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The National Covenants.

NO doubt there is hardly one of our intelligent readers but knows something about the National Covenants of our country, and yet it is to be feared that many, especially of the younger generation, would find it difficult, if questioned, to give an intelligent account of their history, character, and aims. These Covenants were entered into during the most important periods in the history of this nation, and had much to do with the establishment of the kingdom of Christ in our midst. We all make our boast of the distinguished sufferings which our ancestors endured for Christ's Crown and Covenant; and the stimulating influence of their heroic lives and ever-memorable sacrifices is with us unto this day. Surely it would be well, therefore, to have a clear understanding of their Covenants or Mutual Agreements in the cause of God and truth, which have had such an intimate connection with the history and life of vital Christianity in the land. Much has been written on the subject; it would be easy to refer our readers simply to books,¹ and so leave the matter, but a brief statement here of the facts historical and otherwise may not be without advantage to both old and young among us.

The Covenants were the results of the Reformations from Popery and Prelacy. The Reformation from Popery began to dawn about the beginning of the fifteenth century. James Resby, "an Englishman and scholar of Wicliffe," and Paul Craw, "a Bohemian and follower of Huss," then suffered martyrdom in Scotland for their faithful testimony against the errors of Rome. But it was not until the sixteenth century, when Patrick Hamilton and other Scottish witnesses died the martyr's death, that the Reformation had made so much progress as to encourage those who were emancipated from Popish error and superstition to band themselves together (formally and publicly) for the maintenance and advancement of God's truth in the country. It is on record that those who were valiant for the truth entered into "bands," or covenants, at Dun in 1556, Edin-

¹ The "Scots Worthies," "The Covenants and Covenanters," etc.

burgh in 1557, Perth in 1559, and again at Edinburgh in 1560, the objects of which were to declare their renunciation of idolatry and all society with it, and to vow (as may be learned from the words of one of these covenants) that "we, by His grace, shall, with all diligence, continually apply our whole power, substance, and our very lives, to maintain, set forward, and establish the most blessed Word of God." In 1562 the Confession of Faith, prepared by John Knox and five other Reformers, was approved of by the three Estates of the kingdom and by the first General Assembly of the Church of Scotland. "The jurisdiction of the Bishop of Rome" was abolished within the bounds of the realm. In 1569 the Reformed Church was acknowledged by Act of Parliament as "the only true and holy kirk of Jesus Christ within this realm." The Reformation, which thus made such remarkable strides, had as one of its eminent fruits the great National Covenant of 1580.

The National Covenant was drawn up by Mr. John Craig, minister of Holyrood House, Edinburgh. It was signed by the King and his household and others, "to the glorie of God and the good example of all men," at Edinburgh, on 21st day of January, 1580, and it purported to be "Ane Short and Generall Confession of the True Christiane Faith and Religion." It appears that the special circumstances that called for this renowned Covenant was a Jesuitical effort by the Pope to retain his hold of the kingdom, in connection with which he granted a secret dispensation to his followers to profess the Reformed religion, and at the same time to do all in their power to advance the interests of the Roman faith. The National Covenant begins with a declaration by its subscribers to the effect that they are "thoroughly resolved in the truth by the Spirit and Word of God," and that they confess and affirm "before God and the whole world the true Christian faith and religion, which now is, by the mercy of God, revealed to the world by the preaching of the blessed evangel," received by Church and State as God's eternal truth, and "expressed in the Confession of our Faith," grounded upon God's written Word. They then proceed to declare their detestation of all contrary religion and doctrine, and make particular reference to the Roman Antichrist, his "usurped authority upon the Scriptures of God, upon the Kirk, the civil magistrate, and consciences of men," with specific mention of many of the erroneous opinions, superstitious practices, and corrupt decrees of Rome. They conclude with a solemn oath to defend the king's person and authority, according to the following terms:—"We shall defend his person and authority with our goods, bodies, and lives, in the defence of Christ, His evangel, liberties of our country, ministration of justice, and punishment of iniquity, against all enemies within this realm or without, as we desire our God to be a strong and merciful defender to us in the day of our death, and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ; to whom, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, be all honour and glory

eternally. Amen." The time of this Covenant was a blessed one in the history of the Church of Scotland. Calderwood, the historian, writes:—"The Kirk of Scotland was now come to her perfection, and the greatest purity that ever she attained unto, both in doctrine and discipline, so that her beautie was admirable to forraigne kirks. The assemblies of the sancts were never so glorious."

The period of rest and external prosperity did not long continue. Soon Charles I. began to exert a tyrannical authority over the Church. Knowing that Prelacy lent itself to his despotic schemes rather than Presbytery, the friend of freedom, he endeavoured to force the former system, with its bishops and canons, upon the Scottish people. But his efforts were largely in vain. Andrew Melville and other noble witnesses for God's truth resisted the king's encroachments upon the purity and liberty of the Church. Janet Geddes flung her stool at the Dean's head in St. Giles, when he began to read Laud's liturgy in divine worship, and this was the signal for a remarkable display of popular feeling against the inroads of Episcopacy. The Council of the State vainly imagined that they could extinguish the agitation by a proclamation "condemning all meetings against the Episcopal Canons and Service Book," but their attempts to suppress only fanned the fire into a more vehement flame. Satan, as he often has been, and will be, was outwitted by his own stratagems. The result was a public and most impressive renewal of the National Covenant, with additions for the times. One of these additions was the following notable passage:—"And because, after due examination, we plainly perceive, and undoubtedly believe, that the innovations and evils contained in our supplications, complaints, and protestations, have no warrant of the Word of God, are contrary to the articles of the foresaid Confession, to the intention and meaning of the blessed reformers of religion in this land, to the above-written Acts of Parliament, and do sensibly tend to the re-establishing of the Popish religion and tyranny, and to the subversion and ruin of the true reformed religion, and of our liberties, laws, and estates; we also declare, That the foresaid Confessions are to be interpreted, and ought to be understood of the foresaid novations and evils, no less than if every one of them had been expressed in the foresaid Confessions; and that we are obliged to detest and abhor them, amongst other particular heads of Papistry abjured therein. And, therefore, from the knowledge and conscience of our duty to God, to our king and country, without any worldly respect or inducement, so far as human infirmity will suffer, wishing a further measure of the grace of God for this effect; we promise and swear, by the GREAT NAME OF THE LORD OUR GOD, to continue in the profession and obedience of the aforesaid religion; and that we shall defend the same, and resist all these contrary errors and corruptions, according to our vocation, and to the uttermost of that power that God hath put in our hands, all the days of our life."

The renewal of the National Covenant took place on the 28th February, 1638, in Greyfriars Churchyard, Edinburgh, and presents one of the most famous scenes in Scottish history. Alexander Henderson was the grand directing personality of that age, and his testimony about this memorable day, on which "Nobles, Gentlemen, Barons, Burgesses, and Commons" met to put their hands to the cause of God, was, that it was "the day of the Lord's power," the greatest day that had yet appeared in our Scottish Israel. Hundreds of copies of the Covenant were circulated throughout the kingdom, and were signed by all ranks and classes. Great success attended the efforts of the Reformers at this time. The King was reluctantly compelled to yield to their just claims. He abolished his courts and liturgies, and articles, and gave consent to the calling of a General Assembly of the Church, the first free Assembly that was held for the long period of forty-two years. It met in Glasgow on the 21st day of November, 1638.

The second great national agreement on behalf of truth was the Solemn League and Covenant, which was subscribed in St. Margaret's Church, Westminster, on the 25th September, 1643. This document was animated by the same spirit and embodied the same principles as the former Covenant. It was, however, more comprehensive in its scope; was adopted by Englishmen as well as Scotsmen; and aimed at the furtherance of religion and reformation in the three kingdoms of Scotland, England, and Ireland. It is the crown of all the covenants ever entered into within the bounds of these realms, and has been well designated by Hetherington as "the noblest in its essential features of all that are recorded among the international transactions of the world." Members of the English Parliament and the Westminster Assembly of Divines, embracing representatives of both nations, lifted their hands in solemn oath to God, and declared their agreement with the terms of this Covenant. This remarkable union in the faith resulted, through the wonderful providence of God, from the despotic measures of Charles, who compelled the peoples of both nations thus to band together for the defence of their civil and religious liberties, for the preservation of the reformed religion in the Church of Scotland, and for the reformation of religion in the kingdoms of England and Ireland. And all this was engaged in under the deepest sense of the need of humiliation before God for sin, and with the utmost dependence upon the grace of God for the accomplishment of their intentions. Notice the concluding passage:—"And because these kingdoms are guilty of many sins and provocations against God and His Son Jesus Christ, as is too manifest by our present distresses and dangers, the fruits thereof; we profess and declare, before God and the world, our unfeigned desire to be humbled for our own sins, and for the sins of these kingdoms; especially that we have not as we ought valued the inestimable benefit of the Gospel; that we have not laboured for the purity and power thereof; and that we have not endeavoured

to receive Christ in our hearts, nor to walk worthy of Him in our lives, which are the causes of other sins and transgressions so much abounding amongst us ; and our true and unfeigned purpose, desire, and endeavour for ourselves, and all others under our power and charge, both in public and private, in all duties we owe to God and man, to amend our lives, and each one to go before another in the example of a real reformation : that the Lord may turn away His wrath and heavy indignation, and establish these churches and kingdoms in truth and peace. And this Covenant we make in the presence of Almighty God, the Searcher of all hearts, with a true intention to perform the same, as we shall answer at the great day, when the secrets of all hearts shall be disclosed ; most humbly beseeching the Lord to strengthen us by the Holy Spirit for this end, and to bless our desires and proceedings with such success as may be deliverance and safety to His people, and encouragement to other Christian Churches, groaning under, or in danger of, the yoke of anti-Christian tyranny, to join the same or like association or covenant, to the glory of God, the enlargement of the kingdom of Jesus Christ, and the peace and tranquility of Christian kingdoms and commonwealths."

It is lamentable to reflect that the principles of this noble Covenant do not seem ever to have been carried out with general zeal and hearty thoroughness in England. The Commonwealth came to an end in 1660, and the Stuart dynasty was unhappily restored to the throne. Charles II., who had subscribed the Covenant on two occasions, became a perfidious traitor to them, no sooner had he gained the crown. He pursued the same policy as his father, and exercised all his power to overturn the whole work of the Covenanted Reformation. The Acts Recissory were passed, in which the Covenants were annulled and declared treasonable and seditious articles. Thus began the period of the 28 years' persecution. James II. succeeded Charles, and acted with greater severity than his predecessor. The Covenanters were hunted with dragoons on the moors of Scotland, and many of them endured most painful sufferings and died most cruel deaths for the sake of Christ's Crown and Covenant. At length, in the gracious providence of God, the Revolution came in 1688, when William and Mary, a Protestant king and queen, were set upon the throne, with the result that the persecutions were brought to an end, and an era of religious freedom dawned. The Presbyterian Church was established in Scotland and the Episcopal in England—not quite the ideal of the Covenanters. The Covenants were not formally acknowledged again, and the Acts Recissory remained on the statute book of the realm. More than two hundred years have elapsed since that time, and still we are nationally in the same, if not a worse, position. But a better day may yet dawn, when, under the outpouring of the Holy Spirit of God, these kingdoms will repent of their backslidings, and renew their solemn engagements with God, thus realising the fulfilment of the famous predic-

tion of James Guthrie, the martyr, uttered on the scaffold, in immediate prospect of beholding the face of God and the Lamb, "The Covenants, the Covenants, will yet be Scotland's reviving."

Precept, Promise, and Prayer:

DIVINE SOVEREIGNTY AND HUMAN AGENCY.

A SERMON by the late REV. HUGH MARTIN, D.D., Edinburgh.¹

"Make you a new heart and a new spirit."—Ez. xviii. 31.

"A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you."—Ez. xxxvi. 26.

"Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me." Ps. li. 10.

IT is proposed in the following discourse to enquire into the relations which subsist among these three verses, with the view of exhibiting the helplessness and responsibility of man in connection with the sovereignty and grace of God in the matter of the new heart (and indeed in salvation generally); if by the blessing of the Divine Spirit, we may lead you to despair of "man, with whom this is impossible," and with mingled anxiety and hopefulness to have recourse to "Him with whom all things are possible," (Matt. xix. 26)—"even God, who quickeneth the dead, and who calleth the things that are not as though they were," (Rom. iv. 17.)

That these texts are closely related to each other must be obvious even on the most cursory examination. The same expressions occur in each of them, and they all clearly point to one and the same subject of momentous interest. A further attention, however, will show, that while the subject is the same in *all* it is presented in a different light in *each*. In all, the one unvaried topic of regeneration is placed before us; but in passing from one to another, the point of view from which we look upon it is changed. In the first, it is presented to us embodied in a command, "Make you a new heart and a new spirit." In the second, it is embodied in an offer. "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you." In the third, it is embodied in a supplication, "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me." The first comes from God the Lawgiver; the second comes from God the Redeemer; the third comes from man the suppliant. The first is the loud and authoritative voice of Majesty; the second is the still small voice of Mercy; the third is the humble, earnest voice of Entreaty. In the first, God presents His authority and demands His right; in the second, God presents His mercy, and makes offer of His gift; in the third, man

¹ This sermon is taken from vol. 3 of "The Free Church Pulpit," 1847. Dr. Martin was then the Rev. Hugh Martin, of Panbride. The complete title of the discourse is "Precept, Promise, and Prayer: an Illustration of the Harmony between Divine Sovereignty and Human Agency."—Ed.

presents to God His own offer again, and pleads for its fulfilment. The first is an utterance from the throne of justice ; the second is an utterance from the throne of grace ; the third is an utterance from its footstool. The first is a Precept ; the second is a Promise ; the third is a Prayer.

A true veneration for the word of the living God will at once deliver us from the sin and folly of looking on this as a random combination, the product of mere chance, and will dispose us to behold in it an exhibition of Divine wisdom, and the result of a Divine arrangement, fraught, we may well believe, with much practical instruction, and calculated to give comprehensive and satisfactory views of certain vital "truths once delivered to the saints." It is not with the materials of a curious speculation, savouring more of ingenuity than utility, that we are furnished in these verses, and in the threefold light which they cast upon the self-same subject. On the contrary, they are replete with principles which pervade the Word of God, and the life of God in the soul,—principles which are the only real key to the harmony of Divine truth, written both in Scripture "and on the fleshy tablets of the heart." And it may deepen this impression on our minds, if we consider that the three verses chosen as the subject of illustration are not the only three in Holy Scripture so related to each other, but an instance only of a general rule—a specimen merely of a very frequent arrangement. It might be shown by a large enumeration of cases that every duty incumbent upon us, as the sinful creatures of the Most High, may be regarded in the same threefold aspect ; *first*, as enjoined in a command to performance ; *secondly*, as involved in a proffer of help ; and *thirdly*, as acknowledged in a supplication for help. Let the following suffice.

Is it our duty to seek a knowledge of God—an acquaintance with His name, His character, His nature ? Assuredly, for "this is life eternal" (John xvii 3), and thus only shall we "be at peace." Then the command is, "Acquaint thyself with God" (Job xxii. 21) ; the promise is "I will give them a heart to know Me" (Jer. xxiv. 7) ; and the appropriate prayer is that of the Psalmist, "Give me understanding according to Thy word (Ps. cxix. 160). If, following his example, "thou criest after knowledge and liftest up thy voice for understanding, then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God." (Prov. ii. 3 and 5.) Again, the duty of saving faith, so often neglected *in the character of a duty* is presented to us in Scripture under the same threefold aspect. It is matter of precept, "This is His commandment, that we should believe upon the name of His Son Jesus Christ" (1 John iii. 23) ; it is matter of promise also, "By grace are ye saved through faith ; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God" (Eph. ii. 8) ; the gift of God, promised "on the behalf of Christ," and bestowed in answer to the intercession of the "priest," now "upon His throne"—"I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not" (Phil. i. 29 and Luke xxii. 32) ; and it is matter of daily sup-

plication with all saints, "Lord, I believe, help mine unbelief" (Mark ix. 24). Another very interesting illustration of this principle, and one in which we do not need to bring the texts from different parts of the Word, is found in the sixth chapter of the Gospel of John, where Jesus is speaking of Himself as the true manna, the bread of life which cometh down from heaven. In the midst of this discourse He lays the following injunction on His disciples, "Labour for the meat which endureth to everlasting life" (ver. 27)—an injunction which He immediately follows up with the precious corresponding promise—"which the Son of Man shall give unto you;" and, rightly exercised under the teaching of their Lord, the apostles hasten to offer up to Him the appropriate prayer, "Lord, evermore give us this bread" (ver. 33). And not to multiply farther instances, let it be borne in mind, that not even the duty of prayer itself is exempt from this principle of triple relation. We have a commandment to "pray without ceasing" (1 Thes. v. 17); but we have a promise too, "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities, for we know not what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit itself," even "the Spirit of grace and supplications," maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered" (Rom. viii. 26 and Zec. xii. 10); and the special prayer applicable in these circumstances we learn from the example of the apostles, "Lord, teach us to pray" (Luke xi. 1).

In short, the Word of God is full^r of this important and beautiful arrangement. You will always find a promise adapted to the precept, and a prayer grounded on, and appropriate to them both.

Our intention, then, is to lead you to contemplate somewhat of the wisdom of God in this arrangement, to enquire into the practical spiritual purposes which it subserves, in the hands of the Divine Spirit, in awakening the soul and leading it to God, making good that paradox of grace which engrafts the most joyous hopefulness upon the convicted sinner's abject helplessness—the gracious Creator's strength being perfected in the guilty creature's weakness. In other words, let us examine the Divine economy of Precept, Promise, and Prayer, when brought powerfully into contact with the anxious and enquiring soul.

I. And, *first*, as to the Precept. What place does it hold in this arrangement? What is its office? What good practical purposes does it serve?

"Make you a new heart and a new spirit." At first sight this command may appear to be worse than useless. Does it not enjoin a thorough impossibility? The practical and the possible seem to be utterly put to flight? "Can the Ethiopian change his

Compare the following sets of texts:—(Phil. ii. 12; Phil. ii. 13; 2 Thes. i. 11). (1 Cor. xvi. 13; 2 Cor. xii. 9; Ps. xx. 2). (Phil. iv. 4; Isa. lxi. 3; Ps. li. 12). (Isa. i. 16, 18; Ps. li. 2 and 7). (Eph. v. 14; both precept and promise; Ps. cxix. 25, or Ez. xxxvii. 9). Jer. iii. 22, first clause; Matt. xviii. 11, 12; Ps. exix. 176).

skin, or the leopard his spots?" (Jer. xiii. 23.) "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one" (Job xiv. 4.) "In me, that is in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing" (Rom. vii. 18.) But surely the power to make a new heart and a new spirit is a good thing—one of the best of things, the most wonderful, the most glorious, the most holy. It belongs not to me. I am "dead in trespasses and in sins" (Eph. ii. 1.) I have as little power to make a new heart as I had to create my living soul at first. My present heart can be of no use to me in this matter, for it is "deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked. I cannot even know it" (Jer. xvii. 9.) The law of God can be of no use to me, for it cannot accomplish this holy achievement, in that it is "weak through the flesh" (Rom. viii. 3), my fleshly heart being "enmity against it, not subject to it, neither indeed can it be" (Rom. viii. 7.) The assistance of my neighbour can avail me nothing, for he cannot redeem himself, and as little he can help "by any means to redeem his brother. The redemption of my soul is precious, hut it ceaseth for ever" (Ps. xlix. 7, 8.) And, oh! surely this command is but a mockery of my helplessness? Is this not a cruel triumphing over my inability? What tendency can this have to remove the evil? Surely there is no step taken here to give a practical movement to my helpless soul.

Yes, there is. Your very meditations prove it. For

1. This command has evidently *made you conscious of your helplessness*, and I call that a practical movement, a very practical movement—an invaluable result—and the indispensable prerequisite to all others. Would your thoughts ever have been directed towards your helplessness at all but for such commands as this? Would you ever have imagined it such that it cannot be mended or improved at all, but must be altogether removed and replaced, but for this injunction, "Make you a *new* heart?" Would you ever have imagined that you had wandered so far from God, but for the loud voice in the distance behind you crying, "Return, return?" Would you ever have known how thoroughly your soul is paralyzed in spiritual death but for the command, "Arise from the dead?" (Eph. v. 14.) Would you ever have known how completely your senses are sealed in spiritual sleep but for the authoritative voice of God? and even that, as you can testify, only like a dying echo, through your dream, crying, "Awake, awake, thou that sleepest" (Ibid.) Say not that the precept is useless. If you have been aroused to earnest thought at all, the precept has already done you good service. If your meditations on this impracticable commandment—this "hard saying"—are at all honest and heartfelt, they are abundant testimony to the practical worth and working of the precept on your soul. It has led you to think of your helplessness. You have one invaluable lesson already. Follow on, for "to those that have shall be given." "Thank God and take courage." For

2. This is not all that the precept can do for you. It will not

only lead you to think of your weakness and helplessness, but it will tend to *show you how complete and thorough your impotency is, and to deepen the sense of this upon your soul.* For it will not do to have merely some vague and general idea of your inability; you must have a deep and pervading spiritual conviction of this truth. It must not be a matter of hearsay, but of actual experiment and experience. I can conceive a sick man confined to his couch, murmuring and fretting over the injunction of his physician, which prevents him from rising and walking through his chamber. He feels that he is indeed weak, but he knows not how much disease has debilitated his shattered frame; and he thinks it a hard restriction to be deprived of the liberty of trying his strength. If nothing else will convince him, let him get the proof of experience. Let permission be given him to walk across his chamber, and, as in the attempt he falls helpless into the arms of the friendly physician, whose wisdom he doubted, and whose advice he despised, he will at last acknowledge how thoroughly his strength has been prostrated. This is not to be supposed an accurate illustration in all points, for the natural man does not possess even those wretched remnants of strength which the case imagined involves—paralysis and even death itself are the favourite images of Scripture. Yet what I wish you to observe is, that in the sinner's spiritual experience, the command, "Make you a new heart," holds a place and serves a purpose exactly similar to the permission given to the sick man to try the measure of his bodily powers. You may have some dim notions of your helplessness. But bring it to the test of experiment. This precept gives you the opportunity: nay, lays you under the obligation to do so. Go and try to make yourself a new heart. Labour to regenerate your own soul. "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might." And then tell your success. Break off every old habit, if you can. Give up every outward act of sin. Mortify the deeds of the body. But have you changed your heart? Have you given it new dispositions, new desires, new delights? In short, after labour the most painstaking, the most strenuous, the most unrelenting, have you succeeded in yielding obedience to this commandment? Have you "made you a new heart and a new spirit?" No. But you have proved experimentally that it is wholly beyond your power. By the precept you have been taught experimentally what you but dimly surmised before, even your thorough, unmitigated, and hopeless helplessness. You had heard of that helplessness "by the hearing of the ear;" but now your whole soul feeleth it. You have now a far more deep and pervading and pressing conviction of this humbling truth; for the spiritual precept, and your efforts to obey it, have proved to you conclusively, because experimentally, that you are wholly "carnal, sold under sin" (Rom. vii. 14.) Is not this another practical movement? "I had not known sin but by the law" (Rom. vii. 7.) I had not felt my helplessness but by the precept.

3. But the precept can do you more service. It can originate another and perhaps a still more important practical movement. It may have already taught you how thoroughly helpless you are by nature. But this is not enough. Besides evoking the testimony of experience and consciousness, the precept *has power to touch the springs of conscience*; and without this it would indeed be utterly inefficient.

Let me commend the truth to your conscience in the sight of God, who searcheth the heart. With what *moral* feelings do you regard this thorough helplessness? Is it not the case that you regard it, or are at least continually tempted to regard it, more in the light of a melancholy misfortune, which makes you very much to be pitied, than as a heinous crime which makes you very much to be condemned? Is it not the case that you look upon yourselves chiefly as sufferers in this matter, and scarcely, if at all, malefactors? Do you not think that your case calls more for sympathy than for blame—that you should rather be soothed than threatened? We appeal to you if this is not very often the cast and current of your meditations. Because you cannot obey this commandment, therefore you imagine you are not responsible for disobeying it—because you are thoroughly helpless, therefore you imagine you are excusable. And thus the deceitful heart, ever tender to its own sores, and plausible in its own defence, contrives to shake itself clear of the irksome feeling of obligation to keep the impracticable commandment. In such circumstances, it is strange with what wretched sophistry conscience will submit to be baffled and silenced, and with what contradictory excuses its remonstrances are put away; so much so, that out of his own mouth the sinner may be condemned. “If we were only in more favourable circumstances, we might and would obey this precept; but as matters stand, with the whole head sick and the whole heart faint, with “nothing in us but wounds and bruises and putrifying sores,” surely we cannot be expected to come up to the high standard which this commandment sets before us.” Now, in giving vent to such meditations as these (and it is to be feared they are not uncommon), do you really consider what you say? *If you were in more favourable circumstances, you would obey this precept?* What do you mean by *more favourable circumstances*? Your circumstances, spiritually considered, must be such that you have within you either the old heart or the new. No possible condition can be imagined between these two; and what, therefore, does this promise—so potent in silencing the conscience, and ending all debate, and putting all anxiety to flight—what does it amount to but simply this, that if you had the new heart already, you would then “make you a new heart and a new spirit”—you would do the work after it had been fully accomplished? Truly, if by such a proffer conscience were momentarily silenced, the deceitful heart ought in its turn to be thoroughly ashamed; and if these are its

wretched delusions, it is surely high time it were for ever got rid of and replaced.

Do you still suggest that your helplessness sets you free from blame and responsibility? If you have any reverence for the Word of God, the precept ought at once to cure you of such perverse imaginings? For here you have the Lawgiver Himself giving forth His deliverance on your case, and His utterance is in the form of a *command*. It is not an utterance of pity, or of sympathy, or of lamentation, over your prostrate impotency. The Lord does not say, at least *here* he does not say, Oh that you were able to make you a new heart and a new spirit. On the other hand, this is an utterance of authority. It is an unhesitating and peremptory injunction from the God who rules in righteousness. You may have begun perversely to imagine that your helplessness had removed you from under His authority, and beyond the limits of His government. But it is not so. He is still the God with whom you have to do; with whom you have to do, not as sufferers merely, but as subjects still; and, in testimony thereof, listen to the voice of His *commandment*, "Make you a new heart and a new spirit." He comes to deal with you, not as *sufferers* whose *disease may* issue in death as its *result*, but as *rebels* whose *crime must* issue in death as its *doom*. He comes to tell you that you have not got beyond His dominions—that still He is your lawgiver and your judge. Could He be a judge at all, if rebellion carried you beyond His right and His power of judging? Could he be a lawgiver at all, if entitled to legislate only for the righteous? Nay; "the law is not made for a righteous man," but for exactly such as you, "for the lawless" (1 Tim. i. 9), for all those who, like you, are seeking freedom from the obligation of this very law, which commands you to "make a new heart and a new spirit." Surely, then, it is miserable affectation for a guilty sinner to sorrow over his helplessness as a misfortune, and then to think that all that can be expected of him is discharged, and he is responsible for nothing more. Let him learn rather to tremble over this helplessness as a crime, the very fountainhead and cause of all crimes.

Is this demand said to be unreasonable? This might be pleaded if there could be two opinions as to the source of our inability to obey, but not if it springs from our perverse and irrepressible and willing habit of doing evil—not if we are incapable of making a new heart, because our natural hearts have not only shown symptoms of enmity to God, but are very enmity itself. Is it possible for any one to affirm that the very depth of our iniquity, and the uniformity of our criminal habits, must set us free from the charge of all crime? Is it possible that the consciences of men can be so perverted and debauched? No: not so long as they are found "the meanwhile accusing or else excusing one another" (Rom. ii. 14.) Suppose it possible for some man, some monster in human form, to acquire the habit of murder, so that he could not refrain from assassinating every victim that crossed his path—

that by habit, and a monstrous love for blood, he had become utterly incapable of obeying the commandment, "Thou shalt not kill"—would any one tell me that this man's inability to obey excused him from the penalty of disobeying? Would not the doom of death be sealed upon this human fiend, amidst the loud execrations of outraged humanity? And is the case any different, or less urgent, when the just and righteous King of Glory sits in judgment? Shall His high and righteous bar be degraded by the admission of a plea which would be scouted as insane at a human tribunal? Shall the very strength of the grasp which the law has over the rebellious heart be pleaded as a reason why the Lawgiver should abdicate His throne, and denude Himself of all His claims? Nay, verily; not to obey is a crime—not to be able to obey is a second, rivetting and fastening the first as with iron. Rather it is a habit of crime plunging the soul in a sea of guilt.

Thus, then, the office of the precept is most vital and important. It first of all informs the sinner that all is not well, and points to the seat of the disease. Then it leads him experimentally to a knowledge of his miserable condition, his thorough helplessness and inability to save himself. And lastly, it presses on his conscience a deep feeling of his responsibility and criminality. Thus he learns much of himself, and he learns much of the God with whom he has to do. He is taught to feel his own weakness and worthlessness. He is taught, also, God's authority and power. He is led to see his thorough subjection to the heavenly Majesty, and his not less thorough incapacity to do the duties of a subject. You may have been "alive without the precept once, but when the precept comes in spiritual power, sin revives and you die" (Rom. vii. 9). You die to all pride, and peace, and hope. You learn two solemn truths, which, when taken together, give you no rest till they mercifully shut you up to the only remedy. You know your helplessness; but you cannot sit down contented, for you know also your obligation and responsibility. You know your obligation; but you do not become legalists, for you know also your helplessness. You feel that you cannot obey; but this does not set all at rest, because you feel that you must obey. You feel that you must obey; but neither does this settle all, for you also feel that you cannot. It is "as if a man did flee from a lion, and a bear met him" (Amos v. 19). "Fear, and the pit, and the snare, are upon thee, O inhabitant of the earth. And it shall come to pass, that he that fleeth from the noise of the fear shall fall into the pit, and he that cometh out of the midst of the pit shall be taken in the snare" (Is. xiv. 17, 18). In neither can you remain. You struggle from the pit of helplessness, because you feel you are bound over to obedience. You avoid the snare of legalism, because you know you cannot render the obedience required. Oh! what a source of unspeakable spiritual agony is there here! And so must it still remain, while the "inhabitant of the earth" looks not beyond the earth for

deliverance. But look up, and lift up the head, O wearied sinner—look away from thyself; long enough has that poor self of thine agonized thee—truly thou wilt find no help there. Look “up into the hills whence cometh thine aid;” and then, baffled with thy weak and helpless attempts to “make thee a new heart and a new spirit,” and prostrated, too, with the thought that it must be done, turn now from the terrible precept and listen, “Be still and know that it is God.” Thus saith the Lord, “A new heart also will I give thee, and a new spirit will I put within thee.”

II. We come, then, to the consideration of the Promise.

1. And, *in the first place*, it is obvious that the *wisdom* of God is wonderfully exhibited in bringing in the promise at this precise point. If it had come sooner, the soul would not have been prepared to receive it. If it had come later, the soul would have been already given over to hopeless despair. The promise cannot go before the precept, for then the soul would not feel the need of it, and consequently its value would not be appreciated; and the promise cannot come after the prayer, for then prayer would have no foundation on which to ground her supplication. But the Lord, who knoweth the spirits which He hath made, and who “knoweth what is in man, and needeth not that any should testify unto Him” (John ii. 25), seeth the end of a spiritual conflict from the beginning, and all the parts thereof in their order; and He comes in with His separate dealings at the proper time, and at the proper point. Thus, when the precept has done the preparatory work in righteous authority, the promise begins to reign on the throne of meekness and of mercy. The precept, like affliction, may not have seemed joyous, but rather grievous; nevertheless it hath wrought the humbling “fruits of righteousness,” preparatory to the gifts of mercy, “in them that have been rightly exercised thereby” (Heb. xii. 11). The reign of the precept, if we look not beyond it—if we regard it as an end—may have been a reign of terror. Viewed, however, as a means, as the prerequisite merely to the “better things to be revealed,” it has indeed been the reign of grace begun, although the grace as yet has been concealed. But now “the better things themselves” are brought to us by the promise. If the precept could have brought these things, “if that first covenant had,” in this respect, “been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second,” no room for the promise. But because the precept has a tantalising “shadow” only “of the good things to come, and not the very image of these things,” because it can never “make the comers thereunto perfect”—because “the law can make nothing perfect”—therefore “there is verily a disannulling of the commandment going before, for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof,” to make way for “the bringing in of a better hope”—“He taketh away the first that He may establish the second;” and what the precept “cannot do, in that it is weak through the flesh, God” through His own Son can do, by the “promise, which in Him is yea and amen.” (Compare

Heb. vii. 18 19, viii. 6-13, x. i. 9; Rom. viii. 3). Is the precept then useless? No, by no means. "Is it then against the promise of God? God forbid; for if there had been" a precept "given which could have given life, verily righteousness" and a new heart "should have been by" that precept. "Wherefore then serveth the" precept? "It was added because of transgressions," and nature's helplessness, "till the seed should come to whom the promise was made." And its indispensable and blessed, though painful work, is this—that it "hath concluded all under sin" and helplessness, and proved this in their own experience and to their own consciences, "that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe. But before" the promise "came we were kept under the" precept, "shut up unto the" promise "which should afterwards be revealed. Wherefore the "precept" was our schoolmaster, to bring us to" the promise, and to Him who is "the surety of a covenant established upon better promises," "that we might be justified by faith." (See Gal. iii. 19-24).

Thus there is the economy of a Mosaic dispensation, carried on preparatory to that of a Christian dispensation, in God's dealings with every regenerated soul, as truly and really as in the history of the collective church. This preparation in the church was not more necessary than it is in the individual heart; and just as there was a Divine wisdom seen in emancipating the Church from the "tutors and governors," at "the time appointed of the Father," when "He sent forth His Son," so there is a "fulness of the time" in the history of every believing sinner, when God sends forth His promise, even the promised Spirit of His Son, into the heart, as faithfully as He sent forth His Son into the world, emancipating the despairing soul as fully in the one case from the grievous bondage of the precept as He freed His people in the other from those beggarly elements, and from that "yoke of bondage which neither they nor their fathers were able to bear." In the days of Moses the Church was not ready for the simplicity, the liberty, the manliness, and the spirituality of the Christian dispensation. And so, at the opening of the soul's spiritual discipline, by reason of its childish ignorance and wayward pride, God introduces a dispensation of precept first; and when this has accomplished the work whereunto He sent it, at the proper point, and at the proper time, He brings in His dispensation of promise. "Surely this also cometh forth from the Lord of Hosts, who is wonderful in counsel and excellent in working."

2. How is the *grace* of God adored by the fainting soul, when, after the conflict with the precept, the promise comes brightly into view. The *wisdom* of God is seen in the promise, coming at the very time when it was needed. But the *grace* of God is glorified in bringing in the very gift which was needed. "Make thee a new heart and a new spirit," says the precept. "Ah," replies the sinner, "that is not in my power;" I am carnal; sold under "sin," "dead in trespasses and in sins." I cannot frame my heart other-

wise than it hath been formed by iniquity. "I am as an unclean thing, and all my righteousness are as filthy rags. I do fade as a leaf, and my iniquities, like the wind, have taken me away" (Is. lxiv. 6). "A deceived heart hath turned me aside that I cannot deliver my soul" (Is. xlv. 20). In this helpless state is it a partial promise that is given? Is it a greater earnestness to try the work ourselves that God offers to communicate? Does He promise to help us out with the laborious achievement, if we will arise and put our hand to the work ourselves? Does He engage to fill up or supplement our deficiencies? Does He offer to overlook our failures, if only our attempt shall be sincere? Oh no! These may be the doctrines of a wretched Arminianism. These may be the desires of a half-humbled soul. But they are not the promises of God. These would be boons of little value; they would tend to no practical result, no saving issue. There would indeed be mockery in promises like these; for the very condition on which such offers are supposed to be made, never could be realised in us till the whole work were done. But the very thing that we cannot make ourselves, God promises unconditionally to bestow, freely to bestow, without condition, without money, and without price. The precept, having done its painful work, seems, as it were, recalled, and the form being annulled, but the whole substance retained, it once more returns in the form and the language of peace and hope and joy. Like the same law given to Moses a second time, not amidst thunderings and lightnings, and darkness, and tempest, but amidst light, and peace, and favour, all God's goodness passing by before His servant, sheltered now in the cleft of the rock; so here, the preceptive form, which caused the tempest and the terror in the soul, being all done away, the very same substance, in all its integrity, is restored, but now beaming in the light and lustre of a free and gracious promise, "A new heart will I give unto you, a new spirit will I put within you." It is the very thing required, without restriction, and without abatement, offered freely and without condition, without money and without price.

3. But the *grace* of God is still more wonderfully glorified by the consideration, that, while this is the very thing which we need, and which God offers to bestow upon us, it is also the very thing which we are bound to render unto Him. And here, again, the good fruits of the precept as the forerunner of the promise come clearly into view. The precept teaches that we need this, for it teaches us experimentally our want and our helplessness. But when it teaches our responsibility, our obligation to make us a new heart and a new spirit, our crime and our guilt in not doing so, then we see, not the depth of wretchedness and misery merely, but the essence of rebellion in our inability. Oh! when the responsibility is really felt, as well as the helplessness, how does the manifold grace of God grow before the view of the admiring soul! If I feel that I would be better if I had a new heart, and, at the same time,

feel my utter incapacity to make me a new heart and a right spirit, how gracious in the great God to come and offer me the very thing I need—the very thing that I cannot do without! But when, besides this, I feel my deep and unchangeable responsibility to make this new heart which yet I cannot make—when I feel my criminality in delaying every moment to do it, and my criminality in being unable to do it at all, either now or at any future time, oh! how shall I speak then of that grace which pities both my weakness and my guilt, and delivers me most fully from the death-bringing consequences of both. It was much when He “looked upon me in my low estate;” but it was more when He looked upon me in my lost estate. It was great grace when He, “in due time,” pitied me as a weak and helpless sufferer, “yet without strength” (Rom. v. 6); but it was greater far when He pitied me as a daring rebel, “a sinner, an enemy” (v. 8-10). Grace abounded when, sympathisingly, He gave me that new heart which I was unable to make; but grace much more abounded when, forgivingly, He gave me that new heart which I was bound to make, and guilty in my inability to make it. “Bless the Lord, O my soul, for He *healeth* all thy *diseases*; He also *forgiveth* all thine *iniquities*” (Ps. ciii. 2, 3).

4. And now the *sovereignty* of Divine grace can be obscured or concealed no longer. This also the believer is taught to feel and to acknowledge by reason of his previous discipline under the precept. In learning his obligation and responsibility, he at the same time necessarily learned the majesty and kingly authority of God. We have seen that the precept teaches not only the soul's utter helplessness, but also the soul's entire subjection to the righteous justice of the Lawgiver. We are made to feel completely in God's power. We are exposed to His righteous anger, and incapable of effecting our deliverance from threatened wrath. The Lord maintains His right to command, though we have lost our power to obey. Whatever impotency we are groaning under, He is seen to reign as King. He has the destinies of all souls at His own free, unchallenged disposal. He is the Sovereign God: righteous in forsaking all if He will—righteous in pouring out wrath unto the uttermost. What an overpowering dignity is seen in His sovereign majesty, His uncontrollable right and power! How exalted above all created excellence! How full of uncreated, all-governing glory—a glory terrible indeed, if no grace is mingled with it! But if this high Sovereign shall give His gracious promise, then how resplendent is His *sovereign* grace? If He who is the God of all majesty, and excellency, and dignity, and sovereign glory—if He, who ruleth among the armies above, and the inhabitants of this earth below, free and uncontrolled in all His ways, and in all His purposes—if He who is the sovereign disposer of ten thousand times ten thousand angels, and who is sovereign over *me*, as His precept and commandment do fully prove—if He, who as such a sovereign hath the fullest right to execute on me wrath to the

uttermost—if He shall single out and distinguish me from among the mass of helpless, dying, daring rebels, and glorying in His words, shall cry in my astonished and delighted ear, “I, even I, am He that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own name’s sake,” and as “I am that I am,” “a new heart will I give unto thee, and a new spirit will I put within thee,”—oh! how shall my grateful but too straitened soul ever realise, or comprehend with all saints this mystery of sovereign grace, all made mine in the free and gracious promise of a sovereign God! Wondrous and adorable sovereignty of my God! I quarrel with it no more—I hail it with rejoicing. The Lord is my Sovereign; “the Lord is my Lawgiver; the Lord is my King;” as such “He will save me” (Isa. xxxiii. 22). None can deny His right. Who shall condemn when the Sovereign God hath justified? (Rom. vii. 33). None can resist His power. Who shall stay His hand from working? Who shall say unto Him what doest Thou? How powerful, how authoritative is the grace of this holy Judge—the Sovereign King of Zion!

Behold then, O my soul, how God, by giving thee His precept, first prepares thee for His promise—opens thine eyes to behold His wisdom, enables thee to see His grace, His multitude of tender mercies, begets in thee a deep sense of His righteous authority, which, when the promise comes, is transferred with all its sovereign majesty, to that redeeming love which then excels in glory, and shines forth in dignity and splendour. Thus the creature is abased, and the sovereign God is exalted, and no flesh can glory in His presence. Thus there is glory to God in the highest, and grace to men. The grace is compassed with sovereign glory, and the glory is full of sovereign grace. “O Lord, we beseech Thee show us Thy glory!” Fulfil to us Thy gracious promise! “Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.”

III. We have already made use of the Prayer. Indeed we are brought almost insensibly to the third and last link of this beautiful chain—the last line of this threefold cord.

And now, the office which prayer performs in this divine and spiritual economy will be obvious to all. It appropriately comes last, because it is grounded on, and takes its warrant from the promise, pleading the fulfilment of the promise that thereby the object of the precept may be gained. The prayer, when offered, grows out of the promise; the prayer, when answered, satisfies the precept. The precept teaches man that he is helpless; the promise tells him there is help; the prayer secures the help. The precept teaches man that he is responsible and guilty; the promise tells him there is forgiveness; the prayer obtains the pardon. The precept teaches man God’s authority; the promise tells of God’s grace; the prayer tries and tests God’s sufficiency. The precept teaches man his dependence; the promise declares dependence in God well placed; the prayer puts dependence on God accordingly. The precept teaches man humility; the promise gives man hope;

the prayer shows man's trust. The precept gives scope for God's righteous justice ; the promise gives scope for God's faithfulness ; the prayer gives scope for man's faith. In all cases, the prayer is necessary to complete the cycle ; and if the precept and the promise do but graciously exercise the soul, the prayer will and cannot but follow. He who listens to the precept and feels his need, his helplessness, his responsibility, his crime, and then listens to the promise, "counting Him faithful who hath promised, who also will do it,"—that man will and must have recourse to the prayer. He is shut up to prayer by every principle in his nature, by his sin and misery, by reason and conscience, by fear and hope. He must pray. He cannot help it. He is carried captive to prayer by a blessed necessity, a willing and therefore victorious and joyful necessity.

To the prayerless, therefore, there is here very clear and simple ground for self-examination and self-condemnation. Dear brethren, matters must stand thus with you ; you have received aright neither the precept nor the promise of your God ; for they always bring the prayer along with them. No man can put asunder what God hath joined ; and therefore if you are living in the habitual neglect of earnest prayer, it must be because you have listened proudly to the precept, faithlessly to the promise. You are quarrelling with the precept, and denying your helplessness ; and herein you falsify the word of God, your own experience, and the experience of all the saints and the spirits of just men made perfect. Or you are denying your responsibility and God's authority, "casting His cords away from you," and saying "Who is the Lord, that we should serve Him?" Or you are quarrelling with the promise ; either contemning His wisdom by counting His promise worthless, or contemning His faithfulness by insinuating that His truth will fail. One or other of these fearful alternatives you must choose, if you are not habitually plying the throne of grace with prayer ; and perhaps the guilt of all these crimes together is cleaving to your consciences. Oh how unprovoked and how God-provoking must be the sin of prayerless lives? Only think how beautifully God has prepared the way for prayer. How much wisdom has He lavished upon this gracious arrangement! How safely and how gently has He contrived to carry you step by step to His throne of grace! The precept tells you that you must obey. Even God Himself cannot release you from that. It is a painful lesson ; yet is it not well to know it, while hope yet remains, that it may become a practical lesson? It is mercy in God to speak out ere all hope is gone. The precept tells you of your helplessness, convinces you of this experimentally when you attempt to obey it, and find that you cannot "make a new heart and a new spirit." Surely it is good to know this truth also. Your ignorance of it would not make it less true, and your knowledge of it will at least turn you away from a fruitless source of labour, and should make you willing to try a "more excellent way" if it can be shown to you. And that this can be done, you need not doubt ;

for the promise now comes in to show that all may yet infallibly be well, pledging immutable things to your full deliverance and your eternal safety. "What could have been done more to His vineyard that He hath not done to it?" (Isa. v. 4). Will you turn it all into contempt? Nay, rather, I should say, will you yourselves become a contempt and a hissing to all passers-by, through indolence, or pride, or unbelief, or any other miserable habit of your wretched hearts, the very presence of which should only add wings to your haste, and fervour to your prayer. What! shall God do so much for miserable guilty rebels, and will you do nothing, absolutely nothing, for yourselves? Will you not even arise and call upon your God for mercy? How *can* we persuade you? What arguments remain wherewith to ply you? To the authoritative voice of the taskmaster, and the pleasant voice of the charmer, ye are alike deaf. Ye are like sullen "children in the market-place." By the precept we "have mourned unto you and ye have not lamented;" by the promise we "have piped unto you and ye have not danced." One word more, and may the Lord bless it to your souls. Your guilt is now tremendous, because your case is now made so hopeful; and your case is thus hopeful because you have so little to do. Yea, you have only to plead with God to do *all* the work to your hands. Will you cast away eternal joy and court eternal agony by refusing *that*?

How calculated are these imperfect meditations to encourage the hearts of those who are Israelites indeed, princes with God in prayer! Let the precept, and the promise, and the prayer, be alike precious to you, and have your souls disciplined by a due attention to them all. Never think you can obey the precept in your own strength. Never think that your interest in the promise sets you free from the authority of the precept. Never think that prayer can supersede either the precept or the promise. Prayer is hypocrisy except with a view to the obedience of the precept. In all thy ways diligently search for the pure precepts of thy God, crying evermore, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?" Fear not for thy weakness to know thy duty, though it should be thine in Divine command to remove mountains. "Who art thou, O great mountain? before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain, for He shall bring forth the headstone with shoutings, crying, "Grace, grace, unto it" (Zec. iv. 7). "His grace shall be sufficient for thee" (2 Cor. xii. 9). His promise is, that "as thy day, so shall thy strength be" (Deut. xxxiii. 25). "Yet for all this will he be enquired of by the house of Israel to do it for them" (Ez. xxxvi. 37). Therefore, let thy duty, and thy weakness, and thy cheering promise, send thee to the throne, for "grace is help in thy time of need" (Heb. iv. 16). "Put him in remembrance" (Is. xliii. 26), saying, "Remember the words unto thy servant, upon which Thou hast caused me to hope" (Ps. cxix. 49). Then "Fear not thou worm Jacob; thou shalt thresh the mountains, and beat them small" (Is. xli. 41).

The Higher Criticism in the U.F. Church.

THE following letter by the Rev. D. K. Auchterlonie, Craigdam, Aberdeenshire, appeared some time ago in the *Glasgow Herald*, and is, we think, the best letter on the relation of the United Free Church to the Higher Criticism that has yet appeared from any of her ministers. We earnestly wish more light and power to Mr. Auchterlonie, and trust he may soon be led to take a more decided stand against the Church's toleration of this infidel criticism than ever he has done in the past. We fear he still entertains a too favourable view of the faithfulness to truth of "the respected leaders" in the Church, and that much disappointment awaits him in the future. In the present state of things separation is the only adequate testimony.

IS THE HIGHER CRITICISM SANCTIONED BY THE U.F. CHURCH?

(To the Editor of the *Glasgow Herald*.)

Sir,—I see in the *Missionary Record* of the U.F. Church a notice of the recent meeting of the "Bible League" in Scotland. In that notice the editor commends the statement of my friend, Dr. Whitelaw, to the effect that the Assembly of the U.F. Church does not sanction nor authorise the teaching of the Higher Criticism. And no doubt, in the strict formal meaning of the Assembly's decision, it is as Dr. Whitelaw says.

But everyone knows that under certain circumstances toleration is little better than sanction. An instance in point occurs to me. I think it was about the year 1850 that the Synod of the U.P. Church passed a law restraining all ministers of the Church from reading their sermons. Next day, I think, Dr. William Anderson, of Glasgow, appeared at the Synod, and told them that he had read his sermons since his ordination, and that he proposed to continue doing so, and asked them, in view of their decision, to say how they were to determine his relation to the pulpit of John Street Church, Glasgow. The brethren were startled, they looked up and looked around, but "nothing was done and nothing was said," and everyone knew that in letting the thing go *sub silentio*, the reading of sermons in the pulpit of the U.P. Church was tacitly sanctioned everywhere.

But I fancy that the toleration of the wretched imposture called the Higher Criticism by the Assembly is, as in the case assigned, its practical sanction in the chairs and pulpits of the U.F. Church. And the Higher Criticism is not only tolerated, but, I am sorry to say, it is encouraged in the official literature of the Church. In Aberdeen last year there was held a summer school of theology under the auspices of the U.F. Church. It was advertised in the little syllabus of Scripture reading, circulating in tens of thousands throughout the whole Church. The men chosen to lecture at this summer school of theology were nearly all known to be favourable

to the Higher Criticism. Scholars opposed to it were carefully excluded from the programme. Lectures were given advocating the Higher Criticism views in some of its extremest and most preposterous aspects. One learned professor lectured on the spiritual significance of the Tabernacle, and was careful to inform his hearers that there never was a Tabernacle. We had also Ritschlianism in full blast. Of this summer school there appeared an account in the *Missionary Record* of the Church, filled with glaring and most indiscriminate laudation. There was not the faintest suggestion that there had been brought forward any doctrine which the Church had not sanctioned. And when a protest was entered on behalf of those who regard the doctrines of the Higher Criticism with well-grounded disapproval, it was refused insertion in the *Record*, and treated with the most discourteous contempt.

And the whole history of the case is very significant of the sense in which U.F. officialdom interprets the finding of the Assembly in regard to the Higher Criticism. When the official magazine of the Church lends itself to the extreme laudation of congresses for the dissemination of this heresy, when the publications of the Church Committee are used for advertising these Higher Criticism juntos, and when all protest against this perversion of our Church literature is refused, we have evidently got a step or two further than the mere toleration of this great evil. I believe, with Lord Overtoun, that the Christian democracy of the U.F. Church is sound on this question. But as our political democracy expects its representative leaders to give expression to its mind in the Parliament of the people, so our Christian democracy looks to Lord Overtoun and its other respected leaders to have its opinions and beliefs in this vital matter expressed and formulated in our spiritual Parliament—the General Assembly of the Church—in such a manner as that we shall have a conclusive deliverance from this destructive plague.

Until this is done we shall get, as some of us are getting, the full measure of scorn and contempt of those that are "making void God's law," and, indeed, if we do not take decided and earnest action, we shall almost deserve this scorn, and shall be guilty of condoning what is certain to be, if tolerated, an irreparable mischief to the life of the Church.—I am, etc.,

D. K. AUCHTERLONIE.

Sabbath Sickness.

(From *Casket of Odds and Ends*.)

NOT long since, on hearing it related that a certain minister was accustomed, in the stated exercises of the sanctuary, to pray for those able to labour hard through the week, but too ill to attend public worship on the Sabbath, our attention was especially directed to this suffering class of our fellow-beings; and as the disease is far more prevalent than is generally imagined, and it is

thought to be contagious—as whole families usually have it when the head is materially affected—and frightfully dangerous, it seems but an act of humanity to give the alarm.

The seat of the disease is said to be the *heart*, and through that organ the head and other parts of the system become affected. It is not, however, an enlargement of the heart, but rather an extreme contraction of that organ. Moreover, it is found that persons who naturally have small hearts are predisposed to the disease, and on such remedial agents have less effect. Like other internal diseases, its approaches are insidious and stealthy; and although the subject constantly bears with him the elements of the malady, which may be seen by the careful observer, yet, as the symptoms are remittent, and only develop themselves strongly on the return of the Sabbath, the patient has little or no apprehension of evil from his seventh-day *ague*.

But his apathy increases his danger. The most intelligent authors who have written upon it are all agreed that, without a remedy applied, it invariably terminates in death; and, what may seem singular, it is said that on the dawn of a future Sabbath, of which the present is only a figure or *prelude*, each and all of these subjects of Sabbath sickness will be found incurably sick—the whole head sick and the whole heart faint—and totally unfit for the services of the true tabernacle; and on that memorable Sabbath they will *all die*.

The premonitory symptoms of this disease are, during the week, inordinate love of the world, extreme devotion to the pursuit of its honours, its pleasures, and its profits, accompanied with a disrelish for secret prayer or pious meditation, and an apprehension of the want of time for reading the Scriptures and for family devotion. As the Sabbath morning dawns, the subject manifests great lassitude and debility, sighs, groans, complains of divers pains, becomes nervous, dreads especially a little rain, and rises late.

If the attack is light, the weather fair, and all things favourable, he drags himself to the house of worship. But here the symptoms of Sabbath sickness in its mildest forms are often seen. The subject is seen to seat himself or herself in a convenient place, say in the corner of a pew, as he or she feels the premonitory symptoms coming on. The eyes look heavy, the eyelids drop, the muscles of the neck give way, his respiration appears asthmatic, and he drops into a death-like stupor. Towards the close of worship the patient gives signs of life, gradually raises the head, and the red forehead and blinding eyes, as they gradually salute the light, plainly say that animal life is not extinct. By the time the benediction is pronounced the paroxysm appears over, the subject has the hat or parasol ready, and, with a countenance bright and beaming, starts for home, rejoicing in the prospect of six more happy days before the return of the day of evil.

But if the Sabbath morning attack be severe, the sufferer is far too ill to attend church, and lounges away the whole forenoon.

In the afternoon the symptoms abate, and the person is often seen in the fields. As the evening comes on, he appears quite well. The plans of operation for the coming week are all made.

But the worst form in which this disease manifests itself is that in which it so affects the head as to derange the judgment. The heart at first dreads the prescribed duties of the Sabbath, until, through sympathy, the judgment is perverted, and the subject is left to say, and half believe, that there are no duties peculiar to the Sabbath.

But there is a remedy for this widespread, contagious epidemic. Let the sufferer take daily a proper dose of godly sorrow, combined with self-denial, mixed with precious faith, and exercise himself unto godliness; and in severe cases double the dose, and take it, fasting, on Sabbath morning, and the cure is sure. The seventh-day ague will disappear, and the Sabbath dread no more trouble the poor invalid. The Sabbath will become his delight, and his duties his meat and his drink. And soon, very soon, for ever cured of Sabbath sickness, he shall enjoy that Sabbath of rest which remains to the people of God.

The Psalms in the Early History of the Church.¹

BY THE REV. DONALD BEATON, WICK.

“THERE is scarcely a leaf in the Psalter which is not stained by some withered flower of the past. To gather some of these petals and read their meaning, as they fall thick from the pages, has been the purpose of this book. Vain must be the effort to recall to life persons or events divided from us by centuries of change. But as we read the familiar verses, the words bring before us, one by one, the hundreds of men and women, who, passing from tribulation into joy, have, in the language of the Psalms, conquered the terrors of death, proclaimed their faith, or risen to new effort and final victory.”

In these sentences, Mr. Prothero concludes his remarkable book, “The Psalms in Human Life.” It is a work that impresses one with a deep sense of the untold influence exercised by the Psalms on all the departments of human life. The author tells us that his purpose was “to collect together some of the countless instances in which the Psalms have guided, controlled, and sustained the lives of men and women in all ages of human history, and at all crises of their fate.” The result is a goodly volume of 415 pages, in which we find history and biography ransacked to yield their stores to meet the author’s purpose. The work at once supersedes all other works of the kind. The list of authorities and works referred to show how

¹ “The Psalms in Human Life,” by Rowland E. Prothero, M.V.O. London: John Murray, 1904. Price, 10s 6d nett.

thoroughly the author went about his task ; however, it must be admitted that anyone acquainted with the literature on the psalms will discover that there are a great number of volumes not cited in the above lists that might have been used with advantage. Another point that will be regarded as a defect by pious minds is what may be described as the Cave-Adullamite character of many of the personages whose utterances are recorded in these pages. Here, testimonies of William the Conqueror, Burns, Matthew Arnold, and Carlyle, and of other less known but somewhat questionable characters, are recorded with the saintly expressions of hunted Covenanter and persecuted Puritan, and the pious outpourings of consecrated hearts, such as Brainerd, Eliot, Martyn, and Duff. But then, this is the very purpose of the author, to gather from every source testimonies as to the place the Psalms had in shaping and moulding human character, or in bringing comfort to drooping spirits and hearts broken with the weight of this world's sorrow. Discriminating readers will know how to use a book so catholic in its tone and so world-wide in the range of its vision, but it must be candidly admitted that it jars somewhat on our sense of historical justice to find Hildebrand compared with David. To compare the man who was the creator of the political papacy of the Middle Ages, and whose claims for ecclesiastical supremacy were founded largely upon the fabled Donation of Constantine and the forged Isidorian Decretals, with the man after God's own heart, who, if he sinned, has embalmed the expression of his repentance in words which will never die, is carrying comparison beyond its legitimate sphere.

As has already been said, every department of human life and activity is represented ; the great men of the earth are represented by such names as William the Conqueror, David I. of Scotland, Charles V., and Mary Queen of Scots ; patriots by Sir William Wallace ;¹ statesmen and rulers by Cromwell, Hampden, Wilberforce, and Kruger ; men of letters by Shakespeare, Bacon, Browning, Carlyle, and Tennyson ; men of science by Pascal, Sir James Simpson, and Romanes ; soldiers by Colonel Gardiner and Sir Henry Havelock. These names are scarcely a tithe of those referred to. Of course the great Reformers and religious writers are well represented. Perhaps to Scotsmen the most interesting chapter will be that dealing with the Covenanters, but to all interested in the great religious movements that have stirred the European nations or our own country the chapter dealing with the Reformers, the Huguenots, the Puritans, and the great revival in England in the 18th century, are enough to awaken in them a

¹ "At the execution of William Wallace, the dying patriot found comfort in the Psalter, which had been the companion of his adventurous wanderings. . . . As he stood on the scaffold, in the midst of the instruments for his torture, he begged Lord Clifford to restore to him the Psalter which had been taken from him at his capture. The prayer was granted. Unable to hold the book in his chained hands, he asked a priest to keep it open for him, and, as he hung from the gallows, he continued to look on it with love and devotion." (p. 99.)

profound sense of the usefulness of the Psalms in such movements. What the Psalms were to those holy men of God—Eliot, Brainerd, Carey, Martyn, Duff, and Livingstone—is told in the opening pages of the last chapter, and is as fascinating as any part of the book. It may be here stated that the author does not make it a point of showing what place the Psalms had in the worship of the Church. He incidentally touches on the subject, but the title of his book fully indicates the extent and the limits of his object.

When this article is headed "The Psalms in the Early History of the Church," it is not intended to dwell on the place the Psalms had in the worship of the early Church (this has already been done in works that are readily accessible), but rather to the place given to the Psalms by those who were prominent teachers and preachers in the early ages of the Church. The second chapter of the "Psalms in Human Life" opens with these words:—"Though the influence of the Psalms has been confined to no age, no nation, no class, and no creed, there have been special periods when they have spoken with peculiar force. This has been particularly the case in times of persecution, when circumstances gave to the words an immediate personal application. Such a period was the infancy of Christianity. Secretly, under cover of night, or at early dawn, children cast out by their parents, slaves oppressed by their masters, citizens suspected by their neighbours, subjects proscribed by their rulers, gathered for prayer and praise in the catacombs of great cities, in workshops, or in the upper rooms of retired houses on the outskirts of towns. Of their religious services the Psalms formed a conspicuous part, and special Psalms were soon appropriated to particular occasions, such as the 73rd for the morning and the 141st for the evening worship. These little companies of wool-workers, cobblers, fullers, craftsmen and slaves—'the most vulgar and illiterate of mankind,'—with whom assembled a handful of persons of higher rank, centurions, government officials, and ladies of noble birth, met together in danger of their lives. . . . The language of the Psalms was ever on the lips of those who, in the early history of Christianity, suffered violent deaths for or in the faith."

The peculiar reverence in which the Psalms were held may be gathered from the words of Ambrose:—"When other passages of Scripture are used in church the words are drowned in the noise of talking. But when the Psalter is read all are dumb." And again—"Any one possessed of his five wits should blush with shame if he did not begin the day with a Psalm, since even the tiniest birds open and close the day with sweet songs of holy devotion." And if further evidence was required Theodore, of Mopsuestia, readily furnishes it in the following words:—"Of other Scriptures most men know nothing. But the Psalms are repeated in private houses, in streets, and market places by those who have learned them by heart, and feel the soothing power of their divine melodies. What the Psalms were to Augustine, one

of the greatest doctors of the Christian Church, one may learn from his almost innumerable references to it in his "Confessions." In that memorable struggle that ended so well for him he gives expression to the feelings of his heart in the words of the Psalms. "How long, O Lord, how long?" was his prayer to the God whom he was seeking. "How long wilt Thou be angry? Oh remember not our old sins." (Ps. lxxxix. 5, 8.) When the great change came—a change that turned the whole current of his life—he found in the Psalms words well suited to give expression to a penitence that reveals how great were the depths to which the Holy Spirit led him ere he found that rest for which he panted with longing earnestness. "How, O God," he says, "did I cry unto Thee as I read the Psalms of David, those hymns of faith and songs of devotion, which fill the heart against all swellings of pride. I was still but a novice in Thy true love, a beginner, keeping holiday in a country place with Alypius, like myself a catechumen, and with my mother—in garb indeed a woman, but in faith a man, in the tranquility of age, full of a mother's love and Christian devotion! How did I cry unto Thee in these Psalms! How did they kindle my heart towards Thee! How did I burn to rehearse them all over the world, if so I might abate the pride of man." When his mother died, that mother who prayed with tears for his conversion, it was to the Psalms Augustine turned to find comfort in his sorrow. When the first gush of weeping was over, his friend Euodius took up the Psalter and began to sing, the whole household joining with him, Psalm ci., "My song shall be of mercy and judgment: unto Thee, O Lord, will I sing," etc. (p. 18.) When his own hour of departure came, it was with his eyes fixed on the book of Psalms that he bade farewell to all earthly things. "It was a plain and barely furnished room, says Prossidius, "in which he lay. The seven Penitential Psalms were, by his orders, written out, and placed where he could see them from his bed. These he looked at, and read in the days of his sickness, weeping often and sore." It is interesting to learn that the Psalms were very precious to Athanasius, the great defender of the faith against the Arian heresy. His favourite Psalm was the 72nd. "Against all assaults upon thy body," he says, "thine estate, thy soul, thy reputation, against all temptations, tribulations, plots, and slanderous reports, say this Psalm."

Obituary Note.—We regret to intimate the death of Mr. Rod. Kennedy, Strone, Charranach, Lochcarron, Ross-shire. He departed this life on the 20th ult.

Memoir of Rev. D. Macdonald.—As already intimated, copies of the "Memoir and Remains of the Rev. D. Macdonald, Shildaig," are soon expected to be out. Subscribers are requested to send their orders at once to Rev. D. Macfarlane, F.P. Manse, Craig Road, Dingwall.

Searmon.

LEIS AN URR. ARCH. COOK, A BHA'N DEIMHIDH.

Iosua vii. 12.

CHA-N 'eil am fasgadh is lugha anns an anam gun fhios do Shatan. B' aithne dha gu maith 'nuair a dh' fhag an Tighearn anam Iob agus chi sinn anns an Taisbean gu'm bheil e sgriobhta, "tilgidh an diabhul cuid dhibh ann am prìosan agus bidh amhghar agaibh." 'S e a' mhuinntir a b' iriosaille agus a bu naoimhe a bha mar so a' fulang. 'S iongantach na briathran sin, "agus dh' amhairc mi agus cha robh Fear-cuidich ann agus b' iongnadh leam nach robh Fear-taic ann, uine sin dh' oibrich mo ghairdean fein slainte," Anns a h-uile linn 'nuair a bha an Tighearn a' fagail na h-eaglais bha e air a thoirt fainear gu'n robh E 'dol a dh' fhalbh. Bha e air a thoirt fainear gu'n robh E 'gan toirt thairis do dh' inntinn shaoghailta, do fhuirm na diadhachd agus do ardan spioradail; agus gu'n robh E 'toirt air falbh nan creutairean a b' anmhuinne am measg a shluaigh agus le sin bha E ag radh, "Cha bhi mise maille ribh tuilleadh mur sgrios sibh an ni mallaichte as 'ur measg."

Feudaidh an Tighearn an eaglais fhaicsinneach fhagail ged a bhiodh a phobull gaoil fhein aige 'nam measg. Airson a lathair-eachd spioradail cha treig E am feasd a phobull, ach feudaidh E am fagail truagh ni's leor. Feudaidh E spiorad na gleachd ris fein a tharruing o an anam. Is uamhasach na briathran ud a thubhairt E ris an fhaidh, "na guidh as leth an t-sluaigh so airson an leas." Feudaidh E spiorad gleachd ris fein airson an aite a tharruing o an anam agus feudaidh E leigeil le spiorad na suaine tuiteam air an eaglais; "thuit thu o do cheud ghradh." 'Nuair a chuir an namhaid an cogal am measg a' chruithneachd tha e air a radh gur ann 'nuair a bha daoine 'nan codal a chuir se e. 'Nuair a chi sinn spiorad na suaine agus a' chodail a' tuiteam air muinntir feudaidh sinn a bhi 'cluinntinn nam briathar sin. "cha bhi mise maille ribh tuilleadh mur sgrios sibh an ni mallaichte sin as 'ur measg." Cha-n 'eil comharradh is mo air a' bhreitheanas no air an Tighearn a bhi 'falbh o 'eaglais na spiorad na suaine. Feudaidh E spiorad an tagraidh a tharruing o pharant a leth a leinibh agus cha-n 'eil comharradh a's mo air 'fheirg na sin. O mo chairdean, c'àite an cluinn sinn an diugh iomradh air anam grasnhor a' gal airson anaman? Ni iad urnuigh bheag, ach c'àite am bheil spiorad na gleachd nach comasach a' comhfhurtachadh as 'easbhuidh fein? agus nach 'eil sin 'na cho-mharradh air E a bhi 'tarruing air falbh o 'shluaigh fein?

Feudaidh an eaglais a bhi truagh 'nuair a chi sinn spiorad aithreachail briste 'ga fagail. Airson nadur an aithreachais cha-n fhag sin an t-anam fhad is a tha e anns an t-saoghal. Tha e ann an nadur grais. Ach feudaidh stad tighinn air a chleachdadh agus

ma thig feudaidh sinn na briathran sin a thogail, “Ichabod, dh’ fhalbh a’ ghloir o Israel.” ’S e spiorad briste aithreachail gloir na h-eaglais. Bha E fein de spiorad broin agus briste agus ciod a’ ghloir a tha cosmhuil ri muinntir a bhi air an cumadh ris fein? Tha cuid de chloinn Dhe aig am bheil an spiorad briste aithreachail so ’nan anam. Tha an seann slighibh air an cur fa’n comhair anns an uaigneas agus air an deanamh cho ùr dhoibh’s ’nuair a bha iad ciontach dhiubh agus “amhaircidh iad airesan a lot iad agus ni iad caoidh air a shon.” Ach oh! na fuirmean tioram, fuirmean tioram! tha ni’s leor dhe sin againn. Ach o! nach bu phriseil bhi faicinn drap de’n aithreachas agus do chràdh airson peacaidh. ’Nuair a chi sinn so a’ fagail an t-saoghail feudaidh sinn a bhi ’gabhail eagail gu’m bheil an Tighearn a’ falbh o ’eaglais agus ag radh, “cha bhi mise maille ribh tuilleadh mur sgrios sibh an ni mallaichte as ’ur measg.” Tha sinn a’ toirt fainear ’nuair a tha spiorad ceusda a’ fagail an anama cho iosal ’s a tha an gnothuch. Anns a h-uile linn ’nuair a bha so anns an t-saoghal bha geur-leanmhuinnean ann, bha tuiltean de dhearbhaidhean ann. O mo chairdean, cha-n ’eil spiorad saoghalta chum gloir Dhe. Ciod an t-ocras spioraid nach comasach bhi air a shasuchadh a tha an diugh ann an luchd aidich an deigh an t-saoghail? Ma ’s e so ’ur staid nach fheud sinn a bhi ’gabhail eagail gu bheil an Tighearn gu ’ur fagail? “Cha bhi mise maille ribh tuilleadh mur sgrios sibh an ni mallaichte as ur measg.”

Ach gu comhdhunadh aig an am so, bha sinn a’ labhairt air dol air falbh an Tighearna, agus tha eagail orm nach ’eil sin fad o’n sgìre so. ’Nuair a chi mise mar a leumas creutairean a mach as an eaglais tha mi ’gabhail eagail. Ach tha an la a’ tighinn anns am faigh sibh ’ur toil fein. Bha sinn a’ labhairt air urnuigh. Cha-n ’eil urnuigh le deoir aig nach ’eil buaidh iongantach ann an gloir. Oh! nach e gaol Chrìosd a bha mar theine ann a innigh o shiorruidheachd nach foisicheadh dealaichte o ’eaglais?

Tha cuid ann agus ma tha briathran breagha aca anns an urnuigh cha chreid iad gu’m bheil iad gun Dia gus an toir na lasraichean siorruidh orra chreidsinn. Ach oh! cho beag ’s a tha sin a’ cur a dh’ eagail air luchd-aidich. Suidhidh iad ann an socair. C’àite am faic thu deoir ann an eaglais? ’Nuair a bha an Tighearn anns na meadhonan bha deoir, bha am bron, bha aithreachas. Ach a nis, is iongantach gu’m faicear aon a’ tighinn gu curam mu ’anam, mu ’shiorruidheachd. Am bu chomasach thu fein bhi ni bu lugha fo churam ged nach biodh anam agad? Tha curam anama nis cho tearc ’s nan tigeadh aon gu curam gu’n abradh an saoghal gu’n robh e ’dol as a chiall; agus cha-n e sin a mhain ach cho tearc ’s a tha ’tighinn a mach a’n teanntachdan ann an rathad gu’m bi iad ’nan comhfhurtachd do’n eaglais. ’S ann a chi thu iad ’nam mill laidir nach bi chum mor chomhfhurtachd do’n eaglais.

Tha peacaidhean uamhasach a’ dol air aghaidh anns an t-saoghal agus sin anns na teaghlaichean is soilleire, agus ’s math

dh' fheudta ann an coimhthional anns am bheil drap de bheo-fianuis gur ann an sin a tha na tuiltean peacaidh a' dortadh a mach. Theid am peacadh air aghairt air tus anns an uaigneas, cha tig e dh' ionnsuidh an t-soluis 'na thoiseach. Theagamh gu'm bheil thusa ciontach de striopachas anns an uaigneas, ach thoir an aire thig e dh' ionnsuidh an fhollais. Tha e air a radh gur naire eadhon labhairt air na nithibh a ni daoine anns an uaigneas. Ach cumadh Dia tosdach agus cha-n fhada gus an tig thu gu peacachadh gu follaiseach. Cha dana le parant a leanabh a chronachadh agus 'nuair a tha nithe air teachd gu so nach 'eil e 'na aobhar eagail gu'n d' thubhairt E, "Cha bhi mise maille ribh tuilleadh mur sgrios sibh an ni mallaichte as 'ur measg?"

1. Is eagalach gu'm biodh aig neach air bith lamh ann an cràdh an Tighearna ann an doigh air bith o na meadhonan. Thusa, aig am bidh, cluinnidh tu fathasd na briathran sin, "Imichibh uam, a shluagh mhallaichte dh' ionnsuidh an teine shiorruidh a dh' ulluicheadh do'n diabhul agus d'a ainglibh." Anam bhoichd, na biodh lamh agad ann a chràdh.

2. Tha creutairean bochd a tha 'faicinn nach comasach iad ni a dheanamh ach a bhi 'ga chràdh, 'nan smuaintean ged a sguireadh iad dhe gnìomhachadh, gidheadh tha an tobar anns an anam. Sibhse a tha anns an staid sin, innsibh sin do Chrìosd; 'se Crìosd a chruthaicheas cridhe glan. Cha d' fhuair E aon riamh ach aon aig an robh cridhe salach agus 's iomadh cridhe salach a rinn E glan. Sibhse a tha anns a' chor sin meantraibh sibh fein air. Feudaidd Crìosd a radh ri iomadh, "Cha d'iarr thu riamh ormsa do thearnadh, cha-n fhaca mi riamh deur air do shùil ag iarraidh trocair." Tha cuid ann agus cha-n e a mhain gu bheil iad 'ga chràdh uapa fein ach tha iad a' deanamh na's comasach iad gu a chràdh o mhuinntir eile. Tha daoine agus mnathan ann agus cha labhair iad focal mu Chrìosd ach talamh, talamh, talamh. "Cha bhi mise maille ribh tuilleadh mur sgrios sibh an ni mallaichte as 'ur measg."

3. Am biodh tu toileach thu fein a bhi air do thearnadh? Am biodh tu naraichte bhi air do thearnadh a' d' aonar? Am bheil thu 'creidsinn nach teid ni de'n chruas sin a stigh a shealbhachadh rioghachd Dhe? Ach oh! c'àite am bheil a' ghal airson anaman?

Am Fear-Deirce

LE IAIN NEWTON (eadar-theangaichte).

A' gabhail misnich mhoir
O do ghealladh do na bochdaibh,
Feuch deirceach, Rìgh na glòir,
A' feitheamh aig do dhorsaibh;
Do lamh, do chridhe fein a mhain
Ni cabhair ann a leithid de chàs.

An tagradh 'chluinnear tric
 Aig baigearan an t saoghail
 Cha n fhiu leat gabhail ris
 O h aon de chloinn nan daoine ;
 'S do'n tagradh ris an eisd Thu fein
 Cha tugadh clann nan daoine speis.

Cha bhuin e dhomh bhi 'g radh,
 Ged tha mi nis tur-fhalamh,
 Gidheadh gu'n robh an la
 Bu shaoibhir mi air thalamh ;
 Tha sar-fhios agad o mo bhreith
 Nach robh 'bu bhoichd na mi am bith.

Cha dàna leam ni's mo,
 Mar their am baigear bitheant',
 A radh, ged mor mo leon,
 Gur ionnan sin mo neo-chiont ;
 Ged chlaoidheadh cion-bidh m'anam bochd
 Cha-n fhaighinn ach na thoill m'lochd.

Bu ghorach dhomh a radh,
 Nach d'iarr mi deirc ort roimhe,
 'S ma bheir Thu rud an tra-s',
 Nach cuir mi dragh ort tuilleadh ;
 'S minic a chuidich Thu le m' chruas,
 'S is tric a thig orm tighinn as ùr.

'S ro mhaith an spruileach fein
 Airson mo leithid de mhadadh,
 Ach lionadh dhomh a'm' fheum
 Cha toir ach biadh na cloinne ;
 An gruaim na iarr orm imeachd uait,
 'S mi 'm feum an dearbh ni dh' ulluich Thu.

'S cha-n urrainn mi bhi reidh
 Ri cleith ro-mheud do mhaitheis
 O thruaghain mar mi fein
 'Nan eigin leis an acras ;
 Ach innseam dhoibh mu lan do stòir,
 Ach an tig na miltean 'nad choir.

Ceart mar tha neamh nan speur
 Os cionn an t-saoghail againn,
 Do smuaintean glic gu leir
 Do 'r n-inntinn tha do-bhreithnicht' ;
 Ris an tagradh-s' clann nan daoine' cha-n eisd,
 Ach eisdidh Dia ri fear na deirc.

Literary Notices.

THE NEW PROTESTANT DICTIONARY.¹

This work, which is issued under the auspices of the Protestant Reformation Society, is, as we are told in the preface, the first attempt made on the Protestant side to deal with the points of dispute between Romanists and Protestants by means of a dictionary. There are 67 contributors, including the two editors. Among these one finds the names of some of the foremost biblical scholars and ecclesiastical historians of the day, such as Dr. Margaret Gibson, Principal Lindsay, Professor Margoliouth, Bishop Moule, Professor Orr, and Provost Salmon. One is also glad to see the names of such sound Protestants as Rev. Dr. Robertson, Venice; Rev. Thomas Connellan, editor of the *Catholic*; and Mr. Walter Walsh, author of the *Secret History of the Oxford Movement*, etc. The subjects dealt with cover the whole field of controversy between Protestants and Romanists. None of the articles is exceptionally long, and there may be a feeling of a certain lack of adequate treatment in reading some of the articles, but the editors forestall all such criticism by saying that the Protestant Dictionary does not profess to be complete as a historical or theological lexicon. Dr. Wright deals with the Apocrypha in an interesting article. The article on the Atonement is written by Dr. Wright's co-editor. It deals more particularly with the nature of the atonement, and in so doing dwells on its substitutionary character as opposed to the moral influence and governmental theories. Mr. Neil also writes the article on Redemption, which contains a statement which, to say the least of it, is misleading in its phraseology. The statement is as follows:—"Some who teach particular redemption, as Calvin taught it, hold with Calvin the theory of universal atonement, and others who are hyper-Calvinists maintain that of a limited atonement." The writer here, it is probable, is referring to the gospel offer. No Calvinist believes in a universal atonement. The great majority of them believe in the free offer of the gospel to all, but that is quite a different matter. Considerable space is devoted to Justification and Sanctification. The biographical articles on Huss, Wyclif, Luther, and Knox are fairly lengthy and satisfactory. Professor Cowan, of Aberdeen, who writes on Knox, acknowledging his sternness, says, "But a man of gentler mould could hardly have accomplished the signal work which was given him to do, and he stands forth as the greatest and noblest Scot of his age—heroic in his absolute fearlessness, sublime in his single-minded and disinterested devotion to duty, with a love of country subordinate only to his love of truth, and with an underlying tenderness which was repressed only by the constant necessity of conflict and the

¹ A Protestant Dictionary, edited by the Rev. C. H. H. Wright, D.D., M.A., Ph.D., and the Rev. Charles Neil, M.A. (London: Hodder & Stoughton. 1904.)

stern sense of responsibility." But why is there no special biographical article on Calvin? Surely a place might have been found in a work like this for an article on one of the greatest reformers and profoundest theologians that the Church ever possessed. The articles on Liberius, Honorius, Galileo, and the Popes should yield some painful facts for infallibility-Papists. One of the most interesting and instructive articles in the book is on church music. The writer, Rev. N. Dimock, M.A., of St. John's College, Oxford, makes it very plain that in the Early Church Christians had no desire for instrumental music in worship, and that a great number of the English reformers were strongly opposed to it. But the field which the book covers is wide, and it can only be a mere fragmentary notice that we can give at best.

In concluding, it may be as well to quote Professor Nicol's reference to our own Church in his article on the Scottish Churches:—"Another section of the old Free Church," he says, "is found in the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland. It had its origin in a secession from the Church on account of the Declaratory Act of 1893, by which the Free Church, in the estimation of the seceding ministers, had departed from the ancient testimony. The number of ordained ministers in the Free Presbyterian Church is twelve, and there are over twenty sanctioned charges, with a number of mission stations besides. There are five students preparing for the ministry. It has a considerable body of adherents in different parts of the Highlands. Like the remanent Free Church, it holds fast by the Establishment principle, and is opposed to the use of hymns and organs in public worship."

Were this a review instead of a short notice reference might be made to the articles on Hades, Paradise and Hell. They are not as satisfactory as one would wish, but taking the work all in all, it will be invaluable to everyone interested in the great controversy between Romanists and Protestants. Its price, 15s., may put it beyond the reach of many. It is, however, issued to subscribers by the Protestant Reformation Society for 10s. 6d. It is a large book, containing over 830 pages, well printed, and of handsome appearance. It is also enriched by some good illustrations.

D. B.

THE CHURCH IN SARDIS AND THE GLORY TO FOLLOW. By M. J. Benson. (London: Farncombe & Son, 30 Imperial Buildings, E.C.)

This little booklet in cloth contains the reflections of a spiritual mind on the present low condition of the Church at large, and on its future glory during the good days to come. Unfulfilled prophecy is at all times a difficult subject to handle, and Miss Benson realises this. She expresses her anxiety not to write "anything contrary to the mind of God in His Word," and we are pleased to see she does not advocate pre-millenarian views. If Miss Benson

adds nothing very original to the study of prophecy, her reflections may at least stir thought in the minds of others. In an interesting chapter on "The Times of Antichrist," where indeed there is nothing dogmatically asserted as to the exact dates of future events, Miss Benson considers it probable that the millenium will begin about the year 1972. The price of the booklet is ninepence, and may be had from the authoress at 108 Ditchling Rise, Brighton.

J. S. S.

The Hill of Haimer.

The cold hand of Death its dark shadows hath cast
O'er the famed hill of Haimer since we visited thee last.
The daughter of a prince we mourn;¹ we then mourned a prince.
Ah me! what bright jewels have been taken home since.

From the evils to come are they saved to His praise.
The Voice says, "Be still," in these sad, troublous days;
Yet the rugged cliffs of Haimer are as able to hear
As this hard heart of ours, if pow'r divine don't appear.

"The salt of the earth" were once found on that coast,
Of whose valour the remnant delighted to boast,
By the world little valued, for it knew not their price;
Their treasure was above, the good part was their choice.

Sweet Margaret Gunn's equal, O where would you find?
For love that ne'er faileth and graces combined,
Enrapt in that myst'ry, the covenant of grace,
Admiring not her own, but Christ's righteousness.

Her Sabbaths were hallowed, His Word was her theme;
The saints her delight, but her King was supreme;
Gifted with precious faith, which worketh by love,
Was this Shunamite fair, so enriched from above.

There were troublers in Isra'l e'en in those former days,
Then foxes entered Zion, changing worship and praise;
Like the doves of the valley, some saints mourned alone,
Until they entered the rest where all sorrows are gone.

There dwelt worthy William Iverach, who lived in God's fear,
Like Nathanael of old, whose stamp he did bear.
To contend for the faith he was brave as a lion,
Sore oppressed with the wrongs done by foes of God's Zion.

Who could not but revere saintly James Mowat so true,
With his branches refreshed by heaven's bright dew;
Much absorbed in the wonders beheld in the plan,
Which brought glory to God and salvation to man.

What ails this generation at Christ, His glorious name?
Why scorn they His yoke, the cross and its shame?
Ah! the faithful decay; may sons rise in their stead,
To stand in the gap 'tween the living and the dead.

D. T.

¹ See notice in last issue of Janet Mowat, who died on 6th February.—ED.

A Brief Account of Gustavus Adolphus.

IN our last rehearsal of the affairs of the King of Sweden (see February issue) we intimated that his daring enterprise had now entered on a new phase. Ferdinand and his Jesuits, stung into a supreme effort, had recalled Wallenstein and launched him with some 40,000 foemen against the victorious champion of the Protestant faith. Having failed to prevent the junction of Wallenstein and his ally, the Elector of Bavaria, Gustavus fell back before overwhelming odds, and, till his various forces scattered throughout Germany should be able to concentrate, betook himself to tactics of defensive war. The town of Nuremberg in Franconia was an important Protestant centre. It was a wealthy, populous place, strongly devoted to the King's interests, and on these accounts its capture was the first object of Wallenstein's ambition. The inhabitants beheld the storm surging towards them from the east, and fearing the fate of Madgeburg they sent a pressing message to Gustavus to defend them from the onset. He replied to the messengers—"Return to your city, and tell your fellow-citizens to be of good courage. So long as I live, with the help of God, Wallenstein shall never see the inside of your walls." The King accordingly resolved to make a stand at Nuremberg, and he caused a camp to be formed outside the city walls. With the enthusiastic help of the citizens he quickly formed a strong position frowning with 300 cannon, and here with 16,000 men he arrived in the beginning of June, 1632. Wallenstein was also quickly on the scene with a host now numbering 60,000. He was burning to achieve a victory over the antagonist who had wrested the pre-eminence in arms from himself, but it behoved him to be wary in such an undertaking. Knowing how pressing the problems of food and sanitation would soon become in the King's crowded lines, it seemed to him good policy to avoid direct warfare and to pursue instead a policy of famine. By surrounding the King and intercepting all his supplies he hoped to starve him into surrender, and thus gain victory at a cheap rate. His project was not a complete success owing to the unforeseen activity and resource of Gustavus, but, nevertheless, while the situation lasted the strain of it was terrible. On the 23rd of August the expected reinforcements under Oxenstierna arrived in camp, bringing the King's numbers up to 60,000 fighting men. With this force he determined to attack Wallenstein's position and force on an engagement. The key of the situation was a hill called the Altenwald, surmounted by an old castle which Wallenstein had strongly fortified. The attempt upon such a position was a hazardous one. It was manfully prosecuted, but it ended in failure. Gustavus spent 2000 of his best troops on the assault, but he could not prevail. Wallenstein was not to be dislodged, but neither was he willing to accept the enemy's challenge to fight in the open. On the 8th of September,

leaving a garrison for the protection of Nuremberg, the King broke up his camp and retired to Neustadt to refresh his army, Wallenstein offering no opposition to the movement. The situation had been as fatal to him as to Gustavus. The country could not bear two such hosts, and famine and pestilence had prevailed in both camps. Gustavus had lost 12,000 horses and 10,000 men during these stifling, fever-stricken summer weeks from June to September, and Wallenstein's 60,000 were also much diminished. We relate such things easily and thoughtlessly, but the detail of suffering in all forms to man and beast involved in such a story is terrible if we could realise it, and wakens longings for the time foreseen in prophecy when "Nation shall not lift up the sword against nation. Neither shall they learn war any more." Wallenstein also broke up his camp and retired northwards, and thus the two antagonists separated ineffectually for this time, but when they meet again it will be to terrible purpose.

Church Notes.

Communion.—Edinburgh, 1st Sabbath of the month; Lochgilphead, 2nd; Wick, St. Jude's and John Knox's, Glasgow, 4th; Oban, Kames, and Lochinver, 1st Sabbath of May.

Notice.—Treasurers under the jurisdiction of the Northern Presbytery are requested to send in abstracts of the financial statements for their congregations to the clerk (Rev. D. Beaton, Wick) at their earliest convenience. Last year the Presbytery, on receiving the report of the Committee appointed to examine these accounts, recommended that they should be audited, and where possible, printed, and that congregations should make their financial year end on 31st March.

Acknowledgment of Donations.—Rev. Mr. Macfarlane, Dingwall, begs to acknowledge with thanks £5 received from James Mackenzie, Esq., Cliff House, Poolewe, towards the Manse Building Fund. The treasurer of the congregation would also acknowledge with thanks £1 for the same object from an anonymous donor.—Mr. Murdo M'Leod, missionary, Stoer, begs to acknowledge with thanks the receipt of £5 16s. 8d. for assisting towards the building of new church from the few lads belonging to their congregation in Drumbeg district who left for Canada last year.

Mr. John A. Kensit before the Lord Mayor.—On Sabbath, 28th February, Mr. Kensit protested, in an orderly manner, against the ordination by the Bishop of London of certain deacons to "the office of Presbytery or Priest," on account of their Popish practices. He was summoned to appear before the Lord Mayor on March 4th for unlawful disturbance, and although his agent, in an able speech, clearly demonstrated that Mr. Kensit was acting in entire consistency with the law, the decision was £5 or one day's imprisonment. An appeal was lodged. The case has evoked great popular sympathy.