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The Dearth of Divinity Students in the Churches.

THERE is a general complaint at present of the fewness of divinity students. It is not among the small and unpopular Churches alone that the complaint exists, but among the large and popular ones also. The reasons which representative men give for the dearth are various. Most of these reasons contain some truth, but several of them, which are propounded with much solemnity as sufficient to explain the situation, are quite inadequate to do so.

During the recent Assemblies, the subject came up. Dr. Hunter of the Established Church said that the present was a time of much religious indifference and great commercial activity, and thus young men were not disposed to enter into the profession of the ministry. He went on to say that probably ministers themselves were very much to blame; they did not magnify their office sufficiently nor impress upon their youthful hearers the importance and value of the ministry. Drs. Stalker and Somerville in the Free Assembly also made allusion to the dearth. Dr. Stalker pointed out that there was at present a scarcity of young men coming forward for all the professions, and that this was felt not only in Scotland but in England and America. Dr. Somerville laid the blame at the door of home training; children were taught to criticise and find fault with the ministry.

Dr. Hunter is right in saying that the religious indifference, and commercial activity, or in one word, the worldliness of the times accounts for the dearth of students. But he does not seem to perceive that this worldliness is as much in the professing Church as out of it, and that spiritual death has gone so deep into its vitals that nothing less than a special day of power is necessary in order to awaken dead souls within its borders to real interest in the things of God and of eternity. The vast proportion of the present-day ministry, we fear, is without spiritual life. It would

be a great matter for Scotland to-day if all who are now in the ministerial office were ministers indeed. Much will depend upon the manner in which ministers will magnify their office. True it is that some of them are men who have no pretensions to vital godliness. They are in no respect better than their neighbours; the most carnal society is quite congenial to their taste, and they are not strangers to gross sins. These would do well to magnify their office by at least endeavouring to live after a comparatively Christian manner. But there is an unscriptural magnifying of the office that now obtains with many in the Established Church; they are doing their best to introduce the idea into the minds of the people that the ministry is a priesthood in an official sense, an indispensable channel of spiritual blessing. Of course, this is one of the leading tenets of the Church of Rome, and if Dr. Hunter entertains this view of magnifying the ministerial office, he is urging on his brethren to the assumption of Romish pretensions, a very undesirable climax. The explanations of Drs. Stalker and Somerville have an element of truth in them, but they are more fitted to mislead than to instruct. Is it sufficient to say that there is a falling off in the other professions as well as in that of the ministry? Two blacks don't make a white. And moreover might there not have been a greater influx into the ministry seeing that fewer are going into other departments of work? The secret, however, of the dearth in all the professions is the extreme spiritual deadness of the times. Young men have become so debased that none but materialistic pursuits, such especially as will most readily gratify the desire for money, will meet their inclinations. The chief blame for this state of things is to be laid at the door of the so-called Churches themselves. Defective home-training of the description referred to is the most unworthy reason of all that have been alleged for the scarcity of divinity students. In it we discern an effort on the part of ministers to shift guilt off their own shoulders on to those of the people. Ministers have degenerated in every respect during recent years, and it would be no wonder though the heads of families would require to warn their children against adopting the ideas or following the example of many who profess to be ministers of Christ. Once upon a time the standard of attainment was so high in the ministry that people were in danger of putting the minister in the place of God. But there is little danger of that in many places nowadays. The fallibility of the minister is too patent. The loss is that the standard of religion among the people has also fallen very low or there would be more criticism of, and witnessing against the views and tendencies of the modern pulpit. Of course, we do not say that there is no possibility of the hearer erring as well as the preacher. Sometimes there is nothing easier in the world than criticism of the preacher. His every defect affords a text for the family circle, and is laid open to indiscreet criticism, and thus the idea is inserted into the youthful mind that the

ministry throughout is untrustworthy and contemptible. Nevertheless, we are convinced that in the vast majority of cases ministers are themselves to blame for such a feature as this in church life, and it would show more wisdom on their part if they would try to search out in the proper quarters for the causes that have produced the present scarcity of candidates for so highly important an office as that of the gospel ministry.

It appears very significant that there should be a dearth of students in these large and popular Churches at the present time. According to the expressed views of their leading men they were never so prosperous as at this moment. Their numbers and wealth are increasing. They boast of great liberty of belief; they extend open arms to young men who have doubts about fundamental doctrines of the faith; and they are not over-scrupulous in examining students as to spiritual attainments. In spite of all this liberty, charity, and breadth, the students are not forthcoming; they prefer to go into other spheres of work; they eschew the office of the ministry, the most honourable in itself of all offices in the world. We shall try to give the explanation:—For a considerable number of years prominent theological teachers have been casting doubts upon the inspiration of the Scriptures, and have been treating them as the imperfect workmanship of erring men. Young men of serious thought have had their minds unsettled, and they refuse to contemplate the idea of going forward to proclaim a gospel that has not the authority of an infallible divine revelation behind it. There is still some little conscientiousness left in the human mind, especially in the mind of the young who are not thoroughly hardened in iniquity. Further, young men cannot fail to entertain a complete distrust of the modern ministry. It is chiefly composed of men who have vowed to uphold and preach certain doctrines, but who deliberately set themselves to violate their vows. They earn their incomes by dishonesty. Now what can any young conscientious mind think but this? "It must be better out of the ministry than in it in such circumstances." It has been clearly proven in the history of Scottish Churches in recent years that the newer views of the Bible and the Gospel so far from producing Christ-like lives in preachers cannot produce common honesty. In fact, they foster the most dishonourable dishonesty and hypocrisy. Well it will be, if the divinity students in the larger bodies get fewer and fewer. We expect, however, they will have a revival by and bye in this respect; the poison of error will do its deadly work; the consciences of the young will get thoroughly perverted, and then there will be an increase in students.

The question may arise—What have you to say to the dearth of students in your own Church which professes to hold fast the faith which was once delivered to the saints? We say in reply to this, that it is matter of astonishment and thankfulness that we have so many as we have. Let the powerful influences of the

times, with the temptations of popularity, social position, and other things be considered on the one hand, and on the other the trials of obscurity, persecution, contempt, and such like, it will be seen that there is occasion of praise to the Most High that a few students have been raised up who choose rather to suffer affliction with the truth than all the pleasures and honours of the world without it. At the sametime, we feel that it is a sad sign of the generations in which we live that the Lord is raising so few to be preachers of His Word in purity and faithfulness.

Let all who have the least degree of the true fear of God in their hearts be fervent at the throne of grace, beseeching the Lord for His own name's sake to pour out His Spirit upon the young of our time, and to call from among them such as He would prepare by a real work of grace upon their souls for the noble function of preaching the gospel of salvation. "The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest."—(Matt. ix. 37, 38.)

A Sermon.

PREACHED BY THE EMINENT AND FAITHFUL SERVANT OF JESUS CHRIST
MR. JOHN WELCH, MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL IN AYR.

"Remember from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and remove thy candlestick."—
REV. ii. 5.

IN this treatise of repentance, which hitherto we have handled, well beloved in the Lord, these are shortly the heads we have spoken of to you.

First, I told you the names repentance gets in the Scripture.

Secondly, The sundry ways it was taken. As first, for the pricks and terrors of conscience, that is wakened with the sight of sin, after the conviction or condemnation of the law or of the gospel; therefore I shewed you these terrors are partly legal, and partly evangelical, and both the elect and reprobate are subject to both these sort of terrors; but the one sees an outgate, and therefore he waits patiently, he hopes above hope, and he would be gladly freed from them, and be reconciled to God, and in these terrors he is sustained by the secret power of God; that suppose he sees not, nor feels not the love of God in the meantime when he is under these terrors, yet he knows afterward that it was the almighty hand of God that did uphold him, and saved him, that he was not his own currier; but the reprobate he sees no outgate, therefore he has no patience to bear it, he has no hope to overcome it, he has not so much as an earnest desire to get out of it; and therefore he falls into the depths, and the more he plunges in them, the more he drowns.

Thirdly, I shewed you that repentance is taken for the whole conversion of a christian man, that is, when he has all the essential parts of the image of God drawn upon his soul, suppose not perfect ; this is when a man has true faith, contrition, love to God and His saints, and a begun obedience to the whole law of God ; and this is that repentance that is spoken of in Luke xv. 7, "I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance ;" and this is conversion and repentance, when thou mayest say, grace is not begun only, but all the essential parts of grace are formed on thy soul, and thou that hast this true conversion and repentance, thou wilt also have a true dolour and sorrow because thou hast offended God ; and this sorrow is joined with the hope of remission, it is joined with a will to be sanctified, it is joined with a purpose to leave every sin, were it never so dear to thee.

This repentance is double, the one is in the first time of thy calling, the other is after thou art called, and when thou hast fallen from grace ; and this is more difficult to be gotten, for the house must be swept, and the ashes riddled, and the candle must be lighted, and thou must be sought and found again after thou hast lost thyself ; after thou wast once put up in the bag, as the woman did her piece of silver ; and the shepherd must leave his flock, and go through moss and muir seeking thee wandering in the wilderness, till he find thee out, and when thou art found, he must lay thee on his shoulder and bring thee home, and set thee in his own sheepfold, and have a care of thee as of a lost sheep ; but when thou art found and brought home again, then the Lord rejoices more of thy conversion, nor of other ninety and nine that never went astray ; for when thou hast been once called, and at home in thy Father's house, and thou wilt away with thy portion and lose thyself wilfully, the travel will be great in gaining thee again, and it will be long ere thou be brought home again, for it must be plain necessity that must drive thee to it ; but no matter of that, thou shalt be welcome whenever thou comest ; yea, suppose thou hadst stayed twenty or forty years out of thy father's family, and he shall be twice so glad, that when he had lost thee once and had found thee again, and he shall say of thee as he said of the forlorn son, this my son was dead, and is now alive again ; as if he would say, this my son was dead, and he is my son as well as thou, he desired to go away and I gave him leave, Luke xv. 12. He wandered far, and I thought never to have seen him again, but now he is come again ragged and hungry bitten, yet I will not cast him off, I will put my best robe upon him, I will slay the fatted calf, and will be merry and rejoice ; because a poor lost sinner is found and brought home again.

Now, my brethren, you are all of two ranks you that are here this day, for the one rank there are many that are yet out, and have never yet been in the Lord's fold, nor family ; nor have never

received the Lord's livery ; nor have borne His circumscription in your hearts ; here is Jesus Christ dealing : but if you will come home by repentance, and will you now renounce your sins, and put on you now the Lord's livery (well it is) come your way, you shall be welcome, but if you will not come now, but you will delay your repentance till another time when you get more leisure ; take heed what you do to yourselves, take heed and behold your own misery, for as long as you repent not, you lodge in your souls the foul spirits, and you make your hearts cages to the devil, you lay your souls and carcasses open to the wrath of God, that is a consuming fire ; ye expose yourselves to all His judgments, both temporal and eternal, bodily and spiritually ; and you that repent not, neither yet are come within the compass of the blood of Jesus, there is nothing that bears up the wrath of God off your heads, but the lenity and patience of God, that says, I will give yet a day or yet a year to you sinner to repent, and if he pass over the date appointed, my mercy has done with him, but my justice shall overtake him, for I give him over to it ; thou that repentest not, beware of thyself, for the devil has laid a snare before thee, smoozing sin with some sweet pleasure, the which snare is made of three cords.

With the first, he traps thee in a sin, and so makes thee offend God. With the second cord, he driveth thee on piece and piece, that the more thou sinnest, thou delightest in sin.

And with the third cord, he fangs and fetters thy feet hard and fast, that thou canst not get out again ; then he makes thy own conscience accuse thee, convict thee, and condemn thee, and it shall be the first that shall be ready to put hand in thee, and it shall be the currier to hang and quarter thee in pieces, as thou that hast not yet repented, this net is set before thee ready to fang thee, and if thou abidest so, it shall be able to bind thee hand and foot, and thou shalt be casten in that lake that burns with fire and brimstone : thou that repentest not, thou hast all thy sins at thy heels, like as many mad dogs barking and biting thee ; thou that repentest not, as many blessings as thou hast gotten from God, they shall serve for as many suburbs of hell to thee. For hell is compared to a city out of which ariseth a smoke, which blinds the eyes of them that are therein, after this smoke follows a flame, that kindleth the conscience, then last of all, comes the fire and burns soul and conscience, carcase and all together ; thou that repentest not, look to the thing before thee, an eternity of wrath, ready to embrace thee everlastingly, a fire of hell abiding thee, and a worm that shall never die, to gnaw thee eternally, and an eternity of torment to punish thee. O eternity, eternity ! Who will not be astonished to think on that eternity ? O soul ! why shakest thou not, and tremblest not, when thou hast mind of that eternity. Are these fables, think you, when I am telling you of these things, when I preach to you of eternity, and when I speak of a heaven and a hell to you, is it not the oracle of God ? And is it not this

truth, which the Son himself that was from the beginning, and came out of the Father's bosom, and was upon the counsel of God, and knew all that was in the Father's heart? (Is it not He that hath spoken this) for He has told you that there is a fire that shall never be quenched, and there is a worm that shall never die, and He that brought the glad tidings of salvation to a sinner that repents, He has brought the same news from heaven, that one day He shall fling all impenitent sinners into a lake that burns with fire and brimstone eternally.

Now, if ye will doubt whether this be true or not, and if ye will call in question the thing that God himself the Judge of the whole world has spoken out of His own mouth; be doing on, take your hazard; and if you will not believe it now to be true, persuade yourselves once a day ye shall feel it. Now, if you will say, I know there is a hell, but yet I shall be saved; I shall warrant me for it I shall never go thither; for there are Jews and Pagans and Papists anew to be cast into hell, suppose I be not cast in too. But this I say to thee that countest light of heaven and hell, let all men, in all ages, have some excuse for them in that great day; let Cain have some excuse, that has been suffering hitherto these five thousand years bygone; and let the whole world have some excuse, for they had but one preacher Noah, amongst them all; and let Sodom and Gomorrah have some excuse, that had but one private man Lot, amongst them; and let the rich glutton have some excuse, that was no extortioner or oppressor of any man, but lived wealthily upon his own; and let all those have some mitigation in hell; but as for you that perish in this age for want of repentance, you can pretend to no excuse; for behold, I am here to summon you all before the tribunal of God, and arrest you to a day that God has set, wherein He is to judge you all, and I proclaim repentance to you; now, if you will judge yourselves now and condemn yourselves here, then you shall be absolved in that great day; but if you will not repent nor judge and condemn yourselves here, I assure you, you shall be condemned one day, and when others shall say, woe's me! that I fell not in that age, wherein the gospel was contemned, for if remission had been offered to me in that blood, I should have embraced it; but thou shalt say, woe's me! that ever I fell in the days that the gospel shined, for I have the blood of the Son of God lying upon my back, which offered salvation to me, but I contemned and slighted it; therefore my condemnation is the greater.

Now, you see in what danger you stand that delay and will not repent. I told you also that this repentance comprehends four things.

First, It has the terror of the law and of the gospel.

Second, It hath contrition, for it breaks thy heart and makes it soft and mollified. Then it brings you to this, that thou art like to be swallowed up by the wrath of God, and terror of thy conscience: now when thou seest thy conscience trailing thee before

the tribunal of God, then thy heart begins to break and thou beginnest to reason thus with thyself, What shall I do, that I be not cast in yonder, in eternal fire?

Thirdly, This repentance stands in faith, that is, when thou art forfoughten and canst do no more ; then thou wilt say, Lord, I will fall down at Thy feet ; do with me what seems fit and right in Thy sight ; I believe Thou art able to save me if Thou wilt, I perceive there is enough in Thy Son, that I desire no more nor is in Him, and then thy heart will warm, and thou wilt draw near to Him, to see if thou canst get a touch of the hem of His garment, and if thou canst not get to Him through the press of thy sins, thou wilt do as the men that carried the sick of the palsy, who did climb up to the house-top, and let him down through the roof of the house, for thou wilt climb up above all thy sins, and let down thy sick and diseased soul before Him.

Fourthly, It stands in justification ; that is, when the Lord speaks a word of comfort to thee, either in prayer by His Spirit immediately from heaven, to persuade thee that thy sins are forgiven thee ; or else by any of His servants that will say in His name unto thee, "Son, be of good comfort, thy sins be forgiven thee." Then thy soul exults in joy, and triumphs in persuasion, then thou wilt say, now death, I defy thee ; grave, I defy thee ; hell, I defy thee ; now I have gotten enough in my Lord that I need no more : then thou reachest out thy hand, and takest unto thee permission and remission, then thou putttest Christ upon thee, then thou takest His blood to wash thee, His righteousness to cover thy unrighteousness, His obedience to justify thee, and His glory to glorify thee ; and when thou hast gotten this, then thou givest God His own glory, when thou avowest that Christ is come to save sinners of whom thou art the chief ; and then God gives thee the honour again to be the son of God, the brother of Christ, and fellow heir with Him of the kingdom of heaven : from this comes an unspeakable joy, and peace that passes all understanding ; then thou putttest on all thy armour, thy steel-bonnet of hope, the breast-plate of righteousness, and the target of faith, the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God ; then thou goest out as an armed man to fight against the devils, the world, and the flesh, thy deadly enemies ; then thou standest waiting for the Lord coming from heaven, and longest to see Him appearing in the clouds, that thou mayest follow Him in there, and sit on a throne with Him to judge the whole earth.

Now, in the end thou comest back again to thyself, and thou lookest into thine own heart, and there thou runnest to the capstone of thy sins, and casteth down stone and stone until thou comest to the ground stone, and to original sin ; then thou labourest to get it plucked up by the root, and rooted out ; then thou hast a marvellous light, that the power of the Almighty is spread over thee ; and the virtue of the Most High doth overshadow thee ; then thou becomest a new creature, and so comes

in repentance, that is, when thou mournest for thy sins, not so much for fear of punishment, as that because thou hast grieved God who was so kind and so loving a Father unto thee. Then to take it up shortly ;

This repentance comprehends, first, a legal or evangelical terror, by considering the absence of God, and the presence of wrath, which breeds such a burning flame in thy conscience, that strikes such a dreadour in thy heart, that thou fearest to fall into the gulf of condemnation, but the arm of God is under thy head holding thee up.

Secondly, It comprehends a contrition and a breaking of the heart, which makes thee to have a contrite spirit, and a humble heart, that thou canst fall down at Christ's feet, thou canst lay thine ear to the word, and submit thy neck to the yoke of Christ.

Thirdly, It stands in a justifying faith, whereby thou layest hold on the Son of God, and all the promises made to them that believe in Him.

Fourthly, It stands in that unspeakable joy, and exulting persuasion, that arises from the sense of the love of God in Christ, spread abroad in thy heart by the Holy Ghost ; then thou art guarded with peace of conscience, when thou seest there is no condemnation for thee, because thou art in Christ, for thou hast gotten the Son, and the merits of His blood imputed to thee ; then thou art more than a conqueror : then thou laughest at all the evil that can come to thee ; then welcome cross, then welcome pest, welcome death, for I defy you all, seeing I am persuaded of the love of my Lord, that nothing can be able to separate me from the love of God in Christ.

Object. 1. Thou wilt say, What will become of me that could never get this exulting joy and persuasion? How shall I know if ever I have gotten that repentance to life? Answer, All men and women that shall be saved get not this exulting joy at the first, for it is the highest degree the soul of man can win to in this life ; and therefore, there is a meaner degree of faith and repentance that is given to some, whereupon, if thou hast it, thou mayest rest satisfied without danger ; and this is either at the beginning of thy first calling, when thou hungerest and thirstest after righteousness, when thou longest to get a fill of Christ, and a new drink of His blood, and to be reconciled to God in Christ Jesus ; or else it is after thy calling, when thou hast an unsatiable desire to get a new bit of the flesh of Christ, and a new drink of His blood, because thou hast quenched His Spirit by some notorious fall ; and therefore thou hast a vehement hunger and extreme thirst that heaven itself cannot fill thee, but God himself, and the flesh and blood of Jesus only ; therefore thou longest to get Christ's arms folded about thee, and His blood to cover thee. Hast thou then this unsatiable desire of Christ, and this hunger and thirst for righteousness in Him? Then I answer thee, one day thou shalt get a fill of Him, either sooner or later ; then thou mayest confidently rest

upon His promises, who has said, "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst for righteousness; for they shall be filled."—Mat. v. 6. Then thou mayest say boldly, My Lord that has given me this hunger and thirst with an unsatiable desire to be filled, He is now coming to fill me; for this hunger and thirst is the undoubted token of the forerunner of Christ; wherefore I am sure He is coming from heaven to feed me with the apples of the tree of life, that stands in the midst of the paradise of God. and shall give me to drink of the water of life, that I shall never hunger or thirst any more in the like manner.

Objection 2. Some will say again, I have found these things sometimes when God first called me, but now I am fallen in sleep and security, and hardness of heart, through the long custom of sin, that now I miss all this hunger and thirst; and some may say, That I am casten in such terrors, that I see nothing but wrath, and the judgment of God following upon induration and hardness of heart. Answer, A man may be hardened in heart, and yet nevertheless have the Spirit of Jesus; for Isaiah says, in his own person, lxiii. 17, and in the name of the Church of God in his time; "Lord, why hast thou hardened our hearts? And we have turned from thy ways?" This is the complaint of the prophet of God; shall we say then, that he wanted the Spirit of God when he said this (God forbid), for the prophet speaks by inspiration, that is the Spirit of God informed him. And David, Psalm xxii. 1, also cries out, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? I cry by day, but thou hearest me not, and I cry by night, but thou takest no heed: I am a worm, and not a man; all that see me have me in derision, they make a mock of me, and they shake their heads at me; I am like water poured out, and all my bones are out of joint; my heart is like wax, and melts within my bowels," by which words ye may see he felt nothing but terrors within and pain without, and yet he was a man according to the heart of God; Job also says, "Fear is turned unto me, my heart passeth away as a cloud, my soul is poured out, he has casten me in the mire, and my bones are broken, and become dust and ashes; and when I cry unto thee, thou shuttest out my prayer, thou turnest thyself cruelly against me; and my sighing comes before I eat, and my roarings are poured out like water; I had no peace, no rest, and trouble came upon me;" and yet Job was the dear child of God.

Objection 3. Yet thou wilt say, How shall I know if I have that much within me as to bear me out in that great day or not? I answer, Tell me if thou seest the hardness of thy heart, and art thou displeased with it, art thou sorry that all the joints of thy heart are not loosed and melted with the fire of God's Spirit, and hopest thou above hope, and longest thou for the day of salvation, and hast thou any sighs and cries unto God that He would take away this hardness of heart: then be of good comfort, for thou art in the way to heaven I assure thee; and therefore consider with thyself, that the frost is as needful for manuring the earth, as

the south wind and soft showers are needful to loose the earth, and the harder the frost be, and the longer it continue in the ground, the fruitfuller and more plentiful shall the crop be that year ; even so hardness of heart is as needful sometimes for a man and woman as softness of heart, and the harder thy heart be, and the longer thou hast lien under induration, when the wind of God's Spirit shall blow upon thee, and loose thy heart, then it shall cast up a more plentiful crop, and in the greater abundance ; so then suppose thou feelest thyself bound with bonds, I dare persuade thee, that the Lord shall once loose thee, and set thee free and at liberty.

Question. But yet ye will ask me, What warrant ye shall have for that ? Answer, I tell thee, none can sigh and pray with groans, and long for the Spirit of God, but he that has the Spirit of Jesus already, and none has the Spirit of the Son of God, but he that has the Son Himself, and none has the Son but he that has the Father also, and no man or woman has either of these but they that are the chosen children of God ; and this is a sure ground whereupon thou mayest build the certainty of thy salvation, and this is the rock that the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. Therefore (my dear hearts) be not discouraged, suppose ye find hardness of heart and the absence of the Spirit at some times ; for remember there was a time when thou sawest not thy own blindness and hardness of heart, even when thou wast in nature : but tell me then, who hath letten thee see thy blindness and hardness of heart, and who makes thee discern between hardness and softness of heart ? Who but the Spirit of grace, that has pulled thee out of nature and planted thee as a lively branch in that true olive tree the Lord Jesus ; and seeing thou hast been ingrafted in Him, thou mayest be sure always to draw life out of Him, by renewing thy repentance, and by taking a new bit of His flesh, and a new drink of His blood. The Lord grant that ye may wait with patience upon God's time, when He shall come again to the comfort of your souls. This I crave for Christ His Son's sake ; to whom be praise, glory, and honour, for now and evermore.—Amen.

WE soon sin away what the Lord communicates out of His fulness, and then we may as easily put our hand in the sun in the firmament as bring ourselves back to that frame till the Lord return.—*George Mackay, Rowens, "Ministers and Men."*

It is pure mercy that negatives a particular request. A miser would pray very earnestly for gold, if he believed prayer would gain it ; whereas, if Christ had any favour to him, he would take his gold away. A child walks in the garden in spring, and sees cherries ; he knows they are good fruit, and therefore asks for them. "No, my dear," says the father, "they are not yet ripe ; stay till the season."—*John Newton.*

Meeting of Synod.

THE Synod met in the Free Presbyterian Church, Inverness, on Tuesday, 3rd July, at twelve noon. The Rev. George Mackay, Stornoway, Moderator, conducted public worship, and preached from Ephesians iv. 8-12. The Synod was then constituted. Sederunt: Southern Presbytery—Revs. Neil Cameron, St. Jude's, Glasgow; James S. Sinclair, John Knox's, Glasgow, ministers; Mr. John Maclean, St. Jude's, elder. Northern Presbytery—Revs. Donald Macfarlane, Raasay; Donald Macdonald, Shieldaig; John R. Mackay, Inverness; John Macleod, Ullapool; George Mackay, Stornoway, ministers; Mr. Alexander Maclean, Inverness, elder. The minutes of last Synod were read and approved of. Mr. William Fraser was appointed officer of court. A Committee on Bills and Overtures was appointed, to report at next sederunt. The Synod adjourned, to meet again in the evening at seven o'clock. The meeting was closed with prayer.

The Synod met in the evening at seven, and was constituted with devotional exercises. Sederunt: Southern Presbytery—Revs. Neil Cameron, James S. Sinclair, ministers; Mr. John Maclean, elder. Northern Presbytery—Revs. Donald Macfarlane, John R. Mackay, John Macleod, George Mackay, and Neil Macintyre, Glendale, ministers. The minutes of the former sederunt were read.

Mr. Clunas, treasurer, submitted the Financial Statement for the year, which was approved of. It was agreed that the statement be printed in the Magazine. A remit from the Deacon's Court of John Knox's congregation was read, requesting the Synod to add two additional columns to the Tabular Statement of the Funds, in which columns items of congregational finance might be inserted. The Synod were of opinion that the Church's present Tabular Statement was sufficient, but agreed that the Presbyteries ask congregational treasurers to send in to them annual reports of their financial transactions. The following collections were appointed for the year:—Organisation Fund, 1st Sabbath of September; Missionaries and Catechists, 1st Sabbath of November; Students, 1st Sabbath of January, 1901; Building Fund, 1st Sabbath of March; Foreign and Jewish Missions, 1st Sabbath of May. The thanks of the Synod were tendered to Mr. Angus Fraser for auditing the Financial Statement, and regret was recorded at the illness of Mr. Charles Maclean, the other auditor, who was unable to do the work. For the ensuing year, Messrs. Angus Fraser, Charles Maclean, and Finlay Maciver were appointed auditors, and it was agreed that the report of any two of these would be held satisfactory. The Synod arranged that schedules be supplied to the Church's missionaries, in which to report the services and meetings conducted by them in their districts.

An application from the Rev. John Robertson, assistant, St. Jude's, Glasgow, asking to be received as a retired minister of the Church, was taken up. An extract from the minutes of the Presbytery of Kingston, Canada, showed that Mr. Robertson had been an ordained Presbyterian missionary in Ernestown and Fredericksburgh, Canada, and that he had resigned his charge on account of ill health. Rev. Neil Cameron spoke in favour of the application, and said that he considered that, from what they knew of Mr. Robertson's personal character and worth, it would be an honour to the Church to have him on the roll of its ministers. Rev. J. R. Mackay moved, and Rev. D. Macfarlane seconded, that the application be granted. The motion was unanimously agreed to. Rev. John R. Mackay gave a verbal report of the theological work done during the past session. He expressed regret that personally he had been unable, owing to ill health, to teach as much as formerly. Rev. Donald Beaton also made some remarks on the work done. The thanks of the Synod were given to the Rev. Messrs. Mackay and Beaton for their valuable services as theological teachers. It was agreed that students be not asked to go to supply any distant places on Sabbath but such as would admit of their return in time for Tuesday's classes at Inverness. The Synod gave instructions that the Confession of Faith form a part of theological study, and be gone over during the course. It was explained that this did not imply that students were not previously to be acquainted with the Confession, but that a special and detailed study of it would be beneficial and instructive. It was taken up as a special subject in the Presbyterian College, Belfast, while in this country it had been lamentably neglected in Theological Halls. A Free Church minister once said in the Assembly that he had not read the Confession which he signed at his ordination.

Rev. Neil Cameron reported on the education of the Kaffir students. He said that it was his painful duty to state that one of these students, Mr. M. F. (James) Saki, had adopted views similar to those held by the Plymouth Brethren, and had left the Church. The other student, Mr. John Radasi, was examined by a committee of the Southern Presbytery, not because they had any suspicions as to his views, but to ascertain anew his loyalty to the Church and its principles, and they had pleasure in reporting that the result of their examination was very satisfactory. Mr. Radasi expressed himself as in no way approving of Plymouth Brethren views, and as being fully satisfied with the Church and its doctrines and worship. Rev. John R. Mackay said that it was a matter of much regret that Mr. Saki had taken the course referred to. He moved that the Synod approve of the procedure of the Southern Presbytery in the case. The motion was unanimously agreed to. It was reported that the Committee appointed by last Synod to translate the Formula and Questions into Gaelic had done nothing as yet. It was agreed that they defer their

work for some time, especially in view of the change of name that is shortly to take place in connection with the body calling itself the Free Church. The Court appointed examiners for the final examinations in theology as follows:—Rev. D. Macfarlane in Greek, Rev. Neil Cameron in Systematic Theology, Rev. Donald Beaton in Ecclesiastical History, Rev. John Macleod in Hebrew.

The matter of preaching supply for the East Coast Fishing was next taken up. Rev. John R. Mackay, Rev. George Mackay, and Rev. Neil Macintyre offered their services for two Sabbaths each—Rev. J. R. Mackay to go to Aberdeen, and the other ministers to Fraserburgh and Peterhead. The Synod accepted these offers with thanks. It also appointed Mr. John Cameron, missionary, to officiate at Fraserburgh and Peterhead alternately for eight weeks. His salary was fixed at probationer's rate. Mr. John Mackay, of Tarbet, was also appointed missionary at Fort-William and Kilmallie for three months. Rev. J. R. Mackay reported on Church interests. He said that the legacy left by the late Mr. Alexander Macnight, advocate, Edinburgh, to the Miners' Mission in Fife, and the Home Mission of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland, had been disputed. The Free Church had put in a claim, and so had the relations of the deceased. The trustee had been compelled to refer the decision of the case as to who were the rightful claimants to the Court of Session, and the result would likely be known shortly. Mr. Mackay said that the trustee had recommended that the claimants should agree among themselves, but that the Committee of this Church considered that it would be better the case should be decided by the competent Court, as the Free Presbyterian Church wanted none of the legacy if it did not belong to it, and if it did belong, why should there be a division? The Synod instructed the ministers to preach upon Church principles during the ensuing year. Rev. John R. Mackay proposed that the Synod should issue an appeal in the form of a letter to the people of Scotland, warning them of the dangerous errors of the times, and of the necessity of holding fast the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. It was their duty as a Church taking up the position of a watchman upon Zion's walls, to warn the people when "the sword was coming upon the land." The proposal was cordially agreed to, and Rev. Messrs. Stewart, Sinclair, J. R. Mackay, and George Mackay were appointed to draw up the appeal, the appeal to be submitted to the Presbyteries for final approval. The Court reminded moderators of sessions to see to the appointment of representative elders for Presbyteries and Synods at an early date.

The Synod adjourned, to meet again in St. Jude's Hall, Glasgow, on Tuesday after the second Sabbath of November. The meeting was closed with singing the closing verses of Psalm cxxii. and the benediction.

The Decay of Conversation.

IN these days when the popular mind has been perfected by a quarter of a century's course of School Board training, one result naturally to be looked for is an improved style of everyday speech. It should be pleasant in trains and steamboats, to overhear the ready flow of rational discourse, and to note how the well-furnished minds and sharpened wits of a polished generation instinctively shunned the trivial and the hackneyed, and passed with ease to themes new, interesting, and solid. But the truth is, never probably was the subject matter of popular remark so trivial, empty, and illiterate as it is in this age of abounding books and schools. Passing by the whole multitude of the depraved devotees of sport, who can frame their speech to nothing else but football and horse racing, let the conversational manners of ordinary middle class men and women of to-day be marked, and a humiliating display of mental poverty will, we think, be seen to be the chief feature of the whole process. Of the elaborate educational course they underwent at the public expense, the literary, historical, and scientific lore they imbibed in their school days, the average man and woman of to-day retain hardly a trace. Of the main facts of the history of their country they are densely ignorant, Church history they never knew, and even a competent knowledge of Bible history is a rare accomplishment. We are not complaining that the common man is not able to talk like a printed book, or demanding that every social group shall constitute itself a philosophical society, but we are recording our contempt and disgust for the stupid, trivial, illiterate conversation of the well-dressed, gad-about modern world. Sample anywhere a knot of talkers at this travelling season, and almost without fail you find them drivelling about railway tickets, complaining about the weather which they will call "beastly," announcing their important Saturday to Monday arrangements, or malevolently sizing up the character of absent acquaintances. This inability to rescue the mind from the dominion of the present, this incessant gloating on small selfish interests, this oblivion of everything deep, grand, and solemn, is a thing that moves the indignation of rational men, much more of God, the Creator and Judge of all. "It is a people of no understanding, therefore he that made them shall not have mercy on them, and he that formed them shall shew them no favour."

The degeneration of the public mind is reflected in the changed character of the daily press. The jocular, the gossipy, the sensational are more and more prevailing to the exclusion of better elements. A generation feeding itself on novels and penny papers is not aware how absurdly childish it is growing, but the destitution of ideas exhibited by the average man, his utter incapacity to realise either the past or the future, betoken to the intelligent observer a permanent state of mental infancy.

**TABULAR VIEW of the SUSTENTATION FUND and SPECIAL COLLECTIONS of the
FREE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF SCOTLAND.**

For the Year from 31st March, 1899, to 31st March, 1900.

[illegible]

36. Helmsdale,	5 0 0	3 16 2	5 0 0	..	2 8 1	..	5 0 0
37. Inverness,	31 0 0	1 0 0	1 0 0	1 0 0	..	..	42 4 3
38. Kilmallie,	3 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	..	..	6 0 0
39. Kilmorack, .....	..	3 0 0	1 0 0	1 0 0	..	..	7 11 7
40. Kilmuir, Skye, ..	10 0 0	1 0 0	0 10 0	..	1 5 0	1 0 0	17 9 0
41. Kingussie,	17 17 0	..	..	..	..	..	19 7 0
42. Kinlochbervie, ..	3 6 0	..	..	..	..	..	3 6 0
43. Knapdale, N., ..	5 0 0	..	..	..	..	..	5 0 0
44. Lairg,	32 0 0	5 18 9	6 1 0	5 0 0	3 1 0	5 10 0	57 10 9
45. Lochbroom,	121 1 3	6 2 4	5 1 11	..	4 16 9	..	137 1 3
46. Lochcarron,	41 18 5	1 2 11	2 18 1	0 12 0	1 3 0	..	47 14 5
47. Lochgillhead, ..	..	1 14 0	1 1 6	1 0 0	..	..	3 15 6
48. Lybster,	13 0 0	2 0 3	1 10 0	..	..	..	16 10 3
49. Moy,	39 10 0	3 14 3	3 0 0	..	2 0 0	..	48 4 3
50. Ness, .....	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
51. Newtonmore, ..	2 10 0	0 10 0	0 10 0	0 10 0	..	..	4 0 0
52. Obar,	110 2 6	4 0 0	6 9 3	3 0 0	2 8 0	..	125 19 9
53. Plockton,	11 0 0	1 0 0	1 12 0	1 0 0	0 16 0	1 1 0	16 9 0
54. Portree,	24 16 11	3 10 0	4 0 0	3 2 6	2 2 0	..	37 11 5
55. Raasay,	39 5 6	5 8 6	2 16 0	0 11 9	0 10 0	1 0 0	49 11 9
56. Resolis,	7 0 0	..	..	..	7 0 0	..	7 0 0
57. Rogart,	13 13 3	1 6 0	1 10 2	0 17 1	0 12 6	1 1 0	19 0 0
58. Soay,	8 13 3½	..	..	..	..	..	3 13 3½
59. Scourie,	8 0 6	1 0 0	1 0 0	0 15 0	0 17 0	1 0 0	12 12 6
60. Shieldaig,	40 6 6	8 5 6	1 18 9	1 6 2	0 11 3	..	52 8 2
61. Salsort, { Flashadder, ..	20 0 0	1 0 0	1 0 0	..	0 11 6	1 0 0	23 11 6
62. Salsort, { Glenhinisdale ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
63. Stornoway,	114 19 5	5 0 0	..	5 0 0	..	5 0 0	129 19 5
64. Stratherrick, ..	25 8 0	3 5 2	3 8 0	2 0 0	1 15 6	2 4 6	38 1 2
65. Strathpeffer, ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
66. Strathly,	15 0 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	1 5 0	..	..	20 5 0
67. Tain,	8 10 0	1 10 0	1 10 0	1 12 0	1 12 0	0 18 3	13 2 0
68. Tarbert, Loch Fyne, ..	..	0 15 11	1 5 1	0 10 3	0 12 8½	..	4 2 2½
69. Thurso,	5 0 0	..	..	..	..	..	5 0 0
70. Tighnabruach, ..	60 0 0	6 19 6	7 0 0	..	..	..	73 19 6
71. Uist, N., { Pabla, ..	27 10 6	1 10 6	1 4 0	1 16 2	1 0 0	..	33 1 2
72. Uist, N., { Claddach Kyllis, ..	6 8 3	0 8 6	0 6 3	0 10 0	..	..	7 13 0
73. Uist, N., { Claddach Kirtibost, ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
74. Uist, S., ..	4 0 0	0 11 0	0 10 0	..	0 7 0	..	5 8 0
75. Wick,	74 8 6	5 10 0	3 14 0	2 2 0	..	..	85 14 6
<hr/>							
Congregational Contributions, ..	£1841 7 0½	£157 17 5	£127 16 10	£86 11 5	£64 8 8½	£39 4 1	£2297 5 6
Donations,	20 0 0	..	0 15 0	..	..	..	20 15 0
Legacies,	50 0 0	..	..	..	..	..	50 0 0
Interest,	4 18 8	..	..	1 15 1	4 19 4	..	11 13 1
<hr/>							
TOTAL,	£1916 5 8½	£157 17 5	£128 11 10	£68 6 6	£69 8 0½	£39 4 1	£2379 13 7

**ABSTRACTS of the PUBLIC ACCOUNTS of the FREE PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH OF SCOTLAND,**

FOR YEAR FROM 31st MARCH, 1899, TO 31st MARCH, 1900.

SUSTENTATION FUND.	
CHARGE.	DISCHARGE.
Receipts—	Payments—
Balance of last Account ending 31st March, 1899,	1. To Ministers at Whitsunday,
1. Congregational Contributions,	" Martinmas,
2. Missionary and Catechist Collection,	2. To Missionaries at Whitsunday,
3. Donations,	" Lammas,
4. Legacies,	" Martinmas,
5. Interest,	" Candlemas,
2074 3 1½	3. Expenses—
	Postage, Printing, Stationery, &c.,
	Balance at 31st March, 1900,
	£1929 13 2½
	824 8 8
	£2754 1 10½

MISSIONARY AND CATECHIST COLLECTION.			
<i>Receipts—</i>	CHARGE.	<i>Payments—</i>	DISCHARGE.
Congregational Contributions,
		£157 17 5	£157 17 5

STUDENTS' AID FUND.		
CHARGE.		DISCHARGE.
<i>Receipts—</i>		
Balance of last Account ending 31st March, 1899, ..	£64 1 5	
1. Congregational Contributions,	£127 16 10	
2. Donations,	0 15 0	
	<hr/>	
	128 11 10	
	<hr/>	
<i>Payments—</i>		
1. To Students,		£139 14 0
2. Postage, Printing, Stationery, &c.,		0 15 6
		<hr/>
		£140 9 6
		52 3 9
		<hr/>
		£192 13 3

[illegible]

GENERAL BUILDING FUND.

CHARGE.		Payments—		DISCHARGE.
Balance of last Account ending 31st March, 1899, ..		£90	16	5
<i>Receipts—</i>		..	..	..
1. Congregational Contributions,	.. ..	£68	11	5
2. Interest, .. ..	.. ..	1	15	1
		<hr/>		
		68	6	6
		<hr/>		
		1. To Stornoway Congregation, N. Tolsta Back " North Uist " Lochinver " Oban " Portree " Halkirk " Tarbert, Harris, " Stratherrick " Ransay " Gairloch " Lochbroom " Shieldaig Building Fund, "		
		2. Expenses— Postage, Printing, Stationery, &c., ..		
		<div style="text-align: right;">Balance at 31st March, 1900, ..</div>		
		<hr/>		
		£159 2 11		

SHIELDAIG BUILDING FUND.

[illegible]

RAASAY BUILDING FUND.

[illegible]

NORTH UIST BUILDING FUND.

<i>Receipts—</i>		CHARGE.		<i>Payments—</i>		DISCHARGE.	
Congregational Contributions,	To Treasurer North Unit Congregation, ..	
						Postage, Printing, Stationery, &c., ..	

I have examined and audited the Accounts of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland for the year ending 31st March, 1900, and I have found the whole transactions properly vouched and instructed. I also certify that the balances brought out in the foregoing Abstracts are correct.

ANGUS FRASER, Auditor.*

* The other Auditor, Mr. Charles Maclean, Inverness, was, through illness, unable to do the work. The Synod approve of the Accounts as audited by Mr. Fraser alone.—Ed.

Letters of the late Donald Duff, Stratherrick.

(XXI.)

STRATHERRICK, *January, 1877.*

MY DEAR FRIEND,—I was sorry to learn by your last letter that dear J. has been so ill, and hope there is now a change for the better. He has youth on his side.

In connection with your letter and its various complaints, I was thinking of the question that the prophet Jeremiah asks when he says, "Wherefore should a living man complain, a man for the punishment of his sins?" Does he mean that because we are reasonable beings, and can exercise our reason, it should silence many of our complaints to consider that we are still "living men" on this earth, where mercy may yet overtake us? Or does he mean by a "living man" one who has been justified by God for Christ's sake, and therefore has had the sentence of condemnation removed from off him, and has had a principle of spiritual life implanted in his soul? And not only so—for Adam had spiritual life and lost it—but the one who is justified and made alive in Christ, is vitally united to Him, so that he shall never die, being a living member of the living divine Head. Now, if it is the first—the reasonable creature—that is meant by the "living man," then certainly *he* has no reason to complain, whatever be his outward circumstances, since he is out of hell, the place he deserved long ago to be in, and is yet on this earth, on which the Son of Man has power to forgive sins. And far less has any one who is in Christ cause to complain of anything that may meet him in providence, seeing he is in covenant relation to Him who knows what is best for him; as Luther said, "Lord, do with me as seems good in Thy sight, seeing Thou hast forgiven my sins." I think, however, that there is just one case in which it is allowable for a man to complain, and that is when he is so pressed down by a body of sin and death, and is so harassed and burdened by it, as that it prevents him from living as he would to God's glory, and interferes also with his cherishing a good hope for eternity.

You spoke about the need of getting your troubles sanctified, but I do not believe that trouble will bring on in the soul the blessed work of sanctification. Nothing will do that but the working of the Holy Spirit, although we see from Scripture that trouble sometimes was made the means of leading sinners to approach God, as He is revealed in His Word, and the Word being applied by the power of the Spirit, they were sanctified thereby, according to the prayer of the Redeemer, "Sanctify them through thy truth, thy word is truth." Trouble is also fitted to make manifest to reasonable creatures the emptiness of all mere

worldly enjoyments, and it has also sometimes led people to look back on their own life, and sin has then come to remembrance; for few can stand the light of their own consciences, if they honestly examine themselves. And if they would be brought to see their need of the peace-speaking blood of Christ, that would be a step in the right direction. Trouble should also teach us how dependant we are on the Lord's goodness for support under it, and for the removal of it.

Hoping for better news from you next time, and with my good wishes, little worth as they are.—Yours, &c.,

D. DUFF.

(XXII.)

STRATHERRICK, 22nd September, 1877.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—I am in receipt of yours of the 8th inst., and do sincerely sympathise with you in this trying Providence. Both the Scriptures and my own reason say "Good is the will of the Lord," but, placing myself in your circumstances, how difficult I find it to be reconciled to His will. And yet I am not without a hope that the Lord has a blessed end in view in this trial, and that perhaps you may live to see it, and to see His delivering hand; for when the furnace is "heated seven times," it is in order that He Himself may be seen in it. Let me hear again next week.

You were asking me in a former letter to give you some marks of religion in a soul or in a church becoming "ready to die," also to state the causes of this state of things, and then to state the remedy. I suppose you would have me to write a pamphlet, and if I did, very likely the first thing you would do would be to find fault with it. However, I will try to take up your first question—some marks of religion coming to a low ebb in a soul or in a church—and leave the rest to yourself.

1. When God is silent, not accompanying the Word with the power of His Spirit.

2. When conscience is less tender, and can think more lightly of sin than once it did.

3. When the waters of the sanctuary become, as it were, run dry—the Lord's presence not vouchsafed in His own means of grace as formerly.

4. When the cause of Christ is not following their minds so as to be a concern to them.

5. When they can live contentedly without the fellowship of any of the true people of God for a length of time.

6. When the company of the world, or the company of those who have but "a name to live," can be put up with in the room of those who truly fear the Lord.

7. When they know that matters are in a lukewarm state with them, and yet they are more reconciled to this backsliding state than they were wont to be.

8. When the spirit of worldliness and ungodliness seems to be getting the upper hand in their souls and in the church, and they are not mourning over that in secret before the Lord.

9. When they have not the patience they once had under cross dispensations at the Lord's hands.

10. When they have not the confidence to trust the Lord which they know He deserves from them.

11. When they have not the courage to witness for His name, which it is their duty and privilege to do.

12. When spiritual or temporal chastisements raise a spirit in them of hardening and rebellion, and there is nothing of repentance and humiliation for the same.

I might say more, but enough for the present.

Oh! what monuments of free grace will some be at last, if saved.—Yours, &c.,

D. DUFF.

The Sabbath.

BY THE LATE REV. GAVIN PARKER, BON-ACCORD
CHURCH, ABERDEEN.

IN this short Tract, it is attempted to furnish evidence—intelligible to all—that the SABBATH is a divine institution, appointed to continue in the Church of God till the end of time.

Its origin is to be traced to the state of primeval innocence. On the seventh day of this world's existence "God ceased from his own works." "He rested and was refreshed." He was well pleased with the works which He had just finished. They appeared to Him sufficient for the purposes intended; He had pronounced them good, and on the first Sabbath He rejoiced in them as the productions of divine power, and wisdom, and goodness, which He had created for the diffusion of benevolence and joy among countless myriads of intelligent beings not then in existence. (Gen. ii. 1-3.) He blessed the seventh day. He rejoiced in it as a day of peculiar delight to himself. Also, He sanctified it. He taught the first man—recently formed after the divine image—to rejoice, to bless, and to glorify his benevolent Creator, and to enjoy along with Him a day of holy rest.

It was the Great, the Benevolent Lord of All, who made the first Sabbath a holy and a happy day. He separated it from other days for the special purposes of solemn yet joyful worship; for affording to men regular and frequent opportunities for acquiring useful knowledge and felicity, and to be an example of that glorious rest which shall for ever be enjoyed by all the holy creatures of God. The Sabbath was, therefore, appointed for man, and announced to him as the first fruits of divine wisdom and holiness, and, to this region of creation, the most ancient of the laws of God. It is unquestionably the will of God that His

own example should be a perpetual rule to man. His will is, that on the Sabbath the soul of man should rest from things common, and be joyfully occupied about things that are holy.

The institution of the Sabbath is to be traced to the benevolence of the Godhead ; and from this lofty source, Sabbath after Sabbath, there shall continue to flow streams of pleasure, to be enjoyed by all who love God during the measured ages of time and onward to eternity. We, therefore, pronounce this institution venerable from its antiquity—sacred by the example of the benevolent God—and conducive to the improvement and happiness of all who are in earnest in seeking preparation for the everlasting Sabbath in heaven.

We possess some evidence that the Sabbath was observed by godly men before the giving of the law at Sinai. Even prior to the Deluge, Enoch and Noah, at least, and perhaps many others, "walked with God" and "pleased God." Could they have done so without obedience to His law? Are there not strong reasons to believe that they did obey Him, and imitate His example in observing every seventh day as a day of holy and joyful rest? The sacred Scriptures also inform us that before the thousands of Israel in their journeyings from Egypt had reached Sinai—before the fiery law, and the phenomena which attended its promulgation, had diffused trembling throughout the camp—the seventh day had been distinctly marked and called the "rest of the holy Sabbath;" and it had been observed as a day peculiarly holy "unto the Lord." Had not Moses been accustomed to observe the Sabbath before the giving of the manna in the wilderness, how could we suppose that the God of Israel could have spoken to him in these words (Exod. xvi. 4-5), "Behold I will rain bread from heaven for you ; and the people shall go out and gather a certain rate every day. * * And on the sixth day they shall prepare that which they bring in, and it shall be twice as much as they gather daily?" In these words the God of Israel evidently addressed one who understood what was to be done on the seventh day. Even the people also must have known that the Sabbath ought to be observed—for "It came to pass," probably before Moses had given them any particular instruction concerning the manna, "that on the sixth day they gathered twice as much bread, two omers for one man." The rulers of the congregation appear to have been surprised at the conduct of the people, as they may have supposed that the gathering of the manna could not be any great violation of the Sabbath, and they "came and told Moses." He approved of what the people had done, and he more fully expounded and enforced the first law which God gave to man. (Exod. xvi. 23-30.) In these transactions we recognise the God of Israel, by His servant Moses, repeating His injunctions, and more fully revealing His will, concerning the sanctification of the seventh day. He gives bread from heaven for six days successively—bread which could not be preserved from day to

day—bread to be gathered anew each day. He commands that on the sixth day a double quantity be gathered, and on the seventh He preserves it in a miraculous manner as suitable food for His chosen people.

On the seventh day the benevolent God ceased to send food from heaven, and gave commandment to the people that they also should cease on the seventh day from the work or labour of gathering. In defending the perpetual obligation to observe the Sabbath, therefore, we can trace its origin and authority far beyond the era of the Jewish system of laws. It was revered and observed by the people of God during the patriarchal ages—it is almost coeval with the creation of our world.

The Sabbath is recognised in the moral law as an institution previously in existence. It rests not merely on the circumstance which gave birth to the Mosaical institutions. It is derived from a higher origin, and it continues, and it will continue in force when the ceremonial observances of the Mosaic ritual are no longer necessary. "*Remember,*" said *Jehovah*, at Sinai. "In this I give you no new commandment. I call upon you to obey with more reverence an old commandment which was from the beginning. I give it new publicity and authority, and I more fully explain its duties and its privileges. You have known, or might have known, the order of days from the creation. 'The seventh day is the Sabbath of *Jehovah thy God.*'" *His* name is upon it. He claims it as *His* property. Neglect not, forget not to sanctify it; love and honour and observe it as that holy day which is the peculiar property of the holy and benevolent God. Never let this commandment be strange to your minds or unwelcome to your souls. Never dare to set it at naught; never venture to profane any part of it by common works, or words, or thoughts. Let gratitude to God for allowing you six days to follow out common labour—let a regard to your own salvation and comfort—let an ardent desire to please God and to enjoy his friendship—induce you to remember and to sanctify the Sabbath-day.

We might now add that no repeal of this law took place before the coming of Jesus Christ, and that Jesus Christ himself made no change on the moral law; but, in the present Tract, there is no room for illustration on these and other proofs for the permanent authority of the Sabbath.

In conclusion, this law comes to all with authority from *Jehovah*, authority which cannot be denied, and which cannot be resisted with impunity. May it be written on every heart! The duty is binding on every one of us—"Remember the Sabbath to keep it holy." Let all be obedient.

This law is addressed to parents and masters, and all who give employment to other human beings, and to all who require labour from cattle. "Six days shalt thou labour and do all thy work: But the seventh day is the Sabbath of *Jehovah thy God*; in it

thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy man-servant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates."

By giving you this Tract, we call on you to keep the Sabbath holy. We bring the law to your doors—we bring it to your consciences. We say, read, and understand, and obey the words of Jehovah, your witness and your judge.

The Sabbath was made for man; it was made for you! Keep, therefore, this law; it will be for your good. "Blessed is every one who keepeth the Sabbath from polluting it." See that you all observe it and enjoy it as a good, a blessed day. On this blessed day, behold and admire the words of God—behold the Lamb of God—repent and turn to God—search the Scriptures—follow after holiness—and in all the ways which the benevolent God has prescribed, seek to be prepared for enjoying an everlasting Sabbath in the heaven of heavens.

But let it be considered that the disobedient abide under the curse of God. Expect not the blessing of God on your persons or property, or on the works of your hands, unless you keep the Sabbath holy. Deceive not yourselves by supposing that you can be in earnest in seeking salvation—or that God will approve of any profession of faith in Christ which you may make until you sanctify the Sabbath.

Let parents keep the Sabbath, and thus teach their children by their example to fear the Lord and to obey His voice. Let masters or employers beware lest they do anything, or require any work which would tempt or induce or even permit their servants to neglect the duties of the Sabbath.

Let children begin to obey this law by reading the holy Scriptures, by regular attendance in the House of God, and by learning at home and in Sabbath Schools the way of salvation, and the practice of holy living. Let none of the young appear idle in our streets, or even within doors on any part of the Sabbath. But let them in early life be earnest to obtain the salvation of the Lord, and that holiness without which none can enter heaven.

Our friendly desire is to summon all to duty. Jehovah hath spoken. Let parents and children—let the rich and the poor—let the old and the young—hear and obey the voice of the Lawgiver and Judge. "In his favour is life." His indignation is terrific as death. "Hear, and your souls shall live."

I CANNOT pray but I sin; I cannot hear or preach a sermon, but I sin; I cannot give an alms or receive the sacrament, but I sin; nay, I cannot so much as confess my sins, but my confessions are still aggravations of them. My repentance needs to be repented of, my tears want washing, and the very washing of my tears needs still to be washed over again with the blood of my Redeemer.—*Bishop Beveridge.*

An t-Eionadh.

Roimh-radh leis an Urr. Dr. MACAOIDH na h-Earradh do shearmoin leis an Urr. Dr. NIXON, Montrose, an aghaidh an aonaidh 1869.

THA an Tighearn air ceadachadh, ann an Riaghladh a Fhreasdail, gu'm bheil aimsir a tha trioblaideach, agus *deuchainneach*, air tighinn oirnn, mar Eaglais Shaoir na h-Alba. Tha iad, fathast a làthair, gu maith lionmhor 'n ar measg, leis an cuimhne àm an *Dealachaidh* 's an Eaglais. B' aimsir dheuchainneach an aimsir sin do 'n chuid mhòir do mhinistearibh na h-Eaglais, a thàinig a mach. Agus tha fios gu 'n robh an deuchainne féin, mar an ceudna, aig mòran do 'n t-sluagh a thàinig a mach, agus a dhlùthaich iad féin ris an Eaglais Shaoir. Tha, a nis, tuilleadh 's sèa bliadhna thar fhichead o àm an *Dealachaidh*, agus tha fios gu 'm bheil, a nis, ann an tomhas nach beag, ginealach òg air éirigh 'n ar measg, a tha gun fhiosrachadh aca, 'n an cuimhne féin, air aimsir no air deuchainnibh an *Dealachaidh*; agus feudaibh gu 'm bheil iad tuilleadh 's lionmhor 'n ar measg, nach 'eil cho fiosrach mu aobharaibh an *Dealachaidh*, 's a bhiodh buannachdail dhoibh féin, agus do aobhar na h-Eaglais mar an ceudna. Tha sinn an dòchas, ma cheadaichear leis an Tighearn e, 'n a fhreasdail beannaichte, gu 'm faighear cothrom leinn fathast, agus sin gu h-aithghear, ni-eigin do mhìneachadh air aobhairibh an *Dealachaidh* a chur mu choinneamh ar càirdibh air feadh na Gàidhealtachd agus nan Eilean, mar ath-chuimhne dhoibh. Cha ruig sinn air sin 's an àm. Ach, tha aon ni a dh' fheumar a chur leinn mu choinneamh ar càirdean aig an àm so, gu 'm bheil deuchainnean ar n-Eaglais, 's an là 'n diugh, eadar-sgarichte gu farsuing o dheuchainnaibh aimsir an *Dealachaidh*. 'S an aimsir sin, b' ann an aghaidh chumhachdan an t-saoghail, a ghairmeadh sinn gu bhi a' cathachadh, agus ar fianuis a thogail. Agus chuidich an Tighearn leinn. Ach, 's na deuchainnibh a tha 's an là an diugh 'n an luidhe oirnn, 's iad air iomadh dòigh, na 's truime, 's nas 's cràiteiche dhuinn. Oir is ann 'n an aghaidh-san, a tha sinn a' meas mar ar bràithribh, tha sinn 'g ar faotainn féin fo fhiachaibh a bhi a' togail ar fianuis. Ach, an dìteadh, cha ghabh sinn oirnn e: cha bhuin sin dhuinn, no idir breth a thoirt orra. Tha sinn a' deanamh gearain, air cuid d' am beachdaibh, agus air cuid d' an comhairlibh, agus air cuid d' an oidhirpibh; 'g am meas sin a bhi cunnartach agus calldach do fhallaineachd, agus do shoirbheas, do shìth, agus do thèaruinteachd ar 'n-Eaglais; agus os ceann gach ni, nach 'eil na comhairlean ud, co-shìnte, no co-sheasmhach, ri aobhar glòire an Tì sin, is e, e féin *Ceann-uile*-ghlòirmhor na Eaglais, "na h-uile, agus anns na h-uile," d'a Eaglais, agus mar Rìgh nan Rìghrean, agus mar Thighearn nan Tighearna,—Esan, d' an thug an t-Athair, a réir a' Cho-cheangail Shìorruidh, mar Cho-cheangal nan gràs, "Na h-uile cumhachd, air nèamh, agus air thalamh." Is e so a theistear féin.

Tha a nis, dlùth air seachd bliadhna, o thachair, gu 'n do ghabh cuid do mhinisteiribh na h-Eaglais Saoire, Comhairle, a chuireadh leo air beulaobh an Ard-Sheanaidh, gu'm bu ni maith agus buan-nachdail do 'n Eaglais Shaoir, agus gur h-ann a bhiodh e a réir na h-athchuing a chuir Criosd a suas, gu 'm biodh a shluagh féin uile, 'n an aon. (Eoin xvii. 21.) Gun teagamh, bu mhòr, 's bu bheannaichte, gu 'm biodh an gnothuch mar sin; agus tha, 's an t-seadh spioradail, an gnothuch mar sin, cheana, a thaobh nan uile, a tha gu frinneach ann an Criosd. Ach bu mhaith agus bu bhuannachdail do aobhar Chriosd, gu 'm biodh an gnothuch mar sin ann an rathad aideachaidh. Ach, mur faighear buidheann fa leth air an toirt gu bhi d' an aon inntinn, agus air an tarruing gu a chéile, fo bhannaibh a' ghràidh spioradail agus bhràthaireil, chun a chéile, cha chomasach do riaghladh agus do chomhairlibh dhaoine, an t-aonadh spioradail so a *thàthadh*, no a chur air chois. A nis, is iad a' Bhuidheann ris an d' iarr cuid d' ar ministeiribh, aonadh a dheanamh, no gu 'n deanadh an Eaglais Shaor e;—a' Bhuidheann ris an abrar, 's a' Bheurla—“*United Presbyterians*.” Tha iad 'n am Buidheann a tha gu maith lionmhor, ann am bailtibh mòra, agus ann an céarnaibh na machrach, an Albainn. Tha aca, an Albainn, no bha, 's a' bhliadhna 1867, Cùig ceud, ceither fichead, 's a seachd deug coimhthional; agus feudaich e bhi, gu 'm bheil tuilleadh a nis aca. Thòisich a' Bhuidheann so tuilleadh agus sèa fichead bliadhna o 'n àm so, ann an roinn a dh' éirich 's an Eaglais Stéidhichte 's an am sin. Agus, gun teagamh 's am bith, a' bhuidheann a dhealaich aig an àm sin o 'n Eaglais Stéidhichte, bha 'n fhìrinn 's an ceartas aca air an taobh; agus bu daoine iad, a bha dìleas, urramach. Cha b' ann ri aon teagasg 's a' Bhìobull, no a dh' aidich an Eaglais Stéidhichte, a dhealaich iad. Ach, 'n uair mheudaich an luchd-leanmhuinn, 's a bha iomadh coimhthional aca 's an Tìr; thàinig iomadh roinn 'n am measg, agus iomadh dealachadh. Ach mu ùine leth cheud bliadhna roimh 'n là an diugh, thòisich beachdan air tighinn a stigh 'n am measg, a tha colg-dhìreach an aghaidh aideachaidh Eaglais na h-Alba, agus na h-Eaglais Saoire mar an ceudna. B' e an ni sònruichte air cheann nam beachdan ud, nach robh e laghail no ceadaichte, do 'n Uachdaran aimsireil, cuideachadh 's am bith a dheanamh ri aobhar Chriosd agus an t-soisgeil, agus gu 'n robh an Eaglais Stéidhichte, agus an t-Uachdaran aimsireil, ag imeachd ann am peacadh, cho fhad 's a bha an t-Uachdaran aimsireil a' buileachadh, no an Eaglais a' gabhail ri cuideachadh aimsireil 's am bith, o 'n Uachdaranachd sin. Thòisich iad an sin air dèteadh na h-Eaglais Stéidhichte air a' bhonn so, mar Eaglais thruaillidh, neo-dhìleas, neo-ghlan, 'n a bunaitibh, agus 'n a teagasgaibh, agus 'n a giùlan. Agus dh' éirich connsachadh làidir, eatorra. Cha chualas leibh-sa, air feadh an Gàidhealachd, tha sinn a creidsinn, mòran mu 'n chonnsaid ud; ach 's ann searbh a bha i, agus a tha i fathast. A nis, cha tagair sinn idir, agus cha mhò a thagair sinn riamh, nach iomadh coire, agus nach iomadh truallidheachd,

a bha air faotainn a stigh do 'n Eaglais Stéidhichte. Ach, thoiribh an ro aire' a Chàirdean, do 'n ni shònruichte so, a thaobh na dàimhe a bha eadar an Eaglais Stéidhichte agus an Uachdaranachd aimsireil, no 'n *Stàta*, mar their sinn—Gur h-e so Teagasg Eaglais na h-Alba, o àm a tòiseachaidh, gus an là an diugh, Uachdaranachd a bhi aig an *Tighearn Iosa Crìosd*, os ceann *Rìghrean* agus Luchd-Riaghlaidh Rìoghachdan gu léir; agus gur seirbhisich *dha-san* iad; agus a réir an teagaisg sin, a tha gu soiller agus gu farsuing r' a fhaicinn 's na Sgrìobtuiribh Naomha, a tha uile 'n am Fìrinn a mhaireas gu sìorruidh, gur seirbhich do Dhia, tre Chrìosd, Uachdaranachda agus Rìghrean,—*dha-san*, is e *Rìgh nan Rìghrean*, agus *Tighearn nan Tighearna*. Agus uime sin, cha 'n e a mhàin gur h-e an dleasdanas, ach gur h-e an tàrd dleasnanas dhoibh e, agus an àrd shochair e, agus gu 'm bheil *mar fhiachaidh orra*, 'n an inbhibh fa leth, urram, aoradh, seirbhis a dheanamh dha, agus cuideachadh a thoirt d' a aobhar-sa, agus do a Rìoghachd spioradail air thalamh. A nis, is e so an teagasg a gheibh sibh gu sònruichte, air a thoirt air aghaidh agus air a mhìneachadh dhuibh gu soilleir agus gu dileas, 's an t-searmon urramach agus dhìleas a tha sinn a nis, a' cur do bhur 'n ionnsuidh, ann bhur cànanain féin. Gu cinnteach, a chàirdean, is fiù dhuibh a leughadh. Tha feum oirre, agus air a leithid.

Agus ciod e am feum sònruichte a tha oirre, an diugh? Oidhirpichidh sinn sin a mhìneachadh dhuibh, ann am beagan bhriathran.

Tha a' Bhuidheann sin a dh' ainmich sinn cheana—a diùltadh, 's ag àicheadh, 's a' cur an aghaidh an teagaisg ud. Cuiribh a' cheist riutha féin; agus is i ar dearbh bharail, nach àicheadh aon neach dhiubh e. Tha sinne, a togail, o Leabhar na Fìrinn, gu 'm bheil am beachd ud, a' toirt eas-urram do 'n Tighearn Iosa Crìosd, 'n a Aicheadh dha, air an Inbhe, agus air an Ard-Uachdaranachd, a tha Dia an t-Athair, air buileachadh air, a réir na comhairle bith-bhuain, a shuidhicheadh ann an Comh-cheangal sìorruidh nan Gràs. “Am bi Crìosd air a Roinn?” Dh' innseadh roimh làimh leis an Spiorad Naomh—tre 'n fhàidheadaireachd a chuireadh chun an t-saoghail roimh dha féin tighinn 's an fheoil;—a dh' aindeoin na dh' fhuiling e 'n a anam naomh, 's 'n a chorp naomh, “Cha bhi *cnàimh* dheth air a bhriseadh,” eadhon 'n a chorp beannaichte, prìseil, 's an do ghabh iomlanachd na Diadhachd còmhnuidh, agus far am bheil an iomlanachd sin féin fathast an còmhnuidh. Agus bitheamaid cinnteach, dearbhta, 'n ar anamaibh féin, nach mò a cheadaichear le Dia, aon ni 's am bith, agus cha 'n 'eil ni 's am bith d' a iomlanachd uile-ghlòrmhoir-sa 'n a ni *beag*:—nach giùlainear leis féin, 's nach giùlainear leis an *Athair* agus nach giùlainear leis an *Spiorad Naomh*, agus iad uile 'n an *Aon*—aon ni 's am bith; agus ma cheadaichear dhiunn an sloinneadh,—aon *ròine* do iomlanachd na glòire a tha an t-Athair air buileachadh air *Mac Sìorruidh* a Ghràidh, a bhi air a dhiùltadh dha, no air 'àicheadh dha, le buill a chuirp dhiomhair féin, no gu 'n giùlainear e leis an Uile-chumhachdach, gun a dhiombadh a

dheanamh aithnichte, no a bheannachd orra a bhi air a h-àicheadh leis dhoibh.

Agus, ma thogar a' cheist so :—Is soilleir agus is cinnteach an gnothuch, ma 's e gur h-e sud àrd-dhleasdanas Rìghrean agus Luchd-riaghlaidh an t-saoghail so, agus a Rìoghachdan, gu'm bheil am beachd ud 'ga àicheadh, agus 'g a dhiùltadh dha. Nach 'eil? Mo thruaighe! is ann do rìreadh firinneach a tha sin, *gu'm bheil*. Ach, thoiribh an aire. Cha 'n 'eil sin uile, muldach mar tha e, a' deanamh aon atharrachaidh 's am bith air ùghdarras Fhocail agus chomhairle Dhé, no air glòir Chrìosd. Seasaidh Esan, mar tha e. Agus nach maith a dh' fheudas sinn a' cheist so a thogail a ris, a gheibh sibh aig an Abstol Phòl—Romh. iii. 3, “Oir ciod e sin, ged nach do chreid cuid? an dean am mi-chreidimhsan firinn Dhé gun éifeachd? Nar leigeadh Dia : ach bitheadh Dia fìor, agus gach duine 'n a bhreugaire.” Agus, ceadaich dhomh, a charaid, aon cheist eile a chur ort—An dean ni 's am bith ni 's *lùgha*, na eadhon an iomlanachd gu léir, a tha air a tasgadh ann am pearsa uile-ghlòrmhor Chrìosd, thu *fein* a thèarnadh? Mur dean; agus innseam dhuit *nach* dean;—Thoir an aire do D' *aideachadh*. Am bheil thu toileach, ma ta, an gabhail mar do luchd-comuinn, an aideachadhsan, a ghabhail mar t-aideachadh féin; a tha agàicheadh aon ni do Chrìosd, 'n iomlanachd, a thoilich an *t-Athair* gu 'n gabhadh i sin còmhnuidh annsan? Is leòr dhuit, mar cheann feadhna nam peacach, an iomlanachd ghlòrmhor ud. O, nach ann a chitheadh tu i, le sùil a' chreidimh air a dùsgadh 'n a t'-anam; agus 's e theireadh tu,—cha tuilleadh 's ni 's leòr i dhomh-sa!

Agus a nis, mar tha an iomlanachd ud ann an Crìosd; tha iomlanachd ann am *Focal* Chrìosd; mar stéidh do chreidimh, agus mar riaghailt do bheatha. Agus mar gur h-Esan, an t-aon Ti, an diugh, an dé, agus gu sìorruidh; mar sin, tha, agus mairidh, am Focal. Agus cuimhnich gur h-e am Focal gu léir, an Sgrìobtur gu h-uile—Focal *Chrìosd*. Agus is Esan féin sùim agus brìgh an Fhocail sin. An gabhadh tu ort aon fhocal no aon lideadh a chur ris? Amhairc dìreach air co-dhùnadh an Fhocail féin. (Taisb. xxii. 18, 19.)

Tha cuid dhuinn, co dhiubh, an dòchas, tre shaor ghràs Dhé, ann an Crìosd, agus leis an Spiorad, gu 'n d' fhuair sinn aithne, agus làn dearbhadh, gur Fìrinn Dhé, am Focal, tha againn 's na Sgrìobtuiribh Naomh, o thùs gu crìch a' Bhìobuill. Cha chomasach dhuinn, gun fhianuis eile bhi againn 'n ar coguis féin, na 'm b' e agus gu 'n tilgeadh sinn uain, aon fhocal, no aon lideadh do 'n Fhocal sin, gu toileach, air impidh dhaoine, no air sgàth an deadh-ghèan; gu 'm faighteadh sinn, ann an breth Dhé, a' deanamh *ceannairc* 'n a aghaidh-san, agus a' ciontachadh do rìreadh peacaidh an *an-dànadais*; seadh, gheibhteadh sinn a' toirt maslaidh do Dhia; a' gabhail oirmn féin, gur glìce sinn féin na Dia. Is uamhasach an ni a tha 'n so; ma gheibhear idir, eadhon a choslas, 'n ar measg! Nach ann mar Riaghailt iomlan, agus mar theistear

iomlan, d' ar creidimh, tha am Focal air a bhuileachadh oirnn; agus mar Riaghailt dhuinn, a tha iomlan, 'n ar 'n uile ghiùlan. Nach faic sibh féin, a chàirdean, 's an Leabhar bheag ud, ach a tha ro phriseil, eadhon Leabhar Aithghearr nan Ceist, 'n uair a tha a' cheist sinn air a cur oirnn, "Ciod an riaghailt a thug Dia dhuinn gu ar seòladh chum Esan a ghlòrachadh agus a mhealtuinn?" Nach e so a leanas, am freagradh,—"*'S e Focal Dhé*, a ta air a chur sìos, ann an Sgròbtaibh an t-Seann Tiomnaidh agus an Tiomnaidh Nuaidh, *an aon riaghailt gu ar seòladh*, chum Esan a ghlòrachadh agus a mhealtuinn." Am bheil sibh air bharrail, nach d' fhàg Dia, 'n a Trùir Phearsabh, a tha 'n an Aon, an Riaghailt so, *Iomlan*? An cualas gu 'n dh' fhàgadh riamh leis an *Uile-Chumhachdach*, *cearb*, no *neo-iomlanachd*, air gnìomh no obair 's am bith a chruthaich E féin? Agus mur d' fhàg e sin air oibribh a' chruthachaidh, cha d' fhàg e sin air oibribh a *ghràis*. Agus a réir sin,—tha an *Sgrìobtur Naomh*, agus is ann an saoihbreas, ann an gliocas, ann a ghràdh sìorruidh féin a thug esan na Sgrìobtuire, agus bitheamaid cinnteach gu 'm bheil *iomlanachd* ann. An aontaicheadh aon neach dhibh gu 'n cuireadh luchd-teagaisg, bhur luchd-teagaisg féin, aon fhocal, no aon lideadh as a' Bhìobull? No, an aontaicheadh sibh gu'n cuireadh iad am folach e? Cha b'i an riaghailt iomlan gu bhur seòladh, a bhiodh aghaibh ni b' fhaide. Amhaircibh féin; agus na gabhaibh air m' fhocal-sa e, air chor 's am bith. Amhaircibh 's an àm, dìreach air dà earrann a mhàin, 's an Sgrìobtur, agus cha mhòr nach iad an dà earrann mu dheireadh iad a tha ann (Taisb. xxii. 18, 19), agus chithear an sin leibh gu 'm bheil seula ùghdarras nam Flaitheanas 'g a chur, an sud, leis an Spiorad Naomh, air iomlanachd Fhocail Dhé, dhuinn; nach ceadaichear *focal* a thoirt uaith, no *focal* a chur ris.

Agus c' uime, am bheil sinn 's an àm, a' toirt so air aghaidh? Am bheil ar 'n-Eaglais-ne, air focal a thoirt air falbh as an Sgrìobtur? Buidheachas dha-san, is E féin am *Focal*, nach 'eil; agus is e ar dòchas nach ceadaichear dhuinn e am feasd. Ach, tha aon Teagasg Sònruichte 's an Sgrìobtur; agus ged tha gach teagasg a tha ann, priseil, agus an t-aon ùghdarras orra gu léir, gidheadh tha aig an teagasg so, brìgh, agus blas, do anamaibh creidmheach, o nach toireadh na *saoghail* orra, dealachadh: agus is e sin, Glòir Pearsa an *Tighearn Iosa Crìosd*, araon mar *aon ghin Mhic Dhé*: agus mar an *Dia-duine*; agus anns an do thoilich an t-Athair, gu 'n gabhadh na h-uile iomlanachd còmhnuidh: agus mar an t-aon Eadar-mheadhonair, eadar Dia agus daoine,—an Duine Iosa Crìosd. Agus dha-san, nach e a theisteachas féin (Mat. xxviii. 18), "Thugadh dhom-sa *gach uile chumhachd air nèamh agus air talamh*." Agus nach ann air an dearbh ùghdarras sin, agus d' a réir, a tha e a' toirt na h-àithne gràs-mhoir glòrmhor, priseil sin, an *Soisgeul* a bhi air a shearmonachadh, "do gach dùil." Agus is teisteachas eile, a tha an Spiorad Naomh a' toirt dha (Philip. ii. 9, 10, 11.) Leugh sin, a charaid, agus O, gu 'n

sgrìobhadh an Spiorad Naomh air do chridhe e. Agus, aon Teisteanas eile, nach faic sibh, a chàirde; cia co tric, 's a chi sibh an t-urran so air a thoirt dha 's an Sgrìobtur, "*Prionnsa Rìghrean na talmhainn*." Agus a rìs (Taisb. xix. 16), "Agus tha aige air a thrusgan, agus air a leis, ainm sgrìobhta, RIGH NAN RIGH, AGUS TIGHEARN NAN TIGHEARNA." Cha 'n ann a mhàin anns na h-earrannaibh ud, a gheibhear an teagasg ceudna, ach air feadh an t-Sean Tiomnaidh mar an ceudna, agus air a mhìneachadh gu soilleir. Leughaidh e, mar eisimplir 's an Daramh Salm, agus gnìomharra a Rìaghlaidh os ceann Rìghrean na talmhainn. 'Bu Rìgh air thalamh, an Salmaidh féin: agus nach faic sibh an sealladh creidmheach, foillsichte a tha aige air Crìosd, agus an t-urram macanta, a tha e a' toirt dha, 's an t-aideachadh iomlan a tha e a' deanamh air, agus sin roimh do Chrìosd fathast a thighinn 's an fheòl? Ach, feudaidh, gu 'n cuir sibh fathast, a' cheist orm; 'S cinnteach nach comasach e, gu 'm bheil an Eaglais Shaoir ag àicheadh an Teagaisg bhunaiteich sin? Cha 'n 'eil sinn ag ràdh idir gu 'm bheil. Agus 's e a theireadh sinn, le ar n-uile chridhe, "Nar leigeadh Dia." Ach, tha iad, a' chuid nach lugha dhiubh, is e sin aobhar ar 'n eagail; agus a rèir ar 'n eagail, iad ann an cunnairt, am buaireadh sin bhi aig an dorus. Tha iad, a' chuid mhòr dhiubh, ag oidhirpeachadh, *Aonadh* a dheanamh ri Buidhinn, agus iad sin gu maith lìonmhor, nach 'eil, mar dh' iarraidh sinn, a' cumail, 's a' géilleadh do 'n teagasg ud, no idir 'g a aideachadh, mar dh' iarradh sinn. D' a Mhaighstir féin, seasaidh, no tuitidh gach duine. Cha Tighearnan sinne air coguisibh ar co-chreutaire. Ach, aig an àm cheudna, cha chomasach dhuinn a smuaineachadh, gur dleasdanas, gur buannachd dhuinn, mar Eaglais, mar choimhthionailibh, no mar anamaibh fa leth, *Aonadh* a bhi againn ri Buidhinn, no ri Eaglais, no ri Comunn, a dh' fheadas, eadhon a réir seallaidh, no 'n an aideachadh, a bhi a' cumail air ais, no bhi a' cur folaich, air Teagasg 's am bith, a bhuineas do ghlòir an Tighearn Iosa Crìosd, a tha *Focal Dhé* a' cur an céill. Tha fios againn, mu 'n Bhuidhinn air am bheil sinn, a nis, a' labhairt, gu 'n tìgeadh dhuinn labhairt, mar dhaoineibh fàilingeach, neo-iomlan, r' a chéile, agus mu a chéile; gun fhianuis bhréige a thogail 'n an aghaidh, gu 'n àicheadh iad an teagasg prìseil agus bunaiteach ud, air an robh sinn a' labhairt. Ach, ma chithear iad a' gluasad, 'n an *cleachdamh*, mar Bhuidhinn, no mar Eaglais, a' cumail an Teagaisg ud air ais, mar is e cuid Chrìosd e; no cuid, no earrann 's am bith dheth, air ais, agus iad a' leantuinn ri sin, gu dlùth, agus gu daingean,—tha sinn ag ràdh, nach dleasdanasach, agus nach tèaruinte dhuinne, mar Eaglais Shaoir na h-Alba, Aonadh, no ceangal a dheanamh riutha; agus sinn a thighinn gu bhi 'n ar 'n-aon Eaglais, maille riutha. Is e an sloinneadh a tha iad a' toirt dhoibh féin, "*Voluntaries*." Cha chomasach dhuinn gu furasda, an Sloinneadh ceuda a chur an Gaelic. Agus gu 'm bu fada uainn e, sloinneadh 's am bith a thilgeil orra, mar *athais*. Is iad féin a tha a' toirt an t-sloinnidh ud dhoibh féin. Agus feumaidh sinn an

t-eadar-theangachadh a ghnàthachadh a 's cuimseiche a tha co-shlnte ris, a 's fèarr air an amais sin,—“*Fèin-thoilich*.” Tha iad féin a' deanamh uail ann.

A nis, tha iad sud, a' tagradh, agus a' deanamh uail ann, 'n an Aideachadh, gur h-e am beachd, nach 'eil aig Rìghribh, no aig Luchd-Riaghlaidh Rìoghachd, ni idir r' a dheanamh, gu bhi a' buileachadh shochair, air Eaglais Chrìosd, no air aobhar Chrìosd, agus an t-Soisgeil: agus nach buin dhoibh sud, ach a mhàin riaghladh a bhi aca ann an cùisibh aimsireil. Aidicheadh an Luchd-riaghlaidh ainm Chrìosd; ach, cha 'n 'eil e mar *fhiachaibh* orra, no 'n a dhleasdanas dhoibh, cuideachadh no misneachadh a thoirt do 'n Eaglais, ann an aobhar Chrìosd, d' a fhìrinn, no d' a Rìoghachd-sa, air thalamh. Tha sin, gu soilleir a' filleadh ann, nach 'eil ùghdarras aig Chrìosd, mar an t-aon Eadar-mheadhonair, eadar Dia agus daoine, os ceann Rìghrean no Luchd-riaghlaidh. Cha 'n e so, a tha Focal Dhé a' foillseachadh 's a' cur an céill. Agus is àicheadh so, ged fheud nach ann am *briathraibh*, air an inbhe agus air an dreuchd, a thugadh leis an Athair Uile-Chumbachach dha. Cha 'n e so aideachadh ar 'n-Eaglais-ne.

Chi sibh, gu soilleir, agus gu còmhnhard, 's an t-Searmon urramach a leanas, an teagasg so air a mhìneachadh gu drùidhteach, agus gu dìleas; gu 'm bheil e mar *fhiachaibh* orra,—agus mar am prìomh dhleasdanas, do Rìghribh, agus do Luchd-riaghlaidh, urram, géill, agus ùmhlachd a thoirt do Chrìosd, agus do 'Fhìrinn, agus do a Rìoghachd; agus gu 'm faicteadh iad sud, fo an làimh, a' cur air aghaidh, le an cuideachadh, agus le an còmhndadh, agus le an deadh-ghean, fhìrinn agus Rìoghachd Chrìosd. Bha aobhar sònruichte air so, gu 'n cluinnteadh e 's an t-Searmon. Bha i air a thoirt, air beulaobh Ard-Sheanaidh na h-Eaglais Saoire; agus an t-ùghdair 'n a Cheann-Suidhe air an Ard-Sheanadh mu dheireadh. Agus bha aobhar sònruichte eile, air an teagasg a bhi air a thoirt dhoibh mar Fhianuis agus mar Rabhadh, 's an àm; agus gu cinnteach, is muldach leinn, r' a luaidh e:—cuid do ar Luchd-teagaisg, agus d' ar n-Eildeiribh, a bhi air am faicinn, a' faomadh, agus a' sleamhnachadh o theagasgaibh bunaiteach ar n-Eaglais, agus iad a' togail, 's a 'g aideachadh bheachdan nam *Fèin-thoileach*—na *Voluntaries*. Chi sibh 's an t-Searmon, ciod e an luidhe truagh, a dh' ionnsuidh an tuiteadh ar Rìoghachd, gun seachnadh, na 'n tuiteadh ar Luchd-Riaghlaidh o bhi ag aideachadh Chrìosd, mar an Ard-Mhaighstir agus an Ard-Rìgh féin. Thubhairt sinn, a cheana, gu 'm bheil Focal Dhé *iomlan*. Agus is soilleir 's is ro chudthromach an gnothuch—thigeadh gnìomh no beachd 's am bith a stigh, a bhiodh 'n a aicheadh, no 'n a cheiltinn, no 'n a fholuch, air bunaitibh slòruidh air 'n-aideachaidh, chiteadh a thoradh, ann an giùlan a' chreutair, agus 's an Eaglais ris an dlùthaichteadh e, an ùine ro ghèarr.

Bheir sinn a nis, comharradh no dhà mu nithibh air am bheil

gach coslas, gu 'n tigeadh iad oirnn, na nasgtadh an t-Aonadh ris na *Fèin-thoilich*, a tha nis air 'oidhirpeachadh.

Is atharrachadh mòr agus muladach a bhiodh ann.

1. Cha 'n 'eil iad réidh ruinn ann an teagasg àrd agus bunaiteach, priseil, na Réite a tha ann am Pearsa Iosa Criosd : co iad air son an do dh' fhuiling E? An do dh' fhuiling E air son nan uile, no air son nan daoine taghta a mhain?

2. Mu 'n ghnothuch chudthromach eile, Sgoilean, a bi air an cur suas, air chostus na Rìoghachd, a chum 's gu 'n ruigeadh na h-uile teaghlach air sgoil agus air foghlum cubhaidh. Cha 'n éisd na *Fèin-thoilich* ri sud, mur cumar as na sgoilbh, am Bìobull, agus Leabhar Aithghearr nan Ceist; agus gach foghlum do'n òige, a bhuineas do 'n Diadhachd. Fhuair sinn dearbhadh no dhà, air so, o chionn ghoirid, nach gabh àicheadh.

3. Mu Airgiod na h-Eaglais, no mar their sinn 's a' Bheurla, "*Sustentation Fund*": an dòigh 's am bheil e sud air a chruinneachadh 's gach coimhthional, agus air a roinn air gach ministeir; ma chreideas sinn na tha buidhnean a' cur rompa, atharraichear sud, gu h-ìomlan. Bithidh dà sheòrsa, no dà inbhe coimhthional againn 's an Eaglais aonaichte, a' chuid a 's bochda dhiubh, agus a' chuid a 's comasaiche.

4. Riaghailtean an *Aoraidh fhollaiseich*. Bithidh Laoidhean aig na *Fèin-thoilich*, air an cur r' a chéile le daoinibh : agus iomadh dhiubh le daoinibh aig nach robh riamh cliù na diadhachd; agus tha inneala ciùil air am bagradh oirnn le cuid dhiubh; mar tha a nis, gun teagamh, iad air an toirt a stigh le cuid do Eaglaisibh na h-Eaglais Stéidhichte, an Alba.

5. Cha do thog iad, riamh fathast, cho fad 's is fiosrach sinne, an guth, no am Fianuis fhollaiseich an aghaidh na *Pàpanachd*. Agus cha 'n fhiosrach sinn idir gu 'n co-sheasadh e ri beachdaibh an aideachaidh, gu 'n togadh iad fianuis 'n a h-aghaidh, ged bhiodh Rìgh, no Ban-Rìgh a bhiodh *Pàpanach* air an suidheachadh, air Rìgh-chaitir Bhreatuinn.

6. Is trom an cionta d' ar Tìr, mi-naomhachadh na Sabaid. Agus is aobhar eagail dhuinn, gur h-ann a meudachadh a tha e, 'n ar measg. Cho fad 's a 's fiosrach sinne, cha do thog na *Fèin-thoilich* fathast, an guth no am Fianuis an aghaidh a' pheacaidh ud gu follaiseach, no mar Eaglais. Agus is i ar barail, nach co-sheasadh ri beachdaibh aideachaidh, gu 'n tagradh iad ri Luch-Riaghlaidh na Tìre, lagh no Reachd 's am bith a shuideachadh, a bhiodh 'n a chronrachadh, no 'n a thoirmeasg, eadhon 's an t-seadh fhollaiseach, air a' pheacadh so. Is fiosrach sinn, gur h-e a their iad gu coitichinn ri so, Gu 'm biodh a leithid sin do lagh, an aghaidh shaorsa nan ìochdaran.

A nis, a chàirdean, cha 'eil sinne, le so gu léir, a' toirt breth, air ar coimhearsnachaidh. Do am Maighstir féin, tuitidh no seasaidh iad. Cha 'n 'eil sinn, cho fad 's is fiosrach sinn, air dol thar chrìochan an aideachaidh féin. Cha 'n 'eil sinn ach a' cur an aideachaidh féin an céill. Ma chaidh sinn aon ròine ni 's faide,

bithidh e ro-dhoilghiosach dhuin; agus iarraidh sinn maiteachas uatha. Cha 'n ann mar phearsaibh fa leth, a tha sinn a' tighinn orra. Tha mi a' làn chreidsinn, gu 'm bheil iomadh neach do chloinn an Tigearna 'n am measg; agus their mi gu 'm b' aithne dhomh, agus gur h-aithne dhomh fathast, neach agus neach a tha 'n an comunn, d' am bheil gràdh agam, agus air am bheil mòr mheas agam. 'S ann a tha sinn a' tighinn air an *aideachadh*. Agus tha sinn a' co-dhùnadh le dà cheist a chur oirbhse, ar Luchd-leughaidh:—Am bheil an t-aideachadh ud 'n ad shùilibh-sa, a réir Fìrinn Dhé? Agus, Am bheil thu 'g a fhaicinn, 'n a dhleasdanas dhuit fein, a bhi air t-aonadh riutha sud, mar bhall do 'n aon Eaglais. No, am faic thu an t-aonadh ud mar dhleasdanas do 'n Eaglais d' am buin thu?

Notes and Comments.

Dear Coals.—The persistence, despite the summer weather, of dear coal is a vexatious feature of the times. One factor in the situation is of national interest, and has received some attention in the House of Commons, viz., the recent extensive purchases by the French Government of the best Welsh steam coal, which they are storing at Calais and other port towns. In the brief period of six months the French purchases have risen from 2,670,000 to 4,230,000 tons. The suspicion is natural that this continental power contemplates a stroke of naval warfare, and the object in view is most likely the humiliation of Britain. That the downfall of the British Empire is imminent we do not believe, but that some enemy might get a commission to vex and harrass us for our sins is not unlikely. Nevertheless, it is marvellous to note how frequently the enemies of our country have reckoned without the host, and their best laid schemes have ignominiously gone to pieces.

The defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588 was a manifest effect of the same arm that, in the ancient days, "cut Rahab and wounded the dragon." In September, 1601, another attempt was made by Spain. Four thousand Spaniards landed in Kinsale, with intent to conquer England through Ireland. They suffered this time a defeat on land, and were forced to return home without success. In 1690 Britain was denuded of regular troops owing to King William's operations at Boyne Water and Limerick. The French enemy, watching his opportunity, had 30,000 men lying at Dunkirk, ready to descend on the English coast whenever the channel was clear. A naval battle, fought at Beachy Head, resulted in the defeat of the English Admiral. In a short time thereafter war galleys, carrying the hostile soldiery, appeared off the Devonshire coast. There was universal alarm and hurried massing of the militia. But for some secret reason the blow did

not descend. The enemy retired, having done nothing but burn a few huts and fishing boats at Teignmouth. In 1692 another French invasion was set on foot, but in the action off Cape La Hogue the enemy's fleet was destroyed, and the project was wrecked. In 1708 a French Jacobite scheme for the reinstatement of the Stuart dynasty was, with much secret plotting of traitors at home and foes abroad, organised. In the month of March a French squadron appeared off the Firth of Forth. An agent on shore was to have a pilot ready to conduct the fleet into the narrow waters, but he tarried too long at the wine, and the pilot was not forthcoming at the time appointed. The Frenchman's opportunity was lost, for Admiral Byng was now on his track. He sailed north to effect, if possible, a landing at Inverness, but Byng sighted him there also, and so at last, giving up the enterprise, he turned homeward, and after a month of tempestuous voyaging reached Dunkirk, not scathless, but with a report of 4000 men dead by disease and hardship.

Seven years later was the era of the "fifteen," when the clans were raised in a vain attempt to place the Pretender on the throne of Britain. At Sheriffmuir, fought on Sabbath, 13th November, 1715, 10,000 Highlanders behaved with their usual courage, but prevailed not. The action was indecisive, and the Pretender's party shortly thereafter fell to pieces. The death of Louis XIV. of France contributed much to the non-success of the attempt. He was the mainstay of the project, but most providentially he died on the eve of its execution, and the scheme, thus deprived of its backbone, was foredoomed to failure. In 1718 a plot by Sweden, Spain, and Russia, was projected. The object of this strange coalition was, as usual, the restoration of the Stuart dynasty to the throne of Britain. The military part was to be carried through by Charles XII., at the head of 12,000 Swedish veterans. But the head of this leviathan was broken by the death of the redoubted Charles in the trenches of Frederickshall.

In 1719 Spain organised another invasion of our island. Twenty-five warships, with 5000 troops aboard, set sail for the Hebrides. But the God of Heaven had determined to defeat this counsel, and so he sent out a stormy wind to fulfil His word. At Finisterre a tempest scattered the armada, and turned them back to their harbours. Three hundred Spaniards on board a few ships reached the island of Lewis. Led by Lord Seaforth, they passed to the mainland, where their numbers grew to 2000. In Glen Shiel, in the Kintail country, they fought a successful battle against the king's forces. But Seaforth was badly wounded, and the clans separated during the night, leaving the 300 Spaniards to their fate. On the morrow these surrendered at discretion to the royal commander. In January, 1744, another powerful and dangerous attempt to set the Pretender on the throne was thwarted by the immediate action of the God of Providence. A fleet of French warships and transports set sail for the English

coast, but was smitten back by a terrible tempest that raged for five days. Some of the largest ships foundered with all on board. The rest were glad to regain the shelter of their own harbours. "Thou breakest the ships of Tarshish with an east wind." Next year Prince Charlie landed in Skye, and proceeded to unite the clans in a second attempt upon the British throne. In his progress southward he had some meteoric successes; nevertheless the appointed doom overtook him next year at Culloden, where his pretensions were drowned in blood. The gallant Charles escaped to the continent, where, as a pensioner of France, he lived to 1788, and died the inglorious death of a drunkard at the age of sixty-seven.

In 1759 the enemies of our country were again lively. A great French army threatened the shores of England. At Havre and Dunkirk huge flotillas of flat-bottomed boats lay at their moorings, ready to convey 18,000 men across if once the channel was open. But the Lord repented for this also, and said "it shall not be." The French squadron lay at Quiberon in the Bay of Biscay. On a wild November day, Lord Hawke, risking everything, ran his ships in between the Frenchman and the shore. Hawke's broadsides destroyed part of the French fleet, and the tempest did the rest. In 1794 another French scheme to invade Britain was frustrated by Lord Howe's victory off Ushant on the 1st of June. In 1797 there was distress in the nation and perplexity. The Bank of England stopped payment, there were dangerous mutinies in the navy, and a coalition between Holland, France, and Spain was set on foot for the subjugation of Britain. Nevertheless, England was not forsaken, nor Scotland of her God, the Lord of Hosts, though their land was filled with sin against the Holy One of Israel, for, as heretofore, the power of the foreign enemies was broken by disasters at sea. At Cape St. Vincent, in February, 1797, Jervis shattered the sea power of Spain, and at Camperdown, off the coast of Holland, in July 2, the same year, Admiral Duncan gained a victory over the combined French and Dutch fleets. In 1805 was wrecked the last and most dangerous of all the projects to invade our island. Napoleon's great force of 150,000 men lay at Boulogne, waiting the favourable moment to slip across and divide the spoil. A combined French and Spanish fleet of 33 sail of the line was manned to sweep the British power from the seas. But it seemed Britain had an interest in that word spoken long ago by the prophet—"Associate yourselves, oh ye people, and ye shall be broken in pieces; take counsel together and it shall not stand, for God is with us." Lord Nelson, seeking the foe, found him at Cape Trafalgar, and on 21st October, 1805, in four or five hours, smote him down to destruction. So numerous and remarkable a train of deliverances as we have rehearsed, certainly bears the mark of the finger of God. It is to be noted that our ill neighbours have always been the two Romish powers of Spain and France. Spain, now a shorn,

degraded nation, is no longer dangerous. France, posting on to national decay and impotence, has still the will and power to injure. The chief reason why Britain has survived so many deadly assaults is that hitherto, with all her faults, she has been the metropolis of Protestantism and the chief seat of the Gospel, and the God whom the nation professes to own has shown Himself to be the true God by thus delivering and rescuing. If, as the whole race of ungodly newspaper editors and apostate churchmen will have it, this tree of evangelical Protestant faith and practice shall be torn up and cast out of our borders, it will quickly appear that our chief defence is gone, and that there is now no longer any reason why the faithfulness of God should be our shield. The signs of the time show that as a nation we are degenerating fast, and becoming ripe for the righteous indignation of heaven. Therefore, it is not without thoughts of heart that we hear that hostile nations are storing munitions of war, but we pray, nevertheless, that such fears and apprehensions may prove groundless.

Wondering after the Beast.—The abandonment to the deceitful delights of a sensuous idolatrous religion, an abandonment which is making way like an epidemic in degenerate Protestant Churches, sometimes appears in an acute form. For example, there is a gentleman signing himself John Campbell, evidently a minister of the Established Church, who writes in *St. Andrew*, and gives an affecting view of the inordinate length the ritualistic craze can go. As if he were penning the "Confessions of an Opium Eater" he relates in *St. Andrew* the places he haunted and the delight he had in seeing Masses, Passion plays, and other samples of undiluted Romanism. As persons of a fast living tendency, wishing to have a good holiday, will break loose from social restraints and have a round of choice dissipations in strange cities, so this Protestant minister, when he has a spare week, gads about to London or the Continent, and there feasts his eyes and ears on the worst Popery he can find. He spends four columns in the last number of *St. Andrew* describing with the highest notes of admiration the profane and daring spectacle of the Passion play in the Bavarian town of Oberammergau. This is a stage play wherein the dread scenes of Christ's last agony and death are mimicked by men and women who have conned their parts. This Protestant minister professes he was highly delighted and edified by the whole performance. There is an artistic and emotional side of Romanism, and there is a cruel licentious side. They who affect the one may profess their aloofness from the other, but the unity of the system cannot be broken to please fastidious persons, and this curious example of a Protestant minister, evidently much in love with the music, incense, and painted windows of Rome, will find, before all is done, that he will also have to swallow Bartholemew massacres, nunnery scandals, and a whole inheritance of dirt and abomination.

John Bunyan, in his autobiography, gives an amusing account of a strong fit of ritualism he once took. He says:—"But withal I was so overrun with the spirit of superstition, that I adored, and that with great devotion, even all things, both the high place, priest, clerk, vestment, service, and what else, belonging to the church, counting all things holy that were therein contained, and especially the priest and clerk, most happy, and without doubt greatly blessed, because they were the servants, as I then thought, of God, and were principal in the holy temple, to do His work therein. This conceit grew so strong in a little time upon my spirit, that had I but seen a priest—though never so sordid and debauched in his life, I should find my spirit fall under him, reverence him, and knit unto him. Yea, I thought for the love I did bear unto them, supposing them the ministers of God, I could have laid down at their feet and have been trampled upon by them. Their name, their garb, and their work did so intoxicate me." The spell of this religion was soon broken for John Bunyan, and he saw it was a cheat and a delusion. Will our Protestant Established clergyman deliver his soul, or is he destined to stumble, and fall, and be broken, and snared and taken? Bunyan was then travelling from darkness into light. The case of those who are going from light to darkness is not so hopeful.

Anti-Unionists in Conference.—On Tuesday, 17th July, a private conference and public meeting of Free Churchmen opposed to the approaching union were held in the hall of the Free North Church, Inverness. Rev. J. D. Maculloch, Hope Street Church, Glasgow, presided at the conference. Two resolutions were made, the first being to diffuse by means of deputies information concerning the union scheme, and the second, to take a plebiscite of congregations for or against union. We are not clear whether this plebiscite is intended to extend through the length and breadth of the Church, or to be confined to the Highland section of it. But in any case the result of the plebiscite, though interesting, can in no way determine the duty of ministers. The public meeting in the evening was reasonably well attended, and was presided over by Rev. Mr. Galbraith, Lochalsh. It would appear that there were two parties in the meeting—a party disliking the union but not prepared to resist it, and a party disliking it and meaning to give effect to this opposition by separation from the United Church.

Another Gigantic Crime.—Europe is becoming a very unsafe place for kings and princes. President Carnot was assassinated within recent memory. Two years ago the Empress of Austria was brutally stabbed, the other day the Prince of Wales was shot at in Brussels, and on Sabbath, 29th July, Humbert, King of Italy, met his death at the hands of a murderer. He had attended a musical fete at Monza, where there is a royal residence. As he was leaving to enter his carriage, a miscreant

named Bressi shot him to the heart, and the king expired in three minutes. It is, no doubt, another anarchist villany. We hope the due reward of capital punishment will be meted out to the murderer. It will be remembered that the assassin of the Austrian Empress escaped with his life owing to the abolition of capital punishment in the state where the deed was done. But the folly of the spurious humanity that has rejected the awful but most beneficent and necessary law of God, will become more and more manifest. "Whoso sheddeth man's blood by man shall his blood be shed, for in the image of God made He man," and they who supplant this ordinance by another supposed to be more humane, are in reality the advocates of cruelty, for, by making murder safe, they cheapen and imperil the lives of all law-abiding citizens.

The Painful Situation in China.—Since the middle of June a reign of terror has prevailed in China. A violent anti-foreign party, called the "Boxers," has arisen, and with, it is feared, the connivance of the authorities, has begun a crusade against all missionaries and foreigners. Peking has been isolated for six weeks, and a general massacre of Europeans was feared, but reports are now more hopeful. The German Ambassador was killed by the Peking mob some weeks ago, and the situation of the other foreign representatives is known to be dangerous. Some missionaries have been murdered, and for the native Christian Church it is the hour of temptation and trouble. The reigning Emperor and Empress were ejected from the throne at the beginning of the upheaval, and there are political complications difficult to unravel. The Powers have fleets and armies in the Pichili Gulf, and have obtained footing in Tientsin, a town on the Peking River. No doubt there is a Chinese side to the situation. The forcing of the opium trade by war and violence upon the reclaiming Chinese authorities, and the unprincipled grabbing of territory by Russia and other Powers, afford ample warrant for just indignation against the foreigner; and it is a pity our own country should be so strangely identified both with the cause of Christ and the cause of opium.

Various Notes.—In the month of June a large company assembled in Jonathan Edwards' Church, Northampton, U.S.A., to unveil a tablet to the great man's memory. There was much speaking and praising of Edwards by men who are miles away from his beliefs and experiences. . . . As our readers will see, we have published this month in the Magazine, the annual balance sheet of the Church. It will probably be a surprise to many readers to note the number of places throughout the Highlands and Islands where the Free Presbyterian Church has a footing. . . . The Christian Endeavour Society, a religious movement originating in the United States, had its annual demonstration in London last month. The fundamental idea of the association is

to promote Christianity among young people by pledging them to read their Bibles and attend to their devotions, and other duties. It was started by Dr. Clark, of Boston, in 1881, and now has 60,000 societies, these being found in all parts of the globe. The membership numbers $3\frac{1}{2}$ millions. It thus appears to be a thoroughly popular movement, and if these pledged three and a half millions of young men and young women are real Christians, then we may sing the song of Simeon and rejoice that we have lived to see such a consummation. But alas! we are not permitted to entertain such a thought. The movement is suspiciously popular, and a nearer acquaintance with it would, no doubt, shew that it depended for its success on the old familiar avoidance of the more spiritual and difficult side of real Christianity, and that the flame of devotion was kept fictitiously alive by a continual round of social functions and sensuous services. . . . We are sorry to report another bereavement to the Royal family. The Duke of Edinburgh, second son of the Queen, died on 30th July, at Rosnau Castle, his German seat. His age was 56 years.

More Sabbath Breaking.—We reported, in a recent issue, the failure of the Sabbath steamboat scheme on the Firth of Clyde. After a three years' effort the owners of the steamer "Duchess of York" found their project would not pay. But the devil, it seems, could not well digest this failure of his plans, and so he has stirred up other agents to a fresh attempt. An old steamboat called the "Heather Bell," whose occupation on the Thames or elsewhere was probably gone, has come seeking her fortune into the Firth of Clyde. Her owners are conducting her not only on principles of profanity, but also on principles of violence and impudence. The Dunoon authorities have a by-law forbidding the using of the pier for traffic between the hours of twelve on Saturday night and midnight on Sabbath. This is enforced by a penalty of £5 for each offender. In contempt of this just and wholesome regulation, this impudent steamboat with the approval of the newspaper world, has, every Sabbath for the last month, attempted to force a landing on Dunoon pier. The authorities keep the gates locked, but otherwise their attitude is supine. It seems there is some difference of opinion between the Corporation and the Police on the question of who should take the initiative in carrying out the law, and so, each Sabbath a crowd assembles on the pierhead to view the Sabbath breakers scrambling over the spikes and railings that guard the pier, while the police stand by and do nothing. Of course there is a want of zeal and heart somewhere, else the law would be put in force and such scandalous scenes stopped.

Obituary Notices.—As we go to press we are in receipt of the sad news of the death of Mr. Donald Mackay, divinity student. His decease took place at Inverness on Thursday, 2nd August. We also regret to report the death of Rev. James Patterson, Aikenside, Manitoba.