

T H H

Free Presbyterian Magazine

And MONTHLY RECORD.

VOL. IV.

NOVEMBER, 1899.

No. 7.

The War.

WAR has broken out between the Dutch Republic in South Africa and Great Britain. War at any time is a great evil, but it is especially so when waged between Christian nations. It is the spectacle of two Christian nations at war that at the present moment rivets the attention of the world. The spectacle is a lamentable one and must fill the heart of every lover of peace with sorrow and shame. The antagonists, moreover, are a stupendous contrast in strength and numbers. Think of the British Empire with its 400 millions of a population, and the Transvaal Republic, a mere handful, not 100,000 people altogether. According to human calculation there can be little doubt as to the result of the conflict; the Boers (or farmers) as the inhabitants of the Republic are called, must be defeated. Not certainly without a fierce struggle and great loss to this country. The question as to who is in the right is a different one, and is so complicated in many ways that personally we do not profess ability to settle it. To use a common phrase, there are likely faults on both sides. God is judge of all the earth, and will give justice to each one. His dealings, however, are often mysterious to us, and the right decision of many causes will not be known until the last day. Success and defeat on the plains of time are not necessarily equivalent to righteousness and unrighteousness. The righteous are often in adversity when the wicked are flourishing like a green bay tree.

There are many wheels in the movements of providence. The ostensible cause of this war is a controversy about political rights. There may be a more secret cause of it in the sins of the conflicting nations. The Boers have undoubtedly their sins to account for, and to all appearance are to get sharp chastisement for them. But the British nation has also her large reckoning of sins, and will not escape the righteous judgment of God. It

seems to us this nation is filling up the cup of her iniquities, and it will be no surprise though she should suffer very severely during the present war. Of course, many are sublimely insensible to our national sins, but that does not make them any less, it rather shows that our declension has gone well nigh irrecoverably deep. Look at the almost entire disregard of God and the Bible in the deliberations of our legislature, the prevailing desecration of the Lord's day in our towns and villages, the drunkenness, gambling, and immorality which abound on many hands, and the indifference, irreligion, worldliness, contempt of God's ordinances which have come upon us like a flood; and let anyone who knows the past history of this land, say if we are not ripening for the judgments of God.

In connection with this war, we cannot fail to see the finger of judgment apart from the particular question at issue. The chief reason why there are so many British people in the Transvaal is the existence of gold there. We do not take up the absurd position that it is wrong to go in search for gold. It is quite lawful to do so, and many upright men have engaged in the work. But the fact nevertheless remains that the search for gold, when not regulated by the highest principles, strengthens the basest passions of the human heart. The gold seeker at home and abroad is frequently one of the most unscrupulous of men. The Scriptures are verified to the last degree—"But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil; which, while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows."—(1 Tim. vi. 9, 10.) As far as we learn, the Outlanders of the Transvaal, with the exception of a small minority, are just an illustration of these verses. Johannesburg, the centre of their operations is said to be a cesspool of iniquity. Need we be surprised that the Lord has manifested His displeasure against them by permitting the present state of things to arise? Many of these men were brought up in religious surroundings in the home country. Not satisfied with a plain living here, they went out to seek a fortune in South Africa. There they have chosen to cast off the restraints of their early training, and to go in for a gross irreligious life. The greed of gain has taken possession of them, and all the commandments of God must go to the winds. The Lord's day is there, as elsewhere, treated with great contempt. Now, for all this God will bring the Outlanders to judgment. They have already felt the touch of His finger, but if they repent not, they will know the weight of His arm to the full. We have no difficulty then in understanding why Britain and the Boers are at war. The British at home and abroad are to be chastised for their contempt of God and His commandments.

We read in the newspapers humiliating accounts of the war spirit as exhibited in the wild enthusiasm that attends the outgoing

of forces from this country. Thousands of people, in a state of mad excitement, have been thronging and cheering our regiments during the process of embarkation for the seat of war. Many poor young fellows of the reserves are leaving their homes perhaps never to return. Their friends stand weeping at the railway station, while the promising warriors wave their adieu with the one hand and imbibe draughts of stimulus from the whisky bottle with the other. Truly a sad sight and not a hopeful outlook for the future!

The meaning of war is realised by very few. It not merely means the loss of many precious lives, but the loss of many precious souls also. The poor, godless soldier is insanely unconscious of the melancholy prospect that is before him. He rushes on in the pursuit of undying fame and glory, when, the bullet striking him in a vital part, he is precipitated, with his wretched lust-bemangled soul, into the blackness and darkness and torments of an undone eternity. Let no one suppose this is an imaginary or fictitious picture. There is nothing in all the world more terribly real than this. What a different spirit then should animate the soldier than that which generally pervades him! Instead of trusting to his own sword or rifle for success, he should fix his confidence upon the mighty power of God. Instead of breathing out boastings and threatenings, he should pour out his soul in confessions, petitions, and cries to God. Instead of defiling his lips with the rollicking bacchanalian song, he should tune his voice for the songs of Zion. There were soldiers in days of old who were also soldiers of Jesus Christ. Prayer and praise were heard upon the battlefield. The worship of God was observed in the soldiers' tents. All this we fear is becoming a thing of the past. The Boers are more noble than we in this, let their present contention be right or wrong.

In conclusion, we express the hope that this war may be brought to a speedy end. All who fear the Lord will certainly pray for this. As yet, the British arms have been successful, though attended with heavy losses, and before these pages are in the hands of our readers the final battle may be fought. It is devoutly to be wished that at the end of the conflict matters will be settled in a way consistent with the principles of that righteousness which exalteth the nations of the world.

"TAKE away a toy from a child, and give him another and he is satisfied, but if he be hungry, no toy will do. Thus, as new-born babes, true believers desire the sincere milk of the word; and the desire of grace in this way is grace."—*John Newton*.

"THE generality make out their righteousness by comparing themselves with some others whom they think worse; thus, a woman of the town, who was rotting in the Lock Hospital, was offended at a minister speaking to her as a sinner, because she had never picked a pocket."—*John Newton*.

A Sermon

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"For they got not the land in possession by their own sword, neither did their own arm save them; but thy right hand, and thine arm, and the light of thy countenance, because thou hadst a favour unto them."—PSALM xliv. 3.

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THE Holy Ghost spake many things in David to confirm the faith of the poor church in every age in the faithfulness, mercy, love, compassion, and truth of God. He often puts before her what He did for His in the past to raise her drooping hope in what He promised to do for her in the future. In this psalm He reminds her of His kindness and faithfulness to the fathers in bringing them out of the bondage of Egypt, and in bringing them into the land of Canaan. David makes an acknowledgment that it was the Most High that helped them to take possession of it, and that they could never have achieved it by their own power or wisdom. This will answer the church's state in every land, but we think most particularly in our own beloved land. We are to treat the text under this impression.

In our meditation upon this portion of the Word of God, and in dependence upon the guidance of the Holy Ghost, we will endeavour to consider four heads therefrom:—

I.—The land mentioned in our text.

II.—How the people of God got possession of this land.

III.—The secret of their success.

IV.—The duty devolving upon us relative thereto.

I.—We read in the holy Scriptures that God called Abraham when he was an idolator in Ur of the Chaldees, and said to him, "Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee; and I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing; and I will bless them that bless thee, and curse them that curseth thee; and in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed. So Abraham departed, as the Lord had spoken unto him."—(Gen. xii. 1-4. We read again, "By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise."—(Heb. xi. 8, 9.) Further we read, "And they went forth to go into the land of Canaan; and into the land of Canaan they came. . . . And the Lord appeared unto Abraham, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this *land*."—(Gen. xii. 5-7.) There were four hundred and thirty years between the giving of the above

promise to Abraham and the time when his posterity got possession of the land of Canaan. That the text, in the first instance, refers to the land of Canaan cannot be doubted. It is also seen that Abraham knew not whither he was going till the Lord, by the infallible guidance of His providence, brought him into the land of Canaan, and there pointed out that land to him as the inheritance of his posterity. The question may be asked, Why did the Lord separate this land from all other lands, and give it to the seed of Abraham? Secret things belong to the Lord our God, but the reason which will appear palpably to every careful reader of the Word of God is, that God purposed to take Abraham and his posterity into covenant with Himself, and to set up His church among them, and in that land. Concerning this people, and this land the Old Testament is almost entirely taken up, because "the adoption pertained to them, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever and ever. Amen."—(Rom. ix. 4, 5.) This caused Canaan to be kept separate from other lands till the time appointed for the coming of Christ in the flesh. When the Lord Jesus Christ, by His atoning death on Calvary's cross broke down that middle wall of partition that separated the Jews and the land of Canaan from the Gentiles and the rest of this earth, His command to the apostles and to all His messengers since was, "Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and lo I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen." The land of Canaan was to be no longer the only place chosen by the Most High for a repository for His church. The actual beginning of this new development we see recorded in Acts xiii. 1-4, "Now there were in the church that was in Antioch certain prophets and teachers. . . As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away. So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed unto Seleucia." After passing through several places of Asia Minor they came to Antioch in Pisidia, and while there Paul preached a sermon to the Jews which the Gentiles desired that it should be preached to themselves next Lord's day. When the Jews saw that the gospel was preached to the Gentiles they contradicted and blasphemed. "Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, it was necessary that the Word of God should first have been spoken to you; but seeing you put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles. For so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, I have sent thee to be a light to the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth."—(Acts xiii.

46, 47.) On Paul's second journey from these parts of Asia towards the coast of the Mediterranean, "He was forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the Word in Asia. After they were come to Mysia, they assayed to go into Bithynia; but the Spirit suffered them not. And they passing by Mysia, came down to Troas. And a vision appeared to Paul by night; There stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him saying, Come over into Macedonia and help us. And after he had seen the vision immediately we endeavoured to go into Macedonia, assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us for to preach the gospel unto them."—(Acts xvi. 6-10.) The above will make it quite clear that the Lord directed His gospel to be brought to some lands, while He, in His sovereignty, caused it to pass by other places. We can trace the same unerring guidance as to the planting of the gospel which we observed above directing Abraham to the land of Canaan. The gospel never came to any land except by the guidance and power of the Holy Ghost. How many lands and peoples there are who never had the gospel among them to this day! Is this by any chance? No, dear brethren, this is in accordance with the adorable will of the Most High.

Passing by many clear evidences of the sovereign selection of lands, peoples, and times by the Lord for setting up His own church among them, let us come to the time of the Reformation. At this time the whole world lies before us sunk in idolatry. How did the Lord point out the land or lands which He intended to bless with that Reformation? He took the same method that He had taken in the case of Abraham. Luther, in the convent of Erfurt in Germany, was called effectually by the Holy Ghost, and after passing through the pangs of the new birth, left Rome with its idolatry, and was the instrument in the hand of God's Spirit to make Germany a land of promise. Woe to Germany that they are going back to the bondage of Rome again! If we turn our attention for a little to Scotland, the same thing meets our eye. John Knox, after passing through terrible pangs of conscience which the fasts, vows, penances, confessions, masses, etc., of the Church of Rome failed to assuage, found by reading the Word of God, peace with God through faith in the Lord Jesus, and felt that the blood of Jesus Christ the Son of God can cleanse from all sin. He was from that day separated from idolatry. This was most clearly a work of the Spirit of God, and by it He pointed out that our beloved land was to be favoured from heaven by the light of God's truth. Who can, without closing his eyes to most convincing facts, deny that the Holy Ghost called John Knox as He had called Abraham, Paul, etc., to show him a land which was to be taken possession of for Christ and His church? Thus we conclude that Scotland may be taken as the land in our text, which prior to all other lands, demands our deepest sympathies and real concern that it should continue "Thy land, O Immanuel."

II.—How the people of God got possession of this land.

Under this head of our text we have two negatives, and three positives ; two negatives on the people's side, and three positives on the Lord's. Let us briefly consider these.

(1) "They got not the land in possession by their own sword." When the Lord's people came with the ark of the covenant to the river Jordan we are told that it ran over its banks. The Lord opened a passage for them through the flood. This first step was not by their own sword. Again we read, "And it came to pass when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted up his eyes and looked, and, behold, there stood a man over against him with his sword drawn in his hand ; and Joshua went unto him and said unto him, Art thou for us, or for our adversaries ? And he said, Nay ; but as captain of the host of the Lord am I now come. And Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and did worship, and said unto him, What saith my lord unto his servant ? And the captain of the Lord's host said unto Joshua, Loose thy shoe from off thy foot ; for the place whereon thou standest is holy. And Joshua did so. . . . And the Lord said unto Joshua, See I have given into thine hand Jericho, and the king thereof, and the mighty men of valour. And ye shall compass the city, all ye men of war, and go round about the city once. Thus shalt thou do six days. And seven priests shall bear before the ark seven trumpets of rams' horns ; and the seventh day ye shall compass the city seven times, and the priests shall blow with the trumpets. And it shall come to pass, that when they make a long blast with the ram's horn, and when ye hear the sound of the trumpet, all the people shall shout with a great shout ; and the wall of the city shall fall down flat, and the people shall ascend up every man straight before him."—(Joshua v. 13-15 and vi. 2-5.) Here are their marching orders. It was not Joshua who gave them, but "the captain of the Lord's host." It was not their swords that was to gain the victory, but the sword of their captain. This was a very unusual kind of warfare. The people of Jericho, standing on the wall would at last begin to deride such tactics. On the seventh day they went round the city seven times, and with one shout of the people, after hearing a long blast from the trumpets, the walls of the city fell from the foundations. Might it not be truly said that they got not the land in possession by their own sword ? But I refrain from giving more instances of how the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and of how He made the worm Jacob a threshing instrument to beat mountains. If we turn our thoughts for a little to our own land at the time of the Reformation, what do we find ? A Jordan in full flood running over its banks, of superstition, idolatry, spiritual darkness and ignorance, with every form of unrighteousness. Was it by their own sword, the witnesses of God, brought the ark of the covenant through this flood ? No. Was it by their own sword they caused kings, princes, and nobles to fall before them ? No. How was it then accomplished ? By

the mighty supernatural power of God. The preaching of the gospel of the grace of God, which is foolishness in the eyes of the wise men of this world, caused the fortifications of the Church of Rome to fall from their foundations.

(2) "Neither did their own arm save them." We take "their own arm" to mean two things. First, their physical strength, and second, their mental powers. First, Was it by their physical strength they got possession? No; for is it not written, "For the Lord hath driven out from before you great nations and strong; but as for you, no man hath been able to stand before you unto this day?"—(Joshua xxiii. 9.) While they kept the laws, statutes, and judgments of the Lord they had the promise that "five of you shall chase an hundred, and an hundred of you shall put ten thousand to flight." The physical strength of the people of God is like that of Samson: the Philistines could not understand where his great strength lay. When they looked upon him, he was not in their eyes but like other ordinary men, but when they had an encounter with him he slew them in heaps. His great strength was in his head. Faith in the omnipotent power of God was the arm by which they were saved, not their own arm. Christ the power of God was their strength. Second, Was it by their mental endowments? No; not that we are to grant to their calumniators that they were weak men, on the contrary, the Reformation period produced men of rare mental capacities, and the most profound of them were in the church. Their enemies were never able to refute their reasonings, while every word they spake entered deeply into the minds of their fellow-men leaving an indelible conviction behind it. The words of Luther in Germany, and of John Knox in Scotland were like arrows that no armour of Satan or the carnal minds of men could quench. Every statement they made brought supernatural light to the reason and conscience of the reader or hearer. Is it so to-day? You may read the writings of these men to-day and feel nothing in them of this power. How can we account for this? Just by the words of our text, "Neither did their own arm save them." The gospel was not brought to this land by the physical strength or mental powers of men. The Most High made John Knox like a wall of brass against which the enemy could not prevail. When he began to reform all seemed to be against him, but that caused him to lean more upon the strong arm of the Lord. In our day we are too much given to look to the *multitude* of followers; but the Lord looks to *the man* whose heart trembles at His word. He dwells with this man. "It is he that sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers."—(Isaiah xl. 22.) When did Isaiah get this view of the Most High, and of the nothingness of the inhabitants of the earth? He answers that query thus:—"In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. . . . Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone;

because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the king the Lord of hosts. . . . Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me. And he said, Go, and tell this people."—(Isaiah vi. 1-9.) This was it, and not their own arm that saved and supported the messengers of the Lord. Was it only in Judah's land that God was well known, and that His name was great? Was not the same thing true of our beloved land in the past? Most certainly it was. Though we, as a church may look despicable in the eyes of men, yet believing with all certainty that we are contending for the same truths and principles for which they did contend, let us take courage in the same unchangeable God, not trusting in the least to our own arm, and the day may come when He will give His truth possession in this land again.

(3) "But thy right hand." While thinking of this statement of our text, it came before my mind that the Lord Jesus Christ is meant by it. He it is that sits at the right hand of God. All power in heaven and on earth is given to Him by the Father. Was it not by preaching Christ crucified to guilty sinners, as the only way to obtain peace with God, that men in this land threw away all the idolatrous worship of the Church of Rome? Most assuredly it was. "It is confessed that the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead at the last day, and the everlasting joys, and eternal sorrows, that shall succeed it, as they are described in the New Testament, are a very awful sanction to the gospel of Christ, and carry in them such principles of hope and terror as should effectually discourage vice and irreligion, and become a powerful attraction to the practice of faith and love, and universal holiness."—*Isaac Watt, The World to Come*. When the law of God deals with the conscience of the sinner he at once believes that he is under the wrath and curse of God. Nothing can save but the blood of Christ. The doctrine of the Atonement is so essential to salvation that sinners must inevitably perish eternally when it is ignored. Till Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, "many," we are told, "of the people perished." The Lord provided this remedy for them, "and as many as looked were healed." So it is under the New Testament dispensation. They had the type, we have the antitype. "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up; that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life."—(John iii. 14, 15.) The Reformers declared the whole counsel of God to their hearers; that nothing but faith in Christ could save them from perishing for ever. Indeed, faith in Christ and Him crucified, was the fundamental doctrine of the whole Christian religion to these godly men. They taught the impossibility of salvation in any other way. Good works, as they perceived, and that most correctly, followed faith. All man's merit and natural goodness had no place in their creed. They

took a firm hold of the truth that God is just when He justifies the ungodly that believe in Jesus. This was a joyful sound in their ears, and by declaring it, the right hand of God gave them possession of the land, *i.e.*, of its inhabitants. Christ cannot be preached without the two covenants; for take away the awful state of man under the broken covenant of works as he comes into this world, and you have no room for the covenant of grace.

In our day the total depravity of man's nature is denied. They find so much of the image of God in man as that "he has a knowledge of God, and of duty, and is capable of actions which in themselves are virtuous and praiseworthy." Thus they have put a foundation of earth under the feet of perishing men; and therefore the tried, sure, and precious stone laid by God in Zion is set at nought by these builders. This land is going back to anti-Christ with the most alarming speed. What is the only remedy? Nothing can gain back the people but the Word of God; if that fails we are lost. Keep before men their lost condition from the truth of God, and faith in Christ as the only remedy.

There is also a false Christ put before people in our day—a Christ that will go with his professors to the theatre, the ball room, to profanation of the Lord's Day, to cheat their neighbour, to undo the whole work that had been done in this land in the name of Christ, to declare that the Bible is mostly made up of fiction, to turn the House of God into a den of thieves. Brethren, is this the Holy One of God? This is of a truth a false Christ. Therefore the more necessity is laid upon us to hold forth the true Christ. The Lord give us grace, faithfulness, and strength to do so, in love to our fellow sinners and to the truth of God.

(4) "And thine arm." The arm of the Lord here I understand to mean the Holy Ghost. For it is written, "By his spirit he garnished the heavens."—(Job xxvi. 13.) In Psalm eight He says, "When I consider the heavens the work of thy fingers."—(Psalm viii. 3.) The Lord Jesus, in warning the blasphemous Pharisees of the awfulness of their sin against the Holy Ghost, says, "But if I with the finger of God cast out devils," (Luke xi. 20), in Matt. xii. 28, "But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you." In Ezekiel we read, "The hand of the Lord was upon me, and carried me out in the Spirit of the Lord, and set me down in the midst of the valley which was full of bones."—(Ezek. xxxvii. 1.) The whole vision represented the deliverance of the Jews from the Babylonish captivity. Who were they of the Jews that rose out of these graves to come back to the promised land? "Then rose the chiefs of the fathers of Judah and Benjamin, and the priests, and the Levites, with all them whose spirit God had raised, to go up to build the house of the Lord which is in Jerusalem."—(Ezra i. 5.) In strengthening the hands of Zerubbabel, the Lord says, "This is the word of the Lord unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by

might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts. Who art thou, O great mountain? before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain."—(Zech. iv. 6, 7.) From all these truths we conclude that it was by the Spirit of God they got possession of the land.

This is most observable in the history of the Church of Christ, both under the Old and New Testament dispensations, that there never has been a quickening of the dead in trespasses and sins but by the power of the Holy Ghost going forth through the truth. On the day of Pentecost it was so. This was the arm of God fulfilling the promise to Christ, "Ask of me, and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession."—(Ps. ii. 8.) It was by this awakened arm of the Lord that the Apostles took possession of many peoples and lands; not by their own might, nor power, but by the Spirit of the Lord.

At the Kirk of Shotts five hundred were converted in one day under the preaching of that eminently godly man, John Livingston. This was the arm of the Lord taking possession of this land, and the very men and women who were quickened by the Holy Ghost at the Kirk of Shotts, faced bravely the great mountain of prelacy, and before them it became a plain. Could they accomplish this by any power of their own? I cannot conceive of it. Why is it, when Christ in the Gospel is set before sinners in our day, that so few are awakened to realise their lost condition, and their need of the Saviour? Because we, in this land, have provoked the Spirit of the Lord, and therefore we are left to wander in the vain imaginations of our own hearts. As rational men we are bound to keep "the form of sound words;" but without the Holy Spirit's power, orthodoxy will not save. This shows how undone we are, and shall be, without the blessed Spirit. What then can we do? Let us, with the Church of God in the past, cry, "Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the Lord; awake, as in the ancient days, in the generations of old. Art thou not it that hath cut Rahab, and wounded the dragon? Art thou not it which hath dried the sea, the waters of the great deep; that hath made the depths of the sea a way for the ransomed to pass over?"—(Isaiah li. 9, 10.) The presence of the Spirit is promised to the Church of Christ till the end of time. Christ says to us, "If ye love me, keep my commandments. And I will pray the Father, and he shall send you the Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of truth."—(John xiv. 15-17.) The Holy Ghost, instead of Christ's bodily presence, is promised, and the results of His being sent foretold. "Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment. . . . He shall guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but

whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak ; and he shall show you things to come. He shall glorify me : for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you."—(John xvi. 7-14.) Brethren, here is abundance of encouragement ; therefore let us not fold our arms and say, there is no hope. Let us declare the whole truth. God, the Holy Spirit, can make it quick in the immortal souls of our fellow sinners. "Thou sendest forth thy Spirit, they are created : and thou renewest the face of the earth."—(Psalm civ. 30.)

(5) "And the light of thy countenance." Mankind lost the light of this glorious and benign countenance through sin. Our sins separated between us and our God, and the whole human race fell under His awful wrath and curse. He would have been just in leaving man in that state, as we can perceive from the terrible doom of the angels that sinned. But instead of this, He reveals His purposes of mercy, as the truth records ; "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."—(John iii. 16.) The giving of Christ is here directly attributed to the Father. This proceeded from the free sovereign love of God—Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Christ loved the Church, and gave Himself for it. But we understand this part of our text as referring directly to the Father. Christ, as the second Adam, took the place of the people whom the Father gave Him. In doing this He had to bear their sins, the wrath and curse due to their sins, and the punishment which sin deserves at the hand of a righteous God. Thus, as surety and substitute of His elect people, God the Father did hide His face from Christ. "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (Ps. xxii. 1) was the cry of the Son of God when He was numbered with the transgressors on Calvary's cross. Christ died to satisfy justice, and the clearest proof is given that justice has been satisfied, in that He rose again. There were no hidings of the Father's face from Christ after the Resurrection ; He was made exceeding glad with the Father's countenance. In Christ, their living head, the light of the Father's countenance was lifted upon them. God looks with the utmost complacency on the seed of Christ, and gives them all His blessing. In the light of His countenance is comprised His eternal love towards them, all His counsels and purposes in order to their being saved, His freely giving of His Son for them, and His giving them in Him all things. Among all the things given them in Christ by the Father was a right to worship Him, according to His revealed will, in the places of His earth which He, by His providence, might allot to them. The land of Canaan was one of these places, and we have endeavoured to prove that Scotland was another. Thus, the fountain of all the favours bestowed on them, was the reconciled countenance of God the Father, through Christ, and by His Spirit and Word, impressed upon their minds. Through this light of His countenance He opened up a way for them through the Red Sea, while He frowned

upon their enemies. Was it not the same light of His countenance which gave the Reformers in this land a passage through the midst of the sea of difficulties, which met them on the threshold of their deliverance from the Egyptian bondage of Rome? What was it but the frowning of this countenance that caused the kings, captains, and whole army of their pursuers, to be lost in that confusion? Yes, brethren, it was the reconciled countenance of God the Father, raised upon our godly ancestors in Christ, that gave them possession of this land. Let us, their sons, be aware of losing it.

III.—The secret of their success. "Because thou hadst a favour unto them." This favour is recorded in His word. "And because he loved thy fathers, therefore he chose their seed after them, and brought thee out in his sight with his mighty power out of Egypt: to drive out nations from before thee, greater and mightier than thou art, to bring thee in, to give thee their land for an inheritance, as it is this day. Know therefore this day, and consider in thine heart, that the Lord he is God in heaven above, and upon the earth beneath: there is none else. Thou shalt therefore keep his statutes and his commandments, which I command thee this day, that it may be well with thee, and with thy children after thee, and that thou mayest prolong thy days upon the land, which the Lord thy God giveth thee, for ever."—(Deut. iv. 37-40.) Again—"The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people; but because the Lord loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers, hath the Lord brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bondmen, from the land of Pharaoh, king of Egypt. Know therefore that the Lord thy God, he is God, the faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him and keepeth his commandments, to a thousand generations; and repayeth them that hate him to their face, to destroy them: he will not be slack to him that hateth him, he will repay him to his face."—(Deut. vii. 7-10.) The sovereign love and faithfulness of God, confirmed by His oath, was the secret of their success. The almighty unseen hand, which supported them, but which confounded His haters and brought their counsels and intrigues to nothing along with themselves, was the secret of all the success of the Reformers.

Take Mordecai and Haman as an illustration. Haman, from malignant hatred, plotted the destruction of Mordecai, and of all the Jews along with him. He got on so far that the day was fixed for the execution, and the gallows set up upon which Mordecai was to be hanged; but instantly the tables were turned. Ahasuerus, the night that Haman had all things ready for Mordecai's execution, could not sleep, and he commanded to bring the book of the records of the chronicles; and they were read before him. And it was found that Mordecai had told of two of the king's

servants who sought to take the king's life. Early next morning Haman came to ask of the king that Mordecai should be hanged, but was asked the question, "What shall be done to the man whom the king delighteth to honour?" Haman takes the man to be himself, and gives his answer accordingly. The king tells him, make haste and do even so to Mordecai, the Jew. It had to be done. The next fall is Haman hanged upon the gallows which he had erected for the other. Mordecai and all the Jews are raised to great honour. None but Atheists can ignore the favour of heaven in the above; and we have instances of the like interventions of the favour of God in Scotland. Take the poor, persecuted Covenanters as another illustration of the same favour. They were sentenced to death, pursued for several years upon the hills and in the caves, rocks, and ravines of this land, by about eighteen thousand soldiers. Hundreds of them perished by the sword, upon the gallows, and at the stake. At last the tables were turned. The tyrant, King Charles, had to abdicate the throne. All these soldiers, who were persecuting the godly Covenanters, turned now their arms against their former abettors in Scotland; and they had to make an appeal to the Covenanters to come to the rescue of the nation, which they did by sending, under arms, eighteen hundred men to defend Edinburgh. The men who were looked upon as traitors and not worthy to live, were made the defenders of the nation, and instantly raised to a most honourable position. Why? Because God had a favour unto them. He may allow His poor people to be exceedingly tried and put to very severe tests for the faith, but He will not withdraw His favour from them. Let those who endeavour to maintain His truth in our day be strong; for there never has been yet a groan uttered on a death-bed by any for what he or she had done in defence of the truth. That cannot be said of those who, in order to keep the favour and the applause of the enemies of God's truth and of His poor afflicted Church, connived at, or assisted wicked men to ruin them both. Any one who desires to follow Christ must count the cost. The cross is bitter for flesh and blood, but it is the only way to the crown. The cross and the favour of God are inseparable. Therefore we ought to count His favour none the worse for the cross.

There are two things in this favour which causes the living soul to thirst after it.

(1) "For his anger endureth but a moment; in his favour is life."—(Psalm xxx. 5.) Everlasting life is meant. This life is in the favour of God. This life is given to His people in Christ Jesus our Lord. When He desired life, as the Mediator, of God the Father, He gave Him life. He needed no life for Himself, for He was the fountain of life; but He needed life for the people whom He came to save, for they were dead in trespasses and sins. Christ is the life and light of men, "In him was life; and the life was the light of men."—(John i. 4.) This life which God the

Father gave to the Son for men is bestowed on them by the Holy Ghost. Christ said to the Jews, "It is the Spirit that quickeneth ; the flesh profiteth nothing ; the words that I speak unto you they are spirit and they are life."—(John vi. 63.)

(2) "Because thy loving kindness is better than life."—(Psalm lxxiii. 3). Does the psalmist mean that the favour or loving-kindness of God is better than eternal life? We don't think he means this ; for His favour is life eternal. He is speaking of the natural life, and that if the two things were offered him, to part with the favour of God or with his natural life, he would choose the latter. What did the martyrs mean when they preferred to die rather than renounce their faith, or recant their profession of the gospel of Christ? Was it because they were fanatics and did not realise the value of their own natural life, and their responsibility to preserve that life by all lawful means? Their dying testimonies abundantly prove that they valued their own natural life and that of their fellow-sinners very highly ; but when they could keep it only by losing the favour of God, they made choice of God's favour and temporal death. It is related of that eminently godly minister of Christ, Robert Bruce of Edinburgh, that because he would not, from the pulpit, give an intimation exculpating King James VI. of a charge of murder, he was banished for five years. The reason he gave for not giving the intimation was, that he could not speak a word in the pulpit in the name of Christ, but what he was certain to be truth. At the end of five years he was allowed to return to his flock, but no sooner did he come back than the king demanded of him to give the intimation. He refused, though he confessed his mind had undergone some change in favour of the king's innocence. One of the chief men at court came to plead with him to give the intimation producing many reasons why he should do it. At last Robert Bruce said to him, "I was for seven years studying for the law and the Most High pressing me to study for the church. At last I had to yield. Before I would pass through such troubles of conscience as I then passed through I would, were it possible, pass through a lake of fire and brimstone knee deep, for two miles. There is peace between my God and my conscience ; therefore do what you will with my body, but I beseech you don't interfere with that peace." As I am quoting from memory I cannot vouch for the accuracy of the very words, but I do give the full sense. These were men who knew the value of God's favour, and who would not for flattery, threats, or worldly advantage, or even life lose the same ; these were the men who overcame all obstacles and made Scotland free. Their motto was, "If God be for us, who can be against us."—(Rom. viii. 31.) Christ says to such, "Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul ; but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell."—(Matt. x. 28.) Again, "Fear not little flock ; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."—(Luke xii. 32.)

IV.—What is our duty in relation to these things. This psalm begins with the words, “We with our ears have heard O God, our fathers have told us, what works thou didst in their days, in the times of old.” The above brings our duty before us. It was the duty of the fathers to teach their children, and to acquaint them with the doings of the Lord. This is most certainly our duty. It is not our duty to teach the rising generation new things founded upon the vain imaginations of our minds or that of others, but the laws, statutes, and judgments of God as we find them recorded in the Bible. It alone must be the light of our feet, and the lamp of our path as to what ought or ought not to be taught. “For he established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers, that they should make known to their children; that the generation to come might know them, even the children which should be born; who should arise and declare them to their children; that they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments; and might not be as their fathers, a stubborn and rebellious generation.”—(Psalm lxxviii. 5-8.) Let us hold fast the Word of God, the Confession of Faith, the Larger and Shorter Catechisms of our church, and let us do our utmost to inculcate these grand old doctrines of the truth of God upon young and old. Let not even a pin of the tabernacle be lost. The Lord be praised for His goodness to us for that we have in our hands the creed and principles of His church, and for that holding the same intact, as we have done hitherto, outwardly at least, we have a clean conscience, and need not be ashamed before the world for saying one thing in their defence and doing another.

(1) The first object we should have in view is the glory of God. This glory reveals Him a God of justice, holiness, and truth, also a God of mercy, love, compassion, faithfulness, and long-suffering. Our duty is to declare His whole counsel, keeping nothing back for the frowns or applauses of men. We must do our utmost to lift up Christ and Him crucified before our fellow sinners. Let us declare that God has a glory from His grace through Christ in saving perishing sinners from eternal death, which exceeds the glory of His justice in the punishment of the ungodly. That the offer of Christ in the gospel is freely set before each sinner to whom the word of God comes; that if he or she accepts that offer by faith and repentance he or she is immediately saved; but that to refuse it is to be lost for ever. To place the conditions of peace before rebels is the duty of an ambassador, to continue in rebellion or to accept of the terms is in the hands of others.

(2) In declaring the truth we must have a vigilant eye upon our own corruption. To be the messenger of a holy, zealous God, and upon such an awful errand as the everlasting welfare or misery of men, demands great reverence and godly fear in the person sent. It needs a single eye to the glory of God, and the eternal well-being of sinners. All other motives will ultimately

end in shipwreck of the faith. Therefore we ought to stand aloof from the vanities of the godless world, admonish them to seriousness and godliness, and do our very utmost to prove to them from the truth that the end of these things is death eternal. "Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them; for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee."—(1 Timothy iv. 16.)

(3) In speaking the word of God to men, we should aim at their conversion; seek that they should set their hope in God, and suffer not His mighty works to fall out of their minds. Certainly it is the Holy Ghost that reproves of sin, righteousness, and judgment, but He uses means. We should aim at the reason and the conscience, making free use of both law and gospel, while taking good care not to confound them. The spiritual state of this generation is very deplorable. An awful flood of irreligion from hell covers the land to the tops of the highest mountains, and unless the Spirit of the Lord shall raise up a standard against it, the efforts of creatures will avail nothing. That does not mean that God's witnesses are to hold their peace and fold their arms. No, they must tell the wicked that it shall be ill with him if he continues in his wickedness, and the righteous that it shall be well with him.

(4) The presence of the Holy Ghost is promised, and His power is infinite. When the prophet Ezekiel was brought in a vision to the valley of bones, dry and whitened though they were, and when the Lord asked him, "Can these bones live?" his answer was, "Thou, O Lord, knowest." The power of the Spirit accompanying the word of God caused a resurrection among them. He is the same still. Our duty is to cry for the breath to come from the four winds and breathe on the slain that they may live. Though our sins as a people reach up to heaven, the mercy of God in Christ Jesus is above the heavens. It is just for Him for Christ's sake to save the guiltiest. The merit is all in Christ, and He is able to save to the uttermost all them that come to God by Him. O that we had the voice of a thousand trumpets in one, to set Christ on high and to declare His mercy to perishing men! Nothing will save us if the blessed Gospel fails. It is the Holy Ghost alone that can make it effectual. Let us therefore look to the infinite merit of the blood of Christ to cleanse from sin and uncleanness, and to the infinite love and power of the Spirit to apply it to ourselves and others. These things are impossible with men, but with God all things are possible.

Lastly, whatever the purposes of the Most High may be concerning us, we desire to keep His truth as the godly of the past brought it to our hands by the good hand of their God which was upon them. What else can we do? Can we, with our eyes so far open, associate with the enemies of God's truth and of His cause in this land? May the Lord keep us from doing this! We have very great sympathy with some of our

people who are alone, in some cases one only in a family, in a few cases, one only in a township. The tempter will whisper, or may be speak out through the mouth of one of his agents, Are you better than others? Are such not as godly as any of you? Tell him or her that the question is not about godliness, but about the defence of God's truth; and that every reasonable creature ought to buy it and not to sell it. Abraham was alone, but he held and professed the truth in his day. If John Knox were to say, because other people are not standing for the truth, what will be the use of my weak efforts? No, he never gave room to the thought. Let us not be ashamed of Christ, nor of His word, in this sinful and adulterous generation. Christ is more than a match for millions of men and devils, and though there were but one in Scotland who would hold fast the word of His mouth, He could bring all that one's enemies to bow at his footstool. We are not at all fighting under a weak captain, neither is the cause unrighteous, and the victory will most certainly be on Christ's side.

The Rise and Progress of Deism.

BY THE REV. THOMAS HALIBURTON.

EXTRACTS WITH LESSONS FOR OUR TIMES.

NOT long after the beginning of the last elapsed century (the 16th), so far as I can learn, some in France and Italy began to form a sort of a new party. They called themselves Theists, or Deists, unjustly pretending that they were the only persons who owned the one true God. And hereby they plainly intimated that they had rejected the name of Christ. They rejected all revelation as cheat, priest-craft, and imposture, pretending that there was nothing sincere in religion, save what nature's light taught. However, being generally persons too fond of a present life, and too uncertain about a future, they thought it not meet to put too much to the hazard for this their pretended religion. It was a refined sort of Paganism which they embraced, and they were pleased to imitate the heathen philosophers, who, whatever their peculiar sentiments were in matters of religion, yet, for peace sake, they looked on it as safe to follow the mode, and comply with the religious usages that prevailed in the places where they lived. That which made this party the more considerable was, that it was made up of men who pretended to learning, ingenuity, breeding, and who set up for wits. They pretended to write after the copy of the new philosophers, who scorned that philosophical slavery which former ages had been under to Aristotle. They inculcated that credulity was no less dangerous in

matters of religion than in matters of philosophy. And herein certainly they were not mistaken. But one may justly suspect that at the same time, while they pretended to guard against easiness in believing, they have fallen into the worst credulity, as well as ruining incredulity. For none is credulous as an Atheist.

Much about the same time some novel opinions began to be much entertained in Holland in matters of religion. The broachers of them, being men learned and diligent, carefully cultivated them, till they were ripened into something very near akin to plain Socinianism, which is but one remove from Deism. It was not long after this when those new-fangled notions took footing in England, and began to be embraced and countenanced by some topping churchmen, who, forgetful of their articles, homilies, subscriptions, and the conduct of their predecessors, carefully maintained and zealously propagated this new divinity.

I shall not make bold to judge what the designs of those were, who appeared most zealous for those new notions: this is to be left to the judgment of Him who searches the hearts of the children of men, and will bring forth things that are now hid. But there were not a few reasons to suspect that the Jesuits had a considerable hand in disseminating them, and that others were their tools, though it's likely they did not suspect this. The Jesuits vaunted that they had planted the sovereign drug of Arminianism in England, which in time would purge out the northern heresy. This it could not otherwise do, than by shaking men as to all principles of religion. And it's a known maxim, that make men once Atheists, it will be easy to turn them Papists. The jealousies many discerning people had of this were considerably increased when it was seen with what violence the abettors of this new divinity appeared against the more moderate part of the Church of England, as well as the Dissenters, upon the account of some ceremonies owned by themselves as indifferent in their own nature; while at the same time they expressed a great deal of tenderness, if not respect, to the Church of Rome, and made proposals for union with her.

But to return, whence we have for a little digressed, to the state of religion in England. No sooner were they advanced to power, who had drunk in those opinions, but presently the doctrines that are purely evangelical, by which the apostles converted the world, the reformers promoted and carried on our Reformation from Popery, and the pious preachers of the Church of England did keep somewhat of the life and power of religion amongst their people; these doctrines, I say, began to be decried: justification by the righteousness of Christ, which Luther called *Articulus stantis aut cadentis Ecclesiae*, that redemption that is in Him, even the forgiveness of sins through faith in His blood; the mystery of the grace, mercy, and love of God manifested in Christ; the great mystery of godliness; the dispensation of the Spirit for conviction, renovation, sanctification, consolation, and edification

of the Church by a supply of spiritual gifts and other doctrines of a like tendency, were, upon all occasions, boldly exposed, discredited in press and pulpit. The ministers who dared to avow them from a conviction of the truth, the sense of the obligation of their promises and subscriptions to the articles, were sure to have no preferment, nay, to be branded with the odious names of Calvinists, Puritans, Fanatics, and I know not what.

The doctrines of faith were not regarded as belonging to the foundation of religion. The morality of the Bible was pretended the only thing that was necessary, and as much of the doctrine, as all, even Socinians, Quakers, and all the rest, were agreed in, sufficient. And if any opposed this, though in civil language and by fair arguments, they were sure to be exposed as enemies to morality, albeit their adversaries durst not put the contest on this issue with them; that he should be reckoned the greatest friend to morality who was most blameless in his walk, and shewed it the greatest practical regard. They could exercise charity, forbearance, and love to a Socinian that has renounced all the fundamental truths of religion, but none to a poor Dissenter, who sincerely believed all the doctrinal articles; nay, even a sober churchman, who could not consent to new unauthorized ceremonies, was become intolerable. So that men at this time might, with much more credit and less hazard, turn Socinian, or any thing, than discover the least regard to truths contained in the Articles owned by most of the Reformed Churches, and taught by our own Reformers. This is too well known to be denied by any one who knows how things were carried on at that time and since.

Further, whereas preachers formerly, in order to engage men to a compliance with the Gospel, were wont to press much upon them their guilt, the impossibility of standing before God in their own righteousness, their impotency, their misery by the Fall, the necessity of regeneration, illumination, the power of grace to make them willing to comply, and that no man could sincerely call Christ Lord, and be subject to Him practically, save by the Holy Ghost; care was now taken to unteach them all this, and to show them how very little they had lost by the Fall, if any thing was lost by it, either in point of light to discern, or power and inclination to practise duty. They were told how great length their own righteousness would go, and that it would do their business; they might safely enough stand before God in it; or if there was any room for Christ's righteousness, it was only to piece out their own where it was wanting. In a word, the people were told what fine persons many of the heathen were, who knew nothing of illumination, regeneration, for what the Bible was, and how little odds, if any at all, there was betwixt grace and morality.

And, whereas a veneration for the Lord's Day was a means to keep people under some concern about religion, and that day was spent by faithful ministers in pressing upon the consciences of their people, those new contemned Gospel truths, to the spoiling

of the whole plot; care was taken to discredit and bring it into contempt. Ministers, instead of telling them on that day, that they were naturally inclined to sin, levity, folly, and vanity, were commanded to deal with them as persons too much inclined to be serious, and instead of preaching the Gospel, they were required, under the highest pains, to entertain them with a profane Book of Sports. And for disobedience many were ejected. And that they might be taught by example as well as precept, a Sunday's Evening Mask was publicly acted, where were present persons of no mean note.

Moreover, a State game being now to be played, the pulpit, press, religion and all, were made basely to truckle to State designs, and to the enslaving of the nations, by advancing the doctrines of passive obedience, non-resistance, and *jure-divino-ship* of kings; whereby men of religion were wounded to see the ordinances of Christ prostitute to such projects, as were entirely foreign, to say no worse, to the design of their institution. And men of no religion, or who were not fixed about it, were drawn over to think it a mere cheat; and that the design of it was only to carry on secular interests under specious pretences.

At length, by those means and some other things, which are not of our present consideration, concurring, confusions ripened into a Civil War, whereby every one was left to speak, write, and live as he pleased.

Many who intended no hurt while they, upon honest designs, inquired into and laid open the faults of the topping clergy, did unaware furnish loose and atheistical men with pretences against the ministry; and what, in truth, gave only ground for a dislike of the persons faulty, was received by many as a just ground of prejudice against the very pastoral, as priest-craft, and all who are clothed with it as a set of self-designing men.

The body of the people, who had been debauched by the example of a scandalous clergy, and hardened in sin by the intermission of all discipline, which of late had only been exercised against the sober and pious, who could not go into the measures that were then taken, the neglect of painful preaching, the "Book of Sports and Pastimes;" and who had their heads filled with the airy and self-elating notions of man's ability to good, free-will, universal grace, and the like, and who now, when they much needed the inspection of their faithful pastors, were deprived of it—many of them, by the iniquity of the times, being forced to take sanctuary in foreign nations; the people, I say, by these things turned quite giddy, and broke into numberless sects and parties. Every one who had entertained those giddy notions was zealous, even to madness, for propagating them, and thought himself authorized to plead for them, print for them, and preach them. The office of the ministry, that had before been rendered contemptible by the suppression of the best preachers, and the scandalous lives of those who were mainly encouraged, was now

made more so by the intrusion of every bold, ignorant, and assuming enthusiast. The land was filled with books of controversy stuffed with unsound, offensive, and scandalous tenets, which were so multiplied as they never have been in any nation of the world in so small a compass of time. The generality of the people being, by the neglect of a scandalous ministry, and the discouragement of those who were laborious, drenched in ignorance, were easily shaken by those controversial writings that were disseminate everywhere, and became an easy prey to every bold sectarian.

Many of the better sort set themselves to oppose these extremes, and from a detestation of them, were carried, some into one evil, some into another; whereby the common enemy reaped advantage, and truth suffered even by its defenders. Ministers who desired to be faithful, by the abounding of those errors, were forced to oppose them in public; whereby preaching became less edifying, and disputes increased, to the great detriment of religion.

The nation was thus crumbled into parties, in matters both civil and religious; the times turned cloudy and dark. Pretences of religion were dreadfully abused on all hands to subserve other designs; and even the best, both of ministers and people, wanted not their own sad failings, which evil men made the worst use of. The Word and Providence were used in favours of so many cross opinions and practices, that not a few began to run into that same extreme which some in France and Italy had before gone into. And about this time it was that the learned Herbert began to write in favours of Deism; of whom we shall have occasion to speak afterwards.

After the Restoration, things were so far from being mended that they grew worse. Lewdness and Atheism were encouraged at the Court, which now looked like a little Sodom. The clergy turned no less scandalous, if not more than before. Impiety was, as it were, publicly and with applause, acted and taught on the stage, and all serious religion was there exposed and ridiculed. Yea, the pulpits of many became theatres, whereupon men assumed the boldness to ridicule serious godliness and the gravest matters of religion, such as communion with God, confession of sin, prayer by the Spirit, and the whole work of conversion. Controversial writings were multiplied, and in them grave and serious truths were handled in a jocular way. The Scriptures were burlesqued, and the most important truths—under pretence of exposing the Dissenters, to the great grief of all good men among them and in the Church of England—were treated with contempt and scorn. The pulpits were again prostitute to State designs and doctrines; and the great truths of the Gospel, in reference to man's misery, and his recovery by Jesus Christ, were entirely neglected by many; and discourses of morality came in their place—I mean a morality that has no respect to Christ as its end, author, and the ground of its acceptance with God, which is

plain heathenism. The soberer and the better part were traduced as enthusiastical, disloyal hypocrites, and I know not what. And sometimes they, on the other hand, in their own defence, were constrained to lay open the impiety, atheism, and blasphemous boldness of their traducers in their way of management of Divine things. And while matters were thus carried betwixt them, careless and indifferent men, especially of the better and most considerable quality, being debauched in their practice by the licentiousness of the Court, the immorality and looseness of the stage, were willing to conform their principles to their practice, for which this state of things gave them a favourable occasion and plausible pretences. Men whose walk and way looked like any thing of a real regard to religion, they heard so often traduced as hypocrites, fanatics, and I know not what, that they were easily induced to believe them to be such. They who taught them so, on the other hand, by the liberty they assumed in practice, convinced these gentlemen that whatever their profession was, yet they believed nothing about religion themselves; and therefore it was easy to infer that all was but cheat. Besides, the Popish party, who were sufficiently encouraged, while the sober Dissenters of the Protestant persuasion were cruelly persecuted, made it their business to promote this unsettledness in matters of religion. They found themselves unable to stand their ground in way of fair debate, and therefore they set themselves rather to shake others in their faith, than directly to press them to a compliance with their own sentiments. And it is well known they wrote many books full of sophistry, plainly levelling at this, to bring men to believe nothing; as well knowing that if they were once brought there, they would soon be brought to believe anything in matters of religion.

On these and the like occasions and pretences arose this defection from the Gospel, which has been nourished by many of the same things which first gave it birth, till it is grown to such strength as fills all well-wishers to the interest of religion with just fears as to the issue.

Nor was it any wonder that these pretences should take, especially with persons of liberal education and parts, who only were capable of observing those faults which gave occasion for them; since the generality were prepared for and inclined to such a defection by a long continuance under the external dispensation of the Gospel, without any experience of its power, the prevalent love of lust, that makes men impatient of anything that may have the least tendency to restrain them from pursuing the gratification thereof; to which we may add the natural enmity of the mind of man against the mystery of the Gospel.

WHEN we first enter into the divine life, we propose to grow rich; God's plan is to make us feel poor.—*John Newton.*

Brief Notes of a Sermon

BY THE LATE REV. ARCHIBALD COOK.

PREACHED IN THE NORTH CHURCH, INVERNESS, 24TH MARCH, 1838.

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“And also all that generation were gathered to their fathers. And there arose another generation after them, which knew not the Lord, nor yet the works which he had done for Israel.”—JUDGES ii. 10.

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IT is a precious thing to have the people of God amongst us or in the world. We are informed in the preceding passage that the people served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that outlived him. The next generation knew not the Lord. This was the fruit of ignorance of God and His works. A soul that knows not God must seek its sole contentment in the creature. We are bent on idols. Forms of God and of spiritual things in the mind were the original spring of all idolatry. The poor people of God will be brought home in safety notwithstanding all their trials.

I.—The people of God are a blessing wherever they are.

II.—It is a visible sign of judgment when the Lord has taken His own people away.

I.—The people of God are a blessing wherever they are.

1. They are a blessing on account of their spiritual union to the living Head. Without this union one cannot be a Christian. They are said to be “partakers of the divine nature.” The soul begins to act faith upon Christ, and becomes a living member of this mystical body. While a living member of Christ’s mystical body is on this earth there will be communion between earth and heaven through that person. The world knows them not, even as it “knew Him not.”

2. The people of God are a blessing on account of the secret, spiritual and unchangeable concern Christ has for them. They were the first objects of His love. They are represented as the apple of His eye, and as the excellent ones of the earth. He has such care for them, and such interest in them, that what is done against them He counts as done against Himself. On account of His concern about them, He will be letting down temporal blessings upon the earth while there is one of them in it. It is like as if a father had a child in another family, he would give presents to that family, not because he loved them, but because his child dwelt with them. It is on account of the children of God that temporal blessings come to this world.

3. The people of God are a blessing on account of their prayers. They are a praying people. They are represented in Scripture as turning away judgments from the world by their

prayers. The prayers and sighs and tears of a gracious soul have a great effect in the court of heaven.

4. They are a blessing, as they are represented as the salt of the earth, preserving the earth from putrefying in their lusts. . . . They are represented as the wonders of heaven and lights of the world. They are as candles in a dark place, through whom God preserves the true knowledge of Himself. It was once confined to one family.

5. The people of God are a blessing on account of their standing against floods of iniquity. They are represented as pillars. "I will make thee a pillar in the temple of my God." There are some, no doubt, better pillars than others. . . . In the objects of His love there is a spirit of spiritual purity as pure as the very being of God. Were it not for the people of God we would be falling down to stocks and stones like poor papists. Now, they are precious on this account. They are precious as standing against sin in their families.

6. The people of God are a blessing on account of the way in which they are the means of preserving the pure ordinances of the gospel in the world. Every soul will take the means most agreeable to his nature. Whenever any of God's children are in a means of grace, there is spiritual life in that ordinance. Many a struggle the people of God had since the beginning.

7. The people of God are a great blessing on account of their example. The example of a gracious soul is precious : hence we see the people follow the example of Joshua and of the elders who outlived him. Even graceless souls followed their example. There is something in the gracious soul that will put another in mind that he has a soul. What makes this world to shun the people of God? Because when they see them, their very appearance will bring something of eternity to their remembrance. The example of the people of God in their families is precious. . . .

8. The people of God are a blessing on account of their advices. It was well there was an Eli that Samuel might speak to, when the Lord came to him ere he knew the Lord. Go to a mere professor of religion, he will put you wrong with regard to eternity, he was never taken out of the old covenant of works.

9. They are a blessing on account of their fellow-feeling and sympathy. We read of the apostle, how he "longed for them in the bowels of Christ." He became a partaker of the bowels of the Saviour. Go to the people of God with your trials, and you will see something of the bowels of the Saviour in them. Christ wept when He saw Jerusalem. Look at a poor believing woman who has a carnal worldly husband. I am sure she will have wet eyes for his soul before God. The nearer the people of God come to Him, the more fellow-feeling they will possess.

10. They are a blessing because they are the only beauty in the world. The king's daughter is all glorious within. Infinite wisdom has drawn a veil over the spiritual glory of the believer,

the veil of his body. It is a mercy the Lord has covered this glory. I am sure if it was uncovered believers would become idolators, worshipping one another. There is something purer in the child of God than in the very angels. Their purity is created, but the purity of the believer is uncreated. Christ is made their sanctification. They also have the robe of Christ's righteousness. Carnal worldlings will scoff at God's people; but hereafter they will shine in a different light; kings and princes will say then, "Oh, that I were in your garment." Oh, how much is the parent honoured that has been the means of bringing one of the children of God into the world. O, graceless family that have a guard of devils always about them! When prisoners are long in prison, they are permitted to get an airing with generally a double guard about them. So when the people of the world go to church that they may get an airing, they have a double guard of devils about them. If the love of the world go with one to eternity, it will give that person the heart-burn for ever. The people of God are the diamonds that will shine in Christ's crown. They are companions who will walk with Him in white. . . .

There is not a lawful calling in the world but God has some child of His own in it: it is because of this that it prospers. The Lord fixes the time when the objects of His love are to be taken out of the world, when the poor soul shall be freed from trials and crosses. The world have their time fixed also, but the end is different. A person who lives for dying will die for living in everlasting enjoyment.

The late Captain MacCallum.

IN the person of the late Captain Donald MacCallum, Oban, there has passed away a most staunch and faithful upholder of evangelical truth, as expressed in the principles of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland.

Captain MacCallum's parents early cast in their lot with the Free Church of Scotland, and since the time when the light of the Gospel of God first shone into his heart, he himself strongly upheld the principles of that Church, until it became manifest that the Free Church had departed from her distinctive constitution, doctrines, principles, and practice alike. This he felt he could not do. He then, at the cost of very dear friendships and much that appeals to the human heart and mind, severed his connection with the Free Church, and joined in the formation of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland. Captain MacCallum, though of a naturally genial disposition, was a man of deep and abiding convictions regarding the things of God. He had a marked reverence for the Word of God, the sanctity of the Sabbath, and the worship of God. These things were never

treated by him in a light manner, and he seldom lost an opportunity of enforcing upon those over whom he had any influence or control, the great and eternal importance of these things. This was manifest in his life to such an extent that a clerical friend, writing of him since his death, says—"How I envied the simple, strong faith which sustained his eternal hope. He was a sincere and godly old Christian, and I have no doubt, has entered on the fuller, larger life on which he used to meditate with such tremendous earnestness." His faith was strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus, while fully realising his own weakness and sinfulness. He earnestly strove after holiness in life and conversation.

This earnestness found expression in action more than in words. But, nevertheless, Captain MacCallum could speak, and did speak with no uncertain sound when he meant to enforce the due observance of the Decalogue. "Remember the Sabbath Day, to keep it holy," was to him a binding commandment, and while doing his best to obey it himself, both in the letter and in the spirit of it, he feared not to urge its observance on others. He was also very particular in his observance of the public worship of God, and his place in the congregation was seldom empty, till near the end of his earthly journey, when bodily weakness intervened, and even then he frequently asked his physician to allow him to drive to church.

But with all this intense interest in things unseen and eternal, which manifested itself more fully in the closing years of his life, Captain MacCallum did not forget the friendly duties of life. Incidents have come to light once and again, which point to a kindly care for sorrowing ones, and a disposition to oblige others at the cost of some little trouble and delay to himself. However, he was very reticent regarding these things, and only now is the veil of silence being lifted from some of them.

None of these incidents shall be recorded here. They are touched upon merely to show that the subject of this sketch was something more than the "sturdy Presbyterian" or "stern moralist," which a contemporary dubbed him many years ago. If the perception of the justice of God found ample entrance into his heart and mind, it is apparent that the love of God came with it. And this latterly, like the dew of Hermon, cast its gentle influence over him, making him in his closing hours on earth very patient, and drawing his affections upwards to the dwelling place of the Most High. On the morning of his departure he longed to be with Jesus, and said "Untie these bonds off my body, and let me go up." In a short time these bonds were untied, and he did go up, in response to the request of Him who said, "Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am." He departed this life on the 18th of September, 1899. A very wide circle of friends mourn the loss of such a rare and faithful friend.

M.

Letters of the late Donald Duff, Stratherrick.

WE have much pleasure in submitting to our readers a series of letters by the late Mr. Donald Duff, Stratherrick, who was well-known throughout the Highlands as a layman of pre-eminent gifts and piety. The following notice of him occurs in the "Life of Dr. Kennedy":—"Mr. Duff was a remarkable man. He held the foremost place among the 'men' of the Highlands in his day—a position that implied rare gifts of mind, extensive religious knowledge, and high attainments in the Divine life. He had also the capacity of arranging his ideas with logical precision and expressing them in effective language. Few ministers could so satisfactorily divide the Word of truth. Mr. Kennedy, who recognised his worth, secured his services as a catechist, and often expressed regret that Mr. Duff refused to qualify for the ministry. A privileged people to have such a pastor, and such a coadjutor! Mr. Duff laboured for twelve years in connection with Dingwall congregation, then removed to Strathconon, where there was then no fixed ministry; and spent the last fifteen years of his life in Stratherrick, Inverness-shire, having gone there at the request of Mr. A. Cook, the minister, who was in delicate health, to become catechist and missionary to his people."

(I.)

STRATHERRICK, 18th February, 1870.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—Partly the desire of hearing from you and partly the pleasure of conversing with you, although I have to listen only to what I have myself to say (of which I am often heartily sick), makes it an agreeable duty to write.

I may begin by stating that I was lately from home—at the Dingwall Communion—and may say of it, as a whole, what the late Mr. Finlayson, Helmsdale, said to a boy he was catechising—"Do you pray?" he asked. "Yes, sir." "How often do you pray in a day?" "Three times." "Oh, well, you are not such a bad boy at all as the times are going." So Dingwall was not so bad at all as the times are going. The preaching was good, and it was refreshing to meet some of the Lord's dear people from various parts; and, perhaps, some could add that they felt something vouchsafed of the presence of Him who is the Beloved of the Father, the Beloved of the angels, the Beloved of the Church triumphant, and of the Church below, although now they see Him but as in a glass darkly. But when faith is in any lively exercise, they do get glimpses of the King in His beauty, and by that glorious light are changed in some measure into the same image, and have their hearts weaned from the forbidden pleasures of sin and sense. If I could, I would bless the Lord for the

means of grace and for the fellowship of His dear people, for the promise holds good, and will to the end, "Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them." Oh! thou blessed, most blessed of all names in heaven or earth—the "I am." Oh! that He should condescend to say, "I am there." In whatever place or company He is present, by His gracious Spirit would He not turn it into a house of God and gate of heaven? And in the gatherings of His people at His ordinances He is sometimes pleased so to commune with them, as that He leaves the stamp of His own grace on their souls, and thus accomplishes the end the Father had in view, of conforming His children to His own likeness. For this is the great design of the Father's love to them in the gift of His Son for their salvation, that he should have them all conformed to the image of the Son. The Son, indeed, shall possess an eternal weight of glory which His children shall come far short of, inasmuch as His human nature is and shall be forever in union with His Divine nature, and receives thus a fulness of unction from the Godhead such as no mere creature can ever receive. And all God's children would desire to have it so, would desire that in all things He should have the pre-eminence. But they would desire also to bear His image in their measure—to be like Him in love to the Father's glory, in zeal for the Father's honour, and in obedience to the Father's will. Yet, alas! our cold, fickle hearts are such that the sun of the same day does not see us in the same frame. What we would wish to be in the morning, perhaps we are very far from at night. And, indeed, were it not that Jesus Christ is "the same yesterday and to-day and for ever," some of us would be afraid of naming His name at all. But He graciously keeps alive in the soul that is truly united to Himself a whisper on behalf of Himself, even when the soul is in a very low case, a whisper that says, "There is in Jehovah, and in Him alone, that which will satisfy all thy desires. Therefore, my soul, wait thou only on the Lord." . . . Yours, &c.,

D. DUFF.

(II.)

STRATHERRICK, 25th March, 1870.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—I received your welcome letter of 28th ult., and am now longing to hear from you again. I liked the remark you quoted from Mr. M's sermon—that the woman who washed the blessed Saviour's feet was a believer before she was herself aware of it. But you said another thing which I did not approve of—that you were to give up seeking for marks of grace in yourself, because you had lost the only one you thought you had—viz., love to the brethren. But I am very sure if D—S—were in a happy frame on a Communion Friday, giving marks of the true people of God, you would be all ears to hear if you could appropriate any of them. And as to the mark which you so logically try to prove is lost, perhaps I can help you to

recover it. You say—"I fear I have more complacency in a person who is naturally amiable and agreeable than in a person who may have grace, but who wears the badger's skin." But let us suppose a third person to have the amiability of the first and the grace of the second, and which of the three would you prefer? And if you must confess it would be the third, there is nothing differing him from the first but grace, and as only grace will love grace, I hope to hear no more of that complaint.

I was meditating lately on that passage where the bride of Christ compares her Beloved to the apple tree among the trees of the wood. I suppose the "trees of the wood" mean all created beings whether in heaven or on earth. But the uncreated excellence and beauty that she saw in her Beloved and attracted her to Him, made her esteem all others, good though they were, as nothing in comparison with Him. And oh! what a blessed position was she in, sitting under His shadow. She found a shadow in His incarnation and humiliation, a shadow in His obedience and sufferings, and a shadow in His intercession. Well might she say, a day under that shadow is better than a thousand. She also tasted something of His fruit, and experienced something of its sweetness. "His fruit was sweet to my taste." She tasted the sweetness of a word of pardon dropped into her guilty conscience; the sweetness of a word of reconciliation dropped into her hard, unbelieving heart; the sweetness of a word of love and faithfulness dropped into her doubting, trembling spirit. Alas! that we are such strangers to sitting down under this shadow and eating of this fruit; but we should bless the Lord that such attainments He gave to other fellow-sinners, and yet they had a great jealousy of themselves. And were it not that those who are now in glory and who obtained much nearness to the Lord when they were on earth, regarded themselves as the chief of sinners, some of us would often be very downcast indeed.

Please do not conclude your letter again by saying, "Yours until sin part us." By grace that shall never be. Sin was not the cause of our meeting, and, I trust, it will not be the cause of our parting. "Wilt thou not who from death me saved, my feet from falls keep free?"—Yours, &c.,

D. DUFF.

Suim an Eolais Shlainteil.

I.

Air staid chailhte thaobh nàduir, tre bhriseadh Cùmhnant nan gnìomh.

"O Israel, sgrios thu thu féin."—HOSEA xiii. 9.

I.—Dh' orduich an Dia siorruidh agus uile-chumhachdach, an t-Athair, am Mac, agus an Spiorad Naomh, trì Pearsa eadar-dhealuichte anns an aon Diadhachd gu neo-scarthail, comh-ionnan anns gach uile fhoirfeachd, neo-chrìochnach, gu ro ghlic chum a

ghlòire féin, roimh chruthachadh an t-saoghail, gach ni a thig gu crìch ; agus tha e a' cur uil' orduighean an gnìomh gu ro-naomh agus neo-mhearachdach, as eagmhuis bhi 'na fhear-compairt do pheacadh creutair sam bith.

II.—Rinn an Dia so na h-uile nithe do neo-ni, an ùine shè làithean, agus iad uile ro mhaith ann an gnè : Gu sonraichte rinn e na h-aingil uile naomha ; agus rinn e ar ceud sinnseara Adhamh agus Eubha, freumh a' chinne-daoine, araon ionraic agus comasach air an lagh a bha sgrìobhta 'nan cridheachaibh a choimhead. Bha iad a thaobh nàduir ceangailte air ùmhlachd thoirt do'n lagh so fo pheanais bàis ; ach cha robh Dia ceangailte air duais thoirt do'n seirbhis, gus an deachaidh e ann an cumhnant no ann an coimh-cheangal riu, agus ri'n sliochd annta-san, chum beatha shiorruidh a thabhairt doibh air chumhnant ùmhlachd iomlan phearsanta ; agus le so uile a' bagradh bàis orra nam b'e is gu'm briseadh iad e. 'Se so cumhnant nan gnìomh.

III.—Bha daoine agus aingle araon caochlach o'n saor-thoil féin, mar a dhearbh a' chùis (air do Dhia a' bhuaidh nèimh-phairt-each so, a ta thaobh nàduir neo-chaochlach, a ghleidheadh ris fein), oir thuit mòran do na h-ainglibh o'n ceud staid le'n toil féin ann am peacadh, agus dh'fhàs iad 'nan diabhluibh.

Air bhith d'ar ceud sinnseara air am mealladh le Satan, aon do na diabhluibh sin, a labhair ann an naithir nimhe, bhris iad cumhnant nan gnìomh, le'n itheadh do'n mheas thoirmisgte ; leis an d'fhàinig iad féin, agus an sliochd, air bhith dhoibh 'nan leasraibh mar gheugaibh anns an fhreumh, agus mar sin ceangailte anns a' chumhnant cheudna maille riu, cha'n e a mhàin an luidhe ri bàs shiorruidh, ach mar an ceudna chaill iad gach uile chomas air Dia a thoileachadh ; seadh, dh'fhàs iad thaobh nàduir 'nan naimhdeibh do Dhia, agus do na h-uile mhaith spioradail, agus ag aomadh a mhàin chum uile an còmhnuidh. 'Se so am peacadh gin, an fhreumh shearbh o bheil gach uile pheacadh gnìomh ann am smuain, am briathar, agus an gnìomh a' teachd.

II.

An leigheas a ta air ulluchadh do na daoineibh taghta ann an Iosa Crìosd le Cùmhnant nan gràs.

“O Israel, sgrios thu thu féin, ach annamsa tha do chabhair.”—

HOSEA xiii. 9.

I.—Ged thug an duine e féin chum na staid chaillte so, agus ged nach 'eil e comasach air e féin a chomhnadh, no toileach gu'n deanadh Dia còmhndadh ris as an staid so, ach gu'm b'fhearr leis fuireach innte gun mhothachadh oirre gus am biodh e cailte ; gidheadh dh' fhoillsich Dia 'na fhocal, chum glòir a ghràsa saoi bhir féin, slighe chum peacaich a thearnadh, eadhon le creidimh ann an Iosa Crìosd, Mac soirruidh Dhé, a réir cumhnant na saorsa, air a dheanamh agus air a reiteachadh eadar Dia an t-Athair, agus Dia am Mac, an comhairle na Trìonaid, roimh thoiseach an t-saoghail.

II.—'Se so suim cùmhnant na saorsa ; Air taghadh do Dhia gu saor chum beatha, àireamh àraidh do'n chinne-daoine chaillte, chum glòir a ghràs saoi bhir, thug e iad roimh thoiseach an t-saoghail do Dhia am Mac, a bha air orduchadh 'na fhear-saoruidh, air chumhnant is gu'n irioslaicheadh se e féin co-mhòr, as gu'n gabhadh e d'a ionnsuidh féin a nàduir daoineil, corp agus anam ann an aonachd phearsanta ri a nàdur Diadhuidh, agus gu'n ùmhlaicheadh se e féin do'n lagh mar urras air an son, agus gu'n dìoladh e ceartas as an leth, le ùmhlachd thoirt seachad 'nan ainm, eadhon gu fulang bàs malluichte a' chrann-cheusaidh, gu'n saoradh agus gu'm fuasgladh e iad o gach uile pheacadh agus bàs, agus gu'n coisneadh e dhoibh fireantachd agus beatha mhaireannach, maille ris gach uile ghràs slainteil a ta treòrachadh d'a ionnsuidh sin, chum, le meadhonaibh d'a orduchadh féin, a bhi gu h-eifeachdach air an cur ris gach aon diubh ann an am iomchuidh. An cumhnant so ghabh Mac Dhé (neach is e Iosa Crìosd ar Tighearna) os laimh roimh thoiseach an t-saoghail, agus ann an iomlaineachd na h-aimsir, thainig e chum an t-saoghail, agus bha e air a bhreith leis an òighe Muire, dh' ùmhlaich se e féin do'n lagh, agus dh' ioc e an eiric gu h-iomlan air a' chrann-cheusaidh : Ach do bhrìgh a' chùmhnaidh so bha air a dheanamh roimh thoiseach an t-saoghail, tha Crìosd anns na h-uile linn o thuiteam Adhamb, ag cur nan sochaire a chosnadh leis, gu h-éifeachdach ris na daoineibh taghta, agus a ta e deanamh so ann an gabhail riu air cùmhnant do shaor ghràs agus réite maille riu, tre chreidimh ann féin ; agus leis a' chùmhnannt so, tha e deanamh thairis do gach creidmheach, còir air féin agus air uile shoch-airibh.

III.—Chum cùmhnant na saorsa so a choimhlionadh, agus chum na daoine taghta a dheanamh 'nan luchd-compairt do chùmhnannt nan gràs, bha Iosa Crìosd air a sgeudachadh leis na trì dreuchdaibh so, Faidh, Sagairt agus Rìgh. Air a dheanamh 'na Fhaidh chum gach eòlas slainteil fhoillseachadh d'a phobull, agus chum impidh chur orra creidsinn agus ùmhlachadh do'n eòlas so ; air a dheanamh 'na Shagart, chum e féin a thoirt suas 'na iobairt aon uair an son uile, agus chum gnath eadar-ghuidhe a dheanamh ris an Athair, chum's gu'm biodh am pearsa agus an seirbhis air an deanamh taitneach dha : agus air a dheanamh 'na Rìgh chum an ceannsachadh dha féin, chum am beathachadh agus an riaghladh le orduighean féin, agus chum an dìon o'n uile naimhdebh.

III.

Na meadhona o'n leth muigh chum na daoine taghta a dheanamh 'nan luchd comhpairt do'n chumhnant so, agus a chuid eile a ta air an gairm dhiu gun leisgeul.

“Tha mòran air an gairm.”—MATA. xxii. 14.

I.—Na meadhona o'n leth muigh chum daoine a dheanamh 'nan luchd comhpairt do chùmhnannta nan gràs, a ta iad co ghlic

air am frithealadh, as gu'm bi na daoine taghta gu cinnteach air an iompachadh, agus air an tearnadh leo; agus sin air chor is nach faigh na daoine aingedh am measg a bheil iad fìor-aobhar tuislidh. Is iad na meadhona gu sonraichte a' cheithir so; 1. Focal Dé. 2. Na sacramainte. 3. Riaghailte eaglais. 4. Urnuigh. Ann am Focal Dé air a shearmonachadh le teachdairibh tha air an orduchadh chum sin, ta an Tighearna tabhairt tairgs-gràis do na h-uile pheacaich, air chùmhnannt gu'n creid iad ann an Iosa Criosd; agus ge be dh'aidicheas am peacadh, agus a ghabhas ri Criosd air a thairgse, agus dh' a ùmhluicheas iad féin d'a orduighibh-sa, 's àill leis gu'm bi iad féin agus an clann air an gabhail a steach chum urram agus sochaire cumhnant nan gras. Leis na sacramaintibh is aill le Dia gu'm bi an cùmhnannt air a shèulachadh agus air a dhaingneachadh dhoibh air na cumhnantaibh roimh-ainmichte. Le Riaghladh eaglais, is aill leis gu'm bi iad air an iadhadh a steach, agus air an cuideachadh a chum an cùmhnannt a choimhead. Agus le h-urnuigh, is aill leis gu'm bi a ghrasa glòrmhor féin ta air an gealltuinn anns a' chumhnant air an tarruing a mach gu lathail, air an aideachadh, agus air an cur an gnìomh. A ta na meadhona so uile air an gnathachadh gu treibhdhireach, no air sgath sgèimh a mhain, a réir gnè an luchd-coimhcheangail mar is creidmhidh da rìreadh iad, no a thaobh coslais a mhain.

II.—Cumhnant nan gras, a ta air a chur sìos anns an t-Sean-tiomnadh, roimh theachd Chriosd, agus anns an Tiomnadh-nuadh o thainig e, is ionnan da ann am brìgh, ged tha atharrachadh frithealaidh air o'n leth muigh: Oir bha an cumhnant fo an t-sean-tiomnadh air a shèulachadh le sacramaintibh an timchioll-ghearraidh agus an Uain-chaisge, a' comharrachadh a mach bais Chriosd chum teachd, agus na sochaire bha air an cosnadh leis, fo sgaile iobairte fola, agus ioma deas-ghnatha eile; ach o thainig Criosd tha an cumhnant air a sheulachadh le sacramaintibh a' bhaistidh agus suipeir an Tighearna, a ta comharrachadh a mach gu soilleir, Criosd air a cheusadh am fianuis ar sùl, air toirt buaidh air a' bhas agus air an uaigh agus a' riaghladh gu glòrmhor gach ni air nèamh agus talamh, chum maith a phobuill.

IV.

Na beannachdan a ta air an comh-pairteachadh gu h-èifeachdach leis na meadhonaibh sin ri muinntir thaghta an Tighearna.

“Tha mòran air an gairm, ach beagan air an tagha.”

—MATA. xxii. 14.

Mar a ta ar Tighearna leis na meadhonaibh so o'n leth muigh, a' fàgail nan daoine aingidh gun leisgeul, mar sin tha e ann an cumhachd a Spioraid a' cur ris na daoineibh taghta gu h-èifeachdach gach uile-ghràsa slàinteil a chosnadh dhoibh ann an cùmhnannt na saorsa, agus a' deanamh caochladh air am pearsa. Gu

sonraichte, 1. Tha e g'an iompachadh no ga'n ath-ghineamhuinn, le beatha spioradail thabhairt doibh, a' fosgladh an tuigse, ag ath-nuadhachadh an toile, an aigne, agus uile chumhachdan an anama chum ùmhlaichd spioradail thoirt d'a àitheantaibh. 2. Tha e tabhairt doibh creidimh slainteil, leis am bheil iad fo mhothachadh an damnaidh a thoill iad, ag aontachadh o'n cridhe le cumhnant nan gràs, agus a' gabhail ri h-Iosa Criosd gu treibhdhireach. 3. Tha e tabhairt dhoibh aithreachas, ionnus gu bheil iad o dhoilghios diadhuidh, le fuath peacaidh, agus gràdh do fhìreantachd, ag iompachadh o gach uile aingidheachd chum seirbhis Dé. Agus, 4. Tha e g'an naomhachadh, le toirt orra dol air an aghaidh agus buanachadh ann an creidimh, agus ann an ùmhlaichd spioradail do lagh Dhé, 'ga fhoillseachadh le'n toradh anns na h-uile dhleasdanas, agus deadh oibre a réir mar chuireas Dia cion-fàth 'nan làimh.

II.—Maille ris a' chaochladh so o'n leth a stigh air am pearsaibh, tha Dia mar an ceudna a' deanamh caochladh air an staid : oir co-luath 's a ta iad air an tabhairt le creidimh fo chùmhant nan gràs, 1. Tha e g'am fireanachadh, leis an ùmhlaichd iomlan sin thug Criosd do'n lagh, agus mar an ceudna an dioladh thug e do cheartas air a chrann-cheusaidh 'nan ainm, a mheas doibh mar fhìreantachd. 2. Tha e g'an deanamh réidh ris, agus 'nan cairdibh do Dhia bha roimhe so 'nan naimhdeibh dha. 3. Tha e g'an uchdmhachadh, chum's nach bi iad tuille 'nan cloinn aig Dia, air an deanamh saoi bhir le uile shochairibh spioradail a chloinne. Agus fadheoidh, air bhi do'n cogadh anns a' bheatha so bhi air a chrìochnachadh, tha e g'an deanamh foirfe ann an naomhachd agus am beannachadh air tùs 'nan anamaibh aig am bàis, agus a ris 'nan anamaibh agus 'nan cuirp faraon, 'nuair dhlùthaicheas e r'a chèile iad le h-aobhneas anns an aiseirigh anns an la san tig e gu glòrmhor chum breitheanas, 'nuair bhitheas na h-aingidh gu léir air an cur air falbh chum ifrinn, maille ris an Diabhl do'n d'thug iad seirbhis : Ach a mhuinntir sin a thagh Criosd, an dream a shaor e, na fìor-chreidmheach, luchd-leanmhuinn na naomhachd, bithidh iad maille ris féin ann an staid na glòire.

V.

Am feum is coir a dheanamh d'on eolas shlainteil.

Mar a ta e air a chur slos anns na Sgrìobtuiribh agus gu h-aithghearr mar a dh' ainmicheadh ann an Leabhar aidmheil a' chreidimh, agus nan ceistean.

'Se feum àraidh an teagaisg chrìosdaidh, mothachadh a thoirt duinne mu pheacadh, agus mu fhìreantachd, agus breitheanas (Eoin xvi. 8), ann an cuid, leis an lagh, no coimhcheangal nan gnìomh, chum 's gu biodh e 'na chreidmheach neo-chealgach ann an Iosa Criosd, agus gu'm biodh e air a neartachadh 'na chreidimh le deadh-bharantas, air bunachar daingean, agus le dearbhadh a

thoirt air fìrinn a chreidimh, le deadh thoradh, agus mar sin a bhi air a théarnadh.

'Se so suim coimhcheangail nan gnìomh, "Ma ni thu gach ni tha air àithne, agus nach failnich thu ann an aon phunc, bithidh tu air do thèarnadh: ach ma dh' fhàilnicheas tu, gheibh thu bàs," (Rom. x. 5; Gal. iii. 10, 12).

'Se suim an t-soisgeil, no coimhcheangal nan gràs agus na rèite, "Ma theicheas tu o'n fheirg a thoill thu dh' ionnsuidh an Fhìr-shaoraidh fhìor Iosa Crìosd" (a ta comasach air tèarnadh gus a' chuid a 's faide, gach neach a thig a dh' ionnsuidh Dhé tridsan), cha bhi thu air do chall, ach bithidh a' bheatha mhaireannach agad (Rom. x. 8, 9, 11).

Tuiteam na h-Eaglaise ann an Alba.

A REIR a gheallaidh a thug sinn air a mhios a chaidh, theid sinn air aghaidh gu bhi toirt beagan mìnachaidh air na teagasgan agus na buinn riaghlaidh a tha air an cur sìos anns an Achd-mhinachaidh; ach bheir sinn an toiseach an t-Achd sin air beulabh ar luchd-leughaidh anns a Ghàilic:—

AN T-ACHD-MINACHAIDH.

Do bhrìgh gum bheil e iomchaidh gun biodh cruaidh-chais agus teagamhan air an toirt as an rathad a bha air am fairichdinn le cuid a thaobh na'm boidean air creidimh a tha air iarraidh, bho dhaoine a tha faotinn coir laghail gu bhi teagasg, no a tha air an gabhail a stigh gu dreuchd, anns an eaglais so; tha an t-Ard-sheanadh, le aonta na'n cleirean a cur an ceill mar a leanas:—

I.—Gum bheil (ann a bhi cumail agus a teagasg a reir Leabhar Aidmheil a Chreidimh rùn gràs na Diadhachd a thaobh na muinntir a tha air an tearnadh, agus coimhlionadh an rùn sin ann an tìm), (a) an Eaglais so leis an dùrachd as mò a cur an céill, mar a seasamh ann an claraodainn taisbeanaidh na'n gràs, gràdh Dhé an Athair, a Mhic, agus an Spioraid Naomh do pheacaich do'n chinne-dhaoine, air fhoillseachadh, gu h-àraidh anns an Athair a thiolacadh a Mhic gu bhi na Fhear-saoraidh an t-saoghail, ann an tighinn a Mhic gu bhi 'g a thabhairt féin na iobairt réitich air son peacaidh, agus ann an strì an Spioraid Naomh ri daoine a chum an tabhairt gu aithreachas. (b) Gum bheil an Eaglais so mar an ceudna cumail gum bheil aig na h-uile a chluinneas an soisgeul barantas, agus gum bheil e air agradh uatha, gun creideadh iad a chum tearnaigh an anama; agus a thaobh cor a mheud 'us nach creid ach a bhasaicheas na'm peacaidhean bidh na leanas do bhrìgh an duilaidh fein air gairm an t-soisgeil. Chan eil an Eaglais so a teagasg, agus chan eil i meas gum bheil Leabhar Aidmheil a Chreidimh a teagasg gum bheil daoine air an roimh-orduchadh gu bàs eadar-dhealaichte bho 'm

peacadh fein. (c) Gur e dleasdanas 'na muinntir a tha creidsinn, agus aon chrìoch air son am bheil iad air an gairm le Dia, gun deanadh iad an soisgeil aithnichte do na h-uile dhaoine, anns na h-uile aite, chum ùmhlachd a chreidimh. Agus am feadh is e an soisgeil meodhainean suidhichte na slainte dhoibh-san da 'm bheil e air a dheanamh aithnichte, gidheadh chan eil e leantuinn, ni mò a tha Leabhar Aidmheil a Chreidimh gu bhi air a thuigsinn mar a teagasg, gum bheil aon air bith a tha bàsaichadh 'n an leanabachd caillte, no nach feud Dia, air sgath Chrìosd, agus le a Spiorad Naomha-san, a throcair a shìneadh a mach a dhuinnsuidh na muinntir a tha 'n taobh thall do na meodhainean so, mar a dh'fheudas sin a bhi taitneach dha a reir saoihbreas a ghràis-san.

II.—Gum bheil (ann a bhi cumail a mach agus a teagasg, a reir Leabhar Aidmheil a Chreidimh, truaididheachd iomlan nadur an duine mar air tuitean), an Eaglais so mar an ceudna a dìon gum bheil fathasd air an duine comh-arraidhean na h-ard-inbhe mar a bha e air a chrùthachadh ann an iomhaidh Dhé; gum bheil e ann an seilbh air eolas air Dia agus a dhleasan; gum bheil e fo fhiachan ùmhlachd a thoirt do lagh na modhannan, agus do'n t-soisgeul; agus mar sin ged a tha e neo-chomasach as eugmhais cuideachaidh an Spioraid Naoimh pilltinn gu Dia, gidheadh tha e comasach air rùintean maithe agus gnìomharan a tha annta fein deadh-bheusach agus arraidh air moladh.

III.—Tha an Eaglais so ag àicheadh bunaitean riaghlaidh neofhulangach agus geur-leanmhuineach, agus chan eil i comhdhunadh gu'm bheil a luchd-dréuchd, ann a bhi cur an ainme ri Leabhar Aidmheil a Chreidimh, 'gan cengal fein ri bunaitean riaghlaidh air bith neo-fhreagarach ri saorsa cogais, agus coir na h-uile neach gu a bharrail dhiomhair fein a bhi aige.

IV.—Am feadh a tha eadar-dhealachadh bheachdan air an aideachadh anns an Eaglais so air a leithid de phuincean, ann an Leabhar Aidmheil a Chreidimh, 's nach eil a buntainn ri brìgh a chrideamh ath-leasaichte air a chumail a mach ann, gu bheil an Eaglais a gleidheadh na laimh fein làn-ughdarras gu tighinn gu comh-dhunadh ann an cùis ghearrain air bith a dh'fhaodas eirigh, gu de na puincean a bhuineas do'n gne so a chaidh ainmeachadh, agus mar so dlòn a chur an aghaidh gu'm biodh droch fheum air bith air a dheanamh do'n t-saorsa so chum dochann do theagasg fallain, no chum ciurradh aonachd agus sìth na h-eaglais.

Anns an eadar-theangachadh so air an Achd-mhineachaidh dh'fheuch sinn ri brìgh na 'm briathran anns a chanain bheurla a chur ann an caint cho so-thuigsinn agus a bha 'n ar comas. Tha a bhrìgh gle dhorchais; ach tha i mar sin anns a chanain bheurla mar an ceudna. Cha robh e ann ar rùn droch cothrom a thoirt do dhuine sam bith le bhi cur brìgh na chaint nach robh sinn a faicinn gu soillear innte. Feuchaidh sinn a nise ri beagan soluis a chur air an Achd thruagh so. (1) An toiseach co air son an robh an t-Achd so air a dheanamh? Chi sibh gur ann air son

luchd dreuchd anns an Eaglais a bha e air a chur ri cheile. Tha iad so air an deanamh suas de mhinistearan, da 'm bheil cuid na'n luchd-teagaisg anns na tighean foghlum aig an Eaglais, de sheanairean, agus de dheaconaibh. (2) Is e an dara ni ciod a tha cur dragh orra? Tha e air a chur sios anns an Achd so gum bheil "cruaidhchais agus teagamhan" aca thaobh nam boidean leis an robh iadair an ceangal ri Leabhar Aidmheil a Chreidimh. Bheir sinn fainear nach eil na cruaidh-chais no na teagamhan so air an ainmeachadh, agus mar sin gum feum sin ar suil a chumail air am Achd fein gu bhi 'gan deanamh soilleir dhuinn. Tha e ro-shoilleir nach robh an luchd-dreuchd so riarachtaichte le Leabhar Aidmheil a Chreidimh. Thoisich *Professor Candlish* ann an Glaschu air a cheangal a bha eadar an Eaglais agus Leabhar Aidmheil a Chreidimh a bhriseadh cor air ficead bliadhna roimhe so. Bha moran de na doine oga, bha air am foghlum fo theagasg Chandlish agus luchd-teagaisg eile de'n na h-aon bheachdan ris, air òl teagasgan ùra, anns an tìr so, a bha calg-dhireach an aghaidh teagasgan Leabhar Aidmheil a Chreidimh agus focal Dhé. Bha, mar an ceudna, oidhirp air a tabhairt uair no dha, le cuid anns an Eaglais, gu cuid dhiu a thabhairt ga cùntas air son an teagasgan mearachdach air beulaobh cuirtean na h-Eaglais. Nochd an seasamh 'a bha air a dheanamh ann an cuirtean na h-Eaglais gun robh beachdan na cuid bu mhò de'n luchd-dreuchd an aghaidh teagasgan na firinn agus Leabhar Aidmheil a Chreidimh. Bha an Eaglais a cur na h-uile bha gabhail dreuchd innte fo bhoidean gu'n teagaisgeadh, gu'n dìonadh, agus gu'n cumadh iad suas uile theagasgan Leabhair Aidmheil a Chreidimh, agus nach leanadh iad ni sam bith a dh'obraicheadh roinnean anns an Eaglais. Bha e nis soilleir gu'n robh na dearbh dhaoine a ghabh agus a rinn no boidean so, le an saor-thoil fein, ga 'm briseadh agus a togail roinnean anns an Eaglais. Is ann chum fuasglaidh air na daoine so a thug mionnan eithich a bha an t-Achd so air a dheanamh. An aite an Eaglais a thoirt orra seasamh ri 'm boidean, no a co-chomunn fhagail, is ann a tha i dol a dh'atharachadh a creud fein a chum gum fuasgail i air na "cruaidh-chàsan agus na teagamhan" a bha aca a thaobh a creud agus focal na firinn. (3) Co i an Eaglais a tha gus an ni so a dheanamh? Tha e ro-shoilleir gur i an Eaglais Shaor. Co a thug ughdarras dhi an ni so a dheanamh na phairt de a creud a cumail suas a lamhan anns an olc oillteil so. An urrainn e bhi gur i so an Eaglais a dh'fhuiling call na h-uile ni air son còraichean Chrìosd ann an 1843? Is i, ach tha e soilleir gun do chul-shleamhnuich i gu ro mhor. Thug i aite do dhaoine neo-iompaichte ann a tighean foghlum, na cubaidean, agus na cuirtean a bha nis gus a deanamh fàs. Is iad na daoine so "do nach b'aithne Ioseph," a tha air an gairm anns an Achd so "an Eaglais so." Is ann a reir am beachdan nadura fein agus chan ann a reir focail Dhé a tha iad anns an Achd so a dol a dh'fhuasgladh orra féin. Na 'n d' thigeadh iad air beulabh a cuirtean le puincean ann an Leabhar Aidmheil a Chreidimh a

dhearbhadh iad a bhi an aghaidh focal Dhé, be dleasdanas na h-Eaglais sealltuinn a stigh anna, agus ma bha aon fhocal na creud nach gabhadh bonntachadh air an fhirinn, an taobhar gearain a thoirt air falbh le a creud a chumadh ri focal Dhé. Ach cha chuala sinn ni air ainmachadh le aon de na daoine so an aghaidh Leabhar Aidmheil a Chreidimh ach gun robh e sgriobhta ann gun do chruthaich Dia na neamhan agus an talamh ann an séa laithean. Tha so cho calg-dhireach an aghaidh focal Dhe (Gen. ii. 2; Exod. xx. 11) agus a tha e an aghaidh Leabhar Aidmheil a Chreidimh. Cha d' thug iad firinn air aghaidh gu puinc air bith de'n chreud ùir so a dhearbhadh. Tha fios aig na h-uile a chunnaic Leabhar Aidmheil a Chreidimh gum bheil na h-uile puinc dhe air a daingneachadh leis an fhirinn. Tha sin de'n bheachd gu'm faic na h-uile gur e h-anns an Achd so beachdan mearachdach dhaoine air an cur air amhaich sluaigh an aite focail na firinn. Tha moran de na daoine, a tha air fuasgladh orra leis an Achd so, a cur an ceill gu follaiseach nach eil iad a creidsinn gur e focal Dhé a tha anns a Bhiobul. Thubhairt *Professor Dodds* ann am baile Dhumfries bho cheann da bhliadhna "gur e bhann ni duilich gu'n do thagair an Eaglais riamh gu'n robh am Bhiobul air a dheachdadh, oir gun robh a cheart urrad choir aig na Turcaich a thagradh gun robh an *Koran* air a dheachdadh, no aig muinntir *China* gun robh na leabhraichean (druidheachd) aca fein air an deachdadh agus a bha againne a thagradh a thaobh a Bhiobuil." Thuirt *Professor Adam Smith* "nach eil anns an t-Seann-Tiomhadh ach dìthreabh do ghaineamh, agus fasach ulfhartach." So dithis de'n na daoine a tha teagasg na minis-tearain oga anns an Eaglais. Tha e soilleir nach eil iad a creidsinn na firinn; gu de nis a tha iad a dol a theagasg ach na beachdan uamhasach tha aca air focal Dhé. Is ann a thoirt lan chead dhoibh na beachdan sin a chumail, le ughdarras na h-Eaglais, agus an teagasg a chaidh an t-Achd-minichaidh a dheanamh na lagh anns an Eaglais.

Chan urrainn sinn an cor a radh air a mhios so, ach ma chumas an Ti naomh slainte cuirp agus intinn rinn bheir sinn beagan de bhrìgh an Achd fein air an ath-mhios. Aig an am so cha d' thug sinn ach beagan fhocal mu'n roimhradh aige. Tha sinn a fagail aig ar luchd-leughaidh breth a thoirt air a chothram a thug sinn do na briathran a tha air an cur sìos anns an roimh-radh sin. "S guir, a mhic, a dh' eisdeachd ris an teagasg a chuireas air seacharan o bhriathraidh an eòlas."—Gnath-Fhocail xix. 27.

N. C.

WHEN a man says he received a blessing under a sermon, I begin to enquire who this man is, that speaks of the help he has received. The Roman people proved the effect they received under a sermon of Antony, when they flew to avenge the death of Cæsar.—*John Newton*.

Notes and Comments.

Communion for November.—The first Sabbath, Oban; the second, St. Jude's, Glasgow; and the third, John Knox's, Glasgow. The latter congregation will (D.V.) meet as before in the Original Secession Church, Bedford Street, South Side.

Meeting of Synod.—The Synod will (D.V.) meet in the Hall of St. Jude's, Glasgow, on Tuesday, the 14th November. The Rev. Neil Cameron, the retiring moderator, will preach at twelve noon.

Ordination at Glendale, Skye.—On 11th October, the Northern Presbytery met at Glendale Free Presbyterian Church, and ordained the Rev. Neil Macintyre, probationer, to the pastorate of the congregation there. Rev. John R. Mackay, M.A., Gairloch, preached from John i. 12, 13. Rev. George Mackay, Stornoway, put the usual questions, and Mr. Macintyre signed the formula. This being done, Rev. George Mackay, after special prayer, ordained, and set apart Mr. Macintyre to the office of the ministry and to the charge of the congregation. Mr. Mackay, Gairloch, then addressed the newly ordained minister, and Mr. Macfarlane, Raasay, the congregation, as to their respective duties. The church, which is a large one, was crowded in every part.

Induction at Portree.—The Northern Presbytery met at Portree, on Thursday, the 26th October, and inducted the Rev. Alexander Macrae, Kames, to the pastoral charge of the congregation there. Fuller particulars next month.

A Candid Romanist.—Mr. St. George Mivart, the eminent scientist, has written a long letter to the *Times*, roundly denouncing the insensate conduct of the Pope and his advisers in the affair of the Dreyfus trial. Although the poor man's worst persecutors were obedient sons of the Church, and although the Vatican is supposed to be a habitation of justice and mountain of holiness, the Pope never stirred a finger on behalf of the hunted victim. "Many Catholics," says Mr. Mivart, "are profoundly agitated by the indifference to true justice, and frequently to religion, of the Roman curia, as well as by its amazing stupidity."

President Kruger and Balls.—Mr. Fitzpatrick, in his book, "The Transvaal from Within," prints the following letter sent in May, 1891, in answer to a request that President Kruger would allow his name to be used as a patron of a ball in honour of Her Majesty's birthday:—Sir,—In reply to your favour of the 12th instant, requesting me to ask His Honour the State President to consent to his name being used as a patron of a ball to be given at Johannesburg on the 26th inst., I have been instructed to inform you that His Honour considers a ball as Baal's service, for which reason the Lord ordered Moses to kill all offenders; and as it is therefore contrary to His Honour's principles, His Honour cannot consent to the misuse of his name in such connection.—I have, &c., F. ELOFF, Pr. Secretary.—*Edinburgh Evening Dispatch*.

“ Whither shall I Fly?”

“O that thou would'st hide me in the grave, that thou would'st keep me in secret until thy wrath be past!”—JOB xiv. 13.

O WHITHER shall I fly? what path untrod
Shall I seek out to 'scape the flaming rod
Of my offended, of my angry God?

Where shall I sojourn? what kind sea will hide
My head from thunder? where shall I abide,
Until His flames be quenched or laid aside?

What, if my feet should take their hasty flight,
And seek protection in the shades of night?
Alas! no shades can blind the God of light.

What, if my soul should take the wings of day,
And find some desert? If she springs away,
The wings of vengeance clip as fast as they.

What, if some solid rock should entertain
My frightened soul? can solid rocks restrain
The stroke of Justice, and not cleave in twain?

Nor sea, nor shade, nor shield, nor rock, nor cave,
Nor silent deserts, nor the sullen grave,
What flame-eyed fury means to smite, can save.

The seas will part, graves open, rocks will split;
The shield will cleave; the frightened shadows flit;
Where Justice aims, her fiery darts must hit.

No, no, if stern-browed vengeance means to thunder,
There is no place above, beneath, or under,
So close, but will unlock, or rive in sunder.

'Tis vain to flee; 'tis neither here nor there
Can 'scape that hand until that hand forbear;
Ah me! where is He not, that's everywhere?

'Tis vain to flee, till gentle mercy shows
Her better eye; the farther off we go,
The swing of Justice deals the mightier blow.

Th' ingenuous child, corrected, doth not fly
His angry mother's hand, but clings more nigh,
And quenches with his tears her flaming eye.

Shadows are faithless, and the rocks are false;
No trust in brass, no trust in marble walls;
Poor cots are e'en as safe as princes' halls.

Great God! there is no safety here below;
Thou art my fortress, Thou that seem'st my foe,
'Tis Thou that strik'st the stroke must guard the blow.

Thou art my God, by Thee I fall or stand;
Thy grace hath given me courage to withstand
All tortures, but my conscience and Thy hand.

I know Thy justice is Thyself; I know,
Just God, Thy very self is mercy too;
If not to Thee, where, whither shall I go?

Then work Thy will; if passion bid me flee,
My reason shall obey; my wings shall be
Stretched out no further than from Thee to Thee.

FRANCIS QUARLES.