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Free Church Moderator's Address.

THE Moderator of the Free Church Assembly (Dr. W. R. Taylor) took as the subject of his opening address "Religious Thought in the Nineteenth Century." It has been generally the way with moderators to fashion their addresses after a fairly orthodox pattern, so as to give no offence to any section of the Assembly. But Dr. Taylor has cast this precedent wholly to the winds, and has boldly launched forth in defence of modern scientific and theological views. He is in nowise burdened with the few members of Assembly to whom his address must have been for various reasons very unwelcome indeed; he simply throws stones at them, and holds up their views to ridicule and contempt. Bad taste is this on the part of a Moderator, but it serves one purpose at least, namely, to show that the sound doctrine of the Confession and the Scriptures has now no footing in the Free Assembly.

Dr. Taylor begins by describing the revolution of ideas on a variety of subjects that has marked the nineteenth century, and then goes on to ask the question whether "the old faith has been left behind in the forward rush." He notes the "widespread uncertainty with reference to beliefs formerly unquestioned," that has been produced by the trend of modern thought, but of course he cannot for a moment lay the full blame of this uncertainty at the door of the new lights in the Church; he must charge the steadfast adherents of "the old faith" with the chief hand in it. "And this feeling of dubiety has been increased by the panic-stricken exaggerations in which good men have often indulged whenever the least modification of existing beliefs has been suggested. Their loud outcries that the foundations are being destroyed, largely account for the spread of a suspicion that the foundations are unstable." The conclusion to be drawn from this is: Let Assemblies, professors of divinity, and ministers undermine the foundations as they please, but don't speak of their work of destruction, and whatever you do don't condemn it: for

if you are honest enough to do this, you will be found the guilty party. It looks as if this was a fulfilment of the word ; "He that departeth from evil maketh himself a prey." It is a matter of constant thankfulness that the foundations in themselves can never be moved ; they are as stable as the word and perfections of Jehovah ; but as exhibited in creed and testimony, they may be wholly destroyed to the everlasting injury of thousands of souls. This is what is going on before our eyes in Scotland to-day, and let not the true watchmen on Zion's walls cease to blow the trumpet, whoever may tell them to be silent.

Dr. Taylor's first main topic is "the bearing of modern science upon theology." He takes up the discussions about geology and Genesis, which were in vogue some years ago. "Geology," he says, "seemed to contradict flatly the account of the creation given in Genesis. Anxiety was aroused ; and earnest thought and ingenuity were expended in laborious efforts at reconciliation." He then points out that "the whole trouble had arisen from the mistaken assumption that the opening chapter in Genesis was meant to be an authoritative account of the method and order of creative work, instead of being, what it is, an inspired and rejoicing recognition of God as the one Creator of all." It is not prose but poetry ; "the great creation hymn." Now, there is no warrant whatsoever for this theory. There is poetry in the first chapter of Genesis, but it is the poetry of truth, and not of error. God tells us "the method and order of creative work," if He tells us anything at all. There is no poetic ascription of praise to the Creator such as would bear out Dr. Taylor's words, "rejoicing recognition of God." The individuality of Moses, the writer, is wholly out of sight ; and the chapter is a simple, though majestic, narrative of the various steps in the great work of creation. It is not the creature's recognition of the Creator that we have in it, but the Creator's recognition of the creature after it was made. It appears to us that if there was any subject on which there was more need for an authoritative account, it is just this of the creation. No human eye saw the work performed ; and human authority on the subject is therefore valueless. Men may frame innumerable theories of their own, and they have framed them, but these cannot compel the acceptance of any one. Scientists were not present during the days of creative work, and to argue from present processes to what transpired at the making of the world, is to reason upon a principle utterly false and unwarrantable. And yet this is the principle upon which many theories of creation are based. It is by faith alone that we can learn the method and order of creative work, and we are under the highest obligation to accept God's testimony, and not man's, on this important subject. Dr. Taylor, however is, along with many of his compeers, bewitched by the false light of modern science ; it appeals to him more powerfully than the light of God's word, and so he prefers the former to the latter. To receive the light of God's word one

requires spiritual eyesight, and that is what is not common among doctors of divinity in our time.

Dr. Taylor is also enamoured of the evolution theory, and to the defence of it he devotes a considerable part of his address. He is plainly entangled in no ordinary degree in the meshes of the net of modern science. Evolution is to him a grand affair, a fascinating theory, a magnificent vision. Of course, he holds that God is the author and sustainer of the process; he does not advocate blank materialism and atheism. But then he must have the millions of ages, and the ever-ascending progressive development from the rudimentary forms of life. Now, there is no warrant for this theory in the Bible; there is everything to nullify it. There is no warrant for it from history, reason, or observation. It is simply a piece of imagination that has captivated the understandings of men who want to be done with the God of the Bible. The God of the Bible is too mighty and overwhelming a personality for them; they desire a God who will take a longer time to do things; not one who can speak a thousand worlds into existence in a moment. Their god requires millions of years to do what the other was pleased to do in six days. There is a gulf between dead inorganic matter, and man in the full possession of bodily and mental power. To bridge this gulf, they refuse to introduce the God of revelation who, by His almighty word, created man immediately in His own image, but they must bring in a deity of their own and like themselves, who took millions of years to accomplish the work. The whole theory of evolution is just an attempt to fashion the operations of God after the manner of men, and to set up a deity that is no better than an enlarged man. But the erection of this deity involves, as far as human belief is concerned, the dethronement of the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Dr. Taylor asks the question as to what bearing this theory has on the Christian faith. He presents the opinions of two classes. The one class thinks it relegates Christianity to a place among the superstitions of the past. The other concludes that "the theory must be false because seemingly incompatible with cherished beliefs." He condemns both classes. We have already shown that it is contrary to the testimony of God's word in regard to Creation; it is also inconsistent with its testimony concerning the Fall and Redemption. The late Professor Drummond expressed the views of evolutionists when he wrote of "The Ascent of Man:" it would have been more scriptural to have spoken of "The Descent of Man." Evolution, however, gives no place to the Fall: there therefore cannot have been the loss of the divine image, or the transgression of the divine law. Sin upon this theory does not exist; what is called "sin" is only a circumstance in the upward progress; it entails no guilt upon the sinner. The glorious scheme of Redemption from sin and the curse is thus completely invalidated; it has no meaning whatsoever; there is no need or

scope for any such thing. But in addition to all this, the theory of evolution has not the authority of Christ behind it ; Christ has nothing to do with it ; it is not of Him, and therefore it is not of God. Far otherwise ; the acceptance of it is an act of declared disloyalty to Christ. He sets His seal to the Old Testament as the infallible Word of God, and endorses the account of creation as given there, and it is clear enough that the man who believes evolution cannot at the same time believe Christ. Moreover, Christ is the second person of the Trinity, by whom God made the worlds. The Creator ought to know how the worlds were made. Dr. Taylor has not consulted Him, for he does not once tell us His opinion. He goes to any and every erring scientist, and comes back with the theory of evolution. But the testimony of the Son of God, the Creator of all things, he wholly ignores. This is appalling conduct on the part of a Moderator of a professedly Christian Assembly. It is the result of his acceptance of an un-Christian theory. The alternatives before him were Christ or Evolution, and he chose Evolution.

Dr. Taylor sees rich suggestions in this theory. One of these is "the solidarity (the oneness) betwixt the Creator and His creatures, betwixt the Father of Spirits and the children He has formed. The yawning chasm which Deism opened is, thank God, a nightmare of the past ; science and revelation combine in pointing reverent fingers to a God who is, indeed, transcendent, yet who is also in living contact, ineffably intimate, with the work of His hands ; and in the bond of joint and mutual interest which links into one the whole creation, have we not a revelation of the feeling toward this world which fills the heart of Him who formed and animates the whole ? From the stamp we learn the character of the seal. He who made all one, thrilling with a common life and common interest, has thereby shown the relation linking Himself to us ; and of that everlasting bond we have in the Incarnation the perfect and glorious expression." In these words we have set before us the universal fatherhood of God, and if there is an everlasting bond between the Creator and the creatures, as Dr. Taylor asserts there is, then there is no such thing as a judgment seat, or a place of punishment in eternity. Everlasting punishment in hell is evidently not in his creed, but there is everything to show that he believes in the universal salvation of the race. Truly, things have come to an astonishing pass in a body that bears the honoured name of the Church of Scotland Free, when the Moderator of its Assembly can utter such sentiments from the chair without fear of censure or deposition. Dr. Taylor speaks of the Church and hostile critics. He finds the dangerous critics all outside the Church, and those men who have been introducing the newer views, and throwing out the sound doctrines of the Gospel, are the defenders of the faith in his eyes. He affirms that the majestic words of the Confession of Faith in regard to the Word of God, are "to-day more widely recognised

as true than when they were penned in the Jerusalem Chamber, 250 years ago." But no one who has ordinary intelligence can accept this to be so ; and it is to be hoped that the common people will not be deceived by such sophistry.

In one of his closing paragraphs, Dr. Taylor says that the dominant thought at present is the Fatherhood of God as contrasted with the Sovereignty of God at the time when the Confession was compiled. The present "recognition of His Fatherhood seems," he tells us, "to dismiss for ever these cold, hard, fatalistic notions which during the reign of a dead, Deistic moderatism, when the doctrines of grace were in abeyance, had come to be associated with it." Surely Dr. Taylor has forgotten himself altogether. Has he any recollection of the days of his early youth? Does he not remember that it was in days when the candle of the Lord shone brightly in Scotland north and south, and when the love of God was richly shed abroad in many hearts, that the Christian people most firmly held by the doctrine of God's Sovereignty as stated in the Confession? In fact, moderatism has been for most part associated in Scotland with a belief in the universal Fatherhood of God, a belief that did not in any way change the hearts and lives of the possessors of it. And it is our decided conviction, if the life and conversation of those who now stand up for the universal Fatherhood of God were placed alongside that of our noble ancestors who believed in God's Sovereignty and Fatherhood towards His elect people, the comparison would be very unfavourable to the former. Let our readers be assured that this new religion of which Dr. Taylor is an exponent is only an empty sham ; there is no real spiritual vitality in it ; it will work no deliverance in the earth ; it lives in a carnal worldly atmosphere ; it will only involve its possessors, if grace prevent not, in endless misery.

We have touched in a brief manner on some of the most prominent things in the address. It is very painful work indeed to deal with such topics, but we feel it necessary for the sake of truth to do so. It is to be hoped, however, that some at the present crisis will have their eyes opened to see the end to which the nominal Free Church is drifting, and will flee from it as for their lives. Not that salvation depends upon being in or out of the Free Church, but there is hope that the faith of the gospel will be handed down to future generations when men are awakened to flee from corrupt associations, and to take a stand on behalf of the Word of God in its purity and fulness.

I MEASURE ministers by square measure. I have no idea of the size of a table, if you only tell me how long it is ; but if you also say how broad, I can tell its dimensions. So when you tell me what a man is in the pulpit, you must also tell me what he is out of it, or I shall not know his size.—*John Newton.*

An Exposition.

BY THE LATE REV. JOHN DUNCAN, LL.D., EDINBURGH.*

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“Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ ; as obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to your former lusts in your ignorance : but as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation ; because it is written, Be ye holy ; for I am holy.”—1 PETER i. 13-16.

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THE Apostle here proceeds to the practical exhortation founded on the doctrine which he had in the previous verses taught. For all Christian doctrine is in its tendency of a practical nature, even when it is most abstruse, and most mysterious, as there is no right practice unless when founded on faith—because founded on truth, the truth of God which He has made known ; so there is no true knowledge of, and faith in that truth, and in Him who has revealed it, that does not lead to corresponding practice. So the Apostle connects what he had said before with what he is now saying by the particle, “Wherefore.” “Seeing these things are as I have said, let your conduct be such as I am about to inculcate.” “*Wherefore*”—that is to say, “Since things are as I have said.” And what had he said? I shall not take long in recapitulation ; but it is necessary so far, in order to find the meaning of this little collocative word, “Wherefore,” to see how the one is based on the other.

He had spoken before of the great grace which God had manifested to these scattered strangers—in having begotten them again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead—in their being kept by the mighty power of God through faith unto salvation. Now, how much matter is comprehended in these few words ! to how many objects are our thoughts in the recapitulation of these several particulars directed ! The resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead—the begetting of them by the resurrection of Jesus Christ unto a lively hope—God raising Christ, and raising them by the resurrection of Christ unto a lively hope—and to an inheritance, an inheritance most excellent —“incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away”—and so sure, “reserved in heaven for you”—so sure, “who are kept by

* Dr. Duncan appears to have given within the years 1864-65, a course of lectures on the first Epistle of Peter. They were delivered in the Clare Hall, Grange, Edinburgh. Of only three of these lectures have we been privileged to get possession. The first is an exposition of 1 Peter i. 13-16, the second of verses 17-21 of the same chapter. Then occurs a gap, and our final lecture is an exposition of 1 Peter ii. 1-3. One would like to have a complete set, but we doubt if that can now any more be realised. The Lord's people, who have learned to appreciate the services for His Master of the deeply anointed John Duncan, will be pleased to have even these fragments. J.R.M.

the power of God through faith unto salvation." Now, round this first scene gathers first their joy in Him, as is most meet—"Wherein ye greatly rejoice—Jesus Christ, whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though *as yet* ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory."

The scene here connected with the first is—the believing, loving, rejoicing strangers. Then there is the third scene of their present state connected with all the past—"of which salvation the prophets have enquired, and searched diligently who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you. Searching what or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified before-hand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow." Now, as the first scene connects God in His blessings with the scattered strangers, and the second the strangers, in their faith and love and joy, with the risen Christ and with God—so this third scene connects them in their faith and joy of salvation, with all the prophets that went before; with the whole Old Testament Church of God.

Nor does the scene stop there—"which things the *angels* desire to look into"—with wonder and admiration. God raising Christ, and begetting them unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Christ—they believing, hoping, rejoicing—the prophets that went before having all prophesied about this time, and looked forward to it, and the angels looking down. The past and the present and the future—all earth and heaven—God and men and angels.

What a noble scene! a short panoramic glance of the great salvation!

"Wherefore"—since such is the state of things; since there is such grace in God—such joy bestowed on you—such a prophetic company with longing eye looking forward to this, awaiting till it come, and the angels fixing their interest and their gaze on this—"Gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end, for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ." The words which connect the exhortation with the doctrine are, "the revelation of Jesus Christ," which he had spoken of in verse 5 as, "the salvation ready to be revealed in the last time;" as he had also again hinted at in verse 8, "Jesus Christ, whom though *as yet* ye see him not." The present state of the lively hope which they were begotten unto—"an inheritance incorruptible," to be revealed at the appearing of Jesus Christ; whom they had not yet seen, but whom they would see. Jesus Christ, by whose resurrection God has forgotten you again unto a lively hope—whom having not seen, ye do love—in whom though as yet ye see Him not, yet believing, ye rejoice—he says, He is about to appear; let your conduct and character be such as becomes that appearing, and your hope of that appearing.

"At the revelation of Jesus Christ." Jesus Christ shall be revealed—Him, whom having not seen, the strangers loved and rejoiced in, He shall be revealed. He went up in a cloud, a

cloud received Him out of His disciple's sight—He entered into the holiest of all—He is clothed with glory and honour, and is set over all the works of God's hands. He reigns in a glory which we cannot in our present state form an adequate conception of—we know not what we shall be, because we see Him not as He is.

He shall be revealed, revealed to all—revealed to those who knew Him not—and revealed to those who knew Him truly, but not perfectly. "The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe,"—the apostle adding for the encouragement of those to whom he was writing—" (because our testimony among you was believed), on that day." He comes, He shall shine forth, our eyes shall see the King in His beauty. "Ye are dead," says the apostle, speaking also to believers—"and your life is hid with Christ in God; when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." Jesus Christ shall appear—grace shall be brought unto us at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

And there is, as I have sought in part to show, a duty to be done in relation to this—"Gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end, for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ." Such is the way we are called on to meet our Lord. And yet what is bestowed, though called the recompence of the reward, is the reward of grace—it is *grace* that is to be brought at the revelation of Jesus Christ. For salvation is altogether of grace: not only in its commencement—the carrying forward and the entrance into the state of glory is all of grace—glory being the consummation of grace—the top stone being brought out, as well as the foundation laid, with shoutings of "Grace, grace unto it." "They which receive abundance of grace, and of the gift of righteousness, shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ." That grace, the apostle says, is to be brought unto you. The Greek word is more expressive, being in the present tense—"the grace which is being borne unto, being carried forward unto you." We are called to be in a certain attitude of soul with regard to this grace; the grace is being borne forward unto us—we are called to gird up the loins of our mind and look for it—"Looking for and hastening unto the coming of the day of God."

This grace then is represented as borne on toward us—"The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness,"—the salvation is a salvation which is being rapidly borne on—it is rushing mightily onward to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. As it were, this scheme of things is being hastened on—as it is said of the tribulations of the last days—"Except these

days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved ; but for the elects' sake these days shall be shortened."

Well, the object being put fully in our sight the grace that is to be brought unto us—if we are like these strangers, if, having not seen Christ, we love Him and rejoice in Him, this grace being placed full in view, the exhortation is given.

The duties which are commanded are three—

1. "Gird up the loins of your mind." The ancients wore long flowing robes, which were apt to impede them in diligent action, and therefore they bound them round with a girdle. Binding with a girdle therefore was the sign of setting to determined action. "Gird up"—not your bodies, but "the loins of your mind." These objects are fitted for the rational mind of man—the intellect of man. For Christianity, though founded on mysteries that transcend the comprehension of our intellect, presenting much in God's way that to us is a great deep, is not irrational to thinking human reason ; and presents to human thought, objects the most sublime, the most glorious, the most awful, bearing on all the deathless interests of human being. The mind therefore should not be scattered, nor left in torpidity and sloth ; but directed to this glorious object of Christian hope, the revelation of Jesus Christ—the mind directed to it should have its loins girt. The grace is hurrying on to us—let us be preparing for it, let us meet the coming grace—"gird up the loins of your mind." This expresses therefore the determined setting in of the mind, of the thoughts—of the whole soul, as directed by the understanding divinely enlightened by the spirit and word of God—the setting in of the mind for action—the loins girt.

2. "Be sober." While setting to action, the avoidance of all the things that could distract or impede in the action—"being sober." Which refers not to one disturbance or distraction only—but to all disturbances and occupations which could disturb the mind, and turn it away from one great object. For as the diligence of a girt mind is necessary in commencing, so the vigilance of a sober mind in prosecuting. For as the mind's activity is required, and the loins must be girt ; so there are many disturbances which would call away the mind. And this sobriety therefore has regard to all that would flurry and distract the mind—taking it away to other objects, and engaging the mind in an excessive degree ; so that the mind engaged by these objects is not a sober mind—fixed in sobriety, on the glorious appearing, and on what is to be done in the meantime. Now that the loins are girt, be sober. You have to watch for the Master who is to return, being ready with girt loins ; and are to be in such a state as that the Master, when He comes, shall find all in His house in proper trim ; not saying, "My Lord delayeth his coming"—and beginning to eat and to drink and be drunken.

3. "Hope to the end (hope perfectly) for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ." Diligence,

and sobriety—and the support of all—hope ; if you would be kept sober, hope. Hope, hope, hope on. Fix your hope on the grace that is to be brought—that hope fix your soul on it, “as an anchor of the soul both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil whither the forerunner is for us entered.” For the hope is that which sustains.

It is important to trace the connection between the three cardinal graces—faith, hope, and love, Gospel hope, I take it, may be considered in a two-fold point of view—First, that gospel hope which, acting along with legal fear, makes a sinner flee for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before him. Such is the hope of the manslayer, with the city of refuge in his eye and the pursuer of blood’s sword behind him ; he is not hopeless, or he would not flee.

And this gospel hope is what the spirit of God employs, along with legal fear, in the conversion of a sinner—driving him by the law, and alluring him by the Cross of Christ. This is hope *in view*.

But the apostle speaks of laying hold on the hope—on the hope that is in possession—the hope of the believer who has fled for refuge. This hope is founded on God’s sure promise and oath ; as the other gospel hope is founded on the free invitation : the warrant of the first gospel hope having for its foundation the free invitations—the other hope having for its foundation the sure promise of God to the believer. “Saying, surely blessing, I will bless thee. That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us.” “Two immutable things”—even the word and oath of God.

Now, this hope has respect to the faithful testimony which has been received by faith—the faith which has been received. It is therefore not an uncertain and problematical hope ; it is the hope which one has who has the pledged word of Him who cannot lie—and He who cannot lie has made him to hope on that word. It is not an uncertainty, but is called a hope because of the futurity of its object. “We are saved by hope ; but that which is seen is not hope ; for what a man seeth why doth he yet hope for ? but if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.”

Behold then these two graces, the connection of these two—the third I shall not enter on. “Your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope.”

Well in what character are this diligence, sobriety, and hope to be exercised ? In the relation of children. As obedient children, verse 14—as children of obedience.

As children—for God has begotten us again by the resurrection of Christ. Jesus Christ being the eternal, only-begotten Son of the Father ; not only God but that peculiar second person in the Godhead, the only-begotten Son of God ; the relation of believers to Him being that of union to Him—(“I in them.” “I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ”) ; through relation to the Son of God, not only

are we justified, brought near to the throne, and to Him that sits upon it ; but, as He who sits upon it is the Son of God, we are adopted in consequence of our union to Him who is the only-begotten Son of God. And so we find in Scripture various passages which seem to connect the adoption, not simply with the divinity of Christ, but with the filial relation of Christ, His sonship. "When the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his son, made of a woman, made under the law ; to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." God sent Him forth ; and we who are united to the only-begotten Son of God, through union to Him, are His adopted children—which adoption, as you have it in your Shorter Catechism, "is an act of God's free grace, whereby we are received into the number, and have a right to all the privileges of the sons of God." Therefore, by regeneration, by union to Christ, and by the adoption of the Father, ye are children ; then be diligent, sober, hopeful—as children be obedient, children of obedience. Children of obedience as contra-distinguished from children of disobedience, as in the passage already quoted—"Ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God . . . mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth . . . for which thing's sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience ;" and as in Ephesians—"The children of disobedience ; among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and the mind ; and were by nature the children of wrath even as others." Children of disobedience—children of wrath.

But now, children of obedience—"Is Ephraim my dear son ? Is he a pleasant child ?"

"Not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance." Fashioning, or forming, scheming yourselves. The word relates to the formation of character ; and every man is forming himself, is fashioning himself—and in fashioning himself, it is according to something which he sets before him. Formerly, it was the lusts in your ignorance—you fell in with them, you fashioned yourselves according to them, you formed your character more and more upon them. So now form your character. It is not here, you observe, the irregenerate to whom he is speaking—God has begotten these to a lively hope ; has implanted a gracious principle in their heart. But they are called to the exercise of this, they are called to form the character ; they who have learned of Christ have learned this lesson—"Put off the old man which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and put on the new man."

There is something from which we are deterred from, which we are to reject, in the formation of the character—"The former lusts in your ignorance," the former inordinate desires in your ignorance. For the word translated 'lust' is just primarily 'desire ;' and that may be either proper or improper. But the apostle here speaks of improper or inordinate desires.

What then are ordinate and what inordinate desires? God has given man a peculiar nature—an animal, intellectual and spiritual nature. The animal nature has desires in common with all animals. The intellectual has desires for knowledge—in the world in which we live and move, more wondrously than we know, is found its proper scene (sphere?) The spiritual hath relation to the spiritual world, and specially to God, who is a Spirit and the Father of Spirits.

Now, the regularity of our desires is according to the worthiness or unworthiness of the objects, and the relation in which we stand to them. Above the animal desire is the intellectual, above all, the spiritual—for “God is a spirit, infinite, eternal, and unchangeable in his being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness and truth”—“In his favour is life, and his loving-kindness is better than life.” Therefore God, His favour, is the supreme object of desire; and all other desires, like all other love, are to be placed in infinite inferiority to it, and in their own proper place subordinate to it. So, desire in us that is contrary is covetousness or lust. It is irregular when the object should not be desired at all or when the object may be desired, when it is lawful and proper to desire it, in a certain sphere and to a certain extent—but when it is out of that proper extent and sphere, when the whole desire is not subordinate to and consistent with the great end of our being, the glorifying and enjoying of God: now the soul is away from God the supreme object of its desires, and has to fix elsewhere, for the human soul is insufficient to itself; and ever feels this, that man must have a portion; and if away from God, elsewhere. Well, the desire that is irregular is lust. These lusts were in the ignorance—“The former lusts in your ignorance.”

Many were the disputes of philosophers about the supreme good; there needed be no contest, but the supreme good should be supremely desired; but what *is* the supreme good? that was the question after which the wisest men groped, and came to no true solution. They were lusts in their ignorance; they knew not what the supreme good to enjoy was, and therefore they knew not what the supreme good to do was.

But, says the Apostle, ye know this—to a lively hope ye have been begotten, to an inheritance ye have been begotten; Jesus ye know—for not having seen, ye love Him. These were “former lusts in your ignorance;” now there are other objects truly worthy of you and fitted to satisfy, and fitted abundantly to satisfy all your desires; yea, surpassing all you can ask or think. Still you have your former lusts in your ignorance; the old man, though crucified with Christ, with its desires, and with the objects that will tempt these desires still exists; the principle of depravity, though not reigning, exists in you; and your former lusts in your ignorance are seeking to claim your very being, to stamp and fashion you. But unto that stamp you must not be fashioned—not the “former lusts in your ignorance,” but this.

For a man must be fashioning himself somehow. He must be fashioning his character some way or other. Therefore not in that way, in this other way.

The opposite of the lusts is the Caller—"But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation." He called you. The object of lust solicits; the principle of lust within going forth to the object that solicits. But not to thee must I go, a voice calls me away from thee. "Abraham, Abraham, and he said Here I am," "He calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out," "This is my beloved Son, hear ye him," "God is faithful by whom ye were called into the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ." Called outwardly in the gospel, as all are to whom the Word comes, and which outward call is the only warrant of faith; called not outwardly merely, but inwardly by the Holy Ghost, with renewing, efficacious grace, the only producer of faith.

He hath called you, and He hath called you to conformity, to form your character—"As he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy. Because it is written, Be ye holy for I am holy." He who hath called you to His own fellowship hath done it to the end of conformity to His own character. "Be not conformed to this world," "But as he who hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation."

Jehovah is contradistinguished from all false gods by his being holy. So God speaking to Israel said, as is quoted here, "Be ye holy, for I the Lord your God am holy;" and Moses laying the Sinaitic covenant before them, was commanded to say, 'All the earth is mine, now, therefore, if ye will obey my voice, and keep my covenant, ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation.' So God is frequently called, especially by the prophet Isaiah, "the Holy One of Israel;" by Isaiah who, at or about the beginning of his calling to the prophetic office, saw in a vision the Lord Jesus sitting on the throne, and heard the seraphims proclaim, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of Hosts! The whole earth is full of his glory." The holiness that is in God, ah! it is too high for us to rehearse; but to this we may look—to this infinite, spotless, moral excellence and beauty, the moral character of God. It is exhibited in the law, for the law is holy. We speak of the moral law; we call it *law*, and such it is—because it is the expression of the divine will, of our lawful, our only supreme Governor and Lord; but it is *moral*, as it exhibits his own character—as not exhibiting only His will but His character. It is law, because of the authority that is in it; it is moral, because of this perfection of divine holiness. So then you are called to have conformity to that in which the moral excellence of the divine nature consists, holiness. The properties of a being infinite, eternal, and unchangeable are incommunicable; but while God is a spirit infinite, eternal, and unchangeable, man is a spirit—fitted not to be infinitely, eternally, and unchangeably, but

to be *really* wise, holy, just, and good; to exhibit, to bear the image of God in all the communicable perfections. Not in the incommunicable ones of infinity, eternity, and immutability, but in this, to be holy.

Now, He who calls, the person calling, stands out—"Be ye followers or imitators of God, as dear children; and walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us." "Be not conformed to this world; but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God."

"He who hath called you." God in His holiness, and He who is holy is your caller. He calls you—the Holy One says, "Come away from the lusts and the idols to me." And why? "That ye may be like me, that ye may be more and more like me, in the exercise of this gracious principle which I created and will maintain and increase, that so you may form yourselves after me." This is the high calling of the children of God in Christ Jesus. And can it be reached? It can; it shall. Not here in its perfection. Here must be toil and labour; here must be the loins girt; here must be the sobriety; here must be the hope, and the hope is not the state of perfection. "Grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." "Giving all diligence, add to your faith, virtue, &c., for if ye do these things ye shall never fall: For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." The inheritance, into which shall come nothing that defileth, or worketh abomination, or that loveth and maketh a lie, shall be revealed. This is the high calling of the children of God. He who falls running this race, working in this labour, fighting this battle, rises a crowned victor.

"Be ye holy, for I am holy." What higher motive! What nobler end! Satan told a lie—"Ye shall be as gods;" but this is the true saying of God: "When he shall appear we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is."

Need I insist any more, then, on the duties? Are they not most fitting, most appropriate? May God give us to look to the high calling, and to ask ourselves in the sight of God—"Seeing we look for these things, what manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness?"

THE Scriptures are so full that every case may be found in hem. A rake went into a church, and tried to decoy a girl by saying, "Why do you attend to such stuff as these Scriptures?" "Because," said she, "they tell me, that in the last days there shall come such scoffers as you."—*John Newton.*

MINISTERS would over-rate their labours if they did not think it worth while to be born and spend ten thousand years in labour and contempt to recover one soul.—*John Newton.*

The late Rev. John Willison on the Sanctification of the Lord's Day.

Some Instances of the great Regard which our Ancestors and Legislators manifested to the Lord's Day, and of the Laws and Acts made in ancient Times for the Observation of it, with those of this Nation and Church which still stand in Force; being so many Testimonies to the Morality of the Sabbath, and the Divine Institution of the Lord's Day.

I SHALL not stand here to notice the high regard which kings, prophets, and righteous men among the Jews had for the Sabbath, recorded in the Old Testament; the passages being obvious to those who are versant in the Holy Scriptures, sundry of which are brought in in the following treatise. Neither shall I stand citing the testimonies of learned and pious divines at home or abroad for confirming the doctrine of this treatise; seeing these are so many as would fill a volume by themselves. I shall only mention some of these of more public authority, and which may be of greater weight with the generality of readers.

The ancient Christians, who lived nearest the apostles' times, still spoke of the Lord's day with the highest veneration and respect; such as Ignatius, Justin Martyr, Tertullian, and others; who also give an account of the particular religious services performed by Christians on that day. It is observable, that the Christians then commonly called that day among themselves, the first day of the week, and the Lord's day, as it is denominated in the New Testament; likewise, they sometimes called it the eighth day, because it succeeded the Jewish seventh day, and came to be celebrated in the room of it, and seems to be pointed at by the eighth day mentioned by Ezek. xliii. 27. I grant that some of the fathers, such as Justin and Tertullian, in their apologies to the heathen emperors, called this day Sunday; the reason whereof is plain, they were speaking to heathens, who always called this day by that name, and so would not have known certainly what day they meant, if they had not called it Sunday; which name indeed was given it by the heathens, because of their dedicating this day to the sun, which was the chief of the planetary gods worshipped by them. But now, when that reason is ceased, and Christians speak of this day among themselves, it is not proper to give it the name of Sunday any more.

With what esteem and veneration doth Ignatius, that ancient martyr, speak of this day, in his epistles to the Magnesians? Saith he, "Let us not Jewishly Sabbatize, but let us rest spiritually; and instead of the old Sabbath, let every lover of Christ celebrate the Lord's day, the best and most eminent of days, in which our Life arose."

So strictly was this day set apart by the ancients for public devotion, that very early the Synod of Illeberis ordained, "That if

any man dwelling in a city (where churches are near at hand) should for three Lord's days keep from church, he should be suspended from communion with the church."

In the fourth century, the historian Eusebius tells us, that Constantine the Great, the first Christian emperor, issued an edict requiring the whole Roman empire to observe the Lord's day, in memory of those things which were done by the common Saviour of all men; and bearing that he counted that day the best and chief of days, truly the Lord's, and a day of salvation; and that he ordered his army to offer up prayers to God, and required all men every where to apply themselves to religious worship; and that no work nor anything should be allowed to hinder their prayers and devotions that day.

We read also of many ancient laws made by kings in England, prohibiting all kinds of servile work, merchandise or traffic on the Lord's day, upon very severe penalties; as that made by king Ina about the year 688, that made by king Alfred in the year 876, that made by Edward his son about the year 912, that made by king Edgar about the year 966, which required that the celebration of the Lord's day should begin from nine o'clock on Saturday night. Also that law made by king Canute about the year 1026, to the same effect with that of Edgar's, and more particularly and strictly forbidding all trade, and all meetings of people for secular affairs or converses; requiring them to abstain from hunting and every worldly employment on this day.

To the same purpose might be adduced many canons of ecclesiastical Synods and Councils in England, France, Germany, and other nations; a great number whereof we find collected by Dr. Francis White, bishop of Ely, in 1635. Likewise we find great zeal manifested by a convocation of the Scots clergy for the Lord's day, at their meeting at Perth in the year 1680, as narrated by Archbishop Spotiswood. They ordained that every Saturday from twelve o'clock should be set apart for preparation for the Lord's day; and that all the people on Saturday evening, at the sound of the bell, should address themselves to hear prayers, and should abstain from worldly labours till Monday morning.

But I shall pass from those more ancient laws and canons, to give a brief account of some Acts of Parliament both in England and Scotland, which are now in force for observing the Lord's day; and which all magistrates of burghs, justices of peace, and other judges, should and might execute presently, if they were disposed to do it.

In England *Primo Car. I. cap. 1*, "Forasmuch as there is nothing more acceptable to God than the true and sincere worship of Him according to His holy will, and that the holy keeping of the Lord's day is a principal part of the true service of God, which in very many places of this realm hath been, and now is, profaned and neglected by disorderly sorts of people: It is therefore enacted, That there shall be no more meetings, assemblies, or

concourse of people on the Lord's day, for any sport and pastimes whatsoever," &c.

Tertio Car. I. cap. 1. it is enacted, "That no carrier, carman, wainman, nor drover of cattle, shall travel on the Lord's day, upon pain of forfeiting twenty shillings; nor any butcher shall be allowed to kill or sell meat," &c.

Vigesimo nono Car. II. cap. 7. it is enacted, "That all the laws enacted and in force concerning the observation of the Lord's day, and repairing to the church thereon, be carefully put in execution; and that all and every person and persons whatsoever shall on every Lord's day apply themselves to the observation of the same, by exercising themselves thereon in the duties of piety and true religion publicly and privately; and that no tradesman, artificer, workman, labourer, or other person whatsoever, shall do or exercise any worldly labour, business, or work of their ordinary callings upon the Lord's days, or any part thereof (works of necessity and charity only excepted;) and that every person, being of the age of fourteen years and upwards, offending in the premises, shall, for every such offence forfeit the sum of five shillings; and that no person or persons whatever shall publicly cry, shew forth, or expose to sale, any wares, merchandise, fruit, herbs, goods, or chattels whatsoever upon the Lord's day, or any part thereof, upon pain that every person so offending shall forfeit the same goods, so cried, or shewed forth, or exposed to sale."

It is further enacted, "That no drover, horse-courser, waggoner, butcher, higler, they or any of their servants, shall travel or come into his or their inn or lodging upon the Lord's day, or any part thereof, upon pain that each and every such offender shall forfeit twenty shillings for every such offence. And if any other person travels on the Lord's day, and should then be robbed, the hundred is not to be answerable for it; and whatever the person loses, he is barred from bringing any action for such robberies. No waterman is to be employed to travel, except as licensed for any extraordinary occasion. No person is allowed to serve, execute, or cause to be served or executed, any writ, process, warrant, order, judgment, or device, except in cases of treason, felony, or breach of the peace. The impeachment of offenders is to be within ten days, and a third part of the forfeitures is appointed to the prosecutor," &c.

Some Acts of the Parliament of Scotland for the Religious Observation of the Lord's day, which still stand in force:—

James VI., Parliament 6, chap. 71. It is enacted, "That there be no markets on the Sabbath day: And that no gaming, playing, passing to taverns and ale-houses; or selling of meat or drink, or wilful remaining from the parish kirk in time of sermon or prayers upon the Sabbath day, be used, under the pains of twenty shillings Scots: And who refuse, or are unable to pay the said pains, shall be put and holden in the stocks, or such other engine for public punishment, for the space of twenty-four hours," &c.

Charles II. Parliament, Act 1, 18, intituled, "Act for the due observation of the Lord's day;" which Act doth discharge, "All going salt-pans, mills, or kilns, under the pains of twenty pounds Scots, to be paid by the heritors and possessors thereof: and also all salmon fishing, hiring of shearers, carrying of loads, keeping of markets, or using of merchandise upon the said day, and all other profanation thereof, under the pain of ten pounds Scots, the one-half thereof to be paid by the said fisher or shearer hired, and the other half by the persons hiring. And if the offender be not able to pay the said penalties, that he be exemplarily punished in his body according to the merits of his fault. This Act is again ratified, Charles II., Parliament 2, session 3, chap. 22. Likewise it is ratified by king William, Parliament 1., 15th June, 1693. And also, that Parliament made several new laws to the said purpose, 28th June, 1695, 9th October, 1696, and 31st January, 1701. And in these Acts, they ratify, renew, and revive, all former laws against Sabbath-breaking, and strictly require and enjoin all inferior magistrates to put the same to exact and punctual execution against all persons without exception; with certification, that any magistrate that shall refuse, neglect, or delay to execute the said laws, upon application of any minister or kirk-session, or any person in their name, informing and offering sufficient probation, shall be liable *toties quoties* to a fine of an hundred pounds Scots by the Lords of Session," &c.

Likewise our Sovereigns, upon their coming to the throne, do still emit proclamations for executing the laws against Sabbath-breaking, and other vices; and wherein they charge all magistrates and judges to suppress and punish the profanation of the Lord's day by gaming, selling of liquors and otherwise; and they require and command all persons whatsoever, decently and reverently to attend the worship of God on every Lord's day, on pain of their highest displeasure, and with being proceeded against with the utmost rigour that may be by law.

To these Acts of Parliament and proclamations, I might subjoin some Acts of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland against Sabbath breaking, and for the better observation of the Lord's day. Many such Acts have they made since our reformation from Popery—I shall only mention a few of them.

Assembly 1639, at Edinburgh, 29th August. They made an Act intituled, "Act anent keeping the Lord's day," in which we have these words—"The General Assembly recommend to the several Presbyteries the execution of the old Acts of Assemblies against the breach of the Sabbath day, by going of mills, salt-pans, salmon fishing, or such like labour," &c.

Assembly 1646, at Edinburgh, 18th June. They made an Act intituled, "Act against loosing of ships and barks on the Lord's day," which runs thus: "The General Assembly understanding how much the Lord's day is profaned by skippers and other sea-faring men, do therefore discharge and inhibit all skippers and sailors to

begin any voyage on the Lord's day, or to loose any ships, barks, or boats out of the harbour or road upon that day; and who shall do on the contrary thereof, shall be censured as profaners of the Sabbath."

Assembly 1699, at Edinburgh, 30th January, in their Act against profaneness, they have these words: "The General Assembly recommends to kirk-sessions and presbyteries, the vigorous, impartial, and yet prudent exercise of discipline against all immorality; especially drunkenness and filthiness, cursing, swearing, and profaning the Lord's day, which too much abound: And that they apply to the magistrate for the execution of the good laws made against immorality and profaneness. And seeing it is observed, that in burghs, especially those of the greatest resort, as Edinburgh, many sit too late in taverns, especially on the Saturday's night, and men of business pretend they do it for the relaxation of their minds; through which, some neglect the public worship of the Lord's day in the forenoon, and others attend the worship drowsily: Therefore the General Assembly recommends it to all ministers, where such sinful customs are, to represent to the people, both publicly and privately, the sin and evil thereof; and to call them to redeem that time which they have free from business, and to employ it in converse with God, about their soul's state, and in preparation for the Sabbath; which will yield more delight than all sensual pleasures can do. And the General Assembly beseech and exhort all magistrates of burghs to be assistant to ministers in inquiring into and reforming such abuses."

Assembly 1795, at Edinburgh, 10th April. "The General Assembly, taking to their serious consideration the great profanation of the Lord's day, by multitudes of people vaguing idly upon the streets of the city of Edinburgh, pier and shore of Leith, in St. Ann's yard, and the Queen's Park, and in diverse places about Edinburgh; and considering the profanation of the Lord's day in other places, by unnecessary travelling and otherways; and the General Assembly being deeply sensible of the great dishonour done to the holy God, and of the open contempt of God and man, manifested by such heaven-daring profaneness, to the exposing of the nation to the heaviest judgments; therefore they do, in the fear of God, earnestly exhort all their reverend brethren of the ministry, and other officers of the church, to contribute their utmost endeavours, in their stations for suppressing such gross profanation of the Lord's day, by a vigorous and impartial, yet prudent exercise of the discipline of the church, and by holding hand to the execution of the laudable laws of the nation against the guilty, in such a way and manner as is allowed by law. And, because the concurrence and assistance of the civil government will be absolutely necessary for the better curbing and restraining of this crying sin, the General Assembly do hereby appoint their commission to be nominate by them, to address the Right Honourable the Lords of Her Majesty's Privy Council, that their Lordships

may be pleased to give such orders, and take such courses, for restraining such abuses, as they in their wisdom shall judge most effectual."

Assembly 1708, at Edinburgh, 27th April. "Forasmuch as ministers from diverse parts of this national church do represent that there is a general profanation of the Lord's day by travelling thereupon, carrying goods, driving cattle, and other abuses, to the great scandal of religion, and manifest breach of many good laws; therefore the General Assembly did, and hereby do appoint each Presbytery within this church to nominate two or three of their number, to attend the Lords Commissioners of Justiciary at their first circuit that falls to be in their bounds, and to represent to their Lordships the profanation of the Lord's day, by the foresaid wicked and sinful practices: And the General Assembly do seriously recommend to the said Lords of Justiciary, to take such effectual courses as they in their wisdom shall think fit, to restrain and punish the aforesaid abuses; which the Assembly will acknowledge as a singular service done to God and his church. And they do, in the meantime, enjoin all the ministers of this church, from their pulpits, to advertise their people among whom such practices are, of the great hazard their immortal souls are in by such courses," &c.

By all which we may clearly see what a high esteem our zealous and godly ancestors had of the Lord's day, and of what importance they judged the due observation of this holy day is to the interest of true religion and godliness! And O what a pity is it, that we, who succeed them, should come so far short of them in zeal for sanctifying the Lord's day! O that all magistrates and ministers were animated to shew a due concern for the honour of this holy day, as in former times. A pleasant token would this be of the revival of decayed religion among us.

Original Secession Synod.

A DOWNGRADE PARTY.

THE opening meeting of the Annual Synod of the Original Seceders was held on the 22nd May, in Mains Street Original Secession Church, Glasgow. The Rev. James Yule, the retiring Moderator, preached. Thereafter the Rev. Professor Spence, Auchinleck, was elected Moderator, and delivered an address, in which he gave a resume of the principal religious movements and tendencies of the closing century. He did not think the ecclesiastical history of the century could be more grandly closed than by the union of the two Churches which were so much at one on all fundamental points as were the Free and the United Presbyterian Churches. The articles of union sufficiently conserved all that needed conserving in the sphere of principle and of Christian

faith. Amid much that was depressing and saddening in the state of the Church and the condition of the world, it was pleasing to think there was one great movement which one could contemplate with almost unmingled satisfaction. The single drawback was that this union was not wider, and did not include all the Presbyterian Churches of Scotland, the Original Seceders among the rest. While there had been deterioration in some things there had been general progress, and the religious life of the Church though still marred by dissension, was much healthier than it was a hundred years ago.

At a subsequent meeting, a long discussion took place on an overture from the Session of Mains Street Congregation, Glasgow. In connection with the election of elders to the Session, "it transpired that some members of Session entertained serious objections against exacting from candidates an affirmative answer to certain questions of the formula." The Session applied to the Presbytery for advice, which they failed to obtain, and they then resolved to submit their difficulty to the Synod by overture. Mr. W. J. Isbister, one of the Commissioners appointed to support the overture, said it was felt that the tone and diction of the questions were too stringent in asking an absolute acceptance of the whole doctrine and practice of the church as set forth in the Confession of Faith and in their Church Testimony. Good men and true had, to his own knowlege, been deterred from accepting office because of their inability to give an affirmative answer to some of the questions. They asked the Synod to consider this question in a kindly spirit. Dr. Ritchie, another Commissioner, submitted criticisms on the formula and "Testimony." He asked if the statement on the subject of inspiration met with the approval of the ministers, or if there were any observations such as those on the power of the Civil Magistrate which might be restated. Dr. Ritchie also drew attention to the provision as to the exclusive use of the Psalms in public worship. Was there, he asked, no discrepancy between principle and practice on the subject of "read" sermons (a clause of the "Testimony" being directed against read discourses as affording "an opportunity of introducing persons into the ministry who are destitute of ministerial gifts," as arguing "distrust of the support which Christ has promised to His servants in this work," and as having been the means of "producing a dry and unprofitable strain of preaching.") He was afraid they did not all see eye to eye with regard to the provision as to "ecclesiastical fellowship." They did not all think that the position as to what was concisely called "free communion" was quite tenable. Professor Aitken, senior minister of Mains Street Church, said some of their best young students were fighting shy of taking the formula. The movement that issued in the formation of the Free Church of Scotland was surely a most important one, and had completely altered the face of ecclesiastical Scotland. It had been not uncommon to speak of the Free Church as on the down grade

because it had been holding out its hand to the United Presbyterian Church in connection with the union which was about to be consummated. It would have been an unspeakable blessing had they as a Church been able to enter into negotiations so as to get an honourable place in this church of the future. (Applause.) Rev. James Patrick, junior minister of Mains Street Church, also supported the overture. Rev. John Sturrock, Edinburgh, moved that the Synod find that the overture was very indefinite in what it craved, but that the Synod deeply regret that such sentiments and difficulties as had occasioned the overture should exist. He was persuaded that it would be nothing short of suicidal policy for the Synod to entertain for a moment the idea of tampering and changing the formula to meet the views of the overturists. Consideration of the overture was resumed in the afternoon. On Mr. Wood's motion being put against Mr. Sturrock's, the former was lost by 17 votes to 10. On Mr. Sturrock's motion being put against Professor Morton's, Mr. Sturrock's motion became the finding of the Synod by 21 votes to 15.

Remarks.—In the times in which we live, they who love "the faith which was once delivered to the saints," have much of "the wine of astonishment" to drink. Backsliding in one form or another manifests itself in almost all the professing churches. Sometimes it makes its appearance in a manner and to a degree quite unlooked for. We were overwhelmed with painful astonishment when we first read the above report. The Original Secession Church by its standards professes to hold fast the whole doctrine of the Confession of Faith, and was known in former days as a body of great stedfastness of principle. But within recent years, a backsliding tendency has been observed in it. The practice of having frivolous entertainments and bazaars in their congregations has convinced people of discernment that spiritual life has come to a very low ebb among Original Seceders, and that they are losing hold of the truth in its scriptural simplicity. Moreover, the adoption of organisations such as the Band of Hope for children, and the aid of uninspired hymns at meetings of this kind have deepened the conviction still further. The latest evidences of decline are lamentable to a degree. Professor Spence, the moderator, and ex-Professor Aitken, look with admiring eyes upon the coming union of the Free and U.P. Churches, when they ought to stand aghast at the dangerous errors of these bodies, and very especially at the sad declension of Free Church from a once honoured position. Professor Spence is quite satisfied with the articles of union, and considers them sufficiently conservative of the Christian faith, while it is our humble opinion that these articles surrender an amount of fundamental truth that deprives the bodies who accept them of any just claim to be called "Churches" in a scriptural sense at all. Mr. Aitken would regard it as "an unspeakable blessing to get an honourable place in this church of the future." How can there be an honourable union

between light and darkness, truth and error? And yet these gentlemen who are well up in years, old seceders, are almost prepared to cast themselves, and the Church of the faithful Erskines, into the arms of a body that to every appearance is destined to do incalculable spiritual injury in the world.

The overture from the Mains Street Session sheds further light on the subject. The Session desires the formula relaxed. The Confession of Faith and the Church testimony are becoming a grievous burden. The supporters of the overture are evidently very far astray from the truth. They call in question the Church's testimony on behalf of the inspiration of the Bible, the province of the Civil Magistrate, and the exclusive use of the Psalms in worship. It is gratifying to observe, however, that Mr. Sturrock's motion refusing to acquiesce in the petitions of the overture was carried by a majority. But still the painful fact remains that a considerable section of this once sound and faithful Church has departed in a deplorable degree from the counsel of God as set forth in the Scriptures.

Letters of the late Donald Duff, Stratherrick.

(XVIII.)

STRATHERRICK, 12th February, 1876.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—As you wished me to write after I would return from Dingwall, I now comply with your request. You wanted to know my opinion of Dr. Kennedy's health and strength. Well, he is not very strong, and indeed it is doubtful if he will ever be what he was. He suffers from irregular action of the heart, and his Edinburgh doctor told him that if he took but a hurried step going to a train, he might drop down at once. But he is able to undertake his ordinary duties, and preached a very precious sermon on the Communion Sabbath from John xvii. 9, "I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine." I was with him for some time in his study on the Tuesday after, and he feels keenly the state of the Church; and, indeed, it would be a bad sign of him if he did not. For all those with whom I come in contact who are at all fitted to judge, regard this new Disestablishment movement as one that is inconsistent with our position and principles, and will do harm in our Church, which has enough of controversy within herself at present to distract her.

Now, I find no fault with you for inquiring about Dr. Kennedy, but still I must say there were other questions in connection with the Communion which I would have expected you would have asked; for good as Dr. K. is, perhaps some had reason to say, "Behold a greater than he was there." Why did you not ask me if there were any tokens of the Lord's gracious presence with His

people according to His promise, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world," or was there much solemnity apparent, especially on the Sabbath, and much melting of heart among the communicants? Or did I see any impression made upon the unconverted, or hear of any who were asking the way to Zion? Or did I meet with any who had to say "The Lord was in this place," and could intelligently prove the truth of what they said; or any who were missing His presence and mourning the want of it? Or did I hear any complaining of a hard heart of unbelief, and groaning under the weight of a body of sin and death? Or did I come across any who were mourners with Zion in her desolations, and wrestlers with the Lord for His return to build and to beautify her? If you had asked me any of these questions, I would feel bound to do my best to answer you, but you have spared me that at this time.

You will say on reading this that I have travelled a wide field, and can I take a step on it myself? Well, there is only one place where I can take a firm step. I have a hope toward God because, and because only, of the efficacy of the blood of atonement. You will say, "Many assent to the efficacy of the blood of Christ who yet are not saved." That is true; but my faith in Christ crucified did not come to me by hearsay or by education, of that I am persuaded. When Christ revealed Himself to my soul, He showed me, in the light of God's Word, that it would be for His own glory to save such a sinner as I was, for the sake of His own precious blood, and enabled me to believe that He would do it; although my unsanctified heart has often since called in question His gracious ability and willingness. But He is the same "yesterday, to-day, and for ever," and may His Spirit work the faith of that in our souls. Kind regards to all.—Yours, &c.,

D. DUFF.

P.S.—A middle-aged woman in this place, who is fast hastening to eternity by a painful disease, seems to have undergone of late a saving change. To the Lord alone be the praise.

(XIX.)

STRATHERICK, 14th June, 1876.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—I confess that I deserve a scold at your hands for not sooner acknowledging your last welcome letter; but the truth is, my mind has been much upset for the last few weeks owing to a communication I had from Edinburgh.

The people of Kinlochewe—a preaching station on the way to Gairloch—wrote to Edinburgh asking the Highland Committee to send me there, which they agreed to do, and wrote me to that effect, offering me the work and a substantial salary. There are three times the number of people at Kinlochewe that are here, and they have a nice comfortable church, and the field is larger in every way. But when the people here heard of my likelihood to leave them, they were in such a way about it that I felt like

one torn asunder; so many reasons for my closing with this promising offer, and so many reasons for my remaining here on account of the state of the cause. For if I leave the people here, there is no place of worship that they will attend within twelve or fourteen miles; and so far as man can judge, the Lord has been pleased to countenance my poor labours in this place. Some kind friends said I should take the offer of the church, and some said I should stay here; so if you knew my perplexity you would pity me. There were passages of Scripture occurring to my mind in regard to the matter, and if I believed that these were indications of the Lord's will, it might not have been so difficult to know what was my duty; but I was seeking direction by *Urim and Thummim* ("Let thy light and thy truth be with thy Holy One,") and I came at length to this—that if the Lord would condescend to make known to me His will, I would obey it, whatever were my own feelings. When I came thus to put myself wholly at His disposal, it brought some calm into my mind, for I was enabled to believe that, in His goodness and mercy, He would not allow me to go wrong. After that the claims that the cause and people here have upon me were made very clear to me, and as I got no intimation in the power of the truth that I should go elsewhere, I wrote to Edinburgh declining to remove. You said in a former letter that I did not write enough about myself. You will not have to complain of that this time.

Alexander Kerr's compliments were very welcome. Please remember me to him as a poor, ignorant creature. Remember me also to the Gaelic woman, and to the woman confined to bed on the hill, whom you took me to see. I felt her mind following me. And may the Shepherd of Israel, who slumbers not nor sleeps, watch over all His dear flock in your county, and wherever they are, throughout the world; and may He number us among them, for His own name's sake.—Yours, &c., D. DUFF.

Some Writings of the late William Crowe, Wick.

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NOTES OF LECTURE: LETTERS, AND EXTRACTS.  
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THE following are brief notes by the late Mr. Crowe on part of the second chapter of the Song of Songs. The notes were found in his own handwriting, and afford a fair sample of his manner of discourse. The date prefixed is March, 1890.

Song of Solomon, 2nd chapter—"I am the rose of Sharon." Sharon was a place famed for genial vegetation. This Rose budded in Eden with the first promise. Its fragrance was manifested in the faith of the Old Testament saints. Its fragrance emitted

aroma in Abel's sacrifice. Enoch, who walked with God, breathed the fragrance of this Rose. Noah, moved by the odour of this Rose, built an ark to the saving of his house. By the fragrance of this plant of renown, Abraham went out from his father's house, not knowing whether he went. And what shall we more say? Time would fail to tell of others influenced by this odour. By it they quenched the violence of fire, and escaped the edge of the sword.

Roses are generally guarded by walls, and hid from the gaze of poor people. But this Rose fills heaven and earth, and is accessible to all. Whosoever will may inhale the fragrance of this Rose. May we not say that it budded in Bethlehem, was bruised among the thorns of this world, emitting all the while its odour, unfolding its leaves for the healing of the nations; blossomed in Gethsemane, and opened out in all its glory on Calvary. In His ascension to glory, did the sweet odour leave the earth and ascend with Him? O, no. "Lo, I am with you always even to the end of the world." The saints of God are praising His name for the aroma issuing from the Word, the sacraments, and prayer.

"And the lily of the valleys. (2) As the lily among thorns, so is my love among the daughters." Both the rose and the lily are wounded by the action of the wind upon the thorns. But this very wounding and crushing have the effect of increasing the aroma. The lily produces flowers of great beauty. It is gentle, unassuming, growing in glens and valleys among other vegetation; as it were, hiding its beauty.

"(3) As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons. I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste." The apple tree is not so lofty as the noble cedar or pine, but yields pleasant fruit, while the other trees are of little use until cut down. What were the advantages to be derived from sitting down under the shadow? One advantage is, cooling shade from a scorching sun. The soul parched by the convictions of sin and terror of the law; or like Elijah under the juniper tree, weary and heavy laden. Here the poor soul gets food and shelter. What are His fruits? All the precious privileges of the new covenant. Pardon is sweet. Peace of conscience, faith, assurance, and the other graces of the blessed Spirit are all to be found under this shade.

"(4) He brought me to the banqueting house, and his banner over me is love." This describes even a more intimate communion. He brought me to the house of wines, the secret chambers. With a banner over my head. Not that He triumphed *over*, but that He triumphed *in* me.

"(5) Stay me with flagons, comfort me with apples: for I am sick of love." Fainting fits came on her, panting like the hart, fainting for His salvation. Is not this better than being surfeited with the world's goods?

"(6) His left hand is under my head, and his right hand doth embrace me." While in this state of sickness, she found that His

left hand was under her head. Believers are ever indebted for this left hand supporting and right hand embracing.

"(7) I charge you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, by the roes, and by the hinds of the field, that ye stir not up nor awake my love, till he please." Jerusalem, "the mother of us all," the Church. She charges all her members, all her faculties, all her surroundings, not to stir up nor awake her love till he please. "By the roes and by the hinds," the amiable gentle roes and hinds; "the loving hind and pleasant roe;" everything dear to them, as Christ was dearer than them all. Peter got one of those blessed visitations on the mount, when he said, "Let us make three tabernacles."

"(8) The voice of my beloved! behold he cometh leaping upon the mountains, skipping upon the hills." She hears Him speaking and knows His voice, and rejoices because of the bridegroom's voice. Exultingly, "It is the voice of my beloved," and the child of grace leaped in her womb for joy. "Leaping upon the mountains and skipping upon the hills." What were these mountains? The curse of a broken law, the death of the cross, the powers of darkness. All these had to be overcome. Every opposition from fallen men and fallen angels had to be overcome.

"(9) My beloved is like a roe or a young hart: behold, he standeth behind our wall, he looketh forth at the windows, shewing himself through the lattice." The ceremonial law was termed a wall of partition, but the veil was rent asunder, sending forth the sweet perfume of the rose of Sharon. "Shewing himself through the lattice," looking through ceremonial institutions. Why, "behind our wall?" Sin is our wall.

"(10) My beloved spake, and said unto me, Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away." Here is the voice of the bridegroom. "Come away." Never was any love lost that was given to Christ. "My fair one," in whom He saw no spot. "For, lo, the winter is past.

Here the writer's comment ceases, but he adds a characteristic note. He says:—"This is a part of the sacred Scriptures that it becomes us to put the shoes from off our feet before approaching it. It is recorded in history that the Jews did not permit anyone to read it until up in years, and if years are a qualification, we may well venture to open it. But who is sufficient for these things? Solomon's father wrote many Psalms and Hymns, but this is the Song of Songs.

LETTERS AND EXTRACTS.

(I.)

WELLINGTON STREET,
PULTENEYTOWN, 5th December, 1893.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—At this important crisis in the history of the Free Church . . . we prize a kind word of sympathy from those dear ones who refuse to be led by the time-serving ministers who are combining to stamp out the very principles sworn by them

to uphold, and through which they obtained admission to the pulpit and manse. The poor people are following them without inquiring for themselves, pinning their faith on the ministers, and thus are led blindfold after them. The few, who lifted a testimony against the unblushing innovations, are now silent, joining in with the Voluntary element, and thus are at one in denouncing the Secessionists, and driving them from their homes to the mountains and moors by the decree of Cæsar, thus turning judgment to wormwood and forsaking righteousness in the earth. It is a time of rebuke. The Lord is showing His controversy with the church and nation, and that because of breach of covenant. His displeasure was never, in our day, more evident than during the year now coming to an end. In the name of the Free Church of 1843, I return you sincere thanks for this tangible proof of your sympathy with the despised persecuted few. . . . Had it not been for the laws of the land, one with the spirit of Claverhouse would have been scouring our Highland glens in search of Mr. Macfarlane and Mr. Macdonald, and the students who are foregoing their earthly prospects, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than the applause of the majority, refusing to enter pulpits polluted by heresy. You, no doubt, find yourself alone on that bleak hillside, on the margin of the waters of Marah, but do not be discouraged although former friends, with whom you had fellowship in times past, are now giving you the cold shoulder. Our witnessing forefathers have left on record that they were infinite gainers by leaving all for the testimony transmitted to them by their living Head . . .—Yours, etc. W. C.

(II.)

HARBOUR OFFICE,
WICK, 19th November, 1894.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—I am in receipt of your kind letter, and can only acknowledge receipt, being busy in worldly matters. The world claims all our time, and has no return to make; but I trust it is not so with you—though in the world, not of the world. And if this can be said of you, do not expect the world's favour. The Secessionists are termed the troublers of Israel; but be not cast down. Seek to maintain fellowship and communion with the despised scattered few. Be at charges with them, and this will afford you company amid your desolate surroundings. The Lord sets the solitary in families. Do not fret at your lonely position, shut out as you are from the temple service and from the inheritance of your fathers, but with Jonah be saying, "I am cast out of thy sight; yet I will look again towards thy holy temple;" or with Paul, when he says, "We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed, we are perplexed, but not in despair." And it was the joy that was set before the blessed Head of the Church that made Him endure the Cross and despise the shame. Your pathway

may be rough, but it cannot be long. If one like the Son of man be in the furnace, His people will come out of it without a hair of their head being singed, or the smell of fire on their garments.

I am not quoting these precious truths as my own experience, but the experience of His Church in every age. Be planting your footsteps in the pathway through which the cloud of witnesses passed. Faith and patience, these noble sentinels, will guide the simple. With the sword of the Spirit, and the watchword of Zion, the wayfaring man, though a fool, will not err therein.—With kind regards, yours, etc. W. C.

(III.)

HARBOUR OFFICE,
WICK, 26th February, 1895.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—I am in receipt of your kind letter, and am glad to find you are still a sojourner in this valley of tears, amid windy storm and tempest. What a severe winter we have had? We have been shut out from communication with the south, and cannot give any information about your friends Messrs. Macfarlane and Macdonald, but your prayers can reach them over the snow block.

You would doubtless hear that Mr. Watt, druggist, Lybster, died and is to be buried to-morrow. Captain Ross and other friends are all there at present. Mr. Watt was one of our best friends, taking from the first an active interest in the testimony lifted for the truth. You would hear of the death of Murdo Mackay, Strathy Point, who was removed to his happy rest on Monday, the 18th inst. What is to follow? "By whom shall Jacob arise, for he is small?" Death, relentless death, is removing the choice vines. "Weep, fir tree, for the cedars are fallen," and the second growth is stunted, bending to every wind of temptation. Be you praying for the remnant that is left, as "David will never want a man to sit on his throne" while sun and moon endure. Yet it becomes us to mourn over the sad desolations.

On Thursday last, a day of humiliation and thanksgiving was observed in everyone of our congregations for the wonderful providence that has attended the party, who for conscience sake, were driven out as exiles, without home or shelter, to worship under the canopy of heaven. Yet the almighty wings were thrown over them, and means provided, so that they have a blessing in the little, and a good conscience which is a continual feast.—With kindest regards, yours, etc. W. C.

(IV.)

HARBOUR OFFICE,
WICK, 6th May, 1896.

In your solitude . . . be remembering the captives in Babylon. Be much in prayer for the desolate church and nation, as both are

drifting into infidelity, and the Lord is showing His judgments on both. Yet He has reserved for Himself a remnant, scattered up and down on the earth, who are sighing and crying for the abominations causing His anger. Would that our cry was going up before the Intercessor within the veil.—Yours, etc. W. C.

(V.)

HARBOUR OFFICE,
WICK, 5th January, 1897.

Good new year is a common salutation, too often without any sincere meaning. Yet it is a solemn season, as we are being carried on the swift wings of fleeting time past the landmarks in our journey to eternity. It is a solemn reflection to think how many that entered with us on the first of 1896, are now no more here. We sojourned a little on the rough unsettled ocean with wave upon wave, and beheld our fellow-travellers engulfed in this raging sea and hid from our gaze, while you and I are left stumbling about the grave's devouring mouth amid hidden dangers, snares and pitfalls, where many are making shipwreck.

Do not regret you were so soon born, as the world is daily becoming more corrupt. The world marvels that you are not keeping pace with the age, of much learning and little grace. Dead, formal worship is leading churchgoers on to infidelity. But hold you fast the form of sound words which thou hast heard from the fathers of the past generation, of whom you entertain a loving remembrance, and ever cherish a warm affection for the memory of those who bore a faithful banner for the truth.

The enclosed pamphlets will show you what Popery is doing in our nation, and in our covenanted Scotland. Be praying for the downfall of the Man of sin.—Yours, etc. W. C.

(VI.)

HARBOUR OFFICE,
WICK, 20th December, 1897.

We regret to hear of the protracted illness of your aged father . . . We owe a debt of gratitude to our parents for their tender care over us in childhood and youth, and if parents have brought us under such obligations, what do we owe to a kind Providence, who has so wonderfully preserved and cared for us all our days? I speak of His providence apart from His redeeming love. What debtors to free grace! It is a blessed exercise to be retracing and recounting all the way that the Lord leads His people, causing them to sing of mercy and judgment; both are matters of song to the Church militant on earth. When you are praying for the peace of Jerusalem, do not forget the unsettled condition of our afflicted Zion, which no sooner lifted up a public testimony for the

truth than Satan sent the foul winds of controversy and contention into its sacred fold, causing much sorrow and searching of heart among our dear ministers and members.

Our sympathies are with you in your lonely seclusion; yet rejoice that you are so far removed from the worry of a time-serving age. The passing year should remind us of an approaching eternity, and so to count our days that we may apply our hearts to spiritual wisdom.—Yours, etc. W. C.

Andrew Lindsay:

Brief notice regarding a youth who was brought under concern about salvation, before he reached his fourteenth year, under the ministry of Mr. Gordon of Cromarty.

DRAWN UP BY MR. DAVIDSON OF SUFFOLK, 1776.*

I WAS informed, says Mr. Davidson, towards the end of 1731, or the beginning of 1732, that there was a little boy in town who not only attended the public ordinances of God's worship every Lord's day, but was also present at the weekly sermons, and that he was under concern about the salvation of his soul; but I did not inquire more or less after him till the following April, when one pointed him out to me on the way to a neighbouring Church, where the Lord's Supper was about to be celebrated. I was then crossing a part of the sea, and the boy had placed himself in the opposite end of the boat, so that I had no opportunity of conversing with him, but saw reason to observe, with thankfulness, a poor boy, in a cold morning, crossing the water to hear the Word, having on neither shoes nor stockings, nor any covering to defend his head from the severity of the weather.

A godly gentlewoman sitting near me, said, "That little boy is a distant relation of mine, I know his mother is a poor widow, I would therefore reckon it a favour if you would take an opportunity of calling for him, and inquire into the rise of his concern; if your report is favourable, I have some thoughts of bringing him to my own house."

With this I promised to comply, and in the meantime had my eye upon him while he was hearing the Word. He appeared to me to listen with great attention and desire, lingering after the Word of life, as if he would eat up every sentence. On my next return to Cromarty, I called for him, and put the following questions to him, which I repeat, with his answers:—

"How came it that you went so far from home last week to hear sermon?" "To seek Jesus Christ in the ministry of the Gospel."

"I know you attend the Grammar School in this place, and

* Reprinted in 1843 for Bon-Accord Sabbath Schools, Aberdeen, during the Rev. Gavin Parker's Ministry.

that it is usual for schoolboys to desire a pretence for absenting themselves from their lessons; deal plainly, therefore, and be sure to say nothing but the truth; was it indeed, as you say, a desire to seek Jesus Christ in sermons, that made you go from home?" "As far as I know myself, this is my case. I am sure that I am in a state of nature, but want the *affecting sense* of the misery of my condition; for I have heard my minister say that, unless a person both *saw* and was affected with the misery of his natural state, he could not prize Christ."

"What if the Lord has promised to work that affecting sense of sin?" "I would wish to learn if there be any such encouragement in the Bible."

On my directing him to John xvi. 7-12, and explaining these words to him as containing a summary of the gracious work of the Spirit in the hearts of the elect, he took the Bible out of my hand, and read as if he had found a treasure.

"Do you ever pray?" "*No.*"

"Do you go from home to attend sermons at communion seasons, and yet never bow the knee to God in prayer?" "I do bow *my knees*, but, though this is my custom five, and sometimes six and seven times a day, yet *I do not call it praying to God*, for I am destitute of the knowledge of Christ, and want the spirit of prayer."

"Was it your ordinary practice, in years past, to attend sermon on these days?" "If I except the last half-year, it was not my ordinary way to hear sermons excepting once or twice a year; and, when I did hear, I would grow so weary before sermon was ended, as to leave the Church to go to play!"

"How comes it, then, that you attend upon the week days, as well as on the Sabbaths?" "I can give no account of that, but this, that, as formerly I had no heart to come at any time, so now I dare not keep from hearing."

"Have you at any time conversed with your minister?" "No; what would he think if a poor boy like me should presume to go to him? I had not come to you if you had not called for me; it is true I asked this question of an acquaintance, how I might know if I was glorifying God, and he told me that to obey God's commandments was to glorify him." On this the boy fell amusing, and after a short pause, said, "I think I can answer my own question, for, though it be true what the man told me, yet I think fallen man cannot glorify God but by believing in Christ, and then obeying the law in the strength of Christ."

I wrote the gentlewoman at whose request I had called for him, acquainting her with the boy's concern about salvation, adding that, "As it had pleased the Lord to begin this work under Mr. Gordon's ministry, I judged it not fit to send for him to her family, where he would have less likely means of grace, and therefore, if she pleased to assist him in another way, it would be better." On reading my letter, she sent me cloth for a coat to the orphan.

This occasioned my sending for him again. When he came I said to him, "Poor boy, you are all in rags!" After looking at one of his sleeves, which was torn, he answered, "It is true, and my mother being a poor widow is not able to provide me with another coat, but the summer is approaching, and it may be, before the cold season returns, Providence will furnish me with a coat." But it was easy to perceive that he wanted a "*covering of another kind.*" I asked him, "On the supposition of any one making you the present of a coat, would you see it as coming from God?" He answered, "I know no God; that is my misery, that I am without God, and cannot come to God." I then gave him the cloth, and, after musing for some time, he said, "I am sure none but God could put it into the heart of that gentlewoman to send such a gift, yet this God I know not."

He told me afterwards, "that before he reached his mother's house, God taught him to take the cloth as a gift from himself."

When he met me six weeks afterwards, I perceived a change on his very countenance, and he told me "he was now in Christ." I said, "That is indeed a privilege, one that many pretend to, but few experience; what sight and sense have you now had of your natural condition?" I see, 1st, That the very best of my heart is contrary to God, and especially to the way of salvation by Christ. 2nd, That I could no more deliver myself than pull the sun out of the heavens. 3rd, That not only my former life was a course of sin, whilst I had no concern about salvation, but also my *very best things*, all my praying, reading, hearing, were totally defiled with sin. 4th, Notwithstanding all this, I found so strong an inclination in my heart to establish a righteousness of my own, that the Lord was at pains to cast it down: yet I endeavoured to raise it up again; besides, I saw myself committing spiritual whoredom every day, being constantly taken up with vanity, and the sight of these things so affected me, that I had no rest day or night, till delivered by Jesus Christ."

"When Christ works any such deliverance in the soul, he speaks powerfully to the heart; hath he dealt so with you?" "Yes; the following Scriptures were set powerfully home to my heart, by the effectual application of the Spirit to my soul:—Jer. xxxi. 3; Isa. lv. 3; Psal. lxi. 5; Heb. xiii. 6.

"How do you know that the *Lord* set them home, and that *Satan* has not imposed upon you?" "Sometimes Satan would, by perverting the Word, draw me to sin, or divert me from duty, but, for the most part, I find all his attempts have a tendency to puff me up with pride, or sink me in despair; whereas, when the Lord speaks, I find it a word in season. I am in some strait, and then he speaks; I find it suitable to my case, and for quickening the spiritual life that I find in my soul."

"What do you understand by spiritual life in your soul?" "I must own that, when I was last with you, I had no thought of obtaining spiritual life from Christ. All I wanted was an *interest*

in Christ; but Christ made me see the glory of his person as now he is in heaven. I found this life, and saw his glory to be so great, as that no words of mine can set it forth; only this is certain, that I looked on all my happiness to be so wrapt up in Christ, that I thought of nothing in the world!"

"If good people who are rich would call for you and take notice of you, would this not make you proud?" "To my shame, I must own that Satan did so far prevail with me, for some time, that I thought of taking up a profession of religion, that such persons as you mention might take notice of me; but *now*, above all things, I am made to abhor by-ends. It is indeed rich mercy to deliver a poor boy like me from hell and give me heaven; but what is deliverance from *hell* to *Christ himself*! I have been taught to give over my heart to Christ's management, because I found it would not manage for me. My sins and everything I made over to him, so that I care not though nobody should take notice of me, the Lord Jesus I take for *my all in all*!"

His behaviour, indeed, was such that I observed nothing that was assuming about him; he was so well pleased with the "Lord as all in all," to use his own words, that he seemed like one quite mortified to time and the things of time. I do not remember to have seen many brighter examples of humility than he.

"What say the world of you?" "They say I am mad in mind-ing religion when so young, but I repent I have spent so much of my time, even almost fourteen years, in the ways of sin."

"How do you manage with your comrades at school?" "Some of them, as you know, are the children of godly parents, and to them I say when I see them playing the fool, Is this answerable to the good example you see at home? Others of my school-fellows now and then attend communion seasons, and to them I say, Is it not sad that you return from such solemn ordinances nothing bettered by them? But I gain no ground; and, therefore, when they are mad on their play, I sit on a table in the school, and delight myself in communion with Christ; and the truth is, if I did not find greater sweetness in his love than ever I found in my play, I would turn again to the ways of sin, for I was the ringleader in all sorts of wickedness that I was capable of, as is well known in the place of my nativity."

"What if you have to die this night?" "Oh, I would be glad! Oh, that the day of judgment were to-morrow! for sure am I of being ever with the Lord!"

When he uttered these words, I observed joy beaming in his countenance, the happiness of heaven seemed begun in his soul.

After this, the grace of God became so evident in him, that Mr. Gordon, the minister of Cromarty, said, "I have for a year waited the issue of the Lord's work in the soul of that boy, and, after this trial of his sincerity, do perceive the grace of God so evidently in him, that I cannot deny him access to the seal of the covenant, but must admit him to the Lord's table!" I accordingly

saw him make that solemn approach in the fifteenth year of his age.

The rest of Andrew's story may be told in a very few words. He lived virtuously and happily, supporting himself by the labour of his hands, without either seeking after wealth or attaining it; he bore a good name, though not a celebrated one, and lived respected, and died regretted. It is recorded on his tombstone, in an epitaph whose only merit is its truth, that "he was truly pious from a child—his whole life and conversation agreeable thereto," and that his death took place in 1769, in the fiftieth year of his age.

Tuiteam na h-Eaglais ann an Alba.

THA e soilleir nis leoir gum bi an t-aonadh ann air a bhliadhna so. Bithidh coinneamh aig na h-ardchuirtean aig an da Eaglais ann am mìos deireannach an fhoghair, air a cheud là bithidh iad air leith agus an dara là coinnichaidh iad cuideachd. Tha an Eaglais ris an abair daoine an Eaglais Shaor a gabhail creud agus bunaitean na h-Eaglais U.P. Co chreideadh gu'n tuiteadh an Eaglais Shaor cho-ro-bhaileach? An la a dhealaich i ris an stait thubhairt *Dr. Chalmers*, Dhealaich sinn an duigh ri Eaglais steidhichte a tha air a truailleadh, ach rachadh mid' air ais am maireach do dh' Eaglais steidhichte air a glanadh, tha sinn a cumail a mach còraichean Eaglais shuidhichte na h-Alba, agus mar sin chan e *Voluntaries* a tha annain. Feumaidh a mhuinntir a tha dol a stigh leis an aonadh aideachadh gum bheil iad na'n *Voluntaries* a nis, agus nach eil iad a cumail còraichean Eaglais an Ath-leasachaidh ann an Alba, agus mar sin tha e ro shoilleir nach iad an Eaglais Shaor. Cait' a nis am bheil an Eaglais Shaor? Tha cuid de mhinistirean innte fathasd ag radh, is sinne an Eaglais Shaor.

Nuair a dhealaich sinne ris an Eaglais a ghabh an t-Achd-minichaidh mar a creud anns a bhliadhna 1893 thug sinn leinn na h-uile ni a bhuineadh do'n Eaglais Shaoir ach airgead agus tighean comhnuidh agus Eaglaisean. Cha robh e an comas duine air bith a dhearbhadh nach robh sin fìor. Cia arson ma seadh nach do dhealaich a mhuinntir a bha a deanamh mòran fuaim an aghaidh an Achd sin ris a mhuinntir a rinn e na chreud anns an Eaglais aig an am sin? Bha iad ag radh nach d' thainig an t-am an sin, ach nuair a thigeadh an t-aonadh gu'n seasadh iadsan, agus gun d'thugadh iad leo airgead agus tighean na h-Eaglais leis an lagh shiobhalta. Tha an t-am sin air tighinn a nis. Feudaidd e bhi gum biodh e neo-ghlic a radh nach d'thoir iad oidhirp air an ni a thubhairt iad ris an t-sluagh aig an am sin a dheanamh. Ma ni iad sin bithidh sinn ro thoilichte, ach tha eagal oirn nach dean iad mar a gheall iad. Tha sinn a faicinn trì nithean fa'n comhair. Feumaidh iad an seasamh a thubhairt iad a dheanamh, agus an cuis a thogail a dhionnsuidh cuirtean lagha na rioghachd ni a tha g le mhi-choltach na'r suilibhne; na feumaidh iad dol a stigh do'n

Eaglais Shuidhichte—a tha cho truaillidh na teagasg agus na cleachdadh ris an Eaglais a dh'fhagas iad—ni nach fuilgeadh iad anns an am a chaidh do aon air bith do luchd-leaumuinn na h-Eaglais Shaoir a dheanamh a bha fo an riaghladhsan. An treas ni a tha fosgailte dhoibh is e fuireach mar a tha iad. Tha da dhoigh air am feud iad sin a dheanamh. An toiseach a dheanamh mar a rinn iad an nuair a dhealaich sinne riu, s'e sin a radh ris an t-sluagh nach eil iad fo'n aonadh, agus aig a cheart am a bhi ceangailte anns an Eaglais sin agus na h-uile ni a bhuineas da a cuirtean mar a tha iad aig an am a tha lathair. Bithidh iad mar sin air an riaghladh leis na cuirtean aig an Eaglais aointe, a cur tional airgid an t-sluaigh a stigh gu bhi cumail suas mhearachdan sgriosail do anamaibh dhaoine, agus a faghail an tuarasdail uaipe. Tha Focal Dhé ag radh air a phuine sin—"A mhic ma mheallas peacaich thu, na aontaich thusa leo. Ma their iad, Thig leinne deanamaid feall-fholach air fuil, laidheamaid am folach air son an neochiontaich gun aobhar; mar an uaigh sluigeamaid suas beo iad, agus iomlan mar iadsan a theid sìos do'n t-slochd. Gheibh sinn gach uile mhaoin luachmhor, lionaidh sinn ar tighean le creich; tilg a steach do chrannachur 'nar measg-ne; bithidh aon sporan againn uile. A mhic na h-imich thusa san t-slighe maille riu; cum air a h-ais do chos o'n ceum." Tha e tuilleadh as cruaidh leinn a chreidsinn gu'n dean iad an ni so. Ach ma ni thugadh an sluagh an ro aire nach lean siad iad aon chuid a stigh do'n Eaglais Steidhichte no le fuireach mar a dh'ainmich sinn. Is e an dara ni a tha fa'n comhair na h-uile coimhthional a bhi air leth leis fein, agus a cumail suas an teachdaire fein. Cha bhuin sin do riaghladh Eaglais Ath-leasaichte na h-Alba idir, no do'n riaghladh a chuir na h-Abstol, fo dheachdadh an Spioraid Naoimh air chois agus a tha gu soilleir ann am focal Dhe. Bha na h-Abstol na'n seanairean (*Presbyters*) mar tha an l-Abstol Peadar ag radh—"Na seanairean a ta 'nur measg tha mi ag earail, air bhi dhomh fein a' m' sheanair mar an ceudna." Chi sinn nuair a dheirich cuis chonnspaid ann an Eaglais Antioch gun do "dh'orduich iad Pol agus Barnabas, agus dream araidh eile dhiubh fein, a dhol suas chum nan abstol agus nan seanairean gu Ierusalem mu thiomchioll na ceisde so." Agus a ris—"An sin chunnacas iomchaidh do na h-abstolaibh, agus do na seanairibh, maille ris an Eaglais uile," an comhdhunadh a dhionnsuidh an d' thainig iad a chur a dhionnsuidh Eaglaisean nan cinneach. Tha so a deanamh soilleir gun robh Eaglais Chriosd fo'n toiseach air a riaghladh le seanairean, no *Presbyters*—am focail mar a tha e anns a chuid chanain.

Car son nach gabh iad an seasamh a ghabh sinne? Tha moran aobharan air son nach gabh iad sin. Tha na daoine cho mor, agus tha an eaglais againne cho beag na'n suilibh. Chan eil moran do dhaoineibh saoi bhir na tire ceangailte ruinne. Tha na duaisean tuilleadh as beag. Tha sinn fein nar daoine aig nach eil ainm mor anns an tir airson comasan mor inntinn gu nadara, agus

tha sinn tuilleadh us cumhann airson a chuid-mhor dhiubh. A ris chan eil ni aca an aghaidh an aonaidh so (mur eil e aig fìor bheagan dhiubh) ach gum bheil e deich bliadhna tuilleadh as trath; oir nam biodh e air fhagail deich bliadhna eile dh'fhalbhadh na seann daoine agus bhiodh an oige uile leis an aonadh. Ach cha 'n e sin air beachd idir air cuid de oige a ghinealaich so. Tha moran de'n oige a tha ni's treibhiche airson na fìrinn na tha mhuinntir a bu choir a bhi na'n eisaimpleir dhoibh. Tha sinn ag amharc air a so mar ni gealltanach a thaobh cuid. Tha a ris fear eile dhiubh a thubhairt nam biod e anns an taobh deas, na ann am baile mòr nach biod e an aghaidh an aonaidh so idir, agus far am bheil e nam biodh an sluagh air a shon nach biodh esan na aghaidh. An do chaill na daoine so sealladh gu h-iomlan air an Fhìrinn, Dia na fìrinn, cathair a bhreitheanais, cor anamaibh neo-bhàsmhor an t-sluaigh, an t-siorruidheachd ann an truaighe a bhios aig' a mhuinntir a ghabhas naire do Chrìosd agus da bhriathraibh anns a ghinealach adhaltranach agus chroda so, agus de'n chunntas a dh'fheumas iad fein a thabhairt as an stuibhar-tachd do Chrìosd aig là mor a bhreitheanais?

N. C.

Le Dunnachadh Cameron, Aviemore.

CUMHA DO MHAIGHISTEIR IOSEPH MACAOIDH,
FEAR CEASNAICH BHA'N SGIRE MHIRA AN GALLAOBH.

OCH, is Och, mar a tha mi!
Siubhal fasaich 'si dorch;
'Smi dh' easbhuidh 'n luchd treoraich,
Bha stiuradh na treud.

Bha trom leis an fhìor eagal,
'Sa siubhal fo bhron;
A' sealtuin ris a Phìlear,
'S bha siubhal fo'neul.

Chur thu Maois do an Eiphit,
A dh' fhuasgladh do shluaigh;
A roinn orr na h-oighreachd,
A gheall thu dhoibh fein.

Leis a ghealladh bha fìrrineach,
Thug thu do Isaac's do Abraham;
'S do Iacob's do Israel,
Bha taght agad fein.

Ach 'se mo ghearan san am so,
Bhi gun chainnt ann mo bheul;
Na tuigs' ann mo chridhe,
Gu chuir ann an ceill.

Mu'n urramach uasal,
 Chaidh thoirt uainn leis a bhas ;
 A dh' ionnsuidh nam Flaitheas,
 'S gu Athair nan gras.

Bu tu Ioseph mac Iacoib,
 Bha lan gaoil agus graidh ;
 'S bha dearbh fhios aig do bhraithrean
 Gur tu b'fhearr na iad fein.

'S mor an t-aobhar broin e,
 'S tha nair orm a luaidh ;
 Gum be buachail nan caorach,
 Bha reubadh do chot.

Thug iad mir dha'n eildear,
 'S dha'n Phresentor 's iad gun ghras ;
 'S do'n fhear aideachaidh aotrom,
 'S do'n t saoghal gun ghras.

Ach fhuar thu Spiorad nan grasain,
 Bha'n fhabhar tha shuas ;
 Gu bhi maitheadh do'n phairt ud,
 Na rinn iad a thair ort san taoibh tuath.

'S gu seinn air an oran,
 Maile ri ainglibh 's ri naoimh ;
 'Storadh fola T-fhearsaoruidh,
 Sior chuir binn an do cheol.

Chi thu aghaidh nan uailsean,
 A thug buaidh trid a ghrais ;
 Air an Dragon dhearg fhuilteach,
 Anns an tsaoghal so stain.

An Dragon dearg fuilteach,
 Bha cuir tuil as a bheul ;
 'Stric a rinn e do bhruthadh,
 Feadh dhithreabh'n Taoibh tuath.

'Stric a rinn e do bhruthadh,
 'Na do spiorad 's na t-fheoil ;
 Ach nuar gheibheadh bho'n Charraig,
 Bu gheur an claidheamh' nad' bheul.

Fhuar thu grasan i's gibhtean,
 Fhuar thu tuigs' agus cial ;
 'S cha'n fhaca mi 'n tim,
 Na bheireadh am Biobala' d' laimh.

Fhuar thu spiorad a mhinich,
 Air a dheanamh finealt le gras ;
 Agus spiorad an rannsuich,
 A chuireadh an Satan an sas.

Fhuar thu spiorad na h-urnuigh,
Bho'n Ughdaras tha shuas ;
'Sbu tric aig caither nan gras thu,
Airson fabhar an Uan.

'S nuar gheibheadh tu' laithreachd,
Gu phairteach ris an tsluagh ;
Gu bhi caramh nan lotan,
'Sa briseadh a chlaiginn ghreannaich bha cruaidh.

Fhuar thu spiorad a chaoimhneis,
Bho'n t-shaibhreas tha shuas ;
Is mar Dhaibhidh do Shaul,
Nuar thug e an t-sleagh bho a cheann.

'S cha chreideadh a phairt ud
Samuel bho bheul Dhia ;
Ach dheanadh iad rìgh dhe'n fhear ardud
A rinn traillean dhuibh fein.

Nuar rachadh tu Shrath theirinn,
Bhidh iad eudmhor ruit san am ;
Ach'mheud 's fhuar ughdaras san eaglais,
Ag radh gum bhu bheag ar thu thighin ann.

Ann an Cuigean Shratheirinn,
Far an robh cuid mibheusach dhiubh ann ;
Thug iad ortsa sitheadh reubaidh,
Leis an t-sheideadh bha orra suas.

Le ughdaras gun ghrasan,
Rinn feum do mhichiall ;
A' cuir nan clachan air Daibhidh,
'S e ruith bho Shaul san am.

Ach a ghinealach uallach,
Le fuaim anns gach ait ;
Deanamh tair air an fhior eaglais,
Bho nach eil iad dhe 'n cails'.

Ach nuar rachadh tu'm sgìre Dhaothal,
Far an robh luchd do ghaoilse a thamh ;
Gheibheadh tu laithreachd an Athair,
Aig caithear nan gras.

Ach a mheud sa rinn do dhiultadh,
Le ughdaras gun ghras ;
Chluinte Iesebel a' riaghladh,
Anns a ghniomh a bha grannd,

'Tha do bhantrach ro bhronach,
Air son maighstir Ioseph Macaoidh ;
'S cha'n iogantach i bhi tuireadh,
Air an taobhsa do thim.

Bho no chaill i 'n duin uasal,
 Bh'air a dheanamh suairce le gras ;
 Agus dleasnach d'a theaghlach,
 'S do cheile a ghraidh.

Fhuar thu aisigeadh throcaireach,
 Nul thair Iordan a bhais ;
 Agus Airce chomhcheangail,
 'Ga do chumail an aird.

Fhuar thu deaghthoil an Athair,
 Mac beannuicht' a ghraidh ;
 Agus anail an Spiorad,
 Gu bhi seinn ann an glair.

Ach bhrosnaich sinn a t-Athar,
 Gu Ioseph thoirt uainn ;
 'S cha d'fhuair a mantal,
 Is chaill sinn a bhuaidh.

Ach is eigin bhi tosdach,
 Bho'n is Esan rinn e ;
 Ged tha'n oidhch' oirn air ciaradh,
 'Sa Ghrian gun bhi ann.

Notes.

Communions.—June—1st Sabbath, Bonar, Creich ; 2nd, Shieldaig ; 3rd, Raasay ; 4th, Gairloch. July—1st Sabbath, Inverness ; 3rd, Halkirk, Caithness. Others will be intimated in next issue.

The Assemblies.—The General Assemblies of the Established and Free Churches were opened on 24th May. Revs. Dr. Norman Macleod, Inverness, and Dr. W. Ross Taylor, Glasgow, are the new Moderators. With Dr. Taylor's address we deal in our opening article.

Rev. Allan Mackenzie.—On Saturday, 26th May, the General Assembly of the Established Church unanimously granted the application of the Rev. Allan Mackenzie, Fraser Street, Inverness, to be admitted as an ordained minister of the Church.

Corrections.—In April number, page 454, a misprint occurred twice, frivolous for frivolous. In last issue, among others, page 3, reproof for reproach ; further for worse ; and page 9, task for taste. Typographical errors will occur notwithstanding the utmost precautions. We have the satisfaction however of knowing that our pages are comparatively free of these errors.