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## The Sign of the Prophet Jonas.

THE religious leaders of the Jews came on more than one occasion to Jesus asking Him for a sign from heaven. Jesus had given many gracious and convincing signs of His ministry as the Messiah sent of God ; but they were not satisfied with them. He healed the sick, opened the eyes of the blind, raised the dead, and preached the gospel to the poor ; but these teachers of the people were not convinced ; they desired something more—"a sign from heaven"—some amazing demonstration from the skies that would appeal with overwhelming force to their natural senses and imaginations, and would, in materialistic fashion, prove to them that He was the great prophet of God, the true Messiah.

The two leading religious sects which came into contact with Christ in the days of His flesh were the Pharisees and the Sadducees. The Pharisees, as our readers know, were the devotees of a formal religion ; they professed to adhere strictly to the faith of their fathers, but were wholly taken up with external observances ; they made broad their phylacteries, and delighted to walk in long robes ; they prayed at the corner of the streets, not as zealously desirous for the salvation of their fellow creatures, but as those who loved to be seen of men ; and they pursued a whole round of ceremonies and services, supposing thereby to justify themselves before God and to win a title to heaven. All the while they were but whited sepulchres ; the outside of the platter was fair, but the inside was full of all uncleanness. They were, we may say, the Ritualists of their day and generation. The Sadducees, on the other hand, were of a different cast. They were sceptics in regard to things supernatural ; while professing belief in God, they disbelieved in the existence of angel or subordinate spirit, they denied the resurrection of the dead, and accepted only a part of the Old Testament as of divine authority. They were, in fact, the Rationalists of their time. The two classes were divided about many things, but they agreed in one thing in particular, namely, a decided opposition to the ministry

of Christ. Both sought a sign from heaven—a sign of course adapted to their own carnal ideas. And yet even in seeking this, they were seldom sincere; they rather “tempted” Christ to see what He would do.

In answer to the request for a sign, Jesus gave the following striking reply, as narrated in Matt. xii. 39-40:—“An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas: for as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale’s belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with the men of this generation, and shall condemn it: because they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here.” First, Jesus with one stroke unmasks the wickedness and hypocrisy of the sign-seekers; He gives them their true character, “an evil and adulterous generation”; and then He proceeds to tell them that they will not get the kind of sign they seek, but a sign similar to one given already in Old Testament times, “the sign of the prophet Jonas,” a sign indeed that was not very palatable to the natural man. This sign was not one that was surrounded with outward pomp and glory, and adapted to the self-exaltation of the creature; it was quite the opposite in character; it was entirely fitted to humble man, while it exalted at the same time the grace and righteousness of God. This sign was not such as the Pharisees and Sadducees wanted; it was of too humbling a character to suit their proud unsubdued hearts; while its glory was of too spiritual a nature for them to understand. Jonah was three days and three nights in the fish’s belly; and in like manner the Son of man was to be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. Just as Jonah’s humiliation and deliverance were a sign to Jews and Ninevites of old time, so the death of Christ was to be the great sign to Jews and Gentiles for all coming generations.

Let us notice briefly the points of *resemblance* between the case of Jonah and that of Christ. Jonah suffered for sin; he suffered for the benefit of others; his humiliation and deliverance were designed to show forth the righteousness, grace, and power of God; and his experience was a powerful testimony to the divine authority of the message he was sent to proclaim. In like manner, “Christ suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring sinners to God.” Of course there are striking points of *contrast* between the two cases, all fitted to exhibit the glory of the latter. Jonah went down to the dark recesses of the fish’s belly, and there felt the pains of hell in his conscience for his own individual sin; but Christ, “who knew no sin,” descended into the unspeakable hell of His Father’s wrath for the sins of others, the innumerable sins of an innumerable company of Adam’s race. Jonah’s sufferings were those of an imperfect sinful creature; Christ’s sufferings were those of one who was holy, harmless, undefiled,

the Son of man, and the Son of God, "God manifest in the flesh." Jonah expiated no sin; but Christ made a complete atonement for the sins of His people. Jonah, under the divine hand, was an instrument for the display in a limited degree of the divine perfections; but the Son of man unfolded the immeasurable glory of the Triune God. A view of Jonah's sufferings may profit but will not save the soul; while a spiritual view by faith of "Christ and him crucified" gives everlasting life. "Behold, a greater than Jonas is here." It is the points of resemblance, however, which Jesus meantime emphasises for the benefit of His questioners; He promises that they shall get "the sign of the prophet Jonas." But He also indicates that the present generation of Jews was more perverse than the heathen generation of Ninevites in the days of Jonah, for the latter repented at the preaching of Jonah, while the former refused to repent at the preaching of a greater than Jonah. The Ninevites, who got an unasked for sign from God, and accepted it when it came, shall rise up in judgment against the generation of Pharisees, Scribes, and Sadducees, who were constantly seeking a sign, and would not receive it when it was given them. The Apostle Paul met with the same type of persons as the Lord Himself had to deal with in the days of His flesh, for he says: "The Jews require a sign and the Greeks seek after wisdom: but we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God" (1 Cor. i. 22-24).

It is very plain to any observer that the present age abounds with Pharisees and Sadducees, Jews and Greeks, in the sense referred to. We take the Ritualists to represent the Pharisees, and the Rationalists the Sadducees. What is the case with the Ritualists? Well, they are not satisfied with the gospel of Christ in its purity and simplicity; their sensuous taste is not gratified by a plain and unadorned worship; they are not taken up with a spiritual and holy Christ who aims at planting the kingdom of God in the sinner's heart; who declares that man is so corrupt that nothing less than a new birth will make him fit for the kingdom of heaven; who dies in order that sin may be taken away; and who makes filthy rags of all creature merit, and claims to be the whole meritorious ground of a sinner's salvation. The Ritualists prefer an adulterated gospel, a pompous and vain glorious worship; and they seek a Christ who will leave the citadel of iniquity untouched, and will supply them with signs from heaven that are suited to gratify their carnal senses and emotions. It is not the sin-mortifying, man-humbling, God-glorifying Jesus they seek, but a vain idol, the creature of their own depraved imagination. There is, however, no other sign from above to be given them, but "the sign of the prophet Jonas," "Jesus Christ and him crucified," and if they reject this glorious sign in all its

divine excellency—as they undoubtedly do in our day and generation—there is no other way of salvation open to them; there is nothing that awaits them but a fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation which shall devour the adversaries. The Rationalists, again, cast doubt on the supernatural; they declare the angels to be the mere “forces of nature”; they question the real resurrection of Christ; they doubt His divinity; and they also say that the Bible is full of errors, and is only partially inspired. Such are the Rationalists in the professing Church; they are to be found among many religious bodies, Presbyterian, Congregational, Baptist, and Episcopalian; as are also the Ritualists to whom we have referred. No doubt the Rationalists are not so fond of signs from heaven as the Ritualists, for they are sceptics in regard to the supernatural. But they are agreed with the others in rejecting the glorious sign of “Christ and him crucified”; and are constantly seeking after some new thing. They are not satisfied with the divine way of salvation as unfolded in the Word of God; and they claim that others in later times are inspired equally with the divinely taught prophets and apostles. They condemn “the truth as it is in Jesus” as an antiquated or irrational system of belief; and in total disregard of the many testimonies God has given in the past of the truth and power of His Word, they call for some new sign from heaven. But they will get no new sign, no new Christ, no new salvation, no new Bible, no new Gospel; they may devise counterfeit substitutes of their own in room of the things which God has given, but they will find out at last that they have chosen strong delusion, and have believed a lie to their everlasting shame and everlasting destruction.

Let us then, who profess the faith once delivered unto the saints, be well satisfied with “the sign of the prophet Jonas,” “Jesus Christ and him crucified.” It must not be forgotten of course that we need the teaching of the Holy Spirit to discover to us our sinful and lost condition as sinners, in order that we may be led to look and long for the spiritual revelation to our souls of this glorious sign, and that we also require the same Spirit to make this revelation unto us. It is possible even for ordinary hearers of the gospel to be animated by something of the same spirit as the Pharisees and the Sadducees. Indeed, we are all Ritualists and Rationalists by nature. Let us not look with the former for sensuous pictures of Christ, depicted on the imagination; nor let us, with the latter, reject every truth that does not please our dark carnal reason. May the Spirit of the living God teach immortal souls to be satisfied with the pure and unadulterated Word of truth, to cordially acquiesce in the one divinely appointed way of salvation, and to receive by a God-given faith, not an imaginary or false Christ, but the true and exalted Christ of God in His matchless person and blessed offices, as richly set forth and freely offered to us in the gospel!

## A Sermon.

BY THE LATE REV. JOHN LOVE, D.D., GLASGOW.

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"Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?"—I JOHN v. 5.  
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AFTER we have emerged from non-existence—when, by and by, the dawnings of reason begin to appear in the breast, Satan is at hand; and his first secret whispers in the ears of the soul are to this amount, "All is well; thou art an excellent and happy creature. All is fair and friendly around thee. See how thy parents and friends caress and admire thee. Fear not; thou art come into a good world—a world richly furnished to make thee happy." Such as these are the early sentiments suggested to the unwary soul by the artificer of destruction. They suit the taste and the bias of the corrupted spirit of man. So that fatal, pernicious dream is begun, which, as to some, is hardly ever disturbed till they pass into another world.

By different means, and in various degrees, many are a little roused up. Experience of the disappointing vanity of the world, cool reflection, the stings of conscience, the powers of the world to come—these, and similar causes disturb the sinner's repose. He sees that this is an evil world; that he is fallen into the hands of enemies; that he must struggle for the life of his soul. But what is the issue? Often these strugglings have a dismal issue. The captive of Satan rattles his chains, frets himself a little, looks round the walls of his prison, falls asleep again. Perhaps he is terrified into quietness. Perhaps he too soon imagines himself set at liberty, and that the great conflict has come to a happy crisis. Why? He hath been alarmed; he hath heard the Word with joy; Satan hath retired as though he were discomfited. And now the sinner's dream is sweeter, and his sleep more deep than ever before.

In the midst of these things the Spirit of the Lord utters His still but awakening voice. With a mixture of triumph and of defiance, the inspired apostle cries out, "Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?" Triumph, ye children of God, for yours is that victory in which others have no share. Tremble, ye philosophers, ye moralists, ye notional Christians; your imagined victories will be your confusion. Your enemies are yet in full power, and will not fail to ruin you, if you continue afar from the only Deliverer.

That we may enter more exactly into the meaning of the important words of this text, it will be useful to attend to the train of the inspired writer's reasoning. He is inculcating on Christians the practice of a very important duty, that of mutual love. He holds up to view this excellent grace in a variety of postures; as a large and splendid precious stone is turned round

in the hand of the artificer that, by beams of light falling on it in different ways, its diversified lustre may delight the beholder's eye. The apostle represents the peculiar love of Christians to each other as inseparably connected with regeneration, with the saving knowledge of God, with faith in Him through the Mediator, and with a sense of His sovereign and incomparable love towards us. At the second verse of this fifth chapter he excludes those profane counterfeits of Christian affection which are sometimes exhibited by unbelieving men, whereby the love of the creature is exalted on the ruins of love to God himself. His words are these (verse 2nd), "By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep his commandments." That is, not only may we discover the genuine sincerity of our love to God by its influence to kindle in our breasts a supernatural warmth of affection towards His children, but we may reverse the trial—we may judge of the soundness of our affection towards God's children by observing whether it springs from the right source, namely, love to God himself, and whether it is excited and regulated by His authority and precepts concerning it. For he adds (verse 3rd), "This is the love of God, that we keep his commandments." That is, here lies the evidence and the native effect of sincere love to the great and glorious God; that love brings the soul to a willing subjection to His sacred authority in all things, and particularly in those just and sweet precepts of God which respect our temper and conduct towards one another. Having advanced thus far, the inspired writer adverts to the difficulties and obstacles which lie in the way of an unreserved and continual observation of God's commandments. These difficulties he anticipates by appealing, in general, to the equitable and excellent nature of the precepts themselves: "His commandments are not grievous." But it might be objected, "Though we grant the general truth of that assertion, yet in such a world as this it is no easy matter to adhere inflexibly to the divine rule of conduct." The apostle answers (verse 4th), "Whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world." Still an objector might say, "I grant the new life infused in regeneration tends towards such victory. But is not that new life very feeble and imperfect in its degrees? How is it then capable of encountering so mighty an adversary?" The apostle replies—by taking hold of the infinite strength of Jesus Christ, "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith."

Then follow the words of the text, in which exclamation the apostle is to be considered as at once filled with a sense of the vast worth of the Christian faith, and fired with just indignation against the empty pretences of philosophers, Pharisees, and all others who attempt to rival the Redeemer of the world by promising their disciples that victory over evil which none but He can bestow. "Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?"

For the illustration of this subject it is necessary to make an inquiry into two things, namely: In what respects the world is a Christian's enemy? and, How faith in Jesus Christ is a sufficient cause—the only sufficient cause—of victory over this formidable enemy?

To these two points of inquiry let us, my brethren, bend our most serious attention, looking upwards to the God of all grace, that while we meditate on this grand victory, each of us may feel it in himself; may even now triumph over the world as a conquered enemy; may inwardly bless the great Deliverer of our souls; and may be prepared for every succeeding circumstance of conflict in the spiritual warfare.

I.—In the first place let us look a little in the face of this enemy, "the world." That which derives its existence, furniture, and powers from an infinitely good God—that which the generality of men hug in their bosoms as something consummately fair and delicious—must, by a Christian, be treated with jealousy, with fear, with distance, with hatred, with indignation, with mortal opposition. The world must be dealt with as an insidious and deadly adversary, and that for the following reasons: I see thy fatal aim, thou glistening, thou ever-eloquent serpent; it is thy aim to blind and deceive my understanding, to entangle and ensnare my heart, to irritate the corruptions of my nature, to decoy me into evil by the charm of example, or to compel me by thy menaces, by thy punishments.

Let me speak coolly, and in plain terms.

1. The world is our enemy by its influence to enfeeble and corrupt our views of the most important and salutary truths.

Divine truth, that is, the truth concerning God and the spiritual system of things, is the life and nourishment of the immortal soul. Those things, therefore, are to be accounted hostile and destructive in the highest sense which rob the soul of spiritual ideas and sink it down into the regions of matter. "That which is born of the flesh," says the Redeemer, "is flesh." "To be carnally minded is death," says the inspired apostle. Such is the strange influence of our original corruption, that it diffuses poison through the whole of nature. The system of material objects which meets our bodily senses, is the work of God, and proclaims His infinite perfections. But even here Satan entrenches himself, and he gains access to the soul by every one of the senses of the body, and by all the objects which correspond thereto. Satan teaches us to think of sensible objects detachedly from God; then to stick fast in these objects, so as to account them more real and substantial than things divine and spiritual. Then we loathe and recoil from the direct contemplation of God. Then we adulterate and transform the invisible things of God, mixing them with sense, and sinking them in the mire of matter. Is not every one of us conscious of this process? I speak to true converts. Can you not remember the time when the circle of the visible heavens,

which confines your senses, was the prison which confined all your thoughts; when you had hardly any steady or vivid idea of anything immaterial; when all beyond the visible things of nature appeared as a huge void and chaos, without beauty or delight? At that time you lived "without God in the world." When the eye of God then looked into your souls, instead of their being full of the fair and powerful idea of His divine excellency, He saw them in a state like that of the ancient temple when abused by the idolatrous Israelites, as the prophet Ezekiel describes it (chap. viii. 10), "So I went in and saw, and behold, every form of creeping things, and abominable beasts, and all the idols of the house of Israel, pourtrayed on the wall round about." Such is the present situation of the multitude around us. Were we to go into the streets and houses of this city—were we capable to look into the inmost souls of the people whom we meet—we should, in general, find all summed up in this, No God. The idea of God and spiritual things we should see lurking ignominiously in chains in a secret corner of the soul, but, expanded and bustling through the heart, the strong ideas of whatever can strike the eye, the ear, the taste, the touch, or smell—money, goods, houses, honour, pleasure, and a countless train of such things. These are the gods which possess the temple of the heart in its corrupt state.

Such is what the apostle calls "the darkness of this world." It is the darkness, not of this or that monster, but of mankind; and because it is so general it forms a kind of impetuous torrent which bears down all that comes in its way. In which view the apostle speaks of the unregenerate as walking "according to the course of this world." And hence human society becomes more corrupt in proportion to the multitude of men who are collected together. It is in great cities as though ten thousand pestilential vapours should meet together and condense into one vast cloud of destruction. "I myself," may each individual say, "am a mass of darkness, error, and delusion. I live in a world crowded with creatures of like blindness. Let me go from house to house, from city to city, from continent to continent, my trifling sentiments of divine and eternal things, and my fiery rage for the world, gather confirmation from every person I meet with. For these are the sentiments which I find inscribed on the countenances, conversation, and decisive conduct of mankind—'There is no God, or if there is, His favour is not worth courting—His anger not worth fearing—in comparison of the big, the solid, the substantial things which we are all well assured of in this world.'" Such, my brethren, is the state of things in the world, *as the world*, and exclusively of that victory of faith which the text presents to view. And is there not an enemy here? What is the consequence of these things? It is that the generality of men have no ideas of God and of divine truth but such as are feeble, ineffectual, and, in an endless variety of ways, tainted with destructive error and delusion.

Thus the way is opened for all the other hostile operations of



the world. For when the understanding is thus distempered and robbed of those lively views of God and divine things which should govern the whole man—when this is the case it is no difficult matter for the objects of the world to steal into the heart and to take possession of that sacred place which belongs to the infinite God, who is to be confided in and supremely esteemed, desired, and loved.

Then follows a dreadful irritation of that corruption of nature which consists mainly in rebellious enmity against God and hostile malevolence against man. For whether men's worldly lusts are gratified or disappointed their hearts become more alienated from God and from each other. If divine sovereignty gives them, for a season, their request, such indulgence strengthens that flame of pride, self-sufficiency, and self-complacency which burns in opposition to God and our fellow-creatures. Or if God walks contrary to men in their lusts, and the selfish schemes of others succeed against them, then all the powers of the soul are rankled with virulence against God and against mankind.

In this darkened and debased state of the soul the examples of the world, its frowns and its terrors, are abundantly sufficient to suppress every rising of conscience, and to check every aspiring effort of the soul towards deliverance.

Such is the hostile influence of the world where it fully prevails. And in a way somewhat similar, doth it operate in those molestations and assaults which respect believers in the Son of God. Here, indeed, a mighty arm opposes itself and crushes that evil influence. But still the aim and tendency of the world is to bring believers into darkness and error, to catch away their affections from God, to irritate them against God and man, to draw them into evil by example, or to drive them into it by terror.

We now see this Goliath—the world—stalking forth into the valley to defy the armies of the living God; we see his fierce aspect, and hear the clattering of his brazen armour. Is this enemy conquerable? Can any mortal being stand up to this contest? Yes, it is possible to overcome the world. It is possible in one way, namely, that mentioned in the text. Faith in Jesus, the Son of God, will do this business.

II.—Let us now inquire, as was proposed, in the second place, how faith in Jesus Christ is the sufficient cause of so important a victory—the alone, exclusive cause?

A whole discourse might be very usefully employed in illustrating the description of faith contained in these words, "He that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God." This, however, is not my present object. The nature of genuine faith will be somewhat unfolded in some of the following observations. As to this particular account of the Christian's faith, it may be at present sufficient to take notice that a part of the exercise of true faith is here put for the whole. For though one article of truth is here mentioned, true faith hath respect to a variety of other truths. And

that something vastly higher than a notional assent to the truth is intended by the faith spoken of in the text is manifest from the effect here ascribed to faith, and likewise by the first verse of the chapter, where regeneration and faith are connected together: "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God."

But I pass on to exhibit faith as the conqueror of the world. It is so—

1. Because the believer realises and rests on the testimony of God himself, opposing that testimony to every other, whether from sense, carnal reason, mankind, or infernal spirits. That this idea was full in the apostle's mind appears from several verses immediately following the text (verses 6-10). In these verses the apostle lays open the firm foundations in divine testimony of that faith which overcomes every enemy. Let us think for a moment what is implied in taking hold of this testimony of God. It supposes a discovery made of God himself to the soul, as possessing the attribute of infinite veracity, resulting from the infinite perfection of His understanding, rectitude of His will, and majesty of His government. He appears to the soul as God who "cannot lie." To take hold of the testimony of God respecting the truths of the Scripture implies this farther—that the soul is illuminated to discern the stamp of divine perfection impressed on those truths, to see the glory of Godhead itself shining forth in them. Where now is the world's testimony? What is the believer's language concerning it? "Let God be true, and every man a liar." For in this respect, as in all others, "Before him the nations are as a drop of the bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance."

"Whom say men that I am?" Some, a mere man; some, a superior angel. "But whom say ye that I am?" "Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God." "Blessed art thou, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee. On this rock will I build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Such is the triumphant evidence which attends the whole system of divine truth.

But what are the things which, on this high authority of "Thus saith Jehovah," are brought to the believer's view. Let it be considered—

2. That faith brings to view an infinity of moral and of penal evil, indissolubly connected with the ways and courses of the world. Under the cover of harmless entertainment, a little liberty of thinking, necessary attention to lawful affairs, a little inordinate fondness and irregularity of enjoyment, a little lingering and negligence—under the cover of these and such like things faith sees the astonishing deformity and malignity of sin, calling forth the infinitely good and holy God to prepare the abode of misery, to rivet the chains of everlasting darkness, and to kindle those flames which, by no artifice, by no force, by no entreaties, shall ever be quenched. Bring forth now

thy vanities, thou gaudy world, or thy boasting terrors! The charm is broken, "for what portion is there of God from above? and what inheritance of the Almighty from on high? Is not destruction to the wicked, and a strange punishment to the workers of iniquity?"

On the other hand—

3. Faith brings to the view of the trembling and humbled soul an infinity of good, of felicity, and glory; for it opens a crevice through which the soul looks into the inner shrines of the loveliness and love of God; and when this is done, talk no more to that man of the poor world. Wonder not at his seeming apathy. It is not from want of feeling that he is dead to inferior impressions. His higher powers are otherwise engaged; they are carried aloft. He dwells in God, and God dwells in him. He is gone into the holiest of all; only his earthly tabernacle remains for a little in the view of mortals.

4. But thou smilest, O world, thou fawnest, thou professest kindness and love! Go, thou believer, "Behold the Lamb of God." I see the sparklings of love in His infant eyes. O, let that suppressed understanding be quickly expanded; let that wonderful heart of purity and compassion diffuse abroad its perfumes! It is done. Look down, ye bright angels, and see your glories eclipsed, your wisdom charged with folly, your flaming affections accused of coldness, your tender compassions of indifference! Who is this King of glory? What voice do I hear? It is the voice of my Beloved! Behold, He cometh leaping on the mountains and skipping upon the hills! But what is now in His heart? His body is on the cross, His soul in the furnace of wrath, burning with unknown fierceness against my sins. My heart and ways are now His torment. But how does He look at me? His faith grasps the supporting Omnipotence of Godhead; His love grasps a world of sinners. He will bear them through these flames and floods. Now the conflict is over He is got to the midst of the throne. What sweetness is now in heaven! What new lustre glistens in the countenances of saints and angels! But whom have I in heaven but thee, O thou adorable Jesus? What have I to do any more with idols? Smile, smile thou upon me to eternity!

5. But perhaps the present frame and fervour is not to be trusted. It is not. What, then, are the believer's resources? Here I introduce the last particular which is now to be mentioned. Faith overcomes the world because, in connection with those views of divine truth already attained, it takes hold of that everlasting, divine strength, which is able to preserve, to confirm, to renew, and to increase these precious discoveries, so as to secure and complete the begun victory. A believer knows the deceitfulness of his heart, even in its best frames. He knows also that new and astonishing trials may overtake him, and that at length he must go the way which he hath not formerly gone with

his feet, even through the valley of the shadow of death. The world's malice may add to his death some shocking circumstances. But Jesus says, "Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world. I am the First and the Last. Fear not, I will strengthen thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness. My grace is sufficient for thee, for my strength is made perfect in weakness."

Such is the influence of Christian faith to overcome the world. Suffer me, my brethren, to employ a few moments more in pointing out the—

*Application* of this subject. How exalted and powerful a thing is the true faith of the Gospel! Surely that faith which overcomes the world is of the operation of God—"It is not of ourselves, it is the gift of God."

How dignified is the present state of true believers! They are the people who, in God's infallible estimation, dwell on high. The highest earthly things are far beneath their feet. Their thoughts, pursuits, and delights, savour of victory and of heaven.

But they are destined to more sublime honours and to more public exaltation than they experience in their present pilgrimage. Yet a little while and the world shall see its conquerors, with the Prince of Glory at their head. The upright shall have dominion in the morning. They shall stand with the Lamb, with crowns of immortality on their heads, and palms of complete victory and joy in their hands.

Let us, therefore, put ourselves to the trial, whether our faith is indeed of this quality to overcome the world. Have you seen the world as an enemy, or are you secretly in friendship with it? Has your bondage under this and other spiritual enemies become intolerable? What were your designs yesterday at the Lord's table? What are your feelings now? Do you feel this victory, or do you heartily groan after it? I dare administer no present comfort to any who are not included in those words of Christ, "Blessed are the poor in spirit. Blessed are those who mourn. Blessed are they who hunger and thirst after righteousness."

If we have found a true beginning of such victory, let us follow it out, and exhibit it in its true lustre to the view of the deluded world. "Be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind." Thy indulged carnality, O Christian, grieves the Spirit and hurts thy soul. But it does more. Perhaps some poor unbeliever, who knows thy profession, is secretly watching thee, that he may form a judgment whether there is any reality in those truths which thou professest. But when he finds little else about thee besides the stench of a carnal worldly spirit like his own, what is likely to follow? He may stumble over thee into hell, though thou shouldst scramble into heaven by means of that little sincerity which was but little cherished and manifested on thy part.

Let us be solemnly concerned for those miserable beings who,

either with or without a profession, are overcome by the world, and helping forward each other to the place of woe. Are there any such in this assembly? Are there any of those who halt between God and the world, who, for one morsel of meat, like Esau, sell their title to eternal blessedness? If there are, I give them warning to flee from the wrath to come, and invite them to receive deliverance from unbelief and all its dreary effects, from Jesus, the Messiah, the Son of God.

Let those who truly fight against the world, and have begun to conquer it, confide still more in Jesus Christ, and bless the Author of their deliverance. Let Him inhabit your praises. Observe that signal passage (Gal. i. 3-5), with which I now conclude, "Grace be to you, and peace, from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ, who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father: to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen."

## Glasgow University and the Pope.

THE ninth jubilee of the Glasgow University was celebrated last year. It appears that the University was founded by a Pope in the year 1451. The Reformation came after this date, and the University is more indebted to our noble Reformers than to all the Popes since the first. Romanism may set up educational institutions for the furtherance of its own pernicious tenets, but it has ever been the determined foe of a sound enlightened education. It makes no hiding that it is opposed to the instruction of the common people. Glasgow University authorities saw meet, however, to give the Pope last year a certificate of his love for education, and addressed him in terms of flattery worthy of the most devoted Papists. There are traitors in the Protestant camp. The Jesuits are not dead, but are as active as ever they were in their history. It is strange that this letter was sent to Rome with the signature of Principal Story, but that the Chancellor, Lord Rector, and the Professors knew nothing of it. There has been some Jesuitical scheming in connection with the business. The following is a translation of the letter given in the *Glasgow Observer* (a Romish paper), which was the first to give it publicity in this country. *The Reformed Presbyterian Witness* republished it (with a condemnatory note):—

TO THE SOVEREIGN PONTIFF  
THE MOST HOLY, THE MOST REVEREND,  
AND THE MOST LEARNED MAN,  
LEO XIII.

The entire University of Glasgow, the Chancellor, the Rector, the Professors, the Graduates, and the Students,

(send) health.

In our great joy (for soon we celebrate our centennial feasts), this above all else we can remember with grateful minds, that this splendid University, which is to-day enriched with all the wealth of talent and works, started from the Apostolic See itself, and that it commenced with the most loving patronage of the Supreme Pontiff, as we have learned from our forefathers.

For that most learned Pontiff, Nicholas V., in the year of the Incarnation of our Lord, one thousand four hundred and fifty-one, displaying the greatest love for the Scottish people, being himself a man most illustrious for all the lights of talent and of the liberal arts, founded among us a University, and wished that our doctors, masters, and students should enjoy and use all the liberties which had been granted to the University of his own city of Bologna.

The which so great benefit, as like a loving daughter we ascribe it to the most dear mother from whom it came, we think leads us to hope that Your Holiness may become a sharer of our joy, as also to utter due thanks to the Holy See for so great a favour.

We therefore pray that you may deign to increase this our happiness with your authority; and if on account of these wicked times it could not be that your Beatitude should come to us in these feasts over such difficulties of sea and journeying, we hope at least that you will express to us your feelings through some other person enjoying your favour, and that this our University, founded by the learned Nicholas, fostered by James, King of the Scots, cared for and defended by William, Bishop of Glasgow, and furthermore enhanced by many benefits from many of our Kings, you yourself, most scholarly and most elegant cultivator of Latin Literature, through your kindness may deign to honour still more, and to commend to yet new ages.

We write at Glasgow on the Ides of May, MCMI.

The Prefect and the Vice Chancellor.

About a month ago the University Council took up the matter. Dr. Young tabled a motion disapproving of the letter, and supported his motion in a vigorous speech. Mr. W. Rounsfall Brown seconded the motion. It was not carried however, a majority deciding that it was quite unnecessary to take any steps. The letter was said to be a mere letter of courtesy. We were disappointed with this decision; but we were much more disappointed with the speech of the seconder of the motion disapproving of the letter. The seconder was Mr. W. Rounsfall Brown, editor of the *Bulwark*, and treasurer of the present Free Church. Mr. Brown objected to the letter because of the terms in which it was couched, but he gave the public to understand that he was not wholly against it root and branch. Truly there is room for astonishment. The editor of the *Bulwark* and treasurer of the Free Church only against the terms in which the letter to the Pope was couched! Things are coming to a strange pass. Is there no scope here for inquiry on the part of a Free Church Committee? We think there is abundant. The inspired command is, "Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness;" and there are no circumstances whatsoever that can justify

a Protestant University entering into communication with the Pope of Rome.

The Rev. Jacob Primmer, we are pleased to see, has been pursuing Principal Story on the subject, and has moved for libel in the Glasgow Presbytery. The Presbytery first refused to take any step in the matter; Mr. Primmer appealed to the Synod; the latter sent him back again to the Presbytery, deciding that it was proper for the Presbytery to consider a libel. The Presbytery have agreed by a majority to adhere to their first decision, and Mr. Primmer has appealed to the Assembly. Mr. Primmer deserves to be encouraged in his laudable work, and it is rather interesting to observe that his resolute and able advocacy of Protestantism has secured for him now a more attentive and respectful hearing than he used to get when he began his crusade. We hope his efforts will be attended with abundant success.

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## Spiritual Counsel.

LETTER FROM THE LATE REV. W. STEWART, LOCHEE,  
TO A FRIEND IN SOUL DISTRESS.

I DESIRE to sympathise with you in your present distress, and would be happy to be in any measure instrumental in establishing and comforting your soul in the truth as it is in Christ. I am happy to learn that you have seen such a beauty in the 88th Psalm; none but exercised souls can understand or relish it, and the most of Christian professors are entire strangers to what it contains.

There is only one way to heaven, and we may see from the Word of God how Old and New Testament saints were led. If our exercises and experiences coincide with these, we may conclude that we are on the road to heaven; but if otherwise, we are on the way to hell. There are many in the present day who grasp at the privileges of God's children, though they do not possess the character of such; but a sincere soul will not take the privilege without the character. They who are taught by the Holy Spirit, are made sensible that they are by nature children of wrath, like to the devil, and meet for hell, and that they can do nothing to recover themselves; although Christ is freely offered to them in the preaching of the gospel, yet they cannot embrace him till the Spirit enables them. They know experimentally the redemption which Christ purchased will be but a sealed fountain to them in time and eternity, unless the Spirit apply it. The faith which unites the soul to Christ, is the fruit of the Spirit of God—the result of His regenerating grace—(See John i. 12, 13). Christ by His Spirit takes the first hold of the soul, and when the Spirit enters into the dead soul, He imparts life to it by enlightening the understanding, and renewing the will, and the first act in the quickened soul, is to apprehend the Lord Jesus

Christ for wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. Christ apprehends the sinner, and then the sinner apprehends Him—(Phil. iii. 12). He keeps hold of the soul by His Spirit, and then the result is that the soul keeps hold of Him. It is not the carnal mind that closes with Christ, but the heaven-born principle implanted in the moment of regeneration. That principle turns to God, Christ, and holiness, as the needle to the north pole. Its language is, I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ, and regard everything but dung that I may win Christ, and be found in Him so as to obtain pardon through His blood, acceptance through His Word and Spirit, grace here, and glory hereafter.

There is and must be something like a progressive effectual calling going on in the *true* believer from the day of conversion till the moment of death. The Holy Spirit convinces him more and more of his sin and misery so as to make him feel himself getting worse and worse every day; thus He gives him new discoveries of the person, offices, and fulness of Christ, and enables him to take a new hold of Him for life and salvation, as if he had never come to Christ before. This is what I understand by living a life of faith on the Son of God, and entering into the spirit of these words, "As ye have, therefore, received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him, rooted and built up in him, and established in the faith." The first act of saving faith is to receive and rest upon Christ, then by a repetition of the act faith grows (for faith grows by exercise), and the believer becomes more firmly rooted in Christ and the things of God. This is the secret of inward, real, and experimental religion. The Holy Spirit keeps the saint ever alive to his guilt and depravity, then he glorifies Christ in taking of his blood, righteousness, and grace, and shows them to the soul; and in this way the real Christian is kept travelling between his own emptiness and Christ's fulness, until he is prepared as a vessel of mercy for glory. They are either hypocrites or formalists, or backsliding Christians, who have not a daily and growing sense of their need of the Lord Jesus Christ in all His offices, and of the Holy Spirit in His illuminating, quickening, and sanctifying influences—(See Phil. iii. 8, 14). Paul, when thirty years in Christ, felt as much, and perhaps more, his need of Christ than the first time he closed with Him. They who are really in Christ come daily to Him in the exercise of humble and believing prayer. They come for a *present salvation, for a new heart, for new intimations of pardon, for true faith, true love to God, true repentance unto life, true zeal for the divine glory, true indignation against sin, and victory over it, and for a true meetness for the heavenly world.* The true people of God are desirous that the devil and hell may be cast out of their souls in this life, and that the kingdom of glory, which consists in righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost, may be established within them.



They who are exercised about these things, and cannot be content without them, have a true and lively faith, and they who say or think that they rest upon Christ, and are not exercised about these things, whatever appearance of holiness, comfort, joy, and assurance they possess, *they*, in their present state, are but the devil's lambs, and going quietly and comfortably to hell. They who can live quietly with the hell of indwelling sin in their souls in this world, shall be shut up in the hell of sin and misery in the next; for sin must and will go to its own place, if not destroyed. Let professors say what they please, if they are not seeking above all things the glorious work of regeneration and sanctification on their souls, they are growing like devils, and ripening for hell; and on the other hand, they who are tortured and tormented with sin, and are desirous above all things to be made new creatures in Christ, and perfectly holy, are preparing as vessels of mercy for heaven and glory. We have many professors of religion, but few new creatures. Indeed, it is a rare thing to meet with a person really seeking after a change of nature; the most of professors are in very good terms with themselves, and this is a sure evidence that the Holy Spirit is not dealing savingly with their souls.

When the Spirit commences to destroy the works of the devil, there is an uproar in the soul; then the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, because they are contrary to each other. The warfare gets hotter and hotter as the work of grace advances. Satan and sin say—If we are forced out of this soul at last, we will do all that we can against the Holy Spirit and the new creature while we remain. If we are not able to destroy the new creature, we will at least make it groan, and weep, and cry. The Holy Spirit put it here to disturb our rest and repose. Now, the devil and sin outwit themselves here, for the new creature runs and tells God what sin and Satan are doing against Him. "Lord, thou seest how vile I am, like and worse than a devil, and a picture of hell; O Lord, I am sore oppressed, undertake for me, O destroy the devil's work within me; if thou wilt not destroy sin in me, it will destroy me in time and eternity. Lord give me a holy nature to hate *sin*, and to strive successfully against it. Write thy lovely law upon my heart, that I may delight in it after the inward man; O Lord, save me, or I must perish, for I know that I can do nothing but destroy myself; convert, humble, quicken, and sanctify me in spite of myself (the carnal mind). Take hold of my soul by thy Spirit and grace, as the angel took hold of Lot and pulled him out of Sodom. Lord, pull me out of myself, and every refuge of lies, for I feel Sodom within me, pull me into Christ, and pull me on in a progressive sanctification, and never let me go, but make me like thy blessed self, and meet for glory." Now, if you are really exercised about these things, your soul is in health, and prospering before God.

## Difference between Acquired and Experimental Knowledge.

A LETTER BY THE REV. JOHN NEWTON.

April, 1766.

MY LORD,—I shall embrace your permission to fill my paper. As to subject, that which has been a frequent theme of my heart of late, I shall venture to lay before your Lordship—I mean the remarkable and humbling difference which I suppose all who know themselves may observe, between their acquired and their experimental knowledge, or, in other words, between their judgment and their practice. To hear a believer speak his apprehensions of the evil of sin, the vanity of the world, the love of Christ, the beauty of holiness, or the importance of eternity, who would not suppose him proof against temptation? To hear with what strong arguments he can recommend watchfulness, prayer, forbearance, and submission, when he is teaching or advising others, who would not suppose but he could also teach himself, and influence his own conduct? Yet alas! *Quam dispar sibi!* The person who rose from his knees before he left his chamber, a poor, indigent, fallible, dependent creature, who saw and acknowledged that he was unworthy to breathe the air or to see the light, may meet with many occasions before the day is closed, to discover the corruptions of his heart, and to show how weak and faint his best principles and clearest convictions are in their actual exercise. And in this view, how vain is man! what a contradiction is a believer to himself! He is called a *believer* emphatically, because he cordially assents to the Word of God; but, alas! how often unworthy of the name! If I were to describe him from the Scripture character, I should say, he is one whose heart is athirst for God, for His glory, His image, His presence; his affections are fixed upon an unseen Saviour; his treasures, and consequently his thoughts, are on high, beyond the bounds of sense. Having experienced much forgiveness, he is full of bowels of mercy to all around; and, having been often deceived by his own heart, he dares trust it no more, but lives by faith in the Son of God, for wisdom, righteousness, and sanctification, and derives from Him grace for grace; sensible that, without Him, he has not sufficiency even to think a good thought. In short, he is dead to the world, to sin, to self; but alive to God, and lively in His service. Prayer is his breath, the Word of God his food, and the ordinances more precious to him than the light of the sun. Such is a believer, in his judgment and prevailing desires.

But were I to describe him from experience, especially at some times, how different would the picture be. Though he knows that communion with God is his highest privilege, he too seldom

finds it so ; on the contrary, if duty, conscience, and necessity, did not compel, he would leave the throne of grace unvisited from day to day. He takes up the Bible conscious that it is the fountain of life and true comfort ; yet perhaps while he is making the reflection, he feels a secret distaste, which prompts him to lay it down, and give his preference to a newspaper. He needs not to be told of the vanity and uncertainty of all beneath the sun ; and yet is almost as much elated or cast down by a trifle, as those who have their portion in this world. He believes that all things shall work together for his good, and that the most high God appoints, adjusts, and over-rules all his concerns ; yet he feels the risings of fear, anxiety, and displeasure, as though the contrary was true. He owns himself ignorant, and liable to be deceived by a thousand fallacies ; yet is easily betrayed into positiveness and self-conceit. He feels himself an unprofitable, unfaithful, unthankful servant, and therefore blushes to harbour a thought of desiring the esteem and commendations of men, yet he cannot suppress it. Finally (for I must observe some bounds), on account of these and many other inconsistencies, he is struck dumb before the Lord, stripped of every hope and plea, but what is provided in the free grace of God, and yet his heart is continually leaning and returning to a covenant of works.

Two questions naturally arise from such a view of ourselves. First,—How can these things be, or why are they permitted ? Since the Lord hates sin, teaches His people to hate it and cry against it, and has promised to hear their prayers, how is it that they go thus burdened ? Surely if He could not or would over-rule evil for good, He would not permit it to continue. By these exercises He teaches us more truly to know and feel the utter depravity and corruption of our whole nature, that we are indeed defiled in every part. His method of salvation is likewise hereby exceedingly endeared to us ; we see that it is and must be of grace, wholly of grace ; and that the Lord Jesus Christ, and His perfect righteousness, is and must be our all in all. His power, likewise, in maintaining His own work, notwithstanding our infirmities, temptations, and enemies, is hereby displayed in the clearest light—His strength is manifested in our weakness. Satan, likewise, is more remarkably disappointed and put to shame, when he finds bounds set to his rage and policy, beyond which he cannot pass ; and that those in whom he finds so much to work upon, and over whom he so often prevails for a season, escape at last out of his hands. He casts them down, but they are raised again ; he wounds them, but they are healed ; he obtains his desire to sift them as wheat, but the prayer of their great Advocate prevails for the maintenance of their faith. Farther, by what believers feel in themselves they learn by degrees how to warn, pity, and bear with others. A soft, patient, and compassionate spirit, and a readiness and skill in comforting those who are cast down, is not perhaps attainable in any other way. And lastly, I

believe nothing more habitually reconciles a child of God to the thought of death, than the wearisomeness of this warfare. Death is unwelcome to nature; but then, and not till then, the conflict will cease. Then we shall sin no more. The flesh, with all its attendant evils, will be laid in the grave—then the soul, which has been partaker of a new and heavenly birth, shall be freed from every incumbrance, and stand perfect in the Redeemer's righteousness before God in glory.

But though these evils cannot be wholly removed, it is worth while to inquire, secondly, how they may be mitigated. This we are encouraged to hope for. The Word of God directs and animates to a growth in grace. And though we can do nothing spiritually of ourselves, yet there is a part assigned us. We cannot conquer the obstacles in our way by our own strength; yet we *can* give way to them; and if we do, it is our sin, and will be our sorrow. The disputes concerning inherent power in the creature have been carried to inconvenient lengths; for my own part, I think it safe to use scriptural language. The apostles exhort us, to give all diligence to resist the devil, to purge ourselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, to give ourselves to reading, meditation, and prayer, to watch, to put on the whole armour of God, and to abstain from all appearance of evil. Faithfulness to light received, and a sincere endeavour to conform to the means prescribed in the Word of God, with an humble application to the blood of sprinkling, and the promised Spirit, will undoubtedly be answered by increasing measures of light, faith, strength, and comfort; and we shall know, if we follow on to know the Lord.

I need not tell your Lordship that I am an extempore writer. I dropt the consideration of whom I was addressing from the first paragraph; but I now return, and subscribe myself, with the greatest deference, &c.

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## A Letter from Rome.

BY THE LATE REV. JOHN KENNEDY, D.D., DINGWALL.\*

ROME, 21st February, 1884.

MY DEAR SIR,—I feel exceedingly anxious to know how you have been since we left home, and how your work has been getting on, and I cannot refrain from asking you to take the trouble of writing me such information as I desire.

As for me, I am just as the Lord hath appointed, and with this I desire to be satisfied. I have not been quite so well for the last week. I somehow caught cold, and this has produced results which make me rather anxious. But till this came, I felt

\* This letter, hitherto unpublished, was written to the late Mr. Alexander Macdonald, Catechist, Dingwall.—ED.

wonderfully better and quite conscious of a considerable accession of vigour.

This is our last day in this wonderful idolatrous and ungodly city. On this occasion I did what I could in looking into the worship and practice of the Romish Church, and the result has been to make me feel assured that I had previously no right conception of the monstrous deceit and blasphemy of the horrid system of Popery. I have been a witness of many services that were such an outrage on reason, as well as on all spiritual feeling, that I felt persuaded that only the power of a "strong delusion" could induce men to countenance them. Here you can enter a Church during service and walk about and talk as if you were in a museum or in a gallery of paintings, and look on what is being done before the altar, without even approaching to anything like a countenancing of it. During the service at the altar, even priests and monks are moving about among the people who are mere spectators, and are just as frivolous as those who are talking and laughing around them. The officiating priests are quite as devoid of any appearance of seriousness as those who are looking at them as they mutter and posture in a way that indicates nothing except the weariness of routine, their utter want of faith in what they would commend to others, and the facility with which they can dishonour Jehovah and His Anointed. The religious power of Popery is manifestly on the wane here, as surely as its political power is gone. But the poor people are going back into the gross darkness of infidelity instead of coming out into the light of truth. But this is not the final condition of the Romans. If severe great national calamity occurred to scare them, they would fly back into the arms of the Pope again, and be his slaves as before. I cannot but think that this ungodly city shall be the scene of dire judgments ere the Lord shall arise to shew mercy. The present condition of the people is just what might be expected. The utter deceitfulness of Popish worship—its utter emptiness of all that would meet the crave of conscience—is such that, combined with the profligacy of the priesthood, the people are driven into utter infidelity. The only religion they know is that which is represented by Popery, and how can we wonder if they say "if that is religion we chose to be without it."

But there is much, very much, here that is intensely interesting. The recent excavations have discovered remains of ancient Rome as prove it to have been the most magnificent city in the world—and its greatest works were erected by the slave-labour of Christian captives—works such as the Colosseum, the most splendid ruin in the world, which afterwards became the scene of the slaughter of the Christians who erected it, the architect being one of the first to suffer on its arena. I was at Appii Forum and the three taverns where Paul met the brethren on his way from Puteoli to Rome. I was at his own hired house. I was in the prison in which he was confined, and I stood on the very pavement on

which rested his feet when he was before Nero. All this was very interesting amid all that was grieving. How strange it seems to find oneself standing between walls that shew the paint that was so skilfully laid upon them 2000 years ago, and to stand on the mosaic pavement with which at that distant date they were floored.

Protestant congregations in this city are very few and very small, and of these some appear to be imitating Popery, rather than protesting against it. I refer to the High Church Episcopal Churches, one English, and another American. These are but helping those who worship in them pass over to the Beast. In our Free Church here there is a minister who is an able, clear, doctrinal preacher, but whose sentiment is considerably affected by the fashionable religion of the times. I preached once there, and because I used no hymns, I have never been asked again. The doctrine which I preached was not relished because I endeavoured to set forth views of scripture truth which told against current tendencies. I had promised to preach again, but since that first service I was never reminded of my promise. I find that the Scotch newspapers are down upon me because of the service which I conducted, and of course they represent the feeling of the congregation here.

I am leaving Rome, D.V., to-morrow forenoon for Florence, where I expect to be for a month. . . .

With kindest regards.—I am, my dear sir, yours affectionately,

J. KENNEDY.

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## The Glasgow Football Tragedy.

IN the Magazine for August, 1896, we chronicled the fact that over 60,000 persons had assembled at Glasgow, on Saturday, April 4th of that year to witness a football match. The event thus celebrated was the yearly contest between England and Scotland for supremacy in the sport, and every year since then we have noted that the crowds flocking from the four winds to see this folly have become more multitudinous and mad. On Saturday the 5th of the present month (April), this carnival was again on foot in Glasgow. The local crowd, swelled by contingents from Aberdeen, London, and all places far and near had risen to over 80,000 in the Ibrox Football grounds. The game was proceeding briskly when suddenly the staging, overstrained by the surging and swaying of such a mass of people, gave way at the highest point, and over 500 spectators fell to the ground—a distance of 40 feet. The results to life and limb were terrible; 23 deaths have taken place since the accident, and many of the survivors who now crowd the infirmaries of Glasgow have been maimed for life. We do not agree with the press writers who interpreted the accident merely as a regrettable example of the

effects of insufficient woodwork. No doubt the managers of the Football Club propose to build a much improved range ; but we suspect their inward thoughts are quite erroneous. When Ephraim and the people of Samaria said, "The bricks are fallen down, but we will build with hewn stones ; the sycamores are cut down, but we will change them into cedars," they uttered these words in the pride and stoutness of their heart, and their improved masonry and carpenter work, in due time, fell about their ears. So will it be to all those who do not understand the Lord's work nor regard the operation of His hands. The Ibrox football accident was not an admonition regarding the insufficiency of certain timbers, but it was a sermon to the times on some forgotten points of religion. The 80,000 sinners who gloated on the imbecile spectacle of eleven Englishmen and eleven Scotchmen diverting themselves with a child's plaything had deeply forgotten God. But He came suddenly into their midst and spake as on Mount Sinai. As at Belshazzar's feast when the revelry and riot grew high, the God of heaven revealed Himself by the handwriting on the wall, and the king's knees smote together with terror, so solemnly did this same God invade, with His terrors, that scene of abandonment at Ibrox. The present day passion for sport has become a national vice. Children may make pastime their business and grown-up people may recreate themselves soberly in due season, but that the course dissipation of the football field or the race course should devour the time and absorb the thoughts during the seven days of the week of the rising manhood of the nation, is, we are sure, a thing intensely provoking to the righteous Ruler of the skies. By reason of gambling, swearing, general moral coarseness, and total eclipse of reason and conscience, the Ibrox football field was probably on that fatal Saturday afternoon, a scene unmatched under the sun. It was a spectacle of congested ungodliness, and we are not astonished that a thunderbolt of the Divine vengeance was launched into the midst of it. The reckless violation of the fourth commandment so plentifully displayed in connection with this national mania would of itself suffice to bring swift destruction from the insulted Majesty of Heaven. Of the thousands who came from distant places to see the match, the greater number intended to return per Sabbath train. If, instead of careering homeward in full health, exchanging notes on the game, and inflaming with oaths and jests the depravity of their fellows, some of these devotees were forced to spend the Sabbath groaning in the hospital, it was a spectacle of sorrow, but also an exhibition of just judgment. Let the youth of Scotland beware, and especially the youth of our own Church, who may be experimenting in the popular vices and vanities. The thunderclouds of divine anger brood over all such scenes of abandonment and riot, and the affair of Ibrox shews that the life of such presumptuous sinners is not worth a moment's purchase.

## Letters by the late Captain Ross, Wick.

WE happen to have in our possession a number of letters written by the late Captain Ross to intimate friends, some of whom were passing through much mental and bodily trouble. He gives glimpses of his own spiritual history in these letters, and also enlarges in an interesting manner on the exercises of the children of God in general. Captain Ross, it may be said, did not lay any claim to scholarship, and so our readers will not expect samples of finished composition. The letters are just the homely outflow of a mind deeply exercised in the things of God. The first letter here given was written during a temporary residence at a place fourteen miles south of Wick.

SWINEY,

LYBSTER, 19th January, 1887.

We were down at Wick at the time some of our friends were getting married, which was very pleasant to them. . . .

How few we see or hear of entering into spiritual marriage! Plenty are in name; but the courtship is too short. They are too sure of their marriage with the new Husband they profess to have and embrace when their old husband is still living. Paul calls such adulteresses. Always in such cases they rejoice for a season, but when trouble comes in and the affections get cold, they will begin to forget their new husband, and turn to the old house, swept and garnished, and take with them seven spirits worse than the first. But when the true spiritual courtship between Christ and the soul begins, what heavy troubles, what sorrowing, what rejoicing, what sinning on the bride's side, what darkness she is left in, what sighing, what mourning, what praying, what giving over of hopes for her Husband to return! She is afraid of all being a delusion; afraid He will never return. And it may be for years before He will make up the marriage knot between the poor soul and Himself, when she can say, "My beloved is mine and I am his." She now rejoices in seeing her marriage with such a great One as the King of Glory, and His giving to her, in the marriage covenant, Himself and everything in heaven and on earth. No wonder she rejoices with joy unspeakable and full of glory. She thought she would do nothing on earth but sing, and she would like all the world to sing with her, wondering they were not doing so. Her mountain stood strong. But little did she know of herself or her sinful heart, full of carnal, deceitful lovers, and of her giving all her Husband's jewels and all she got to rejoice in Himself, to her carnal lovers. No wonder although He would hide His face and put her to trouble and cause her to mourn. Why? Because "he lifted me up on high and cast me down again." And after that there was but mourning. When giving over hopes, He will send His Spirit with the word to her heart, to show her His love to her—thus lifting her up on high.



But she will be soon in the miry clay, afraid she will not get out. Darkness was for her good as well as the light. Israel was in the wilderness till they knew what was in their hearts. The more the creature knew, the more he felt he was unlike Him who made choice of him, and the older he grows the more sinful in his own eyes and the more unlike heaven.

I must finish as it is late, and perhaps my writing will have no taste, but there is some truth in it. Let anyone read John Bunyan's "Grace abounding to the chief of sinners."

R. R.

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PULITENEY,

31st January, 1890.

I am now an old man, and any spiritual teaching I got was through the holy Word and Spirit all my life long. I depended on man very rarely. If I were in trouble, any word that would suit my case I took hold of, just as a man giving up hope would grip anything that would meet his hand.

When I was young, I heard ministers until I got sick tired of them. I gave up going to church, and not contented myself when I was but young in years, I would be at home on Sabbath, and was envying those who were going to Church. I was myself at times miserable. But any preaching or teaching without life would not satisfy a craving want. I was wandering in a wilderness without a way of safety. Sometimes I thought I was going to heaven. For seven years I was in that state. Some times I was troubled, but I never made my case known to any one. I was afraid I would turn a reprobate at last, but still I had a false hope of heaven. When the Lord's time came, He put me in deep distress of mind. My sins made me most miserable. I envied all brute creatures, even serpents, because they were not like man, condemned to eternal death by sin, original and actual. I was sinking fast to the lowest hell in my feeling. No man can describe this state, not even they whom the Lord took through it. Only as the psalmist, they can say "And thou delivered hast my soul out from the lowest hell." When the court of heaven is put up in a creature's conscience, and the poor soul is condemned to eternal ruin, what a joyful voice will the condemned soul hear when the Father says "Save him from going down to the pit, I have found a ransom" in my own Son! No one can tell the change of state a poor soul experiences sinking down to the lowest pit in his own feeling, and in an instant getting a view of the glory of the Father in the face of Christ Jesus. A new nature created, a new life given to live a life of faith on Him who loved him, and gave Himself for him, and power given to rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory. What was pressing him down to the lowest hell? His sins. Now he or she can rejoice in Christ Jesus for being a lost sinner, as Christ came to seek and to

save the lost. But he will not be always in this happy state. He has perhaps a long and dreary wilderness to go through, sin turning to be exceeding sinful, and darkness hiding all the glory he saw from his face, and all the good he saw fleeing away, and doubts and fears coming, coming. The soul has but one news. An unchangeable Jehovah is his fortress where he can hide himself.

The Lord would not spend so much pains on you for casting you off. When He begins the good work, He will carry it on till the day of Jesus. He will be eternally glorified in cleansing them, and washing them from their sins. You will not see all His work here, but there will be a long eternity for the revealing of it to His redeemed ones. Eye hath not seen nor ear heard what He hath prepared for them that He loved. We have need of the everlasting arms to keep us in the time of need. Nothing but everlasting love and everlasting power can keep us in time of need.

R. R.

## Christ's Conquest of the Soul.

BY THE REV. JOHN FLAVEL.\*

WE will open the way and manner in which Christ obtains a throne in the hearts of men, and that is by conquest; for though the souls of the elect are His by donation and right of redemption; the Father gave them to Him, and He died for them; yet Satan hath the first possession; and so it fares with Christ, as it did with Abraham, to whom God gave the land of Canaan by promise and covenant, but the Canaanites, Perizzites, and sons of Anak, had the actual possession of it, and Abraham's posterity must fight for it, and win it by inches, before they enjoy it. The house is conveyed to Christ by Him that built it, but the strong man armed keeps the possession of it, till a stronger than he comes and ejects him.—(Luke xi. 20, 21, 22.) Christ must fight His way into the soul, though He has a right to enter, as into His dearly purchased possession. And so He doth; for when the time of receiving them is come He sends forth His armies to subdue them; as it is in Psalm cx. 3, "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." The Hebrew may as fitly be rendered, and so is by some, "in the day of thine armies;" when the Lord Jesus sent forth His armies of prophets, apostles, evangelists, pastors, teachers, under the conduct of His Spirit, armed with the two-edged sword, the Word of God, which is sharp and powerful.—(Heb. vi. 12.) But that is not all; He causes armies of convictions, and spiritual troubles to begird and straiten them on every side, so that they may know not what to do. These convictions, like a shower of arrows, strike point blank into their

\*Extract from Mr. Flavel's Sixteenth Sermon on "The Fountain of Life."—ED.

consciences (Acts ii. 37), "When they heard this, they were pricked to the heart, and said, Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Christ's arrows are sharp in the hearts of his enemies, whereby the people fall under Him.—(Psalm xlv. 5, 6.) By these convictions He battles down all their loose vain hopes, and levels them with the earth.

Now all their weak pleas and defences, from the general mercy of God, the example of others, etc., prove but as paper walls to them. These shake their hearts, even to the very foundation, and overturn every high thought there, that exalts itself against the Lord. The day, in which Christ sits down before the soul, and summons it by such messengers as these, is a day of distress within, yea, such a day of trouble that none is like it. But though it be so, yet Satan hath so deeply entrenched himself in the mind and will, that the soul yields not at the first summons, till its provisions within are spent, and all its towers of pride and walls of vain-confidence, be undermined by the gospel, and shaken down about its ears, and then the soul desires a parley with Christ. O now it would be glad of terms, any terms, if it may but save its life; let all go as a prey to the conqueror. Now it sends many such messengers as these to Christ, who is now come to the very gates of the soul; Mercy, Lord, mercy, O were I but assured Thou wouldest receive, spare, and pardon me, I would open to Thee the next moment! Thus the soul is "shut up to the faith of Christ" as it is Gal. iii. 23, and reduced now to the greatest strait and loss imaginable; and now the merciful King, whose only design is to conquer the heart, hangs forth the white flag of mercy before the soul, giving it hopes it shall be spared, pitied, and pardoned though so long in rebellion against Him, if yet it will yield itself to Christ. Many staggerings, hesitations, irresolutions, doubts, fears, scruples, half-resolves, reasonings for and against, these are at the council-table of man's own heart at this time. Sometimes there is no hope; Christ will slay me if I go forth to Him, and then it trembles. But then, whoever found Him so that tried Him? Other souls have yielded, and found mercy beyond all their expectations. O but I have been a desperate enemy against Him. Admit it, yet thou hast the word of a King for it; "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon."—(Isaiah lv. 7).

But the time of mercy is past; I have stood out too long. Yet if it were so, how is it that Christ hath not made short work and cut me off, set fire, hell fire, to my soul, and withdrawn the siege? Still He waiteth that He may be gracious, and is exalted that He may have compassion. A thousand such debates there are, till at last the soul, considering if it abide in rebellion it must needs perish; if it go forth to Christ it can but perish; and being somewhat encouraged by the messages of grace sent into the soul at

this time, such as in Heb. vii. 25, "Wherefore he is able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him"; and John vi. 37, "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out"; and in Matt. xi. 28, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." It is at last resolved to open to Christ, and saith, "Stand open, ye everlasting gates, and be ye opened, ye everlasting doors, and the King of glory shall come in." Now the will spontaneously opens to Christ; that royal fort submits and yields; all the affections open to Him. The will brings Christ the keys of all the rooms in the soul. Concerning the triumphant entrance of Christ into the soul, we may say, as the Psalmist rhetorically speaks concerning the triumphant entrance of Israel into Canaan (Psalm cxiv. 5, 6), "The mountains skipped like rams, and the little hills like lambs; what aileth thee, O thou sea, that thou fleddest? thou Jordan, that thou wast driven back?" So here, in a like rhetorical triumph, we may say the mountains and hills skip like rams, and the fixed and obstinate will starts from its own basis and centre; the rocky heart rends in twain. A poor soul comes in to the word full of ignorance, pride, self-love, desperate hardness, and fixed resolutions to go on its way; and by an hour's discourse the tide turns, Jordan is driven back. What aileth thee, thou stout will, that thou surrenderest to Christ? thou hard heart that thou relenest, and the waters gush out? And then the soul is won to Christ; He writes down His terms, and the soul willingly subscribes them. Thus it comes in to Christ by free and hearty submission, desiring nothing more than to come under the government of Christ for the time to come.

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## Obituary.

MR. HENRY ADAMSON, HELMSDALE.

WE record with much regret the decease of Mr. Henry Adamson, cooper, Stafford Street, Helmsdale, which took place there on the 2nd April. Mr. Adamson was a man of a quiet, unassuming disposition, yet manifestly one who truly feared the Lord. He had the musical gift, and led with much efficiency the praise in the Helmsdale Congregation. The removal of this humble, intelligent, praying man is a real loss to the Church. He was born in Clyth, Caithness, and had reached the ripe age of seventy years. Much sympathy is felt for his widow and family in their great bereavement.

J. S. S.

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FRIENDS in Glasgow and in the north will regret to learn the death of the worthy Donald Mackenzie, the aged colporteur, late of Tain. His end was sudden. He attended, as usual, St. Jude's Church on Sabbath, the 13th April, and was then in his ordinary health. On the Tuesday following he unexpectedly passed away.

## An la a Ch'ann 's an la a th'ann.

[Gle thric nuair a tha sgriobhadh Gaidhlig air a chlobhualadh tha mearachd an a thaobh litrichean nam focal gu math lionmhor. 'Se is aobhar dha so gu bheil an luchd oibre anns an tigh-dheasachaidh mar is trice gu tur aineolach air a chainnt a tha iad a cur an clo agus mar sin ged a b' ionnan's gu'm biodh an lamh sgriobhaidh gle ghlan tha na daoine a' dol cli agus cha'n iongnadh e 'Se tha na iongantas cho math 'sa tha iad a deanamh. 'Nam biodh cothrom aig an luchd sgriobhaidh air sealltuinn thairis an obair nan clo-bhualadairean mum biodh iad reidh dh'fheudadh iad iomadh litir agus focal mearachdach a cheartachadh : ach eadar aon ni agus ni eile chan eil so gu tric a tachairt agus feumaidh ar luchd-leughaidh ar leisgeulne a ghabhail ma chi iad mearachd litrichean anns na focail Ghaidhlig a tha sinn o mbios gu mios a cur a mach.]

**T**HA e na chall ann am moran aiteachan far an i a Ghaidhlig : canain an t-sluaigh fhathast cho beag 's is urrainn leughadh ceart a dheanamh innte. Oir fhad's gur h-i a chanain is fhearr a thuigear bhiodh e da rìreadh na bhuannachd gum b' urrainn a chuid mhor a leughadh. 'Se gle bheag do'n ghinealach a tha 'g eiridh suas nach dean leughadh gu cothromach anns a Bheurla : ach am feadh 's a tha i 'na cainnt choimhich dhoibh tha iad an cunnart an cuid Beurla a chall agus bitheanta cha'n fhaigh iad mor fheum dhi. Mu'n robh an-t-ionnsachadh cumanta cho pailt 'sa tha e an diugh bha gun teagamh am barrachd feum air sgoilean Gaidhlig a bhi air an cur suas na tha ann an diugh ach 'nuair a bha iad air chois anns a Ghaidhealtachd tha e 'na aobhar duilich-inn nach deachaidhaidh an cumail suas. Oir is mor am feum gu ruig an la 'n diugh ann an caochladh earrainnean do'n duthaich air cothrom leughaidh 'nan canain fein a bhi aig moran do ar co-luchd-duthcha.

Cha'n eil fhathast ceud bliadhna ann o thainig an Sgriobtuir a bhi gu pailt agus gu saor air a chraobh-sgaoileadh ann an Gaidhlig Albannaich. Roimh 'n am sin bha cuid de'n oigirdh air an teagasg anns a Bheurla agus le cleachdadh thainig iad gu bhi gle fhileanta ann an rathad a bhi 'g eadar theangachadh nan Sgriobtuirean o Bheurla gu Gaidhlig ionnus gu'n leughadh iad ann an Gaidhlig o leabhar Beurla. Ach ged a bha so gu math far an robh e cha robh e pailt no cumanta agus thigeadh dhuinn maitheas Dhe aideachadh agus a ghabhail a stigh anns an t-sochair a fhuair sinn mar shluagh 'nuair a chuir na Comunnan air son a Bhiobull a chraobh sgaoileadh an leabhar naomh ann an lamhan a phobuill chumanta. Be sin an t-am freagarrach air son ionnsachadh Gaidhlig a thoirt seachad agus chuir aireamh do dhaoine beannaichte leis an Tighearna an guailnean ris an obair so anns an taobh dheas. Chaidh comunn nan Sgoilean Gaidhlig a chur air bonn agus is mor am maith a rinn e air feadh an taobh tuath anns na h-eileanan agus ann an Earaghaidheal leis na sgoilean a chuir

iad air chois agus na daoine urramach diadhaidh a chuir iad gle thrì air an ceann.

Air fear do'n mhuinntir a dh'eadar-theangaicheadh a Ghaidhlig o'n Bheurla bha Fionnladh Mac-an-Rothaich an soisgeulaiche urramach a shaothraich air feadh na Gaidhealtachd o eilean Arain gu ruig Duthaich 'ic Aoidh agus Leogas. Ach ri linn da a bhi dol mu'n cuairt bha an t-eolas litireil a dol am mend agus thall 's a bhos anns an duthaich bha na Sgoilean Gaidhlig 'nan lochrain soluis. Tha cuimhne againn ann an bliadhnachan a chaidh seachad agus nach till a chaidh air tearc do na maighistearan Sgoile urramach so fhaicinn agus aig cuid dhiubh chuala sinn mu dheighin nam maighistearan a bha aca fein og agus na daoine urramach eile a bha aigh Comunn nan Sgoilean o chionn faisg air ceud bliadhna air ais. Dh'fheudamaid iomradh beag a dheanamh air eachdraidh ghoirid a fhuair sinn air fear dhiubh a leigeadh fhaicinn an t-seorsa dhaoine a bha iad ann. 'Se am fear a bh' ann Ian Macleoid a mhuinntir Chil-ma-luthaig ann an Trotarnais anns an Eilean Sgiathanach. Fhad's a chuala sinn ma dheighin 'sann ann am Bhatarnais ann an Eilean a bhreith a chaidh a shuidheachadh an toiseach air ceann Sgoile. Shaothraich e gu dileas ann an sin agus cha robh a shaothair an diomhan. Bha dusgadh am measg an t-sluaigh mar thoradh air a dhillseachd air an do rinneadh beagan iomraidh an uraidh anns an leabhran so an co-cheangal ri Tormod an Dall a chaochail ann an Gleann-Dail. An deigh dha bhi am Bhatarnais chaidh e gu Gabhsunn ann an Leogas-far an robh sluagh an trath sin. Dh'fhan e leis fein anns a bhaile so ann am bothan gun uiread is uinneag a bhi air. Ach ged a dh'fheudadh daoine mor-chuiseach tair a dheanamh air fein agus air aite comhnuidh thug an Tighearn a ris gnus d'a shaothair agus bha moran ann Gabhsunn agus ann an Dail air an iompachadh. Air an dara turas a thug Fionnladh Mac-an-Rothaich do Leogas bha an dusgadh so air toiseachadh agus rinn Fionnladh dìreach air tigh Iain. 'Se is coltaiche gun robh eolas aig na fir air a cheile roimhe. Co dhiubh bha iad a nis gle bhlath a thaobh a cheile.

Bha fear Domhnull Domhnullach a mhuinntir a bhaile agus a bha cheana 'na dhuine gle ghealltanach a stigh nuair a shuidh Fionnladh ri taobh an teine ann an tigh Iain. Chaneil fada idir o chaochail Domhnull 'na sheann duine ann an sgìre Bharbhais. Areir mar a bhiodh e 'g innseadh mar a dh'fhailtich na h-urramaich a cheile bha iad a suidhe taobh ri taobh agus thoisich Ian air glun Fhionnlaidh a shliobadh. Dh'fhairich e gu'n robh glun a bhriogais caithte no reubta agus seach nach robh aig Fionnladh ach an aon deise aodaich co dhiubh cha robh ni b'fhearr a ghabhadh deanamh na e fein a dhol a luidhe agus gun caradh am fear eile an reubadh Thoisich Ian air caradh agus 'nuair a bha e ris an obair thubhairt e "Nach ann ormsa a chaidh an t-urram a chur gu'n d'fhuair mi briogais a Chrìosduidh ri caradh?" Fhrea-gair Fionnladh as an leabaidh, "Agus nach ann ormsa a chaidh

an t-urram a chur gu'n d'fhuair mi luidhe ann an leabaidh a Chriosduidh? 'Sann mar so," ars' esan, "a tha na fìor bhraith-rean; nuair a gheibh iad reubadh ann an aite feuchainn ri a dbeanamh nis miosa 'sann a tha iad a' deanamh na tha 'nan comas air son a charadh." Dh'fhan Fionnladh greis uine comhla ri Iain agus chum e na coinneamh e an dha is bha Ian fein a' seinn. Cha b'fhad a a chaidh an obair so air aghaidh nuair a dh'eirich geur-leanmhuinn an aghaidh Iain. Bha an t-aite an robh e mu naoi mìle air falbh o Eaglais na Sgireachd agus mun deachaidh Ian do'n aite is gann duine a bhiodh a dol do'n Eaglais air an t-Sabaid. Thoisich Ian air seirbhis a chumail air an t-Sabaid nuair a bha i anns an Eaglais naoi mìle air falbh. Bha am ministear gu math samhach fhad's a bha daoine an aite gun a bhi dol taobh sam bith a dh'eisdeachd ach a nis nuair a shin iad air dol a dh'eisdeachd shin esan air casaid air Ian ris a chomunn o'n robh e mach agus chaidh an duine diadhaidh a bhriseadh o a dhreuchd.

Ach a nis bha a leithid do theas am measg an t-sluaigh air son an t-soisgeil 's gu'n do chum iad suas e air an costus fein fad da bhliadhna. Agus lean iad air so ged a bha sochairean Eaglais air an diultadh dhoibh. Bha da bhaile a dol an laimh a cheile ris an obair so, am baile anns an robh e fuireach agus am baile a b'fhaig air Gabhsunn agus Dail o dheas. Chum iad suas Ian gus an tainig ministear soisgeulach do Leoghas—Mr. Alastair Macleoid a bha ann an Uig. Fhuair esan fios air suidheachadh Iain agus fhuair e air a ghabhail a stigh a ris mar mhaighistir sgoile ann an sgìre aige fein. Shaothraich e ann am Breinis ann Uig far an d'fhuair e bas mu'n bhleadhna 1838. Mar dhearbhadh air an spiorad a thaisbein e feudaich sinn innseadh mar a dh'fhag e uiread 's a dh'fhag e do chuid an t-saoghail. Bha beagan do phuinn Shasunach aige agus dh'fhag e iad aig a' chomunn a bhris e o bhi 'na mhaighistir seach gun robh iad a deanamh uiread fheum air feadh na duthcha. Is olc a thigeadh e dhuinn cuimhne a leithid so do fhiughalaich a leigeadh air di-chuimhne. An teagasg a bheireadh Ian so seachad bha e air son a chuid bu mho air a dbeanamh suas do bhriathraibh nan Sgriobtuirean air an cur ann an altan a cheile. 'Se a bh' ann fein duine trom ionndruinneach 'na spiorad. Thubhairt neach araidh a bha fìor eolach air gum b'e Ian agus Gilleasbuig Cook an dithis bu mho a chunnaic esan 'na la aig an robh cudthrom na diadhachd a luidhe air an spiorad. Air chuimhne bithidh na fireanan agus cho fad 's a tha ceangal aig na Gaidheil ris an t-seann soisgeul bithidh aite blath aig na h-urramaich a dh'fhalbh ann an cridhe nan linntean a tha tighinn 'nan deigh.

Ma bha a Ghaidhealtachd fada ann an comain muinntir an Taobh Dheas airson cothrom fhaghail air leughadh 'nan canain fein agus airson Biobuill a bhi aca cho pailt agus a nis cho saor is coir dhoibh gun iocadh iad ni maith do shliochd na muinntir o'n d'fhuair iad a leithid do shochairean. Mar a tha cuisean air tionndadh anns na bailtean mor tha cothrom aig na Gaidheil a

theid gu deas a bhratach a chumail suas a tha eadhon Eaglaisean a bha ainmeil air son an dillseachd a slaodadh anns an eabar. Dh'fheudadh clann na muinntir a fhuair an fhirinn—mar a dh'fheudamaid a radh—o mhuinntir an Taobh Dheas eisimpleir a thoirt do shliochd nan daoine o'n tainig e d'an ionnsuidh ann an rathad a bhi diultadh dealachadh ri briathraibh an Ti is e e fein an fhirinn. Tha feum a tha dol seachad air comas cainnt a chur an ceill eir na bailtean mora mar a tha Glasacha agus Dun-eidin a bhi air an taoisinn a ris a chum agus gun aithnich a chuid mhor dhiubh soisgeul Chriosd agus rian no Sabaid. Ach tha e 'na aobhar eagail gu bheil moran do na Gaidheil a chuala soisgeul glan agus a chunnaic oilean na Sabaid 'nan oige 'nuair a thig iad gu deas a tilgeadh dhuibh cleachdaidhean an oige agus 'gan comh-chumadh fein ris na nithibh a tha iad a faicinn mu'n tiomchioll. Bha *ceisd* air a cur o shean mu na cinnich aig nach robh eolas air Dia an do threig a h-aon diubh an diathan nach robh 'nan diathan gidheadh threig Israèl tobar nan uisgeachan beo agus tha so ri radh fhathast mu iomadh neach a tha treigsinn oide-foghluim an oige agus reachd an De. Is olc an diol so o chlann nan Gaidheal do chlann na muinntir o'n d'fhuair iad caoimhneas cho mor. Ach is maith gu bheil fuigheall 'nam measg a tha a taisbeanadh tomhas a dh'èud am measg nam fineacha garbh far am bheil an comhnuidh.

Air cho pailt 's gum bi na Biobuill air cho mor 's gum bi an solus litireil tha nadur an duine 'ga dhearbhadh fein a bhi 'n aghaidh Dhe leis mar tha an ginealach so a tarruing air falbh an guailne o bhi fo chuing Chriosd. Ni a tha dearbadh ann an rathad neo chumanta soilleir cho feumail cho do-sheachuinte feumail 's a tha cumhachd an Spioraid a bhi leis an fhocal agus anns na meadhonan a chum gum faigh muinntir feum dhiubh. Tha iomadh neach ag aideachadh nach dean na meadhonan as fearr feum mur beannaich an Spiorad iad ach tha iad a dol air an aghaidh gu toilichte socrach gun na meadhonan a bhi air am beannachadh. Cha'n ionnan creud fhallam anns a' cheann agus blathas na beatha a bhi anns a chridhe. Nuair a bha Melanchthon og bha a leithid do bhlàs 'na inntinn 's gun robh e 'n duil nach seasadh muinntir an aghaidh na firinn. Dh' fheuch e riu agus cha'n fhada a bha e gun fhaghail a mach gun robh seann Adhamh tuilleach is laidir airson Mbelanchthon og. Far am bheil blathas anns an anam agus eud airson teachd rioghachd Chriosd 'Se ni anabarraich feumail a bhiodh ann gum biodh dearbh bheachd nach dean nis lugha a chuis na obair an Spioraid Naoimh. Ann an la mar a tha an la an diugh-nuair a tha eolas cho farsuinn agus am Biobull cho saor agus dearbadh air a thoirt mar sin fein air na meadhonan a bhi gun fheum gun an cumhachd o shuas is math a thigeadh do'n dream len ionmhuinn Ierusalem a bhi an sas ri cuirt nam flaitheanas mar a bha am faidh o shean. O gun reubadh tu o cheile na neamhan gun tigeadh tu nuas gun sruthadh na sleibhtean sìos 'nad lathair.



## Laoidh Spioradail.

LE DOMHNULL MATHANACH BH' ANN AN SGIRE CHILDONAIN.

*Oran a rinn e 'n uair a bha nithe an t-saoghal so 'ga thréigeadh.*

'S MITHICH dhomhs'a bhi tuirsgeadh,\*  
 'San dus a' triall m' fhàgail,  
 Is m' aghaidh chuir romhan,  
 Ann an gnothaich mo thearnadh;  
 Ach dar sheallas mi stigh,  
 Air seana-chridh' cheud Adhamh,  
 'S mòr th'orm do leth-ghrabhadh,  
 Thug ur-chadal a bhàis orm.

Le cridhe gun chreidimh,  
 Làn aidich gun ghràsan,  
 A ghabhadh le faileas,  
 Mar dhearbhadh air tearnadh;  
 Cridhe a tha feòlmhor,  
 'S leis nach deoin dhol dachaidh,  
 'S tha sealltuinn ri saoghal,  
 Mar iodhal le tlachd ann.

Ach dar 'bheireas am bàs orm,  
 'S nach fhàr mi dhul as uaith,  
 Bu mhaith an uair sin na Chrìosd e,  
 Gu m' dhìon bho do cheartas.  
 Och is ochan mar tha mi!  
 'S mi 'san fhasaich an cunnart,  
 Agus Iordan a bhàis  
 Na chuan bàthaidh tha cumant.†

Mur fhaigh mi 'n caochladh glòrmhor,  
 Air an fheòil a tha malluicht',  
 Agus cobhair Trionaid,  
 Do m' dhìon bho gach cunnart;  
 Cha ruig mi leas bhi 'g innseadh  
 Ciod a dh' iomrainn gu tearnadh;  
 Cha dean ni's lugh' no Chrìosd e,  
 Ann Iobart tha làidir:

A fhuair buaidh air an t-saoghal,  
 Air daoine 's air Sàtain,  
 'Sa dh' fhosgail geatacha' Shìoin  
 Do gach neach a chaidh thearnadh.

\* Preparing for a journey.

† Common.

Bheiream comhairl' oirbh 'bhràithrean,  
Na'm b'àill leibh 'bhi beò,  
Gun sibh d'ur milleadh le saoghal,  
'Tha 'caochladh mar cheò.

Nach 'eil sibh 'faicinn na daoine  
Th' air leaghadh sìos leis mar ròin,\*  
A chur an cul'aobh ri Criosd leis,  
'Sa leig dhiubh a bhi beò :  
'S mòr mo thruas ris gach duine,  
'Tha 'n taobh muigh do 'n Fhear-thearnaigh,  
'S tha fathast na *strains'ear*†  
Do mhac cinnteach Israeil.

'S mi chinnteach an oighreachd,  
'S cha 'n fhoighnich mi a h-àireamh,  
Cha 'n 'eil i ac' ach air earball,  
Dar dheargas am bàs orr' ;  
Dar dheargas am bàs orm,  
'S nach fhar mi dul as uaith ;  
Dar dhiùltas na glùinean,  
'Sam beul nach dean labhairt :

'Sa chluais nach dean clàisdean,  
'San t-sùil nach dean faicinn ;  
Tha so 'gam agair ni's tric' gu ùrnuigh,  
Mo thim a bhi caitheamh ;  
'Sam bàs a' tighinn dlùth dhomh,  
Nach gabh diùltadh dar thig e,  
Le comhairl mo chàirdean,  
Le ràthan no bileach.‡

Ach dar gheibh am bàs so comas,  
A Sion bho 'n Tighearna,  
Thig e-san mar Earraid  
Le cabhaig do m' iarraidh :  
Ach cionnus dh' fheudainns' bhi beò  
Mar biodh Stòras an Athair,  
A thug Criosd na Glòire,  
Mar lòn dhomh ri chaitheamh.

Ach dar sheallas mi 'siosa,  
Orm fhein a chlùit§ shalach,  
Cuiridh sud mi gu h-ìosal  
A sìos aig do chathair ;  
Aig cathair do thròcair,  
Tha sòlas ri fhaighinn,  
Na 's mò na saoghal,  
Ged dh'fhaodt' a ghleidheadh.

\* A sea animal. † Or, coigreach. ‡ Bills. § A clout

Tha 'n Spiorad Naomh ann,  
 'S e mar Shoar\* a sior shnaidheadh ;  
 Dheanadh Creidmhach a cealgair,  
 As an earbainnse ma'anam :  
 Dh'earbainn ann m'anam,  
 Is dheanainn deth bràthair,  
 Le gaol ni bu doimhne  
 Na gheibheadh aon mhac mo mhàthair,

'S ma's e 's nach bitheadh e,  
 Ach na dhuine 'thaobh nàduir,  
 'S goirid a leanadh e mise,  
 Tre mheadhon mo nàimhdean ;  
 Far am bheil naomhachd,  
 Tha mìneachd is irisleachd ;  
 Tha saorsinn is càirdeas  
 Anns gach cearnaidh ri shireadh :

'N tra dh'eir'eas a Gbrian orr'  
 A nios gu suilleach,  
 Gheibhear iadsan an tra sin  
 Mar aon àl ann do bhroilleach :  
 Is e so am bainne,  
 Tha fallain gu àrach,  
 'S anns nach 'eil a chrodaich,†  
 Ged a tha 'ar 'ga àicheadh.

'Se gliocas na nathrach,  
 Agus *puision*‡ an t-Satain,  
 Dh'fhag mis' cho an toileach  
 Air an talamh so fhagail :  
 Ach na 'n tigeadh 'n geur-leanmhuinn  
 Sin dar dh'aithnicht' na bràithrean :  
 Oir theicheadh iad cuideachd  
 Mar chaoraich do 'n fhàsaich.

'S ged sgapaidhte bho chéile  
 Cha 'n eugadh an cairdeas,  
 'S cha sguireadh iad a dh' ùrnuigh  
 Ged a bhùitichte bās orr' ;  
 Ged bhuitichte bās orr',  
 Bha lorg Dhaibhidh 'gan cobhair,  
 Dheanadh an cumail a 'n aird,  
 'N uair b' aird na tonnan.

A bheireadh a null iad air Iordan,  
 Gun am brògan a bhogadh,  
 A stigh air geata' na gloire,  
 Sud an ceòl ac' gun obadh ;

\* Carpenter.

† Something that adulterates the milk.

‡ Poison.

Tha 'n ceòl ac' gun obadh,  
Is aobhar ogan gu brach e,  
Do chlann na h-ath-bhreith,  
Oir gheibh iad án sàth dheth.

Ach ma shiubhlas iad mi-cheart,  
Cha chaomhainn e stracain,\*  
Cha toir e buill dhoibh diomhan,  
Ach d' an dion o 'n t-Satain.  
Nach truagh leatsa daoine,  
Tha gun naomhachd gun ghrasan,  
Gun dearbhachd o 'n fhìrinn,  
Air cinnteachas tearnaidh.

Tha 'n creach air an cul'aobh,  
Tha 'n sùilean air iadhadh,  
Tha 'n cridhe na shuidhe,  
Air nithe di-buan ri 'n iarruidh,  
Nach cruaidh leat cuid do luchd comuin,  
Gun sùgh ach alladh† ghrasan,  
A tha nan luidh' ann am muineas ‡  
Fo dhalladh aig Satan.

A thilg thairis an fhìrinn,  
A tha 'g innseadh mar 'tha iad,  
'S nach teid anam gun naomhachd  
A chaoidhch' steach do Phārras.  
Ach na 'n chleachda sibh dìcheall,  
'Sa chealgairachd aicheadh,  
A dheanamh fathasd 'n 'ur naoimh sibh,  
'S'n ur luchd-aon-tigh air fhrādaich.

Na smuainichibh a chairdean,  
Nach bu chradh leam 'ur dìobhall  
Dar thig laithean an fhoghair,  
Is tim taghaidh nan diasan,  
Dar thig laithean an fhoghair,  
Is tim taghaidh nan diasan,  
Gach neach gheibhear gun ghrasan,  
Gheibh a Satan a sios iad.

Ach cha 'n urra' mi innseadh  
Gach ni tha na chradh dhomh,  
Mheud 'sa tha mi a' faicinn  
Do mhi-chleachdadh air t-fhabhar,  
'N deigh daoine bhi tainneadh,  
'San t-aran air aicheadh,  
Tha iad a rithist air tionnda'  
Gu cleamhnas ri 'n abhaist.

\* Stripes.

† Clù.

‡ Sloth.

Gu cleamhnas ri 'n abhaist,  
 'S cùis chraidh bhi 'g am faicinn,  
 Le ith agus le òl,  
 Le an-steòrnadh 's mi-chleachdamh ;  
 Cuid eile cho chrion diubh  
 'Deanamh dia agus taic dheth ;  
 'S mur caochail sibh abhaist,  
 Bithidh 'm bàs na chùis ghrabh dhuibh.

## Notes and Comments.

**Correction.**—In the March number, on page 411, 8th line from the top, "Son of God" should read "son of God."

**Communions.**—Oban and Kames, 1st Sabbath of May; Glendale, Skye, 3rd; South Harris, 4th. Coigach (Lochbroom), and Bonar, 1st Sabbath of June.

**An Unprofitable Book by a Degenerate Son.**—There is hardly anything that has given us more pain of late than the perusal of a certain new book by Mr. Oliphant Smeaton, son of the late eminent Professor George Smeaton, of the New College, Edinburgh. Professor Smeaton was one of the soundest and ablest divines that Scotland has produced, a faithful and accomplished expounder of that system of Scriptural doctrine commonly denominated Calvinism; but his son, we regret to say, has written a glowing eulogy on the late Principal Morison, the most zealous advocate of the erroneous Arminian system that has been known in recent times. Mr. Oliphant Smeaton is good enough to tell his readers that when "only a lad" he was troubled with the doctrine of Predestination, that he swung from Calvinism to "something akin to Roman Catholicism," and that at length he found the light that brought him rest in the writings of Principal Morison. So much the worse, we say, for the light and the rest. There is a light which is darkness, and a rest which is no rest. It is not ours to determine Morison's personal standing before God, but as far as his views of the Gospel system are concerned, we can contemplate nothing better fitted to infuse a delusive hope for eternity into immortal souls. Mr. Oliphant Smeaton had the blessed privilege in his youth of a godly father and mother that were in no ordinary degree intellectually and spiritually capable of directing him in the right ways of the Lord. But he has manifestly cast their instructions behind his back; and as if glorying in his own shame, he has published a book in which he condemns those life-giving truths that should have lingered in his memory, if not in his heart, surrounded with the sweet halo of holy and happy memories. The writer is the last person in the world to affirm that any man is to accept a system of doctrine simply because his parents have held it, but he is strongly of the opinion that Mr. Oliphant Smeaton should have thought twice before

publicly identifying his name, and that in terms of no common admiration, with the Morisonian system of theology. This scheme has done nothing for Scotland or any other country but to produce a superficial easy-going worldly religion, that has wrought no deliverance for humanity, while on the other hand, Calvinism has shaken and reformed the world. Mr. Smeaton is a lover and writer of novels, and no doubt his Arminian religion will present no check to his progress in this field. Truth may be a stumbling-block to the pursuit of fiction; but error never.

There is, however, one sentence in this book which we must notice as a most unwarrantable misrepresentation that not even a school-boy should have been guilty of. Mr. Smeaton says that "before he died, Dr. James Morison had the satisfaction of knowing that the doctrines for which he fought and suffered were accepted as the essentials of our Christian faith, as the '*every-day dogmas*' of every Protestant Church in Britain." We admit that the larger so-called Protestant Churches, such as the United Free and the Established, now accept, in one way or another, the dogmas of Morisonianism, but are the smaller bodies to be all included in this category? Or does smallness of size exclude a religious body from the designation of a Protestant Church? Mr. Smeaton sublimely condemns the existence of the Reformed Presbyterian, Original Secession, and Free Churches, as well as others that need not be mentioned. But fiction is one of Mr. Smeaton's favourite fields, and so we need not wonder that his eyes are blind to the most patent realities.

**Acknowledgment of Donations.**—The Rev. Neil Cameron desires to acknowledge, with thanks, the following donations to St. Jude's Building Fund:—A Friend from the North, £10; A Friend, Garve, 5/; A Friend, Paisley, 10/; A Friend, Jura, 10/; A Sympathiser, Lochcarron, per Miss Kennedy, 15/. Our readers will understand that it is anonymous donations that are acknowledged here. One donation, not anonymous, was inserted by mistake in last issue.

**Protestant Alliance Meeting.**—The fifty-first annual gathering of the Protestant Alliance was held on the 23rd April, in the Queen's Hall, London. In the afternoon, Colonel Wellesley Robinson presided, and in opening the proceedings said our forefathers thought they had crushed out the viper of Roman Catholicism, but they were wrong. Rome had never lost sight of its aim to regain its power in this land. At the present day this object was proclaimed, and Rome was a real force in the land. The first resolution affirmed that it was absolutely necessary that the Sovereign on his accession should give a personal assurance of his rejection of the distinctive errors of the Church of Rome, and pledged the meeting to resist any attempt to alter in any way the words of the Royal declaration. The Rev. William Thomas and Mr. W. C. Maughan, Glasgow, supported the resolution which was carried unanimously. In the evening a demonstration was

held in the same hall. Mr. B. Nicholson presided. He said that Mr. Balfour's Education Bill favoured the ritualistic faction and not the Protestants. Unless Protestants arose against its sacerdotal tendencies, we should have the greatest and most precious of our liberties snatched away from us. The Rev. W. R. Mowll, M.A., then brought forward a motion which stated that the inaction of successive Governments in neglecting to enforce the Act of 1829 for the suppression of Jesuit and other Papal orders was fraught with danger to the highest interests of His Majesty's subjects. The Rev. Henry Dening, M.A., moved a resolution deprecating the development of Ritualistic teaching and practice in the Church of England, and earnestly calling upon Lord Salisbury to nominate for promotion such men only as were faithful in both preaching and practice to the principles of the Protestant religion. Mr. John Kensit seconded the resolution. If Lord Salisbury and the Cecil family, he said, had been pandering to priestcraft, let them remember that Mr. Gladstone and the Liberal party did the same when they were in power. The resolution was eventually carried with acclamation.

**Sabbath Concerts in the U.F. Church.**—The following is the summary of a programme of a concert held in the Cowgate U.F. Church, Edinburgh, in December last:—“A Service of Praise will be given by the Choir, in the Church, on Sabbath Evening, 22nd December, 1901. The Rev. Charles Wedderburn will preside. Programme—Part I.—Ward's Sacred Cantata ‘The Nativity.’” Here followed the names of Instrumental Marches Choruses, Solos, Quartettes, &c. Part II. consisted of Solos and Anthems. The additional items of the advertisement were as follows:—“Piano, Miss Madge Mackay. Organ, Mr. G. Crerar. Conductor, Mr. R. Douglas. Doors open at 6.30. Commence at 7. Collection to defray expenses.”

This needs little comment. Music is the chief religious deity of the present generation. In the name of Christianity, ministers and people are returning to idol worship. The Greeks had their goddess of music, and so have the larger so-called Christian churches of to-day. They imagine that they will bring the people to Christ by their Sabbath concerts, but they labour under a great delusion. To a false Christ they may bring them, but not to the true Christ of God. Man-made devices in worship are under His curse. The United Free Church, which boasts of its Christian enlightenment, is only leading the people back to that heathenism from which they were delivered at the glorious Reformation.

**Meetings of Assemblies.**—The Moderators-elect of the General Assemblies are as follows:—Established Church, Dr. James Russel of Cambeltown; United Free Church, Dr. Robert Howie, Govan; Free Church, Rev. D. M. Macallister of Free Greyfriars and Buccleuch, Edinburgh. The U.F. Assembly expects to meet this year in Glasgow. The case of Professor George Adam Smith and his views on the Bible will come up;

and it is mooted that Principal Rainy will bring forward a motion condemning *some* of his views, but not calling for any special discipline. Should this forecast be realised the process will only be on a level with Rainy's past methods of procedure which have wrought such incalculable evil in Scotland.

**"The Bible and the Critics."**—The Rev. John Macewan, D.D., Edinburgh, has published a book with the above title, in which he criticises the pernicious views of Professor George Adam Smith and other higher critics. Dr. Macewan does his work with ability, but there is one very large fly at least in the apothecary's ointment; he affirms that the standards of the United Free Church to which he belongs maintain the sound doctrine of inspiration. Now, the Confession of Faith embodies that doctrine, but the U.F. Church has made void the Confession by its Declaratory Acts. In 1892, the General Assembly of the Free Church declared in the notorious Declaratory Act of that date that diversity of opinion was recognised in the Church on various points of doctrine, and one of these points was undoubtedly the inspiration of the Scriptures. Leading men in the Church then got legal standing for erroneous views of inspiration. The formula of the U.F. Church is further adapted to this condition of affairs and makes it quite consistent for men, who do not regard the Scriptures as the infallible Word of God, to hold office in the Church. Dr. Macewan is under erroneous Declaratory Acts, and administers a defective formula so that his present effort in nowise delivers his soul. Dr. Macewan's ecclesiastical history is rather a sad one; he was once a vigorous supporter of Drs. Begg and Kennedy in defence of the sound principles of the disruption; he is now in the company of the betrayers of the faith, and is silent on important points for the maintenance of which he was at one time almost prepared to shed his blood.

**Death of Mr. Rhodes.**—There passed away at Capetown, on the 26th March, Cecil John Rhodes, the leading man of affairs in South Africa. Mr. Rhodes, who was 49 years of age, was the son of a Church of England clergyman. By his company interests in connection with the diamond mines, he amassed immense wealth, and became the leading figure in the business and political circles of South Africa. His chief idea was the extension of the British Empire, and towards the accomplishment of this end, he put forth all his energies, and freely expended his money. Mr. Rhodes was essentially a man of the world and a not very scrupulous one either, so that while we may stand amazed at his remarkable mental vigour and vast activity, we can only view his career with a melancholy interest. His god, it appears, was this present world, and so darkness shrouds his end. In his will he has left vast sums of money for the promotion of education in South Africa, and for the encouragement of young men there and in other countries who might desire to prosecute their studies at Oxford, in his native England.