

THE

Free Presbyterian Magazine

And MONTHLY RECORD.

VOL. VI.

NOVEMBER, 1901.

No. 7.

A Notable Autobiography.*

THE Religious Tract Society recently re-published in neat form a little work that wielded a powerful influence in its day, and that may still be read with much profit. It is *The Force of Truth*, the autobiography of the Rev. Thomas Scott, the well-known commentator. The book cannot be said to equal for literary genius or profound experience such great autobiographies as Augustine's Confessions and Bunyan's Grace Abounding, but it fills a valuable niche of its own, in fact a peculiar place which they do not fill. Augustine, Bunyan, and Fraser of Brea, describe remarkable conversions that took place in the experience of the writers before they entered upon the ministry of the gospel. Thomas Scott tells in impressive language the story of his conversion, an event which transpired after he assumed the sacred office. He was a minister too whose genuine creed at his ordination was entirely opposed to that which he solemnly subscribed before God and men. It may be concluded, therefore, that the book is replete with interest and instruction. There is certainly evidence to show that God has blessed it for spiritual good in the past. Witness the recorded experience of the Rev. Dr. Stewart of Moulin, Perthshire, and the Rev. Alexander Gunn, sen., Watten, Caithness, "the great Mr. Gunn," as he was called. Dr. Stewart, who was converted when minister of Moulin, read *The Force of Truth* with profit during the progress of his conversion; while Mr. Gunn, though a converted minister, was stimulated by it to seek a new baptism of the Spirit which he obtained. It may be said, however, that there was never more need for the study of *The Force of Truth* than at the present day, when many assume the office of the ministry, who evince no spiritual qualification for it, nor even any real faith in the creed they profess.

The Rev. Thomas Scott was a minister of the Church of England. He was born at Braytoft in Lincolnshire, in 1747, was ordained in 1772, held curacies at Stoke, Ravenstone, and Weston Underwood in Buckinghamshire, and succeeded the Rev. John Newton at Olney in 1781. He removed to London in 1785,

* *The Force of Truth*.—An Authentic Narrative. By the Rev. Thomas Scott, late Rector of Aston Sandford, Bucks. London: The Religious Tract Society, 56 Paternoster Row, 1s.

having accepted the chaplainship of the Lock Hospital. When there he held lectureships in Bread Street and Lothbury. In 1801 he accepted the living of Aston Sandford, where he died on the 16th April, 1821. Mr. Scott entered the ministry, as we have already said, in an unconverted state, and imbued with the most pernicious views, being a disbeliever in the doctrine of the Trinity and of the divinity of Christ, in one word a Socinian or Unitarian. The gradual process of spiritual enlightenment by which he became a new man in heart, life, and doctrine took place between the years 1774 and 1777. After this period he showed himself an able and laborious minister of the New Testament. His ministrations were blessed to the conversion of sinners and the edification of God's people. He possessed a facile pen, and wrote an interesting account of his conversion in *The Force of Truth* presently under notice. He also published many sermons and essays on theological subjects. His chief work, however, was his Commentary on the Bible, a sound scholarly production, not much sought after now, but a work that has had the favourable opinion of such competent judges as Dr. Love, and C. H. Spurgeon. Mr. Scott was a clear able writer, and his essays and discourses on points of controversy are exceedingly well-reasoned and highly fitted to remove the difficulties of anxious enquirers, and to answer the objections of gainsayers. His life was written by his son, the Rev. John Scott, A.M., and published in 1824.

The Force of Truth is divided into three parts. The first gives "an account of the state of the author's mind and conscience in the early part of his life;" the second supplies a history of the change which took place in his life and sentiments; and the third contains "observations on the preceding narrative."

In part first Mr. Scott relates that he became subject to religious impressions about his sixteenth year. These, however, were of a temporary character; they came and went according to circumstances for a period of nine years. Sometimes his fears of hell were intolerable, and his cries for mercy intense and persevering; at other times he lived "without prayer of any sort." At length he found a very effectual opiate to his conscience which quieted his convictions and allowed him to sleep securely in his sins. "I met," he says, "with a Socinian (Unitarian) comment on the Scriptures, and greedily drank the poison, because it quieted my fears and flattered my abominable pride. . . . In reading this exposition sin seemed to lose its native ugliness, and to appear a very small and tolerable evil; man's imperfect obedience seemed to shine with an excellency almost divine; and God appeared so entirely and necessarily merciful that He could not make any of His creatures miserable without contradicting His natural propensity. These things influenced my mind so powerfully, that I was enabled to consider myself, notwithstanding a few little blemishes, as upon the whole a very worthy being. At the same time, the mysteries of the gospel being explained away, or brought

down to the level of man's comprehension, by such proud and corrupt, though specious reasonings; by acceding to these sentiments I was in my own opinion, in point of understanding and discernment, exalted to a superiority above the generality of mankind; and I pleased myself in looking down with contempt upon such as were weak enough to believe the orthodox doctrines. Thus, I generally soothed my conscience, and if at any time I was uneasy at the apprehension that I did not thoroughly deserve eternal happiness and was not entirely fit for heaven, the same book afforded me a soft pillow on which to lull myself to sleep; it argued, and I then thought proved, that there were no eternal torments; and it insinuated that there were no torments except for notorious sinners, and that such as should just fall short of heaven would sink into their original nothing. With this welcome scheme I silenced all my fears." Mr. Scott then proceeds to tell that "in this awful state of mind" he prepared to take office in the Church. "As far as I understood such controversies, I was nearly a Socinian and Pelagian, and wholly an Arminian; yet to my shame be it spoken, I sought to obtain admission into the ministry, in a Church whose doctrines are diametrically opposed to all three; without once concerning myself about those barriers which the wisdom of our forefathers has placed around her, purposely to prevent the intrusion of such dangerous heretics as I then was." As he also informs us, he lived in known sin and utterly neglected prayer; he did not know or believe there was a Holy Ghost; and yet he blasphemously declared at his ordination that he was inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost to take the office of the ministry upon him. "I never think," he says, "of this daring wickedness without being filled with amazement that I am out of hell." It appears that his chief motive for entering the ministry was to gain some distinction in the literary world. After a time, however, he began to be gradually shaken as to the soundness of his theological system; and his conscience accused him of base hypocrisy in his religious devotions. He was again filled "with anxious fears and terrifying alarms;" and began to conclude that if eternal torments were reserved for any sinners he certainly should be one of the number. This state of mind led him to modify his views to some extent, though in general they continued the same. He derided the evangelical party, commonly called Methodists, and publicly endeavoured to prove their doctrines "to be dishonourable to God and destructive to morality." Thus was Thomas Scott previous to his conversion.

In part second he describes at some length the way by which the Lord led him out of the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of His dear Son. Mr. Scott was at this time curate of Ravenstone and Weston Underwood, near Olney, where the eminent John Newton was pastor. He, of course, despised Mr. Newton and the doctrines which he preached, but an

incident occurred through which he was compelled to acknowledge that whatever contempt he might have for Mr. Newton's doctrines, his neighbour's ministerial character was superior to his own. The incident was to the following effect. In January 1774, two of Mr. Scott's parishioners, a man and his wife, were lying at the point of death. He had heard of the circumstance, but not being specially sent for, he took no notice of it. At last one evening he learnt that the woman was dead, the man was dying, and that Mr. Newton had several times visited them. His conscience smote him for his negligence, and he also concluded that Mr. Newton had more love and zeal for souls than he had when he walked so far to visit persons who, so far as he was concerned, might have been left to perish in their sins. At this point he began to consider his former ways, and to seek the Lord in earnest. In May, 1775, he got personally acquainted with Mr. Newton, and a correspondence began that was highly useful to Mr. Scott, and that issued eventually in the warmest personal friendship between the correspondents.

Our author also tells us a series of books, chiefly by divines of the Church of England, that were made helpful to him. Some of these writers were Bishop Burnet, Soame Jennings, Richard Hooker, Bishop Beveridge, Henry Venn, James Hervey, and Bishop Hall. To these may be added the eminent Dutch divine, Hermann Witsius. His book on the "Economy of the Covenants," proved of great benefit. Mr. Scott also quotes, as the occasion arises, several passages of the Word itself that were a light to his path and a lamp to his feet. "Thus, I trust," he says, "the old building which I had purposed to repair was pulled down to the ground, and the foundation of the new building of God laid aright; "Old things passed away; behold all things were become new;" "What things were gain to me, those I had counted loss for Christ." My boasted reason I have discovered to be a blind guide, until humbled, enlightened, and sanctified by the Spirit of God; my former wisdom foolishness; and that when I thought I knew much, I knew nothing as I ought to know. Since this period, every thing I have experienced, heard, or read, and every thing I observe around me, confirms and establishes me in the assured belief of these truths which I have received; nor do I in general any more doubt whether they be from God, than I doubt whether the sun shines, when I see its light, and am warmed by its refreshing beams. I see the powerful effect of them continually among those to whom I preach; I experience the power of them daily in my own soul; and while, by meditating in and glorying in the Cross of Christ, I find the world crucified unto me, and I unto the world, by preaching Jesus Christ and Him crucified,—I see notoriously immoral persons taught by the saving grace of God "to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world," being examples to such as before they were a scandal to."

The third part of the book consists in a series of observations on the narrative. Mr. Scott was anxious to make it as effective as possible with those who might cherish the same pernicious views as he formerly held, and so he indicates in a series of observations how unlikely a person he was to come to the position he now occupied, how his whole character and circumstances were opposed to the change, how gradually, and with serious consideration of every step, he came to receive the whole truth as it is in Jesus; how little after all he was indebted to human teaching; and finally, the great influence which the study of the Scriptures and prayer to God had in producing so complete a change in his life and sentiments. The latter part of his book is a powerful argument for the truth and power of Christianity. Indeed, the same thing may be affirmed of the whole narrative.

There are many things that may be learned from *The Force of Truth*. It may be seen that an unconverted man can quite easily enter the holy office of the ministry; that he may hold the most erroneous and soul destroying doctrines; and, what is even worse, that he may also boldly profess his belief in a sound creed, and come under solemn vows before God and man to maintain the same. History proves that Thomas Scott's case is not an isolated one, and it is clear from the kind of ministry that prevails at the present day that there are many unconverted and heretical Thomas Scotts occupying the pulpits of the professing Church. There is, however, something more to be learned from the striking narrative, and it is this, that we are not to limit the grace and power of the Holy One of Israel. He who translated Thomas Scott from darkness to light, who changed the unbelieving Unitarian into a devoted Calvinist, the dangerous heretic into a lover of the whole counsel of God, is the same yesterday and to-day and forever, and is as able now to accomplish the same marvellous work in the hearts and lives of men as in a former age. May He do so to the praise of His glorious grace!

Elijah on Mount Carmel.

A SERMON BY THE LATE REV. JOHN KENNEDY, D.D., DINGWALL,
PREACHED AT INVERNESS, 30TH JANUARY, 1853.

I KINGS xviii.

THE inspired story of Elijah's life and labours may be divided into two parts—the first terminating and having its climax in the scene before us in this chapter, and the second closing and culminating in his translation. And there is a striking parallelism between these two portions of his biography. The first step of his ministry is taken in a stern threatening of coming judgment because of Israel's sins, followed by his retirement to Cherith—

the second begins with the infliction of judgment on the prophets of Baal, followed by his flight to Beersheba. Out of his retirement at Cherith he comes to the widow of Zarephath, while out of his hiding-place at Beersheba he comes to find and anoint Elisha. As the next event in both portions of his life, we have a meeting with ungodly Ahab. He next appears in both, wielding the thunders of divine judgment, in the one period confronting the priests of Baal, and in the other inflicting judgment on the messengers of Ahaziah. And his triumph on Mount Carmel, at the close of the first portion of his biography, has its corresponding and overtowering climax in his translation to heaven.

Of all the servants of God, there is none whose *history* is more *strange*, and whose *character* is more *unearthly*. He is admitted on the stage of history quite prepared for his work, and enters at once into service, just as if he had dropped down into his place from heaven. No sooner is he introduced than his stern voice is heard threatening direful judgments. We are startled by the suddenness of his appearance. We know indeed that he is a man—for he is called “Elijah the Tishbite.” We know, too, that he had a home on earth before he appeared as the prophet of the Lord, for he is said to be “of the inhabitants of Gilead.” But this is all the private history of the man Elijah. We know, too, that he was a sinner saved by grace. But with these exceptions, and the instances of his bodily infirmities recorded, the man is shrouded by the mantle of the prophet, and the sinner is hid beneath the heavenliness of the saint.

How strange, too, are the incidents of his life! Any one of them would suffice to signalise a biography. Some of them are altogether peculiar, and the part which he acted on Mount Carmel seems to be without a parallel. And how strange was the close of his life on earth! If he seemed to have been dropped down from heaven when he first appeared on earth as a prophet, he was actually raised up, without having passed through death, when his work on earth was finished. But strange as was his removal, we almost cease to wonder when we connect it with his marvellous life and labours. His life on earth ends consistently when it ends very strangely. Elijah’s translation seems to be the fitting close of such a life as his.

His life-work cannot but remind us of John the Baptist, and his end of Enoch. We cannot refrain from comparing him with both these men of God. Of Enoch we thrice read that he “walked with God;” yea, the singular testimony is recorded that he did so for at least three hundred years on earth. This strange life ended, as did Elijah’s, in a translation to heaven. In such a removal, peculiar heavenliness, in the life of both, finds a signal attestation in their being taken over death to glory. John the Baptist, in his life, ministry, and character, was Elijah the Second; but how different the close of his life on earth from that of him who ascended in chariots of fire to heaven! But

even John's life, with a translation like Elijah's at its close, would not present to us so remarkable a history as Elijah's, though the Baptist's was the more important ministry.

How peculiarly *unearthly* is the *character* of Elijah! Knowing nothing of him, till he is introduced as a prophet, the Lord thereafter keeps him so much with Himself—He allows him to mingle so little with society—that there seems to be no opportunity for the ordinary development of the character of a saint. It is true that God sends him to the home of a widow to dwell there for a season—He allows him to have stated intercourse, during a period of his life, with a fellow-creature; but how strange, how scarcely human, is all that is told us of their fellowship! He finds indeed an opportunity of expressing his love towards one who was journeying with him on the way to heaven, but how altogether unusual is the manner in which his affection is expressed. Divine power seems to be at his command, to perform miracles for her benefit, but how little of the tenderness of human affection appears in all his benefaction. The hand of the prophet seems as if it were unconnected with the heart of a man—it would seem as if it were immediately wielded by the power of God. How little, too, of what is earthly do we find in his intercourse with Elisha. Even to him how seemingly stern is the prophet. Only, as a prophet, does he seem to care to have any intercourse with him. The *man* seems unapproachable even to Elisha, his anointed successor. And in his intercourse with ungodly men how studded with spear-points was the mail in which he was clad. How stern and repulsive the world judged him to be!

But why does Elijah seem so *stern*? Because we know him only as a prophet in degenerate times, and as a prophet peculiarly holy. He lived in days of rampant ungodliness, when provocations countless, and tokens not a few, of divine anger appeared to him. He would not be in sympathy with the mind of God, at such a time, without being sad and stern. His appointed work was to testify against abounding sin, and to be the minister of God in the infliction of terrible judgment. How could a man of God, in such circumstances, be less stern than was Elijah, or less sad? Only one who was disposed to be a trimmer could present a more benign aspect in the days of Ahab in Israel. All tenderness was repelled by the bold iniquity and the rampant idolatry of the time. Ungodly men compelled him to be severe, and then censured him for being so. They assumed an attitude of defiance towards his God, while **trampling** under foot His law. He, in the name and strength of **Jehovah**, **assumes** an attitude of firm and fearless protest against the **views and practices** which, under the shade of court favour, were **now rising** into fashion. He was not, because of this, the "troubler of Israel," though he was charged with being so. He is Israel's best friend, among all her sons, as he is the one outstanding witness on Jehovah's side. He Israel's troubler! No; it is his work to repel the

troubles which Ahab, and his court and his priests, are bringing on the land. He is the great peace-maker of the time, and just because he is so he is described as a troubler. He desires *purity and peace*, while the trimming halters in Israel desired peace in impurity—the stillness of death, which is but quiet in the midst of corruption.

And what is the sternness of Elijah? It is the vehemence of his zeal for the glory of his God, and the fervour of his love to Israel. It is the bright flame of his holy love to God and to Israel that is so repulsive to ungodly worldlings, to lying prophets, and to false worshippers. He appears severe, and is decried as intolerant, because he cannot have any compromise with sin, and will not divide his favour between truth and error. He is uncompromising, because he is so like “the Holy One of Israel.” “But surely,” some will be disposed to say, “his sternness was carried to an extreme when he slew the priests of Baal.” But why should that action of his be so regarded? Does it bear an aspect of relentless cruelty? If to your mind it appears in that light, it is because you know not Elijah’s God. It is His beauty, His glory, to be holy, and He never acts in a way that more becomes Him than when he is “a consuming fire” to the workers of iniquity. God is glorified in a work of judgment. “Yes,” it may be said, “but Elijah was a man, and therefore to him vengeance did not belong. ‘Vengeance is mine, saith the Lord,’ therefore he ought to have withheld himself from slaughter.” But you forget that the prophet was called to the work of vengeance by the Lord of Hosts. In carrying out a purpose of God, it is dutiful to act the part which the Lord assigns to His servants—yea, it is honourable as well as dutiful to do so. He was acting as a minister of God in bringing into view the glory of His holiness. Such a work unbecoming to a prophet! Why, even angels took part in such a work, and are they to be charged on that account with being unloving and stern? Did they not act a part in the awful destruction of Sodom and of the hosts of Assyria? And is work done by angels to be regarded as such, that *men*, called to do so, ought not to take part in it? If there was naturally a lack of tenderness in Elijah’s disposition, all the more fitted was he for the place which he was destined to fill. Such a man, when renewed by the grace of God, was developed into the prophet, whose lot was to be cast in degenerate times, and whose work was to announce the coming of God’s righteous judgments.

The only objection to the character of Elijah on the part of the ungodly is founded on their dislike to the character of God Himself. Utterly repulsive to the world are the holiness and righteousness of Jehovah. It is because of this they form for themselves a deity invested with no attribute but love, that will wink at sin, and will allow them with impunity to walk in the way of their heart. The more His people resemble the true

God, the more will they be repulsive to the ungodly ; and if true godliness is flourishing in a time of growing impiety, whether it be in an individual or in a Church, its aspect must be severe, for it cannot but frown on the ungodliness around it, while those who are careful to walk in the fear of the Lord must have persecution to endure. Just as the frown of God is darkening the firmament of providence over a land that is ripening for judgment, the aspect of a faithful witness for God must be becoming more stern, his attitude more unyielding, his sorrow more profound, and his rebukes more severe.

Elijah was the representative of true godliness in degenerate times—a representative of Bible religion in a time of spiritual barrenness and growing error. He was a witness for the truth when the power of the world was against it. It is as such we must view him on Mount Carmel. And how well fitted did the Lord make him for the part which he had then to act. Undaunted, unyielding, and holy, he finds his proper place, in the scene before us, as the one outstanding witness for God and for His truth, against the abused power of an ungodly king, the idolatrous rites of superstition, and the vacillations of an ignorant people.

Which is true, the religion of the Bible or the religion of the world? was the question to be decided on Mount Carmel. The religion of the world, or the worship of Baal, is the popular religion in Israel. All the power of the king is on its side, and the nobles of Israel take side with the king. The overwhelming majority of the people, attracted by the imposing spectacles of the worship favoured by the court, follow the king and the nobles. So widespread is the degeneracy that Elijah accounts himself alone in witnessing against the prevailing iniquity. Let no one rashly rebuke him for thinking himself alone. True, there were seven thousand in Israel who bowed not their knees to Baal ; but these were known only to the Lord. They should have been known to the Church and to the world as well. Had they been fired with Elijah's zeal they had not been so hidden as they actually were. If Elijah's judgment was a hasty one, he lacked materials for a more favourable one. If he was faulty, it was because he formed any judgment at all, not because it was not more charitable.

He meets Ahab, the king having come at his summons when a sense of judgment had made him a coward. It is in a time of trial the difference between one man and another appears. How the righteous man rises over the billows by which the wicked are overwhelmed ! Look to Ahab, bewildered and afraid, and then look to the prophet, undaunted even in a time of "wrath," issuing his summons to the king to come to confer with him. And the cruel, cringing Ahab comes. Through lips quivering with fear comes out the malignant feeling of his wicked heart in the question—"Art thou he that troubleth Israel?" This charge Elijah regards as a reproach cast upon him as the servant of

Jehovah. For the sake of his God's glorious name he demands a trial to decide whose claims should be respected, those of God or those of Baal—an occasion on which the truth and cause of God might be vindicated in presence of His enemies.

With what boldness he submits the question to a conclusive test! He has no doubt as to his being a witness for God, and as to the worship which he opposed being false. He was no halter, he was no trimmer. The expedient had not, in his mind, swallowed up the true. He knew the truth, he loved it, he was quite ready to die for it. And he knew what the issue of the trial would be. He did not suggest it to Ahab till the Lord had first suggested it to himself. He had acted rashly in making such a proposal to the king, unless he knew that he was acting under divine direction, but knowing this, he could have no fear bearing on the issue of the trial.

With what authority he is invested when, in the name and strength of the Lord of Hosts, he stands before the king! He commands him to gather to Carmel his priests and his people. He acts, in issuing this demand, in the name of his God, and he knows that He can secure the obedience even of Ahab. He speaks as the Lord directs him, and his words tell on the conscience of the king, and as the result of Ahab's cowardice, a royal edict goes forth in terms of the prophet's demands; while Elijah, with unshaken confidence, awaits the issue of the trial, knowing that Jehovah would manifest His glory to the confusion of His enemies.

On an early morning, soon after Elijah's meeting with Ahab, crowds from all parts of the land might be seen journeying to Mount Carmel. They reach it, and form a large assembly on the mountain. Ahab the king is there with a group of his courtiers around him. Four hundred and fifty of "the prophets of Baal" are there, and four hundred of "the prophets of the groves." A crowd of the people of Israel is there. Confronting the host of false prophets, in presence of the king and people, is Elijah, the prophet of the Lord.

How remarkable a scene this is! What a contrast Elijah presents, all alone as he appears to be, to the group of prophets whom the king delights to honour because they feed his pride and his love of ease with lies, appearing in the pomp and pageantry by which royal favourites are usually invested. Rude in his attire, perhaps emaciated and careworn, stern and undaunted, stands Elijah as the solitary witness for Jehovah. Into what relief are thrown the loneliness, the austerity, and the meanness of the man of God by the number, the proud mien, and the glitter of the minions of the king! These are the types of two religions—the one of God, the other of the world.

"And Elijah came unto all the people and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? If the LORD be God, follow Him: but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word." Two feelings strove for utterance in the souls of these

halts in answering the prophet's question—one arising from the action of conscience, and another from the worldliness of their hearts—and they smother both and are dumb. Then he describes to them the trial to which the claims of Jehovah and those of Ahab are to be subjected, “and all the people answered and said, It is well spoken.”

Elijah then addresses the prophets of Baal, and directs them what to do to vindicate the claims of their God. They do as they are bidden, and in presence of assembled Israel the worship of Baal by sacrifice begins. They take a bullock, “and dress it first,” and then begin to invoke the idol to send fire to burn it. “From morning even until noon” they cry “O Baal, hear us.” It required no small measure of faith to enable these men to face the test in presence of all Israel, and to preserve them from abandoning their worship soon after it had begun. But it is far from unusual to find much faith of a certain kind in alliance with much error, and acting as a stimulus in false worship.

“At noon” “Elijah mocked them.” How could he refrain from doing so? He was standing in the light of Jehovah's glory. In his view, therefore, infinitely despicable seemed all competitors for the homage due to Him, as well as the folly of all who turned aside from Him to “the vanities of the heathen.” In mockery, therefore, of the worship and of the worshippers of Baal, his holy zeal was most fitly developed. He but expresses his sense of the absurdity of idol worship. A company of fools are before him, for they have substituted an idol for Jehovah. And their folly is wickedness, and his sense of their folly and his indignation because of their iniquity are becomingly expressed in mockery of their worship and of their god. He stood on an elevation and in a light, through the knowledge and faith of his God, from which he saw in all its absurdity the drivelling folly of idolatry.

By his stinging sarcasm the prophets of Baal are driven desperate. “They leaped upon the altar which was made,” “they cried aloud, and cut themselves after their manner with knives and lancets till the blood gushed out upon them;” but “there was neither voice, nor any to answer, nor any that regarded.” How affecting are these last words as they tell us of the vanity of all false worship, and of the full proof of this, which shall be the issue of a conclusive trial! They gave up their vain service, for their cause was found to be desperate, their worship false, their hope unfounded, their prayers vain, and their god a lie.

The time has now come for the worship of the true God, and there is none but Elijah to take part in it. It is now evening. All day long lasted the worship of Baal. There was no stint of opportunity to his worshippers. Till the close of the hopeless service the crowd looked on and listened to the frantic cries of the idolaters. The long and anxious waiting of all whose god was Baal, ended in utter disappointment. It was then, and not till then, that Elijah came forward to worship and invoke his God.

He is quite confident. "Elijah said unto all the people, Come near unto me. And all the people came near unto him." He then "repaired the altar of the Lord," taking "twelve stones according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob, unto whom the word of the Lord came, saying, Israel shall be thy name." He thus associates Jehovah with Israel, and it is as the covenant God of Israel he proceeds, in presence of the people, to worship him. "He built an altar in the name of the Lord." And in order that there might be no excuse left to the sceptic, "he made a trench about the altar, as great as would contain two measures of seed. And he put the wood in order, and cut the bullock in pieces, and laid him on the wood, and said, Fill four barrels with water, and pour it on the burnt sacrifice and on the wood. And he said, Do it the second time. And they did it the second time. And he said, Do it the third time and they did it the third time. And the water ran round about the altar; and he filled the trench also with water." How careful in all this was he to cut himself off from every resource apart from the power of God! A belt of water around the altar separated it from all earthly fire, and the soaked victim and wood could be burnt only by fire from heaven. This was seen by all the people; and to all it was evident that only as God "answereth by fire" could the sacrifice be consumed.

Not till all this was done, and when "the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice" had come, did "Elijah, the prophet, come near" to worship and to pray to "Jehovah, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel." He appeals to Him as the covenant God of His peculiar people, for His name's sake, in his own behalf as his servant, in order to the confusion of His enemies, and in order to the confirmation of wavering Israel.

In instant response to his appeal "*the fire of the Lord fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench.*" The demonstration was complete. Jehovah, the God of Israel, was the true God, for He alone answered by fire. The people are satisfied, for when they "saw it, they fell on their faces; and they said, The LORD, He is THE GOD; the LORD, He is THE GOD."

The trial scene on Mount Carmel closes with the arrest of the prophets of Baal; and when Elijah had "brought them down to the brook Kishon," he "slew them there." These wicked men died by divine appointment. They deserved to die. An accursed death fitly closed their course; and in connection with it, Elijah acted as the minister of God.

APPLICATION. It is now time to take up and to enforce the lessons of this passage of the word of God.

I. Do not forget that the question decided on Mount Carmel was, who is the true God, or which is the true religion. That is a question which each one of you ought to desire instantly to decide. Israel were constrained to make a choice between the

claims of Jehovah and those of Baal, while Elijah, representing true godliness, and the witness of the true God, on the one side, and the many prophets of Baal, representing false religion and the worshippers of an idol, on the other, were before them. There was a choice very palpably presented to them, and they were very urgently pressed there and then to decide. But not less surely are you called to make your final choice. To them neutrality was impossible, and is just as much so to you. They tried to refrain from a deliberate choice, and they succeeded only in being halters, and if you follow their example you will be just as lame as they.

True, you have not, to aid you in your choice, such a proof as they had of the God of Israel being the true God. But it is not needed, for a much more glorious manifestation of God is before you. If not on Mount Carmel does He actually give to you a palpable proof of His being the God "that answereth by fire," has He not given the highest possible evidence of this on Mount Calvary? Did He not there answer by fire the cry of all His people during Old Testament times, when His wrath descended on the sacrifice for sin provided by Himself—on His own Son, who was His own Lamb, as the substitute of a guilty people? That grand proof of His being the living God is before you in the clear light of the gospel. "Yes," you say, "but I have the *record*, and not the *vision* of that." True, the scene on Calvary cannot be a palpable spectacle as was that on Moriah. But it is just as really exhibited, though it is to your spirit, and not to your senses. Dare not to ask that God would supplement this revelation by some such display as your carnality requires. Even if the sign you seek were given what would it benefit you? You would still require the illumination of the Spirit in order that you might profit by it, and all that the Holy Ghost requires, in order to your enlightenment, is furnished in the *record* of the scene on Calvary. And with the light of that record shining on you, surely it is a fitting thing that you should be pressed to look on this manifestation of God in Christ crucified, and be urged, with that wonder of wonders before you, to make instant choice of Jehovah as your God. He is there as nowhere else—there in the fire that descended on the sacrifice, there in the sacrifice on which the fire came down, and there in the altar on which the sacrifice was laid; and, therefore, though the fire was "consuming," you see Him, on whom it took full effect, rising through death to "the power of an endless life." Is not this Jehovah, the God that answereth by fire—a fire that expressed his infinite aversion to sin, and that consumed all that prevented the free and full outflow of His love in salvation?

Is "this God" *your* God? How are you affected towards him? What think you of His holiness, of His justice, of His truth, of His wisdom, and of His love? Are you reconciled to His character as He appears in the glory of those attributes, in the

cross of His Son? Is it because His name is thus revealed you adore, and trust, and love Him? Do you really so know His name that you actually trust in Him? Or is it your affliction that, because of your ignorance, you are such a stranger to faith in God? Would you prefer a believing acquaintance with Him to all that the world can give you? Is it really your desire to discover how God can be glorified in the salvation of sinners, ere you with confidence can appeal to his mercy? Does the light which discovers that God may be trusted by you humble you in His presence? Does a desire to do his will accompany your faith? Have you any zeal for the glory of His name? Does your sin grieve you because it dishonours Him? Are you afflicted by the iniquity which abounds around you in the world? Have you ought of Elijah's trust, of his faithfulness, of his dependence on communion with his God, as the one solace of his life, and of the contempt and indignation with which all idols were regarded by him?

Or is yours the god of *the worldling*? He lives "without" the true "God in the world," but he cannot dispense with leaving his idol. He must have an idol, and he himself must make it. He cannot endure to have as his deity one whose majesty would overawe him, to whose authority he must defer, whose holiness would make him shrink from sin, whose justice would invest with terror the judgment to come, and to whose sovereign grace he must as a sinner be a debtor for salvation. He therefore imagines a god all mercy, a universal father, from whom all may expect the treatment of children. Such a god as this does not require to be treated with honour. He is not so respectable as the world. He need not be thought of except under constraint. He is one of whom advantage may be taken. He has no eye to see, no ear to listen to the prayers of the needy, no power to smite, and no power to save. How many there are who have no other god than this—nothing more respectable than the idol worshipped on Mount Carmel by the prophets of Baal! Is this *your* god? If so, there is a trial coming, in which your idol will fail you, and as the result of which, with despair instead of hope in your heart, you shall miserably perish, unless you shall be "turned to God from idols, to serve the living and true God."

Or is yours *the Pharisee's* God? Of him only hard thoughts can be cherished. He is one to be appeased by toil and penance. He has no mercy, and therefore one who is a sinner can have no hope before him. Only as he contrives to keep a sense of sin out of his heart can he have any hope bearing on this god. But what can all one's labour and earnestness profit in serving such a deity? What can all your knowledge of God as Lawgiver and Judge avail you? What can He avail you, of whom you can only have such views as tend to drive you away from His presence? No knowledge of God can be profitable which is attained apart from Christ crucified. There is no saving knowledge of the true

God in your mind if you are not acquainted with Him as He is revealed in Jesus Christ. "This is life eternal," Jesus says to His Father, "that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." O, what if the veil is still on your heart, which hides, as the doctrine of the cross is before you, the sight which made the Psalmist's heart to sing—"Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other!" And what can you be but a child of darkness, unless "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, has shined in" your heart "to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ?"

Or is yours the new god of *the dreaming sentimentalist*? Once a day men hopefully thought of God's universal mercy, now it is the fashion to think of His universal love. Those of the olden time did not care to associate the mercy of which they dreamed with the gospel of Christ at all; but these imagine that their hopes are directed towards the love commended in the cross. They care not to recognise in the revelation of the gospel the God of Sinai. They prefer to ignore Him. They refuse to associate ideas of truth, righteousness, and holiness with the God which they elect. The one idea which they connect with His character is that of love. A vague universal benevolence is the one attribute of their deity. Professing to desire a new testament, they really desire a new God. With "the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob," and of Moses, of Elijah, and of David they will have nothing to do. They must have a new God for themselves. With a God who claims as His the whole work of salvation, and who declares that "except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God," they will not deal. They refuse to be to that extent debtors to divine grace. They think of faith as that which is demanded in the gospel in order to an interest in the love of God. Thinking of the gospel in this aspect alone, they apply themselves to the work of meeting its requirements in their own strength, and the doctrine of universal love, because it is a lie, they find it not difficult to believe. Exercising this faith with the power of an old heart, they regain the ease which thoughts of danger had disturbed, and a new sensation of relief works itself out in the selfish bustle of carnally earnest service. Of their new god and of their religion these men are enamoured, and their zeal may not wane, nor their service cease, till, like the foolish virgins, they are knocking at the door of heaven only to find it for ever shut against them. Is this your god? If so, he is not Jehovah, the God of the fathers, nor is he the God who is revealed in the cross of Jesus Christ. You have not found him in either Testament of the Bible—he appears in the light neither of law nor of gospel.

2. In the light of the description given of Elijah we may see *the kind of witness required in degenerate times—the man whom we need in the times we live in.* In a season of growing declension

policy and compromise are the powers which shape the action of those who profess, like Israel, to be on the side of God. Differences between truth and error, and between spiritual and carnal worship are minimised, in order to remove the lines of difference which the word of God requires to be preserved. The views of Israelites and those of Baalites must be mixed up together, and as much must be borrowed from idolatrous worship as will make the worship of Jehovah less severely simple, and therefore less offensive to the carnal. This is the kind of spirit now at work in determining what shall be the creed and the worship of the rising generation. By those who, in judgment, are allowed to take the lead of an overwhelming majority in the religious revolution now in progress, a man of Elijah's spirit would be regarded as a most intolerant bigot, who had no sympathy with an enlightened advancement, and who was bound to the past by an unreasonable traditionalism. But there is none such to trouble them, and of the few who have a little of his views and of his zeal they will soon be rid. A few years hence they are very likely to have the field to themselves, and can carry out their scheme of removing "the old landmarks" till naught is left of the labours of those men of God who "contended," in other days, "for the faith once delivered to the saints." It is verily high time that all who desire that the word and worship of the true God be not trodden under foot should cry, "Where is the Lord God of Elijah?"

3. To all who hesitate to make a choice the Lord puts the question addressed to Israel on Carmel by Elijah, "How long halt ye between two opinions? If the LORD be God, follow Him; but if Baal, then follow him."

There are two opinions between which you halt. The one is, Jehovah *is* the true God, and the other is, another than He, and one altogether unlike Him, would be more to our liking—or, godliness is safe, but worldliness is pleasant—your conscience urging you to the one and your heart drawing you to the other.

(1.) There are some of you who have not allowed yourselves to think at all about the two opinions between which you are urged to make a choice. If you yielded to your conscience your heart would be grieved, and if you consciously yielded to your heart your conscience would be troublesome. So you choose to keep aloof from the question altogether. Doubts as to the safety of your course do not disturb you. You will not admit God into your thoughts, and you thus acquire such ease as allows you to enjoy the world. A little fool's sport on the brink of hell is all of which you are ambitious, and with Satan's help you have gained it. Friend, you find it easy to say "peace and safety now," but the conclusive trial is drawing near, and "sudden destruction" shall soon overtake you if you continue as you are.

(2.) Others have an habitual conviction of their ungodliness, though that conviction is not effective in arresting them in their course of sin. They think that there is before them "a more

convenient season" for deciding such a question as is pressed upon them. They therefore suppress the workings of conscience, and promising to themselves that there is a good time coming, they pass on to another stage of the journey to hell. What can they possibly gain by a short-lived triumph over conscience? It were far better, in a struggle with conscience, to be defeated than to overcome. Conscience must, sooner or later, have the advantage over you. The time for using lies as your weapons shall right early pass away, and in the might supplied by divine authority, it will arise within you, to scatter all excuses to the winds, and to fasten on your soul a grasp from which you cannot shake yourself free. A neglected conscience is a smothered fire in your breast which must yet break forth. And what right have you to reckon on a moment beyond the present? "Now is the accepted time," saith the Lord, and dare not to say "Nay" to a divine statement so plain and explicit. And, even if you had years of life before you, what reason have you for thinking that these would supply "a more convenient season" than the present? Why is not the present "convenient?" It is not because of aught that is awaiting, on God's side, to complete an opportunity of salvation. It seems not "convenient" to you, just because you dislike to apply your attention to your soul's case, and to make a decided choice for eternity. And think you, will you, by leaving yourself under the power of sin, Satan, and the world, become more disposed, than you now are, to lay to heart "the things which belong to your peace?"

(3.) Others there are who seem sufficiently decided, if they are judged by their profession. There is no stint, in their case, of the cry "Lord, Lord," and this is loud because it is alone, and has to make up all their religion. They boldly do the work of professing, because they care not to be sincere, and because Satan counts it not worth his pains to stir up persecution against them. He cares not how much there may be of the "sounding brass," and the "tinkling cymbal," within the church. The men who have truth in their hearts, and "the sword of the Spirit" in their hand, are the men to make him angry. Those "who live godly in Christ Jesus" are they who "suffer persecution." But how vain to themselves, as well as fruitless to the Church, is the hollow profession of graceless men, and how foolish, as well as sinful, it is, not to be anxious to have, while it can be found, "oil in their vessels with their lamps?" What will a profession, which is but a lie, avail in the day of trial?

(4.) Others still there are who think that they have made the right choice already, and who dislike to have their decision called in question or examined. They were conscious of some change, and they can recall it, and be comforted by the remembrance, and the resulting hope fed by a bustling service they cherish in a dark place, into which they allow not the searching light of truth to enter. They never leave "the first principles of the oracles of

God," and neither in knowledge, experience, nor practice does progress indicate the presence and activity of spiritual life. But they have satisfied themselves, because they were both deceitful, and were dealing with fools; and, of all, these are the most difficult to move to a careful examination of their state before God. With supercilious contempt passing into open hostility they are prone to regard those who would urge them to examine themselves.

But let all these, without exception, know that *neutrality is impossible*, and that the *halters* who attempt it are both foolish and wicked.

Neutrality is impossible on two accounts. (1) Because there is a conflict for your choice, bearing upon you, between the Lord and the great enemy. Between these opposite and mighty powers, it is impossible for you to be neutral. Either power must gain you. Unless the Lord puts forth the power of His omnipotent grace to win you to Himself, you must be on the enemy's side. The whole power of sin, Satan, and the world is at work in the influence which keeps you from yielding yourself up to God. (2) Because there is a choice implied in the refusal to make a choice of God as your portion. If you make not that choice, then you choose to abide as you are. You cleave to Baal if you return not to the God of Israel. How *foolish*, therefore, it is to imagine that you can be neutral! And yet how wise you seem, to yourself, to be, in staving off the question, "How long halt ye between two opinions!"

But hesitation is *sinful* as well as foolish, for it foully dishonours God. It implies that you rate Jehovah and the world as of equal value—that their claims are so nearly balanced, when you weigh them, that you find it impossible to choose between them! Think of the dishonour which such an estimate casts upon God! The tinsel of a deceiving world equal to the glory of Jehovah! The vapid pleasures of a vain world equal to the joy of the divine fellowship and the peace of the Lord's ways! The short-lived carnal ease, which worldlings enjoy, equal to the eternal rest that remaineth for the people of God! A life spent in the destruction of the soul equal to a life spent under the healing hand of Christ! A death that is the gate of hell, as the terminus of one's life on earth, equal to a death that is the gate of heaven! To abide under the power of the murderer just as good as to be a partaker of the saving grace of God in Christ! O what a world of iniquity there is in the halting that is caused by an estimate such as this!

Such a hesitation is, and must be, *dangerous*. It is so because it is a cleaving to that which to you must end in death. For the hesitation is a refusal to make choice of Christ, as your Saviour, and of God in Him, as your portion for ever. Are you to persist in that refusal? Can you venture nearer to eternity on the side on which you are? Can you be strong still further to provoke the anger of God by still further refusing to choose Him? On the answer which these questions shall receive from you, depends the state of your soul for ever.

Letter by Alexander Gair.

RISGILL, September, 1822.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—I am sure you have heard how the Lord hath been pleased to write bitter things to me upon the 11th day of September—a day of grief and sorrow to me indeed; but the Lord Himself hath done it. Many a bitter cup have I got since 24 years; but this is Marah water indeed. I do not say that a sorer stroke could not be. No, no; God forbid. However, I may say that it hath reached my marrow. It is long since my lot was in the 88th Psalm, both outwardly and inwardly, and this dispensation brought me forward to the last three verses. I may say, “Men’s hopes are vain, their sorrow certain, and joy feigned; our wine mixed with water, our honey with gall, our sugar with wormwood, and our roses with prickles.” Well might I call this world a sea of glass, for the troubles and brittleness of it. Trivial flowers surrounded with many thorns, this world is nothing at all; but Christ is all and in all; and He hath supported me, a poor barren branch in His vineyard. Suppose He cast me down with one hand, He upholds me with the other hand, ever blessed be His name for it, surely. My wound is deep, but His wounds are sweet. But, oh my withered hand and unbelieving heart! I am sure my stroke is heavy; but it might be heavier, if He were to mark iniquity. If the loving and sweet Branch, Jesus, were put in my Marah water there would be no outcasts betwixt us, and I would make Him very welcome to the two sweet flowers He hath plucked out of my breast, and they were that to me in my weak and decayed frame of body. I may call their death a *Benoni* to me, but I am clear to call it a *Benjamin* to them. Suppose (although) my son Robert is tossed in the womb of the raging sea, I believe his soul is at its eternal rest and endless happiness. I never, never saw three pleasanter young plants than Robert Gair, Donald Bain, and Donald Ferguson;—one my lawful and dear son from his birth. To all mild and affectionate in his sweet disposition; and to me the poor man, now, is the burden heavy that he bore for me since he was 12 years of age. He had care of the family. I am not able to add more. I am hurt and soft. My son Donald Bain to me was beyond what I can express in words, and Donald Ferguson. They were lovely in their life, united in mutual love on land, and embraced in one another’s arms till the raging waves made a separation. To me their love was beyond the love of women. Pray you for the poor young widow my daughter. I brought her to my own house with the child. My poor wife is wonderfully supported; but oh, how flat and low this brought her. Remember me to my friends at G. without exception. Dear brother, I got your breath near and sweet to me since my last trial came on me. Will you write me when you can. You’ll find me in the 109th Psalm, 22-24 versès. Accept of this confused mite, presented to you from a poor and despised friend.

ALEXANDER GAIR.

The Barrier Act.

THE Barrier Act, of which so much has been heard in recent controversy, was an Act passed by the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland in 1697. Previous to this, from the year 1560 until a few years after the Revolution Settlement, the General Assembly, on its sole authority, passed Acts that had reference to laws that were binding on the members and judicatories of the Church. That this state of matters was considered unsatisfactory seems to be indicated by the action of the Assembly in 1639, for it ordained "That no innovation which may disturb the peace of the Church and make division, be suddenly proposed and enacted, but so as the motion be first communicated to the several synods, presbyteries, and kirk-sessions, that the matter may be approved by all at home, and commissioners may come well prepared, unanimously to conclude a solid deliberation upon these points in the General Assembly." This was the forerunner of the famous Barrier Act, and paved the way for the Act anent Innovations, which the Assembly of 1695-96 passed into law. It declares that "the Assembly having heard an overture brought in from the Committee for overtures, that no new Acts relating to the doctrine, worship, or government of this Church be made until they be first transmitted to the several presbyteries of this national Church; which being considered, the General Assembly recommends it to the members of this Assembly to discourse upon the said overture with their respective presbyteries, that the next General Assembly may be more ripe to determine anent the conveniency thereof." The result of this "discourse" recommended by the Assembly, was the passing of the Barrier Act on the 8th January, 1697. This Act, which has played such an important part in the legislation of the Church, may well be described as the Magna Charta of Presbyterian ecclesiastical law. Its text is as follows:—

"The General Assembly, taking into their consideration the overture and Act made in the last Assembly concerning innovations, and having heard the report of the several commissioners from presbyteries, to whom the consideration of the same was recommended, in order to its being more ripely advised and determined in this Assembly; and considering the frequent practice of former Assemblies of this Church, and that it will mightily conduce to the exact obedience of the Acts of Assemblies, that General Assemblies be very deliberate in making of the same, and that the whole Church have a previous knowledge thereof, and their opinion be had therein, and for preventing any sudden alteration or innovation or other prejudice to the Church in either doctrine, or worship, or discipline, or government thereof; do, therefore, appoint, enact, and declare that, before any General Assembly of this Church shall pass any *Acts which are to be binding rules and constitutions to the Church*, the same Acts be

first proposed as overtures to the Assembly, and being by them passed as such, be remitted to the consideration of the several presbyteries of this Church, and their opinions and consent reported by their commissioners to the next General Assembly following, who may then pass the same into Acts, if the more general opinion of the Church, thus had, agree thereunto."

The great end the Barrier Act had in view was to guard against "any sudden alteration or innovation or other prejudice to the Church in either doctrine, or worship, or discipline, or government," but it had only reference to legislation of a certain kind. Not every act passed by the Assembly was to undergo the process laid down in the Barrier Act. It was only legislation that was to be of the nature of "binding rules and constitutions." And to say that any act passed through the Barrier Act is not binding on the members and judicatories of the Church is to ignore the express terms of the Act itself and read a meaning into language that it will by no means bear. That this is the true meaning of the Act is a fact confirmed by such authorities as Principal Hill, Taylor Innes, and Dr. Roberts of America.

Principal Hill, in his Constitution of the Church of Scotland, says—"Every judicatory is occasionally called upon to enforce the laws of the Church by making such special enactments, in conformity to those general laws as are suggested by the circumstances of the district under its jurisdiction; and the Church courts, like all others, have a right within certain limits to regulate the form of its own proceedings. It is not to such partial enactments or regulations we refer when we speak of the legislative power of the Church. We apply that term to the power of making standing laws concerning matters of general importance *which are binding upon all the members and judicatories of the Church.* From the establishment of Presbyterian government in 1560 until 1697 such laws proceeded from the sole authority of the General Assembly, but an Act of the Church passed in the latter year, which we are accustomed to call the Barrier Act, prescribes the mode of enacting permanent and standing constitutions." Dr. Hill here draws the distinction between "partial enactments" and "standing laws which are binding on all the members and judicatories of the Church." The Church, like any other body of people gathered together into a society, has the right within certain limits of regulating its own proceedings, but in regard to the standing laws which are binding on all the members and judicatories of the Church, these must come through the Barrier Act and thereby become "permanent and standing constitutions."

Taylor Innes, in his well known work, the Law of Creeds in Scotland, indirectly confirms the above contention. Speaking of the Act of 1711 dealing with subscription to the Confession of Faith, he points out that great objection was raised to it in the 18th century, when it was denounced as illegal. It was objected

that it had not received the consent of the majority of presbyteries. To obviate this objection an Act was brought in in 1740, and after transmission to presbyteries for many successive years, at last received the approbation of a majority of presbyteries and thereby became a standing law of the Church. "So that," says Taylor Innes, "the stipulation and subscription so far as regards probationers have received the sanctions contemplated by the Barrier Act, and are Church law, in so far as the Church has the power of making law." The main point of interest to us at this time in regard to this Subscription controversy, is that the Barrier Act placed the Acts of 1711 and 1782 on a different footing, and "that they became the law of the Church in so far as the Church has power of making law." In fact, they became binding rules and constitutions.

Dr. Roberts, in an article in the second volume of the Presbyterian and Reformed Review, bears similar testimony. "The history of the Scotch Barrier Act," he says, "is unquestionably the key to the interpretation of the American Barrier Act and proves that the latter, like the former, was intended to deal with matters ecclesiastical which the American Church has seen proper to gather formally *within her constitution*." All which goes to prove conclusively that legislation passed through the Barrier Act is Church law in a higher sense than Acts which may not have undergone this ordeal. Again, these Acts are not simply "binding rules and constitutions" for certain parties in the Church, but by their very nature they become binding upon all who in any way are connected with the Church. Principal Hill makes this clear enough when he says that the Barrier Act deals with the "making of standing laws concerning matters of general importance which are binding upon all the members and judicatories of the Church." Now, if this be so, what course is left open to those who, on conscientious grounds, may object to such legislation? The raising of this point directs our attention to what seems a serious defect in the Barrier Act, inasmuch as it makes no provision for the rights of minorities. It is true that according to ecclesiastical procedure, minorities have the right of entering a *dissent* against any legislation to which they have conscientious objections. But, after all, a dissent is of the very mildest form of opposition and it "simply keeps the conscience clear," says Sir Henry Moncrieff, "from the responsibility of what one does not approve of." It, however, by no means nullifies the binding effect of what are termed "binding rules and constitutions." In other words, a dissent relieves the dissenter from all responsibility in the steps leading up to and in passing the Act, but it does not relieve him from obligation to obey the Act once it becomes law provided that Act is of the nature of a binding rule and constitution. That this is the real force of a dissent is pertinently confirmed by Rev. Dr. Mair of Earlston, one of the leading authorities on Church law in the Established

Church, "Dissent," he says, "against the passing of an Act *does not exempt the dissident from obedience to it*, but relieves him from responsibility for the consequences of the passing of it."

It is necessary, at this stage of our discussion, to point out that this is the only course open to minorities in the case of objectionable legislation, and that they have no power to *protest* against the finding of a Supreme Court unless they are willing to take the step which persistence in such a course involves, viz., separation from the Church that has passed the law. The greatest confusion exists in the minds of many as to the force of a *protest* and a *dissent*. By the bulk they are regarded as implying the same thing. Nothing could be more erroneous and misleading. A dissent may be and is accepted by a Supreme Court against its decisions but never a protest. Such an action would be suicidal. The only time a protest is recognised in Church procedure is *before* the overture becomes law; and it is worthy of note that Dr. Begg, who was such an authority in these matters, always protested *before* and not *after* the overture became law. But to make the matter doubly sure, let us again appeal to authorities. Dr. Cook, in his "Styles of Writs, etc., in the Church of Scotland," says—"A dissent can be given in only by those who were present when the judgment dissented from was pronounced, and *no protest can be taken against a decision of the Assembly.*" Again, Sir Henry Moncreff, in his "Practice of the Free Church," says—"The General Assembly being the Supreme Court, there is no room for any other procedure against its decisions *except that of dissent with reasons.* There is no room for complaint or appeal."

As we have now laid down the general principles in connection with the Barrier Act, and established our main contentions by appealing to recognised authorities, it only remains for us to take a particular instance wherein these general principles are made manifest. Take the Declaratory Act of 1892, which has caused so much controversy, and has done more than anything else since the Disruption to wreck the ecclesiastical peace of the Highlands. Since that Act passed as an overture through the Barrier Act, and thereafter became law, it stands to reason that, by the very terms of the Barrier Act, it became a "binding rule and constitution"—"binding on all the members and judicatories of the Church," to quote Principal Hill's words. It is a fact that will be admitted on all hands that the Constitutional party considered the doctrines of the Declaratory Act to be of such a nature that nothing short of a *protest* was sufficient to express their opposition to the same. But what came of these laudable resolutions? In 1893 Rev. Mr. Macfarlane tabled his *protest*, and notwithstanding the efforts made to make him withdraw it he manfully refused to do so. With the result that in a short time he found himself without church or manse. When the Synod of Glenelg felt it its duty to protest against the Act its protest was rejected like Mr. Macfarlane's with this notable difference, that the members of Synod refused to act

on their protest and were content with a dissent. It is therefore only charitable to suppose that those who are declaring throughout the Highlands that they remained in the Free Church under protest, are quite unconscious that there is a world of difference between a protest and a dissent. And to quote Dr. Mair's words again, a dissent after all does not exempt the dissentient from obedience to the Act once it becomes law. D. B.

Popery Destroys the Obligation of Oaths.

EXTRACT FROM DR. BEGG'S *Handbook of Popery*.

THE following extract will be read with interest in view of Cardinal Vaughan's recent utterance in which he affirmed the non-binding character of the King's Protestant Declaration and Oath. Dr. Begg shows in his *Handbook* that Popery subverts the whole moral law and is emphatically the "man of sin."

III. Popery *overturns the third commandment*, which especially forbids blasphemy and perjury. "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain: for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain." Now we are emphatically told that the mystical beast was to have "on its heads the name of BLASPHEMY."—(Rev. xiii. 1.) And the extraordinary and impious titles assumed or received by the Pope, as "our Lord God the Pope," "Head of the Church," "High Priest," "Supreme Judge of Christians," imply an impious usurpation of the prerogatives of God. "I confidently say," said Gregory I., "that whoever calls himself universal bishop, or desires to be so called, doth forerun Antichrist." The very claim to grant indulgence in sin and to forgive sin, implies the same daring assumption of Divine authority on the part of a mere creature. This peculiarity seems strongly to have impressed the mind of Luther. "I begin to entertain doubts," says he, "whether the Roman Pontiff be not the very Antichrist of the Scriptures." And again, "I am exceedingly distressed—I have little doubt that the Pope is the real Antichrist. The lives, the conversations of the popes, their actions, their decrees, all agree most wonderfully with the descriptions given of him in the sacred writings."

But if from the blasphemy of Rome, we turn to her as a systematic teacher of perjury, we shall see more clearly how thoroughly she overthrows the third commandment. This peculiarity of Popery is beginning to be pretty well understood, and it applies equally to priests and people. There is nothing spoken of in Scripture as more solemn than an oath, and this because of the "great and dreadful name" of God which is invoked, of its great importance in courts of justice, and in settling disputes amongst men. "An oath for confirmation" is, we are told, "an end of strife." But a system which destroys the binding obligation of oaths, may be said

to tear asunder the bands of human society as well as to destroy the authority of God. And yet, this is what Popery notoriously does, and hence the utter disorganization of society in all Popish countries. The famous saying of Peter Dens in regard to priests, illustrates both parts of our present argument, the blasphemy and perjury of Popery:—

“What ought a confessor to answer,” says he, “being asked concerning a truth which he has known by sacramental confession alone? *A.* He ought to answer that he *does not know it*; and if necessary, CONFIRM THE SAME BY AN OATH.”

And the explanation of this is said to be, “that he does not know the truth as a man, *THOUGH HE KNOWS IT AS GOD.*” Now, what is this but the most abandoned perjury, coupled with the most offensive blasphemy? But it is certain that all the priests of Rome are openly taught a system of the most unblushing perjury, as is evident from the text books of Maynooth College, from which the Rev. A. S. Thelwall has made the following selections.* He says—

“*The candidates for the priesthood in this college are trained in a system of awful perjury.*”

“They are trained in a system that opens the door for the violation of every oath that man can take to his fellow creature. I first call your attention to *Bailly's Moral Theology*. This is one of the books which every scholar is obliged to purchase at his own expense. It is stated here as a proposition, vol. ii., p. 117—

“‘*A promissory oath obliges, under the penalty of mortal sin, to do that which is promised in the oath.*’ Well, that is very sound; then follows, ‘*unless a legitimate cause excuses.*’ Well, there may be causes certainly that preclude the observance of a promissory oath. Turn now to consider some of these causes, and we find, p. 119, a chapter with this title, ‘*Of the causes which prevent or take away the obligation of an oath.*’ On this observe, that some causes prevent an oath from imposing any obligation; so that, though a person took an oath, yet he never was bound to keep it. Some causes, again, take away the obligation after it has been imposed; so that a man is bound by the oath after he takes it, but then some cause arises which delivers him from the obligation. Let us first mention some of the causes that prevent an oath from imposing an obligation. There are seven causes enumerated. Some of these seven causes are just and right, as, for instance, the defect of liberty—that is, that a person has no right to take an oath: a child has no right to take an oath to do a thing which his parent will not allow him to do. A third cause mentioned here is, the hindering of a greater good which is opposed to the thing promised by the oath. So that if a man takes an oath, and then there is some greater good that might result if he had not taken the oath, the oath involves no obligation at all. The Word of

* A Statement of Facts respecting the instruction given to the Students, &c., in the College of Maynooth. London, Seeleys: 1845.

the living God says, 'He that sweareth to his neighbour and disappointeth him not, though it were to his own hindrance'—the Church of Rome says, 'The hindering of a greater good prevents the obligation of an oath.' The seventh cause excusing from the obligation of an oath is the limitation—either expressed, or even tacitly and silently understood—of the intention of the swearer; for in every oath certain general conditions are, from justice and use, included. One of them is, unless you accept, unless you remit; another is, '*salvo jure alieno*—that is, saving the right of another.' Every Roman Catholic must take this oath—saving the right of his superior—saving the right of the Pope, of his bishop, or his priest.

"Again, there are five causes that take away the obligation of an oath, after the oath has imposed an obligation. One of them is, 'If the thing sworn becomes impossible or unlawful on account of the prohibition of any superior—*illicita ob superioris prohibitionem.*' So that if a man takes an oath, and then his superior is pleased to prohibit the observance of it, according to the Church of Rome, the obligation of the oath is entirely taken away.

"The fourth cause is, 'the making void of the oath by him to whom the person of the swearer, or the matter of the oath is subject.' See how this is illustrated. '*Thus the superior (that is, the general) of all the orders of the monks can validly, even without cause, make void the oaths of all his subjects.*' One of these men, Dr. Anglade, professor of divinity, is asked, in this Report of the Commissioners, Where does the superior of the Dominicans reside? At Rome. Where does the superior of the Franciscans reside? At Rome. Where does the superior of the Jesuits reside? At Rome. So, while we have monks spreading themselves through every quarter of our country, there is a man residing at Rome who can make void with a word—lawfully making void, as they assert—every oath of allegiance, or every other oath which all the monks in the British empire take to their Sovereign or their fellowmen.

"The next cause is a dispensation or commutation made by the superior. St. Thomas says, there are four cases in which an oath accepted by another can be made void without the consent of that other; that is, you take an oath to your neighbour, and he believes you intend to do what you swear; but according to St. Thomas, there are four cases in which it can be made void. One is 'when there is any doubt whatever whether the oath was valid or not valid, lawful or unlawful; another is, when the public good is concerned, which ought always to be preferred to private good.' Now, let me entreat your attention to this, and let me ask you, what possible security can a man have for the preservation of any oath, which may be prevented from imposing any obligation, or the obligation of which may be totally taken away by such casuistries as these? But there is another point of view in which the case is presented to us in the next head that comes under examination; which is, the power of dispensation in the hands of their superiors. Any

promissory oath, as we have seen, is taken with this tacit condition, that must be reserved in the mind of the swearer, viz., '*saving the right of my superior.*' Now, we come to ask, what is the right that this superior can exercise over him? and we find this in the chapter on dispensations, which is headed as follows (p. 140):—'*There exists in the church a power of dispensing with vows and oaths.*' Then it is asked (p. 145), 'What may be just causes of dispensation from vows? and vows and oaths are said to be the same. The answer which we find in Bailly to this is,—'First, The honour of God. Second, *The utility of the church.*' So that if it should be useful to the church that an oath should be dispensed with, that is a just cause for granting a dispensation from an oath. Other causes are, 'the common good of the republic or society; the spiritual utility of the person that vows or swears; the moral danger of violating an oath from frailty, lightness, or levity of mind; perturbation of mind; fear under which the vow or oath was made; any notable difficulty supervening of carrying it into execution; *any doubt of the validity of an oath; and any other sort of case which may generally be reduced to piety, spiritual utility, or necessity.*' So that whatsoever any priest or bishop chooses to reduce to the head of piety, spiritual utility, or necessity, is ample cause for his granting a dispensation from any oath that a Roman Catholic can take. Observe, this is a class-book in the College of Maynooth, which every individual in that college is obliged to have in his possession. One of the standards of that college—the *Secunda Secundæ* of St. Thomas, their 'best book on ethics,' says (Quest. 89, Art. 9):—

"Sometimes something is promised by an oath, in which it is doubtful whether it may be lawful or unlawful, profitable or injurious, either simply or in any particular case, and in this any bishop can grant a dispensation.

"But sometimes something is promised under an oath, which is manifestly lawful and useful, and in such an oath there seems to be no place for dispensation or commutation, unless something better occurs to be done for the common utility, which seems chiefly to belong to the power of the Pope, who has the care of the universal church, or even an absolute relaxation, which also belongs to the Pope generally in all things which appertain to the dispensation of ecclesiastical affairs, over which he possesses a plenitude of power; as also it belongs to every person to make void an oath which is taken by those who are subject to him concerning these things which are placed under his power.' (Ed. Ven. 1496; part i. fol. 91, col. 3.)

"So that there is no possible oath which a man could take that is not declared to be under the power of the Pope, and which the Pope cannot dispense with, at his own good pleasure, whenever he likes.

"Another of the standards of the college of Maynooth is the work of Antoine. He quotes the celebrated passage from the 16th canon of the third Lateran Council:—'*Those are not to be called*

oaths, but rather perjuries, which are taken contrary to ecclesiastical utility and the institutions of the fathers.—Vol. iii. p. 379, (Ed. Passavii, 1767.)

“Here is another standard—Reiffenstuel. (6 vol. fol. Romæ, 1831-4.). This is the book from which the eighth volume, which is added as a supplement of Dens, was taken, to which it had been published as an appendix. Reiffenstuel says (lib. ii. *Decretal*, tit. 24, *de Jurejurando*, § ii. 51):—‘In every promissory oath, however absolutely made’ (mark, *however absolutely made*), ‘certain tacit conditions are understood.’ Now, of these conditions, which are tacitly reserved in the swearer’s mind, one is this:—‘*Salvo dure et autoritate superioris*,’—that is, saving the right and authority of my superior, ‘*where an oath is considered unlawful, and cannot be kept, which cannot be kept saving the honour of the apostolic see.*’ (Vol. ii. p. 394.) So that no oath is to be kept by a Roman Catholic in which the honour of the apostolic see is not preserved. Again there is the great question which we have heard so often imputed to the Church of Rome, and which they have so continually denied—Whether faith is to be kept with heretics? Now, we have this asked and answered in Reiffenstuel. We have it here in the fifth book of his *Decretals*, tit. 7, *de Hæreticis*, § vi., quest. 6, vol. v. p. 205:—‘Are vassals, and servants, and others, freed from any private obligation due to a heretic, and from keeping faith with him? *Answer.*—Yes. All are so by the clear disposal of the law.’

He quotes for this the *Corpus Juris Canonici*, C. fin. h. T.:—‘*ABSOLUTOS—They may have known that they are freed from the debt of fidelity and of all obedience to man, whosoever remain bound by any sort of covenant, though fortified by any kind of affirmation whatsoever, to those who are manifestly lapsed into heresy; where the gloss on the word Absolutos well observes, that this punishment is incurred ipso jure, so that no declaratory sentence is required if the heresy is manifest!*’ It is inferred also—‘*That he who owes anything to a heretic by means of purchase, promise, exchange, pledge, deposit, loan, or any other contract, is IPSO JURE free from the obligation, and is not bound to keep his promise, bargain, or contract, or his plighted faith, even though sworn to a heretic.*’ Farinacius, Abbas, Pirhing. Now, recollect that this is from the class-books of Maynooth, from the standard canon law, and the ethical theology of Maynooth, as returned by the professors and the president himself to the British Parliament, which supports that college. Reiffenstuel quotes also a canon law, which declares that all public oaths, taken by any man whatsoever in any public capacity, are totally null and void, when taken contrary to the utility and interests of the church. . . . Now, every class-book, every standard in the College of Maynooth, declares that that single circumstance completely abrogates the oath; so that every honest man in England may see that perjury is branded on the brow of Popery. Such are the doctrines of the College of Maynooth on the subject of oaths! . .

“One of the worst parts of this mystery of iniquity is, that very

few, except the priests (and, perhaps, not all of them), are at all acquainted with its depths. The laity, in general, know very little about *the system*; it is far too vast and varied for them to grasp; they are, and must be, guided by their priests; they rely upon their priests; they know no more than their priests think fit to tell them; they (too commonly) dare not inquire farther; and their priests (there is too much reason to fear) take very good care to let them know no more than is convenient. Furthermore, many of them *would* be honest if they *could*; but *will this awful system let them?* Many of them *would* keep faith, and observe their oaths: but *will their church permit them so to do?* Some of them take an oath in simplicity and good faith; but an authority which they dare not dispute, interposes, and tells them that *it never was an oath but a perjury, BECAUSE IT IS CONTRARY TO ECCLESIASTICAL UTILITY!!!* And then they are *bound* to break it!!!”

To prove that all this is not mere theory, we might refer to the systematic contempt for oaths which prevails in all Popish countries—to the impossibility, for example, of trusting Popish witnesses in Ireland, or even in our own Police Courts, whenever the credit of Rome is supposed to be involved. But we prefer taking a more prominent instance. Louis Napoleon is admitted to have violated, in the most public way, the most solemn oath that a man could take; and yet, because Popery has gained thereby, we find him not only lauded as a saint, but his very perjury ostentatiously vindicated. We quote from an article in the *Tablet*, the leading Popish paper of this country, Dec. 13, 1851. The writer says—

“The strongest case made against Louis Napoleon is, that *he has committed perjury in breaking his oath to observe the constitution.* Certainly, these *political oaths* are very unpleasant, and, for the most part, *very immoral things.* What may have been Louis Napoleon’s guilt or innocence in taking the oath, we cannot tell. It may have been very immoral to take it, and if he took it with no intention of keeping it, of course it was immoral. But if he took it with a safe conscience, *we are quite sure that no oath could or should bind him or any man to keep his arms folded while the dissolution of society proceeds, and disable him from taking the only means which can hold back the nation from a most frightful catastrophe.*”

Here is true Popish morality. It is not the “perjury,” but the “oath” which becomes a “very immoral thing,” when a Popish object is to be gained; and the Romish scribe is “quite sure” that in the circumstances the oath of Louis Napoleon was not binding. He “cannot tell” what may have been his guilt in “taking the oath,” but he is “quite sure” that there was none in breaking it. This is just the old detestable doctrine of the 16th canon of the third Lateran Council—“Those are not to be called oaths, but rather perjuries, which are taken contrary to ecclesiastical utility and the institutions of the fathers.” Such a doctrine not only involves the highest guilt as a “lying unto God,” but is fitted to tear society to pieces, and ought to stamp the accursed

system, whose avowed principle it is, with the execration of all Christian men. Even savages maintain a higher morality, and respect their word a thousand times more than a trained Papist respects his oath. And therefore most justly did Gavazzi exclaim—

“Who was it that had taught the world rebellion? It was the Papacy. It was the Papacy that had taught people to disregard social and national ties—to lower the character of an oath, and to think, speak, and act differently—to think one way and to speak another; to speak one way and to act another. It was this teaching which was the root of rebellion. Social disorders in Europe were the result of the Papacy.”—(*Gavazzi at St. Albans.*)

Nothing, therefore, is more demonstrably true, than that Popery—not merely the Popery of the dark ages, but the Popery of all ages—the living Popery of the present day taught in the College of Maynooth, has, as one of its most prominent and characteristic features, an utter contempt for the solemn obligation of an oath, and is ready at all times on the most frivolous grounds to “take the name of God in vain,”—in other words, to set at defiance the third commandment of the law of God.

Nothing can be more certain, therefore, than that Popery is a most systematic violator of the third commandment.

Obituary Notice.

THE LATE MISS CHRISTINA MACCALLUM, GLASGOW.

ANOTHER grain of the salt of the earth has been removed by the death of Miss Christina MacCallum, 18 Portman Street, on the 18th day of August last, at the advanced age of 75 years. She was born at Cuilnadalach, in the parish of Muckairn, Argyleshire. When a young woman she went to reside at Ardchattan, Benderloch. The time when the change from the kingdom of Satan into the kingdom of God's dear Son was effected she has not told; but she very often spoke of sermons which she heard at that period of her life from Dr. Macdonald, Ferintosh, and also from Mr. Fraser, the minister of Ardchattan at that time. We did not know her till 1893, but since then had several conversations with her. Her mind was fully occupied with the things that pertain to the cause of Christ in the world; with the need there is of holding the doctrines and principles of the Reformation in Scotland inviolate; with the awful floods of ungodliness and profanity with which many in this generation are being swept to eternal ruin (of this she spoke to us more than once with tears in her eyes); and with the necessity laid upon the ministers of Christ that they should faithfully preach law and gospel to poor perishing sinners. She repeatedly urged upon us to be faithful to immortal souls, and to the cause of Christ in our day. We thought that we very seldom felt more power and

conviction in the truth than from her earnest lips. She suffered very much from bodily infirmities, and also from the temptations of Satan; but her hope was Christ crucified, and the mercy and faithfulness of God in Him. Though she had not been able to come to church for several years back, we felt that she was some strength to those struggling for the truth and cause of Christ by her prayers. Therefore the world is very much the poorer by her removal, and the Free Presbyterian Church has lost a very true friend. We express deep sympathy with her two nieces who are left to mourn their loss, which is certainly her great gain. N. C.

Focail Mineachaidh.

LEIS AN URR. NEIL CAMERON, ST. JUDE'S, GLASGOW.

“A chionn gun do ghlèidh thu focal m’fhoighidinn-sa, gledibhidh mise thusa mar an ceudna o uair a bhuaireadh, a thig air an t-saoghal uile, a dhearbhadh na muinntir sin a tha ’n an comhnuidh air an talamh.”—REV. iii. 10.

THA da ni gu sonruichte anns na briathran so a tha gairm air n’aire.

I.—Tlachd Chrìosd ann an eaglais a ghlèidh fhocal, agus nach d’aicheadh ainm.

II.—An gealladh gràs-mhor a tha e tabhairt dhi comh-cheangailte ri i bhi ann an ceum a dleasdanais.

“A chionn,” tha e g’radh, “gun do ghlèidh thu focal m’fhoighidinn-sa.” Tha da ni againn anns na briathran so (1) focal foighidinn Chrìosd, agus (2) am focal sin a bhi air a ghlèidheadh.

(1) An toiseach focal foighidinn Chrìosd. Tha an fhoighidinn so ri bhi air a faicinn ann an tabhairt an fhocail so do’n chinne-dhaoine; oir tha sin a tuigsinn gur ann mu’n fhirinn sgriobhte a tha e labhairt. Thoisich daoine gle thrath air a bhi breabadh an aghaidh na firinn. Gheibh thu so ann an lathaibh Chain agus Abel. Lean a nuas a mhuinntir a bha air an cur gu bhi tabhairt na firinn bho bheul Dhè do’n t-sluagh, no a mhuinntir a bha feuchainn a bhi cumail greim deangan oirre agus chi thu gun robh mòr-fhoighidinn air a cleachdadh le Dia ann a bhi buan-nachadh air a bhi deanamh inntinn aithnichte. Cha mhor de na faidhean nach robh air an cur gu bàs. Car son? Do bhrìgh nach sguireadh iad de bhi labhairt briathran Dhe ri’n comh-pheacachibh. Ach cha do sguir an Ti Naomh do bhi deanamh a thoil foillsichte anns an fhirinn, ged a chaidh moran de sheir-bhisich a chur gu bas anns an obair so. Chi sinn Chrìosd fein a tabhairt na foighidinn so fa chomhair nan Iudhach ann an soisgeul Lucais xx. 9-16. Feumaidh sinn aideach gur an le mòr fhad fhoighidinn a bha am Biobul air a thabhairt le Dia do chlann na’n daoine.

A ris ma bheachdaicheas sinn air na dh'fhuiling naomh Dhè ann a bhi cumail an fhocail so bho'n a bha e air a thabhairt doibh, agus air earbsadh riu, feumadh sinn tighinn a dh'iuunnsaidh a cho-dhunaidh gum bheil an t-ainm freagarach—"focal m'fhoighidinnsa." Is ni eagalach ri smuaineachadh na dh'fhuiling daoine, mnathan, agus clann bheag, bho naimhdean Dhè agus na firinn, ann nan oidhirp gu bhi gleidheadh an fhocail so anns an t-saoghal, mar a thainig e bho bheul Dhè. Chaidh aimhnichean de fhuil sluaigh an t-saoghail so a dhortadh gu chumail. Cha robh an ni so an anfhios do air n'atharichean agus air mathairichean diadhaidh ann an Alba. Dh'fheum iad iad fein fholach ann an sluichd agus tuill na talmhuinn a chum gun gleidheadh iad am focal so. Bha am anns an tir so, agus bu leoir gum biodh am Biobul air fhaotuinn aig neach air son e bhi air a chur gu bàs. Thugamaidne, an clann, an ro-aire nach feud an t-am sin pilleadh a ris, agus ma philleas tha e na ni gle choltach nach seas mòran.

A ris, tha foighidinn Dhe air a foillseachadh anns an fhocal so. Tha a bhuaadh iongantach sin, ann an nadur Dhè, air a foillseachadh gle mhòr ann am focal na firinn. Tha na h-uile ni as coir dhuinne a chreidsinn mu thiomchiull Dhe air a chur sios anns a Bhiobul, agus is mòr na tha air a chur sios ann mun fhoighidinn so. Is mòr an fhoighidinn a tha an Cruithfhear a foillseachadh na fhocal a thaobh muinntir ann an staid neo-iompaichte, agus e tairgseadh trocair agus iadsan a deanamh tair air an teargsa. Cia meud bliadhna a ghiulain e le cuid a th'fhuair trocair air a chean mu dhearadh? Nach eil foighidinn Dhè gle iongantach a thaobh Mhanasseh, Shaul o Tharsas, agus moran eile? Tha an fhoighidinn a tha e cleachdadh a thaobh a shluaigh fein ro-iongantach. Co a b'urrair giulan le beusaibh chloinn Israel anns an fhasach, ach Dia? Tha i a cheart cho mòr agus cho iongantach an diugh a thaobh a shluaigh. Am bheil fhoighidinn a cur iongantais ort fein?

(2) Am focal sin a bhi air a ghleadhadh. Feumaidh duine ni a bhi aige leis an cum e greim air an fhocal so. Tha am focal fein a tabhairt fa bhur comhair an doigh anns am bi greim air fhaotuinn agus air a chumail air. "Cum gu daingean samhldh firinneach nam briathar fallain, a chuala tu uamsa, ann an creidimh agus ann an gradh a tha ann an Iosa Chriosd."—(2 Tim. i. 13.) Tha da inneal air an tabhairt do'n chreidmheach air son greim a dheanamh air an fhirinn—creideamh, agus gradh. Feumaidh an da laimh so—creidimh agus gradh—a bhi sas anns an fhirinn uile no cailidh an creutair a ghreim. Tha moran do chunnartan a tighinn a stigh ann an so. Tha an comhnuidh tighean aoraidh, tighean comhnuidh, agus airgead aig an eaglais anns an t-saoghal so; ach aig na h-amanan anns am bheil dearbhadh air a chur oirre. A thaobh so tha e comasach gum feud daoine a bhi bho'n taobh a mach a leantuinn na firinn, ach bho'n chridhe leantuinn nithean an t-saoghail so. Nuair a thig dearbhadh, agus gum feum duine an dara cuid an fhirinn a leigeadh air falbh, no a dhuais, a thigh comhnuidh, an eaglais

anns am bheil a chomh-thional agus e fein ag aoradh, agus dol do bhun nan creag leis an fhirinn, tha e na ni ro-shoilleir gun lean an duine ris an ni anns am bheil e faicinn luach agus a tha e gradhachadh. Fhad agus a bha an da chuid—gnothaichean an t-saoghail, agus focal Dhè—a dol laimh air laimh, tha e furasda gu leir do'n duine an da chuid a ghleidheadh, agus a radh comhla ri Balaam—"Ged a bheireadh Balac dhomhsa lan a thighe a dh'airgiod agus a dh'or, chan fheudainn dol thar focal an tighearna mo Dhè, a dheanamh a bheag no mhor."—Air. xxii. 18.) Ach ma tha tuilleadh graidh ann an cridhe an duine do'n airgead agus do'n or na tha ann do'n fhirinn, tha e na ni cinnteach gun treig e 'n fhirinn. Feudaidh e creidimh eachdrighail a bhi aige air an fhirinn, ach creideamh air dha bhi leis fein—gun a gradh—tha e marbh. Mar so leig moran as an fhirinn anns an là so an Alba, agus tha tha e na ni gle chunnartach nach faigh iad greim oirre tuilleadh. Cha b'ann mar so a rinn eaglais Philadelphia—"Chum ise focal foighidinn Dhé." Thug an luach a chunnaic i ann am focal Dhé, chan ann a mhain dhi fein, ach mar an ceudna do na h-àil a thigeadh na deigh, agus an gradh a bha aice na cridhe dha, comas di gabhail le luathghair ri creachadh a maoin. Is e th'ann an so tiodhlac bho Dhia. Air an aobhar sin chan eil aobhar uail aig neach sam bith an lathair Dhé anns a chàs so. Ach tha moran de aobhar bròin an diugh ann an Alba air son na tha ann de treigeadh creideamh. Firinn Dhé fo chosan nan aindiadhach, agus airgead, or, tighean agus luchd teagaisg bhreug air an *carnadh* suas.

Tha Criosd a togail fianuis air tabh na h-eaglaise so gun robh neart beag aice, gun do ghleidh i fhocal agus nach d'aichidh i ainm. Rinn an neart grais a thug e dhi an gnothach anns na chaidh seachad, ged nach robh e ach beag, uairean an cunnart toirt suas, ach a cumail air aghaidh a gnath, gun a bhi faicinn rathad onarach no firinneach gu dol taobh eile. Ach tha air thoiseach orra am anns nach dean an neart beag aice-se an gnothach: feumaidh i neart a ghairdean ghlormhoir gu a cumail suas. Tha e ceangal an dilseachd a nochd i thaobh fhocail agus ainm ris na tha e gealtuinn a dheanamh air a son. Tha na nithean so air an sgrìobhadh air ar sonne air am bheil deireadh an t-saoghail so air teachd. Tha an Tighearna cho eudmhor air son fhocail agus ainm an diugh agus a bha e an uair ud; agus tha dilseachd air taobh fhocail agus ainm an ni a bha e an sin na shealladh. Ach feumaidh sinn tighinn a dhiunnsuidh na dara puinc.

II.—An gealladh grasmhor a tha e tabhairt dhi combheangailte ri i bhi ann an ceum a dleasdanais. Gabhaidh sinn beachd air an am anns am bheil an gealladh gu bhi air a choimchlionadh dhi—"Uair a bhuaireadh." Ciod a tha sinn gu bhi tuigsinn le buaireadh? Feumaidh sinn toiseachadh aig an toiseach gu brìgh an fhocail so a thuigsinn. Nam feoraicheadh neach do Adhamh ann an staid na neo-chiontais—"Ciod is ciall do'n fhocal buaireadh?" Cha b'urrainn e innseadh; oir bha sith iomlan aige ri

Dia, na choguis fein, agus ris na h-uile creutair eile. Ach nam feoraicheadh neach a cheist cheudna dheth an deigh dha lagh Dhé a bhreiseadh b'urrainn e innseadh an sin. Cia mar a thoisich am buaireadh an toiseach? Thoisich leis a cheist a chuir Satan air a mhnaoi—"An d'thubhairt Dia?" Be so toiseach a bhuaireadh anns an t-saoghal, agus tha na h-uile buaireadh uaithe sin a tighinn o'n fhreumh cheudna.

Thoisich am buaireadh ann an Alba leis na briathran—"An d'thubhairt Dia?" Agus shaoil le daoine ann an Gailteachd na h-Alba, ged a bha teagamhan air an cur ann am briathran Dhé, mar tha iad air an cur sios anns a Bhiobull, anns an taobh deas, nach d'thigeadh sin da'n iunnsaidh-san. Cia air son a tha am buaireadh agaibh anns a ghleann so?—tha e na'r bailtean, na'r tighean, agus na'r nanamaibh? Cia air son a tha sibh an diugh na'r tri buidhnibh, agus gun robh sibh uile comhla gu 1893? Na'n robh sibh uile, air a radh a bhliadhna sin—"Thubhairt Dia na h-uile focal a tha sgriobhte anns a Bhiobull, agus cumaidh sinne ris a sin, agus ris an rian aoraidh a shuidhich na h-atharichean ann an Alba, mar tha sin air a chur sios ann an Leabhar Aidmheil a Chreidimh, bhiodh sibh uile comhla an diugh gun bhuaireadh sam bith na'r measg. Bha an *Declaratory Act* air a dheanamh a chum aite laghail a thoirt anns an Eaglais do'n mhuinntir a bha agus a tha cur na ceiste a thaobh a Bhiobuill—"An e so focal Dhé." Thug so an Eaglais uile bho'n chionta a bhi cur teagamh anns a Bhiobul.

Feumaidh mi beagan a labhairt mu nithean a thachair co-cheangailte ris an Achd mhallaichte sin a bhi air a dheanamh gu laghail na phairt de chreud na h-eaglaise ris an abradh daoine an Eaglais Shaor. Chan eil mi a dol a radh mun Achd sin ach gum bheil e calg dhireach an aghaidh focal Dhé agus Leabhar Aidmheil a Chreidimh. Tha a mhuinntir a bha deanamh suas na h-eaglaise sin bho 1893 gus toiseach a gheamruidh a chaidh, a nis na'n da bhuidhinn. Chaidh moran a stigh leis an aonadh a ghabh aite ann an October a chaidh. Dhuin iad sin an dorus nan deigh fein agus an sliochd a thaobh gu bheil e comasach dhoibh ath-leasachadh a dheanamh, no pilltinn a dhiunnsuidh na firinn na gu creud fhallain a bhi aca fein no aig an cloinn. Tha mi fiosrach gum bi moran guil agus giosgain fhiacal ann an ionad a bhroin troimh 'n t-siorruidheachd comh-cheangailte ris a cheum sin. Gum fosgladh an Tighearna na mhor throcair an suilean ann an tim!

Tha buidhean eile dhiubh nach deachaidh a stigh leis an aonadh. Tha sinn toilichte nach deachaidh iad a stigh le cach; oir feudaidh iad ma's toil leo ath-leasachadh a dheanamh. Nach d'rinn iad sin cheana? Cha d'rinn iad sian fathast ach gun do dhiult iad aonadh. Tha na h-uile mearachd a thugadh a stigh do'n Eaglais Shaor aca. Nach eil iad agradh nach robh iadsan riamh fo'n *Declaratory Act*? Tha mi tuigsinn gum bheil cuid dhiubh ga radh sin. Tha na h-uile neach eile ann an Alba ach

iad fein ag radh a chaochlaidh. Feumaidh iad brigh na canain Bheurla atharachadh bhon doigh anns an robh i air a tuigsinn bhon a chaidh am Barrier Act a dheanamh na lagh ann an 1697 gus am beachd sin fhìreanachadh; oir tha e' gradh gu'm bheil na h-uile achd a theid troimhe na laghanan, agus na bhunaitean anns an Eaglais. Chan eil Leabhar Aidmheil a Chreidimh na's cinntiche na chreud a tha ceangailte orra fein agus air na tha ga'n leantuinn na tha an t-Achd so. Tha e cur mòr iongantas air cuid nach do ghluais iad lamh fathast gu fuasgladh orra fein na air an t-sluagh. Nach d'rinn iad ceum a ghabhail aig an Ard-sheanadh mu dheireadh? Chuir iad air leth commum dhiubh fein a dh'fheuchainn gu de na nithean a dh'fheumadh a bhi air an cuir a mach, agus gu de na nithean nach feumaidh. (Bu choir do'n neach as 'aineoliche dhiubh fios a bhi aige air sin roimhe so.) Is ann a bha am fear a ghluais gus an communn ud a chuir air leth a feuchainn ri lethsgheul an Achd a ghabhail, agus bha e air a leigeil air aghaidh gun stad sam bith a chur air. Dheannaich fear dhiubh a bheachd fein a bhi uile an aghaidh an Achd, agus fear eile nach robh iad riamh fo'n Achd; ghabh iad ris na h-uile beachd dhiubh so. A reir mar a bha iomradh air anns a phaipear dh'fhag iad an eaglais sin bho'n creud bhreugaich sin air son bliadhna eile. Tha dochas again gun nochd iad an tuilleadh treibhdhireis an sin.

Tha cuid de'n bheachd nach eil ni sam bith de eadar-dhealachadh a nis eadar a chuideachd a tha ga'n gairm fein an eaglais shaor agus sinne. Cha neil neach air bith a sheallas air an aobhar air son an do dhiult sinne umhlachd do chuirtean na h-eaglais a chur cul ri focal Dhé, agus ri a creud fein ann an 1893 nach faic nach ann air son an aobhair sin a tha an seasamh so air a dheanamh. Is ann na's mò air son maoin na h-eaglais a tha an seasamh so a gabhail aite. Their iad nach bu choir dhuinne a bhi air seasamh a dheanamh gus a nis. Co ann an solus na thachair bho na dhealaich sin riu a tha duilich air son a cheum a ghabh sin? Tha aon ni againn co dhiu, tha focal Dhé agus creud eaglais Chrìosd ann an Alba againn, gun ni bhi air a chur rithe na air thoirt uaipe. An robh sinn a dol a dh'fhautuinn fo chreud bhreugach air son ochd bliadhna a feitheamh gus an d'thugadh mid leinn clachan, meidean, agus airgead? Cha saoil mi gu'm bheil moran calldachd again de na chaill sin; oir rian an Tighearna ann an cuid mhor a suas dhuinn e cheana. Bhiodh e a cheart cho math dhuinn pilleadh d'an iunnsuidh mios an deigh dhuinn am fagail, agus a bhiodh e dhuinn pilleadh an diugh; oir tha iad dìreach mar a bha iad an lā a dhealaich sin riu. Tha moran a glaothaich gu bheil cuid againn a cumail suas stri gun aobhar. Ma tha is truagh do'n duine a bhios a deanamh roinnean gun aobhar ann an eaglais Dhé. Tha truaighe dhubailte air an duine nach seas air son na firinn. Chan eil sinne an aghaidh aonaidh, ach le ar n-uile chridhe leis, ach biodh e air a dheanamh air bonn focail Dhé agus Leabhair Aidmheil a Chreidimh. Ach

feumaidh sinn a radh nach toil leinn a bhi cluinntinn—"Choimh-lion mise aithne an Tighearna"—nuair a tha meilich nan caorach agus geumnaich a chruidh ann ar cluasan. Nam biodh e comasch dhuinn be ar miann nach biodh na roinnean truagh so—no am buaireadh—am measg ar comh-luchd-ducha; agus cha'n e mhain sluagh Alba ach na tha de shluagh bho'n grèin a bè ar mian a bhi combhla air bonn eaglais an Ath-leasachaidh ann an Alba. Dh'fhosgladh mid air broilleach do shluagh an t-saoghail uile nan d'thigeadh tad combhla anns an fhirinn agus ann an ainm Chrìosd. Ma tha neach air bith a tha toileach dol air ais a dh'iunnsuidh cuing na daorsa rachadh e ann ach fagadh e an Eaglais Shaor Chleireil aig a saorsa fein gu seasamh air son focail Dhé agus ainm Chrìosd an ni air son an do sheas i. Tha sinn ag radh ris an t-sluagh iad a bhi cinnteach gum bi an truaillidheachd air a tilgeadh a mach; oir tha cuisean combhla riu cho chunnartach 's a bha iad roimhe.

Tha aon ni eile a dh'fheumas mi ainmachadh. Thug na h-uile de luchd-dreuchd na h-eaglais dhe 'm bheil sinne boid gun robh iad ag aontachadh leis agus a creidsinn anns a "Gnìomh Dhealachaidh" (*Deed of Separation*) aig an eaglais so. Co as urruainn mise fhuasglad bho'n bhoid sin? Is e mo bheachd nach eile moran anns an eaglais nach eil an rùn-shuidhichte air seasamh gu deangan air a bhunait a bha air a h-ath-thogail ann an 1893. Agus is ann mar sinn a tha firinn agus coguis agus reusan a tagradh. Ma tha sinn air a bhunait cheart, car son a bhiodh i air a fagail? Agus ma tha ni sam bith clith innte bitheadh sin air a chur ceart. Tha aon ni soilleir nach do dhearbh neach fathast gun robh ni air bith a dh'uireasbhuidh oirn de chreud agus bunaitean eaglais an Ath-leasachaidh ann an Alba, na gum bheil ni sam bith again nach buineadh dhi. Gabhadh daoine eile an dearbh sheasamh sin, aidicheadh iad Gnìomh Dealachaidh na h-eaglais so, bitheadh na h-uile tramsgal a thugadh a stigh do'n Eaglais Shaoir air a thilgeadh a mach gu follaiseach, laghail, duineil, agus treibhdhireach, mara rinn sinne, agus chan fhosgail sin ar beul an aghaidh sluagh a dhol combhla anns an rathad sin; ach mar bi sin air a dheanamh cha sguir sin, an Tighearna a tabhairt comais dhuinn, de bhi 'g earalachadh an t-sluaigh, agus a tarruing na h-uile ni nach creid sinn a bhi firinneach de oibrìbh dhaoine a tha air ceann sluaigh anns an tir so, chum soluis. Bu choir do na nithean a bhuineas do dh' aobhar Chrìosd, agus do thearnadh anamaibh dhaoine bhi os ceann gum bu chomasach teagamh a bhi air a chur anns an t-seasamh a bhiodh aca na'r measg mar shluagh. Tha am buairead so na'r measg a chionn nach do lean sin an Tighearna le ar n'uile chridhe, ach gu cealgach.

"Co," arsa *Calvin*, "mar eil e falamh de thruacantachd nach d'thoir gu toileach a chluas agus inntinn nuair a tha iomradh firinneach agus durachdach air a dheanamh air sith bhi air a toirt mun cuairt anns an eaglais. Cha'n eil neach air bith, aig am

bheil eadhoin an tomhas as lugha de eagal Dhé, nach eil air a leon na spiorad le bhi faicinn corp Chriosd cho uamhasach agus cho cealgach air a reubadh. Ach a chionn gum bheil daoine cealgach a tighinn a stigh gu bitheanta bho'n chleochda sin, an uair is e am mian teagasg fallain Chriosd a thruailleadh, co as urrainn aicheadh nach e ceum a ghliocais do dhuine amharc gu curamach air an t-seorsa sìth a tha air a tairgseadh dhuinn? Oir mar a tha Chriosd an comhnuidh a moladh sìth dhuinn mar an ni mòr tha e aig a cheart am a teagasg dhuinn gur e firinn an t-soisgeil aon cheangal na sìthe sin. Air an aobhar sin, tha e na ni gun eifeachd dhoibhsan a tha 'g ar mealladh gu bhi treigsinn aideach glan an t-soisgeil, a bhì toirt a stigh an innleachdan bho'n ainm sìth. Ciod ma seadh? Tha sìth gu firinneach ri bhi air a miannachadh agus ri bhi air a h-iarruidh leis an eud as mò; ach na's luaithe na gum biodh i air a ceannach cho daor ri call a chuid as lugha de theagasgan na diadhachd, ma dh'fheumas e bhi, rachadh neamh agus talamh bun os ceann!" Chaidh teagasgan glan an t-soisgeil, a bha air an suidheachadh anns an tir so aig am an Athleasachaidh a thruailleadh le daoine, agus cha bhi lamhan glan aig duine air bith gus an cart e mach as inntinn, as a chreud, agus as a chuideachd na h-uile truailleachd a thugadh a stigh. Cum thusa focal foighidinn Chriosd mar tha e air fhagail agad ann an Leabhar Aidmheil a Chreidimh, bountaichte air briathran Dhé, agus diult na h-uile beachd ùr ann an creud no ann an teagasg, agus earb ri Criosd do chumail ann an lā a bhuaireadh, agus bithidh tu tearainte.

Tha sinn a faicinn gu bheil am a bhuaireadh a tha na'r ceann-teagaisg a dol a thighinn air an t-saoghal uile. Ma sheallas tu mu'n cuairt an duigh air an t-saoghal uile chi thu gu'm bheil am buaireadh so—"An dubhairt Dia,"—'ga chomhdach. Tha truaighe spioradail a ghinealaich so ag eiridh o bhi cur teagamh ann an focal Dhé, ann a bhi cur suas doighean aoraidh neo-sgriobturail, agus a thaitneas ris an fheoil. Feumaidh gun d' thig nithean gu bhi gle chruaidh, oir tha na briathran "gleidhidh mise thusa" a ciallachadh am thruaighean. Tha e gle choltach nach eil an uine fad as gus am bi feum aig daoine anns an tir so air cumail suas a ghardain shiorruidh bhi orra. "Ge b'e bhriseas an lagh, agus nach fan ann an teagasg Chriosd, chan eil Dia aige: an ti a dh'fhanas ann an teagasg Chriosd, tha araon an t-Athair agus am Mac aige."—(2 John 9.)

A Right Decision.—On the completion of the Electric Car system between Greenock and Gourock, the lessees of the road proposed to run traffic on Sabbath, but the Town Council of Greenock have refused to grant the use of their streets for this purpose.

Notes and Comments.

Church Matters.—Mr. Dugald S. Cameron, student, was licensed to preach the gospel at a meeting of the Northern Presbytery at Portree, on the 16th September. . . . The Rev. Alexander Macrae, Portree, acknowledges with thanks, £1 from "A Well-wisher," Dumfries, towards the reduction of the debt on the Portree Church. . . . The half-yearly meeting of Synod will (D.V.) be held in St. Jude's Hall, Glasgow, on Tuesday, 12th November. The retiring Moderator (Rev. James S. Sinclair) will preach at 12 noon.

Communion.—Oban and Helmsdale, 1st Sabbath of this month: St. Jude's and John Knox's, Glasgow, and Tarbert, Lochfyne, 2nd; Lybster, Caithness, 3rd.

Rev. Walter Scott, Australia.—Friends will be pleased to learn that the Rev. Walter and Mrs. Scott, who were on a visit to this country for upwards of a year, and who left Scotland on their return journey on the 23rd April last, arrived safely at their Australian home, The Manse, Brushgrove, Clarence River, New South Wales, about the end of June. They went from London to Brisbane, Queensland, in the S.S. "Fifeshire," and had an excellent voyage, arriving at Brisbane on the 26th June, and when a few days later they reached their final destination, they received a cordial welcome from their friends, some of whom came a considerable distance to meet them. Mr. Scott was presented with a purse of sovereigns by the congregation. At several services and meetings he has taken occasion to refer to his visit to the home land, and to give some account of his travels and experiences. He had addressed, he has said, many and large meetings not only in the Lowlands but throughout the Highlands, and had received much kindness everywhere, and the warmest expressions of interest and sympathy in connection with their work in Australia.

Preaching at Brushgrove Church, on a Sabbath evening, Mr. Scott spoke of the case of the multitudes who were at ease in Zion, and said it meant that the people were in a state of spiritual slumber. They could not otherwise account for so much violation of the Divine Law, whether individually or nationally. The conscience of the generation was asleep. This explained the Sabbath desecration in their midst for purposes of worldly gain or pleasure, as well as the non-attendance, so prevalent, on religious ordinances. And they had the fact that men and women were being swept into eternity unprepared. It was an alarming thought! All this, moreover, was intensified by the spirit of slumber which had overtaken many of the professing churches, as seen in the explaining away or even rejection of the eternal verities of revelation. The infallibility of Scripture was no longer recognised; and no wonder, then, if the great doctrines which it contained were repudiated. He had been saddened by the extent to which this was so in Scotland. And when he found the

leaders of the churches there complaining that they had lost hold of the masses, he asked, was there not a cause? And if these things were done in a green tree—in religious Scotland—what could they expect in a dry? He found the sacredness and simplicity of God's sanctuary invaded by human and worldly elements. Surely there was an awakening of judgment in store for such people!

A Fatal Step.—The Rev. John Charleson, parish minister of Thornliebank, near Glasgow, has gone over to Rome. This, though a startling occurrence, is one that may be commended on the score of consistency. A minister who cannot get on without altars and crucifixes has no logical standing ground anywhere but in the Church of Rome, and it might therefore obviate a great deal of hypocrisy and shuffling if Professor Cooper and many more of our Scottish ecclesiastics would follow Mr. Charleson's leading. His case is an aggravated example of superstition and delusion. In his farewell address to his congregation, on Sabbath, 13th October, he talked of having had a vision of God like Abraham, and the necessity he was under of obeying the heavenly call. The poor dupe is, no doubt, much in love with the emotional æsthetic side of Romanism. But there is also a coarse, cruel, licentious side, and the hopeful convert may find his devotion sadly strained when he comes into contact with that aspect of his adopted faith. As the first example of a pervert to Popery from the ranks of the Presbyterian ministry, Mr. Charleson's case is one of deep significance. We do not hesitate to say that there has been a blight on the Established Church of Scotland since the Disruption. As a vantage ground for errors and corruptions she has had a bad pre-eminence among the declining Scottish Churches. Lax Sabbatarianism, sensuous worship, unsound doctrine, found, when they came to stay in Scotland their first footing in that unrepentant church. And now the sad singularity of affording the first recruit for Rome belongs also to the Established Church. The end is not yet. As yet we see only the first fruits. The harvest follows apace.

Dr. Whyte's Bible Class.—The Scottish correspondent of the *British Weekly* informs us that the Bible Class at St. George's U.F. Church, Edinburgh, conducted by Dr. Whyte, are this winter to have their attention directed to Wesley and Newman. The text books prescribed by the Rev. Dr. are Wesley's Journals and Newman's Apologia. We know already what the style of Dr. Whyte's performances will be. In his hands the subject of Wesley will turn out a very unsafe one, while his rendering of Newman will be unwholesome and erroneous in the extreme. God has set forth Newman as a terrible example of the energy of error, a glaring beacon light to warn the religious voyager off a whirlpool that has devoured many ships. But Dr. Whyte, wise with a wisdom that never came from above, will exhibit him as a star of the first magnitude for spirituality and devoutness. We

will hear much of Newman's sham saintship, but nothing of his proficiency in loving and making lies. Dr. Whyte will hold on his pathway of unpatriotic, unprotestant exposition quite reckless of the grotesque incongruity involved in extolling Thomas Boston the one week and the next applauding a renegade partizan of the Scarlet Woman, who would have given his vote to burn Boston and all his works. He will hold on his way of fulsome panegyric of his idol quite oblivious of the mean, treacherous disrespect he is thereby showing to the memory of Samuel Rutherford, John Bunyan, and other names he affects to hold in high esteem. He will hold on his way unconscious or defiant of the fact that he is an offence to all right hearted Presbyterians, that his specious reveries on Newman and other Romish devotees are a trap and a snare to simpletons like the minister of Thornliebank, and that it is not unlikely that he himself or some of his scholars may finish a course of incautious dabbling in the lore of Rome by a tragic lapse into superstition and error.

New Edition of "Scots Worthies."—We have much pleasure in stating that a new edition of this historic work is about to be issued. The type and paper are good, and the price is very moderate, three shillings, post free. Applications should be made at once to the Rev. Dr. Kerr, 19 Queen Square, Glasgow.

A Hundred Years Ago.—In 1801 Napoleon was successfully climbing up the slippery ascent that led to empire. Fierce wars had been in the years that were past, and still fiercer were to follow. But in 1802 there was an interval of deceitful peace, and patriotic writers were noticing with disapproval the mad rush of idle and wealthy people to Paris, their spirits not alarmed by the terrors of the past or the forebodings of the future. At home, civil and ecclesiastical Society were quiet, but things of great import were brewing. Burghers and Anti-Burghers had in a great measure forgotten their original quarrel, and were unanimously diluting their strong ancient creed with U.P-ism. The Non-Intrusion controversy that issued in the Disruption was yet in the unexplored future. The Sutherland clearances were only at their disastrous beginning. Strathnaver was a haunt of men, not a silent waste of sheep and grouse. Money was scarce and civilization was rudimentary. Men lived with thatch overhead, and the bare earth underfoot, and seldom saw the inside of the distant city. But true religion and sound morals were more abundant, and therefore the former times were better than these.

The King and the Ritualistic Sect.—The King and Queen while staying at Balmoral attended the Parish Church of Crathie, as was the custom of the late Queen. This constitutional proceeding has wakened the ire of the abandoned bigots of the Ritualistic persuasion. Their arrogant assumption is that there is no valid church in Scotland but the Episcopal one, and that the countenancing of Presbyterianism is heresy. At such a fanatic exhibition we are amazed and angry.