

THE
Free Presbyterian Magazine
And MONTHLY RECORD.

VOL. V.

DECEMBER, 1900.

No. 8.

The United Free Church.

THE BASIS OF UNION.

WE have no desire to dwell continually in these columns on the subject of the Union that has been effected between the Free and U.P. bodies, but in view of the crisis that has arisen in connection with the matter in a number of Free Church congregations throughout the country, we feel it our duty to give what light we can on the subject. This will be seen to be all the more necessary when we take into account the many misleading statements that are circulated by the promoters of union, who do not hesitate to traduce as lies any damaging exposures that are given of the foundations upon which their new Church is built. It may be useful at present to examine some statements in reference to the Basis of Union, which have been made by responsible leaders in the United Church, and which are being disseminated everywhere.

It has been affirmed that the union would take place "on the Standards." The question arises, On what Standards? Certainly not on the Standards of the Free Church alone, but the Standards of the U.P. Church also. This is a basis which no consistent Free Churchman can accept. You might as well ask him to build his house partly on the rock and partly on the sand, and thus to ensure its certain destruction. But "the Standards" spoken of must not be taken to mean even the original documents of either Church. There are old Standards and new Standards. Both bodies have Declaratory Acts, and however much these have been kept out of sight in the present controversy by the promoters of union, they form part of the Standards upon which the union has taken place. These Acts embody an entirely erroneous system of belief, and it is this system that is the ruling standard of faith in the United Church. The Confession is held forth in word, but not in reality; it has been given up as a standard of any practical value. The same thing may be said of the Claim of Right of 1842; the claim to be the Church of Scotland has been entirely thrown away. The statement then that this union has taken place "on the Standards" is fitted to be

very misleading among those who do not understand what is embraced in the expression.

It is further strongly affirmed by some "Constitutional" leaders that they have carried all their principles with them into the United Church. It is very difficult for any conscientious person to understand how such an affirmation as this can be made in face of the real facts of the situation. Is there any possible sense in which it may be said that these gentlemen have carried their principles with them? Certainly they have not carried their principles with them as principles, for if they had continued to hold them as principles they could not have entered this Church. The only sense in which they have carried them with them is as mere opinions. Their principles as such have no breathing space in the United Church. The terms of the Uniting Act make this clear. It professes to give great liberty to all parties in the matter of their distinctive principles, but it takes care that it does not acknowledge any beliefs outside the Standards, upon which the Union is based, as principles, but merely as "views of truth and duty"—very different things. One may have "*views* of truth and duty" that do not amount to fundamental principles of faith. We quote the words of the Basis of Union, "It is hereby declared that members of both Churches . . . shall have full right, as they see cause, to assert and maintain the views of truth and duty which they had liberty to maintain in the said Churches." We may ask further, What was the liberty they had in the said Churches? Since the passing of the Declaratory Acts they had no liberty to exercise discipline upon any who held the erroneous views contained in these Acts. They might have liberty to speak into the empty air, but nothing further. This liberty, therefore, was a mere mockery, and ought still to be treated as such by all conscientious men. Further, let it be noted that the Constitutionalists referred to, in entering the United Church, accept a constitution that is based upon the overthrow of their own principles. For if their principles had held the day, there would have been no Union with a Voluntary Church. These gentlemen, however, are now prepared to act under a Voluntary Constitution, and to administer it to others. They are now prepared to administer the Declaratory Act to candidates for office—the very Act they were so much opposed to in former times as that they were willing to die rather than have anything to do with it. What a complete surrender of principle is this! This, however, is not the first time such a surrender on their part took place. They surrendered their Church testimony when the above Act was passed. It is sad, however, to think that this Union affair instead of opening their eyes to see the low state into which they had fallen as members of the nominal Free Church, should prove only the means of blinding them more and more to their backsliding position, and alluring them onwards to a greater apostacy from the principles which they profess to hold.

It has also been frequently stated that the questions put to candidates for office in the United Church are practically the same as before. No statement could be more untrue. The second question in the old form is as follows: "Do you sincerely own and believe *the whole doctrine contained in the Confession of Faith*, approved by former General Assemblies of this Church, to be founded upon the Word of God, and do you acknowledge the same as the confession of your faith; and will you firmly and constantly adhere thereto, and to the utmost of your power assert, maintain, and defend the same, and the purity of worship at present practised in this Church?" In the new form it runs thus: "Do you sincerely own and believe *the doctrine of this Church*, set forth in the Confession of Faith, approved by Acts of General Synods and Assemblies; do you acknowledge the said doctrine as expressing the sense in which you understand the Holy Scriptures; and will you constantly maintain and defend the same, and the purity of worship in accordance therewith?"

Now, it is very clear that in the old question the person who answers is committed to "the whole doctrine contained in the Confession"; but in the new question he is simply committed to "the doctrine of this Church, set forth in the Confession." There is a great difference here. For every one knows that the doctrine of the Free and U.P. Churches, which now form this new body, is not by any means the whole doctrine of the Confession. Rather a great deal of it is quite opposed to that doctrine. The framers of this question, however, are bold enough to affirm that the doctrine of the United Church is in the Confession, but they are conscious also that the Church does not accept the whole doctrine contained in it, and so they have conveniently left out the word "whole." It is sometimes said that the reason why this word has been omitted is because it was a redundancy, but no one that knows anything of the matter will consider this explanation better than dust thrown in the eyes of the people. In fact, it appears to us that that Jesuitical dishonesty, which pervades the Church of Rome has come in like a flood into the larger Presbyterian bodies of this country, so that responsible leaders and teachers will not honestly admit the changes in doctrine that have been introduced, but will try to deceive the people with the idea that things are as they formerly were. When they believe that these changes are all in the right direction, and that the old views are now out of date, why do they not come forward and openly acknowledge their belief, and defend the same? No; because along with the renunciation of the old views—views founded upon the Word of God—there has been a deterioration of conscience and moral backbone. The new lights have little or nothing of the high integrity of their forefathers; they are of a lower order in the scale of morality.

Notice again that the person who answers the new question is committed to the Church's doctrine as "approved by Acts of

General Synods and Assemblies." These Acts include the Declaratory Acts we have already mentioned. Thus it may be seen still more clearly that it is the doctrine approved by the Declaratory Acts that he is asked to own and believe. Another sentence to be observed is the following:—"Do you acknowledge the said doctrine as expressing the sense in which you understand the Holy Scriptures?" That is to say, the candidate is required to acknowledge the dangerous notion that there may be several senses put upon the Holy Scriptures, and moreover, that the sense put upon the Holy Scriptures in the doctrine of this Church that has been approved by the Declaratory Acts is the right sense. Can any one say, with the least show of decency, that this question is practically the same as before? Is it not plain that the candidate is called upon to endorse doctrinal views that had no place whatsoever in the former questions, and that are entirely at variance with the Confession of Faith? The last point to be noticed in this question is "the purity of worship." It is not the purity of worship that obtained at the Disruption that is here spoken of, but the purity of worship that obtains at the present time in accordance with the said doctrine of this Church. Now, this purity of worship admits of uninspired hymns and instrumental music, so that the candidate here endorses the impure and unscriptural worship that has license in the United Church.

It must be clear to all who impartially study this question in its new form that it is entirely different from what it was, and that it embraces with approval all the baneful changes in doctrine and worship that have been introduced into the Church since 1843. The other questions that succeed are in harmony with the one presently examined.

The Journey of the Marchioness of Bute.

THE following paragraph is from a newspaper of 6th November:—"The Marchioness of Bute, accompanied by her children and suite, has just reached Jerusalem on a pilgrimage of love and sorrowing devotion in fulfilment of the will of the late Marquis, who desired that his heart should be buried on the Mount of Olives. During the voyage her ladyship never allowed the precious relic, which was enclosed in a golden casket, to leave her, carrying it always under her left arm against her breast. A spot has been secured on the holy mount for its interment."

The late Marquis, as our readers are aware, was a zealous convert to the religion of Rome, and the Marchioness is a hereditary devotee of the same faith. The whole project, as devised by the Marquis and executed by the Marchioness, is ridiculous, if not repulsive, and we are glad that the Reformation delivered so many generations of men from the thralldom of such silly, unnatural notions.

Notes of a Sermon

BY THE REV. JOHN MACLEOD, M.A., ULLAPOOL.

~~~~~  
“And the priests that bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord stood firm on dry ground in the midst of Jordan, and all the Israelites passed over on dry ground, until all the people were passed clean over Jordan.”—JOSHUA iii. 17.  
~~~~~

THE people of Israel were the visible Church of God. Until the New Testament dispensation was inaugurated and the Old was antiquated, they were the Church, and none but they. They were a people marked out by the Lord for Himself; they enjoyed privileges that none enjoyed but they. They were the natural branches in their own olive tree. They dwelt apart, and were not numbered among the nations. Goodness was shown to them that was denied to others—Jacob was loved and Esau was hated. Other nations knew not the Lord's judgments, but Israel did. They occupied, under the old economy, the place held now by the Church of Christ as a visible organism in this world. At the same time, it was also true with regard to them that they pictured out in their privileges, their call, their troubles, and their deliverances, that spiritual seed that are indeed the children of the promise, that are the seed of Abraham and Sarah, as Isaac was. They were the visible Church, and they picture to us the Church invisible. There is a visible Church and there is a Church invisible. All were not Israel that were outwardly Israelites; nor are all true Christians that bear the name. And it is to our loss to forget the reality of this distinction.

Writing to the Hebrew Christians the apostle illustrates his argument by bringing forward Israel in the wilderness, and what befel them there. With many of them God was not well pleased, and their carcases fell in the wilderness. They could not enter into the promised rest because of unbelief. A warning is drawn from this: let us fear, for the gospel is preached to us as it was to them. The promise of the land was theirs, yet they did not enter in. The promise was not mixed with faith. There was needed not alone a promising God, but also a believing people. The mere fact of the promise being announced to them did not secure to them its fulfilment. It did not bind the Lord to make it good to them indiscriminately and independently altogether of whether they believed His word or not. To us, too, the word has come, and in the Christ that word reveals is eternal life or the promise of the inheritance. It is not enough for us that the word has come to our hearing, and that there is eternal life in Christ. We must be in Christ to reach the eternal life that is His for sinners. We must be united to Him, and live, too, a life of faith in Him. We must receive Him, and we must walk in Him. Unless the

word is mixed with faith it will not profit. Outward privileges and a name in the Church of God will not suffice. No more will these things profit us than the fact of their being Israelites secured to all who left Egypt with Moses that they should enter into the land of Canaan.

When the history of Israel is viewed in such a light as this the people are regarded as a typical people of the place, standing, and danger of the visible community of those throughout the world, with their children, that acknowledge Jesus to be the Son of God. There was of old a spiritual Israel. In Abraham's family were both Isaac and Ishmael; in Isaac's were both Esau and Jacob. There is still a spiritual Israel. They are known certainly only to Him who searches the heart. But they *are* known to Him; and Israel of old show forth in their history and life many features of the character, history, and privileges of this spiritual Israel.

Now, the narrative of this chapter tells us what happened to Israel, and how they crossed the Jordan; and it lends itself with ease to a spiritual use as illustrative of the history and passing away of the true circumcision. In considering the seventeenth verse let us notice—

I.—The people, and whom they represent.

II.—The river, and what it means.

III.—The way in which this people crossed the river.

I.—The people we find here, on the eastern bank of the Jordan, are the children of Israel. They had come out of Egypt. They had travelled through the wilderness, and now there was nothing dividing them from the land of their possession but Jordan only. Before they had come out of Egypt they were in it, and when they were in Egypt they were as truly there as the Egyptians themselves. Not only were they in Egypt, they also did service to the king of Egypt. And in this respect they pictured forth the nature, state, and condition of the true Israel of God. Those who are God's chosen and called people were by nature children of wrath, as were others. They were dead in trespasses and in sins, as others were. They did the will of the flesh and of the mind, and were the subjects of him who is the god of this world. They were of the world as well as in it; and while they were in it and of it, they were as surely worldlings as any are. If Israel were Pharaoh's slaves, *they* were the devil's. They were in the world and of it, and though there was God's purpose with regard to them to separate them to Himself, yet until He fulfilled His purpose they remained in the world and of it, with nothing to distinguish them from their fellows.

It is true that the Lord knows whom He has chosen. He knows, but we do not. His knowledge is the secret knowledge of Him who knows everything. Secret things belong to Him, and to Him alone, but He is pleased, by His word and providence, to cast light on His secret purpose. Only so far as He has been pleased to reveal His purpose do we know anything about it.

He knew Israel in Egypt, and He brought them out of Egypt, but it was not till they were brought out of Egypt that we could say with certainty who they were that He had purposed to bring out with an high hand and an out-stretched arm. While they were still in Egypt they were as surely there as the Egyptians themselves. It is true that a distinction was made between them and their neighbours on the Passover night; and so there is a distinction already made by the blood of the Anti-type of the paschal lamb. Christ has redeemed His people, and He brings them, one and all, out of their state of natural bondage. The Son sets them free, and they are free indeed. He gives them to know the truth, and thus frees them. But it was only when the Red Sea returned on their foes and drowned them that it was clearly seen who had come out of Egypt and who had not.

In their separation from the people among whom they were, by the blood of the lamb and by the passage of the Red Sea, Israel, as a people, typified the true Israel. Many were sheltered by the blood on the lintels that afterwards fell in the wilderness; and thus when we speak of Israel as typical of the true Israel, we speak not of the individuals that composed the nation. It was the nation, and not the same individuals that left Egypt, that were now on the banks of Jordan, and it is as a nation that they were a type of the true Church of God.

But the people we have here before us not only came out of Egypt, they also came through the wilderness, and found it to be a wilderness indeed. So, too, is the case with the spiritual Israel. When they were brought out of Egypt they were left in the wilderness. They might begin their journey there with a song of gratitude and triumph, but they were none the less in the wilderness now. The children of God are called out of the world, and yet they are left in the world. They were once upon a time at home in it; they were then its children, and it is little wonder they felt at home in it. Their neighbours are still at home in it, for they are still its children; but the children of God have been born from above, and their home is where their Father is—as the children of God, heaven is their home. Their home is where their elder brother is; their home is where their brethren are; their home is where the family shall yet be undivided. And as this world is not their home, they live as strangers. God is not ashamed to be called their God, and He has prepared for them a city. He is not ashamed to call them brethren, and he will not be ashamed to take them home to Himself; but until their home-coming they are strangers, and this world becomes to them a wilderness. In the wilderness they find themselves in a thirsty land. Their soul longs in a dry, parched land where there are no waters, and thus they are taught to appreciate the promises of Him who is not a wilderness to Israel, but who speaks to the poor and the needy, thirsting for water and finding none, and says, "I will open fountains in the midst of the valleys, and rivers in the dry

places." As Israel found the wilderness a wilderness, so the people of the living God find this world to be a desert indeed, and as Israel met with conflict on their journey, so do they.

But Israel of old (to conclude this section) was fed with manna. The wilderness could not sustain them, and they had to be fed from above. So is it with the spiritual Israel. This world will not satisfy them; it will not supply them with the spiritual sustenance they need; and they must be fed from above if they are to be fed at all. They are fed; food has been provided, and they are enabled to partake of it; and in the strength of this food they travel onwards, until at length they come to the borders of the land of promised rest, and nothing parts them from that rest but the waters of Jordan. Thus they come to the point where we find Israel at this time.

II.—The river, and what it means.

Over Jordan was the land of promise. There they were to have rest. It was the land promised to their fathers, but between them and the land rolled the waters of the river. The time was harvest, and the water overflowed its banks. Yet unless these waters were crossed, Israel, though they had come so far, would be shut out from the land. In some respects the land was, and in some it was not, a type of the heavenly rest. It was in this sense that through the type the fathers looked and saw the rest that awaited them. In this land the rest of Israel was to be after their journey from Egypt through the wilderness. In this land they were to serve the Lord and to enjoy His presence. In this land they were to enjoy the riches of the provision He had made for them—it flowed with milk and honey. In these respects the land was a figure of the rest that abides where the saints of the Most High shall dwell. But in the land they were to have fighting. After crossing Jordan they still had an Achan in the camp. Their enjoyment, too, of the land was to be limited by the term of their natural life; and their enjoyment of it as a people was to be contingent on their faithfulness to the Lord in His covenant. In these respects the land was not a type of the unbroken rest of heaven. After crossing Jordan they had to fight ere they gained possession of the land. It is true that their sword won it not, and their arm saved them not; yet though they won it not by their own fighting, it was not won without their fighting. "Pray, pray," said an aged Christian to a youth; "if the battle is won, it is Christ that wins it for you, but you must be on the field." None are crowned as victors but those that engage in the conflict, and all the hosts of the Lord are victors. They have all been arrayed under the banner of the Captain of salvation; they all have fought, and they all have won. But their fighting is on this side Jordan; it is all in this life, and once this world is left behind, its troubles, trials, conflicts, temptations are no more.

In the sense then that the believer has no more conflict to face once he crosses Jordan, the land is not a type of the better land,

and the river is not a type of the dark water that flows in the valley of the shadow of death. The types, however, of the Old Testament are not to be pushed too far, and we need not expect that in every detail and particular the type and what it typifies correspond. Suffice it for us that, taking the matter broadly, we see in the land a figure of the Christian's rest, and in the river a figure of the river of death that all generations until the last shall have to cross in order to be present with the Lord. We see that the spies crossed over Jordan and returned safely, but this does not materially affect our position. It is a subordinate detail, and we need not, on its account, qualify our statement of the general position—that Jordan is a type of death, and that the land is a type of the everlasting rest. Were we inclined to spiritualise details, it would not be difficult to see in the spies' going and their safe return, a picture of faith and hope entering as forerunners and bringing back a message to Israel on Jordan's banks, but we forbear. The river had to be crossed, and Israel were encamped by its side. They were there, old and young; they were there, warrior and matron; they were there, feeble and strong. Of all ages, of each sex, of every quality, they were there; all met together at Jordan's side. So is it with the Church of God. Of every generation, of every clime, old and young, feeble and strong, bond and free, they meet at this point. Jordan has to be crossed ere they enter into possession of the land. The way they never have taken before has to be taken now, and past personal experience will not help them. However old they may be in the service of their Master, however young they may be—babes and sucklings, they all have this journey to make, and the patriarch is not more acquainted with it than is the stripling. The ancient knows no more of it than the infant; they have to tread a path they have never trod before. Though redeemed from the curse and the penalty of sin, the children of God have to face the king of terrors; they are not exempt from mortality. The body is dead because of sin, though the spirit is life because of righteousness. Death is to them spoiled of his sting; his sting is sin, and Christ has spoiled him of it. Instead of being the frowning entrance into the second death, death is to them a door of life. They enter into life, into a fuller, freer, purer, nobler life than ever they enjoyed here. It is not death thus to die; and such an end as this awaits all the Israel of God when they shall go into the presence of the King to abide there for ever and ever. They have to die, but how changed is death to them! It is, it is true, the fruit of sin; had there been no sin, it had not been. It is not to them the wages of sin; it is its result. But though the result of sin, it is transformed. It is under Christ's feet; it is His servant; He sends it on a message of love to tell His loved ones of their promotion. By it He says to them, "Friend, come up higher." It has been emptied of the venom of the curse, and is now actually a covenant blessing to those to whom all things are

made new. This, we conceive, is what the river is, and what the river represents.

III.—Let us now see how Israel crossed the river.

Strong men might swim over Jordan even in flood, but this was not the way in which Israel were to cross. Their crossing is a type that speaks to age after age. Strong and weak were on the same level; rich and poor had the one way to take, and they took it. Old and young alike had to cross, and there was no distinction between one and another. They all, each and all, had to pass over the channel of Jordan, and none was to be safer than another. They were all to be equally secure. What then was the mode adopted? By the command of the Lord, Joshua gave orders that the priests should advance carrying the ark of the covenant, and after them at a distance the people were to come. The priests, the sons of Aaron, advanced, bearing the ark. They reached the edge of the water; their feet were dipped in the waters of the river, and then the waters were stayed. The Lord Himself stayed them; they stood up as an heap, and from the standing place of the priests to the mouth of the river where it falls into the Dead Sea, the channel was dried up. Thus was an highway opened up for the redeemed of the Lord. He Himself opened it, and His people used it. Under shelter of the ark of the covenant, Israel, great and small, high and low, crossed over to the other side. Their crossing would take no long time, ranged as they would be perhaps for miles along the river's bank. They crossed, however, whether in a few moments or in a longer time, and Jordan made way for them; Jordan was driven back.

Now, what does all this mean? How was Jordan driven back? The Lord did it, but He used instrumentality. The priests, bearing the ark, advanced to the brink of the river, and then the waters ceased to flow, and stood up as firmly as though they were frozen by winter's cold. The priesthood of the Old Testament was typical, and the ark was a type. They were typical of Christ, of Christ as priest, of Christ as the ark of the New Testament. Christ in His sacrificial death, tasting death and drinking the cup, is brought before us here. By His death He spoiled death of its sting. As the priests entered the river, so He entered; as the priests were not drowned, so too, in bruising the head of the serpent, His heel only was bruised. He died, but death did not conquer. He conquered death, and He conquered it by dying. By His death He overcame death. The priests' feet were wet; they entered the water, but the water overwhelmed them not. He entered the water indeed, but it could not overwhelm Him. He destroyed death: He opened a safe way and passage over the river of death for all believers. They go not through the water, but only over the channel of the dried-up river.

All Israel took the shelter of the ark. Under its shelter they crossed safely. So with the spiritual Israel; they cross the river

of death under shelter and covert of what Christ has done. The channel has to be crossed, but it cannot drown. Among the all things that are theirs is death; it is theirs. They are not its prey; it is theirs; it is transformed. It is only, however, under covert of the atoning death of the Lamb of God that this is to be enjoyed; but it is to be enjoyed, and more than that, it *is* enjoyed. Be they strong or weak, old or young, in the family of God this is secured to them by the death of Christ, that death shall not sweep them away to the Dead Sea of perdition. The strong are here no stronger than the weak, nor are the weak weaker than the strong. To all that are justified by faith in His blood, Christ secures that they shall not perish, for the justification that is from Him secures to them the title to eternal life.

This narrative, however, is very instructive in various details. Israel crossed during harvest, and then the river was wont to flow up to the level of its banks. There is a sense in which death is the harvest, and to all that are out of Christ when the harvest comes this falls as their lot—that they have to cross Jordan in flood, and thus to be swept away by its waters. The people were to keep at a distance from the ark. It cleared the way, yet they were not to come too near it. Redemption is a mystery. It would not be known if it had not been revealed, and now that it has been revealed, its depths are past sounding; they cannot be searched. Profane boldness of speculation about the mysteries of God's word are forbidden. They are not to be treated as common things; they call for reverence and for becoming treatment. In meditating on them we must not lean to our own understanding. Only in so far as we are led into the word of God, and led by that word to know its secrets, do we treat them with the reverence that they deserve and demand. As Israel must not come near the ark, so must not we deal with unholy familiarity with the mystery of godliness and the mystery of redemption. Again, the priests bearing the ark stood in their place until all Israel crossed over. As long as there is a believer in the world who is to cross into the eternal world by the passage of Jordan, so long does the efficacy of that death in which is his hope keep a clear passage for him into the promised rest. "Christ crucified" in the gospel offer is laid hold of by faith, and thus the shelter of the ark of the covenant is taken, and a safe passage secured over the river. As long as there is one believer to cross, so long will the royal highway be kept open for the royal household. It is their privilege, one and all, to be conquerors, and this enters into their victory, that even in death they are victorious. Though body and soul part company, yet the redeemed spirit passes into the King's immediate presence.

But now suppose that there was in Israel one who was so proud and independent as to refuse such a passage as this. To think that he would take advantage of the passage that the vulgar herd availed themselves of, that *he* should have to stand indebted to

the protection of the ark! Why, he could cross Jordan for himself, and needed no such help. If Jordan was deep before, how much deeper was it now? Its waters stood up as an heap; there was no wading possible. Are there any that deal so foolishly with an offered Christ? Alas! there are multitudes. They will not become His debtors; they wilfully disregard Him; they trample Him under foot. There are but the two ways of crossing Jordan; one must either come under the ark's shelter, or he must refuse its protection. Death to the ungodly that never knew the gospel is awful, but privilege increases responsibility, and the death of those that refuse Christ is not only sure as a part of the wages of sin, but it is made sevenfold certain to them. He who would try to wade Jordan with its waters standing up as an heap, would be punished for his pains. He who refuses Christ as his surety and relies not on His finished work and His perfect sacrifice, walks into the heaped-up waters of Jordan, and there is no swimming here.

Christ is still held forth; He is as mighty to save as ever. There is but the one salvation, and that is by faith in His blood. His people, one and all, esteeming their own righteousness to be but filthy rags, rely on Him as their righteousness. Their desire is that they should be found in Him, in His righteousness arrayed. They may have their fears, but their faith causes them to take the safe side of the ark. Some in Israel of old, looking at the heap of waters, might tremblingly say, "What if all that heap descend on me, and I deserve it! I shall be swept hopelessly away." Such there might be in Israel, and such there are in the spiritual Israel. Looking at times with the eye of their heart only to their own desert, they see that this is but righteous, that death should be the end of their hopes. They lose sight of Christ as their surety—not that ever they lose sight of Him as *the* surety. They question not His power to save those that trust in Him; they question their own salvation, because they question their own faith in Christ. They have faith, and yet they question it. The questioning is in them and not in their faith. While they are here they are subject to any or all the assaults of the adversary, and even when passing beyond the range of his arrows they may have their heel wounded. He may wound their heel with cruel questionings even when they are passing finally out of his reach. But if such there were among Israel, the Lord dealt with them not according to their unbelief, but according to their faith. Their soundness of mind led them to take shelter under covert of the ark, and there was security there. So with the spiritual Israel, in spite of all their questionings they cling to Christ. They take shelter under His covert, and not one drop of the flood of wrath shall descend upon them. They are as safe in Him, though weak, as the strongest of His people. He will not suffer them to be lost. He will not belie His word, nor will He lose His glory by the loss of their soul. Now, this is said not to encourage a

doubting, questioning spirit, but rather to encourage the true believer in spite of his doubt.

Christ is worthy of such a self-denied trust on our part, that we should yield ourselves unto Him, confident that He will not cast out, but rather that He will perfect that which concerneth us. See to it then, that as a traveller to eternity, you come under the covert of His blood; then you will find, as Israel found, a clear passage opened to you into the land of promise. You shall then go in and enter into possession. The land and its fulness shall be yours, and you will never forget to whom and to what you are indebted for it all—even to Christ and His precious blood. This is the theme of song for all the redeemed. They are one in this, as they are one in Him. Their song shall be to Him who loved them, and washed them from their sins in His own precious blood, and made them kings and priests unto God, even His Father. Amen.

Letters of the late Donald Duff, Stratherrick.

(XXXI.)

24 WELLS STREET,
INVERNESS, *October, 1884.*

MY DEAR FRIEND,—By this address you will see that I have changed my abode, which is the reason that I have not written you for some time.

It is now about 50 years since I have been endeavouring to follow the camp of Israel to the promised land, and you know that the pillar of cloud that was leading them arose sometimes out of one wilderness and settled in another, and so it has been the case with me. And a man that is also a wilderness to himself, to be settled in a wilderness is surely a melancholy sight. But still I believe that the gracious presence of the Lord manifested to my soul, would turn even such a wilderness into a fruitful field, and make the desert of my withered experience as a very garden of His grace.

I may tell you that it was entirely of my own accord that I left Stratherrick; the dear people there were altogether against it, and it was a great trial to them and to me—after fourteen years of happy union—that we had to part. But the state of my health made it necessary, for as mentioned to you before, I had to be sometimes in Inverness to be attended daily, and often twice a day, by the doctor.

I may also say that I had no idea until I came to live here that vital godliness was at such a low ebb in this town. How few are they with whom one can take counsel as to the dealings of the Lord with a soul that He is making a habitation for Himself! And

as to the public means, there is not a church I would care to worship in except Dr. Mackay's, he being the only one that upholds what is called the religion of the old stamp. And the longer I live, I am the more persuaded that it is the right stamp, and I would desire to declare this with my dying breath; not only because it agrees with my experience, but because taking the Word of God as the rule and standard, it is in accordance therewith, and is also in accordance with the experience of the Church of God as recorded in the Scriptures. "To the law and to the testimony, if they speak not according to that Word it is because there is no light in them."

Hoping to hear soon how all is with you.—Yours, &c.,
D. DUFF.

The above was the last letter written to our correspondent by Mr. Duff, and those of our readers who have valued the "Letters" from his pen which have appeared in the pages of this *Magazine* during the past year, may be interested in perusing the following account of his last days on earth, written by one who attended him closely during his last illness.

18 DOUGLAS ROW,

INVERNESS, 19th January, 1885.

. Our dear friend appeared to be in a measure of health, although not strong, since coming to this town a few months ago. The doctor had warned him against exposing himself to any cold or fatigue, nevertheless he felt able to venture to the communion at Urray, and after returning complained a good deal of pain, but hoped the attack would pass away as similar attacks had done. On 29th ult., however, he was seized very badly, and suffered much for 24 hours, but next day got relief. On New-Year's day forenoon as I was going to a service in church, I thought I would go round and call for him, and found him very ill, so much so that I went for the doctor. He was out of town and did not return till 3 p.m., and for these three hours our dear friend suffered intensely but patiently. In the evening the pain subsided and he became cheerful again and spoke of the sufferings of the saints, referring to Guthrie who went to the scaffold glorifying God, and to others who pined in suffering on a bed of straw. Next day he was very weak, but patient and pleasant, and chided another friend and me who were sitting in the room for our being so sad. On Saturday he became very heavy under the influence of the medicine the doctor was giving him to soothe the pain (morphia, I think), and did not speak much that day, nor on Sabbath. On Monday he was still in that state, and I began to tease him for being so sleepy that we could get nothing out of him. He smiled and said, "But I am easier and suffering less than I was." I said, "Is there anything I can do for you?" He replied, "The first thing you will have to do for me is to prepare a coffin for me." To that I could not reply, but turned away saying, "Although you

are not so well as we could wish, you are better than you were." Next day Tuesday, he was seized again with acute pain, and his suffering was agonizing during that night, but he got relief towards morning. I said to him in the forenoon when he was a little better, "Some friends have been writing to inquire for you," and mentioned their names. He burst into a stream of tears, and said, "I believe it, for I am feeling their spirits around me." "What message shall I send them?" I asked. "Tell them that my sufferings are not so great as they might be, and that I find it is well that I have not now to begin to seek the Lord and His salvation, for the time of trouble is assuredly not 'the acceptable time.'" He then relapsed into the former heavy state, although he looked round and tried to smile on hearing the voice of Mrs. Maciver, Achnasheen, in the room, she having come that day to see him. He shook hands with her, but could not speak; and that night the cold perspiration began to come out on his head, and we thought it was the end. But about 11 p.m. his eyes that had been closed almost continuously for the past days, suddenly opened with a bright piercing look and began to gaze at something unseen by us, and they continued fixed upon some object that we could not see, with an expression of conscious delight. The only change we perceived afterwards was, that as he got weaker the look became more intense, until the following morning, when the breathing got to be laboured, and continued so until noon, when it ceased, and he passed away in presence of his two daughters and Mrs. Maciver, Achnasheen, and myself. Oh! the loss to us and to the Church of God!

The funeral took place the following Tuesday, leaving his house at 11 a.m., and reaching the churchyard of Killearnan between 1 and 2, where, in presence of a large number of sorrowing friends—many of whom came long distances to attend—he was laid to rest. The sacramental services began in the town the following Thursday, and Mr. Angus Macdonald and some others returned with us and remained till to-day. But oh! how we all missed the one who used to be the life of the gathering as far as human company was concerned, so that on this occasion instead of the usual happy fellowship, there was sadness and sorrow. There were present with us and at the funeral, among others, Mr. Duff's precentor in Stratherrick, Donald Macpherson, a sweet leader in the songs of Zion, when He who inhabiteth the praises of Israel sometimes graciously vouchsafed His presence, as seen in the holy melting and sweet weeping of living worshippers; an effect that sounding brass and wind instruments could never produce. We had also the loving Angus Macdonald, whose every word and deed savours of the sweetness of the love of Christ. Also John Rose, Schoolmaster, lowly and precious even to old age, and Simon Campbell, Kilmorack, whose faith nothing can satisfy but Christ Himself, and whose varied experience brings to mind often the words of the Psalm—"They mount to heaven, then to the

depths they do go down again," and which makes his addresses so rich and so attractive. Also John Campbell, Knockbain, who, though delicate in bodily health, is eloquent in prayer and ready of speech. I remember the first time I ever went to see John, he was ill in bed, and on my sending in to ask, was it a sinner or a prince that lay ill in this house? he sent back word, "Tell the man it is a sinner, but if he would get grace, it would make him a prince." And we had dear Alexander Cattanach, self-lost in his love to Christ and to the brethren, and Mr. and Mrs. Maciver, Achnasheen and others.

The following stanzas appeared in a Northern newspaper the week after Mr. Duff's death:—

"What is it that ails thee
Stratherrick, fair vale?
That the mirth of thy homesteads
Is turn'd into wail!
That thy fields and thy gardens
Seem no more to bloom:
And thy heath-cover'd hillsides
Hang o'er thee in gloom!
Is the sword of the alien
Unsheath'd at thy breast?
Or hath pestilence' scourge
Thee bereft of thy best?
Or hath blight of fell famine
O'ershadown'd thy brow?
Say, why sad and silent
Stratherrick art thou?
Friend, neither hath famine,
Nor sickness, nor war,
Cast o'er us the shadow
Thou see'st from afar,
But the hand of Jehovah
'Neath which we must bow,
Hath the 'silver cord' broken
And Zion laid low!
Our shepherd, our father,
Has gone to his rest;
Oh! Death will naught serve thee
But that which is best?

Thou hast ravag'd our Highlands,
Thy scythe hath cut down
Our Princes, our Nobles,
And men of renown!
Then sure there is reason
We sit sad and lone,
Amid the world's music
Ariseth our moan!
Those stars where was mirror'd
Jehovah's own light,
Have departed for ever
And left us in night!
But the night shall have morning,
The Lord hath so said;
His voice shall yet waken
The sleep of His dead!
The Bridegroom in gladness
Arouse shall His Bride,
And enthrone her in glory
With Him to abide!
And who shall claim kindred
That day with the Bride?
When her Lord shall avouch her,
Shall we be outside?
We shall! if we tread not
The paths that she trod,
Her people, our people,
And her God, our God!"

January, 1885.

I FEEL like a man who has no money in his pocket, but is allowed to draw for all he wants upon one infinitely rich; I am, therefore, at once both a beggar and a rich man.—*John Newton.*

Meeting of Synod.

THE half-yearly meeting of Synod was held on Tuesday, 13th November, in the hall of St. Jude's Church, Glasgow. At twelve noon, the retiring moderator, the Rev. George Mackay, Stornoway, conducted public worship, and preached a sermon from Phil. iv. 19, "But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus." After sermon, the Synod was constituted with prayer. Sederunt: from the Northern Presbytery—Rev. John Macleod, Ullpool; Rev. George Mackay, Stornoway (Moderator); Rev. Alexander Macrae, Portree; with Mr. Alexander Maclean, Inverness, elder; from the Southern Presbytery—Rev. Neil Cameron, St. Jude's; Rev. James S. Sinclair, John Knox's; Rev. John Robertson, retired minister; with Mr. John McNeilage, John Knox's, elder; Rev. Walter Scott, of the Free Presbyterian Church, New South Wales, was also associated with the Synod. The minutes of last Synod were read and approved of. The Moderator said that his term of office had expired, and thanked the court for the kindness and courtesy he had received, and added that it lay with the Synod to appoint his successor. Rev. Neil Cameron moved that the Rev. James S. Sinclair, John Knox's, be appointed Moderator for the ensuing year. The motion was seconded by the Rev. Alexander Macrae, and unanimously agreed to. Mr. Sinclair having accepted office, took the chair. He thanked the court for the honour conferred upon him, and expressed the hope that through grace he might be enabled suitably to perform the duties of his office. After a committee to arrange business was appointed, the court adjourned to meet again in the evening at seven o'clock.

The Synod met at the hour appointed, and was opened with devotional exercises. In addition to the members of the first sederunt there were present from the Southern Presbytery, the Rev. Alexander Stewart, Oban, and Messrs. Duncan Crawford, Oban, and James Nicol, St. Jude's, elders. The minutes of the previous meeting were read and approved of. The clerk read a letter (which will be found on page 304), drawn up by Mr. Sinclair and himself, according to the instructions of Synod, in reply to a fraternal communication received last year from the Associate Synod of North America. He said that a copy of the magazine of that body had come to hand, which contained a report of a meeting of the Associate Synod, and it was stated in the report that the Free Presbyterian Synod's letter had been listened to with the deepest interest, and that a Committee was appointed to send a reply. The reply, he added, had not yet come. The Clerk said that the Committee appointed to write an appeal to the people of Scotland on the subject of the errors of the times had not been able to accomplish the work as yet. The court renewed the appointment. The next thing taken up was remits from the Presbyteries.

A remit was presented from the Northern Presbytery asking that Dingwall should be constituted a regular charge, apart from Beaully, the Dingwall congregation having promised £100 to the Sustentation Fund. The petition was granted. A remit from the Southern Presbytery, in reference to sending a missionary to the island of Coll, was spoken to by Rev. Neil Cameron. He said that about 300 people there had quite recently separated from the nominal Free Church when it decided to unite with the U.P. body, and they had formally declared their adherence to the Free Presbyterian Church. He moved that Mr. John Mackay of Tarbert, Ross-shire, presently at Fort-William and Kilmallie, be sent to officiate in Coll. The motion was unanimously agreed to.

The Rev. John Robertson submitted the following resolution, which was cordially adopted:—"The Synod views with much alarm and deep regret the action of some of our rulers in the countenance they give to Popish and Prelatic errors and practices as most dishonouring to God and dangerous to the interests of His Church in the land. Particularly the Synod condemns the presence of the Lord Provost and other Magistrates of this city at the celebration of a Popish mass, and in consideration of the gravity of this offence against the convictions of all true Protestants, it is resolved that a copy of this resolution be sent to the Lord Provost, and also to the two leading newspapers." Mr. James Nicol, elder, in supporting the motion, urged the importance of systematically instructing the young in the history and principles of the Church in Scotland as a preventative against the erroneous views and practices of the time.

The Clerk next read the commission of the Rev. Walter Scott, from the Free Presbyterian Synod of Eastern Australia, and the Moderator invited Mr. Scott to come forward and address the court. Mr. Scott delivered an able and interesting address in which he portrayed the state of religion in Australia, and also made some remarks upon the obligations of the Scottish Covenants, National and Solemn League. (A sketch of the address is given elsewhere.) Rev. Neil Cameron expressed the pleasure it gave them all to meet Mr. Scott, and to receive him as a representative of the Free Presbyterian Synod of Eastern Australia. Mr. Cameron said that whatever opinions might be held by many about the Covenants, he personally felt that a renewal of them with adaptation to the times was something that would become a necessity at a not very distant date in the future. The Synod then recorded their thanks to Mr. Scott for his address, and their desire that he should convey reciprocal friendly greetings to the Synod in Australia which he represented.

The interim financial report was next read. The treasurer's recommendation that the salaries for the half-year be continued at the former rate of £65 was approved. The allocation of the Building Fund was remitted to the Committee.

The Clerk announced that the next subject was "The Anti-Union Movement." It was moved, seconded, and agreed to, that the court meet in private to discuss this subject. The Moderator intimated to the congregation that the result of the conference would be published in due course. The Synod then met in private. The following is the resolution that was agreed upon,—
"The Synod, while expressing its thankfulness that so many ministers and people of this country have refused to enter the United Free Church, and while cherishing the hope that these same ministers and people may be ultimately led in the mercy of God to take up a position similar to that held by the Free Presbyterian Church, desires to inform the people under its charge that the ecclesiastical position of the anti-unionists is in its estimation still unsatisfactory. The Synod would therefore urge upon all its congregations to stand fast to the testimony raised in 1893 by this Church."

It was agreed that the next meeting of Synod be (D.V.) held in the Inverness Church on Tuesday after the first Sabbath of July. The meeting was closed with the benediction.

Synod Address by the Rev. Walter Scott.

THE STATE OF RELIGION IN AUSTRALIA: THE SCOTTISH NATIONAL COVENANTS.

THE following is the substance of an address delivered at the meeting of Synod in Glasgow, on the evening of 13th November, by the Rev. Walter Scott, New South Wales.

The Clerk having read the Commission of the Synod of Eastern Australia in favour of the Rev. Walter Scott as their delegate to the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland, the Moderator (Rev. J. S. Sinclair) invited Mr. Scott to address the Court.

Mr. Scott expressed the pleasure it gave him to be present at such an Assembly in the old land. He thanked them for their cordial reception. In this respect he contrasted his experience, coming as a delegate from Australia, with the very different reception which had been accorded to the Rev. William Miller of Melbourne, a former Commissioner from the Free Church in Australia to the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland. Mr. Miller had been denied any official acknowledgment, and when, apart from his formal commission, he pressed before the Assembly the case of the Free Church minority in Australia, their claim to be acknowledged as the loyal representatives there of the principles contended for in 1843, was, on the motion of the present Moderator of the "United Free Assembly," emphatically rejected; the reason being their refusal to be a party to the Union with Erastians and Voluntaries, which had just then been formed in Victoria. That was in 1861. Even at that early stage, therefore,

the attitude of the home Free Church must have been softening towards Voluntaryism. At the same time it could be said that subsequent events in Scotland, culminating in the Union with the Voluntaries which had just been consummated in Edinburgh, had left the Victorian Church with no cause to regret the severance thus providentially forced upon them. And after the lapse of years they in Australia had the satisfaction of being able, in connection with this Synod, to convey greetings to more genuine representatives of the Disruption contendings under the changed circumstances which now obtained.

The mention of the Disruption brought them to the fact that in the colonies even the issues of the Ten Years' Conflict in Scotland had to be recognised and decided upon. In New South Wales what had been known as "the Synod of Australia in connection with the Established Church," was broken up in 1846, and those in sympathy with the Evangelical Movement at home became constituted as the Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia. But again, in 1864-5, a majority of that Synod merged into the Union then formed in that colony after protracted negotiations, leaving a still smaller minority adhering to the Scriptural and historic doctrine of the duty of a nation as such to maintain and further the interests of Christ's kingdom. This minority became once more reduced in 1884. But if they turned to the case of those who had gained numerically by such rendings, they found that Unionism had completely changed the situation. Whilst there was an absence of distinctive Reformation principle in the large Presbyterian Churches, their position was that of Voluntaryism. Nor had the Voluntary principle in the colonies been merely theoretical. What were the facts? In Victoria, at the instance of a certain Minister of Public Instruction, who was the son of a Voluntary minister in Scotland, Parliament had gone the length of ordering the name of the Saviour to be expunged from every lesson book used in the public schools! This almost incredible state of things was only changed within recent years. Strange to say, it was left to a Roman Catholic member to move the rescinding of the infamous order. And to this day the Bible itself stands interdicted from the schools of the colonies referred to. In New South Wales no school buildings were allowed to be used for any religious service. These were significant facts. And in the face of them what were they to think of the present triumph of Voluntaryism in Scotland? Its baneful influence in Australia was notorious. The young were found, for the most part, unable to read the Bible with any correctness. Reverence for authority, parental or otherwise, was awanting. Crime at an early age was so prevalent that it had attracted the notice of judges on the bench. Everything went to show that the Voluntary principle, as logically carried out so as to eliminate religion as far as possible from the State, was not only a grave danger to the well-being of a community, but was such as even threatened its very existence.

“For the nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish; yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted.”—(Isaiah lx. 12.)

Unionism had not meant revival or reformation in Australia. There was the same innovating and revolutionary spirit in worship and doctrine there as obtained in Scotland. The fundamental doctrine of the inspiration of the Bible had been attacked with impunity from the Moderator's chair in New South Wales. Such witness as had appeared in defence had been silenced, and—similarly to certain cases in their own Highlands—had been won over to the side of the majority. Worldliness, moreover, with all its secularisation of both Sabbath and Sanctuary, was rampant; and it had been observed as in keeping with such facts that there was hardly such a thing as a colonially-trained clergy—the Australian ministry, with only a small percentage, having still to be drawn from Britain or elsewhere.

The state of things religiously in Australia thus indicated might suffice to show the great odds which the Free Presbyterian Churches had to stand against. Nor was it a helpful factor, under the difficulties, they had no great past to appeal to. There had been no religious crisis in the colonies; no religious history practically. In Scotland they had the memorable periods of the Reformation as a background, with the relative struggles and sufferings of their confessors and martyrs. They had events and associations for ever sacred as representing wonderful interpositions of God, from time to time, for both Church and State. They could appeal to these. And in the later stages of their eventful history as a Church they were but finishing the testimony handed down to them from a glorious past, in connection with which they could never forget the great cloud of witnesses which compassed them about. But in Australia it was not so. Besides, their strength there was small at the best; it was not even concentrated. In South Australia, for instance, there were two ministers with their congregations claiming to occupy the Free Church position; in Victoria there was a Synod comprising four ordained ministers with pastoral charges; and in New South Wales the Synod now represented before them had at present three ministers with congregations. In the same colony there was a Synod known as the *Expulsion* or Sutherland Synod—so called from its having expelled one-half of its members—containing now two ministers pastorally settled and two others giving supply. To a certain extent, in each case, there were also vacant stations getting occasional service. These were the statistics. Perhaps the wonder was, not that the witness was so limited in strength, but rather that anything of a testimony for the simplicity and purity of Scriptural doctrine and worship existed in Australia. And it just required a recognition of the facts to render emphatic the appeal now being made for additional labourers. They would, at any rate, know that night that there was a cry reaching them from Australia—“Come over and help us.” It was, of course,

obvious that, in the present exigencies of their own case in Scotland, the demand for labourers amongst themselves was likely to be greater than the supply. But in these matters they were, at least, not straitened in the Lord of the harvest, who was able, in answer to the cry of His needy people, to thrust forth labourers where and when He pleased.

After all, how strange it seemed to be in Scotland pleading such interests amongst brethren, themselves earnest and sympathetic! In Australia, he followed the course of events leading up to the movement of 1893 with the liveliest interest. When they first constituted as a separate Presbytery, his own Synod had lost no time in signifying appreciation of the step taken, and sending fraternal greetings. He had noticed that Dr. Rainy, in depreciating the importance of the movement, had estimated the number of secessionists at 7000; and he had rejoiced if even there were 7000 who were not prepared to bow the knee to the new theology. How thankful they should be that God was reserving so many as a faithful witness in the midst of such prevailing defection.

But before closing his remarks, he desired to say a few things on the National Covenants and present duty, which the moderator had informed him the Synod would be pleased to hear as part of his address.

1. They had the fact that in the providence of God they were in the position of having a free hand to act unreservedly in the interest of Divine truth and as a witness in the land. At such a crisis in the history of the church and nation, this was an advantage not to be lost sight of. It was an advantage which those presently remaining outside of the United Church, and claiming to be the Free Church, did not possess. They were hampered by questions of property and otherwise. Was the Synod prepared to take a comprehensive view of the situation by identifying itself not merely with what was done in 1843, but with the earlier attainments of the Reformation, in connection with which there was a special call for a more full and special testimony? They had to consider that in so far as they went back in their present testifying only to the Disruption, they were committed to the settlement of religion which took place in 1690—a settlement based on the charter settling Presbyterianism in 1592, but which ignored later and higher attainments in connection with the purer settlement of 1638. It was at this later period, for instance, that the church, as established, had conceded to her, for the first time, the right of appointing her own meetings—a right so nearly affecting the doctrine of Christ's Headship. Now, with the annulling of all the Acts of the famous Assembly of that year, at the Restoration, this inherent right of the Church to a Free General Assembly was included; and the 1690 settlement referred to, left those attainments of the Church thus buried under the brand of being seditious. The Church by accepting and founding upon that settlement identified herself with it. If there had been a departure from

Disruption principles, had there not, therefore, been earlier unfaithfulness paving the way for it? In the existing crisis in Scotland, this matter could hardly be excluded from the grounds of God's controversy, or from the Church's confession of sins; nor should it be omitted from the word of her testimony. And it was his humble opinion that the Synod had a responsibility to God and to the generation in the matter.

2. There is the further fact that it was the use and wont of the Reformation Church in each of the several crises of her history, to associate with her special contendings, the solemn sanction of covenanting. This was characteristic of her from the earliest of her struggles. Before the Church of Scotland was an established Church at all, she was a covenanting Church, and she continued to be so onwards to the Revolution period. The present important juncture seems to call for a revival of this scriptural and laudable practice. It was by covenanting that the Reformation Church in her great emergencies was lifted above her difficulties. And it was when she thus renewed her covenant from time to time, in a bond suited to the particular circumstances of each occasion, that she was so signally owned by God. The Solemn League and Covenant was, indeed, publicly burned by the common hangman during the persecution period, but in its place as bound up in the volume of the Church's Subordinate Standards, as well as in the Register of Heaven, it remains a silent witness against the many breaches of it by the Church and nation. When others are trampling upon or unscrupulously breaking away from their vows or covenant engagement, it would savour of the truest Reformation spirit were the Free Presbyterian Church to formally acknowledge the obligation of such covenants, and the duty of renewing them, in a bond suitable to her present circumstances, so as to prepare for engaging in an act of public religious covenanting. And who will deny that the present situation, whether ecclesiastical or political, is fraught with considerations of gravest apprehension, calling for some such serious and extraordinary step in the highest national interest?

Mr. Scott concluded by reading a letter which he had received some years ago from the late Rev. Dr. Walter M'Gilvray of Aberdeen, in favour of such covenanting in order to bring together the friends of truth in Scotland.

Communion.—The Communion of the Lord's Supper will (D.V.) be dispensed in Dumbarton on the first Sabbath of January, 1901.

THE heir of a great estate, while a child, thinks more of a few shillings in his pocket than of his inheritance. So a Christian is often more elated by some frame of heart, than by his title to glory.—*John Newton.*

Letter to Associate Synod of North America.

248 KENMURE STREET, POLLOKSHIELDS,
GLASGOW, 21st February, 1900.

To the Associate Presbyterian Synod of North America.

DEAR BRETHREN,—The Synod of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland, at its November meeting in this city, instructed us to reply to your kind letter of fraternal sympathy, dated the 24th October, 1899, and to send you cordial thanks for the same. It also requested us to give some brief outline of our Church's position on such distinguishing doctrines as the Headship of Christ, the Atonement, and the Inspiration of the Scriptures.

We are glad, indeed, that, in the midst of all the declension which is prevalent now-a-days in the Churches of the Reformation from the scriptural simplicity and fidelity to truth that characterised their founders, you still hold to the principles for which the Erskines contended. We admire the faithfulness of these noble men to the truth of God in their day, and, while not ranged under their special testimony, we maintain the leading positions that they held. Here in Scotland we have many who profess to be the representatives of the Secession and who utilize the names of the Secession Fathers for their own purposes, who yet, alike in principle and in practice, are at complete variance with the contendings of the Original Seceders. Loose views of the Atonement, as to its extent and reference, and loose views as to the duty of the nation, as a nation, to Christ and His truth, are prevalent in the largest body among us that professes to represent the Erskines' position.

We thank you very heartily for enumerating and explaining several interesting facts of history that are fitted to encourage us in the testimony, which, in humble dependence upon the grace of God, we have endeavoured to maintain for the truth in Scotland. As you no doubt know, our Church's full position is to be found in the constitution of the Free Church of Scotland, as settled in 1843. We strenuously protest against all innovations inconsistent with that constitution in doctrine, discipline, or worship. As far as worship is concerned, we refuse to have anything to do with instrumental music in the public services of the sanctuary, and at the same time we maintain that the Book of Psalms is the divinely appointed manual of praise in the worship of God. Accordingly, we refuse to employ in our public devotions uninspired hymns or mere paraphrases of Scripture.

The *first* important doctrine we were instructed to notice in this letter is the Headship of Christ. We hold, of course, the very same views in regard to this doctrine as are formulated in our constitution by the Disruption Fathers. Christ is the sole Head of the Church, and has appointed church officers to administer its affairs, distinct from the civil magistrate. These officers possess a

spiritual jurisdiction, co-ordinate with, and not subordinate to, the civil jurisdiction of the civil magistrate. Further, we also hold that Christ is King of nations, and that the State, as such, is under obligation to acknowledge and support His cause and truth. We are thus opposed to Voluntarism on the one hand, and to Erastianism on the other. The Erastian would spoil Christ's Church of her freedom; the Voluntary would spoil the nation of the privilege of nationally acknowledging the King of nations. With the Voluntary, the idea of religious equality goes so far that Protestantism and Romanism, Christianity and Mohammedanism are by him to be put on the same level. The one measure is to be meted out by the State to truth and falsehood, to light and darkness. This principle cuts even deeper than the question of a religious establishment. It affects the whole attitude of the nation as such to the Most High, who rules among men, appointing the kingdom to whomsoever He willeth. On the theory of Voluntarism, there can be no national reformation, no national confession of sin, and no national furthering of Christ's kingdom. On this theory it is the duty of the State to further merely the civil, or at best, the moral interests of the community. Many in our country are falling under the influence of this theory, as they think it hopeless to expect that a composite body like the State can by any possibility fulfil any functions higher than civil. But we are strongly convinced that, when cowards wax faint-hearted, then is the time for the Church of Christ all the more boldly to unfurl the banner of Christ's Headship over the nations, and not in the least degree to fall in with the spirit that would compromise His glorious prerogatives and crown rights.

The *second* important doctrine we were asked to notice is that of the Atonement. We hold implicitly by the doctrine of the Atonement as stated in the Westminster Standards, without qualification of any kind. We therefore believe that Christ died for the elect only, are opposed to the doctrine of a universal atonement, as well as to the double reference view, holding both to be unscriptural and dangerous. We also deplore the lamentable fact that the preaching of "Christ and him crucified," Christ as an atoning sacrifice in the room of hell-deserving sinners, is conspicuous by its absence from a vast number of pulpits, and that salvation by character, or in other words, "by the works of the law," is the delusive gospel that is very widely preached in our day.

The *third* and last doctrine we refer to is the Inspiration of the Scriptures. On this fundamental subject we hold with our Confession, that the books of the Old and New Testament are given by the inspiration of God; and holding this, we disown all theories of partial inspiration. We maintain that from beginning to end the Bible is the inspired and infallible Word of God. We adhere to its verbal as well as to its substantial inspiration and consequently view with alarm and sorrow the widespread departures in most of the Protestant Churches of this land from this

fundamental doctrine of the Word of God. The "Higher Criticism," with its pernicious trifling with the divine Record, has done incalculable mischief among all ranks and classes of society.

These three doctrines in particular we have touched on, as they afford the key to understand our present position as a Church. There has been for many years back a strong current of tendency away from our old received position on these subjects. In 1892 the door was formally opened in the Free Church of Scotland for the admission of the new system of belief. This was done by the Declaratory Act of that year, which modified the Church's relation to her standards, and made permissible, within her entire borders, erroneous views on a number of vital points. This Act was the occasion of our special stand in 1893 on behalf of the Church standards as formerly held. We have inserted the word "Presbyterian" in the title of the Church for the purpose of distinction. We claim, however, to be in principle and practice the Free Church of 1843, and regard the body that still bears that name as only nominally the Free Church. You will pardon these details; we have entered into them only to make our position perfectly clear.

In closing we may say that we should be happy to hold brotherly correspondence with Churches over the wide world that endeavour in faithfulness to hold by the standards of our fathers.

On behalf of our Synod we subscribe ourselves,

JAMES S. SINCLAIR,
John Knox's Congregation.

JOHN MACLEOD,
Ullapool, Clerk of Synod.

Per J. S. S.

The Union of the Free and U.P. Churches.

FINAL MEETINGS OF FREE ASSEMBLY AND U.P. SYNOD.

THE last meetings of the nominal Free Church Assembly and the U.P. Synod were held on Tuesday, the 30th October. At the Free Assembly Dr. W. R. Taylor was re-elected Moderator. Principal Rainy submitted the report on union. The main discussion took place on the Uniting Act. Principal Rainy moved the ratification of the Act. Mr. C. A. Bannatyne, Culter, moved an amendment which was seconded by Mr. A. M'Neilage. The result was as follows:—For union, 643; against, 27—majority, 616. Rev. J. K. Cameron, Brodick, read a signed dissent and protest to the effect that, as the union could not be carried through consistently with the standards and constitution of the Free Church, therefore all parties who took part therein might lawfully be held as having withdrawn from the membership of the Free Church, and might lawfully be treated accordingly. After the transaction of further business the Assembly adjourned until Wednesday.

The following voted in the minority in the division on the motion for the adoption of the Uniting Act:—

Ministers—A. Beaton, Norman Campbell, Alex. Mackay, M. Mackenzie, William Mackinnon, Donald Maclean, Moy; E. Macleod, John Macleod, M. Macqueen, F. Macrae, J. Noble. Elders—P. Hunter, D. Marshall, David Munro, G. Macdonald, Neil Mackinnon, William MacLennan, John Macleod, J. Nicolson, Edinburgh; Kenneth Stewart, J. H. Thorburn, G. Thorburn. Tellers—Mr. C. A. Bannatyne, Mr. J. K. Cameron, Mr. R. A. Moody, Mr. A. M'Neilage, Mr. W. Rounsfall Brown.

At the U.P. Synod there appeared to be complete unanimity. Rev. Professor Orr, who brought forward the report on union, said the proposal had the approval of 29 Presbyteries and 469 Sessions, not one disapproving. The motion for union was agreed to without dissent.

At the conclusion of the proceedings of the Free Assembly, the minority met in one of the rooms when the Rev. Colin A. Bannatyne, Culter, was elected moderator. A motion was adopted declaring that the resolution passed by the General Assembly had no effect as binding the Free Church of Scotland. The meeting adjourned until next day, and it was decided that should admission not be obtained to the Assembly buildings, a meeting should be held in a public hall in the afternoon.

CONSUMMATION OF THE UNION.

The union of the two bodies was consummated on Wednesday, 31st October. The members of the Free Assembly met in the Free High Church, and in the quadrangle of the new College in front of the Assembly Hall, but the doors of the latter were kept closed, and no admission was to be got throughout the day. At half-past ten, the procession began. The members of the U.P. Synod, who had met in the Synod Hall, formed a similar procession. The two bodies met at the Mound, in Princes Street, and the respective moderators who headed the processions shook hands. The united body then moved down to the Waverley Market where the proceedings were to be held. After the uniting ceremony, in which the two moderators, Drs. Taylor and Mair were the chief figures, was accomplished, the next step was the election of Principal Rainy as the first moderator of the United Church. Dr. Rainy then delivered his opening address. A meeting was held in the evening, at which strangers such as Dr. Watson (Ian Maclaren), Dr. Parker, London; Dr. Cameron Lees, and Dr. Maclaren, Manchester, spoke. On Thursday, there were further sittings. The Assembly was concluded on the evening of that day by an address from the moderator.

THE ANTI-UNION FREE ASSEMBLY.

The members of the Free Assembly who declined to enter the union met in front of the Free Assembly Hall, about eleven o'clock on Wednesday. They found the gates shut and guarded by policemen, who refused to admit them. Rev. Mr. Bannatyne,

Moderator, forced his way through a large crowd up to the gate, and addressing the janitor said:—"We come as a body in name of the Free Church Assembly to demand admittance." The janitor refused admission. It was then agreed to hold the meeting where they stood, and Mr. Bannatyne opened it with prayer. He further said—"We are here to carry out the business of the Assembly according to the amendment to Principal Rainy's notice to adjourn to Waverley Market to consummate the union, and we are also here to follow out the resolution come to by the remanent members at the continued meeting of Assembly; finding the doors closed, I protest, in name of the meeting, and move that the meeting instruct a notarial protest to be recorded, and also that the meeting adjourn to meet in Queen Street Hall at two o'clock." The meeting was held at the hour appointed, when the Rev. Mr. Bannatyne presided as moderator of "The General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland." Several private meetings were afterwards held.

Extract from the 'Christian's Great Interest,'

BY WILLIAM GUTHRIE.

OBJECTIONS AND DIFFICULTIES ANSWERED AND EXPLAINED.

I.—THE SINNER'S BASENESS RENDERING IT PRESUMPTION TO COME TO CHRIST.

Object. I am so base, worthless, and weak of myself that I think it were high presumption for me to meddle with Christ Jesus, or the salvation purchased at the price of His blood.

Ans. It is true, all the children of Adam are base and wicked before Him, "who chargeth his angels with folly."—(Job iv. 18.) "All nations are less than nothing, and vanity before him."—(Isa. xl. 17.) There is such a disproportion between God and man, that unless He Himself had devised that covenant, and of His own free will had offered so to transact with men, it had been high treason for men or angels to have imagined that God should have humbled Himself, and become a servant, and have taken on Him our nature, and have united it by a personal union to the blessed Godhead; and that He should have subjected Himself to the shameful death of the cross; and all this, that men who were rebels, should be reconciled unto God, and be made eternally happy, by being in His holy company for ever.

But I say, all this was His own device and free choice; yea, moreover, if God had not sovereignly commanded men so to close with Him in and through Christ, no man durst have made use of that device of His—"Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money: come ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price."—(Isa. lv. 1-3.) "And this is His commandment, that we should believe on the name of his son Jesus Christ."—(1 John iii. 23.)

So then, although with Abigail I may say, "Let me be but a servant, to wash the feet of the servants of my Lord"—(1 Sam. xxv. 41); yet, since He hath in His holy wisdom devised that way, and knows how to be richly glorified in it—"The eyes of your understanding being enlightened, that ye may know what is the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints.—(Eph. i. 18); "All mine are thine, and thine are mine, and I am glorified in them.—(John xvii. 10); and hath commanded me, as I shall be answerable at the great day, to close with Him in Christ, I dare not disobey, nor inquire into the reasons of His contrivance and commands, but must comply with the command, as I would not be found to "frustrate the grace of God."—(Gal. ii. 21); and in a manner disappoint the gospel, and falsify the record which God hath borne of His Son, "that there is life enough in him for men." (1 John v. 10, 11), and so "make God a liar," and add that rebellion to all my former transgressions.

II.—THE SINGULARITY OF HIS SIN BARRING THE WAY.

Object. I am a person singularly sinful, beyond any I know; therefore I dare not presume to go near to Christ Jesus, or look after that salvation which is through His righteousness.

Ans. Is your sin beyond the drunkenness and incest of Lot; adultery covered with murder in David; idolatry and horrid apostasy in Solomon; idolatry, murder, and witchcraft in Manasseh; anger against God and His way in Jonah; forswearing of Christ in Peter, after he was forewarned, and had vowed the contrary; bloody persecution in Paul, making the saints to blaspheme? etc. But woe to him who is emboldened to sin by these instances recorded in Scripture, and adduced here to the commendation of the free and rich grace of God, and to encourage poor penitent sinners to flee unto Christ; I say, are your sins beyond these? yet all these obtained pardon through Christ, as the Scripture sheweth.

Know, therefore, that all sins are equal before the free grace of God, "who loveth freely" (Hos. xiv. 4); and looketh not to less or more sin. If the person have a heart to "come unto him through Christ, then he is able to save to the uttermost."—(Heb. vii. 25.) Yea, it is more provoking before God, not to close with Christ, when the offer comes to a man, than all the rest of his transgressions are; for "he that believeth not hath made God a liar," in that record He hath borne of life in the Son.—(1 John v. 10, 11.) "And he who doth not believe, shall be condemned for not believing on the Son of God."—(John iii. 18.) That shall be the main thing in his indictment; so that much sin cannot excuse a man, if he reject Christ, and refuse His offer; since God hath openly declared, that "this is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came to save sinners, whereof I am chief." Even he who is *chief* of sinners in his own apprehension, is bound to believe and accept this saying.—(1 Tim. i. 15.)

III.—SPECIAL AGGRAVATIONS A HINDRANCE.

Object. My sins have some aggravating circumstances beyond the same sins in other persons, which doth much terrify me.

Ans. What can the aggravations of thy sins be, which are not paralleled in the foregoing examples? Is thy sin against great light? so were many of those of whom we spake before. Was it against singular mercies and deliverances? so was that of Lot's and Noah's drunkenness. Was thy sin done with much deliberation? so was David's, when he wrote the letter against Uriah. Was it against or after any singular manifestation of God? so was Solomon's. Was it by a small and despicable temptation? so was that of Jonah and of Peter, if we consider the heinousness of their transgressions. Hast thou reiterated the sin, and committed it over again? so did Lot, so did Peter, so did Jehoshaphat, in joining with Ahab and Jehoram.—(1 Kings xxii.; 2 Kings iii.) Are there many gross sins concurring together in thee? So were there in Manasseh. Hast thou stood long out in rebellion? that, as all the former, is thy shame; but so did the thief on the cross; he stood out till the last gasp.—(Luke xxiii. 42, 43.) If yet "thou hast an ear to hear," thou art commanded "to hear."—(Matt. xiii. 9.) Although thou hast long "spent thy money for that which is not bread" (Isa. lv. 1, 3), thou hast the greater need now to make haste and to flee for refuge; and if thou do so, He shall welcome thee, and "in no wise cast thee out" (John vi. 37); especially, since He hath used no prescription of time in Scripture. So that all those aggravations of thy sin, will not excuse thy refusing the Lord's offer.

(To be Continued.)

The Dying Century.

THE closing days of the year—days naturally sombre and pensive—receive this year an access of melancholy from the fact that the century as well as the year is dying. We stand amid the shadows of the last hours of the nineteenth century. That busy, loud resounding era of the world, reaching its inevitable close, is about to vanish in the vague past. The waters of oblivion will come up on the broad, confused landscape of its affairs, and only a few names and incidents will survive the wreck.

Few probably, or none, remain whose memory serves to recall the beginning of the century, but if a centenarian of unimpaired faculties could be found, his story would be a record of change and transformation almost unexampled in history.

We live, as it were, in a new world—a world hardly conceivable by our ancestors, and things which are common and trivial to us would be miraculous to them. In all civilised, but especially in all Protestant countries, where freedom, order, and security have prevailed, the mind of man has bent itself to the solution of

physical problems. The mastery of the forces and the penetration of the secrets of nature have been successfully accomplished, and modern civilisation everywhere has blossomed out into marvellous effects of power and beauty—into steamships, railways, telegraphs, telephones, and a thousand other contrivances for the quickening of commerce, the increase of pleasure, and the improvement of health.

The Seer of Lochcarron, in the year 1803, prophesied the making of the Suez Canal, and told how it would subserve the interests of the Kingdom of Christ. The same account may be given of the other achievements of the nineteenth century. They are designed, in times and ways not suspected by the busy heads who plan them, to advance the "Kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ." There is a day coming when "holiness to the Lord shall be written upon the bells of the horses." And that day of the revealed glory of Christ will also see the consecration of many inventions of the nineteenth century, inventions at present perverted to services wholly secular or even profane. There shall then be railroads which keep the Sabbath, steamship companies fearing Him that made the sea and the dry land, and telegraphs and telephones rescued from the service of Mammon to expedite the King's business in places at home and abroad.

But however the century has signalised itself by attainments in civilisation, the religious history of the time is, it must be confessed, a sad and chequered one. The last forty years especially have been times of declension and of the prevalence of antichrist in many forms. Confining our view to home scenes, we note the dimensions now attained by the Ritualistic movement. In the third decade of the century that movement began in the English Church under the leadership of Newman and Pusey. It has gone on unceasingly, till it threatens at length to swamp the whole work of the Reformation. Other Churches have caught the infection from the English Church, and now there is hardly a parish in the three kingdoms where the simplicity of gospel worship has not been corrupted by some unscriptural device.

This going beyond and adding to the Word of God, which is the chief feature of Ritualism, is well matched by the minimising and making void the commandments of God, which is taking place in other spheres. There is a conspiracy among those in high places to ignore Christ, and make His Word to be a dead letter. The first table of the law, inculcating man's duty Godward, has specially been made of none effect. The Sabbath, which is a sign between God and man, is no longer protected by legislative enactments, and no scruple is made of using it as a mere convenience for the transaction of business which, on other days, would too much hamper the wheels of commerce or pleasure. Railway companies, civil authorities, and legislators have been specially eminent in despising this commandment.

This ungodliness in high places has another manifestation in the heresy of the Higher Criticism, which, proceeding from pulpits

and seats of learning, is undermining the faith and morals of mankind. We see it too in the pagan schemes of philanthropy which are formulated by would-be social reformers. There are ideas abroad of raising the sunken masses, and bringing in a golden age of peace and plenty, but in these schemes there is a constant reckoning without the host, a constant ignoring of the God of Heaven whose justice smites men with disease and poverty for sin, a constant neglect of the gospel of Christ, which is the true lever to raise the degraded, the true panacea for want and wretchedness.

As in the physical frame of man, when the health and vitality sink to a low ebb, there is always some disease ready to fasten and run its course through the wasted form; so in this decay of religion and morality the epidemic of Romanism has found its opportunity. Since the beginning of the century this enemy of God and man has made enormous strides in our midst, and its plans to "bend and subjugate an imperial race" are prospering. By necessity of the case, a generation abandoned, as ours is, to pleasure and worldliness must fall a prey to this devourer, and we see this being accomplished almost before our eyes.

Old men who wisely discern the times look back to the days of their youth, and they think they have real cause to conclude that the former times were better than these. During the early years of the century the Sun of Righteousness which rose at the Reformation was still shining on these lands, and many trees of righteousness were flourishing in its beams; but now these have been transplanted one by one to a better country, and the "trees of the forest are few, so that a child may write them."

A sign of the times we may note, as a likely preparation for some future successes of Christ's Kingdom, is the great extension of the Anglo-Saxon race and the English language that has taken place in this century. "God has enlarged Japhet and he is dwelling in the tents of Shem," and also of Ham. The conquests of Alexander the Great, diffusing the Greek tongue to the borders of India, paved the way for the triumphal march of the Prince of Peace in the days of the apostles; and we doubt not the over-spreading of the English tongue is preparatory to a similar development, to take place in the fulness of time. The congregating of men into cities is also another feature of the age, to be noted with interest, and perhaps with apprehension. Agriculture and the rural arts are now no longer the staple occupations of sire and son, but the distant city, with its bustle and glare, its hopes of gain or pleasure, is attracting the youth of both sexes, so that cities everywhere are flourishing at the expense of the villages and the country sides. We know that the Bible begins with a garden and ends with a city, and probably the city is the ideal state of society, but one trembles to contemplate the evil plight of such masses of humanity in the event of war, famine, or pestilence, which horrors have not yet become obsolete.

Searmoin.

LEIS AN URR. DR. NIXON, MONTROSE.

(Continued from page 277.)

IV. A nis, 's a' cheathramh àit. Bheirear fainear leinn, 'n a fiacha fo 'm bheil sinn gu fianuis a thoirt, is a togail, do 'n cheangal, 's am bheil Rìoghachdan agus an Luchd-riaghlaidh air an suidh-eachadh le Crìosd, fo 'ughdarras féin, d' a fhìrinn agus d' a Rìoghachd.

Thug e féin 'fhianuis do 'n cheangal agus do 'n dàimh so, 's an t-seasamh chruaidh sin, 's an robh e, 'n uair labhair e briathran ar Stéidhtheagaisg, an làthair *Philait*, am Fear-Riaghlaidh Ròmhanaich. Agus thogadh e an fhianuis cheudna air beulaobh mhaigstir *Philait*, an t-Impire Ròmhanaich, agus air beulaobh uile Rìghrean an t-saoghail. Agus riuth sin uile, tha an fhianuis a thug e, 's na briathraibh so a' labhair e, a' labhairt fathast. Agus, mar sin, tha e mar fhiachaibh oirne an fhianuis cheudna a chur am beulaobh. Is e so aon do dhleasdanaibh 'Eaglais féin; agus tha 'Eaglais féin air a comharrachadh gu sin a dheanamh.

Is airidh gu sònruichte, a thoirt fainear, gu 'm bheil an dearbh fhianuis a thug Crìosd an làthair *Philait* air a cur mar riaghailt 's mar impidh, no mar chuimhneachan, ma choinneadh *Thimothy*, agus mar eisimpler dha gu a leantuinn. "Tha mi a' sparradh ort ann am fianuis Dhé, a bheothaicheas na h-uile nithe, agus am fianuis Iosa Crìosd, a rinn fianuis air deadh aidmheil an làthair *Phontiu* *Philait*, thu a choimhead na h-àithne so, gun smal, gun lochd, gu teachd ar Tighearn Iosa Crìosd: ni 'n a àmaibh féin, a dh'fhoillsicheas an Tì a tha beannaichte, agus a mhàin cumhachdach, Rìgh nan Rìgh agus Tighearn an Tighearn." (1 Tim. vi.) Tha an eisimplir cheudna a thug Crìosd, 'n a riaghailt do gach neach.

Mar an ceudna, is airidh dhuinn a thoirt fainear, agus e r' a fhaicinn air feadh nan sgrìobtur, far am bheil iad a' labhairt mu fhàs agus mu shoirbheachadh Rìoghachd Chrìosd, gu bheil 'àrd-uachdaranachd-sa os ceann nan uile, co-ionnan r' a 'àrd-uachdaranachd os ceann na h-Eaglais, air a h-ainmeachadh.

Mar so, an uair a tha Daibhidh, agus a Phrionnsaidh, agus a shluagh air a leithid do chruinneachadh mòr do òir agus do airgid a dheanamh, a chum togail an teampull, tha iad ag aideachadh iad a bhi a' deanamh sud mar an dlighe féin dha-san is e an "Ceann os ceann nan uile," o am bheil gach beannachd a' tighinn a nuas, agus gur h-ann le a ghràs féin a rinneadh toileach iad a thoirt dha-san d' a chuid féin. (1 Eachdr. xxix.)

Fhad 's a bha an daramh Teampull 'g a cur suas, agus inntinne an t-sluaigh a' fannachadh le cho beag 's a chunnaic iad aca féin air chionn na seirbhis sin, agus iad a' gabhail gu cridhe cia cho fad air dheireadh 's a bhiodh an Teampull a rachadh a thogail leo-san, air a' cheud Teampull; Dh 'innseadh dhoibh, mar aobhar-

mhisnich gu dhol air aghaidh, gu'n robh Tighearna nam Feachd a' tighinn, a chrathadh nan nèamh agus na talmhainn,—agus Esan a bhi 's an àrd-inbhe sin, gu h-àrd os ceann nan uile, is e sin ùghdarras na h-Eaglais, agus uachdaranachda na talmhainn, gu 'n sealladh iad r' a aobhar-san, agus r' a sheirbhis-san, mar an àrd-chùram. Agus fhad 's a tha an t-aideachadh sin aig a sheirbhisichibh, Esan a bhi àrdaichte, 's an àrd-uachdaranachd sin, agus 's na dàimhibh sin, bha fios, gu 'm builicheadh Esan orra ni bu leòr do 'n òir agus do 'n airgiod, a 's leis féin, a chum na Rìoghachd sin a chur suas nach feudar a ghluasad am feasd. (Hag. ii. ; Eabhr. xii.)

Is e a chliù-san, mar an "Ceann os ceann nan uile nithe do'n Eaglais," gu 'm bheil e a' toirt a phobuill féin a chum iomlanachd, mar a chorp féin, le a bhi 'g an lionadh le a lànachd féin. (Ephes. i.) Uaithe-san, mar air dol suas, fad os ceann nan uile nithe, agus a' lionadh nan uile nithe, tha na tìodhlaca sin air am buileachadh a tha feumail a chum na crìche sin, air an Eaglais, a 's leis féin. (Ephes. iv.) Is ann 'n a chliù féin mar an ceud-ghin o na mairbh, agus mar Phrionnsa Rìghrean na talmhainn a tha e a' téarnadh, le a chumhachd, nan uile a cheannaich e le 'fhuil féin. (Taisb. i.) Mar is ann leis a' bheatha sin a tha a' tighinn a stigh do 'n anamaibh o Chrìosd, an Ceann, a tha a sheirbhisich air an ulluchadh gu an dleasdanas a dh'àithn e féin dhoibh a choimhlionadh,—gach ni a bhuineas do a Rìoghachd a theagasg : is ann fo a dhìdein-sa, mar an Tì d' an tugadh na h-uile cumhachd air nèamh agus air thalamh, (Mat. xxviii.), a tha a sheirbhisiche gu a dhol a mach a dh'ionnsuidh an t-saoghail gu léir air chionn na crìche sin. Agus is dìomhain dhoibh, uime sin, a smuaineachadh gu 'n toir peacaich éisdeachd do a theagasg-san, no gu 'm foisich a bheannachd-san orra, ann an anamaibh dhaoine, mur toirear fianuis agus teisteanas leotha d' a dhlighe-san, mar am Fear-dìdein, mar Rìgh rìoghachdan an t-saoghail so, agus mar Rìgh nan Rìghrean, mar do a ghràs mar Shlanuighfhear na dream' a tha cailte. Agus 'n uair thig Esan fa dheòidh, mar gu 'n tig, gu léir-sgrios a thoirt air uile chumhachdaibh, agus air uile luchd-aingidheachd an t-saoghail so, a tha a' cur 'n a aghaidh, agus gu slàinte na dreama a cheannaicheadh leis an Iobairt mhòir a thugadh leis' féin;—air chùl gu 'm foillsichear e féin 's an là sin fo ainm an Tì sin, a 's e an *Fhianuis dhùileas* agus *Fhìrinneach*,—*Focal Dhé*,—bithidh mar an ceudna aige gu soilleir, agus gu roaithnichte air a sgrìobhadh air 'fhalluinn agus air a leis, na h-ainmean so, RÌGH NAN RÌGHREAN, agus TIGHEARNA NAN TIGHEARN. Agus mar chruinnichear leis-san a shluagh saorta féin gu cuirm-bhainnse an Uain ; aig an àm cheudna gheibhear leis urram o Rìghaibh agus o Rìoghachdaibh ; agus an Teisteanas ceudna a' cur an céill dhuinn roimh làimn, cho ro ghlòrmhoir's a bhios suidheachadh agus cor na h-Eaglais 'n uair a bheirear a stigh d' a h-ionnsuidh Rìghrean na Talmhainn le 'n uile ghlòir ; agus i gu léir an sin, làn-choisrìgte dha-san. (Taisb. xix.)

A réir so uile, na 'n rachadh a' cheist a chur oirnn, ciod an t-aon

fhocal a gnàthaicheadh sinn gu brìgh agus seadh an t-soisgeil a chur an cèill? Theireadh sin, “CRIOSD NA H-UILE; agus ANNS NA H-UILE.” CRIOSD an Ceann, os ceann gach duine, a’ dòrtadh a stigh na beatha spioradail ’s an anam. CRIOSD, Ceann na h-Eaglais, a’ toirt dhi a h-òrduighean agus a Laghanna féin, agus le a làthaireachd ghràs-mhor annta, ’g a leigeil féin ris annta, mar am brìgh, agus an glòir, e féin. Agus CRIOSD, Ceann nan cinneach agus nan slògh, a’ pilleadh gu h-ìfrinn na dreama a dhi-chuimhnicheas, agus leis an àicheidhear Esan: agus a’ toirt Luchd-Riaghlaidh na dreama a thèarnar gu bhi a’ deanamh ùmhlachd dha aig a chosaibh, agus a’ toirt am buidheachais dha, mar an Tì sin a tha a’ toirt an riaghlaidh gu bhi sìothchail agus furasda dhoibh, tre bhuidh ’fhìrinn féin, agus le a Riaghladh féin os ceann anamanna dhaoine, air feadh an crìochan.

Bha àrd-uachdarachd Chrìosd air a h-aideachadh agus air a fianuiseachadh, ’s a’ cho-shuidheachadh Rìoghachdail sin a chuir *Iain Knox* air chois ann ar Rìoghachd-ne, agus a thogadh gu tomhas iomlanachd le *Aindrea Melville*, agus le *Henderson*, agus le *Samuel Rutherford*, agus leis na h-Urramaich eile a thog an Tighearna suas ’n ar Tìr, ’s na linnibh o chian. Rinn an co-shuidheachadh sin ulluchadh, co dhiubh dh’ oidhirpich iad a dheanamh, air chor gu ’m biodh sgoilean, oil-thighean, agus uile mheadhona an fhòghluim do òigridh na Tìre, saor agus fosgailte dhoibh; agus mar an ceudna, gu ’m biodh bochdan an t-shluaigh air an suidheachadh ann an comhfhurtachd, agus gu ’m biodh an soisgeul air a shearmonachadh do gach dùil ’n ar measg; agus gu ’m biodh *ceartas glan* air a fhrithealadh do gach creutair, agus do gach inbhe do ’n t-sluaigh ’s an Rìoghachd. Agus bha e mar an ceudna air ulluchadh, gu ’n cuideachadh a chnm so,—gu ’m biodh a bheag no mhòir, a reir comais gach neach, air a thoirt an ceann a chèile as gach càrn, agus am biodh meadhonanan gràis, mar aig dorus gach teaghlaich ’s an Tìr. Agus chaidh a chur an cèill leotha sud, gu soilleir, gu ’m biodh tìodhlacan agus ofrailean theaghlaich a’ chreidimh, air an cruinneachadh ’s air an togail a ghnàth, o ’n àm sin, a chum nan crìochan ud bhi air an coimhlionadh.

Ged thàinig ana-mianna dhaoine, agus aignidhean sanntach dhaoine air an aghaidh, gu bacadh a chur air a’ cho-shuidheachadh Sgrìobtuireil ud bhi air a ghiùlan air aghaidh gu h-iomlan air feadh ar Rìoghachd; gidheadh, is e an tomhas ’s an do ghiùlaineadh sin air aghaidh, leis an do thogadh a suas Rìoghachd na h-Alba gu bhi ’s an tomhas ’s am bheil i air soirbheachadh, agus saorsa reusonta gu h-aimsireil agus gu spioradail, a bhi air an sealbhachadh leatha, agus a tha, ann an tomhas, àrd-fhoghlum buadhach aig cho iomadh d’ a ginealachaidh; agus aithne agus soilleireachd, air co-cheannachd, agus air àrd-oilean, air innleachdaibh agus ealhanaibh buannachdail do ’n t-sluaigh a thaobh tìre agus cuain, air tighinn air aghaidh gu h-inbhe cho àrd, ann an Rìoghachd na h-Alba. Agus na ’n cuireadh Luchd-riaghlaidh aimsireil ar Tìre, an co-shuidheachadh Sgrìobtuireil ud air a bhonnaibh, a reir mar

tha àireamh an t-sluaigh air dol an lìonmhoiread, 's ann a dh' ulluicheadh e ar Tìr gu bhì ullamh air son an ama, a tha air a chomharrachadh leis an Athair, tre Iosa Chrìosd, 'n uair a' bhios Rìoghachdan an domhain gu léir air an cruinneachadh 'n an aon Rìoghachd do 'n Tighearn agus do Chrìosd, an Rìgh glòrmhor sin, a tha os ceann nan uile, agus gu bhì air an àrdachadh 's air am beannachadh ann-san, agus 'g a bheannachadh-san, agus 'g a ghairm beannaichte.

An fhianuis agus an t-aideachadh sin, do Ard-Uachdaranachd Chrìosd, a tha air a làn-fhoillseachadh ann an focal Dhé, b' i so an dearbh shochair a b' àirde, 's bu phrìseil' air an d' thugadh greim do Eaglais na h-Alba, riamh fathast, o aimsir an Ath-leasachaidh gus an là an diugh, a dh' aindeoin gach deuchainn, agus geur-leanmhuinn, agus sàrachaidh a fhuair i aig iomadh àm o naimh-dibh Dhé agus Chrìosd. B' i so an fhianuis fhirinneach a thog ar n-Eaglais agus ar n-Aithrichean, sluagh na h-Alba, Ard-Uachdaranachd Chrìosd mar Rìgh na h-Eaglais, agus mar Rìgh nan Rìghrean. B' iad, gnn teagamh, gaisgich threuna an Ath-leasachaidh agus iomadh a thàinig 'n an deigh-san,—b' iad sin na h-inneala beannaichte, fo riaghladh Chrìosd, a chuir air chois, agus leis an do chumadh air chois, mar *innealaibh*, fianuis fhirinneach agus ghlòrmhor so 'n ar n-Eaglais, agus a measg shluaigh ar Tìre. Ach, na di-chuimhnichemaid, nach b' iadsan, iad fein a rinn e, ach *Dia*, mar Dhia na slàinte, ann an Iosa Chrìosd, leis an d' àrdaicheadh Esan, gu bhì 'n a Cheann anns na h-uile nithibh d' a Eaglais féin, agus mar rinneadh iadsan 'n a innealaibh beannaichte fo a làimh uile-chumhachdaich agus ghràs-mhoir-sa, gu 'm facas, agus gu 'n d' fhuair iad a' greimeachadh ris an fhirinn *iomlain*, ri Fìrinn Chrìosd, agus ri aobhar a Rìoghachd-san. Cha d' àicheidh iad riamh, agus cha do thilg iad uatha, aon *lìdeadh* d' a Fhìrinn, mar tha i againn ann an Focal nan Sgrìobtur Naomha. Nach ann o 'n cho-cheangal shìorruidh, mar thoradh do 'n cho-cheangal sin, tre Phearsa glòrmhor Chrìosd, a tha an Fhìrinn air a cur d' ar n-ionnsuidh. B' iad a cho-cheangal agus a Chrùn Rìoghail féin a theireadh iad ris an Fhìrinn, agus a bha iad a' sgrìobhadh air am Brataich, 'n uair ghairmeadh iad, ann an làithibh geur-leanmhuinn, bhi a' seasamh gu fuil, a' cathachadh an aghaidh Peacaidh. Agus 's ann an ceangal ris na fulangasaibh sin a thàinig orra sud, agus gu 'n do neartaicheadh an sluagh a thàinig tre ghràs gu bhì 'n an luchd-leanmhuinn air an Fhìrinn, air Fìrinn Chrìosd gu h-iomlan, agus o' n naimhdeas sin a nochd an Luchd-Riaghlaidh aimsireil 's na làithibh ud, a' cur 'n a h-aghaidh; a thugadh le an dìlseachd-sa an Fhìrinn ud gu solus; agus a thionndaidheadh so, ann an àrd-uachdaranachd riaghlaidh Chrìosd os ceann 'Eaglais féin, gu bhì 'n a beannachd do Eaglais na h-Alba, agus an Eaglais sin fein 'n a beannachd do Thìr ar Dùthchais. Ann an riaghladh fhreasdail Chrìosd, ghairmeadh ar n-Eaglais, araon 's na làithibh ud, agus o 'n àm sin a rìs, ghairmeadh ar n-Eaglais gu a fianuis féin a thogail, agus bhuilicheadh an t-sochair oirre, an fhianuis ud a thogail, agus a bhi 'g a' cur an

céill do Luchd-Riaghlaidh aimsireil—an Fhianuis d' a Fhìrinn-sa, agus do a Rìoghachd.

Tha Eaglaisean eile, a rinn an ni ceudna 's a rinn ar n-Eaglais-ne; gach meanglan do Eaglais Chrìosd, a réir an tomhais, a nochd an dìlseachd, thog iad an Fhianuis cheudna, agus dh' fhuiling iad air son an dìlseachd o Luchd-Riaghlaidh an t-saoghail so. Am fianuis do 'n dleasdanas sin, dhoibh féin, agus dha-san a 's e a Ceann, an treibhdhìreas a choimhead, an gloine, agus a Lagh féin a ghabhail, 's a choimhead uaithe-san, agus uaithe-san a mhàin. Agus na 'm b' e sin ar dleasdanas gu h-iomlan, dh' fheudtadh a dheanamh le dealachadh o 'n cheangal a bha eadar sinn mar Eaglais Stéidhichte, ri Luchd-riaghlaidh aimsireil, agus sinn féin aonadh ri buidhnibh àraidh eile, a dhealaich, fad mu 'n do dhealaich sinne, ris an Eaglais Stéidichte.

Ach a réir ar làn-dearbhadh, agus a réir ar n-aideachaidh, a réir aidmheil ar creidimh, agus a réir ar bòidean dha-san is e Ceann na h-Eaglais, bu shlighe an t-slighe sin, nach faca sinn saor dhuinn a ghabhail. Chunnaic sinn mar dhleasdanas dhuinn, strì agus spàirn a dheanamh, gu ar treibhdhìreas a sheasamh, an làthair Dhé, 's an làthair an t-saoghail, ar n-aideachadh fhìreanachadh, agus ar sochairean aimsireil a choimhead mar an ceudna, agus an Luchd-Riaghlaidh aimsireil a dhùsgadh gu breithneachadh a thoirt dhoibh, le ar Fianuis mu ar dleasdanas "féin" do Fhìrinn agus do Rìoghachd Chrìosd. Agus 'n uair fhuair eadhon leinn ar 'n oidhirpean a bhi gu h-iomlan eu-dòchasach, agus gu 'n do dhùnadh an dorus oirnn, cha tug sinn thairis ar Fianuis, ged nach robh buannachd 's am bith dhuinn ann, ach eadhon fulang air a son. Cha do chaochail idir na fiachan fo 'n robh ar Luchd-Riaghlaidh do Chrìosd, a bhi ùmhail dha-san, ged nach aidicheadh iadsan na fiachan sin. Agus cha mhò a dh' atharraich dhuinne, ar dleasdanas féin, a' buanachadh fathast ar Fianuis air taobh Chrìosd, a chumail mu 'n coinneamh, ged tha iad fathast a' cur na h-aghaidh, agus gu 'm feudar gur h-ann a tha so, a chum dearbhaidh dhoibh air ar treibhdhìreas. Cha saor, agus cha 'n fhurasd an gnothuch dhoibh na buinn ud a thilgeil uatha. Agus cha bhuin dhuinne a leithid.

Cha tigeadh dhuinne gu 'm bu ni beag no eutrom e 'n ar sùilibh, mar thoradh o gnìomharraibh fhreasdail Chrìosd, mar Eaglais a thaobh an Luchd-Riaghlaidh aimsireil, 's na linnibh a chaidh seachad, gu 'm bheil na fìrinne mòra so, fìrinn Chrìosd, air an cur sìos ann ar riaghailtibh sgriobhta, ar n-aidhmheil agus ar riaghlaidh, agus ar n-oideis, mar Eaglais, gu 'n robh 'fhìrinn-sa, agus a Rìoghachd féin, mar Cheann na h-Eaglais, mar dh' ainmich sinn cheana, sgriobhta air brataich ar sinnsir, 'n uair sgaoil iad a mach i air sgàth na fìrinn, agus iad a' fulang cruaidh-dheuchainne na geur-leanmhuinn air sgàth na Fianuis sin. Sheirm an Fhianuis ud o luchd-fulangais, o bheanntaibh, o shléibhtibh, o mhonaidhibh ar dùthcha, o shliosaidh nan onoc, o uamhaibh agus o chòsaibh nan creag, 'n ar Tìr, air beulaobh chaithrichean-breth ar àrd-bhailtan mòra, o phrìosainibh, agus o sgeiribh na mara air oirthir ar Tìre, o lobhtaibh-sgàlain nan *croichean*, agus iad sud agus

tuiltean fola nan naomh a' sruthadh sìos uatha gu làr, air uaighibh nam martuireach dhiadhaidh; agus so uile, mar ar Tìr air a fàgail gu i féin bhi air a togail, gu bhi a' seirm na fianuis ceudna; eadhon mar bha Tìr Iùda féin, a measg shean dhùthcha na talmhainn air a fàgail 'n a fianuis. Sheirm sinn mar Eaglais an Fhianuis cheudna, ann an cluasaibh ar Luchd-Riaghlaidh, agus sinn ann an dàimh cheangailte riutha; gus an d' oidhirpich iad an laghanna féin, mar dhaoineibh, agus mar Luchd-riaghlaidh talmhaidh a cheangal mu 'r muinealaibh, ann an àite Laghanna Chrìosd, mar Cheann na h-Eaglais; agus 's an *Dealachadh* gu sònruichte, sheirm sinn an Fhianuis cheudna dhoibh le guth a b' àirde na thog sinn gu sin. Agus 's cinnteach, fianuis a tha a nis cho coisrigte, eadhon ann an Eachdraibh ar n-Eaglais, tha sinn an dòchas, nach fàgar 's nach tréigear a nis i, gu a leigeil uainn, gu a mùchadh, no a dhol 'g a h-àicheadh an làthair Dhé, no eadhon an làthair an t-saoghail féin. Cha 'n 'eil, agus cha mhò is comasach gu 'm biodh, aobhar cubhaidh no glan, gu 'n deantadh a leithid do gnìomh leinn. Ach tha iomadh aobhar ro chudthromach nach deantadh, a leithid, a chaoidh leinn, mar Shean Eaglais urramach na h-Alba.

Tha glòir Chrìosd, agus a bhi 'g a ghlòrachadh-san, ag agairt uainn, mar Eaglais, nach deanamaid a leithid. Tha Luchd-Riaghlaidh a' briseadh a chuibhrichean-san o chéile, agus a' tilgeil dhiubh a chuinge-san. Tha e, uime sin, mar fhiachaibh oirne, an co-cheangal ri aobhar a ghlòire-san, gu 'n togamaid ar fianuis fathast, "Gu 'n tugadh sinn do Chrìosd, uachdaranachd, agus glòir, agus Rìoghachd, a chum agus gu 'n toireadh na h-uile shluagh, chinneach, agus theangaidh, seirbhis dha: 'uachdaranachd-sa, is uachdaranachd shìorruidh i nach siubhail seachad, agus a Rìoghachd, cha sgriosar i." (Dan. vii.) "Agus gu 'n deanadh gach uil' uachdaranachd seirbhis dha agus ùmhlachd." Agus feumaidh sinne an fhianuis cheudna a chumail air chois, agus a bhi 'g a seirm, mar an fhìrinn, gus an saltair Esan a naimhdean, agus gus an tagair e a chùis féin, 's gu 'm fàg e 'n a ni foillsichte, agus ni 's daingnichte i air feadh farsuingeachd na Crùinne, gur h-ann dha-san a mhàin a bhuineas e a bhi, an Ti a tha e—Rìgh nan Rìghrean, agus Tighearn nan Tighearna.

Tha tèaruinteachd Rìoghachdan ag agairt an dleasdanaìs so uainn: oir tha an tèaruinteachd an crochadh ris, gu 'n éisdeadh iad a ghuth-sa. Oir cha mhi-choslach idir 'n ar 'n aimsir féin, nach 'eil Esan air ti labhairt ri Rìghribh agus ri Luchd-riaghlaidh na Talmhainn, 'n a chorruich, agus gu 'm pianar iad leis, 'n a throm fheirg" (Dan. ii.), uime sin, mar nach b' àill leinn fantuinn 'n ar tosd, no gu 'm faiceadh sinn iad sud air am briseadh 'n am bloighdibh, leis an t-slàit iarruinn, agus air an spealgadh 'n am mìribh, mar shoitheach a' chriadhadaìr, feumaidh sinn gairm orra, agus ar guth a thogail, impidh a chur orra, iad a bhi glic, agus foghlum a ghabhail,—seirbhis a dheanamh do 'n Tighearn le h-eagal, agus an dlighe chubhaidh a thoirt dha, aig a chosaibh.

Tha soirbheas ar 'n-Eaglais ag agairt uainn ar Fianuis a choimhead gu treibhdhireach. An uair a thog sinn ar Fianuis, 's a chuir

sinn mu choinneamh an t-sluaigh i, agus a chuir sinn an impidh orra an t-aobhar ud a thogail, a' dh' àichaidh agus a dhiùlt an Luchd-Riaghlaidh aimsireil; agus gu 'n deanadh an sluagh an dleasdanas féin do 'n aobhar, a réir an comais, an ni sin a bha mar fhiachaibh air an Luchd-Riaghlaidh mar an ceudna (ged nach d' rinn iadsan e), ann an cumail suas an aideachaidh sgriobtuireil sin a choimhid ar sinnsireachd, an fhìor dhiadhachd a réir fìrinn Chrìosd, agus a bha 'n a aideachadh dùthchasach do Albainn, an t urram 's an ùmhlachd a bhuineas dhasan a mhàin, gu 'n rìogh-aicheadh Esan os ceann Rìoghachd na h-Alba, araon os ceann na Tìre, mar 's an Eaglais; 's ann a dhùisg 'n an cridhe a' chuimhne shòluimte, 's am breithneachadh blàth sin a bha snaidhte, air dhòigh, air clàraibh an cridhe, agus thog iad orra, mar bu dual, eadhon 's na làithibh o shean, a measg shluaigh na h-Alba, agus ghluaiseadh iad, 's a' choitchinn, agus ann an iomadh anam, tha sinn an dòchas, le Spiorad nan gràs agus nan athchaingean, taobh agus còmhnaidh a dheanamh ri aobhar, agus ri fìrinn Chrìosd. Agus nach 'eil iad fathast, o 'n là sin, a' dòrtadh a stigh an tabhartasan a réir an comais, mar aig cosaibh Chrìosd, agus ann an ionmhas 'Eaglais féin. Na leigeamaid sìos an Fhianuis sin, aon cheum, no aon ròine ni 's isle na 'n Fhianuis a thug, agus a thog sinn air latha an *Dealachaidh*, agus rè nan deich bliadhna a chathaich sinn an aghaidh nam "*Moderates*," agus an aghaidh Luchd-Riaghlaidh aimsireil. Ach, faicteadh ar n-Eaglais a' gabhail oirre dol a stigh ann an Aonadh ri Buidhnibh nach do thog riamh an Fianuis cheudna a thog sinne; ach a bha, 's a tha fathast, a' cur 'n a h-aghaidh, ann an iomadh puing agus earrann dhi; agus islicheadh an Eaglais Shaor a fianuis agus a teisteanas, air taobh Chrìosd, agus air taobh a chòiriche Riaghail-sa, ar Luchd-Riaghlaidh aimsireil a bhi ùmhail d' a Riaghlaidh-san, agus d' a Lagh-san, agus an Rìoghachd, mar Rìoghachd aimsireil a bhi ann an ùmhlachd dhasan; agus ciod an toradh a dh' éireas? Spionaidh sinn *dara leth an cridhe* o bhuill dhileas ar coimhthionala, agus o ar luchd-leanmhuinn; agus lughdaichear an tabhartasa, agus theid iad air ais; sgapar iad; agus theid ar n-Eaglais air ais; claoidhear i. Seadh, agus bithidh tuilleadh gu mòr na sinn an: thig an t-àm, ged is e ar dòchas nach tig,—'n uair nach bi an Fhianuis ni 's faide gu h-iomlan air a cumail suas leinn, no gu dìleas agus gu follaiseach, mu 'n chòir a tha aig Crìosd ceangal agus ùmhlachd a bhi eadar Esan agus Luchd-Riaghlaidh aimsireil, eadar Esan agus laghannaibh follaiseach agus coitchinn na Rìoghachd; sguiridh a làmh-san, ni 's mò agus ni 's mò a bhi oirnn a chum maith, mar Rìoghachd, agus mar Eaglais, agus mar Thir: ach 's ann a bhios a làmh air a sìneadh a mach ann an cronachadh, agus ann am peanasachadh. Thig tuitlean do mhi-bheusaibh, do dhroch-bheirt, do 'n eucoiribh, do chiontaibh, agus do ana-measarrachd, do ladarnas, agus do neo-mhothachadh, agus do bhochduinn, agus do thruaighibh, agus do dhòlasaibh follaiseach eile, a stigh oirnn, 'n an tuiltibh, agus theid iad thairis oirnn, agus fàsaichidh iad ar fearann agus ar Tìr, agus cuiridh iad sud an Eaglais féin fodha.

Ach, ma neartaichear sinn gu bhi a' tagradh gu dleas ris an Tighearn, an Rìoghachd bhi air a toirt gu h-ùmhlaichd dha-san, do 'm buin an ùmhlaichd, cha 'n e a mhàin gu 'm bi aige-san fathast sluagh dha féin 'n ar Tìr, air an teasairginn, agus air an saoradh, air am beannachadh leis; ach *pòsaidh* e eadhon am fearann ris féin, agus tionndaidhidh e gu bhi 'n a fhearann 's am bi a thlachd. (Isai. lxi. lxii.)

Ann an gnothuch an Aonaidh ri buidhnibh-eile, air ann bheil sinn 's a' cheart àm a'-labhairt; feumar an Fhianuis so a bhi gu dleas air a cumail suas; oir is i an Fhianuis ud, an aon Riaghailt fo 'n comasach, tre bheannachadh Dhé, gu 'n tàirngear, no gu 'n cumar, r'a chéile sluagh Cléireachail na h-Alba. Ge b'e ni a theirear le daoineibh *sagartach*, no le daoineibh, a tha 'n a luchd-céirde ann an cùisibh an Riaghlaidh aimsireil, ge b'e a their iad an aghaidh so; is e co-shuidheachadh Eaglais *Iain Knox* air bunaitibh fhìrinn Chrìosd, an t-aon bhunait, is am bunait a leagadh cheana e, Fhìrinn Dhé agus Chrìosd, am bunait air an do thog *Iain Knox*, agus *Aindrea Melville*, agus *Henderson*, agus *Rutherford*, agus *Gillespie*, agus na h-*Erskinnich*, agus *M'Rie*, agus *Chalmers*, is e an co-shuidheachadh sin, a tha 'n a phrìomh dhreach, agus 'na fhìor aogas, cho làn do choslas na fìrinn mar tha i sin ann an Chrìosd, a tha cho làn do ghliocas, cho fialaidh, cho freagarrach do bhlas agus do inntinn na h-Alba,—a tha cho so-dhèanadach, cho so-oibreachaidh, a tha cho so imeachail, agus na 'n oibrichtheadh e d' a réir féin, gu cùramach, gu h-eudmhor, agus gu dleas, agus gu simplidh, agus e a' ruigsinn air cridheachaibh ar sluaigh, 's e an co-shuidheachadh agus an dòigh, do bhrìgh agus gu 'm bheil e co-shlènte ri fìrinn Chrìosd, a dheanamh, a ghluaisèadh, 's a dhùisgeadh suas, fo bheannachadh Dhé, agus fo chumhachd an Spioraid Naoimh, is e a thredraicheadh sluagh ar dùthchais, gu bhi a' deanamh greime air an aon aidmeil dhùileas, agus air an aon fhianuis, agus leis an togtadh suas an Fhianuis sin, mar thogadh o shean i, agus a bhiodh i cho soilleir, dealrach, 's a bha an t-seann bhratach ann an aimsiribh a' *Chùmhnaint*, 'n uair chunnacas sgrìobhta air a' Bhrataich sin, "*Air taobh a chùmhnaint*, agus *air taobh Crùn Rìoghail CHRÌOSD*."

Tha an Tighearn Iosa, mar Rìgh nan Rìghrean, agus mar Phrionnsa Rìghrean na Talmhainn, gu tighinn a mach o na nèamhaibh air am fosgladh, gu Rìoghachdan an Domhain gu léir a ghabhail dha féin mar an Oighreachd, a 's leis féin mar a *chòir*. Nar leigeadh Dia, gu 'n amaiseadh e oirnne, le ar lòchrain air dol as, agus sinn gun oladh 'n ar soithichibh, gu ar lòchrain a lasadh! Gu 'n deònaich an Tighearn gu 'n cumar suas leinn, tre ghràs, lòchrain ar Fianuis, agus sinn a bhi air ar faighinn ullamh, ar lòchrain a dheasachadh, agus iad laiste, air chor agus mar shluagh, gu 'm faighear 'n ar 'n-ionad sinn, anns a' cho-chruinneachadh mhòr sin, air tighinn a mach o uile Rìoghachdaibh an domhain, mar dhaoineibh saorta Chrìosd, mar ghabhar seachad leotha, gu Luchairt Rìoghail sìorruidh do-thomhais an Rìgh MHOIR.

A' Chrìoch.