamond there; nay, an only one, that He left none like it. "He gave his only begotten son." "Having therefore one son, he sent him last, saying, They will reverence my son." (2) It is a most suitable gift. "Such an one became us;" suited us. Had He given all the works of His hands in heaven and earth for value, they were nothing to this. And had He given all others for suitableness, they would not do. Because less would not do, He gave what would do, cost Him what it will. If the angel said to Abraham, "Now I know that thou fearest God, seeing that thou hast not withheld from me thy son, thine only son," we may borrow the words and say, "Now we know that Thou lovest man, seeing Thou hast not withheld thy Son, thine only Son, from him." Be the case what it may, He suits the case. (3) It is a free gift. "That we might know the things that are freely given to us of God."—(1 Cor. ii. 12.) He seeks no price, nothing to put into His treasury for Him. This is important. He seeks nothing for themselves, nor to recommend them to Christ. Come at once to Him without money or price. Note well here; if He seeks anything from them, it is only what would ruin them by keeping them from Christ. It is only things hurtful that He asks for. (4) It is a gift freely offered. Yet it is to be sought. "Come ye to the waters."—(Is. lv. 1.) "Yet for all this, I will be enquired of." It is freely offered, and the seeking is rather of a heart to take the gift. Were it not for what is in us, there might be none here to-day afraid of anything. For all is in Him we need.

Now, as for the second thing, "who it is that saith to thee," observe we have the gift of God, Jesus Christ, speaking to us:—

I. In the Bible, the written word. "All scripture is given by inspiration of God." Christ is emphatically called "the Word," because He reveals the Father to sinners, as our words reveal our thoughts. "He whom God hath sent, speaketh the words of God." We may say that the word is the Father's, the Son is the mouth or revealer, and the Holy Ghost the breath by which it is spoken. "Come, O breath." The Scriptures then are the words of Christ, the gift of God, and speak to every one who reads or hears. It is given not by man or angels, and therefore observe—(1) It has the authority of Christ. Instead of being doubted, it commands the faith of every one, either that he is in a state of condemnation or justification. The Word describes the state and case of all men and women in the world. (2) He never speaks but according to the Word. "To the law and to the testimony." Therefore a creature has great need to see that his case be decided by the Word. Sometimes the mind may be filled with gloom and despondency on various accounts, as the Psalmist in the 73rd Psalm, "until he went into God's sanctuary" to His oracles. On the other hand, a hypocrite may be lifted up with impressions, and may be thanking God, or as Paul, thinking all well, till the law come. Therefore there is great need to hear what the Word says. (3) He commands all to read the Word. "Search the scriptures." Sometimes the tempter will terrify a creature from reading the Word. But observe, it is Christ that speaks, and then we ought to hear. The old heart is against it, but remember that is just its enmity and deceit. "I hate this man, for he never speaks good of me." (4) He addresses every individual. "If any man." "Whosoever." "Except a man be born again." There is not an individual in a family but to whom the Word speaks in particular. "Saith to thee." "Thou art the man." It speaks to father, mother, son, daughter. "Hear thou." There is warning to all, and individually. (5) It will be the rule of judgment. (John xii. 48.) The Bible rejecter is a Christian-receiver, and the Bible will condemn him at last. It is not a trifling matter to have a Bible in a family.

II. Christ speaks by the word preached. (1) Those who are real preachers are His ambassadors. "Now then we are ambassadors for Christ."—(2 Cor. v. 20.) In His room, name, and authority, they speak His message. In themselves they are vile and once were injurious, persecutors, blasphemers, but they have all authority from Him. (2) They who receive their word, or rather, His word at their mouth, receive Him. (Matt. x. 40.) They who take warning at their reproof are reckoned as taking it from Him. If it is His message it has His authority. (3) Their message will be found binding. "Whatsoever ye shall bind in earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose in earth shall be loosed in heaven."—(Matt. xviii. 18.) Of course

this is only by the Word. (4) Their message will be a sweet savour unto God, as to believers and unbelievers, of life or death. (2 Cor. ii. 15, 16.) Oh, what will come of the Word in Bruan?

1. Remember, then, that Christ has spoken to each of us, and therefore ask of Him. 2. See what your case is by the Word. By it we shall stand or fall. 3. See, it is not easy to come to assurance. Only by the Word, illuminated by the Spirit, and searched. 4. Take heed of false teachers. "Try the spirits" by the Word. "If an angel from heaven preach any other gospel unto you . . . let him be accursed."—(Gal. i. 8.) Such would be much more likely to be followed than the true preacher. "If another come in his own name, him ye will receive." 5. Having tried if you can find the true teachers, consider that their words will not fall to the ground. They are not lost yet.

There is something here said to the woman, Give me to drink. When Christ speaks, He says something to every one. We have mentioned that "the gift of God," being a gift, there is no price paid by the creature for salvation directly to the law or yet to God for Christ. Nevertheless, Christ seeks something from all who come to Him, though not as a price, yet something which they are better without. Here we note:—(1) He might have wrought a miracle for allaying His thirst, but being under the law, the law would not allow Him that. O! His thirst was painful, the law offended, the curse laid on Him! And, clearly seen, the reason: He suffered for others—not as His own on earth suffer, to kill corruption in themselves, for He had none. (2) He asked her to relieve that thirst. O, how humbling to Him to have to ask of such a creature, such a sinner! It is not wrong to seek worldly aid from the wicked world. (3) He asked in order to get conversation with her. He wanted to introduce the subject; He knew what would follow.

Now, while these were the reasons directly, we take occasion by way of accommodation of the words, founded on other parts of Scripture, to mention some things which He asks from all, and takes from all who are made to come to Him, and some which He may take when He chooses or leave as He sees meet.

I. He demands the heart. "My son, give me thine heart."—(Proverbs xxiii. 26.) The heart is the palace of the soul, and since He intends a palace in His Father's house for those who receive Him, He demands a palace from them now. What sort of a heart is it which He demands? 1. It is a hard heart. It is compared to a stone, to adamant. "After thy hardness and impenitent heart." He seeks it to make it soft. "I will give you an heart of flesh." Now, He had to be thirsty for the woman, but He had also to drink a cup of wrath which melted His heart like wax into the midst of His bowels, 2. It is a heart of enmity. "The carnal mind is enmity against God." He will make it a heart of love. "The Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thine

heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live.”—(Deut. xx. 6.) This is an exceeding great and precious promise, for without love none see Him, but such as shall be anathema when He comes. 3. It is a deceitful heart. “The heart is deceitful above all things.”—(Jer. xvii. 9.) Its hardness and enmity are rendered dangerous beyond description by its deceitful nature. He will redeem it from deceit and violence, and make it an honest and good heart to sow in; and then the handful of corn will grow in the top of the barren mountains, taking away all hindrances. 4. It is an unclean heart. “O Jerusalem, wash thine heart.” He will make it clean. “I will sprinkle clean water upon you,” so as to make a “pure heart,” in order that you may “see God.” “Without holiness no man shall see the Lord.” He wants to cleanse the heart. 5. It is a heart of unbelief. “Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God.”—(Hebrews iii. 12.) He will make it believe. He will make it hear the voice of the Son of God. Unbelief shuts out Christ, bars His doing mighty works, makes Him swear in wrath that they shall not enter into rest, despises threatenings, braves them, despises promises, departs from God, and destroys the soul, laying it under condemnation.

The Sanctity of the Sabbath.

TWO LETTERS BY THE LATE ALEXANDER MACDONALD,
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SIR,—I trust you will allow me space for a few remarks on the all-important subject of the sanctity of the Sabbath.

Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour and do all thy work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates; for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.—Exodus xx. 8-11. The fourth commandment was written by the Lord on the first table of the moral law containing our duty to God; the sum of which is the adoring love God claims from us, and expressed in the words of the Lord Christ—“Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind.” It is characteristic of those who keep the Sabbath day holy from love to God, that they do so with respect to the authoritative injunction and caution in the words—“Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.” Precious time and the arrangement of time is of the sovereign will and

disposal of God. The seventh day of rest, which is the Sabbath of the Lord our God, bears in it a peculiar suitableness to mankind in every age and circumstances, in its divine excellence and perpetuity. There are four reasons annexed to the fourth commandment for keeping holy to God one whole day in seven. The first is:—God's allowing us six days of the week for our own employments. And surely we, who are absolutely dependent upon God, who in the beginning made all things very good, and made man in His own image, who was above all creatures on earth the chief object of His complacency, should remember that the Sabbath day is the most blessed part of time, and that it is our duty and precious privilege with loving obedience to acquiesce in His glorious arrangement of time. The man who performs his secular work, by the grace of God, with abiding impressions of the blessing of his past Sabbaths, does his work during six days of the week preparative to his keeping the seventh day holy to the Lord without distraction, and enjoys in worshipping God, precious foretastes of the eternal enjoyment of the Sabbath (rest) with God in heaven.—Heb. iv. 7. Such a person, in so much as he is able by his instruction and example, helps his neighbour to do the same, and he is careful to oppose and remove all things that tend towards encroaching on the sanctity of the Sabbath day, as commanded and forbidden in Scripture. The second reason for keeping the Sabbath day holy is God's challenging a special propriety in the seventh day. The Lord is glorified by the right observance of the fourth commandment according to His word, the observance of which comprehends the whole moral law, which is the divine rule of life, through faith in Jesus Christ, the one mediator between God and man. See the 44th question of the Shorter Catechism. The Lord Jesus Christ is the personal manifestation of all glory to God.—Heb. i. Who redeemed His people from the curse of the law as a broken covenant of works, He being made a curse for them, and His people are made, through faith the righteousness of God in Him and are sanctified by His Holy Spirit put within them.—Ezek. xxxvi. 27. Whereby they know and acknowledge God's special propriety in the seventh day, and realise through supreme love to God, expressed in their keeping His commandments, God's sovereignty over them, His propriety in them, and the zeal He hath for His own worship.—John xiv. 15; Eph. ii. 10; Ex. xxxiv. 14. The Lord hath put a fence around His holy, unchangeable moral law of precious promises to them who keep it and love His holy Sabbath.—Isa. lviii. 13-14, and threatenings against them who break His laws. The Lord has annexed to the fourth commandment dreadful threatenings against the breakers of it, from which no impenitent sinner can escape. The moral law, as it was promulgated by the Lord on Mount Sinai, and the fourth commandment in its bosom, was a sign between Him and His people for ever. It was a memorial token from the Lord to them of His infinite goodness

and wisdom, and the punishment deserved by the Sabbath breakers was death.—Ex. xxxi. 12 to end. And we should know that the guilt incurred through the profanation of the Christian Sabbath is not less, but greater, than that of those who defiled the Old Testament Sabbath, because the glory of the work of Redemption by Christ excels in glory all the works of creation and providence and all that was typical of Him until His coming—who finished His work and rose triumphant from the grave on the first day of the week, having magnified the law and made it honourable, and the fourth commandment as part of the law. We should remember that although the right observance of the Christian Sabbath comprehends its moral and divine character, as it was from the beginning till the resurrection of Christ, the keeping of the Sabbath sacred to the memory of that glorious event on the first day of the week, illustrates with what divine appropriateness we may perceive the glory of God's propriety in the seventh day of the week transferred into the first day, which is the Christian Sabbath, by which the glory of the Old Testament Sabbath is not made void, but established.—Romans iii. 31. The keeping of the Christian Sabbath holy, according to God's appointment in His Word, emphatically prohibits the practice of all that is ritual in connection with religious worship, including instrumental music and unscriptural hymns. The question may reasonably be asked:—How can Ritualists and those who use hymns containing unscriptural doctrine clear themselves from the guilt of disowning the perfection of Christ's finished work, and from desecrating the Lord's day through false doctrine and ritualism? How dangerous must be the secret and manifest practice of many persons of all classes in our day neglecting preparation for the Sabbath on other days, especially on Saturday, when many are busily engaged with their worldly affairs till the last hour is gone, and others pass through the bounds, into the Lord's day! We deprecate the violence of God's law by the running of trains on the Lord's day, for which railway directors are chiefly responsible, and for the criminal profanation of the Lord's day a few weeks ago at Dingwall railway station; we would compassionately warn them, and others who are guilty with them, that, however the breakers of the fourth commandment may escape punishment from men, yet the Lord our God will not suffer them to escape his righteous judgment.—Deut. xxviii. 58-59. Of the many forms of Sabbath profanation, some of them are as follows:—Unlawful visiting and walking on the Lord's day, works not of necessity and mercy, but contrary to the spirituality and extent of the fourth commandment. People in every relationship, go to, and from home to visit relatives and acquaintances, and for worldly business, and neglect going to the house of God and attending to the other duties implied in the right observance of the Sabbath day. There were, and there are people now, who walk on the Lord's day for their health, but it is

impossible that good may come by doing evil. See Gal. vi. 7-8. There are others who walk for pleasure on the Sabbath day, and this form of sin is the most odious. I heard a faithful servant of the Lord say, "They prefer going to walk in the fields and the woods with the devil in their company than go to church." From these evil doings proceed many forms of Sabbath breaking in our land, and how to restrain them is a serious question for the consideration of all who love the Lord and their fellow-creatures.

Fearing that I encroach on your space, I will defer the conclusion of my remarks till next week.—Yours, &c., LAYMAN.

20th July, 1896.

SIR,—The third reason for keeping the Sabbath day holy to the Lord is His own example—"For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea and all that in them is, and rested on the seventh day." The Lord God made all things of nothing, by the word of His power, in the space of six days and all very good; whereby He determined most liberally the morality of six days for worldly labour, and of a seventh day for holy rest, and both these by His own example. Having spoken before concerning the Lord's arrangement of time, I may further say that God, who, of His infinite goodness and wisdom, hath appointed for man the right measure of time in order to his being employed, hath also qualified him, both intellectually and physically, for work. The word of God and man's experience teach that the exercise of lawful work is absolutely necessary for man's health, as well as for his natural sustenance—Gen. ii. 15; Luke xii. 30, 31; and that idleness is very sinful.—1 Tim. v. 8. But the same word and experience prove that man's constitution needs one whole day in the seven to be a holy Sabbath of rest with God, and that the people and nations which profane and disallow the right observance of the Lord's day are in an immoral and degenerating condition.—See Lev. xxvi. Ezek. xx. The sanctification of the Sabbath day is peculiarly testing. The Lord proves the love and loyalty of all who profess to be His people, who follow His example, and the conduct of those which is contrary to His law. His obedient and faithful people keep the Sabbath day by a holy resting all that day, even from such worldly employments and recreations as are lawful on other days, and by spending the whole time in the public and private exercises of God's worship, except so much as is to be taken up in the works of necessity and mercy, according to Christ's example, and from love to Him and to the Father.—John xiv., 14 and 21. And for this end the Sabbath is distinguished as a day of rest and for fellowship with the Father, and with His Son, Jesus Christ.—1 John i. 3; Isa. lviii. 13, 14. The fourth reason for keeping the Sabbath day holy to the Lord is His blessing the Sabbath day and consecrating it. This reason is two-fold. First the Lord's day is the special part of time He

hath set apart for himself—"The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God," the day He has appointed for the public and private worship of His Church, and for the effectual calling of those who are far off. Secondly—The Lord meets with His people who come to His throne of grace, and according to His promises accepts their worship and homage. "I will meet with thee and I will commune with thee from above the mercy seat."—Ex. xxv. 2. "Every one that keepeth the Sabbath from polluting it, and taketh hold of my covenant, even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer; their burnt offerings and sacrifices shall be accepted upon mine altar, for my house shall be called a house of prayer for all people."—Isa. lvi. 6, 7. The Lord blesseth His people on the Sabbath day, and enables them by His grace to contemplate the infinite delight and complacency of the Father in the Son of His love and His finished work, whom he hath exalted and glorified at the right hand of the throne of God.—Isa. xlii. 1; Heb. xii. 1, 2. They are blessed through the Lord's delight in them, as children and heirs in union with Christ.—Rom. viii. 7; Psalms xxxii. 13-18; Zeph. iii. 17. The Lord met with His people on the day of His resurrection, and blessed them. He appeared first to Mary Magdalene, Mark xvi. 9; then He appeared to her in company of the other Mary—Matt. xxviii. 1, 9; afterwards He showed Himself to the two disciples going to Emmaus—Luke xxiv. 13, 15, then to Simon Peter alone, verse 34, and on the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, He appeared to all the disciples except Thomas—John xx. 19-24; eight days thereafter He appeared to all the apostles when Thomas was with them—verse 26. On the day of Pentecost, which was the Lord's day, the Lord according to the promise of the Father, shed forth His Spirit upon His people—Luke xxiv. 49, by which the Father declared His acceptance of the finished work of His Son, and in giving Him on that day, as part of the fruit of His soul's travail, three thousand souls through the preaching of His gospel applied by His Holy Spirit—Isa. lviii. 10, 11; John xvi. 7-11. And so shall He continue to bless His church in a less or greater measure, until the end of the world.—Matt. xxviii. 20. Oh that we were able in a true and worshipful spirit to sing, making melody in our hearts to the Lord, the following words:—

"That stone is made head corner stone,
Which builders did despise;
This is the doing of the Lord,
And wondrous in our eyes.

This is the day God made, in it
We'll joy triumphantly.
Save now, I pray thee, Lord, I pray,
Send now prosperity."

—Yours, &c.

LAYMAN.

Remarks on "Sin" and "The Divine Love."

WHAT is sin? Perhaps a better answer was never given to this question by uninspired men than that given by the Westminster divines who compiled the Shorter Catechism—viz., "Sin is any want of conformity unto, or transgression of the law of God." This answer includes both original and actual sin—want of conformity to God's law is sin—a want which no child descended from Adam by ordinary generation wanted since Adam first transgressed the law of God. The first transgression of God's law is the fountain from which all original and actual sin welled forth and flooded the human world, and brought forth all human woes, pains, sorrows, diseases, and death as its fruit. Nature is the creature of God as it came from His hand in all the plenitude of perfection in which He called it into being; and it would have continued so in all its fruits had not sin caused the whole creation, or every creature in our world, "to groan and travail in pain together until now." Sin transformed not only human nature, but also affected all nature, in reference to our world, together with humanity in its primordial blessedness as placed on earth when God created man.

Death, temporal death in reference to man, is not "the debt of nature" as it is so often, but falsely, called. Irrefragable proof of this is afforded by the translation of Enoch and Elijah, whose bodies were undoubtedly changed into spiritual bodies in their translation, "for flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God." Their natural bodies were changed as the living, natural bodies of those who are Christ's shall be changed when He comes to judge the living and the dead. These "shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump."

The inspired definition of sin by the apostle John is, "sin is the transgression of the law." Literally translated, the original words are "sin is lawlessness." Persistent lawlessness soon makes a person an outlaw; and Adam's first sin, on account of the essential nature of sin, rendered himself and all his natural posterity outlaws in consequence of their natural relation to him as a sinner and his relation to them as representative of the human race. They became the "evil fruit" of a tree transformed from "a good" to a "corrupt tree" by sin. An outlaw is liable to be arrested at any moment by a legal warrant, and every unregenerate sinner is liable to be arrested at any moment by the warrant of the Divine Lawgiver and Judge, whose sentence is, "The soul that sinneth it shall die." And were it not for the unmerited provision of God's sovereign love, not only spiritual and temporal, but also eternal death would inevitably have been "the portion and cup" of the first Adam and all his offspring as certainly as spiritual and eternal death became the irrevocable

portion and infinitely just "wages of sin" in the case of "the angels that kept not their first estate."

Divine love is an essential of God's being, "for God is love;" and it is so essentially and infinitely perfect that it can neither be analysed nor defined more than the essence of Deity can be so dealt with; for the finite can never fully comprehend the Infinite and Eternal One. Divine love, therefore, can be known only in so far as it has been revealed in its fruits; and these have been "according to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace" . . . "the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure, which He hath purposed in Himself." God's will acts according to His law, which is love; and the essential and infinite perfection of His will makes it a mystery to finite created beings however highly exalted. "He giveth not account of any of His matters." The divine will acts according to the divine law, which is "holy, just, and good"—perfect as Himself, and therefore faultless—it cannot err. This makes divine love sovereign, and its sovereignty faultless. In sovereignty He called any creature into being as creator; and in sovereignty "He saith, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy." No creature had any claim on Him for creation; much less has any sinner a claim on Him for mercy. "The angels that sinned," though spirits, lost their spiritual life and the image of God by sin; and enmity against God took the place of love to God in the essential heart of their being. This enmity is the essence of sin, which is directly opposed to divine love, and consequently opposed to the being of God. The love of God is so essentially holy, just, and good that sin could never be pardoned unless the penalty due to sin were exacted by God as Lawgiver and Judge, exhausted by the Bearer of sin's punishment—a punishment which no finite person could or can exhaust either in time or throughout eternity. It would be immoral to pardon sin otherwise than thus. The doctrine become so prevalent, in the present day, that because "God is love" He pardons sin without any regard to His holiness or justice—horrible thought! charges God with unrighteousness, and consequently, with sin.

Divine sovereignty made no provision for bestowing pardon of sin upon "the devil and his angels;" and Divine justice is as unchangeable as the divine law and Lawgiver, and must therefore be inflexible in its demands. Pardon of sin could not therefore be bestowed upon them without a substitute both willing and able to endure the punishment due to sin until that punishment was exhausted. Fallen man had no more claim than fallen angels for pardon of sin from his Creator, Sovereign, and Judge. But God, in the exercise of His sovereignty and of His sovereign love, had provided a Substitute for man "according to the eternal purpose which He purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord," a Substitute both willing and able to endure until He exhausted the penalty due to divine justice for man's transgression of the divine

law, and for all the actual sins of all those whose place He took as Substitute. Those who repudiate the blessed doctrine of Substitution must have views utterly unscriptural, both of the essential nature of sin and also of the infinite perfection of the divine attributes. This divine and divinely-provided Substitute, "His own self bear our sins in His own body on the tree," and thereby procured pardon of sin, and opened a way of egress for divine mercy to be bestowed on the vilest sinner accepting of Christ—a way whereby all the attributes of Deity are magnified and glorified in bestowing all the blessings for time and eternity included in "the eternal purpose which God purposed in Christ." How significantly Christ calls Himself "the door, the way, the truth and the life;" since sin had shut the door and the way of access to and communication with God for ever had He not, as Substitute, taken the place of sinners in the eternal covenant of grace. As He took His place of Substitute as the second and last Adam—1st, to give perfect obedience to the divine law which the first Adam transgressed; and 2nd, to endure until He exhausted that law's curse—the wages of sin—eternal death; He also took the place of Kinsman-Redeemer, that He might "purchase His church with His own blood." Atonement by blood characterises the Bible from the fall of man to the close of revelation. "Unto Adam also and to his wife did the Lord God make coats of skins, and clothed them." This is the first fact recorded by the inspired historian and lawgiver subsequent to the fall of man. The first blood of animals shed was, undoubtedly, by divine appointment, as a type of that blood with which the divine Antitype "purchased His church." The first act recorded of Noah after he went forth from the ark is, "Noah builded an altar unto the Lord; and took of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt offerings on the altar." Noah's sacrifice here recorded is proof positive that, atonement by blood, divinely instituted after the fall of man, was continued by all true worshippers of God from the fall to the flood. The blood of the paschal lamb distinguished the Israelites from the Egyptians, and saved the first-born of Israel from the destroying angel. "For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul" (Leviticus xvii. 11). In Heb. iv. 2 Paul certifies that the gospel was preached to Israel in the wilderness as certainly as to the Hebrews to whom he was writing—the gospel by atoning blood typifying the blood of the divine Antitype. The book of Leviticus and all the ritual given by God to Israel was specifically characterised by blood; and Paul established beyond a shadow of doubt that, "the gospel was preached unto them" by that ritual; and says, "without shedding of blood is no remission"—no atonement for sin, and consequently no pardon of sin. Paul also says, "being now justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath

through Him." No justification, and consequently no salvation from wrath but "by His blood." John says, "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin;" and Peter tells "the strangers scattered throughout" the places he names that they were "elected according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." Justification, sanctification, and all blood-bought blessings for a life of grace in time and a life of glory throughout eternity, have been procured for the "elect of God the Father" by shedding of that blood wherewith Christ, the God-man, purchased His church. J. B.

(To be continued.)

The late William Macbeath, Halkirk, Caithness.

WE regret to record this month the death of William Macbeath, Bridge Street, Halkirk, which took place there on the 25th March. The deceased had reached the ripe age of nearly 79 years, having been born on 1st April, 1820. His native place was Berriedale in the parish of Latheron. For many years he was an inhabitant of Halkirk.

William Macbeath was well-known among friends of truth in Caithness as a humble, sincere Christian, and his removal is felt to be a real loss to the Church in that quarter. The exact time when William's spiritual experience began we are unable to relate. This much we know that many years ago he met with a serious accident which laid him aside for a time, and that during this period he came under deep soul trouble, so much so, that he forgot all about his bodily ailments. When his family would be retiring to bed, William would start off across the hills to visit, for spiritual counsel, Donald Grant, Latheron, and David Campbell, Berriedale, two eminent worthies in those days. He cherished a great regard for the memories of these and other godly persons of the past. Of Alexander Gair he frequently spoke in terms of the highest admiration, and recounted not a few of his memorable sayings. In fact, the past in Caithness was to William surrounded with a halo of glory that nothing in the present could make up for. The persons, sayings, and teachings of the many nobles of Israel, now passed away from the county, were constant matter of contemplation and conversation with our departed friend. Now-a-days people don't want to hear about the glorious days of the past in this land. They cry, "Go back to Christ." But they who have no love for the footsteps of the flock are not likely to be lovers of the Shepherd. William was also well acquainted with the past contentings of the Church during Reformation times, and his whole heart went with the Covenanters in their noble struggle for

Christ's crown and covenant. Their sufferings for truth and righteousness were always fresh in his memory, and he could not speak of them without deep emotion.

William was also a man of prayer. His public exercises were characterised by a deep confession of sin, a cry for mercy, and a felt need of the atoning blood of Christ, and of the new heart and right spirit. At Friday Fellowship Meetings he was also a speaker. His gifts of utterance were not his strongest feature, yet he had often something fresh and pointed to say. Before our Church was formed in 1893, William spoke out vigorously against the errors and innovations that had been introduced into the Free Church. He spoke out in such a faithful manner as to make ministers sometimes very uncomfortable in their seats. We heard of one occasion at which he referred to the Revised Version of the Bible. The revisers got no mercy. William said, he could not compare them to anything but swine entering into a garden and trampling the beautiful flowers under their feet. This may appear to some an extreme expression, but better judges than most of us are of opinion that the revisers made a poor business of their work. Of recent years William's addresses showed an increasing spirituality of mind, as well as a growing concern for the cause of Christ in the land.

He will be much missed by our congregation in Halkirk. He was a punctual attendant at every meeting, and his place is now empty. All who knew him will also miss his warm greeting and genial kindness. To his bereaved family the loss is very great. A daughter, now laid upon a bed of weakness for the long period of 27 years, deeply mourns his removal.

A correspondent sends us some account of his last illness, an extract from which we subjoin. "Although we desired to cherish faint rays of hope for the recovery of our friend, yet these our hopes have been blasted, and now we can say, in the language of the Psalmist, 'He shall not return unto me, but I shall go unto him.' Through his removal from amongst us, there is a missing link in our chain, an empty seat in our gathering for prayer and worship, and the absence of a truly sincere penitent at a throne of grace, which is a sad loss to us—not only us as a congregation, but to the Church throughout the land. Few anxious seekers and contrite self-denial suppliants of his stamp are in our day. These secret wrestlers are rare, who would not remove the ancient landmarks, but loved the old paths—the footsteps of the flock—sought to walk therein, and found rest to their souls. Having been so much acquainted and associated with him in his life, and also in his last severe sufferings, I knew him better than many others, and therefore will sadly miss his exercises, intercourse, and fellowship, which I valued dearly. I greatly enjoyed being with him in his last illness. His continual cry was to pray and read and praise, especially the last, and as soon as one was done he would say, 'Oh, go on, go on.' It was rather

rare altogether to engage in prayer, read a portion of Scripture, and sing a few verses of a suitable Psalm five or six times during the night. Amidst all the distress in his body and soul conflict to the end, it was peculiarly discernible in him a felt and humble consciousness of his own unworthiness, a penitent and contrite disposition of spirit, and a submissive, reverent reconciliation with the chastening hand of the Lord upon him. This feature was peculiarly noticeable, as he sighed often, 'Ah, it is myself is to blame for it all,' and on other occasions made ejaculatory cries and prayers or repeated portions of Psalms appropriate to his case, especially of the 118th Psalm. This was the Psalm he last wished to be read and sung, commencing at verse 19, 'O set ye open unto me the gates of righteousness.' Before a few minutes had gone—after some struggles, the emancipated spirit had departed. 'Eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.'"

A Letter of the late David Steven, Caithness.*

BOWER, 2nd April, 1870.

DEAR FRIEND,—I am longing to hear from you. "When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them." See Isaiah xl. 27 to the end. Many times they have been put sore to it. "I said in my haste, All men are liars."—(Ps. cxvi. 11).

Going through the wilderness you got a sight of "the gold." Learn a lesson from Manoah's wife, "If the Lord were pleased to kill us, He would not have received a burnt offering and a meat offering at our hands, neither would He have shewed us all these things, nor would as at this time have told us such things as these."—(Jud. xiii. 23). The Lord's gifts and callings are without repentance. When He hides His face, they think He has changed His purpose. This is the work of the tempter to lie on the Holy One of Israel. Perhaps when you had some enjoyment as in Ps. xxx. 6, 7; "And in my prosperity I said, I shall never be moved. Lord, by Thy favour Thou hast made my mountain to stand strong: Thou didst hide Thy face, and I was troubled." Children must be weaned from the milk.—(Is. xxviii. 9, 16; Job v. 7 and xiv. 1). You may say and truly as Job said to his friends, "Miserable comforters are ye all." None can comfort but the Holy Ghost. When He speaks the word, Satan must flee with all his lying subtleties. Then the poor soul is too hot for him at that time.

* For an account of this eminent man, see "Ministers and Men in the Far North," page 158. This, like many other letters that have appeared in our columns, was hitherto unpublished. It was written to Daniel Sinclair, Lybster, a deeply tried and exercised young man, who died several years ago.—ED.

My dear sister is a very poor object, as helpless as an infant, but very reconciled and patient in her tribulation. Pray for me : I am very frail and have much to grapple with, within and without. O, what a wonder that such a sinner as I am is dealt so kindly with in His long-suffering on the foot-stool.

I hope Mr. Mackay (*the late Rev. John Mackay*) is getting better. I purpose to write Mrs. Mackay. I would wish to know how Mrs. Adamson is, and her son and daughter. Remember me to Mrs. G—— and Mrs. R——. My mind is every day in Lybster. I do not forget you all. But, alas, it is worthless all that comes from sinful me.—Yours very truly,

DAVID STEVEN.

P.S.—I am afraid you cannot read this, my hand shakes so much.

D. S.

Notes and Comments.

Notice of Communions.—Oban and Kames on first Sabbath of May ; John Knox's, Glasgow, on the second, and Glendale, the third. Knox's will (D.V.) have all the services in the Original Secession Church, Bedford Street, South-side.

"Easter Eggs."—The *Children's Record* of the Free Church for April is a very varied number. On the forefront we have an article on George Wishart, the martyr, illustrated by a woodcut. This may seem to give a distinct Reformation tone to the publication, but George Wishart is not suffered long to prevail. The subject of Easter comes up, and the editor is fairly carried away by it. First we have an Easter anecdote shewing how, in the year 1799, the hostile French were driven away from the Austrian town of Feldkirk by the ringing of the Easter bells. There was not a Frenchman left. Next we have a little poem or hymn of Easter, and next an article on the general subject of Easter. This article is very comprehensive and informing. We learn from it that Easter has its foundation in Egypt. The children of Israel in Egypt were bidden to keep the Passover, and so in like manner we keep Easter. The inference apparently is that because the children of Israel kept the Passover in obedience to a divine command, therefore, the children of the Free Church should keep Easter in obedience to the Pope. Developing his subject, the writer next passes on to the consideration of Easter Eggs. These eggs we are told are boiled so hard that you may toss them about like tennis balls. More than that, these eggs from a remote period have always been painted red, and the writer details the most approved process of manufacture. You roll your egg in a red rag, then you take off your rag and apply butter, &c., &c. These are goodly maxims for the children of the Free Church. We would not like to be irreverent, but we may ask what has all this to do with the Resurrection of Christ? or are we harking

back to the religion of the Druids or the Hottentots? The latter part of the article is occupied with a historical account of Easter. The heathen in this island, we are informed, kept a festival in April to a goddess named Easter. When the missionaries came in they made a Christian feast of it, but they allowed the people to call it after the old name of the heathen goddess; and this is the kind of Christianity which is now being promoted in the Free Church. The Christianity, however, of the Bible is different. "He that sat on the throne said, Behold I make all things new." When He sets up His Church indeed, He disdains to borrow any of the names or institutions of the heathen. Not the idols only are to be abolished, but their very names are to be extinguished, "I will take," saith He, "the names of Baalim out of thy mouth." Let the managers of the Free Church, therefore, look to it, and see if this doating on heathen feasts and mummeries is like to come to a good end.

Newspaper Wickedness.—The London Press is going beyond bounds in its contempt for the thing that is good. Not content with violating the divine law in various ways during six days of the week, two prominent papers have resolved to issue Sabbath editions. These are the *Daily Mail* and the *Daily Telegraph*. Strong feeling—stronger than the proprietors of these papers anticipated—has been evoked against the impious scheme. The *British Weekly* calls it a "scheme to enlarge the floor of hell." It seems impossible for a Sabbath newspaper to be sober and virtuous. In New York the Sabbath Press out-Herods Herod in its violation of decency and religion, and by the necessity of the case the London transgressors will also be forced to dabble in dirt and profanity.

Ter-centenary of Cromwell.—Oliver Cromwell was born on 25th April, 1599. He died on 3rd September, 1658, worn out with labour and anxieties, having risen from the simple life of a rural squire to the virtual kingship of Britain. His name for long was held in dishonour by all parties, but more justice has in this generation been done to his merits. There can be no doubt that he was a man of piety and prayer, both in public and private, and that his guiding principle was the fear of God. Scotland was never so prosperous, in a religious and social way, than during the 9 years of Cromwell rule. The description of Scotland copied from Kirkton, under the heading "Four Streams in the Desert" (see *Free Presbyterian Magazine*, vol. 1, page 110), is a description of Scotland under the dominion of this beneficent "usurper." Of course, he was of the Independent persuasion in matters of church government, as were also Owen and Goodwin, and it is a pity our forefathers could not see past this flaw, and give thanks to the Most High for sending such a just God-fearing ruler in place of the cruel licentious Charles II., whom they loved to the bitter end—and whom they were fain to excommunicate before all was done.