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The Christian Race.

(Continued from page 43.)

“LET us lay aside every weight and the sin that doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us.” Under the third head, namely, the preparation that is required in order to run successfully, we have already considered two things: first, the practice of runners in the physical contest in divesting themselves of every garment that was likely to impede their progress: and secondly, the weights in general that runners in the Christian race are commanded to lay aside. We now proceed to notice a particular weight or impediment that is specifically mentioned.

(3) “The sin that doth so easily beset us.”

The common interpretation of these words is that they refer to some special form of sin that with peculiar ease overcomes the Christian, and that is usually described as “the besetting sin.” There is, however, another view of the words that is held by Dr. Owen among other eminent divines. He concludes, on several well-reasoned grounds, that the words refer to original sin, the sin of our nature. This, he says, is “the sin that doth so easily beset us;” it attaches to every thought and affection of the heart and to every movement of the outward practice; and it also manifests himself in the grosser outbreakings of depravity. This heart corruption, that defiles every form of activity, we are called upon with special care to lay aside. The question, however, may be asked, “How is it possible to lay aside this sin that cleaves to everything we think, and say, and do?” The answer is that while it is impossible for the believer to be wholly rid of it in this life, yet, it is his to seek in the strength of grace to hate and mortify it. Certainly this is a spiritual exercise that characterises in more or less degree every true runner in the Christian race; in fact there is no running without it. The apostle Paul himself cries, “O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?” The body of corruption was a grievous burden and hindrance to him in the life of faith. But he could

answer his own question in the humble but triumphant words, "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord."

While keeping ourselves open for more light on the subject, we still feel a preference for the ordinary view, that the words refer to what is commonly described as the besetting sin. The testimony of Scripture, general observation, and individual experience, combine to show that every person has a sin that exercises a peculiarly strong influence upon the soul, and that needs very special mortification. It is not equally powerful in every individual, nor is it equally discernible in every individual by others. In some Christians it is quite manifest; in others it is deeply hidden in the heart. But they themselves in all cases know what is their besetting sin. Now, this sin is more capable than any other of withering up the spirit of a Christian, and making him fall in the spiritual race. It is the greatest of all impediments to the life of godliness, the source of the Christian's bitterest sorrows, and if it break out openly, it proves to be one of the most serious hindrances to the advance of Christianity in the world.

We do not intend entering into details on this subject, but it may be useful to mention the names of a few of the sins that beset one or other of the members of Christ's mystical body. The names are as follows: pride, selfishness, covetousness, greed of gain, deceit, "the wrath of man," malice, fleshly lust, presumption, slavish fear, rebellion, and unbelief. The list is a dark one. We would all do well to examine ourselves as to "the sin that doth so easily beset us." We may have more than one besetting sin, and it is certain we shall find in our hearts, if we take pains to examine them, the roots of every sin. Whatever we may want in ourselves, there is no lack of iniquity, and if we feel that our self-examination is apt to be partial and superficial, as we are bound oftentimes to feel, then we must follow the example of the Psalmist and cry: "Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts: and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting."

(4) The exhortation: "Let us lay aside."

The command to lay aside "every weight and the sin that doth so easily beset us" does not imply that we have any native power to obey it, or that it is possible in this life to obey it to perfection. "Without me," saith Christ, "ye can do nothing;" and, "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." Nevertheless, we must obey in some genuine degree this exhortation, or otherwise we cannot run the race set before us. We, even we, who have no power to lay aside any weight, must "lay aside every weight and the sin that doth so easily beset us." How is this to be accomplished? Just by looking to the Lord himself for the necessary ability. The apostle Paul said "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." There was no task too difficult to perform through the strength that is in Christ.

The same glorious Person who has laid upon His people every grace in the way of duty, has promised to supply the power for obedience. We cannot in our own strength do anything, even the smallest action that is spiritually good; we cannot think one good thought, or desire one gracious desire of ourselves; but when the power of God is manifested in our souls, there is nothing possible to a creature that we cannot accomplish. Almighty power pertains to God alone, and He has engaged that power on behalf of His people. "My grace is sufficient for thee, and my strength is made perfect in weakness."

Let us labour then, in dependence on the grace of God, to "lay aside every weight and the sin that doth so easily beset us." Let us make conscience of this important duty, and give no rest to ourselves as long as we have no evidence that we have anything of the life, freedom, and activity of the children of God.

Further, this laying aside is not one distinct finished act that does not need to be renewed, but a continuous course of action that goes on during the believer's whole race in this world. The weights are apt to come back again, and the besetting sin is apt to revive at the most unexpected moment. There must therefore be a daily laying aside of all sin, if there is to be a daily progress in the life of godliness. This is the divine ideal of vital Christianity, an ideal, sad to say, however, that is but seldom realised in experience. Certainly God is sovereign in the dispensations of His grace; He gives one person more grace than He gives another; but we are not to cast the responsibility of our cherished perversity, carnality, sloth and deadness, upon the Eternal. Does He not say in the 81st Psalm, "Oh that my people had harkened unto me and Israel had walked in my ways! I should soon have subdued their enemies and turned my hand against their adversaries . . . He should have fed them also with the finest of the wheat; and with honey out of the rock should I have satisfied thee." He charges His people with guilt for not hearkening unto Him, nor walking in His ways, and He shows that if they had heard and walked aright, He would have done great things for them. It is therefore ours to conclude that we are deliberately refusing to harken to the Lord's voice, and to walk in His ways, when we find our enemies overcoming us, and ourselves without wheat or honey. If we are to expect to have the favour and blessing of God in our souls, we must put our feet in the pathway of means and ordinances that He has appointed; and if we are to run the Christian race with success, we must strive, looking to the Lord for grace, to "lay aside every weight and the sin that doth so easily beset us."

Communions.—Second Sabbath of August, Portree; third, Staffin, Skye.

A Sermon

BY REV. WM. GUTHRIE, MINISTER OF FENWICK, 1644-1665.

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“Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labour for that which satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness.”—ISAIAH lv. 1, 2.

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THERE is in this chapter a proclaimed market, such as was never heard of, even the most pleasant, most substantial, and most glorious market that ever was; the most glorious wares; the most precious wares; the dearest bought and cheapest sold that ever any wares were. Here we have the most free and lawful invitation to all sorts of persons to come and have them. They shall get them and pay nothing for them. Now there is in this chapter

1st, An invitation to all persons in all places, to come and receive Jesus Christ, the King of kings, Lord of Lords, and Prince of peace, who is even among our hands in the gospel, wherein He manifests Himself. Now that He offers Himself, take Him, and you are welcome to Him. Any person who hath anything ado with Him, come; for He is now seeking employment to be given Him. He hath balms for all wounds, salves for all sores, and cures for all sorts of diseases. And,

2ndly, There are some objections against this coming, and these He solves, and uses various motives and invitations to encourage souls to come unto Him and buy. Such are the following:—

1. The market is free. He is seeking nothing from you, but hath all glorious things to give you. Therefore, ye are fools if ye will not come and take when ye have nothing to give.

2. If ye will not come, your well-doing is over. Your doom is, “Depart for ever;” and do what ye can, ye shall not prosper, nor get any soul-satisfaction any other way. And,

3. If ye will come, ye need not be afraid of wrath and justice. Ye shall not have that to say that ye dare not come for fear He execute justice upon you. The Father took Christ Jesus to be your Cautioner or Surety. Christ shall stand for you and manage in your room or stead. He will manage all that concerns you, both with regard to the guilt and the pollution of sin; for the punishment of sin, if ye will but accept of Him to be your Cautioner or Surety, He shall answer for all your wrongs, as if they had been done in His own person, and He shall stand for them, and ye shall go free. And,

4. Ye may think it a great honour and prerogative that ever the like of you is allowed to come near Christ, instead of saying ye will not come unto Him. For God hath a mind to make Him unspeakably honourable in His kingdom, think ye of Him what ye will. For many shall come out of all kindreds, kingdoms, and nations, like flocks of sheep, and shall cast down their crowns at His footstool, even those that have never yet heard of Him; and what a shame will it be for you to be the last of all in paying your respects to Him?

5. If ye will not come and close with Him now in the offers of the gospel, wherein He is offered unto you, take care that ye sit not your time of the market; for there is but a set time of His offers, wherein He will be found of you.

But there are two formidable objections, which are these:—

Objection 1.—We are so abominable, and have provoked God so often, that we think it cannot stand with His justice to accept of such traitors, though we should come. But God answers, “Away with such chat; for my thoughts are not like your thoughts, saith the Lord; they are as far above them as the heavens are above the earth.”

Objection 2.—Say some, “Ye may promise us fair words enough; but in the meantime, we get nothing in our hands but bare words.” “That is true,” says God, “but I think My word effectual enough to perform anything I can promise; for I am both powerful enough and willing enough to perform it. Besides, My word must prove itself effectual, for it must be for a name and for a praise unto Me in all generations.” And then He hints at the deliverance of the people of the Jews from their bondage. So much for the meaning of this chapter. We now return, to make some improvement of it in the way of comparing it with the former chapter, in which ye heard many a precious promise made to the Church and her children. And now God will have them apply and bring home all these to their own souls, in closing with Christ; wherein we observe,

That whatever promise was made to the Church, all the members of it should believe, and apply them to themselves in the way of closing with Christ. And now we enter upon the words, wherein there are:—

I.—The King’s proclamation making way for our coming to the market, in the words, “Ho, every one.”

II.—A public intimation of the goods that are to be had at this market, and these are “water,” “wine,” and “milk.”

III.—The manner in which these goods are to be viewed.

IV.—The duty of the party to come, and a dehoration from any other way in these words, “Wherefore do ye spend your labour for that which is nought?”

V.—An exclusion from salvation in any other way than by coming unto Christ, and receiving Him as He offereth Himself in the gospel. I return,

I. To the first, which is the proclamation openly made for coming unto Christ. "Jesus stood, and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." Now Christ is crying this day, who will come unto Him? He is crying to deaf folk who never heard, "Will ye hear, and believe the word preached? I will make you see, ye blind folk who are running upon imminent hazard. Ho! are there any folk who have wounds to heal? here is balm for you. Is there any man here who desires to be made clean? here is water to cleanse you. Is there any who have sores to heal? come, here is salve for you. Are there any fractured bones amongst you? here is healing for you. Are there any hard hearts amongst you? here is repentance for you. Are there any confused with darkness amongst you? come, here is light for you. Do any desire to be taught? here is teaching for you. Do you desire to be made friends with God? here is reconciliation for you. Would any be borne up under their crosses? here is strength for them. Is there any person who judges himself, though they suppose they are beguiling themselves? here is counsel for you. Come unto me and I will tell you where you are, and what ye are doing." But oh! what is the matter that we have to say unto you, that few of you will come to Christ, though ye know yourselves to be far from Him? The reason why a proclamation must be made before we come to this market, is

1. That the King may declare publicly what goodwill He bears to the commonwealth of Israel. He would much rather have folk to be converted and live, than die and perish.

2. He makes it public, that He may evidence His power and sovereignty over all things.

3. He makes it public, that the mouth of all objectors to the contrary may be stopped.

4. That all his enemies may come to a rendezvous and see whether they are able to stop Him.

5. He proclaims it publicly, that all may know that the market has but a set time, wherein Jesus Christ is offered to souls; and therefore they should bestir themselves in the time of the market. Go not away, then, ere ye get the wares secured to yourselves, seeing the great God of heaven has made an open proclamation for all sorts of persons to come to Christ. Let no person be so foolish as to despise the King's proclamation.

He makes an open proclamation that you may know that there is a reality in closing with Christ in the Gospel. Consider this, all ye who never knew anything of your guilt, nor had the sense of it, nor had ever had any debate about your closing with Christ for your recovery out of your lost state and condition. I say, such are to look upon themselves as the most vile and the maddest creatures that ever were known. They even savour of the earth. Any person that is truly acquainted with the exercises of closing

with Christ, and dare say that they have Him for their portion, their countenance shall be made to shine in heavenly glory. As to any person who supposes he has any hatred of his sins, and yet, through a sense of guilt, dares not venture upon closing with Christ, I say, as long as he stands on this side of Christ he shall have no true peace of mind.

Now, we shall give you some motives that we think may put you upon a peremptory closing with Christ. And consider—

1. That these offers are threatened to be removed. God knows how long you may have them. Now, while you have your day of the Gospel, improve and make use of Christ for your salvation by closing your interest with Him.

2. Though it should please Him to continue the same day of the standing of the Gospel, it will not stand long without a storm and many a winter blast blowing against it and its professors. Since the winter is approaching, ye have need to look that your clothes be provided for you, lest ye go with the storms and dint of the weather.

3. And is not God now plaguing all the land? We conceive it is for no other reason but because people will not flee from their idols and cleave to Christ, and close with Him for their alone portion. But,

II.—We come to the wares of this market, and these are of three sorts—(1) Water, (2) wine, (3) milk.

With regard to water, He is called “the water of life;” with regard to wine, the spouse compares Him to “flagons of wine;” and with regard to milk, He bids His people suck out the “sincere milk of the word (which is Himself), that they may grow thereby.” The reasons will be taken from the properties of each of these, which we shall consider separately for your better understanding of the point. And,

Firstly (1) Water, ye know, is good for washing and cleaning away of all filthiness. (2) Water is good for the softening of any hard thing. (3) Water is good for refreshing, or quenching of thirst. (4) Water is good for curing hot and fiery humours. All these properties are to be found in Christ. Art thou one of the most filthy creatures upon the earth? Then Christ is that fountain opened for washing away your sin and uncleanness. Is the wrath of God burning in thy conscience for thy sin and uncleanness? Then Christ broke down the partition wall, and quenched justice and wrath, and became a curse for us. Hast thou an old hard heart, harder than anything thou ever sawest? I say, Christ can soften it, and pour out the spirit of repentance, and make one mourn for sin that never mourned for it before. Is thy conscience galled for sin that thou canst get no rest? Christ is a Prince for that end, to make peace in a soul that is out of peace. Hast thou a desire after Christ, and are all things nothing to thee for want of Him? Then come and venture upon Christ, and thou shalt be satisfied and filled with Him in such a manner that out of “thy

belly shall flow living waters ;" that is, thou shalt have full satisfaction in Him. Is thy case one of the most strange and wonderful in the world? Then Christ's name is also the Wonderful, Counsellor. Art thou afraid of the removal of the gospel, which would oblige thee to flee to the mountains, where thy soul would be famished for want of this water? Christ can be a little sanctuary, and preach to thee there Himself. "But I fear," says one, "for all that, I shall fall into some error or other for want of instruction." I say, Christ will feed thee, lead thee, and teach thee. "But," say you, "what will I have there to live upon, on the top of a bare mountain!" Why? Christ can feed thee there, according to His prophetic office? "But," say ye, "what if the gospel be not totally removed, but is tainted with some mixture that will prove poison to me?" I say, Christ will "lead thee by the way that thou shouldst go," even up into His own bosom, which is the ocean from which the whole gospel flows, where thou shalt drink pure and clear water without any mixture at all. And if thou thinkest thou canst not get Him served there, He can write His law in thy inward parts, circumcise thy heart, and cause thee to serve Him.

Secondly, As for wine, ye know it is good for comforting a weak and heavy spirit. It is also good for reviving one that falls into fainting fits. It is likewise good for fitting a man for more than ordinary pieces of work. All these properties, and more, are to be found in Christ. Then look what case thou hast to propose; there is still something in Christ to answer it. Is thy case a dead case? Then Christ revives the dead and dry bones of Zion. Art thou not only dead, but so very dead that thou art past hopes of recovery? Then Christ can say to these dry and withered bones, Live. Is thy strength quite gone? Then come to Christ, and He will be thy strength and portion for ever. Thinkest thou thyself one of the most needy creatures in the world? Then Christ is that noble plant of renown, that puts life, and holds life, in all His branches. Hast thou no strength to resist an enemy? Then say, "When I am weak, then am I strong in the Lord." Art thou oppressed and borne down with an enemy, and hast thou lost all strength to resist? Then they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength, and make them to face their enemy again. Is all thy strength so far spent that thou art sighing and going backward? Then Christ is that green fir-tree that holds in the spark of life in all the branches that are withered. And as for growth; hast thou such a case that for all the pains that have been taken upon thee, thou hast never grown anything better? Then Christ is the choice builder who makes all the stones of the house cement compactly together. Besides, He is that Sun of righteousness who arises with healing under His wings for all sorts of maladies and diseases, or kinds of diseases.

There are other reasons why Christ and all that believers have in Him, are compared to water, wine, and milk. And Christ

represents Himself under these similitudes to hold out the variety of cures that are in Him, suited to the variety of diseases in His people.

Then, all polluted people, come away to Christ; He has cleansing for you. All that are languishing under diseases, come away; He has cleansing for you. Here is a cure for all your diseases; strength for all your weaknesses; comfort under all your crosses and trials; growth under all your backwardness. He takes away the guilt of sin, and the filth of sin, and the punishment of it. He makes the blind see, the deaf hear, and the lame walk and go forward. He feeds the hungry with good things, binds up the broken-hearted, and dandles them upon His knees, and tenderly lays them in His bosom. We will say no more of that ocean of fulness that is in Christ, but this, "that eye hath not seen, nor ear heard it," nor is tongue able to express the bottomless fulness that is to be had in Christ. Oh, that He were made use of and got employment at our hands! How much more cheerful in this case would many souls be than they are! There would not be so many complaints amongst you; but we think all would be stirring up one another to speak unto His commendation; and that would be a sweet and comfortable life for you.

III. We come to the manner in which the party is desired to come to and accept of Christ in this market of free grace. And, First, They are desired to come that are thirsty.

Secondly, Those that have no money. These are the only objects of Christ's free offers. For thirsty folk, it is clear from the fore-cited text: "Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink." And for those who have no money: "Thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked. I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed." Now,

1st, For the first of these, viz., the thirsty. I shall speak to so many sorts of them that are invited to come.

1. Some are afraid of hell, and thirst principally for heaven, that they may be kept in life. These, perhaps, have no thoughts of Christ. I say to those who are afraid of hell, and would gladly be at heaven, ye must come to Christ for that, for Christ hath both the keys of heaven and hell at His side; it is He that must open heaven's gates, if ever ye get there. Therefore close with Christ for salvation, and ye need not be afraid that ye will not get heaven; but without Him heaven ye shall never see.

2. There is a sort that thirst principally after Christ; and give them all the world, they count it but loss and dung if they get not Christ. Give them evidences of their interest in Him, it will make up all their other losses. I say, I wot well ye should come and close with Christ: for He cries unto all who have any desire after Him to come, and He will fulfil and satisfy all their desires. "Come unto me all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

3. There is another sort that thirst after holiness ; and these also are bidden come. But although this be good in itself, yet take care that ye thirst not more to be holy than to come unto Christ Himself, who must sanctify you, and make you holy by His Holy Spirit. And,

(1.) Beware of seeking holiness in order to make it a positive qualification, whereby ye may have it to say that ye have something in your hands to buy with, by which ye will spoil all the market ; for the market is "without money, and without price."

(2.) I say, think ye ever to get the grace of holiness wrought within you until first ye venture your salvation on Christ, and take Him to be a righteousness unto you. Take Christ in the first place, and then seek holiness from Him. According to His own word, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." Seek first righteousness, and then holiness. Ye would think him a foolish man that would look for apples on a tree that is not yet planted. So people are foolish to think that ever Christ will make one grow in holiness as long as they dare not venture their salvation upon Him. How can ye believe He will make you holy, as long as ye cannot believe in Him, or trust your salvation unto Him. But,

(3.) In the third place, Think not that we discommend holiness, or those who are seeking after it. No, God forbid ; "for without holiness, no man shall see God." Our meaning here is, that people should think nothing of their holiness. For anything that they can do is but as "an unclean thing," which needs mercy for the imperfection of it. However, they must be in earnest in following after commanded duties, for fear of offending God ; and the due honour of their Maker should be the reason of holy duties. And,

(4.) I say, if once ye were well interested in Christ for salvation, then He would put a principle of holiness within you that would not let you take a liberty to sin, and would make you so walk in duties, that for a thousand worlds ye durst not do such things as the multitude do, who know nothing of Christ by closing with Him. Know ye what the apostle Paul, with all his holiness, says ? "I count all things but loss and dung, that I may win Christ."

(5.) I say, every thought that puts Christ out of His place, is as much as to say, ye will shift for yourselves without Him. I say, that is even the conflict betwixt Christ and souls ; they would still have something in themselves ; and Christ will have all flesh as grass, still abasing themselves as nothing, and seeing there is a daily need of Him, and a daily hazard without Him.

4. A fourth sort that have a thirst, that lets them have no rest, and yet they are so stupid that they cannot tell what it is. But oh how glad would they be to have some person's counsel, that could tell them the right way ; and how ready would they be to do anything that would relieve them. I say, let such wait on Christ for counsel, and close with Him, according to that word, "He that hath no light, and walks in darkness, and sees himself to

be in that case, let him stay himself upon God, and come to Christ, and he shall give him light." Seek light from Him who, I am certain, will not deceive you.

5. A fifth sort are those who have some desire after Christ, and yet spend their strength upon the world, and its vanities. I say, these may also come to Christ, and close with Him in the way of forsaking their idols. "Thou hast played the harlot with many lovers, yet return unto me, and I will have compassion upon thee, saith the Lord."

2ndly, The second sort of people invited to come to this market, are those who have no money. And,

1. Is there any man that has no money in his purse, and yet knows not where to get any, let him come to this market, and close with Christ.

2. Those who have nothing in their purses, and yet no where to get it, but dare not come to take it, I say, here is your warrant to come holden out to you, subscribed and sealed with the King's seal.

3. There are a sort of poor folk, poor indeed, while they know not that they are poor, but imagine that they are rich enough; they think that nothing is awanting to them. I say unto you, Atheists of this kind, if ye were once brought so far as to suspect yourselves, and were but afraid of beguiling yourselves, ye might make it an errand to come to Christ, and close with Him, that ye might get a better sight of yourselves, according to that third chapter of the Revelation before-cited. So that if thirsters, and those who have no money, are to be the only party at Christ's banquet this day, and the only persons who are to taste of these fat things, then anyone that sees his need, and has any desire of Christ and these things; and sees that he has nothing in himself to help him; and sees any worth in a Christ to do him good; let such a one come away to Him; here is your market. Here is a rich supply of all your wants.

We know that there will be some objections to this, proposed by some; but it will not be by those that are convinced they have no money. We know few that can boast of their duties or works at this time; we think all may be ashamed of their naughtiness. But we know of some that will say, that they are not of those who are thirsty, and therefore they should not come. Their objection will be this:—

(1.) A thirsty man is pained and troubled under his thirst; but this I am not. I have neither pain nor thirst.

(2.) We say that a thirsty man is not only troubled, but is impatient under his thirst; but this I am not; I have neither trouble nor pain for want of Christ; neither am I seeking after Him, or at pains to find Him.

(3.) A thirsty man is not only pained, and gets no rest under thirst; but even so much pained that he cannot forget it. But it is not so with me; I have no trouble for want of Christ; nor am

I in pain to get Him ; and besides, any thought or desire I have is soon forgotten. And how can any person in this case be said to thirst for Christ, and be among those that should close with Him this day ?

1st, In answer to this :—Dare you say that Jesus Christ, in this text, excludes any person that has the least desire to be interested in Him ? Here is a word for that. Boaz, who was a type of Christ, said to Ruth, “When thou art athirst, go unto the vessel and drink of that which the young men have drawn.” So I say unto you, if ye have any desire after Christ, He is here offered unto you. Go, take Him, and close with Him. “And any man who will come, let him come, and drink of the water of life freely.” But who dare put another qualification upon their closing with Christ, than what He has set down here in His word ?

2ndly, I say, ye must consider that everyone gets not a like degree of thirst after Christ. To some the King measures with larger measure ; and to some with less, according to His absolute sovereignty. How dare you be so bold as to make any qualification necessary that He has not set down Himself ? Dost thou see any need of closing with Him ? Seest thou any need of the pardon of sin, or any need of strength to be borne through, or any diseases thou hast to be cured ? Seest thou that thou art not able to make any help to thyself ? and that thou canst not remedy thy case ? Seest thou any merit in Christ ? Come then, and close with Him for salvation, in order to be freed from the punishment of sin, and to be cured of all your diseases, and to have strength for all your weakness. For, think ye ever to get a constant dependence on Him, adherence to Him, hunger after Him, and thirsting for strength to cleave to Him, if ye close not with Him first for salvation ? But,

3rdly, I say it may be ye have resolved upon it beforehand never to close with Him till He give you such a measure of holiness, and then ye would venture your soul’s salvation on Him if invited to it. But then ye would think that Christ is bound to you by your holiness, and ye would think salvation, so to speak, to be out of Christ’s common. And,

Lastly, I say that the text excludes none living, whether they have any good desires or not. If they have any need of Him, let them come, be what they will. If ye be so self-witted that ye will not come, stand your hazard. If you can provide for yourselves without Him, never come near Him. If ye will not come till ye get something in your hands to put you out of his common, then ye shall not come unto Him, for that ye shall never get. And if ye remain as ignorant as stocks and stones of the knowledge of God, ye may not come unto his table ; but if ye see your need of Christ, and are under the sense of sin, and behold anything in Him that will do you good, then ye may come forward to the table of the Lord, in the way of closing with Him as your Saviour, and receiving His wine and milk without money and without price.

Letters of the late Donald Duff, Stratherrick.

(VI.)

STRATHERRICK, 2nd June, 1876.

MY DEAR DANIEL,—I am longing to hear how you feel. You are little the better of that, but certainly I am one who would wish you well, and I am satisfied you are just as well as your Lord and Saviour would have you to be, as long as He sees fit and until His gracious purpose towards you is answered. I say, without hesitation, His gracious purpose, for not a stroke does He give you either in mind or body, but there is more grace connected with it than you can ever believe while you are in this valley of tears. You will not believe this for my saying it, but that does not alter the case. I would not accept of a grant of all the land between you and me for saying so, unless I believed it myself. And I know that in this particular point my faith has a far better and surer foundation than your unbelief. A far better man than you came actually to his wit's end, thinking of the prosperity of fools and of his own troubles every morning, noon, and evening; yet he got free of this temptation, although for all that I know he might have had it for years. And when he got free of it, he looked on himself as a beast because he allowed himself to be overcome by such uncharitable thoughts towards his Lord. So will you one day, which, if it be His blessed will, may He hasten. Until then, oh, may patience have its perfect work, and may there be some measure of that which maketh not ashamed, I mean, of the hope which is in a peculiar sense the anchor of the soul, and which keeps the vessel safe notwithstanding all the billows that may be permitted to go over the soul. Oh, may He, who is the Captain of Salvation be at the helm, and when all the wisdom of the poor seamen comes to an end, may He for His own glory bring to the desired haven! . . .

You will remember me to the dear friends at Lybster.—Yours,
etc., D. DUFF.

(VII.)

STRATHERRICK, 28th May, 1877.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—I am in receipt of yours of the 23rd, and you see I did not keep you long without an answer, although some other letters that should have been written a month ago are unanswered yet. Certainly if my sympathy would be of any comfort to you, you have that, and I am enabled to remember you particularly, if I can remember myself.

But I am sorry that you are yielding so much to the enemy of your soul as to give so much place to unbelief. You say that you are shut up in the horrible pit of a natural state. Now, sir, let me say in honesty, if you are in a natural state, for my part I never knew what religion was. You will not find your own equal in all God's Word, neither did I ever read of any, except those in a

state of grace, whose main sorrow is occasioned by feeling himself shut out from the comfortable enjoyment of God's presence. How can it be possible for one to be so grieved for the want of a comfort he never tasted? And if ever you had tasted it for one moment, the whole Bible must be a fable or then He will come in His own time, and will be in your experience as the glorious Son of Righteousness arising with healing under His wings. You say, if the prodigal's son would be turned from his father's house without anything in the world to suit his wants, what a miserable wretch he would be! Surely he would be such a miserable one that there was never the like of him in this world, for no one was ever turned away in such a case. That very passage was written to prove God's willingness to receive every prodigal that is convinced of his misery in being without God in the world. I see plainly that the enemy of your soul is taking advantage of your present low state of mind and body to fight against you by the very things that might be a comfort to you. Oh, do not think of Christ as a hard master; He knows your weak state as to mind and body; He does not expect from you such services as otherwise might be the case. As sure as the sun is in the firmament, the day is coming and may not be far off, when you can read Christ's love to your soul in all these dealings that are at present so trying to you.

My daughter is somewhat better. A letter from you is welcome at any time. With sincere regards to all my friends in your locality.—Yours, etc.,

D. DUFF.

(VIII.)

STRATHERRICK, 17th August, 1878.

MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,—I have been very little at home since you saw me. As to my visit to Caithness, for my own part, I certainly did enjoy it, perhaps more than on any former occasion. And I may say this much, that the few friends at Lybster followed my mind in a singular manner. As to yourself, I had a great desire to see you, although I knew I was not able to do you any good.

As to your body, I suppose none besides yourself can enter into your sufferings in that respect fully, but you will say that however painful that may be, if you would bear some hope of your soul's salvation,—yes. Now, faith is the gift of God; none can work it in themselves, or in one another; we must wait God's sovereign will. It is right we should learn this by experience. This is the only thing, as far as I can conceive, that would comfort you, as to your state being safe. Now, sir, you must try to wait on Him for this. What under the sun could the Sovereign Ruler of the universe have in view in making you to go through all the painful feeling you have experienced for years past for the want of a Saviour, I say, the painful feelings? I wish you to ask yourself this question, If you are to be left Christless after having been kept in that state of mind for being so for such a length of time, you will not find your own equal in all God's Word, neither in any other history whatever.

I may tell you that I have been at the Dingwall Sacrament, and heard Dr. Begg preach three excellent sermons. I would go a considerable distance to hear the worst of the three. I had some conversation with him in private, and he has but dark views of the future. He is certainly afraid that matters will end in the Romanists getting the upper hand in this kingdom. Dr. Kennedy had also a good sermon on Sabbath. There was a number of friends also from other places. I did not go to Creich at this time, being so long from home.

Now, you will remember me with all the sincerity I am possessed of to each of my beloved friends at Lybster. Although at such a distance I do rejoice to think of you, if through grace you and I will get to the better country. Neither will there be hills or seas to separate, nor will there be sad hearts at separation, as the friends and myself had when we parted. May grace and peace be multiplied to you all!—Amen.

D. DUFF.

A Worthy Confession.

THE Rev. Watts Wilkinson was a well-known and highly esteemed minister of the Church of England in London, who died in 1840, aged eighty-five years. We take the following note from the *Gospel Banner* of January, 1896. It tells us what Mr. Wilkinson thought of himself at the end of an honoured life. "One of his daughters said to him, 'Can you doubt, after all the experience you have had; nothing but divine grace could ever have made you what you are?' He answered, 'O, my dear love, you are no judge of me whatever. You can only judge by my outward conduct, you cannot see my heart and what passes there. As a minister of Christ, it has always been my desire not only to abstain from evil, but from all appearance of evil. None can tell what conflicts with sin I have had. I find self-seeking and pride still cleaving to me; remember my text (one to which he often referred), "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" Well, my love, I must do again, as I have done ten thousand times before, under such feelings—I must cast myself entirely on the mercy of God: "God be merciful to me, a sinner," the vilest of sinners, and after all I have received, a most ungrateful sinner. I shall never get beyond that prayer. It is a solemn thing to appear before God, even with an assured hope. My only support is, my Judge will be Jesus; that, if He has paid the ransom for me, He must condemn Himself before He can condemn me. Ten thousand times have I fled to Him for the pardon of my sins, and His Word declares that He will cast out none that come to Him. Therefore upon His mercy I cast myself; I have nothing to look back upon as any ground of confidence. Those are sweet, encouraging words, "Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus."'"

Meeting of Synod.

THE summer half-yearly meeting of Synod was held at Inverness on Tuesday, the 9th July, in the Free Presbyterian Church there. There were present, the Rev. D. Macfarlane, J. R. Mackay, J. Sinclair, Moderator; G. Mackay, A. Stewart, N. Macintyre, A. Macrae, D. Beaton, and J. Macleod, Clerk—Ministers; with Messrs. H. Macpherson, John Mackenzie, A. Maclellan, D. Macleod, A. Maclean, and J. Nicol, Elders. The Court met at mid-day. Mr. Sinclair, Moderator, preached on Ephesians iv. 13, and then constituted the Synod. After the formal business of the first sederunt, the Synod adjourned and met again at 6 o'clock in the evening.

In connection with a remit from the Northern Presbytery anent soirees, concerts, &c., in connection with Church work. The Synod "taking into consideration the remit, &c., and viewing how frequent such soirees and concerts have become in other Churches," wished to place on record "there disapprobation of any such practices, and to make plain to their people that as such innovations are unscriptural, it is their duty to refrain from any step that would introduce an element of worldliness into the Church of Christ."

It was decided to increase the allowance given to Messrs. Ferguson, S. Uist; Stewart, N. Uist; Macleod, Stoer; and Macleod, Dunbeath; and it was agreed in the meantime that Mr. Donald Macleod, Grimsay, should receive at the rate of £20 per annum as from 1st March last. The Moderator then read a draft letter of congratulation and condolence to His Majesty King Edward, in connection with his accession and the death of Queen Victoria. The Synod next considered the subject of the Royal Accession Declaration, and on the motion of Rev. J. R. Mackay, seconded by the Clerk, and supported by Mr. Macfarlane and Mr. Nicol, the following resolution was unanimously adopted—copies of it to be sent to the Leaders of the two Houses of Parliament:—

"The Synod of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland considering that the proposal—against which they have already at a special meeting protested—to change the Statutory Protestant Accession Declaration, is still being agitated in Parliament, and viewing with great dissatisfaction the form that the Select Committee of the House of Lords have suggested as an improvement on the original Declaration contained in the Bill of Rights, reiterate their deep conviction that there is no reason whatsoever for the introduction of any change, and particularly of any such change as would leave ambiguous the Sovereign's personal attitude towards the invocation of the Virgin Mary or any other Saints, and that the policy of concession to Rome pursued by the Government weakens the Protestant constitution of the country

and is perilous in the extreme." Mr. Beaton and the Clerk were asked to draw up a report of the discussion on this subject for publication, and if the report is ready it will appear in this issue of our Magazine.

The Moderator then intimated to the Synod that the Petition against any change in the Declaration arranged for at the April meeting of Synod had been signed by over 15,500 persons, and was to be presented to Parliament by the Hon. J. Gordon, M.P. for Moray and Nairn.

The Financial Statement for the year was read by Mr. Clunas, Treasurer, attested by the Auditors, who were thanked by the Synod along with the Treasurer. It was ordered to be published in the Magazine for the information of the Church at large. It appears in our current issue. The annual collections were then fixed.

I.—That for the Organisation Fund, to be made on the first Sabbath of August—(the others at intervals of two months).

II.—Missionaries and Catechists, first Sabbath of October.

III.—For the Students, first Sabbath of December.

IV.—For Church and Manse Fund, first Sabbath of February.

V.—Foreign and Jewish Missions, first Sabbath of April.

The Synod also instructed Congregations to make an annual collection for the hospital or infirmary in which it is most directly interested.

Rev. J. R. Mackay gave a verbal report of the doings of the Church Interests Committee. In connection with Macknight's Bequest, it was decided to take no further steps; and Messrs. Mackay and Clunas, Inverness; Mr. Sinclair, Glasgow; and Mr. Crawford, Oban, were nominated as a Committee on Church Interests, with Mr. Mackay as Convener. The Moderator gave a brief account of how the Magazine progresses, and was thanked for the care and attention he has shown in conducting it. The Theological Report was given in by Mr. Beaton, and he and Mr. J. R. Mackay received the Synod's thanks for their labours in education.

It was agreed that Halkirk and Helmsdale, on their own request, should be recognised as a charge in the position of being able to call a minister. Messrs. A. Fraser, C. Maclean, and F. Maciver were re-appointed Auditors, the report of any two of them to suffice. It was agreed, as heretofore, that each minister in the Synod should at least once a year expound our Church principles to his people. It was ordered that representative elders should be chosen within two months from this date, and that next meeting be held in Glasgow on Tuesday, 12th November. The meeting was closed with singing and the benediction.

"But now is Christ risen from the dead and is become the first fruits of them that slept."

36. Inverness,	J. R. Mackay, Minister, ..	106 2 6	2 8 0	5 0 0	5 9 5	4 0 0	122 19 11
37. Kilmallie,	D. M'Master, Elder, ..	3 0 0	.. ..	.. ..	2 0 0	1 0 0	6 0 0
38. Kilmorack,	D. Bannerman, Probationer, ..	36 18 6	.. ..	1 7 6	2 3 2	2 0 0	44 4 2
39. Kilmuir,	N. Munro, Missionary, ..	22 8 0	1 0 0	0 13 0	1 10 0	1 6 0	27 10 0
40. Kingussie,	D. Fraser, Elder, ..	15 11 6	.. ..	.. ..	.. ..	0 10 0	16 1 6
41. Kinlochbervie, .. .. .	.. .. .	7 11 0	.. ..	.. ..	.. ..	.. ..	7 11 0
42. Knapdale, N.,	A. Gray, Elder, ..	35 0 0	4 10 6	4 0 0	6 1 6	5 10 0	55 2 0
43. Laig,	D. Cameron, Missionary, ..	60 16 3	.. ..	.. ..	4 0 0	4 0 0	70 16 3
44. Lochbroon,	E. Mackenzie, Missionary, ..	27 12 0	3 4 3	2 5 1	2 2 11	1 15 5	36 19 8
45. Lochcarroun,	M. C'ulloch, Elder, ..	.. ..	.. ..	0 15 0	1 5 0	1 0 0	3 0 0
46. Lochgilphead,	D. Beaton, Minister, ..	13 0 6	.. ..	.. ..	2 5 0	.. ..	15 5 6
47. Lybster,	J. M'Aulay, Missionary, ..	43 9 6	1 14 0	2 14 9	2 16 6	2 10 0	55 16 9
48. Moy,	J. Finlayson, Elder, ..	.. ..	.. ..	.. ..	.. ..	1 0 0	1 0 0
49. Nees,	D. Fraser, Elder, ..	.. ..	0 10 0	0 10 0	0 11 0	0 11 0	4 10 0
50. Newtownmore,	A. Stewart, Minister, ..	2 8 0	2 8 4	2 0 0	7 10 0	4 0 0	133 18 4
51. Oban,	J. Macrae, Elder, ..	114 0 0	0 10 6	0 12 6	1 8 0	1 6 0	18 18 0
52. Plockton,	A. Macrae, Minister, ..	114 4 9	.. ..	2 0 0	5 6 6	3 12 0	199 7 3
53. Portree,	D. Macfarlane, Minister, ..	30 0 0	0 8 9	1 3 9	3 16 6	0 17 3	37 13 3
54. Raasay, .. .. .	.. .. .	7 0 0	.. ..	.. ..	.. ..	.. ..	7 0 0
55. Roselis,	J. Murray, Missionary, ..	15 3 10	0 15 0	0 14 4	1 3 10	.. ..	19 0 0
56. Rogart,	J. A. M'Askill, Missionary, ..	4 2 6	.. ..	.. ..	0 14 0	0 5 0	5 8 10
57. Soay,	D. M'Donald, Minister, ..	8 10 0	0 17 6	0 15 6	1 5 0	1 4 6	12 15 0
58. Scourie,	A. Matheson, Missionary, ..	41 11 7	0 10 0	0 11 0	6 5 9	1 17 0	50 12 0
59. Shieldaig, .. .. .	.. .. .	15 0 0	.. ..	.. ..	.. ..	0 10 0	18 18 0
60. Snisort, { Glenghinisdale,	G. Mackay, Minister, ..	68 7 10	.. ..	.. ..	5 0 0	.. ..	78 7 10
61. Stornoway,	J. M'Gillivray, Elder, ..	40 8 0	1 17 4	1 6 3	2 2 0	2 0 0	50 3 7
62. Stratherrick,	J. Cameron, Student, ..	1 8 6	.. ..	.. ..	.. ..	.. ..	1 8 6
63. Strathpeffer,	J. Mackay, Missionary, ..	17 0 0	1 0 0	.. ..	2 0 0	2 0 0	22 0 0
64. Strathly,	J. Mackay, Missionary, ..	12 10 0	.. ..	1 5 0	2 0 0	2 0 0	16 15 0
65. Tain, .. .. .	.. .. .	.. ..	0 14 1	0 15 7½	0 18 3	0 15 0	3 17 1½
66. Tarbert, Loch Fyne,	J. Macleod, Minister, ..	30 0 6	.. ..	.. ..	1 6 6	.. ..	3 8 6
67. Thurso,	A. Ross, Missionary, ..	27 7 6	0 18 9	0 19 0	8 0 0	6 0 0	44 0 6
68. Tighnabruich,	A. Stewart, Missionary, ..	.. ..	.. ..	.. ..	2 0 0	1 1 6	34 6 9
69. { Fable,	M. M'Corquodale, Missionary, ..	7 4 6	0 4 9	0 5 0	0 9 0	0 9 0	8 19 9
70. N. Uist, { Claddach Kyllis,	A. Ferguson, Missionary, ..	1 11 0	.. ..	0 10 0	0 10 0	0 5 0	1 11 0
71. S. Uist, { Claddach Kirkibost,	D. Beaton, Minister, ..	4 16 6	.. ..	1 2 0	4 0 0	3 5 0	6 6 6
72. Wick, .. .. .	.. .. .	80 4 0	.. ..	.. ..	.. ..	6 10 0	95 1 0
Congregational Contributions,		£2029 14 9	£55 6 6	£54 14 10	£169 8 0	£107 5 11	£2491 17 4
Donations,		22 7 14	4 0 0	0 7 6	0 10 6	0 5 0	28 15 1½
Interest,		6 13 3	6 11 5	0 9 6	.. ..	.. ..	15 4 6
TOTAL,		£2058 15 1½	£65 17 11	£55 11 10	£169 18 6	£107 10 11	£2535 16 11½

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

FOR THE YEAR FROM 31st MARCH, 1900, TO 31st MARCH, 1901.

SUSTENTATION FUND.

CHARGE.		DISCHARGE.	
Balance of last Account ending 31st March, 1900, ..		Payments—	
<i>Receipts—</i>		1. To Ministers at Whitsunday, ..	
1. Congregational Contributions, ..	£2029 14 9	..	£250 0 0
2. Missionary and Catechist Collection, ..	169 18 6	..	650 0 0
3. Donations, ..	22 7 1½	2. To Missionaries at Whitsunday, ..	
4. Interest, ..	6 13 3	..	£233 19 7
		..	194 9 4
		..	210 4 5
		..	192 1 1
	2228 13 7½	3. Expenses—	
		Postage, Printing Stationery, &c., ..	
		Balance at 31st March, 1901, ..	
		£2134 10 11½	
		918 11 4	
		£3053 2 3½	
		830 14 5	
		3 16 6½	

JEWISH AND FOREIGN MISSIONS.

CHARGE.		DISCHARGE.	
Balance of last Account ending 31st March, 1900, ..		Payments—	
<i>Receipts—</i>		Postage, Printing Stationery &c., ..	
1. Congregational Collections, ..	£55 6 6	..	£40 9 5
2. Donations, ..	4 0 0	..	303 1 6
3. Interest, ..	6 11 5	Balance at 31st March, 1901, ..	
	65 17 11	£3053 2 3½	
		£303 10 11	

ORGANISATION FUND.

CHARGE.		Payments—		DISCHARGE.	
<i>Receipts—</i>		1. Printing Deliverances of Synod on Sabbath Desecration, and postage.		£1 14 9	
1. Congregational Collections, ..	£54 14 10	2. Printing Missionary and Catechist Schedules, ..	0 8 4	3. Expenses in connection with East Coast Fishing Mission, ..	6 3 3
2. Donations, ..	0 7 6	4. Travelling expenses in connection with Macnight's case, ..	1 7 6	5. Printing Notices to Congregational Treasurers, Circulars for Organisation Fund Collection, and postage, ..	0 16 7
3. Interest, ..	0 9 6	6. Cheques and Cash Box, ..	0 5 6	Balance at 31st March, 1901, ..	£10 15 11
					44 15 11
					<u>£55 11 10</u>

MISSIONARY AND CATECHIST COLLECTION.

CHARGE.		Payments—		DISCHARGE.	
1. Congregational Collections, ..	£169 8 0	In behoof of Sustentation Fund Account, ..	..	..	£169 18 6
2. Donations, ..	0 10 6				
					<u>£169 18 6</u>

STUDENTS' AID FUND.

CHARGE.		Payments—		DISCHARGE.	
Balance of last Account ending 31st March, 1900, ..	£52 3 9	To Students, ..	..	..	£106 4 0
<i>Receipts—</i>		Postage, Printing, Stationery, &c., ..	..	..	0 14 6
1. Congregational Collections, ..	£107 5 11	Balance at 31st March, 1901, ..	..	..	£106 18 6
2. Donations, ..	0 5 0				52 16 2
					<u>£159 14 8</u>

FINLAY MACIVER, J

A Scripture Difficulty Solved.

THE following letter by the Rev. Jonathan Edwards to Rev. Mr. Bellamy, treating at length of Christ's argument in John x. 34-36, will be interesting to students of Scripture. The difficulty felt by Mr. Edwards' correspondent we know to be one that has exercised several thinking minds, and we regard the solution here offered as perfectly satisfactory:—

"*First*, That it is not *all princes* of the earth, who are called *gods*, in the Old Testament; but only the *princes of Israel*, who ruled over God's people. The princes, who are called *gods*, in Psalm lxxxii. here referred to, are, in the same sentence, distinguished from the *princes of the nations of the world*.—'I have said, Ye are *gods*; but ye shall die like men, and fall like one of the *princes*.'

Secondly, That the reason why these princes of Israel were called *gods*, was, that they, as the rulers and judges of God's Israel, were types and figures of Him, who is the true King of the Jews, and the Prince of God's people, who is to rule over the house of Jacob for ever, the Prince and Saviour of God's church, or spiritual Israel, gathered from all nations of the earth; who is God indeed. The throne of Israel, or of God's people, properly belonged to Christ. He only was the proper Heir to that throne; and therefore, the princes of Israel are said to sit upon *the throne of the Lord*, 1 Chron. xxix. 23; and the kingdom of Israel, under the kings of the house of David, is called *the kingdom of the Lord*, 2 Chron. xiii. 8. And because Christ took the throne, as the *Antitype* of those kings, therefore he is said, Luke i. 32, to sit upon *their throne*.—Thus, the princes of Israel, in the 82nd Psalm, are called *gods*, and *sons of God*, or 'all of them *children of the most High*;' being appointed *types* and remarkable representations of the true Son of God, and in him of the true God. They were called *gods*, and *sons of God*, in the same manner as the Levitical sacrifices were called an *atonement* for sin, and in the same manner as the manna was called the *bread of heaven*, and *angels' food*. These things represented, and, by special divine designation, were *figures* of, the true Atonement, and of Him who was the true bread of heaven, and the true angels' food; in the same sense as Saul, the person especially pointed out in the 82nd Psalm, is called '*the Lord's anointed*,' or (as it is in the original) *Messiah*, or *Christ*, which are the same. And it is to be observed, that these typical gods, and judges of Israel, are particularly distinguished from the true God, and true Judge, in the next sentence, Psalm lxxxii. 8. 'Arise, O GOD, thou JUDGE of the earth; for thou shalt inherit all nations.'—This is a wish for the coming of that King, that should reign in righteousness, and judge righteously; who was to inherit the Gentiles, as well as the Jews; and the words, as they stand in connexion with the two preceding verses, import thus much—'As to you, temporal princes

and judges of Israel, you are called gods, and sons of God, being exalted to the place of kings, judges, and saviours of God's people, the kingdom and heritage of Christ; but you shall die like men, and fall like other princes; whereby it appears that you are truly no gods, nor any one of you the true Son of God, which your injustice and oppression also shows. But oh, that He who is truly God, the Judge of the earth, the true and just Judge and Saviour, who is to be King over Gentiles as well as Jews, would come and reign!'—It is to be observed, that when it is said in this verse—'Arise, O God'—the word rendered *God*, is *Elohim*—the same used in verse 6, 'I have said, Ye are gods,'—I have said, Ye are *elohim*.

Thirdly, As to the words of Christ, in John x. 35, 'If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came,' I suppose that, by the *word of God coming* to these princes of Israel, is meant, their being set forth by special and express divine designation, to be types or figurative significations of God's mind. Those things which God had appointed to be types, to signify the mind of God, were a *visible word*. Types are called *the word of the Lord*—as in Zech. xi. 10-11, and in Zech. iv. 4-6.—The word of God came to the princes of Israel, both as they, by God's ordering, became subjects of a typical representation of a divine thing, which was a visible word of God; and also, as this was done by express divine designation, as they were marked out to this end, by an express, audible, and legible word, as in Exod. xxii. 28, and Psal. lxxxii. 1; and besides, the thing, of which they were appointed types, was Christ, who is called '*the word of God*.'—Thus, the word of God came to Jacob, as a type of Christ, 1 Kings xviii. 31, 'And Elijah took twelve stones, according to the number of the tribes of Jacob, UNTO WHOM THE WORD OF THE LORD CAME, saying, *Israel* shall be thy name.'—The word Israel is PRINCE OF GOD:—Jacob being, by that express divine designation, appointed as a type of Christ, the true Prince of God (who is called, in Isa. xlix. 3, by the name of *Israel*), in his prevailing in his wrestling with God, to save himself and his family from destruction by Esau, who was then coming against him, and obtaining the blessing for himself and his seed.—Now,

Fourthly, Christ's argument lies in these words, *The Scripture cannot be broken*. That word of God, by which they are called gods, as *types* of Him who is truly God, must be verified, which they cannot be, unless the *Antitype* be truly God.—They are so called, as types of the Messiah, or of the *Anointed One* (which is the same), or the *Sanctified* or *Holy One*, or Him that was to be *sent*; which were all known names among the Jews for the Messiah. (See Daniel ix. 24-25, Psalm lxxxix. 19-20, Psalm xvi. 10, John ix. 7.) But it was on this account that those types or images of the Messiah were called gods, because He, whom they represented, was God indeed. If he were not God, the word by which they were called gods could not be verified, and must be

broken. As the word, by which the legal sacrifices were called an atonement, and are said to atone for sin, was true in no other sense, than as they had relation to the sacrifice of Christ the true atonement. If Christ's sacrifice had not truly atoned for sin; the word, which called the types or representations of it an atonement, could not be verified. So, if Jesus Christ had not been the true Bread from heaven, and angels' food indeed, the scripture which called the type of him, the bread from heaven, and angels' food, would not have been verified, but would have been broken.

These, Sir, are my thoughts on John x. 34, &c.

I am yours, most affectionately,

J. EDWARDS."

A Letter from Canada.

BRUCEFIELD, 26th June, 1901.

DEAR MR. MACKAY,—It is a long time since I had a letter from you. I have been often looking for one, but it has not come yet, and I suppose the best way to bring that about is to send a few lines to you.

But I have not much to tell you regarding our Church affairs. For since the death of the Rev. J. Patterson we have not been able to get any supply of preaching, or the administration of sealing ordinances. One minister did offer to come among us, but in such circumstances that we could not accept his offer (it was not a financial difficulty). But we are not gaining in numbers, but rather losing, as death is removing some of our friends, some are going away to distant parts, and some, of whom we expected differently, have left us.

We had what we might call our annual meeting here on the 24th of May. There was a fair representation from the several localities, but there was not much business to transact. We feel like sheep without a shepherd, but I do not like to say that either for I hope we can say, "The Lord is my shepherd"; and He is the helper of them that have no help of man at all. He is never a wilderness to His people, although He sometimes leads them into the wilderness; He there speaks comfortably to them. He still makes good His word; "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." We sometimes realise the truth of this.

I was very glad that your Synod took action regarding the King's Oath. It is lamentable the indifference and mawkish liberality that exist among professed Protestants in this matter, and the same is true in almost everything where the Papacy is concerned. I fear they are nursing the viper that will bye and bye sting them. But the Free Presbyterians have done well to sound the alarm.

But what about the Constitutionalists? Will they remain standing where the Union party left them, standing on the

Declaratory Act of 1892? I wonder if they would take a word of advice from an old Canadian backwoodsman. If they would, I would say, "Cast the Declaratory Act to the winds, and stand fair and square on the Constitution of 1843, and take the Confession of Faith and the Larger and Shorter Catechisms as their subordinate standards, and then join hands with the Free Presbyterians." And if any other name were required to distinguish you from other Churches, might not this do, "Original Free Church?" At any rate I hope they will act in such a way as will be a credit to people bearing the name of the Free Church of Scotland. There have been some honourable names connected with the Free Church, honourable because they contended so earnestly for Christ's crown rights. And whatever men may think of them now, these rights are just as precious in Christ's estimation as they ever were, and they are still precious to His friends that are truly loyal to Him.

But the Lord reigneth, and He is carrying on His own glorious purposes, not only in spite of the schemes of His enemies, and the blunders of His friends, but by means of them. But I must close.—(1 Thess. v. 23, 24.)—Yours sincerely,

GEORGE FORREST.

The Synod and the King's Protestant Declaration.

WHEN the subject of the Revised Royal Declaration came up at the Synod, Rev. J. R. Mackay spoke as follows:—I said that as I had at a recent special meeting of the Synod indicated at some length what I thought of the proposed changes in the Royal Declaration, I would, on this occasion, study to be brief. Only, I would not wish that the Synod should allow this opportunity to pass without indicating that they were keenly alive to the importance of every development of the question, and that they were resolved to do their utmost in order to arrest the policy of surrender to Papal intrigues. I decline to enter on a minute discussion of the form of Declaration recommended by a select committee of the House of Lords. It may in general be characterised as a very lame production, and a production very disappointing to friends of Protestantism. Mr. Mackay then pointed out that although the subjects of Christ's Headship over the nations, and of the identification of Popery with the Man of Sin were, as a rule now-a-days, either lost sight of or ridiculed, they were truths plainly set forth in our Confession of Faith, and the unanimity with which almost all students of prophecy agreed in identifying Popery with mystical Babylon, the Man of Sin, was simply surprising. The Synod would only be carrying out its belief in those truths, in exerting itself to the utmost to prevent any change in the Royal

Declaration against Popery, as that declaration is down in the Bill of Rights. We were not actuated by any ill-feeling towards our fellow-sinners in the Roman Catholic Church. On the contrary, we are conscious of only compassion towards them. At the same time we would not conceal from ourselves the fact that, while according to the Word of God, the divine blessing ever follows the kindest interest in His ancient people the Jews (for they shall prosper that love thee), on the other hand the blessing connects itself with the firmest opposition to every Papal intrigue.

In seconding Rev. Mr. Mackay's motion, Rev. Mr. Macleod, Kames, drew the Synod's attention to the difference that exists between the present Declaration and its proposed substitute. The Statutory Declaration may be said roughly to touch on three points:—Transubstantiation, Saint Worship, and the Dispensing Power—in regard to each of these the Sovereign makes his attitude clear. He renounces the Popish doctrine of Transubstantiation, holding that the elements in the Lord's Supper do not, at or after consecration by any person whatsoever become the very body and blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. Of course, this is a renunciation that no Papist can make and yet remain a Papist. Holding as he does that the bread still remains bread, and that the wine still remains wine, the King cannot but view as idolatrous and superstitious the worship that the Church of Rome gives the Host as though it were the very body and blood of Christ. The charge of want of charity levelled against these adjectives—idolatrous and superstitious—bears not only at the corollary that Romish worship is such, but also at the proposition that there is no such thing as Transubstantiation. For it is when Transubstantiation is disclaimed that the worship of the Host is spoken of in these terms. Because what is worshipped is held to be mere bread the worship is held to be superstitious and idolatrous. So should the corollary be suppressed the denial of Transubstantiating power to the priest would yet involve the position that the worship of the consecrated Host is what it is declared to be. In the proposed alteration there is still a disclaimer of belief in Transubstantiation, and so far it safeguards the Protestantism of the Throne, but no true Protestant can for a moment hold that there is any reason why the frank deduction that the present form makes from the disclaimer should be omitted. It is a mere expression of what is already contained in the premises.

The present form makes plain the Sovereign's attitude to Mariolatry and the Invocation of Saints generally. The proposed alteration merely affirms that the invocation of Mary and the Saints as now practised in the Church of Rome is inconsistent with the Protestant religion. Of this no one has any doubt, not even the Pope himself. This new form then would never serve as a safeguard to the Protestantism of the Throne.

The present form rejects the dispensing power of the Pope, and secures the Sovereign's avowal of his own attitude with regard to

it. The proposed alteration merely says that he makes the whole declaration unreservedly. Why this watering down? Has the Pope ever disclaimed the power of loosing oaths and other binding obligations? Has he not again and again in the history of our empire made use of it? Are not the people of Britain interested in the question whether or no their Sovereign will do what in him lies to maintain the Protestant religion and the liberties of the realm? It is true that the throne does not hold the same place in our constitution that it once held, and that its influence depends to a great extent on the personal character of its occupant, as notably in the case of our late Sovereign. It does not hold the place it did, but still its influence for good or for evil is incalculable, and it is the interest of our nation to see to it that our Sovereign be not one of those that subject their heart and conscience to a foreign despotism. For once a Papist occupies the throne of Great Britain he will soon make it appear how effectually his influence can operate in the way of furthering Popery.

But, it may be said, the first part of the proposed declaration still excludes Romanists from the throne. True; but what of the rest of it? and what of the whole policy towards the claims of Rome of which the proposed change is but a specimen? During the long reign of George III. one floodgate after another was opened, and by the end of his reign Romish impudence and British infatuation came to a head in the loud claim that was made for what was spoken of as Catholic Emancipation. This claim was at last granted in 1829, and thus one of the chief barriers against the enemy was taken down. Many good men from a false charity concluded that by the 19th century the Papacy had improved. Its teeth were drawn and its claws clipped and there was no danger to be apprehended from permitting its minions a seat among our legislators. Far sighted men and sound Protestants saw that the case was otherwise. Students of history like the great Dr. M'Crie pointed out the danger of concession, but in vain. The nation gave way, Papists were admitted into Parliament, and soon the results of this policy appeared.

In ordinary times the political parties that have in succession conducted the affairs of our country are, as a rule, pretty evenly balanced and this gave the Papacy its chance. Given even a comparatively small body with a solid vote in a given direction and they have the great parties practically at their disposal. This has happened in our Parliament. Ireland, over-represented, returns alone eighty members that may be counted on to vote as a solid phalanx in favour of the policy of Rome. In all ordinary times we cannot fail to see what this means, and now that the policy of concession has had such perilous results is it not time to call a halt and make a resolute resistance? one of the last links that bind our throne to the Reformation is being filed through, and why should this be permitted?

“Modern Criticism and the Preaching of the Old Testament.”

A CRITIQUE.

WE resume our review of Professor Smith's questionable book. The intention of the work is to teach the modern preacher who has accepted the results of the “Higher Criticism,” how to handle the Old Testament in the pulpit. It is assumed that, by the findings of the said criticism, the traditional view of the Old Testament has been shattered, and that what the preacher has now to work upon in Moses, the Psalms, and the prophets, is a tissue—a very interesting and remarkable tissue, no doubt—of fictions, allegories, pious frauds, with a certain substratum of actual history. The exact amount of this substratum is still doubtful, but at the distance of four or five thousand years, our friends, the “higher critics,” are toiling hard to reduce it to its proper limits.

According to the Professor, the book of Genesis has almost no historical value. The story of the Fall is a prose poem. The account of the Creation is a vague echo of certain Babylonian legends. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were not real men; they are symbolical figures typifying the racial character and history of some Semitic tribes who emerged from Central Asia and found their way into Egypt and Arabia. The author of Deuteronomy (a pious forger of the time of Josiah) had barely rescued himself from the polytheism of his age. This is proved by Deut. iv. 17. Let the reader find the passage and see what vestige of proof he can discover for the Professor's assertion. It is allowed that David might have written some religious poetry, but it is deemed quite impossible to certify him as the author of any one Psalm. Even the fifty-first Psalm is a hymn of the second Temple, composed three or four hundred years after David was dead. “Further, this Psalm is not the acknowledgment by a single individual of an extraordinary and revolting crime against some fellow-creature, but the confession on behalf of the whole Church of her inherent sinfulness before God, and of her neglect of her mission to the world.” In proof of this violent far-fetched theory, we have the foot-note of page 88, “verse 4, ‘*Against Thee, Thee only have I sinned, and done this evil in Thy sight*,’ could hardly be said by David of his crime against his fellow-man.” The strong personal bearing of verse 5 is explained away by asserting that this style of speech was characteristic of the Jewish Church, and the Professor affects to prove this by a reference to Isaiah lxiii. 16, and John viii. 33. If the reader will consult these passages, he will be moved to wonder what the Professor means. Furthermore, the Messianic purport of the rites and prophecies of the Old Testament is now an exploded idea. This theme has been much elaborated by Protestant and mediæval writers, but

the Professor, elated with his own superior views, has almost nothing but pity for this obsolete school of exegesis. He writes:—

“It would not be unjust to call those mere flatterers of their Lord, who, without moral insight or real devotion, have heaped upon Him indiscriminately all the titles of Old Testament history, and symbolised every detail of Jewish worship, as if it were the ingenuity of their efforts and the quantity of their results which were well-pleasing to Him, or capable of convincing the doubter of His Divinity. The fancy, that to discover some type or prediction of Christ where nobody else had seen one before was to honour Christ and confound His enemies, has been the besetting sin both of mediæval and Protestant styles of exegesis; and nothing has been more guilty of rendering sermons on the Old Testament artificial and unreal.”

The Professor, however, is willing to admit the presence of a certain Messianic element in the Old Testament, and he expounds his views in the lecture entitled “The Spirit of Christ in the Old Testament.” In this investigation of the Christology of the Old Testament he impatiently dismisses from his view the whole sacrificial scheme of the Temple services. According to his theory, the pascal lamb and the other ordinances had no divine origin, but were merely customs derived from the barbaric ancestors of the race—the same with the usages that prevailed through the whole Semitic world. He finds no direct types or prophecies of Christ anywhere in the Old Testament; he only finds certain great characters appearing from time to time on the stage of Israel’s history—men of devotion and self sacrifice, and these men, he says, exhibiting on a small scale the same excellencies that the Messiah showed on the great scale, became thus so many types and patterns of the coming Christ. The study of these men, he affirms, constitutes the real Christology of the Old Testament. “Everyone,” says he, “who is familiar with the efforts of Christian preaching to illustrate or explain the Sacrifice of Christ from the Old Testament, is aware how the emphasis of the argument is almost always laid upon the animal sacrifices of Levitical legislation, and how the human sacrifices of Old Testament history—the sufferings of the righteous and the vicarious strife and agony of the heroes of Israel—are either forgotten or used only for the peroration. An equal error has been made in the Old Testament argument for our Lord’s Divinity: the proofs have been sought in strained interpretations of the essentially human attributes and offices of the Messianic King, instead of in those affections and struggles for the salvation of men which the Old Testament imputes to God Himself.”

The adoption of this theory leads him to extol the character of several Old Testament worthies, but especially Jeremiah. He elaborates his treatment of this prophet so as to prove him as indubitably as he can “a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.” Are we gratified to find this “higher critic” so zealously

expounding the rare and eminent graces of God's servant? No, we are not. There is a lurking deceit here. This he says not because he understands Jeremiah, but because his theory of Jeremiah is a useful means to bolster up a daring and novel perversion of the prophetic Scriptures. It will astonish our readers to be told that Professor Smith actually transfers to Jeremiah the sacred contents of the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah. His words are:—

“A later generation, however, awoke to the virtue of Jeremiah's pain. Whether the figure of the Suffering Servant in the fifty-third of Isaiah be intended by the writer as an individual (as it seems to me we ought to conclude), or (in the opinion of most modern critics) as a personification of the righteous and suffering remnant of Israel, there is no doubt that the vision is partly inspired by the nation's appreciation of the meaning of Jeremiah's life.”

Now, this adaptation of Jeremiah's history will appear profane to some and ingenious to others, but it must on all hands be allowed to be very convenient. There was need of some expedient to shift the strong evidence of the miracle of prophecy which still remained in the latter part of Isaiah. To get rid of the argument from prophecy which appeared in the mention of the name and achievements of Cyrus, it was feigned that the 44th of Isaiah was a piece of history written near the close of the exile. But if the few brief outlines of Cyrus' life work given in the 44th and 45th of Isaiah must needs infer the contemporaneous authorship of these chapters, what must be thought of the full length portraiture of a unique and glorious Person given in the 53rd of the same book? Either we have here an illustrious miracle of the omniscience of God or else we have a lofty effusion of one of the apostles or evangelists. But of course, there is, according to the critical theory, no such thing as predictive prophecy, nor has any German theorist been mad enough to identify Isaiah liii. as a monument of the Apostolic age, therefore some other shift was plainly necessary to bring that chapter in line with the conceptions of the Rationalistic School, and this then is Professor Smith's suggestion that the 53rd of Isaiah is a eulogium of Jeremiah. We mention this aberration of Professor Smith, not to spend time in refuting it. To sane, right-hearted students of Scripture, these reckless theories refute themselves.

We are aware that our treatment of the Professor may seem a juvenile, unlearned effort. We do not, however, admit that the office of a hostile critic is beyond our province. The possession of a moderate knowledge of the Bible, and a general acquaintance with the lore of Church history and Christian biography, are sufficient to entitle anyone to speak with this enemy in the gate. We do not suppose the Professor's work is characterised by much originality. The theories that so startle and pain us are probably the old commonplaces of unbelief. These positions we hope again to attack next month.

JOHN M'NEILAGE.

A Lady's Conversion from Popery

IN REFORMATION TIMES.

THE following is taken from *Gillies' Historical Collections*. It is originally an extract from *Fleming's Fulfilling of the Scriptures*.—

It may not be unsuitable to add an instance of the conversion of a lady in our own country now several years ago from Popery, who not only from her education, but with some serious and conscientious respect, before she was enlightened by the truth, did own the profession of that way. The account set down is of her own words transcribed, which with much assurance I can here insert; yea, who after her conversion, until the Lord's calling her to Himself, did confirm the truth thereof by convincing and exemplary piety to all that knew her.

"I have changed no good thing I had before, but what I then in appearance had I labour to have it in truth now. I did ever believe the articles of the creed, and now believe to be saved by the blood of Jesus Christ, and no other way; that true faith must bring forth the fruits of repentance and good works, else that faith is but dead and counterfeit. This change upon me, neither I, nor any creature in the world made, but the Lord Himself within me; for I strove against it all I could, till He let me know that it was Himself dealing with me, and I now perceive He had a work in me from the beginning, though I then knew it not. I had still a love to the truth, and earnest desire to know God, and studied according to my knowledge to do what might please Him, and durst not follow, but made some conscience to shun what I judged wrong. This now I know was the beginning of the Lord's work with me: my love to His service, and that desire I had to be saved, which made me piece and pierce to search out the grounds of that religion I professed. And when other means failed gave myself to reading of books, choosing rather to be under that challenge of curiosity (for so it was accounted), than to be careless of my own salvation. Yea, it became my pleasure above all things in the earth to know what might further me to heaven, so as I could have been satisfied, if the Lord had thought fit, to have renounced all the honour and pleasure of this world, for time and occasion, to use those means which might help me to heaven. But when I got understanding of the grounds of that religion I professed, and my teachers accounted sufficient, I could find no true comfort there, nor how any could have it thereby either in life or death, since all my life I might not seek after assurance of being saved, for that was called the Protestant's presumption, and at my death nothing but purgatory, a fire as hot as hell, and as great torments there, as they made me believe I must go to, but did not know how to get out again; yea, how to escape hell itself, since I behoved to come so near to it.

I wondered, and yet wonder, how any that looks for purgatory at their death can either have true peace or any comfort in the world. I am sure they must either take it for a fiction, as it is, or else forget themselves when they are cheerful. Yet, for all this, I continued in obedience of their injunctions, but would gladly have had a reason for what I did, and a warrant that God would be pleased therewith. But could find nothing but man's word for all; and was told by such as gave themselves for teachers that either I must be content to believe as the kirk believed, or else I would get no other satisfaction.

I thought upon this from time to time, and at last saw that this was no sure ground to lean upon, except I would content myself with this; that the clergy knew, albeit I knew not; that they saw, albeit I was blind; that they knew the gate to heaven, though I was not sure whether I was going to heaven or purgatory. But this blind obedience might well please them, it could never give me content, except they could show that my obedience to the Pope and his clergy should be as acceptable to the Lord, as if it were to Christ and His apostles, and would not be quarrelled at the day of judgment.

These questions arising, then, in my mind, with the slight satisfaction I got, I must confess, put me to many thoughts of heart; yet still I kept from Protestant books, or conference with any such, especially the ministers, as long as I could. But when I saw no outgate, I was forced to lay aside all my beads and books, and to go to God Himself, for Christ's sake, to teach me how to do His will; but more and more doubts arose about sundry points of my religion, though I would never let the truth have place so long as I could hold it out (the Lord forgive me, for I did it ignorantly); yet, notwithstanding, He was pleased to bear in light, and His truth upon me, as I was forced to acknowledge the same, and leave these errors. I cannot tell all, nor the order of this, how they fell in my mind; but, first, I resolved to believe neither priest nor minister, except so far as I understood their warrant from the word of God, for I knew there was no sure ground to rest on, and if anything pleased the Lord it would be obedience to His own direction, and might well quarrel men's doctrine, but could never quarrel His own word. I resolved then to read the Rhemish New Testament and the Protestant Old Testament, for I knew well the Lord would never be angry to read His own word, since I knew it pertained to my soul, as well as other folks, and I found it the sweetest and pleasantest book that ever I read in my life. I loved their cause the worse who held me so long from reading it, and a bad token of them that loved not the Scriptures, for if they loved them they could not have spoken of them as they did, saying, they are not perfect, they are not clear nor plain, but obscure and ambiguous, yea dangerous to be read, for breeding errors in such as read the same, which cannot but scare all that believe them from the Lord's word.

Sure this is an injury to Christ and His apostles to speak so of their writings, as they could not be content that men should speak so of theirs. Thus I perceived it to be false their alleging the Pope and Roman kirk could not err, and how proud a word this was for any sinful flesh. Sure the apostle Peter was as good as any such, and yet erred, and might have erred further if God had not preserved him. And in reading the Rhemish New Testament I found a warrant that young children might read the Scriptures with profit, and that it serves to instruct and make men perfect in what concerns salvation.

I fell another day upon the first epistle of John, where I found no necessity was of our confession of sins to the priest, but of confession thereof to God, who is faithful to cleanse us from all sin, and that no advocate there is but Christ. And, again, if any say they have no sin they lie, and the truth is not in them, which I thought a sore word against them who say they cannot fulfil the law only, but do more than God commands by works of supererogation.

As for that distinction of mortal and venial sins it could not satisfy, when Christ shews that they who say thou fool are guilty of hell fire. Although some sins be greater than others, yet the least brings us under the curse if God deal in the way of justice with us.

I fell out of conceit with their legends and life of their saints when I considered some abominable lies I found in them, as that of St. Katharine of Sienna, who they allege laid her mouth to Christ's side and drunk her sacrament, and that He interchanged hearts with her, and came down from heaven, and brought His mother, with St. Peter and St. Paul, with Him, and wedded her with a ring. I was made to disrelish their form of prayers, and repeating over and over again the same words until their beads be ended. I perceived all their devotion they taught stood in words and ceremonies which God cares not for. However, I disliked many things, and was assured they were wrong, yet I never renounced them till I found myself mistaken in the matter of the Sacrament, and found, in reading the epistle to the Hebrews, there is no necessity to offer daily Hosties for the sins of the people.

For this Christ did once, in offering up Himself, who continues for ever, and hath an everlasting priesthood, whereby He is able to save for ever them that go unto God by Him. And, again, that Christ was gone into heaven to appear before God, not that He must offer up Himself any more, for then must He have often suffered from the beginning of the world; but now once He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. Thus, I perceive, if the Scripture be true, no man can offer Christ but Himself; nor can there be a priest after Him now, since He ever lives Himself to make intercession for us; nor can Christ be offered oftener than once, neither is any need of this, since by

one offering He hath taken away the sins of His people ; yea, this is as impossible as that He should suffer oftener than once.

Then, I thought, if Christ be not offered in His bodily substance in the mass, there can be no transubstantiation in it. My teachers herein called me curious, but gave me no good answer. I wondered also at that place (1 Cor. x.) where it is said that in the wilderness they did eat the same spiritual meat, and drunk the same spiritual drink, for they drunk of that spiritual rock which followed them, and that rock was Christ.

Since they made me believe that Christ could not be in a spiritual way by faith eaten or drunk, as the Protestants teach, but His very flesh and blood taken in at the mouth substantially, I thought how can the rock be called Christ, since it literally could not be in the sense of the Romish church, since He was not yet incarnate. If it be a figure, then the Protestants must have the better in the matter of the Sacrament, since, as the rock is called Christ, so is the bread called His body. These doubts about the Sacrament so affected me, as I could not but choose, and send for a minister (let any judge if it was not then time) with whom I reasoned thereanent. He answered my doubts, and directed me to prayer, herein shewing I could not get solid rest till the Lord made His word lively on my soul, which I found afterwards made good, the Lord making the Scripture efficacious, lively, and clear in the points I doubted of, and gave both such assurance of His love, and of the true religion, that all the earth could not have bred me such joy and solid peace beyond anything I can utter.

I have now got the assurance in some measure which I was seeking. I have found the true ground to rest upon, and God's own truth made lively. I am now free from the fear of purgatory ; I scorn that fiction now with joy, and am assured the Lord is righteous, who will not exact twice payment of one debt, Christ's passion, and His people's torment in a fire as hot as hell. The Lord, who hath promised a sufficient cautioner for us that we might escape torment, cannot come short herein. The Lord help such who live in fear of this wicked fiction. If the Pope and his clergy, for the love they have for money, keep the world in such fearful blindness, they have their Judge to answer unto. I praise the Lord, who has delivered me out of these errors ; I renounce them, and have found too great mercy in the knowledge of the truth to make me exchange again. O that all knew the difference as well as I have felt."

THE KING'S PROTESTANT DECLARATION.—The opposition to the change on this Declaration was ominously small when the matter was put to the vote in the House of Lords. 96 Peers voted for the proposed change, and only 6 against the Bill. In the minority, Lord Kinnaid honourably distinguished himself. Lord Halifax who also voted in the minority, did so on extreme Ritualistic grounds.

Seasamb nan Eaglaisean.

MUN do ghabh an t-Aonadh aite an uraigh thug sinn an aire ma's math ar cuimhne do bhuidhinn anns an Eaglais Shaoir a bha uair-eigin ag aideachadh a bhi do'n aon-bheachd ruinn fein mu sheasamh na h-Eaglais. Nuair a dhiult sinne dol air falbh o'n t-seasamh sin leud-roinneig bha iad a' cur 'nar n-aghaidh agus ag radh nach b'e sin an t-am air son fianuis air leth a thogail ach gu'm bu choir dhuinn tamh a dheanamh gus an tigeadh a' chuis gu aonadh ri buidhinn eile agus gus am biodh na ceisdean a thathas a' cur ri luchd-dreuchd air an atharrachadh. Aig an am a thug sinn an aire do'n bhuidhinn sin 'se gle bheag a bha ri chluinntinn 'nam measg mu sheasamh a dheanamh 'nuair a thigeadh an t-Aonadh. Tha sinn taingeil a nis 'nuair a thainig an t-Aonadh gu'n do sheas moran dhiubh na aghaidh agus gun do dhiult iad dol a stigh leis. Dhearbhadh iad mar sin gun robh iad a' ciallachadh an ni a bha iad a' cumail a mach roimhe gu'm b'e sin an t-am air son seasamh air leth o'n mhor-chuid a bha air ti cullsleamhnachadh buan a dheanamh. Ach bha feadhainn 'nam measg a chaidh a stigh leis an Aonadh agus mar sin a dh'ith suas an cainnt fein. Aona chuid dh' atharraich iad an inntinn—ni nach aidich iad—air neo bha iad ris a cheilg nuair a bha iad a' bacadh an t-sluaigh o sheasamh a ghabhail comhla ruinne. Cha'n iarramaid a bhi ri uail os ceann nan daoine so—saighdearan toll na luatha mar a bha am focal ag radh a dheanadh cogadh an taobh a stigh do'n Eaglais: b'fhearr a thigeadh dhuinn a bhi ri bron agus gun a bhi ard-inntinneach ach fo eagal. Tha so ri fhaicinn annta—an ti a shaoileas e fein a bhi 'na sheasamh thugadh e an aire nach tuit e—cha'n ann an duine a shiubhlas a tha e a cheuman fhein a stiuradh. 'Se spiorad Edoim a ni uail ann an laithibh truagh Ierusalem. Ach ann an Israel o shean bha amannan nuair a dhearbhadh an Tighearn muinntir a thairg iad fein air son cogaidh—abair ann an la Ghideoin agus nuair a bha Israel a dol gu cogadh bha a chead aig an neach a bha gealtach agus lag-chridheach tilleadh gu' thigh fein air eagal gu'm biodh lamhan a bhraithrean air an lagachadh le' ghealtachd-san. Ann an solus nan nithe sin bu choir dhuinn gun bhi gearan air an dearbhadh a chuireadh ann an eud cuid agus aig a cheart am gun a bhi buileach riarachta daoine a bhi 'gabhail seasaimh agus an cridhe air a roinn oir tha fear na h-inntinn dubailte neo-sheasmhach 'na uile shlighean. Ged a thug na mairt o thir nam Philisteach air ais airc Dhe gu fearann Israeil bha iad a geumnaich an deigh an cuid laogh; bha an cridhe fathast ann an tir nam Philisteach—se na mairt Philisteach a bh' annta. Is soluimte an earail a tha anns na briathraibh—cuimhnichibh bean Loit. Tha e ri chreidsinn nam biodh na mairt a thug air ais an airc air am fagail dhoibh fein nach fhagadh iad tir an duthchais.

Roimh am an Dealachaidh 'nuair a bha a' Phatronachd ann an Eaglais na h-Alba rinn an Eaglais lagh anns a bhliadhna 1834 a

thug saorsainn mhor do mhuinntir a bha an t-uachdaran a feuchainn ri ministear a chur thairis orra an aghaidh an toile. 'Se an Reachd *Veto* a theirtheadh ris an lagh so. Thainig na cuirtean aimsireil gu co-dhunadh gu'n deachaidh an Eaglais seachad air a cumhachd 'nuair a ghabh i an ceum so agus mar sin nach robh brigh sam bith anns an Reachd a bh' ann. Bha na Cuibheasaich no mar is fearr a thuigear na *Moderates* an aghaidh an reachd so ach 'nuair a fhuair iad an doigh fein an deigh an Dealachaidh cha do tharruing iad air ais e. Ciod e a bha iad a' ciallachadh leis a cheum so? Bha iad 'ga mheas a bhi 'na litir mhairbh seach gur e sin an inntinn dhe'n robh na cuirtean lagha air dha a bhi a reir am barail-san gun a bhi co-chuimte ris na cumhachan air an robh an Eaglais air a steidheachadh. Cha b' fhiach leo fiu adhlacadh urramach a thoirt dha. Leis a sin bha iad ionnan agus ag aicheadh gur e buidheann fein-riaghlaidh a tha anns an Eaglais aig am bheil comas laghanna a dheanamh a dh'fheumas a buill iad fein umhlachadh dhoibh. Cha b' ionnan is sin beachd Eaglais Shaor na h-Alba. Cha b'e sin beachd nam fiughalach a chuir an aghaidh an Aonaidh o chionn deich bliadhna fichead air ais agus cha b'e sin am beachd air an do sheas sinne mar Eaglais 'nuair a dhiult sinn luidhe fo'n Achd-mhineachaidh ann an 1893. 'Se an inntinn dhe'n robh Eaglais Shaor na h-Alba riamh fhads' a chi sinn o am an Ath-leasachaidh gu bheil a leithid do ughdarras aice os cionn na tha do bhuill aice agus gu bheil e air iarraidh orra a bhi umhal do na h-uile lagh agus reachd a rinn i. O nach b' urrainn sinne a bhi umhal do chuirtean Eaglais a bha ann an rathad eucorach a fuasgladh a luchd-dreuchd o na mionnan fo'n tainig iad cha robh an caochladh againn ri dheanamh ach seasamh air leth.

'Se am beachd a's seirceile a's urrainn duinn a bhi againn do'n mhuinntir a bha riamh ag aideachadh a bhi an aghaidh an atharrachaidh a rinneadh aig an am sin gu'n do dh'fhuirich iad a *stigh* mar a theirear air comhairle luchd-lagha. 'Se so ni agus ma's math ar cuimhne bha cuid dhiubh ga aicheadh aig an am agus cha robh iad idir ag aideachadh mar bhuidhinn gun do chuir iad an comhairle ri luchd lagha. Ach mas e agus gur ann air comhairle luchd-lagha a ghabh iad an ceum a ghabh iad saoilidh sinn gu'n do ghabh iad an aon bheachd do chumbachd na h-Eaglais agus a ghabh muinntir na h-Eaglais Steidhichte an deigh an Dealachaidh 'nuair nach do bhean iad ris an Achd *Veto*. Air dhoibh a bhi creidsinn gu'n deachaidh an Eaglais seachad air a coir an lathair na Morachd cho-dhuin iad gu'n deachaidh seachad air a cumhachd am measg dhaoine agus mar sin nach b'fhiach an t-Achd Mineachaidh am paipear air an robh e sgriobhta. Mur b'e 's gum bheilear air iarraidh air luchd-dreuchd a bhi umhal do chuirtean na h-Eaglais bhiodh rud-eigin do bhonn aca air son a bheachd so ach cha'n fhaic sinn idir agus cuisean mar a tha iad gun robh bonn air an seasadh iad. Bha an Reachd Bacaidh (Barrier Act) air a dheanamh 'na lagh ann an Eaglais na h-Alba o chionn corr is da cheud bliadhna air ais a chum agus

nach biodh an Eaglais uile air a cur fo lagh le aon Ard-sheanadh a mhain. Gach uile bhliadhna cha robh ach an treas cuid do na buill cleire aig an Ard-Sheanadh agus nam biodh a h-uile co-dhunadh gus an tigeadh an t-Ard-Sheanadh ceangailte air an Eaglais uile dh'fheadadh an triamh cuid dhe na buill cleire—seadh agus an cuigeamh cuid—an Eaglais uile a cheangal. A chum mar sin gum biodh inntinn na h-Eaglais uile air chul gach reachd a bhiodh ceangailte air an luchd-dreuchd shuidhich an t-Achd Bacadh gum feumadh e aonta da Ard-Sheanadh agus a chuid mhoir do na cleirean a chosnadh. Rud sim bith a gheibheadh so s'e reachd Eaglais a bhiodh ann ceangailte air an Eaglais uile.

Nuair a thathas a deanamh reachd uir mar so tha e gu tric a tachairt nach eil an luchd-dreuchd uile a dh' aon inntinn. An fheadhainn a tha 'na aghaidh feudaidh iad aon chuid *dissent* no *protest* a chur a stigh—'se sin ged a tha iad 'na aghaidh ma's urrainn iad co-oibreachadh leis a bhuidhinn a rinn an reachd ur feudaidh iad air son an uiread sin do fhianuis *dissent* a dheanamh no a leigeil ris gur ann an aghaidh an inntinn a rinneadh an ni-ach ma 'se agus nach urrainn iad co-oibreachadh leis an rud ur 'se *protest* a thogas iad no fianuis-dhionaidh a dh' innseadh nach urrainn iad a bhi umhal do na cuirtean anns an ni a th' ann. Ma 'se agus gum faigh iad cothrom air fianuis-dhionaidh mar so a dheanamh agus fhaotainn sgriobhta air leabhraichean na-Eaglais tha iad air an dion agus tha bacadh air a chur ann an rathad an reachd uir. Ach ma 'se agus nach fhaigh iad so cha'n urrainn iad ni's fhaide a bhi umhal do chuirtean na h-Eaglais. Cha chuimhne leinn a leithid so a dh' fhianuis-dhionaidh a bhi air a ceadachadh an deigh do Eaglais reachd a dheanamh fo'n Achd-Bhacadh.

O chionn fichead bliadhna air ais 'nuair a bha Dr. Ceannadaidh a cur an aghaidh Disteidheachadh na h-Eaglais Steidhte chuir e mach leabhnan a mhineachadh na cuise do mhuinntir na Gaidhealtachd; anns an Leabhnan sin rinn e soilleir an inntinn dhe'n robh e feid mu bhuaidh an Achd-Bhacadh so. 'S ann mar so a tha e 'cur na cuise:—"Nam biodh Ard-Sheanadh 1880 air an ni air an d' aontaich a chuid bu mho 'chur a nuas tre 'n 'Bharrier Act' gus na cleirean, cha robh an Eaglais Shaor ann a nis. Agus ciod e a choir a tha aig na *Leaders* a bhi filleadh na h-Eaglais ann an nithe nach dana leo bhi air an ceangal riu? Nam biodh iad air an neart so a chur leis an ni ud ann an 1880, cha b' urrainn mise, mar aon, a bhi nis mo an co-cheangal ri Eaglais a dheanadh le sud a suidheachadh eadardhealaichte a threigsinn . . . agus bhiodh an co-cheangal air a bhriseadh a mhain le mise dh' fhanuinn dileas do'n Eaglais Shaoir." Nise 'se so an inntinn dhe'n robh an taobh beag anns an Eaglais Shaoir gu ruige 1892 agus 'sann air bonn a bheachd so a ghabh sinn an seasamh a ghabh sinn.

'Sann air a bhonn eile a tha an Eaglais Shaor a tha ann an diugh a tagradh coir a bhi aca air ainm agus aite na h-Eaglais Shaoir—se sin gun robh iad a cumail a mach gur e litir mharbh a bha

anns an Achd-Mhineachaidh air dha a bhi seachad air coir na h-Eaglais a dheanamh 'na lagh. Ach aig a cheart am tha iad a taisbeanadh an inntinn a thaobh an ni gu math soilleir cho luath agus a gheibh iad saoras na cuirtean lagha gu bheil iad a runachadh na h-Achdan Claonaidh a tharruing air ais agus air son na bliadhna so fein tharruing iad air ais an t-Achd Mineachaidh. Tha sinn a creidsinn gun do ghabh iad ceum cli o chionn naoi bliadhna air ais agus tha an cosan a nis an sas ann an rathad no dha. Nan robh iad air seasamh gu duineil an uair sin bha an deadh chothrom aca agus a reir coltais bhiodh a Ghaidhealtachd co dhiubh ann an tomhas mor slan gus an la an diugh. Ma's e am fear a dh'fheuch ri brogan Dr. Ceannadaidh a lionadh is coireach air son a cheum a chaidh ghabhail an uair sin is mor a choire a th' ann ri chur as a leth. Nise 'nuair a shineas iad air na h-Achdan Claonaidh a tharruing air ais cha bhi e furasda sin a reiteachadh ri am barail gur e litir mharbh a bh' ann an Achd 1892. 'Sann an 1892 a dh' atharraich iad an inntinn agus 'se an ceum cli a ghabh iad an uair sin a's mo a sheasas 'nan aghaidh an diugh. Ach thigeadh dhuinn a bhi cuimhneachadh air na briathran gl'ce aig Dr. *Owen* mar a's fhaisge a tha da bhuidhinn d'a cheile ann an aidmheil agus an seasamh gu math tric gur h-ann a's deine a tha iad an aghaidh a cheile—ni nach eil idir ag eiridh o ghradh agus eud air son na firinn ach o'n truailidheachd a tha fathast annta. Ma's math ar cuimhne 's ann mar sin a labhair e.

J. M.

Notes and Comments.

The Flood of Sunshine.—Not since the year 1887 do we remember such a spell of summer weather as we have had this year. God is making, in an eminent manner, His sun to rise upon the evil and upon the good. In the United States the prevailing heat has become an affliction. Many dwellers in crowded cities have died by sunstroke, and the wheat and corn crops have suffered severely. But in our temperate clime the bounteous sunshine has proved almost an unmixed blessing. In the year of the Disruption when so many unhoused worshippers were assembled in the open air, we believe there was a remarkable prevalence of sunny weather. There is no such national self-sacrifice for behoof of Christ's kingdom to coincide with God's present dispensation of sunshine. If deep forgetfulness of the works of the Lord in the past, and persistent declension after strange gods could procure cloudless skies and fair weather, then the warmth and brightness of the year 1901 are quite explicable. But if floods and devastations are rather the due reward of these doings, then the present bounty of sunny skies and smiling landscapes must be attributed to the majestic sovereignty of Him who is exalted alike over the wickedness of the wicked and the righteousness of the upright.

The Glasgow Exhibition.—This marvel of the twentieth century is now at the mid stage of its six months' existence. The general features of it are a mighty assortment of Art and Manufactures gathered in a long building surmounted by a gilded dome, and an assemblage of brass bands, and diversions planted here and there in the spacious grounds outside. There is also a Picture Gallery which, if it perish not before, shall assuredly perish in the day that the "earth and the works that are therein shall be burnt up." And richly will it deserve its fate. The ground floor of it is populated with the ugliest assortment of lewd statuary which is to be seen outside Paris or Sodom. When Lord Provost Chisholm was an inferior magistrate he was honourably distinguished by his zeal for civic purity. We wonder what he means by being a party to the present exhibition of the abominations of the heathen. In his days, history will record, that Glasgow took several visible steps downwards into the gulf of Sabbath breaking and public evil, and this should be a heavy thought for a man of understanding.

But if the good of this Exhibition could be separated from the evil, we doubt not it would be a lawful thing for observant people to explore it and see the useful and ingenious works of man.

It is notable to mark the pre-eminence of Britain and her colonies in the matter of useful, solid inventions. Reaping machines, locomotives, steamships, &c.—these come from Canada or Scotland; but if it be trinkets or trivialities, the Japs or the Parisians excel in that department. It is also remarkable to compare the appearance of the foreigners who stand behind the stalls, with the aspect of many of our well-to-do middle class countrymen. There is a stamp of well-being and refinement visible upon the latter, which is lacking to the Poles and the Circassians, and other foreigners. Shall we therefore boast ourselves and indulge in conceited comparisons, because God has made us an imperial people, the head and not the tail of the nations? By no means.

Our forbodings are awakened by the reflection that we owe all our national pre-eminence to the presence and power of the Word of God in our midst. And it is this Word which we are madly undermining and casting off. The centuries of deprivation of the common and special influences of God's Spirit which the Jews, by their rejection of Christ entailed on themselves, have told with marked effect upon the faces and physical aspect of that people. We doubt not that David and the men of Israel's golden age bore a stamp of nobility which has wholly faded from the faces of the alien outcast race that now haunts the cities of the dominant Gentile nations. Such a visible degradation will assuredly overtake all peoples and races who, having the Gospel offered to them, spurn that which has the "promise of the life that now is and that which is to come."