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The Multiplication of Books.

IT is certainly a truism to say that books have been among the most powerful factors in the furtherance of the mental education of mankind. We can hardly realise, indeed, how much society is indebted to them, and to one great Book in particular, for the measure of intellectual culture it has now acquired. Ever since the art of printing was invented—about the end of the fifteenth century—the world's library has increased with leaps and bounds, until it has attained overwhelming dimensions. The words of Solomon have special significance in this connection for the present age; "of making many books there is no end." The increase of literature has been attended by an advance of mental culture among all classes of society. We are not to suppose, however, that this multiplication of books is an unmixed good. Far from it; in respect of some departments of literature it is an almost wholly unmixed evil. It is our purpose, then, in this article, to show that the excessive multiplication of books, be they bad or good, tends to defeat one of the great ends they are designed to fulfil, namely, the sound culture of the human mind. One of our chief objects in taking up this subject, is to combat the popular idea that because the present age abounds in books, it is, of necessity, more profoundly intellectual and thoughtful than preceding ages.

In the first place it may be desirable to say something about *bad* books. Would, indeed, there were none such! But they exist in vast numbers; and their circulation is as certainly opposed to mental as it is to moral culture. This may not appear on the surface, but we shall endeavour to make it plain before we are done. These books are to be found in large quantities in that department of literature known as the literature of the imagination. The novel, for example, is famous for its immoral plots and episodes, though every book of this designation is not equally bad. Some novels may be quite moral in their teaching, but they belong to a shady sphere in the world's literature. Poetry, also, is not exempt from the same charge of moral defect. There have been

few truly Christian poets, while some of the greatest masters of the art are not fit to be read in some parts of their works. Strange to say that, notwithstanding all this, there are men of eminence whose personal morality is not questioned, that think themselves justified in recommending books of very doubtful character because they happen to be marked by intellectual power, and to be composed by men of genius—as if, forsooth, cleverness sanctifies carnality. Satan is clever enough, but that does not make his works less evil than they really are; it rather intensifies the evil of them. We further remark that books, or sections of books, that are adapted to stir up corrupt passions, tend to produce, in the long run, mental imbecility. The heart influences the head. Let natural depravity be stimulated and allowed to run riot, and eventually there will be an intellectual collapse. The conclusion, therefore, is that writings which do not possess a sound moral tone, no matter how distinguished they may be for literary power, fail to advance the very end they are intended to fulfil; they do not strengthen, but weaken, the mental calibre of the reader. The fewer, then, of such books the better. Our remarks on this head will also apply to books of unsound, unscriptural tenets. These may sometimes display intellectual ability of a high order, and their evil fruits may not at once appear, but the *final* result of their influence is the same as that of the kind of books already mentioned. Unsound doctrine will produce unsound morality, and unsound morality will produce unsound mind.

It may be readily inferred that if people in general were to agree with the sentiment that is here expressed, they would begin to part company with many of their books. The Ephesians of old, when they turned from idols to true Christianity, burned their foolish books in the fire; and in like manner, when a spiritual Reformation will again visit the world, there will be piles of unwholesome literature destroyed by its former devotees.

The view may not approve itself so readily to our readers that the multiplication, even of useful books, tends to defeat the desired end of mental culture. There appears to be an inconsistency of ideas here. The more numerous are such books, one is disposed to say, the more extensive will be the intellectual improvement; there cannot be too many of them. Now, this is the ordinary way of reasoning; it is certainly sound in the main; but it has its limits; and to some of these we desire to refer.

For one thing, a multitude of books is apt to divide the attention of the reader, so that he does not sufficiently concentrate his thoughts upon any one book in particular. This divided attention tends to superficiality of knowledge and thought. The individual may become acquainted with a vast variety of facts and ideas, but he has only a slender hold of them. Now, superficiality is not an admirable thing, and yet it is a characteristic of this age of many books. There are, however, exceptional men still who concentrate their energies upon particular lines of thought and reading,

and thus attain to special distinction in one or another department of intellectual research. A multitude of books, as we have seen, is apt to tempt the reader to dip here and there and everywhere, so that he knows nothing well; and thus the making of many books may turn out an evil and not a good. Of course, we are aware that these remarks do not apply to a number of people. There are some who have but little desire for reading—the world of literature is nothing to them—and so they are under no temptation in connection with many books. There are others who are far away from libraries, who have only a few books, and who complain of their special lot in this respect. Our sympathies are with the latter, and we would like to see sound literature widely circulated for their benefit. But to even such we are disposed to say, "Endeavour to extend your knowledge of good books by all proper means, but study deeply those you have already got—your histories of the Church and the State, your works of solid divinity, your Bunyan, Boston, Owen and such like, and above all the Book of books." There is in this supreme Book what is fitted to enlighten every faculty of the soul; yea, under the divine blessing, to renew us in the spirit of our minds and make us capable of knowing and glorifying the great God our Creator. The Bible is a library of books in itself; there is history, poetry, philosophy, theology in it. The man who is well acquainted with his Bible and has the word of Christ richly dwelling in his heart, is no ignorant, superficial trifler, but a person of the best and noblest culture.

Another point is this: the undue multiplication of books is apt to kill independence of thought. The ordinary reader is led to take all his thoughts at second hand, and not to cultivate the ability to think for himself—the value of the power to think for one's self cannot be over-estimated. While books usually afford a strong stimulus to thinking, yet they may become so many that they will stifle rather than foster individual thought. We think it a great mistake to conclude that, because the present is an age of books, it is therefore more intellectual or thoughtful than the ages that have gone before. In fact, there are many signs of the times that set at nought this idea. There is not at present alive one man of great commanding genius. In fact, mediocrity is the order of the day, and the scattering of books here and there as thick as the leaves in autumn will not remedy the case. A superficial education may cover the earth, but that does not form real mental culture. Our forefathers are nowadays condemned by empty upstarts as traditionalists, who did not think for themselves, but believed whatever was handed down to them. A more false charge could not be made. And what is it that makes the conceited dwarfs of our day think they themselves are on a higher platform? Just this; that they are more richly provided with books, and are acquainted with more numerous fields of research. The greater number of these persons, however, are

almost wholly indebted to others for the knowledge they possess ; they have acquired it by reading ; they have never thought it out for themselves. They are as much traditionalists as it was possible for any of their forefathers to be. In fact, the latter had more time and opportunity for thought ; and we can testify from what we have heard and seen of men of a past generation that their sons of the present day are not to be compared for a moment with them in intellectual penetration and practical sagacity. Undoubtedly, in those past times, if men subjected their minds to books, it was chiefly to the Bible, a book that has been the intellectual as well as the spiritual quickener of men in all ages. This is the Book of divine learning and of infallible wisdom, and all others are as nothing beside it. Our fathers, then, if they submitted themselves to the teaching of the Bible, were in no cramping bondage ; they walked at holiest liberty. But the liberty of thought of the present age, derived from a godless literature, is but the licence of hell, the most despicable, though it may be the most delusive, of all bondages.

We say, then, in conclusion, that the multiplication of books is not necessarily a benefit to society. The chief matter is the wise and understanding use of books. Let us read what will really benefit us, and let us seek to think deeply over what we read. This will produce sound mental culture.

The Growth of Churches and its Danger.

WE have just come across the following note in *The Watchword*, the able anti-union magazine of old-time. The extract is from the late Dr. Guthrie—not a safe guide in several things—yet here he directs attention, in felicitous language, to something worthy of our consideration at the present crisis in the churches :—“The water is purest at its fountain among the mountains, where it gushes cold from the rock, or bubbles up at the mossy spring ; the nearer to the source the clearer is the spring. By every mill it rolls, it grows in volume ; till the streamlet, which a child could leap, fed by many tributaries, has swollen into a broad river, on whose bosom, as it nears the sea, fishermen shoot their nets, and the ships of nations ride. But what the water has acquired in depth and breadth, it has lost in purity, growing the muddier the further it goes. How like to what happens with Churches,—which, as they become larger, usually become more loose in doctrine, and more lax in discipline. With an increase of numbers, they often present such an increase of corruptions, that to find the purest days of many a sect we must turn our steps backward to the period of its rise.”

Notes of a Sermon

BY THE LATE REV. ARCHIBALD COOK, DAVIOT.

PREACHED IN JOHN KNOX'S FREE CHURCH, GLASGOW.

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"If ye were of the world, the world would love his own : but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you."—JOHN xv. 19.  
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THE hatred of the world is not easy for the saints to endure. A child of God is not an angel that he can live above feeling, nor is he a stone that he cannot feel ; on the contrary, he has very tender feelings. The hatred of the world is sometimes very hard, very severe, but if it arises against the creature on account of his spiritual acquaintance with the Saviour, he often rejoices in the midst of it. We read of the apostles that they went "from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name." A view of this would make opposition easier for the child of God. The hatred of the world is a part of the cross he has to bear, and the cross is an ornament to the gracious soul. When these words were first uttered, the Saviour was personally present with His disciples. He knew from experience what the hatred of the world was, and He knew that the world from that time forward would hate every drop of His grace in His disciples, and therefore He forewarned them that they might lay their account with suffering. He says : "It hated me before it hated you." "If ye were of the world, the world would love his own ; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." In discoursing from these words, I intend to show :—

I. Whence the love of the world to its own arises.

II. The manner of Christ's choosing His people out of the world ; and

III. Whence arises the hatred of the world to the children of God.

I. We are to show whence the love of the world to its own arises. Why does the world love its own ?

1. In the first place we may say it arises from this, that the world is all of the same corrupt nature. We see that every class of creatures has a kind of attachment to its own class. We see that sheep, cows, horses, fowls, and even the very serpents, have an attachment each to its own kind because they are of the same nature. And so the world must love its own ; it is all of the same corrupt fallen nature. We need not wonder at this. But one thing may be said, their attachment to one another is but short ; there will be nothing of it in eternity.

2. I observe further that this love arises from sinful lusts in the

nature. There is not a sin we hear of or see in the world, but the seed of that sin is in us when we come into the world. We need not say, "Look at the murderer, the thief, or the unclean creature;" we brought the seed of murder, theft, and uncleanness into the world with us. But there is some predominant sin in the nature of each person. Although the same sin is in the nature of all, yet the same sin does not predominate or rule in every creature. Hence the ruling sin of some is drunkenness, of others, covetousness, and of others still, uncleanness. Now, whatever sin rules in the nature of one person, that sin chooses a companion in another; it loves its own image in the other person. Hence you may know what sin reigns in a man by his companions. No doubt this is partly what is meant by the rich man in hell speaking of his five brethren, who were probably his five companions in lust. Why did he not wish them to come to hell? Was he not wanting their company? No, my friends; but because he was afraid they would bring five more hells with them. And do we not see some of those persons freer with a companion than with a brother, or a sister, or a father? There are persons who, on hearing another profane the name of God, will reprove him for it, and will even be grieved for it, but, should they see one drunk, they, and very few besides, will grieve for or reprove him. I hear people often saying, "He was an honest man, though he had his own infirmities." Although he was a drunkard, a profane swearer, a Sabbath breaker, they will say he was an honest man who had his own infirmities. There is a want of faithfulness among men. Many will speak behind a man's back, what they will not say to his face. What if you see that person on the left hand for the very sin which you should have reproved him for?

3. We may go further and speak of the low, mean thoughts of divine things that reign in the unregenerate heart of the world. There are low and contemptible thoughts of God, of Christ, and of eternity, reigning in unregenerate persons. Now, it is from this that a great deal of their love to one another and of their hatred to God's people arises. We see that the old philosophers never agreed in anything among themselves; they were tearing one another continually; but when Christ Jesus appeared to preach to poor sinners, they join together to reject Him. Here the world showed that it loved its own.

II. The manner of Christ's choosing His people out of the world. On the subject of choosing sinners, as here set forth, we are not going to enter into the doctrine of eternal election. With regard to this, there is a mystery in God, hidden from the angels, and known only to Himself. Eternal election was a mystery from all eternity, and its objects are only known when we see the power of God made known in the souls of sinners. When you see the power of God made known in the soul of a sinner, you may know that that sinner was elected from eternity.

1. In the first place, I observe that Christ gains the consent of

the soul to be His. Without this, we cannot say that a soul will be saved, according to the eternal purpose of God, and in view of that eternal purpose, we dare not say that any soul, whose consent is gained to Christ will be lost. We read that when Eliezer went for a wife to Abraham's son, Isaac, the question was put to Rebekah, "Wilt thou go with this man?" Her answer was, "I will go." Her consent was gained. Now, the Spirit of God creates in the elect soul that consent; though this movement of soul be no bigger than the first movement of a child in its mother's womb, yet the Spirit of God is there, and it will take the soul to glory. I believe that if the pain produced by the point of a needle would be sufficient to prepare the soul for heaven, the Lord would not use more, but he must bruise, and break, and purge the soul to pieces, before He brings it there. In choosing His people out of the world, Christ by His Spirit gives them grace to consent. "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power."

2. I observe further, that the gaining of the soul from the world to Christ is by means of "the promise" and that in His own ordinances. Know you, poor sinner, that can put your finger upon a promise with which God gained your consent to Christ, you have something that will give you comfort, when you come to grapple with eternity, when flesh cannot comfort you. This promise is between the soul and God, it is a secret. And it is very often when the poor sinner is on his knees that the consent of his soul is gained. This promise has something of the nature of the word of which the Psalmist speaks—"Remember the word unto thy servant, upon which thou hast caused me to hope." Indeed, whatever word the soul gets from time to time to the day of his death, it is only a confirmation of the first word.

3. When the soul is gained to Christ by the promise, there is something of the nature of spiritual dew that comes with it. You, that know something of this, you know something of a heart closed in to God, closed in to Christ, closed in to the offers of the Gospel. Neither prayer, preaching, affliction, nor hell itself would convert you. Now, when the Lord comes to a soul in this way, a spiritual dew comes down. You yourselves will see in the morning, when the dew descends and the sun begins to rise, you will see the very flowers opening their bosoms. And when the Spirit of God opens up to the soul something of the infinite loveliness of the Great One, the spiritual dew falls down from Him through the promise into the soul, and the soul is open to receive it. "Awake, O north wind; and come thou south; blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out. Let my beloved come into his garden, and eat his pleasant fruits." The hypocrite has only God without, Christ without, and he is content with that, but the gracious soul must have Him *within*. You that have room in your souls to give to God and Christ, they have room in glory for your souls. You that have no room for the Saviour, you have no evidence that He has room for you in glory.

4. This experience comes to the soul oftentimes when the soul is looking at himself as one whose day of grace is past. There are some poor creatures that conclude that the day of grace is past with them, and that they are given up to judicial hardness. There is something in these words—"Why hast thou hardened our hearts from thy fear?" This is as if they thought the Lord had hardened their hearts in judgment. We see the Psalmist in the eighty-eighth psalm saying, "Wilt thou shew wonders to the dead? shall the dead arise and praise thee?" Why does he say this? He needed to realise himself among the dead. Why? That the Son of God may be glorified. "This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified thereby." There is power in His resurrection—"that they may know him in the power of his resurrection and in the fellowship of his sufferings"—to give sinners a spiritual resurrection. I am sure you, poor soul, know something of this. Once you thought if you could be freed from vain thoughts in prayers, on the Sabbaths, when reading the Bible, you would be happy; but what follows now? A dead soul. "Oh, it is not so much vain thoughts I am now burdened with—but a dead soul, every feeling is dead." The carnal world know not the worms that eat them; their spiritual death never brought one sigh from their hearts. But there is a principle of faith in the bosom of the living soul, which lies, as were in a grave, until the power of Christ's resurrection comes; then something comes out of that grave that sets the soul to spiritual action. This is the way in which the Lord chooses a people out of the world or sets apart a soul for Himself. Will not His glory, His power, His grace, and His love, be seen in the resurrection of that poor soul?

5. The soul will now be newly furnished. We lost our spiritual furniture by the fall; we are unfit for the enjoyment of God. Now the soul will feel a new love of spiritual objects, a new hatred to sin, a new longing after holiness and after enjoyment of the Three-One God.

6. The Saviour, when He chooses and sets apart a poor soul for Himself, sets apart that soul for God. "I have chosen you out of the world." First; the tastes of the soul are renewed. You may set a sheep to feed on a dunghill, but let it loose, and it will go to the grass. Why? It is its nature. Take a sow, and put it on grass, but let it loose, and it will go to the dunghill. Why? It is its nature. You may take a carnal worldling and put him among the people of God, and I am sure he will have very little comfort, he will soon get tired. The reading of a chapter is a burden to him. Why? It is his nature; it is like that of the swine. But whenever the power of the Saviour comes to the soul the taste is changed, so that the soul does not find comfort in the carnal company of the world. He now becomes a poor broken creature, mourning in a corner over hatred of God, and a barren, hard heart. And notwithstanding this mourning, he must confess

that at this moment he has greater comfort than all the comfort he had in the world. How? Because he is renewed in his mind, and in proportion as he is renewed, his comfort becomes sweeter. This change must take place in the soul here, that the creature may love God through eternity. Though an unregenerate sinner would be brought to glory, how is it possible that he can love glory, who had no love to God here? The renewed soul loses comfort, solace and happiness in the fashions and company of the world, and profess to be a poor, broken creature at the footstool of the Lord. Secondly, the soul now becomes tender and easily wounded in spirit. Perhaps there was a time when he could hear the profaning of God's name or profane swearing, without any grief. He could see drunken creatures, and the sight gave him no grief. But the soul now has become tender, and like one who has a wound on his body that is easily hurt, so the Lord now makes his conscience tender like raw flesh, easily hurt. But the soul is not yet wholly weaned from his lusts or from company, and again another drop falls from above and makes the soul tender, so that a vain thought or a worldly word will wound him. But some professors of religion can make a prayer, a long prayer, and a good prayer, and can live with any company; their conscience is spiritually dead.

7. I observe further that they set themselves apart from the world because they feel from experience that the Saviour is not among the world. Hence when there, they get hardness of heart, and when that hardness comes, it is not easily removed. Nothing but power and comfort from above will remove barrenness of soul and the sense of an angry God. This makes them know that the Lord is not in the pleasures of the world, and hence they try a private corner. O my friends, it is a great thing to be brought to love a secret place. There are many professors who keep family worship as regular as the clock, and yet they do not spend five minutes in prayer in a corner from morning to night. O it is a wonderful thing to bring one to find happiness in private exercise! The poor creature loves a broken heart, loves a penitent spirit, loves a thirst after God, and loves holiness. First: the soul may set himself apart for God from spirit of thankfulness. O child of God, if the Spirit of grace gives you a glimpse of the sins which you had once, if you "look unto the rock whence ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged," and look at yourself as you were an heir of hell, lying in your blood in the open field, think of your deliverance, and what it cost God before you could be delivered out of that pit. The Son of God had to become a man of sorrows, and to be sacrificed in your room. He then passed by and said to your soul, "Live," and the soul was quickened; and perhaps you remember the first day you had a spiritual being. Will not that soul be filled with thankfulness, and be disposed to give himself to the Lord's service? Why, see the Psalmist, after he got deliverance from the pains of hell, he

says, "What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me? . . . I am thy servant, and the son of thy handmaid: thou hast loosed my bonds." These bonds were chains that all the angels in heaven could not loose. Ah, sinner, there were two chains on the soul that would make the very devils miserable to all eternity, the chains of guilt and of the curse. Now, you, poor sinner, I am sure, if the Lord will give you your choice, you will not be willing to leave the world without doing something for Him. Secondly: Now, the soul, in setting himself apart for the Lord, as the fruit of the Saviour's choice of him, comes to see the end of his creation. What is the greatest honour that ever was put on a sinner of this world? Is it to be a king or queen? No, no. The greatest honour is to answer the end of his creation. All the lower creatures answer their end; the very serpents answer their end. Think of your tongue; was it for speaking about the world on the Lord's day that the Lord gave you a tongue? Look at the profane swearer; was it for profanity that a tongue was given him? But the child of God answers the end of his creation, the greatest honour that can be put upon him. The riches of the world, the honours of the world, are but a shadow in comparison with this. In whatever company he is, whether among the people of God or among the world, if he sees the crown on the head of the Redeemer, and the world under foot, he counts it an infinite sweetness, an infinite comfort. It is something which makes the creature happy through all eternity. It is in this way that the people of God find it easy to get through the world. The soul comes to this, as the result of the Saviour's setting him apart, namely, to put the crown on His head. All the true godliness that is in the world is the only thing the soul sees of any value.

III. This brings me to the last part—why the world hates the people of God. Never you mind, never you mind, there is a common saying among people, "Dogs may bark at the moon, but the moon is none the worse of their barking." So the world may bark at the people of God, but they are none the worse. Moses counted the reproach of Christ greater riches than all the treasures in Egypt. There are few people will do this, but the children of the new birth will do it.

1. The hatred of the world is a fulfilment of the first promise. The Lord said to the serpent, "I will put enmity between thy seed and her seed." This must be fulfilled; it is God who spoke it; and what Word is so faithful as His?

2. Again I observe that the world hate God's people, because something of the spiritual knowledge of the Son of God has come into their souls. The knowledge of the Saviour, or the fruit of that knowledge, will appear outwardly, and the enmity of the world will show itself against it, for the world are against God; and when God appeared in man's nature sinners were not at ease. If you saw a bear or a lion on the road, you would flee from it, if

you could not overcome it. So sinners, because they cannot overcome God, flee from Him. Thus when the fruit of the spiritual knowledge of the Saviour begins to make its appearance, the world will try to nip it in the bud. You, child of God, you could once dance as well as others, you could go to the ball as well as others. Did your parents say anything against you then? But something came over you and you began to pray, and perhaps they then turned upon you. There are some poor creatures that only God and their souls know what they have suffered at the hands of others. There are but few who have so much godliness, but that when they are in the company of drunkards, these may say, "Ye are of our own;" or when they are with the Sabbath-breakers, these may say, "Ye are of our own;" they conform to every company.

3. The world's hatred arises because the people of God have so much tenderness of spirit that they cannot put up with everything others may do. Lot was in Sodom, and I am sure the people of Sodom were as tired of him as he was of them, for he was reproving them for their sin. Now, poor creatures, that cannot allow things to pass without reproof, I am sure you will often feel the serpent beginning to hiss, and this will often send you to your knees with broken spirits and wet eyes. "If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you."

4. The world's hatred to the soul arises because the soul has a principle of stedfastness that will not comply or make concessions. We see this in poor Daniel; he would not yield although they threw him among the lions. We see the other children; they would not yield although they were thrown into the furnace. The furnace was as terrible in itself to the three children as to any others, but they had a view of the unquenchable fire; they saw that Nebuchadnezzar's fire would be soon over, and could at the worst burn only their bodies, but the other fire would eternally burn their souls in hell. So, if the Lord creates a principle of stedfastness in the soul that will rather suffer than yield, the child of God will lose all rather than sin. But, my friends, you will not lose; there is not a hair lost but you will get it back in a spiritual way. I have no doubt but that for every arrow that enters the soul there is a drop of eternal sweetness put in his cup in glory, and even in this world itself there will be drops of sweetness in the cup with trials. If the world knew that they were the occasion of so much sweetness to the children of God they would not meddle with them.

5. It is the sovereign good will of God that the world's hatred is shown to his children. Were it not that the Lord would bring us out of the world's company we would lie and rot in it. So He must let the world loose upon a poor creature, and this is a part of the furnace a gracious soul must be brought through. This is

not our home ; eternity is our home ; glory is our home. It is written of others that they sought "a better country." Why did they seek it? Because they were crucified to the world, and the world to them. And this is one of the ways in which the Lord crucifies them to the world, and makes them pilgrims and strangers. "If ye were of the world, the world would love his own." But poor things, remember that it hated the Saviour before it hated you, and "in that he himself suffered, being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted." When things come to a head, He will take you home to Himself, or He will cut these things short. The Saviour loves a broken heart and a contrite spirit. These are the sacrifices with which He is well pleased. But He does not like them to be too much broken, so when things come to a height with a poor soul, He will send deliverance.

The Lord honours that soul greatly whom He hath separated for Himself. It is not everyone that the Lord is separating for Himself. These are few. How many are going out of the world as ignorant of God, of self, of sin, as when they came into it. There are but few holy creatures whom the Lord is setting apart for Himself. Remember these words, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God ; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be ; but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him ; for we shall see him as he is." And what is it to be like the Son of God? Ah, there is not a child of grace in this world but will be more glorious in eternity than although ten thousand suns should be shining in one sun. It were worth while to endure the spittings of the world for a while. Where would they be, if they had got their deserts? they would be lying in hell among the devils. Perhaps there are persons in hell this night that were no worse than you, and if He show His grace to you, will you not then endure the spittings of the world, when there are such things in eternity? Moses chose to suffer affliction. O what a reward he has got! How many thousands of years he has been already in glory! Fourscore years would likely have ended his happiness in Egypt, and then there would be the eternal flames ; now, although he should get no more happiness than he has got already, has he not been rewarded enough?

O poor, foolish sinner, your day of grace is given to prepare for eternity, and will you spend your few days in trifling? "What will it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" Ah, poor sinner remember eternity ; you must go to eternity for yourself. "Him that cometh unto me," says the Saviour, "I will in nowise cast out." "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." "They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and as the sun in the kingdom of their Father" for ever and ever.—Amen.

Letters of the late William Crowe, Wick.

(XVIII.)

HARBOUR OFFICE,
WICK, 17th January, 1893.

WE hear often about you from friends coming and going, and they all agree in one thing—that you have not yet got deliverance through the Word, and that you refuse to take it from man. This is as it ought to be, and you must hold on to it, and tell your friends and advisers that if they are able to advise you in so important a matter, surely they must have access to a throne of grace, and if so, let them carry your case there, and plead for your deliverance through the right channel. He who said, “Woman, thou art loosed from thine infirmity,” is the only one that can command your deliverance. Bonds and imprisonments are peculiar to the people of God, but you say, “My case differs from anything on record.” Perhaps it may, as every child of grace will have a different experience to record, but you will allow that the Church triumphant in glory will be at one in singing to the praise of redeeming love, that He brought them by a right way. It may be—as in your own experience—a rough, round-about way, and the soul discouraged because of the way, yet wait on the Lord, asking for faith and patience—those noble graces that enable the soul to fight the good fight; even the worm Jacob overcame by the use of such weapons.

Unknown to myself I have become one of your advisers, the very thing reprobated at the beginning of this scribble. . . .

Yours very faithfully,

W. C.

(XIX.)*

HARBOUR OFFICE,
WICK, 5th April, 1894.

Seeing in our local papers a paragraph intimating the death of your beloved brother, and well knowing that tender affections would, by this sad bereavement, be wounded and cast down, my heart yearns over you, and more especially in recalling the waves of affliction in body and mind through which you have already passed. But do not be cast down, or overcome by these fiery trials, but rejoice inasmuch as ye are made partakers of Christ's sufferings. And yet it is natural for you to mourn, and it is matter of solemn reflection in parting with those dear ones brought up in the same family and associated with your tender years, with childhood and youth, with all the endearing ties relative thereto. When these tender ties are severed, a wound is left bleeding, and

* This letter was written to the late Mrs. Harper, Thurso. See Vol. ii., page 427.—ED.

nothing can bind up and heal this wound but to consider Christ ; a healing virtue flows out from His wounds. May that blessed balm be applied to your affections !

We are getting old ; the frail tabernacle is bending earthward. We have out-lived most of our early associates and friends. The world is becoming colder ; yea, the love of many is waxing cold. Strife and contention are severing former friendships. The adversary of souls is gloating over the divisions of Reuben. Unblushing heresy is lifting its unhallowed head in the sacred places where we had our dwellings in times past ; and those that we trusted to as witnesses are faintly turning back, carrying along with them the mixed multitude that came up out of Egypt. We are seeing the faithful removed from pulpit and pew, leaving congregations so infatuated that they are ready to accept of sound without substance, and they refuse to suffer reproach for His name, holding on by a Church that has forfeited all claim to the name. Rainy, Dods, Bruce, and company have thrown a soul-destroying charm over the once protesting Free Church. Thurso, once ornamented with choice cedars—giants who were never known to cringe to popular applause, “how is she become tributary ?”

I must not continue longer in this melancholy train of thought,
 . . .—Yours very faithfully, W. C.

(XX.)

HARBOUR OFFICE,
 WICK, 11th May, 1897.

We are all sorry to hear of your suffering, yet how helpless to render you any aid. Our sympathies cannot give you relief, but if we were what we ought to be, we would be sharers of your afflictions. Wearisome days and anxious nights have been measured out to you, causing you to say, with Job, “When I lie down I say, When shall I arise, and the night be gone? And I am full of tossing to and fro until the dawning of the day.” You find bitter ingredients mixed in the cup put into your hand, with wave upon wave, yes, and deep calling unto deep ; yet be of good cheer, these billows will be soon over, and a morning without clouds will soon dawn in on you, and dispel the dark clouds that have so long darkened your sky. Your sorrows will then be for ever swallowed up in the ocean of His redeeming love. Saving faith touching the promises will even now beget a healing balm amid all your disquietudes. The Lord will not break a leaf driven to and fro, nor pursue the dry stubble.

My wife sends her kind regards. We are both finding passing years telling on us, unwilling to leave home, and unable to undergo much fatigue. . . . Have you wholly given up writing? My own scribble is now becoming difficult to read. You should make a strong effort to leave a memoir of your chequered experience for the use of the Church. The modern Free Church would have little sympathy with your experience yet there are those left after

the gleanings of the vintage that would prize it. As you are now laid past from looking in on the afflicted, and able only to pray, see that your prayers have a wide range. Visit old haunts of early and endearing associations, the Zion hill where you had your dwelling in times past. Although these haunts are now desolate, yet the very rubbish and stones are more precious than the costly Free Churches of the present day.

Be of good courage, holding on, by faith and patience, to the end.—Yours very faithfully,
W. C.

(XXI.)

I WELLINGTON STREET,
PULTENEYTOWN, 8th March, 1898.

I am in receipt of your kind letter of sympathy. It is when one is under the rod that sympathy from one who has been long experiencing trouble is doubly dear. I have had a sudden and alarming call, yet mercy has been mingled in the cup. I have no pain, only extreme weakness, and find a difficulty in writing these few lines. But being carefully nursed, I fondly hope to be able to resume my duties in a few days. . . .

My wife wishes to be kindly remembered to you and L——. When I can write with ease, you will hear again from—Yours truly,
W. C.

The Bible.

BY PROFESSOR GAUSSEN, D.D., GENEVA.

WE would fain that people should understand that this human individuality to which our attention is directed in the Scriptures, far from leaving any stain there, or from being an infirmity there, stamps upon them, on the contrary, a divine beauty, and powerfully reveals to us their inspiration.

Yes, we have said that it is God who speaks to us there, but it is also man; it is man, but it is also God. Admirable Word of God! it has been made man in its own way, as the eternal Word was! Yes, God has made it also come down to us full of grace and truth, like unto our words in all things, yet without error and sin! Admirable Word, divine Word, yet withal full of humanity, much-to-be-loved Word of my God! Yes, in order to our understanding it, it had of necessity to be put upon mortal lips, that it might relate human things; and, in order to attract our regard, behoved to invest itself with our modes of thinking, and with all the emotions of our voice; for God well knew whereof we were made. But we have recognised it as the Word of the Lord, mighty, efficacious, sharper than a two-edged sword; and the simplest among us, on hearing it, may say like Cleopas and his friend, "Did not our hearts burn within us while it spoke to us?"

With what a mighty charm do the Scriptures, by this abundance of humanity, and by all this personality with which their divinity is invested, remind us that the Lord of our souls, whose touching voice they are, does Himself bear a human heart on the throne of God, although seated on the highest place, where the angels serve Him and adore Him for ever ! It is thus, also, that they present to us not only that double character of variety and unity which already embellishes all the other works of God, as Creator of the heavens and the earth ; but, further, that mingling of familiarity and authority, of sympathy and grandeur, of practical details and mysterious majesty, of humanity and divinity, which is recognisable in all the dispensations of the same God, as Redeemer and Shepherd of His Church.

Such did the Word of God behove to be.

Like Immanuel, full of grace and truth ; at once in the bosom of God and in the heart of man ; mighty and sympathising ; heavenly and of the earth ; sublime and lowly ; awful and familiar ; God and man !

Studied under this aspect, considered in this character, the Word of God stands forth without its like ; it presents attractions quite unequalled ; it offers to men of all times, all places, and all conditions, beauties ever fresh ; a charm that never grows old, that always satisfies, never palls. With it, what we find with respect to human books is reversed ; for it pleases and fascinates, extends and rises in your regard the more assiduously you read it. It seems as if the book, the more it is studied and studied over again, grows and enlarges itself, and that some kind unseen being comes daily to stitch in some fresh leaves. And thus it is that the souls, alike of the learned and the simple, who have long nourished themselves on it, keep hanging upon it as the people hung of old on the lips of Jesus Christ. They all think it incomparable ; now powerful as the sound of mighty waters ; now soft and gentle, like the voice of the spouse to her bridegroom ; but always perfect, "always restoring the soul, and making wise the simple."

To what book, in this respect, would you liken it ? Go and put beside it the discourses of Plato, or Seneca, or Aristotle, or Saint Simon, or Jean Jacques. Have you read Mahomet's books ? Listen to him but for one hour, and your ears will tingle while beaten on by his piercing and monotonous voice. From the first page to the last, it is still the same sound of the same trumpet ; still the same Medina horn, blown from the top of some mosque, minaret, or war-camel ; still sybilline oracles, shrill and harsh, uttered in an unvarying tone of command and threat, whether it ordain virtue or enjoin murder ; ever one and the same voice, surly and blustering, having no bowels, no familiarity, no tears, no soul, no sympathy.

After trying other books, if you experience religious longings open the Bible ; listen to it. Sometimes you find here the songs

of angels, but of angels that have come down among the children of Adam. Here is the deep-sounding organ of the Most High, but an organ that serves to soothe man's heart and to rouse his conscience, alike in shepherd's cots and in palaces; alike in the poor man's garrets and in the tents of the desert. The Bible, in fact, has lessons for all conditions; it brings upon the scene both the lowly and the great; it reveals equally to both the love of God, and unveils in both the same miseries. It addresses itself to children; and it is often children that show us there the way to heaven and the great things of Jehovah. It addresses itself to shepherds and herdsmen; and it is often shepherds and herdsmen who lift up their voices there, and reveal to us the character of God. It speaks to kings and to scribes; and it is often kings and scribes that teach us there man's wretchedness, humiliation, confession, and prayer. Domestic scenes, confessions of conscience, pourings fourth of prayer in secret, travels, proverbs, revelations of the depths of the heart, the holy courses pursued by a child of God, weaknesses unveiled, falls, recoveries, inward experiences, parables, familiar letters, theological treatises, sacred commentaries on some ancient Scripture, national chronicles, military annals, political statistics, descriptions of God, portraits of angels, celestial visions, practical counsels, rules of life, solutions of cases of conscience, judgments of the Lord, sacred hymns, predictions of future events, narratives of what passed during the days preceding our creation, sublime odes, inimitable pieces of poetry—all this is found there by turns; and all this meets our view in most delightful variety, and presenting a whole whose majesty, like that of a temple, is overpowering. Thus it is that, from its first to its last page, the Bible behaved to combine with its majestic unity the indefinable charm of human-like instruction, familiar, sympathetic, personal, and the charm of a drama extending over forty centuries. In the Bible of Desmarets it is said, "There are fords here for lambs, and there are deep waters where elephants swim."

But behold, at the same time, what unity, and, lo! what innumerable and profound harmonies in this immense variety! Under all forms it is still the same truth; every man lost, and God the Saviour; every man with his posterity coming forth out of Eden, and losing the tree of life, and the second Adam with his people re-entering paradise, and regaining possession of the tree of life; ever the same cry uttered in tones innumerable, "O heart of man, return to thy God, for He pardoneth! We are in the gulf of perdition; let us come out of it; a Saviour hath gone down into it. . . . He bestows holiness as He bestows life."

"Is it possible that a book at once so sublime and so simple can be the work of man?" was asked of the philosophers of the last century by one who was himself too celebrated a philosopher. And all its pages have replied, No—it is impossible; for everywhere, traversing so many ages, and whichever it be of the

God-employed writers that holds the pen, king or shepherd, scribe or fisherman, priest or publican, you everywhere perceive that one same Author, at a thousand years' interval, and that one same eternal Spirit has conceived and dictated all; everywhere, at Babylon as at Horeb, at Jerusalem as at Athens, at Rome as at Patmos, you will find described the same God, the same world, the same men, the same angels, the same future, the same heaven; everywhere, whether it be a poet or a historian that addresses you, whether it be in the plains of the desert in the age of Pharaoh, or in the prisons of the capitol in the days of the Cæsars; everywhere in the world the same ruin; in man the same impotency; in the angels the same elevation, the same innocence, the same charity; in heaven the same purity, the same happiness, the same meeting together of truth and mercy, the same mutual embracing of righteousness and peace; the same counsels of a God who blotteth out iniquity, and who, nevertheless, doth not clear the guilty.

We conclude, therefore, that the abundance of humanity to be found in the Scriptures, far from compromising their divine inspiration, is only one farther mark of their divinity. — *The Plenary Inspiration of the Scriptures.*

Rev. Walter Scott at Raasay.

A PUBLIC meeting of an interesting kind was held in the Free Presbyterian Church here on the evening of Monday, 18th March. Rev. D. Macfarlane, pastor of the congregation, presided. He stated that he had asked the Rev. Walter Scott, of Australia, who was visiting the Western Isles, and whom he had met at the Portree Communion, to preach for him on the Sabbath. He had thought also that they would like to hear something from him about the state of the cause in the distant land where he laboured, hence their meeting that night.

At the chairman's request, Mr. Scott opened the meeting with devotional exercises, reading a portion of Acts xxviii., and commenting on the words in verse 15, "When the brethren heard of us, they came to meet us: whom when Paul saw, he thanked God, and took courage." Mr. Scott remarked that the significance of the occasion here referred to, and of the effect of thankfulness and cheer which it had upon the Apostle, was his experience of isolation and trial through the opposition of former brethren. That at such a juncture he should meet with those from distant parts who were friendly and sympathetic towards him was a circumstance so providentially encouraging to him that, whilst it led him to thank God, it also nerved him hopefully in connection with the uncertain future which was before him. Mr. Scott went on to point out that there was room, he felt, for a kindred sentiment in connection with the meeting he was addressing. To himself it was matter of joy to find those in Scotland who were

so heartily in sympathy with the church in Australia which he represented, and with the particular testimony which, in that distant land, they were seeking to maintain. And their pastor had indicated a similar satisfaction in reference to his visit to them. Such mutual experience he felt to be the more significant owing to the testing providences which were at work, whether in Scotland or at the Antipodes. In one sense, it was a time of separations both at home and abroad. Yet, under such common trials through former brethren, was it not comforting if, as church positions under such sifting processes came to be more exactly defined, those like-minded were thereby discovered and drawn more nearly together? He was glad that they in the old land appreciated the expression of sympathy which his church, small as it was, had commissioned him to convey to them. There was much that was similar, even circumstantially, in the two positions. Although the Union with Voluntaries in Australia had taken place much earlier, yet the situation resulting from it was such that, in the Colonies, as well as at home, there were three distinct parties—there was the United Church; then there were the Free Presbyterians (for the church he represented used the same name even as themselves); and, again, there were those who, while still outside the Union, were not prepared to be so definite in their testimony, and who, in the latitude which they claimed, were found, for instance, using paraphrases in public worship equally with the inspired Psalms. He believed this distinction obtained as between the parties referred to in Scotland also. He rejoiced that, in regard to purity of worship, as well as in other matters, the Free Presbyterian Church, from which he came, and that in Scotland, were at one. In Australia they had even gone further. They had synodically acknowledged the perpetual obligation of the National Covenant of Scotland, and of the Solemn League and Covenant, for maintaining and carrying on a work of Reformation in the Three Kingdoms, as sworn and subscribed by all ranks in Scotland and England in 1643, and particularly as renewed in Scotland in 1648, as well as the duty of renewing these Covenants, with suitable confession of sin, in a Bond suited to present circumstances. In this way they desired to put themselves in line with the Second Reformation period and its attainments, and to recognise the principle of the Covenanted uniformity ignored by the Revolution Settlement of 1688. He hoped the Free Presbyterians of Scotland would do the same. Mr. Scott proceeded to refer to the particular circumstances of his own charge on the Clarence River, New South Wales. He mentioned that his immediate predecessors had been the Rev. Alexander M'Intyre, of Strontian, well known in the west of Scotland as a powerful and successful preacher; and the Rev. John Finlayson, of Coigach, both of whom had been highly appreciated in Australia. Moreover, his own people had come mainly from the Western Islands; and he himself, through his

maternal ancestry, had connection with Skye and with a former minister of Snizort, Rev. Roderick M'Leod. His manse, like their own, was on an island, on which they had two churches. [At the mainland end of the charge, namely, at Grafton, the congregation, as in Raasay, are deprived of the use of their church building, which is held by the party separated from them in a practically empty condition, those who erected it having had to worship in a hall even during Mr. Finlayson's time]. In these respects there was a correspondence between the Raasay case and his own. Mr. Scott testified to the pleasure he had experienced in associating with their pastor, whose stand in 1893, and since, he had in Australia viewed most sympathetically. If spared to return to his people he said it would be with feelings of even deeper and closer interest in them and their Church. He hoped they in Scotland would not forget the cause which the Free Presbyterians of Australia were struggling to maintain in difficulties even greater, perhaps, than what obtained at home.

The Chairman, in thanking Mr. Scott for his address, expressed the happiness which the visit had afforded him. It had been peculiarly pleasant to him as having been the first visit to him of a minister outside of their own body since 1893—since he had been visited for the purpose of being deprived of his church and manse. The position and principles of the two churches represented seemed so far identical. It was singular that they had even the same name—although in adopting such a title in Scotland they had not recognised that already in Australia it was the name used by those witnessing for the same principles. He expressed the sympathy which they all felt with their friends in New South Wales. Mr. A. Macfarlane, schoolmaster, Raasay, spoke in similar terms of appreciation. Referring to the Union Church in Australia, he said he had sat in the Synod of Glenelg when the Rev. Dr. Mackay of Harris, formerly of Australia, had been twitted with the fact that whilst opposing union at home he had been identified with it abroad. He remembered the deep regret which Dr. Mackay then expressed that he had had any hand in that union. Their expectations of blessing by it had been, he said, sadly disappointed, so that he was glad to be dissociated from it and to return to Scotland, therefore, Mr. Macfarlane remarked, what they had just heard enabled them to understand the position even more clearly. He added that in Scotland they were accustomed to associate Australia in their minds with the idea of gold. But from the statement they had been listening to, they must come to the conclusion not only that there was gold in Australia, but that the gold of that land was good—there was bdellium and the onyx stone. There was a large attendance at the meeting, and the deepest interest was manifested throughout. The Rev. Mr. Macfarlane interpreted certain portions of the address in Gaelic. After the singing of the last three verses of the 122nd psalm, the benediction was pronounced by the pastor.

An Exercise and Addition.

BY THE LATE REV. JOHN MUNRO, OF HALKIRK.

Subject—ROMANS v. 1.

THE following "Exercise and Addition" was composed by the late eminent Rev. John Munro, Halkirk, when he was about to be licensed to preach the Gospel. It is interesting for its intrinsic merit, as well as for its godly and honoured author, who was greatly beloved in his life, and whose memory is sweet with a lasting fragrance. Mr. Munro began his ministerial career in the Achreny Mission, Caithness, in 1806; he was called to the Gaelic Chapel, Edinburgh, about the year 1816, as successor to Mr. (afterwards Dr.) Macdonald, on his translation to Ferintosh; and was finally settled in the parish of Halkirk, Caithness, in 1825. He fell asleep on the 1st April, 1847, "in the seventy-ninth year of his age and forty-first of his ministry." See "Ministers and Men in the Far North," by the Rev. Alexander Auld, Olrig. In the Exercise we have given the Greek words in English letters.

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"Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."—ROMANS v. 1.  
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THE apostle, in the preceding chapter, speaks concerning the manner of our justification before God. He introduces an instance of Abraham's faith in believing the promise of God, when, upon the principles of natural reason, its accomplishment seemed utterly impossible. But Abraham, from a conviction of the faithfulness of God, against hope believed in hope, being persuaded that what the Lord had promised He was able to perform. Therefore we are told, at verse 22, that his faith was accounted to him for righteousness. But lest it should be thought that this was Abraham's personal privilege, and did not at all belong to us, the apostle adds, at verse 23, "That it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him: but for us also, to whom it shall be imputed if we believe upon him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification." It is the peculiar excellency of the Word of God that it is adapted to every nation and age, suited to all ranks and denominations. It is as applicable to us at present as it was to those to whom it was formerly spoken by the mouth of the prophets and apostles. Hence we may conclude that a belief in this fundamental doctrine of scripture (which the verse now read contains) will, in like manner, be imputed to us for righteousness, or in other words, that our belief on Christ crucified and raised by the Father for the expiation of our sins

and justification of our persons, will be accepted by God. Therefore we may reason, with the apostle, that being justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. The words in the original run thus: *Dikaiōthentes oun ek pisteōs eirēnēn 'echomen pros ton Theon dia tou Kuriou hēmōn Iēsou Christou.*

According to the usual method observed in discourses of this kind, I shall endeavour (1) to give a critical analysis of the words in the text; (2) to comprehend their meaning in a short paraphrase; (3) to remove textual difficulties; and (4) to take notice of such doctrines as naturally arise from the subject.

(1) The first word that occurs is *dikaiōthentes*. It comes from the verb *dikaiō*, which signifies to justify or to free from the imputation of guilt. It is taken in this sense in 1 Cor. vi. 11, "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be ye not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolators, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, . . . shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but *edikaiōthēte* (ye are justified) in the name of the Lord Jesus." It also signifies to receive the testimony of being righteous from a judge, as in Romans ii. 3. The apostle reasons thus: "And thinkest thou, O man, that judgest them that do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God?" and he adds at verse 13, "For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law *dikaiōthēsontai* (shall be justified)" or pronounced righteous. And likewise in Acts xiii. 39, it has the same signification. "And by him (viz., Christ) every one that believeth *dikaiontai* (is justified) from all things." Thus I apprehend it is to be understood in the text; and indeed it may always ultimately refer to the being pronounced and treated as righteous by God at the day of judgment.

The next word is *oun*, a conjunction which signifies *then, therefore*. It is frequently used in drawing a conclusion from certain premises laid down, as in the text, where the apostle, after having in the preceding verses considered the nature of faith, draws this conclusion, that being justified by such a faith we have peace with God. It is also taken in this sense in Romans iii. 28, where the apostle, after exposing the futility of grounding our hopes for justification upon our personal righteousness, argues thus: "Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay: but by the law of faith. *Logizometha oun* (therefore we conclude) that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law."

The next word to be noticed is *pisteōs*, from *pistis*, signifying faith or belief, and is derived from *peithō*, which signifies to persuade. An example of this meaning of *pistis* is in Romans i. 8, "I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your *pistis* (faith) is spoken of throughout the whole world," i.e., that

your belief of the gospel of Christ is so steadfast and produces such genuine fruits that it is celebrated throughout the world. It sometimes signifies a temporary belief of anything, as in 2 Tim. ii. 18, where the apostle, speaking of Hymenæus and Philetus, adds that "They have erred concerning the truth, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow *pistin* (the faith) of some." It signifies likewise a mere assent to the truth of any matter, as in James ii. 14. "What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath *pistin* (faith), and have not works? can faith save him?" *i.e.*, though a man may profess to believe the gospel, yet so long as his faith or belief does not influence his heart, nor produce the fruits of righteousness and holiness, it is of no avail. *Pistis* likewise signifies Christ as the sum and substance of all the types and shadows and promises of the Old Testament, as in Gal. iii. 23, "But before *pistin* (faith) came," *i.e.*, before Christ came, "we were kept under the law." The apostle gives us a description of faith in Hebrews xi. 1, "Now *pistis* (faith) is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." It renders invisible things visible, and absent things present. It gives so lovely and realising a representation of things hoped for that they seem, as it were, actually existing before us. Our persuasion of them is as undoubted as if we saw them with our bodily eyes.

Eirēnē is the next word to be considered. It generally signifies peace; sometimes it is used to signify a course of success or prosperity, as in John xx. 19, when our Saviour, upon His appearing to His disciples after His resurrection, saith, "*Eirēnē* (peace) be unto you." In the text it signifies reconciliation, and supposes an interposition made in order to bring about a reconciliation, harmony, or agreement between parties who were formerly at variance. *Echomen*, from *echo*, which almost invariably signifies *to have or possess*. Its import is so obvious that I forbear to say anything further about it.

Pros ton Theon, which signifies towards or with God. The word *Theos* is used to signify the whole Trinity, as in John iv. 24, "*Theos* (God) is a Spirit, and they who worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." It is taken personally for the Father, Ephes. i. 3, "Blessed be *Theos* (God) and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." It is taken for the Son, John i. 1, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was *Theos* (God)." It is taken for the Holy Ghost, Acts v. 4 when Peter, reproving Ananias for lying to the Holy Ghost, says "Thou hast not lied to men, but *Theō* (to God)." *Theos* is also used to signify the devil. Thus in 2 Cor. iv. 4, the apostle says, "In whom *theos* (the god) of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not." Again, *theos* is used to express the heathen deities. Thus Acts xiv. 11, the men of Lystra, upon seeing Paul and Barnabas heal an impotent man, cried out, "*Hoi theoi* (the gods) are come down to us in the likeness of men."

Lastly, *theos* is used to signify that which a person most delights in—any darling pleasure or lust, as Phil. iii. 19, "Whose *ho theos* (god) is their belly."

The next word that comes to be considered is *dia*, a preposition which generally denotes the efficient cause of anything, as in John i. 3, "All things were made *di' autou* (by him)." It is taken in the same sense here, and alludes to that atonement which our Lord Jesus Christ made for sin, by which pardon is obtained, and our peace with God ensured. *Kuriou*, from *kuriōs*, which signifies a lord or a person entrusted with authority. Sometimes in New Testament it applies to God, as in Col. iv. 1, "Masters, give unto your servants that which is just and equal, knowing that ye also have a Master (*kurion*) in heaven." *Iesou*, from *Iesous*, a word derived from the Hebrew. It is of the same import with the Greek *sōtēr*, a Saviour.

The last word that claims our attention is *Christou*, from *Christos*, which signifies Christ or the Anointed. This word comes from the verb *chriō*, which signifies to anoint. The apostle, in Hebrews i. 9, when he speaks of our salvation, "God *echrise* (has anointed) thee with the oil of gladness," and in John i. 41 our Saviour is styled Christ or the Anointed One, "We have found (says Andrew to his brother, Peter) the Messiah, which is, being interpreted, *ho Christos* (the Christ)." This is the name of our Lord which indicates His being anointed and set apart by the Father for the performance of His mediatorial offices; accordingly we are told, 2 Cor. v. 19, "That God was in Christ (*en Christō*), reconciling the world to himself, not imputing unto men their trespasses; . . . and that he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."

Having thus given a critical analysis of the words in the text, I proceed, in the second place, to sum up their meaning in a short paraphrase:—We conclude then, that, as Abraham and others who now inherit the promises expected and obtained justification by faith, we, in like manner, will be accepted of, and pronounced righteous, by means of faith in Christ. The dreadful breach which sin occasioned between God and us being made up, we are admitted into a state of friendship, peace, and favour with Him through the atoning death, obedience, and sufferings of our Lord Jesus Christ, who was anointed as our Great High Priest to purchase salvation for us, who has paid the price of our redemption, and ever liveth to intercede on our behalf.

I go on, in the third place, to remove textual difficulties, and here I shall satisfy myself with obviating one of the many objections that have been brought against this doctrine. Such is the depravity of mankind that many cavil against the most important doctrines of the Gospel, and avail themselves of their pretended superior knowledge, by wresting the Scriptures and venting their spleen in the most inveterate manner against the

professors of religion ; while they do not consider that thus they take the most effectual way to expose their own ignorance and total want of acquaintance with the vital principles of piety and holiness. Some have charged this doctrine with even being unfriendly to holiness and tending to sap the foundations of morality. But what room can there be for such a charge against a doctrine that evidently tends to fill us with the warmest sense of the love of God, at the same time that it gives us the most awful and affecting view of His justice and holiness? A doctrine that shows sin to be, in the highest degree, opposite to the righteous nature of God, nor points out any way for the pardon of it but what will not suffer us to forget the wrath that is due unto it? A doctrine that, whilst it directs us to the fullest satisfaction in the death of Christ for the guilt of sin, impresseth, in the strongest manner, the necessity of that faith which purifies the heart, and is the living principle of all holiness and obedience? Upon the strictest examination it will appear worthy of God, and calculated to answer the noblest purposes, both with respect to the glory of God, and the interests of our faith, holiness, and comfort.

Lastly, I shall take notice of such doctrines as naturally arise from the subject.

1. That we are by nature destitute of such a righteousness as is sufficient to justify us before God. The apostle (in Romans, third chapter), after having, at great length, represented the misery in which all mankind, whether Jews or Gentiles, are involved by sin, when he comes to draw his argument to a conclusion, tells us that "all are under sin," that "there is none righteous, no, not one," and that "every mouth must be stopped, and all the world become guilty before God." Upon which he advances it as an undeniable truth that by the deeds of the law, *i.e.*, any obedience of our own paid to the law, there shall no flesh be justified in His sight. Had man, indeed, continued in his integrity, and yielded to the law that perfect obedience which it required, the law would have pronounced him righteous, and he would be justly entitled to all the blessings that were promised in it, as the apostle argues (Gal. iii. 21), that if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law. But, on the contrary, the law, having become weak through the flesh, is unable to justify us. Man in his present state cannot perform that obedience which the law requires, and hence it is that the law cannot justify him. Besides, it is uniformly asserted in Scripture that we are all as an unclean thing before God, and our righteousness as filthy rags, impure and deficient, such as cannot justify us in His sight. We must, therefore, adopt the language of Job, and say, "If I justify myself, mine own mouth shall condemn me; if I say I am perfect, it also shall prove me perverse."

2. That we must be justified by faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. This is the way appointed by God in which we, upon believing,

shall be judged righteous in His sight. Agreeable to this, it is expressly affirmed in Scripture that the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith, and is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all, and upon all, them that believe. In Romans iii. 25 we are told that God hath set forth Christ to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, that He might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus; where faith is evidently represented as a belief that, through Christ's righteousness, God may be just in justifying men who have sinned and come short of His glory. But more particularly, faith in Christ necessarily supposes a belief that mankind, by their rebellion against God, had merited the severest effect of His displeasure, were unable to satisfy Divine justice for their offences, and that they were unworthy of the Divine pity and help, so that their salvation is wholly to be ascribed to the free grace of God, and to the obedience and death of our Lord Jesus Christ. God sending His Son to be the Saviour of the world demonstrates that all mankind were under sentence of condemnation, and that without this amazing interposition, they must have actually perished. And here again may be clearly discerned the infinite evil of sin, as well as the unutterable obligation men are under to love and serve God.

The apostle, in Phil. iii. 8-9, describes the righteousness by which he was justified, and the way in which he was interested in it. "Yea, doubtless," says he, "I do count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung that I may win Christ, and be found in him, not having my own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith." Here the apostle excludes every other righteousness but that of Christ for his justification. He distinguishes this righteousness from that faith by which we receive it, and shows also how this righteousness is made ours, namely, by believing. God imputes it to us; we are enabled to receive it by faith; and thus, according to the constitution of the Gospel, we come to have an actual and personal interest in it.

3. That, being thus justified by faith in Christ, we have peace with God. As it was necessary that the law of God should be satisfied, so the Almighty, by the resurrection of the Lord Jesus from the dead, hath given the most convincing proof that He hath accepted of that atonement which Christ hath made for sin, as a full and adequate satisfaction to His justice, and every way sufficient for vindicating the honour of His law. As the prophet Isaiah, alluding to Christ, says that He was taken from prison and from judgment, released and discharged from the prison of the grave, in full evidence that he had paid the whole debt which He had taken upon Himself, and that God had accepted the payment at His hands. Of this there is mention made more particularly in a parallel scripture, viz., Acts ii. 24, "Whom God hath raised

up, having loosed the pains of death ; because it was not possible that he should be holden of it." As it is not fair or equitable that the prisoner should be detained longer in prison who had satisfied every demand that the law had upon him, the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ is an open acknowledgment that God, considered as the Supreme Judge of the universe, acquiesces in the death of Christ as a proper satisfaction for sin. So we, upon being interested in that everlasting righteousness which he hath purchased for us, may draw near to God with filial reverence and confidence, while we no longer consider Him as an angry Judge, but under the endearing character of our Father, our best Friend, and Benefactor.

A National Fast a Century Ago.

THE following proclamation of a Fast, by King George III., on the first day of the nineteenth century, may be of interest to our readers. It is to be feared the spirit manifest in it is not to be found in our rulers now :—

Proclamation for a General Fast.

GEORGE R.

We, taking into our most serious consideration the heavy judgments with which Almighty God is pleased to visit the iniquities of this land, by a grievous scarcity and dearth of divers articles of sustenance and necessaries of life ; moreover taking into our most serious consideration the just and necessary war in which we are engaged, for the maintenance of our Crown, for the defence of the commerce, and of the rights and liberties, civil and religious, of our subjects ; and trusting in the mercy of Almighty God, that, notwithstanding the sore punishment which He hath laid upon us and upon our people, He will, if we return to Him in due contrition and penitence of heart, not only withdraw his afflicting hand, but moreover graciously bless our arms, both by sea and land, have therefore resolved, and do by and with the advice of our Privy Council, hereby command, That a Public Fast and Humiliation be observed throughout that part of our kingdom called Scotland, on Thursday, the 12th of February next ; that so both we and our people may humble ourselves before Almighty God, in order to obtain pardon of our sins ; and may in the most devout and solemn manner, send up our prayers and supplications to the Divine Majesty for the removal of those heavy judgments which our manifold sins and provocations have most justly deserved, and under which we at this present time labour ; and for imploring His blessing and assistance on our arms, and for restoring and perpetuating peace, safety, and prosperity to us and our dominions : And we do

strictly charge and command that the said Public Fast be reverently and devoutly observed by all our loving subjects in Scotland, as they tender the favour of Almighty God, and would avoid His wrath and indignation; and upon pain of such punishment as we may justly inflict on all such as contemn and neglect the performance of so religious and necessary a duty. Our will is therefore, and we charge, that this our proclamation seen, ye forthwith pass to the Market Cross of Edinburgh, and all other places needful, and there, in our name and authority, make publication hereof, that none pretend ignorance; and our will and pleasure is, that our Solicitor do cause printed copies hereof to be sent to the sheriffs of the several shires, stewarts of the several Stewartries, and bailiffs of regalities, and their clerks, whom we ordain to see them published; and we appoint them to send copies hereof to the several parish churches within their bounds, that upon the Lord's day immediately preceding the day abovementioned, the same may be published, and read from the pulpits immediately after divine service.

Given at our Court at St. James's, the first day of January, one thousand eight hundred and one, in the forty-first year of our reign.

GOD save the KING.

Moral Effects of Theatres.

ONE of the unsatisfactory signs of the times is the great increase of theatre-going amongst the young men amongst professedly Christian families, and the encouragement given to theatres by our newspapers, probably in some cases for the sake of their advertisements. The experience of all ages and nations proves that the theatre is one of the "devil's chapels," and nothing can be more silly than to suppose that its moral results will ever be beneficial, or that Satan will ever "cast out Satan."

The following just and admirable remarks on this subject, made by the Rev. Mr. Fleming, of Edinburgh, deserve universal perusal:—"It is because I believe that the amusement supplied by the stage is pernicious that I go against all theatres, royal and mean, great and small, but especially the latter, as from the class they attract they are under strong temptations to give just what will take, or furnish what will pay, irrespective of the higher considerations of propriety and utility. There are three vices especially which the stage contributes in no small degree to produce and strengthen. The first is profanity; oaths are liberally diffused over the most popular plays of the best dramatists; the oath is technically styled 'the spicing' of the play, and is rather loved than loathed by a numerous class, although it involves a direct and glaring violation of the Third Commandment, 'Thou

shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.' (Applause.) The second vice which the stage promotes is impurity. Several of the plays of Shakespeare abound with indecent expressions and immoral suggestions. I could mention the name of one who figures as a lecherous, filthy sensualist, with the language of profanity and lasciviousness constantly on his lips; but then he is a mirth-inspiring humourist, he makes people laugh, and therefore he is not only tolerated but extolled. Intemperance is another vice encouraged by the theatre. When a young man has been for hours pent up in a theatre, when his passions have been unduly stirred by the sights and sounds he has seen and heard, when he is thus the subject of an unhealthy excitement, he is then a ready prey to another kind of animal excitement supplied at the doors of the theatre—I mean that furnished by the stimulants of the dram-shop. The one virtually paves the way for the other as all experience has shown, and of this fact none are so well aware as the publicans, who generally plant themselves down in close proximity to places devoted to dramatic entertainments. 'Where the carcase is, there the eagles are gathered together.' Of this close connection between the theatre and the drunkenery, numerous facts might be adduced in proof. At present I simply refer to the seasonable testimony of Councillor Lewis, who stated in the Town Council the other day that, since the opening of the Princess's Theatre, not fewer than seven additional public-houses had sprung up in the immediate vicinity to the serious annoyance of our quiet, orderly, well-disposed fellow-citizens. How magistrates, with any pretensions to Christianity, could sanction such a pest, by a deliberate vote, is what I cannot understand. To me it seems an outrageous inconsistency. But it has been said, 'the people demand such places of entertainment.' What people, I ask? The same people who would convert our Sabbaths into holidays, and our sanctuaries into saloons. The same people that would have our public-houses open on Sunday and Saturday, by night and by day! And are the clamours of these people for self-indulgence to override the claims of morality and religion? Are the property, lives, and morals of the best part of the community to be put in jeopardy that stage-players may ply their craft and play-goers have their mirth? Are the peace loving and tax-paying people, who still form the majority, to be sacrificed to a brawling and lawless minority? No, says justice, let law say what it may; and never must we rest till every nuisance of this kind is extirpated from our midst. In the meantime a heavy responsibility rests with our magistrates in reference to such things, and I for one cannot help thinking and saying that, if they pursue the tactics they have recently inaugurated in this respect, they will forfeit the goodwill of the moral and the religious, and must cease to be 'a terror to evil-doers, and the praise of such as do well.'—*The Watchword.*

A Letter of the late Mr. Donald Mackay, Student.

PORTREE, SKYE, 12th June, 1895.

I AM writing you these few lines wishing that you will not forget me and this place at a throne of grace. I feel very dry to-day, but you may say that is my oftenest cry at any rate. The thing is this, when the truth is away in the power of it, and no dew on the soul, then my sins rage so much the more. If you saw a man or a woman in whom there was life, and wild beasts tearing them, or worms eating them up, would you not pity such? I am that person, yet spiritual death prevails so much that I feel it too little; but one in such a case cannot but groan and cry; and how relieved he would feel if ointment or oil were poured on his wounds. So it is spiritually when the truth comes with power. O that the Lord would subdue our iniquities, and love us freely, so would we be able to give Him praise!

I do not very well understand how any one can give a good report of the kingdom without tasting of the living Bread that came down from heaven. What is desirable is, that this taste would be in a person's mouth always, for there must be either the taste of sin, or the taste of holiness on our spirits.

We had a very pleasant journey after leaving Strathy. I felt the power of the love of Jesus. I cannot forget the warm meeting we had in Dingwall. There is something wonderful in the fellowship of the saints of God! May He pour out more and more of His Spirit, and fill all His true people with the Holy Ghost; and O to have in truth fellowship with Jesus, and to be done with forms without Him, for some, even on this earth, walked with God. What is a king's palace compared with the state of one who has the company of Jesus! O that He would come over the mountains of our sins as a church, and the mountains of our sins individually, and dwell in our souls, so that there would be personal fellowship with Himself!

Remember me to all the friends, and ask them to pray for me, and remember I want you really to pray for me, all of you. Be sure and write soon; and may the love that is better than life be with you, and in you, in great measure.

I was trying to speak twice last Sabbath, and also had two meetings in the week. One meeting was always kept here, but I did not feel so much liberty at the last meeting, so do pray for me that I may get a new tongue to speak of the love of Jesus; and that by tasting it, I may be able to tell how sweet it is.—I am your dear friend,

D. M.

THE last words that Archbishop Usher was heard to express, were, "Lord, forgive my sins, especially my sins of omission."

Focal Rabhaidh.

THA sinn aig an am so mar rioghachd an ann cunnart gle mhòr. Tha a phapanachd a fàs anns an rioghachd so riamh bho na chaidh an Emancipation Act a dheanamh na lagh lnte anns a bhliadhna 1829. Thoisich Eaglais na Roimh, cho luath 's a fhuair i an dorus fosgailte da a luchd-leanmhuinn a dhiunnsaidh na h-uile aite inbheach anns an rioghachd ach tri, ri bhi a toirt oidhirph gu faotinn a dhiunnsaidh na 'n aiteachan sin mar an ceudna. Bi an righ chathair aon de na haitean a bha air an dion bh' uaipe. Cho fad a sheasadh na boidean a dh'fheumas an righ a thoirt mun suidh e air an righ-chathair na'n cuid de lagh na rioghachd cha b'urrainn papanach suidhe oirre. Tha briathran anns a bhoid sin a tha na papanaich ag iarraidh a thoirt aisde mar ni a tha tabhairt oilbheum da'n creideamh-san. Is iad na briathran:—"Tha mise ann an sòlaimteachd agus ann an treibhdhireas, an lathaireachd Dhe, ag aideach, agus a fianaiseachadh, agus a' cur an ceill gum bheil mi a creidsinn nach 'eil, ann an sacramait Suipir an Tighearna, an t-aran agus am fion air an tionndadh gu corp agus fuil Chrìosd, le neach air bith, aig am an cuir air leth air son feum noamh, no na dheidh sin, agus gum bheil a bh'g urnuigh agus a moladh na h-oighe Muire no naomh air bith eile, agus gum bheil iobairt na h-aifrionn (mass) mar tha iad aig an am so air an cleachdadh ann an Eaglais na Roimh na'n saobh-chreidimh agus na'n iodhal-aoraidh." Is iad gu h-araidh na briathran—"Saobh-chreidimh agus iodhal-aoraidh"—a tha iad a togail an guth nan aghaidh. Tha iad ag radh gum bheil na briathran ud a tabhairt beum do na h-ìochdrain phapanach aig an righ.

Labhair na tighearnan papanach ann an tigh na'n Tighearnan an aghaidh na cuid so de'n bhoid a bhi air a cur air an righ. Ann an tigh na'n Cummantan thog na h-Eirinnach phapanach an guth an aghaidh an ni cheudna. Thug Salisbury ann an tigh nan Tighearnan, agus Balfour ann an tigh nan Cummantan gealladh gum biodh cuideachd de'n da thigh air an cur air leth gu sealltuinn a stigh anns a phuinc so. Tha papanaich ri bha anns a chuideachd so. Tha iad ri feuchainn briathran eile a chur an aite na'm briathran ud a bhios a ciallachadh an aoin ni rui. Tha so eucomasach dhoibh. Ma bhios briathran na boide so air am briseadh th' fhuair Eaglais na Roimh an lamh-an-uachdar, agus feudaidh an creideamh Protestanach a bhi air a chur bho na cosan aig am air bith an deigh sin. Tha Salisbury agus Balfour an deigh a dheanamh aithnaichte cheanna nach eil ni air bith acasan an aghaidh gum biodh a bhoid so air a h-atharrachadh ma chuireas sluagh Protestanach Bhreatainn suas leis a sin. Fhuair ar n-atharichean a mach air an cosd gu de cho duillich 's a bha e dhoibh an creideamh Protestanach a chuir suas. Is iomadh neach a dh'fheum a bheatha a leigeadh sìos mun robh an t-ìodhol aoraidh aig

Eaglais na Roimh air a chur air cul, agus aoradh sgriobturail an Ath-leasaichaidh air a shuidheachadh. Cho cinnteach 's a dh'fhuilgeas an sluagh na bunaitean so a bhi air an cur bun-os-ceann bithidh dortadh fola ann an uine ghearr an deigh sin. Tha feum air gun togadh an sluagh an guth mar aon duine an aghaidh atharrachadh air bith a bhi air a dheanamh, agus gun cuireadh iad an run suidhichte air a chuis so a dhuinnsaidh nan daoine a chuir iad fein do'n Pharlamet, agus a dhuinnsaidh Mr. Balfour agus Mr. Salisbury.

Tha e soilleir gum bheil an Thighearna a nochdadh dhuinne mar rioghachd agus mar Eaglaisean gum bheil comhstri aige ruinn. Tha cogadh, gort, agus plaidh oirnn mar rioghachd. Tha ar n-Eaglaisean air an truailleadh le mearachdan, agus le iodhol-aoraidh. Ma sheallas sinn ri focal Dhe chi sinn guni d' thainig truaighe air na h-uile sluagh a threig an Tighearna mar a tha sinne a deanamh, agus mar gabh sinne aithreachas sgrios ar sinn mar an eudna. Tha feum mor air gum biodh am beagan a dh'fhagadh nar measg a togail an gath ris an Tighearna gun doirteadh e air sgath Chriosd an Spiorad Naomh oirn gu ar tabhairt gu h-aithreachas.

N. C.

In Loving Memory of Donald Mackay, Student.

WHY do the little flock thus bleat, and why this plaintive wail
I hear among the lonely sheep in Baca's desert vale?
Relentless death her sword unsheathed, and with a ruthless hand,
Did cut the silver cord which bound the fairest of their band.

Well may they weep and sadly mourn, the loss what can compare
To those who in the breach do stand, and Zion's grief do share;
Ill could we spare this precious gift, so rich in every grace,
And fear among the sons of men no one shall fill his place.

We sorely miss his saintly face, a stranger in this land,
A champion in the cause of truth, one of a faithful band,
Whose heart was constantly provoked by his most single eye,
Through faith to rise above the earth, and see beyond the sky.

That voice is still we loved to hear at hillside, cot, and hall,
Declaring how the human race were ruined by the Fall;
In death they lay, 'neath sin's dark sway, no eye them pity gave,
Till God, in love, sent from above, His Son the lost to save.

The Christian race he ran with speed; as one the prize would gain,
And jealously his footsteps watched, lest he his garments stain.
His life was long, though short in years, in labouring much 'twas
blest,

While wide he sowed the seed of life o'er Scotland's barren waste.

He's now at home, set free from sin, where oft he longed to be,
Where work is done, and joy begun, beyond a stormy sea ;
No darkness shall his visage dim, no cloud his soul can shade,
For on his head his Lord hath set a crown which ne'er can fade.

Shall we not plead the Lord alone, that He the breach would heal,
And for the sake of Zion's poor, His right arm would reveal,
In sending forth His word with power, till every Dagon fall,
And Jacob, as a mighty prince, shall beat the mountains small ?

EDINBURGH, *February*, 1901.

W. R. T. S.

THE pleader's voice is silent now,
And not at eve, nor morn,
Are heard his notes of praise and prayer,
Beside the golden corn.

And far and near, they mourn for him,
Who was a man of might ;
Recalled from Zion's service, ere
His sun had reached its height.

The King desired his beauty, and
He hastily sent down
A messenger, to polish fair
His jewel for His crown.

He was like a lowly city,
And still a burning light ;
While passing through earth's valley,
He walked with God in white.

Ever faithful to transgressors,
Nor did reprove with hate,
Nor ever crouched to error, for
His meekness rode in state.

He would not have us praise himself,
But deep forgiving grace,
That swifter than his fellows made
Him run the heavenly race.

"Not unto us Lord, not to us,"
Is heaven's holy song,
And if we think he'll sing it best,
It cannot far be wrong.

So well he knew and loved the notes,
So humbled was his heart,
He'd be the very last to think
He earned the better part.

The waves, beside his sleeping place,
 Now ever seem to tell,
 He is not, for God took him, and
 He hath done all things well.

And we know, for lack of service
 There never shall be dearth,
 Since Jesus Christ hath glorified
 The Father on the earth.

C.

Notes and Comments.

Communions.—St. Jude's and John Knox's, Glasgow, second Sabbath of this month; Edinburgh, third; Wick and Greenock, fourth.

Church News.—The Northern Presbytery met at Portree, on 10th March, the Rev. Alexander Macrae, moderator. The Rev. Neil Cameron, Glasgow, was associated, as was also the Rev. W. Scott, Australia. A resolution of sympathy with the Free Presbyterian Church in Australia, as represented by Mr. Scott, was adopted, and the clerk (Rev. D. Macfarlane), was instructed to furnish Mr. Scott with a letter to this effect. . . . Mr. Scott has kindly handed a donation of £4 from the Mission Sabbath Schools in connection with his Congregation, to be applied to the Foreign Mission Fund of our Church. The gift is much appreciated as coming from Free Presbyterian children in far-off Australia. . . . The attendances at the recent Communion at Portree were exceptionally large, there being large overflow meetings in the public school.

The late Duncan Macdonald.—A correspondent from Toberonochy, Island of Luing, has written us in regard to the late Duncan Macdonald, missionary, as follows:—"He laboured amongst us here for a period of over four years, during which he made many friends, who hear of his death with much sorrow. I feel I cannot refrain from writing to say how highly he was esteemed, and how faithfully he served his Master. On Sabbath and week-nights, he walked four miles, often through wind and rain to hold his meetings in this village, and seldom, if ever, he missed a night. As a Gaelic preacher he was second to none we heard before or since. A verse from one of Dr. Macdonald's poems fully expresses what we thought, viz. :—

"Co luath 'se a dh' fhosgailleadh e a bheul
 Chum soisgeul Chrìosd a chur an ceill,
 An aite leanaban deanadh sgeil
 'Se theireadh 'n treud gu'm b' Athair e."

Though it is eight or more years since he left, we remember many of his discourses, as well as if we had heard them yesterday. We sorrow not as others who have no hope, believing he has gone to his everlasting rest. We deeply sympathise with his family and friends in their bereavement.—Yours, etc., DUNCAN M'COWAN."

Spain's Decay.—The following quotation we take from the French Protestant paper, entitled *Le Chretien Francaise*—"An illustrated leaflet published in Berlin, and entitled, *For Everybody*, indicates by the lively representation which follows, how Spain has been losing its territories since the destruction of the Invincible Armada :—

[-----]	- - -	1588
[-----]	- - -	1668
[-----]	- - -	1715
[-----]	- - -	1828
[-----]	- - -	1898

From 1558 to 1668 Spain lost Holland, Rousillon, French Flanders, Tunis, Jamaica, Portugal, the Azores, South Guinea, the Cape, Mozambique, Ceylon, Malacca, the Moluques, and Brazil. From 1668 to 1715 it lost the province of Franche Comte, Belgium, Milan, Naples, Sicily, Sardinia, Gibraltar, Guyane, and the little Antilles. From 1715 to 1828, it lost Florida, Texas, California, Mexico, Central America, Haïti, Colombia, Balivia, Peru, Chili, the country of La Plata, Paraguay, Uruguay, and Oran. From 1828 to 1898 it lost Cuba, Porto-Rico, the Philippine, Caroline, and Marian Islands. The real cause of that political and intellectual decay is named—*The holy office of the very holy Inquisition.*"

Is it not time Britain were laying this to heart?

Sabbath Opening of Edinburgh Museum.—A meeting for the purpose of opposing the opening of the Museum of Science and Art on Sabbath in Edinburgh, was held in the Assembly Hall there on Monday evening, 18th March. Sir Archibald Campbell, Bart., presided. A number of apologies from leading Church dignitaries, who, in our opinion, ought to have been present, were read. The Chairman said that at one time he did not see the necessity for strictness on the Sabbath question, but during recent years he had come to see matters in a different light. Rev. Dr. Robson said he had been at Paris, and there a Congress had been held, representing all classes and religious denominations, with the object of getting the Sabbath rest restored in France, that had been lost; while he saw that, in this country, many did not seem to value it when they had it. Bailie Brown made an eloquent speech, in which he pressed the question—Who it was that asked the Scottish Education Department of the Government to open the Museum on the Lord's Day? It was certainly nobody representing the inhabitants of Edinburgh. Rev. Dr. Cunningham

gave a vivid description of the impressions felt by foreigners who visited this country, and saw the respect in which the Sabbath was held. It produced a profound impression on many of them as to the importance of the Sabbath. Other speakers followed. Resolutions were passed urging the Education Department to reconsider their decision in regard to the Museum. There was an attendance of 600 or so at the meeting.

The report here given is only a jotting of what was spoken. The meeting was on the whole a good one, yet we had the feeling that the speakers were not taking high enough ground in respect to the authority of the Lord's-Day. Its utility as a day of rest was too prominently in evidence, while the divine sanction of the Sabbath was but slightly emphasised. This, of course, is just what matters have come to in our country. Our strongest tie to the Sabbath is our own personal advantage of relief from labour. Now all who discern the real glory of the day of rest, feel that there is an imperative divine obligation on them to keep it as a day in which to worship God as well as to refresh their bodies. It is the day on which souls may expect to enter into that spiritual and holy rest the Lord alone can give. May the Lord in mercy check the downward career of our rulers in this matter, or we will soon have "the Parisian Sunday" with all its horrors; it has come already in part.

The King's Oath.—The plotters against this fundamental law of the British Empire have gained a point. A Committee has been promised to confer with the Romanist lords concerning their objections to the oath. We hope a national movement against this impudent aggression will be made. There are plenty of blasphemous pretensions and bloodthirsty edicts still unrepealed on the Papal Statute books. To recede from the full-orbed militant Protestantism that has characterised our national history is a suicidal policy. There is no middle way with Rome. Our fathers found it so to their cost; and this Coronation Oath, which makes the profession of the Protestant faith, both in religion and politics, the very condition of allegiance to our kings, is a thing that cannot be altered without perfidy.

A Bad Book.—So we characterise the latest product of the "Higher Criticism." This is the Yale Lectures on the "Preaching of the Old Testament," by Professor George Adam Smith, United Free College, Glasgow. The author calmly assumes the validity of nearly all the findings of this infidel criticism. His drift is to show how, nevertheless, the skilful preacher can make a great deal out of an Old Testament of literary inaccuracies and pious frauds. We hope, next month, more fully to handle this impious production.

Note.—We expect to begin another series of interesting letters by the late Mr. Donald Duff in next issue.