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Intellectual and Spiritual Freedom.

THERE is a great outcry about intellectual and spiritual freedom at the present time, but it is quite apparent that most of those who talk so volubly on the subject have little real understanding of what it means. Truly, "freedom is a noble thing," provided it be of the right stamp, a privilege more precious than gold, yea, than much fine gold. But, alas! as in the case of many other excellent commodities, there is the counterfeit as well as the genuine article—the apparent freedom as well as the real, the false as well as the true. We need not hesitate to affirm that it is the false liberty and not the true which our modern men of progress so devotedly worship and laud so loudly before Church and world. No doubt they boldly claim to be the successors of our honoured forefathers who fought for freedom in times past, but the hollowness of this claim is manifest to any discerning reader of the Church's history. Our godly ancestors contended for a freedom regulated by the precepts of God's infallible Word, but the present cry is on behalf of a lawless freedom—a licence that would set at defiance the laws both of God and men.

It may be profitable to notice in this connection a remarkable conversation that took place between the great Head of the Church and the Jews in reference to freedom. The Lord Jesus Christ is "the light of the world," and whoso followeth Him "shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." At His feet we may learn something as to the true nature of intellectual and spiritual freedom.

We are told in the eighth chapter of John that on one occasion, as Jesus taught in the temple, "many believed on him." As His custom was, He proceeded to instruct still further the new converts in the things of the kingdom of God. Thus the narrative runs: "Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." He impressed upon them two important facts at least—first, that it

was by their continuance in the maintenance and observance of His word, they would prove themselves to be His real disciples; and secondly, that it was by the knowledge of "the truth" they would be made spiritually free. Some who professed to believe on Him, but vainly boasted of their liberty, resented His words, and answered, "We be Abraham's seed and were never in bondage to any man: how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free?" They did not understand what Christ meant; they only thought of their external privileges as the seed of Abraham; and in their foolish haste to vindicate their possession of liberty they told a deliberate and palpable falsehood; they declared they "were never in bondage to any man." How could they possibly forget that their ancestors had been in bondage to the Egyptians and the Assyrians, and that they themselves were at that very moment under the Roman yoke? But such is the kind of speech that often flows from pride and ignorance; under these unhappy influences men often pour forth lies like a flood. Jesus, however, went on to remind His hearers that there was another kind of bondage besides that of a civil nature, a more terrible kind of which they seemed entirely unconscious—namely, the bondage of sin. "Jesus answered them, 'Verily, verily, I say unto you, whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin. And the servant abideth not in the house for ever. But the Son abideth ever.'" These Jews lived in the daily practice of sin, and therefore showed they were the servants or slaves of sin. No doubt they were also members in the house of God, the visible Church, but it was not as sons but as servants, not as free children, but as bond slaves—destitute of the spirit of adoption and ruled by the legal spirit of bondage—and so were destined one day to leave the house for ever. "But the Son abideth ever." Christ was the Son, the elder Brother, the first-born among many brethren, and it was His right and privilege to abide for ever in the house of God. Through Him alone could any obtain the freedom of the house. Thus He adds, "If the Son therefore make you free, ye shall be free indeed." If they got His freedom, they would be free in reality as well as in name—free in the highest and noblest sense as spiritual sons of the living God.

In the subsequent part of His discourse Jesus brings home to them the unpalatable truth that while they were the natural seed of Abraham, they were not his spiritual seed, otherwise they would do his works, and would not seek to kill a man who had told them the truth which He had heard of God; "this did not Abraham." Christ asserts that they had another "father" whose deeds they did, and this parent at once they claimed to be God, "We have one Father, even God;" but He told them plainly that, if God were their Father, they would love Him who had come forth from God, while the fact remained that they were of an entirely different descent. In words of fire He flashed the light of truth upon their sinful condition; "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of

your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own; for he is a liar, and the father of it. And because I tell you the truth, ye believe not." With all their profession and privileges, with all their boasted freedom, they were still the servants of the devil and the rejecters of the truth—in a word, wrapped up in the darkness of intellectual and spiritual bondage.

Let us observe several points in the foregoing discourse of Christ's that may be fitly applied to present-day circumstances.

1. We note that men may be bound with the chains of the direst bondage, and yet boast of the greatest liberty. Such was the case with the Jews in the time of Christ, and such is the case with many professors of religion at the present day. Men, who are bound hand and foot with the chains of unrighteousness, proclaim themselves the apostles of spiritual liberty. Never delivered from the thralldom of Satan or made subjects of a new birth, they yet imagine themselves freemen in the Lord. Sin has blinded the eyes and hardened the heart, and no amount of native intellect or acquired learning can break the bands. There is a light that is darkness and a freedom that is bondage.

2. These persons who boast of liberty, while yet in thralldom, are generally the captives of error in doctrine as well as in life. The Jews, whom Christ condemns, were such; they had unsound views of man's relation to God. For example, they practically denied their total depravity by nature. This is seen in the fact that they regarded themselves as enjoying spiritual liberty when they were under the dominion of lust and of Satan, and possessed nothing spiritually good in heart or life. Further, they asserted the erroneous opinion of the universal fatherhood of God. We daresay the scope of their ideas on this subject was confined to the Jewish people, the people of Church privilege. But now when the gospel is extended to the whole world, it transpires that errorists on a similar principle assert the fatherhood of God as having respect to every creature. Some hold the most dangerous view that because God is the creator of all, He is the Father of all in the highest sense. Jesus condemned the notion of the Jews out and out, and His words also overthrow all similar errors. He makes it clear that they only who love Him—the Son who came forth from God—are the persons to whom God stands in the intimate relation of Father, and who are manifestly his children. God is certainly spoken of as "the Father of Spirits" in His capacity as Creator, but He is not the Father of all men in a way of covenant and saving relationship. In this most important sense He is only the Father of those who are in Christ Jesus. "As many as received him (that is, Christ) to them gave he power (or right) to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name, which were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God" (John i. 12, 13).

3. Observe the true nature of intellectual and spiritual freedom. *Intellectual freedom* in spiritual things is just a branch of that divine freedom which the Son of God confers upon the children of men. It must always be kept in mind as a prior consideration that sin has darkened and enslaved the understanding as well as the other faculties of the human soul. The intellect is naturally in bondage to error as well as the heart to sin. Correct views of God and spiritual realities, if now possessed by many natural men, did not emanate from the unrenewed mind, but from the heavenly Fountain of light. Man's thoughts by nature are vanity, and it is only when he receives divine light in his understanding and begins to think in accordance with the mind of God as revealed in His Word that he enters upon a new era of intellectual liberty. Intellectual freedom, then, is deliverance from mental darkness and error, and ability to think right thoughts, thoughts of truth, the thoughts of God. *Spiritual freedom* in general is freedom from the bondage of sin and Satan, accompanied with ability to delight in God and to do His will. The understanding is enlightened in the knowledge of sin and Christ and salvation, the conscience is cleansed from the burden of guilt and enjoys peace with God, the will is renewed and brought into harmony with the divine will, and the affections are sanctified and elevated and set upon things above where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God. The soul is thus translated from death to life, from darkness to light, from the kingdom of Satan to the kingdom of God's dear Son; it is freed from the spirit of bondage to fear, and breathes the spirit of adoption crying Abba Father. Let us take special notice of the fact that this is *not a lawless freedom*. Though believers are delivered from the law as a covenant of works, they are under the law as a rule of life. They receive the law—the whole preceptive will of God, including the ten commandments—from the hands of Christ as Mediator, and are moved by regard for Him, who loved righteousness and hated iniquity even unto death, to keep all His commandments. They are "not without law to God, but under law to Christ." They are free, and yet under obligation not to use their liberty as a cloak of maliciousness or evil doing, but as the servants of God. They are free to cast off the tyranny of the devil and the unlawful authority of men, but not free to renounce the government of Christ or to discard any part of His revealed will. Free only are they to do His will from the heart, and to run in the way of His commandments with delight. Lawless liberty is the atmosphere in which the hosts of darkness delight, and is rebellion against the throne of God and the Lamb.

4. Let us observe how this freedom is obtained. It is by the knowledge of "the truth." "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." The truth is no uncertain quantity that varies according to the opinions of men from age to age. It is the infallible and unchanging word of God that perfectly corres-

ponds to the fact of reality in whatever sphere it touches. It is His Word concerning all these matters that He has been pleased to speak of to the children of men, matters that pertain to their good and His glory. This is "the truth" that can be absolutely relied upon, and made a foundation of faith and hope for eternity. It is by the knowledge of it that men are made intellectually and spiritually free.

As far as intellectual liberty is concerned, it is the incontrovertible testimony of past history as well as of present observation that it is those nations where the gospel of Christ has been most richly proclaimed, and where the Bible has taken the deepest root, that have been most distinguished for intellectual vigour and fruitfulness. Christianity has been the foster mother of education and industry, the happy promoter of progress in every noble field of thought and action. The nations of antiquity, though distinguished at certain early periods for men of outstanding genius and mental ability—broken relics of man's primeval glory—yet they contained within them all the seeds of intellectual as well as moral decay, with no inherent power of recuperation, no perennial spring of light and liberty. Thus some of them lost their original greatness, while others vanished from the stage of time. It was the proclamation far and wide through the Gentile nations of the blessed saving truths of God's Word—truths many of which are derided in this degenerate age—that these peoples were rescued from the stupor of mental as well as moral degradation. "The truth" has proved a mighty quickener of all the powers of the human understanding wherever it has come. Its advent in our own country was to us the beginning of days from an intellectual as well as a spiritual point of view.

The chief glory, however, of the Christian religion is that it is the emancipator of the soul from the bondage of sin and Satan. This it accomplishes through the communication of the knowledge of "the truth as it is in Jesus." Let it not be forgotten that even "the knowledge of sin" is derived from the light of this truth. No fallen creature naturally discerns the true character of the sin which is his master or realises its guilt and consequences. Where sin reigns, there darkness reigns. It is only the light of heaven shining through the windows of divine truth that can show men where they stand as sinners in the presence of a holy God. For the knowledge of our guilt and danger, then, we are indebted to that truth which the Son of God by the Spirit employs in converting the soul. The truth, however, which of His free mercy He has given for the salvation of sinners is gloriously comprehensive; it not only unveils before the astonished eyes of the awakened soul the city of destruction in which he lives, but it opens up to him the wondrous way of escape and salvation through Jesus Christ, and under the quickening influences of the same blessed Spirit of Christ, the soul is enabled to see the infinite excellency of this way of deliverance from eternal bondage and misery, and to embrace

it and run in it with delight. The Son of God makes free by the truth.

We also point out that not only is spiritual freedom communicated to the individual soul by "the truth," but also to the general body of men who profess to be called out into the liberty of Christ's gospel, commonly named the Church. The Church's freedom only stands in and by "the truth." Let the truth of God be departed from, and the Church's freedom is lost. If professing Churches give up the fundamental doctrines of the faith of God's elect, no matter though in the supposed interests of boasted light and freedom, they cease to be free, and they pass into the most real bondage, none the less real that it is unrecognised and unfelt.

5. It appears to us that what many men and Churches want nowadays is freedom *from* the truth and not freedom *in* the truth, freedom from all subjection to the authority of God's Word, freedom, in fact, to worship and serve the idol self, whether represented in the opinion of the individual member of the Church, or in the collective vote of the General Assembly. The ministers of one large religious body (the United Free) at the present moment, like the Ephesians of old in regard to their great goddess Diana, are shouting all day long with one accord, "Great is freedom! great is freedom!" little realising the actual bondage to error and corruption in which they wallow. They have cast off the Confession of Faith as an antiquated symbol; they have accepted the erroneous views of Arminianism, which have done much to poison and destroy humanity; they have renounced the Calvinistic system of truth, which is clearly founded upon and agreeable to God's Word, and which, by the divine blessing, shook and reformed the world; while to crown their apostacy from the true freedom of the gospel, they have given an unholy licence to their professors and other teachers to set aside the authority of the Son of God in the matter of the Holy Scriptures, and to treat in a blasphemous manner considerable portions of the sacred volume as mythical stories and unreliable traditions. And yet the apostles of this diabolical liberty have the effrontery to claim that they obey the will of Christ, and are subject to "mind of Christ." How terrible must be the power of the prince of darkness where such strong delusion holds sway! Is not the renunciation of God's truth and the acceptance of the devil's lie the very beginning of eternal slavery? May the Lord in infinite mercy send forth His light and truth in these days of blasphemy and rebuke, days also not without tokens of Christ's reigning power, and may He rescue many deluded souls from destruction, and revive and comfort His true and faithful people, that both together may sing a new song to the Rock of their salvation!

Faith is in some respect an easy thing. Is not that easy, a fte which, if a man look with his heart, he hath it.—*W. Guthrie.*

A Sermon

By the REV. CHRISTMAS EVANS, the Great Welsh Preacher.¹

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"Until the time of reformation."—HEBREWS ix. 10.  
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THE ceremonies pertaining to the service of God, under Sinaitic dispensation, were entirely typical in their character; mere figures of Christ, the "High-priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands;" who, "not by the blood of goats and calves, but by His own blood, has entered once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us." Sustaining such a relation to other ages and events, they were necessarily imperfect, consisting "only in meats, and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances," not intended for perpetual observance, but imposed upon the Jewish people merely "until the time of reformation," when the shadow should give place to the substance, and a Greater than Moses should "make all things new." Let us notice the time of reformation, and the reformation itself.

I. Time may be divided into three parts: the Golden Age before the fall, the Iron Age after the fall, and the Messiah's Age of Jubilee.

In the Golden Age the heavens and the earth were created; the Garden of Eden was planted; man was made in the image of God, and placed in the garden to dress and keep it; matrimony was instituted; and God, resting from His labour, sanctified the seventh day as a day of holy rest to man.

The Iron Age was introduced by the temptation of a foreigner, who obtruded himself into Paradise, and persuaded its happy denizens to cast off the golden yoke of obedience and love to God. Man, desiring independence, became a rebel against heaven, a miserable captive of sin and Satan, obnoxious to the Divine displeasure, and exposed to eternal death. The law was violated; the image of God was lost, and the enemy came in like a flood. All communication between the island of Time and the continent of Immortality was cut off, and the unhappy exiles saw no hope of crossing the ocean that intervened.

The Messiah's Age may be divided into three parts: the time of Preparation, the time of Actual War, and the time of Victory and Triumph.

The Preparation began with the dawning of the day in Eden, when the Messiah came in the ship of the Promise, and landed on the island of Time, and notified its inhabitants of His gracious

¹ This Sermon is taken from the volume on Christmas Evans by the Rev. Paxton Hood, who gives an interesting account of this remarkable man and other wonderful preachers in Wales during days gone by. Mr. Evans died in 1838, in the seventy-third year of his age and fifty-fourth of his ministry."—ED.

intention to visit them again, and assume their nature, and live and die among them; to break their covenant allegiance to the prince of the iron yoke; and deliver to them the charter, signed and sealed with His own blood, for the redemption and renovation of their island, and the restoration of its suspended intercourse with the land of Eternal Life. The motto inscribed upon the banners of this age was: "He shall bruise thy heel, and Thou shalt bruise his head." Here Jehovah thundered forth His hatred of sin from the thick darkness, and wrote His curse in fire upon the face of heaven; while rivers of sacrificial blood proclaimed the miserable state of man, and his need of a costlier atonement than mere humanity could offer. Here, also, the Spirit of Messiah fell upon the prophets, leading them to search diligently for the way of deliverance, and enabling them to "testify beforehand of the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow."

Then came the season of Actual War. "Messiah the Prince" was born in Bethlehem, wrapped in swaddling bands, and laid in a manger,—the Great Deliverer, "made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem those that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." With His almighty hand He laid hold on the works of the devil, unlocked the iron furnace, and broke the brazen bands asunder. He opened His mouth and the deaf heard, the blind saw, the dumb spoke, the lame walked, and the lepers were cleansed. In the house of Jairus, in the street of Nain, and in the burial-ground of Bethany His word was mightier than death; and the damsel on her bed, the young man on his bier, and Lazarus in his tomb, rising to second life, were but the earnest of His future triumph. The diseases of sin He healed, the iron chains of guilt He shattered, and all the horrid caves of human corruption and misery were opened by the Heavenly Warrior. He took our yoke and bore it away upon His own shoulder, and cast it, broken, into the bottomless pit. He felt in His hands and feet the nails, and in His side the spear. The iron entered into His soul, but the corrosive power of His blood destroyed it, and shall ultimately eat away all the iron in the kingdom of death. Behold Him hanging on Calvary, nailing upon His cross three bills, the handwriting of the law which was against us, the oath of our allegiance to the prince of darkness, and the charter of the "everlasting covenant;" fulfilling the first, breaking the second, and sealing the third with His blood!

Now begins the scene of Victory and Triumph. On the morning of the third day the Conqueror is seen "coming from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah." He has "trodden the winepress alone." By the might of His single arm He has routed the hosts of hell, and spoiled the dominions of death. The iron castle of the foe is demolished, and the Hero returns from the war, "glorious in His apparel, travelling in the greatness of His strength." He enters the gates of the everlasting city amid the rejoicing of angels and the shouts of His redeemed. And still

He rides forth in the chariot of His grace, "conquering, and to conquer." A two-edged sword issues from His mouth, and in His train follow the victorious armies of heaven. Lo! before Him fall the altars of idols and the temples of devils; and the slaves of sin are becoming the servants and sons of the living God; and the proud sceptic beholds, wonders, believes, and adores; and the blasphemer begins to pray; and the persecutor is melted into penitence and love; and the wolf comes and lays him down gently by the side of the lamb. And Messiah shall never quit the field till He has completed the conquest, and swallowed up death in victory. In His "vesture dipped in blood" He shall pursue the armies of Gog and Magog on the field of Armageddon, and break the iron teeth of the beast of power, and cast down Babylon as a mill-stone into the sea, and bind the old serpent in the lake of fire and brimstone, and raise up to life immortal the tenants of the grave. Then shall the New Jerusalem, the metropolis of Messiah's golden empire, descend from heaven, adorned with all the jewellery of creation, guarded at every gate by angelic sentinels, and enlightened by the glory of God and of the Lamb; and the faithful shall dwell within its walls, and sin, and sorrow, and death shall be shut out for ever!

Then shall Time be swallowed up in Eternity. The righteous shall inherit life everlasting, and the ungodly shall find their portion in the second death. Time is the age of the visible world; eternity is the age of the invisible God. All things in time are changeful; all things in eternity are immutable. If you pass from time to eternity, without faith in Christ, without love in God, an enemy to prayer, an enemy to holiness, "impurged and unforgiven," so you must ever remain. Now is the season of that blessed change, for which myriads shall sing everlasting anthems of praise. "To-day, if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts." To-day the office is open; if you have any business with the Governor, make no delay. Now He has time to talk with the woman of Samaria by the well, and the penitent thief upon the cross. Now He is ready to forgive your sins, and renew your souls, and make you meet to become the partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light. Now He waits to wash the filthy, and feed the hungry, and clothe the naked, and raise the humble, and quicken the spiritually dead, and enrich the poor and wretched, and reconcile enemies by His blood. He came to unloose your bands and open to you the gates of Eden; condemned for your acquittal, and slain for the recovery of your forfeited immortality. The design of all the travelling from heaven to earth, and from earth to heaven, is the salvation of that which was lost, the restoration of intercourse, and amity between the Maker and the worm. This is the chief of the ways of God to man, ancient in its origin, wise in its contrivance, dear in its accomplishment, powerful in its application, gracious in its influence, and everlasting in its results. Christ is riding in His chariot of salvation

through the land of destruction and death, clothed in the majesty of mercy, and offering eternal life to all who will believe. O captives of evil! now is the accepted time; now is the day of salvation; now is the year of Jubilee; now is the age of deliverance; now is "the time of reformation."

II. All the prophets speak of something within the veil, to be manifested in due time; the advent of a Divine agent in a future age, to accomplish a glorious "reformation." They represent him as a prince, a hero, a high priest, a branch growing out of dry ground, a child toying with the asp and the lion, and leading the wolf and the lamb together. The bill of the reformation had been repeatedly read by the prophets, and its passage required the descent of the Lord from heaven. None but Himself could effect the change of the dispensation. None but Himself had the authority and the power to remove the first and establish the second. He whose voice once shook the earth speaks again, and heaven is shaken. He whose footsteps once kindled Sinai into flame descends again, and Calvary is red with blood. The God of the ancient covenant introduces anew, which is to abide for ever. The Lord of the temple alone could change the furniture and the service from the original pattern shown to Moses on the Mount; and six days before the rending of the veil, significant of abrogation of the old ceremonial, Moses came down upon a mountain in Palestine to deliver up the pattern to Him of whom he had received it on Sinai, that He might nail it to the cross on Calvary; for the "gifts and sacrifices" belonging to the legal dispensation "could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience; which stood only in meats, and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation."

This reformation signifieth "the removal of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain;" the abrogation of "carnal ordinances," which were local, and temporal in their nature, to make room for a spiritual worship of universal and perpetual adaptation. Henceforth the blood of bulls and goats is superseded by the great reconciling sacrifice of the Lamb of God, and outward forms and ceremonies give place to the inward operations of a renovating and purifying Spirit.

To the Jewish Church the covenant of Sinai was a sort of starry heaven. The Shekinah was its sun; the holy festivals its moon; and prophets, priests, and kings its stars. But Messiah, when He came, shook them all from their spheres, and filled the firmament Himself. He is our "Bright and Morning Star;" the "Sun of Righteousness" rising upon us "with healing in His wings."

The old covenant was an accuser and a judge, but offered no pardon to the guilty. It revealed the corruption of the natural heart, but provided no renovating and sanctifying grace. It was a natural institution for special benefit of the seed of Abraham.

It was a small vessel, trading only with the land of Canaan. It secured to a few the temporal blessings of the promised possession, but never delivered a single soul from eternal death, never bore a single soul over to the heavenly inheritance. But the new covenant is a covenant of grace and mercy, proffering forgiveness and a clean heart, not on the ground of any carnal relationship but solely through faith in Jesus Christ. Christianity is a personal concern between each man and his God, and none but the penitent believer has any right to its spiritual privileges. It is adapted to Gentiles as well as Jews, "even as many as the Lord our God shall call." Already has it rescued myriads from the bondage of sin, and conveyed them over to the land of immortality; and its voyages of grace shall continue to the end of time, "bringing many sons to glory."

"Old things are passed away, and all things are become new." The circumcision of the flesh, made with hands, has given place to the circumcision of the heart by the Holy Ghost. The Shekinah has departed from Mount Zion, but its glory is illuminating the world. The Sword of Joshua is returned to its scabbard; and "the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God," issues from the mouth of Messiah, and subdues the people under Him. The glorious High-priesthood of Christ has superseded sacerdotal office among men. Aaron was removed from the altar by death before his work was finished; but our High-priest still wears His sacrificial vestments, and death hath established Him before the mercy-seat, "a Priest for ever, after the order of Melchisedec." The earthquake which shook Mount Calvary, and rent the veil of the temple, demolished "the middle wall of partition" between Jews and Gentiles. The incense which Jesus offered fills the temple, and the land of Judea cannot confine its fragrance. The fountain which burst forth in Jerusalem has sent out its living streams into every land; and the heat of summer cannot dry them up, nor the frosts of winter congeal them.

In short, all the vessels of the sanctuary are taken away by the Lord of the temple. The "twelve oxen," bearing the "molten sea," have given place to "the twelve Apostles of the Lamb," proclaiming "the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost." The sprinkled mercy-seat, with its over-shadowing and intensely-gazing cherubim, has given place to "the throne of grace, stained with the blood of a costlier sacrifice, into which the angels desire to look. The priest, the altar, the burnt-offering, the table of shew-bread, and the golden candlestick have given place to the better things of the new dispensation introduced by the Son of God, of which they were only the figures and the types. Behold, the glory has gone up from the temple, and rests upon Jesus on Mount Tabor; and Moses and Elias are there, with Peter, and James, and John; and the representatives of the old covenant are communing with the Apostles of the new, and

the transfigured Christ is the medium of the communication; and a voice of majestic music, issuing from "the excellent glory," proclaims, "This is My beloved Son, hear ye Him."

"God, who at sundry times, and in divers manners, spake unto our fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son." Behold Him nailed to the cross, and hear Him cry, "It is finished!" The voice which shook Sinai is shaking Calvary. Heaven and hell are in conflict, and earth trembles at the shock of battle. The Prince of Life expires, and the sun puts on his robes of mourning. Gabriel! descend from heaven and explain to us the wondrous emblem! As set the sun at noon on Golgotha, making preternatural night throughout the land of Palestine, so shall the empire of sin and death be darkened, and their light shall be quenched at meridian. As the Sun of Righteousness, rising from the night of the grave on the third morning, brings life and immortality to light, so shall "the day-spring from on high" yet dawn upon our gloomy vale, and "the power of His resurrection" shall reanimate the dust of every cemetery!

He that sitteth upon the throne hath spoken, "Behold, I make all things new." The reformation includes not only the abrogation of the old, but also the introduction of the new. It gives us a new Mediator, a new covenant of grace, a new way of salvation, a new heart of flesh, a new heaven and a new earth. It has established a new union, by a new medium, between God and man. "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." "Forasmuch as the children were partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same." "God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory." Here was a new thing under the sun; the "Son of Man" bearing the "express image" of the living God; bearing it untarnished through the world; through the temptations and sorrows of such a wilderness as humanity never trod before; through the unknown agony of Olivet, and the supernatural gloom of Golgotha, and the dark dominion of the king of terrors, to the Heaven of heavens, where He sits, the adorable representative of two worlds, the union of God and man! Thence He sends forth the Holy Spirit, to collect "the travail of His soul," and lead them into all truth, and bring them to Zion with songs of everlasting joy. See them, the redeemed of the Lord, flocking as returning doves upon the wing, "to the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the living God; and to the spirits of just men made perfect; and to an innumerable company of angels; and to Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant; and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel."

Oh, join the joyful multitude! the year of jubilee is come. The veil is rent asunder. The way into the holiest is laid open.

The blood of Jesus is on the mercy-seat. The Lamb newly slain is in the midst of the throne. Go ye, with boldness, into His gracious presence. Lo, the King is your brother, and for you has He stained His robe with blood! The robe alone can clothe your naked souls, and shield them in the day of burning. Awake! awake! put on the Lord Jesus Christ! The covenant of Sinai cannot save you from wrath. Descent from Abraham cannot entitle you to the kingdom of heaven. "Ye must be born again," "born not of the flesh, nor of the will of men, but of God." You must have a new heart, and become a new creation in Jesus Christ. This is the promise of the Father.

"This is the dear redeeming grace,
For every sinner free."

Many reformatiions have expired with the reformers. But our Great Reformer "ever liveth" to carry on His reformation, till His enemies become His footstool, and death and hell are cast into the lake of fire. He will finish the building of His church. When He laid "the chief corner-stone" on Calvary, the shock jarred the earth, and awoke the dead, and shook the nether world with terror; but when He shall bring forth the top stone with shoutings of "Grace!" the dominion of Death and Hades shall perish, and the last captive shall escape, and the song of the bursting sepulchre shall be sweeter than the chorus of the morning stars! Even now there are new things in heaven; the Lamb from the slaughter, alive "in the midst of the throne;" worshipped by innumerable seraphim and cherubim, and adored by the redeemed from earth; His name the wonder of angels, the terror of devils, and the hope of men; His praise the "new song," which shall constitute the employment of eternity!

The Lord Chancellor and the Declaratory Act of 1892.

THIS subject has been discussed at great length in the press since the decision in favour of the Free Church. The supporters of the United Free Church have misrepresented the Lord Chancellor's judgment about the Declaratory Act of 1892 in the most unwarrantable manner. They have declared that he has condemned the free offer the gospel as inconsistent with the Confession of Faith and that it is not possible for Free Churchmen, if they accept his judgment, to preach "a free gospel." Now, this line of misrepresentation and falsehood strikes against the Free Presbyterian Church as well as against the Free, for the chief ground of our separation in 1893 was the passing of the Declaratory Act. We condemned its Arminianism, and yet we held at the same time that we were in nowise prevented from preaching the free offer of the gospel. It is now declared to all intents and purposes by United Frees that no one can condemn

the doctrine of the Declaratory Act without at the same time renouncing a free gospel. True it is that the parties who thus argue know little of what true freedom is in any shape or form, but nevertheless they are capable of disseminating their errors in the most subtle and insinuating manner, and it would be flagrant disloyalty to truth if Free Presbyterians would hold their peace on such matters, matters that touch the testimony of their own church even more nearly than that of the church which is the main object of attack.

As we pointed out in a former article, the United Frees, in the most absurd and self-conceited fashion, take it for granted as something beyond all doubt that the Declaratory Act statement on the subject of the gospel call and foreordination is open to no exception whatsoever, and that to find fault with it is to disapprove of "a free gospel" in the most orthodox sense of the term. But what is this but a begging of the whole question? They have yet to prove that the Declaratory Act on this or other points is in harmony with "the faith once delivered to the saints." We do not say but isolated words or even sentences in the Act may be construed in a sound sense; this might be done, indeed, with passages in almost any heretical document whatsoever; but what we and all other parties have to do with is the evident intention of the Act and the scope of the whole. It is quite apparent to any student that its main clauses were manifestly designed for the benefit of those who had adopted the Arminian system with its erroneous views of a universal love of God and a universal atonement, and who were disposed to rule out the decrees of God in connection with salvation, and to make the whole matter turn on the individual action of sinners themselves. The human will is made everything; the divine will, little or nothing. And is not this, indeed, the kind of Free Gospel that is preached in the United Free Church to-day, and that has been proclaimed for many years by most of the ministers who now figure within that body? This is not the Gospel of the Confession of Faith or of God's most holy Word, both of which provide for a universal call to "repent and believe the gospel," while at the same time they insist upon God's eternal purposes and man's utter inability of himself through sin to repent or believe. "Salvation is of the Lord."

With these preliminary remarks I proceed at present to notice in detail the Lord Chancellor's judgment about the Declaratory Act and its inconsistency with the Confession of Faith. He first gives a brief sketch of the "contemporaneous theological discussions at the time the Confession of Faith was compiled," which it is not necessary for our present purpose to dwell much upon. Suffice it to say that he indicates how the doctrines of Calvinism and Arminianism were viewed at the time by their respective upholders. Of course, as a wise judge, he does not commit himself to either side, but acts according to his own words when he

says at the beginning of his judgment that "a Court of law has nothing whatever to do with the soundness or unsoundness of a particular doctrine." Thus it is that when he quotes unfavourable opinions of Calvinistic doctrine (in Greek and Latin) delivered by the Council of Constantinople in 1642 and the Synod of Jerusalem in 1672, he refers to these as "treating of what *they describe* as the Calvinistic doctrine," not as satisfactory exhibitions of that doctrine. The fact that he adds, "I quote from the edition of the Councils of the Church, published by two Jesuit Fathers in 1728," does not in any way imply that he takes his personal views of Calvinism from such men, but simply indicates that he quotes from original authorities in sympathy with Arminianism, and not at second-hand from extracts of these Councils given by opposing Calvinistic writers. It was clearly with a view to an impartial statement of the history of the subject that he pursued this line of quotation and remark. The Lord Chancellor then proceeds to say that "it was in this state of the controversy agitating the Christian Church throughout the world that the Confession of Faith was adopted by the Church of Scotland on the 27th of August, 1647, and the approval and adoption of it was made in a form which was intended to prevent cavil as to its being agreed upon without objection or doubt."

I now quote in full the succeeding part of his judgment, in order that our readers may see for themselves, if they have not seen already, that there is no real foundation for the attacks that have been made against it.

"My Lords, I think it is only necessary to put in juxtaposition the language of the Confession of Faith itself and the statement of doctrine set forth by one component part of the supposed united body, united in one faith and doctrine.

"The Confession of Faith :—'Chap. III. Of God's Eternal Decree. III. By the decree of God, for the manifestation of His glory, some men and angels are predestinated unto everlasting life, and others foreordained to everlasting death. IV. These angels and men, thus predestinated and foreordained, are particularly and unchangeably designed, and their number is so certain and definite, that it cannot be either increased or diminished !

"Now, then, for the Act. Act declaratory anent Confession of Faith, made 26th May, 1892 :—"That this Church also holds that all who hear the Gospel are warranted and required to believe to the saving of their souls ; and that in the case of such as do not believe, but perish in their sins, the issue is due to their own rejection of the Gospel call. That this Church does not teach, and does not regard the Confession as teaching, the foreordination of man to death irrespective of their own sin."

"It has been argued with great ingenuity, that, inasmuch as the doctrine of Predestination, as treated of in the Scriptures, is a mystery, and that various opinions have been held in respect of it, it cannot be made a test doctrine, since another doctrine may

be held with it, not to human intelligence reconcileable with it, but equally derived from and established by Scriptural authority. If the Scottish Church, or the Westminster Confession, as one of its declarations of doctrine, had simply declared that Predestination was one of its doctrines, there might be something in the argument ; but the argument ignores the fact that the Westminster Confession purports to explain, and does explain, in language which does not admit of doubt, what is meant. Each party well knew what they meant, It is not a question of metaphysical subtleties or ambiguous language. Each meant to exclude and denounce the other."

So much for the Lord Chancellor. Now, let it be clearly observed that his point is Predestination—the difference between "the Calvinistic and Arminian doctrines of Predestination," as he declares at the very start of his treatment of the second question in debate between the two bodies. His point is not so much the duty of all to believe the Gospel—not certainly at all the question of "a free Gospel"—his point is Predestination. And the question he puts himself is, "Do these statements of the Declaratory Act bearing upon Predestination agree with the doctrine of the Confession of Faith on the subject?" His answer is "No ; 'each meant to exclude and denounce the other.' " He enters into no details ; his language is studiously general ; he never discusses for a moment "the free offer of the Gospel," and so passes no opinion about it. What does he really say? Well, the sum of it is just this—That it had been argued by the counseil of the U.F. Church that the doctrine of Predestination could "*not be made a test doctrine*," inasmuch as it was a mystery subject to a variety of opinions, and since another doctrine might be held with it, not reconcileable therewith to human intelligence, but equally derived from Scripture. His answer is that the Westminster Confession does not leave the doctrine of Predestination in any uncertain or ambiguous form, in order that there may be scope for difference of opinion, but that it explains most clearly what it means by it. and that his judgment is that it excludes and denounces the doctrine of the Declaratory Act. In the same sentence he indicates his conviction that this action is reciprocal. The Declaratory Act meant to exclude and denounce the doctrine of the Confession of Faith. "Each meant to exclude and denounce the other." In stating the matter thus, he does not, of course, mean anything so absurd as that the framers of the Confession in 1647 saw the Declaratory Act of 1892, but rather that they deliberately set aside and condemned the very Arminianism that is raised from the grave in the said Act. The conclusion of the whole matter, so far as it is thus viewed, is that the Lord Chancellor in nowise condemns the free offer of the Gospel as a doctrine inconsistent with the Confession of Faith, which is the United Free misrepresentation, but that he declares that the doctrine of the Declaratory Act and that of the Confession on Predestination are antagonistic to each

other. In doing so, he simply sustains the just contention of the Free Church on this point of debate.

While satisfied with the opinion of the Lord Chancellor on the clause of the Declaratory Act quoted, perhaps the writer may be allowed to say that he does not think the eminent judge's pronouncement entirely satisfactory from every point of view. For example, he would have enhanced its value if he had been a little more explicit on the points discussed, so as, if possible, to have obviated misconstruction. It was, further, somewhat unfortunate that he quoted only the two paragraphs in the Confession on predestination and foreordination, where no mention is made of sin at all, so that the conclusion is apt to be drawn by those who do not know better that the Confession teaches the unfounded notion of condemnation without sin. The opposite is the truth. It teaches in paragraph vii. of the same chapter that God ordains men "to dishonour and wrath for their sin." But, no doubt, his lordship just quoted what was sufficient for his purpose. Again, I think that he might have got sections of the Act open even to greater objection than the one he selected. It may also be said that it would have highly gratified loyal believers in the doctrine of the Confession of Faith, if the whole Act in each section had been specifically condemned. For really, this Act was the most serious aspect of the whole case. Scope is given in it for the maintenance of most erroneous opinions that touch the vitals of the faith of the Gospel, and its adoption in 1892 by the Courts of the Church was even a more serious departure from the truth than the mere act of uniting with the U.P. Church. The Declaratory Act embodies statements that afford a safe covert for the elements of Arminianism, Semi-Pelagianism, Voluntarism, Popery, and Rationalism.

We cannot at present discuss the Act at large—though something of the kind seems to be needed at the present crisis—but it is proper to point out in a few words what is actually objectionable in the section condemned by the Lord Chancellor.

The first section of the Act, which precedes the one under notice, affords scope for the maintenance of the Arminian scheme of universal love and universal atonement, and the duty to believe the Gospel is expressed in this, the second section, in a way that fits in with this scheme. The duty of all to believe the Gospel is practically insisted upon as the outcome of a provision for all. The obligation to believe is set upon an Arminian basis. But the wording of this section is also open to objection. The first clause of it may certainly be understood in a sound sense, though the impression is given that believing is an easy matter, and no word of caution is supplied to show that faith is the gift of God—a much-needed requirement at the present time. The second clause is open to positive objection: "in the case of such as do not believe, but perish in their sins, the issue is due to their own rejection of the Gospel call." Here no place is given to the truth

that through sin men are, in an important sense, lost already, while the decrees of God in reference to the future destiny of sinners are entirely brushed aside, as if they had nothing to do with the matter; the whole is made to turn on the action of the creature. The last clause runs: "That this Church does not teach, and does not regard the Confession as teaching, the foreordination of men to death irrespective of their own sin." It is perfectly true that men are foreordained to death solely on account of sin—this the Confession itself emphasises, but the wording is fitted to obscure the absolute aspect of God's holy though mysterious sovereignty, whereby, for His own glory, He determined to save some of the human race and to pass by others.

The most patent objection, however, in our opinion, which may be brought against this clause is the insertion of the word "own" before sin. A little word sometimes makes a great difference in the meaning of a sentence; and every word, however apparently insignificant, is of importance in a document of this nature. The word "own" here undoubtedly refers to individual sin, as distinguished from Adam's first sin, and the meaning is that none are "foreordained to death" irrespective of their own individual personal transgression. This is clearly contrary to the teaching of God's Word. Notice the fifth chapter of the Romans:—"Through the offence of one, many be dead" (v. 1-5); "The judgment was by one to condemnation" (v. 16); "By one man's offence death reigned by one" (v. 17); "By the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation" (v. 18). Again, see 1 Cor. xv. 22, "In Adam all die." These passages clearly teach that all men are "foreordained to death" on account of the sin of "one man." But, of course, they do not imply that in God's complete or final reckoning with sinners, He does not take into account all their individual transgressions.

Some have suggested that the Declaratory Act means foreordination to everlasting death only, but this is a mere evasion. The word "everlasting" is deliberately omitted, and the Act practically affirms that none are foreordained to death in any sense "irrespective of their own sin." Let us take the case of spiritual death. All the descendants of Adam by ordinary generation are conceived in sin and shapen in iniquity; every soul is spiritually dead from the beginning of its history. Is this death the consequence of its own individual sin? No; but of Adam's first sin. Adam was the representative of the race in the covenant of works, and all mankind are heirs of spiritual death, and made liable to temporal and eternal death in virtue of his first transgression. It may be affirmed that Adam's first sin is "their own sin," and such it may be said to be, seeing it was the sin of their representative; but this view of matters was far from the minds of the framers of the Declaratory Act. On the contrary, their declaration implies that men did not incur the penalty of death in Adam, and that his sin

was not a sufficient ground of condemnation or punishment to any one of his posterity.

Men in all ages have kicked against the doctrine of representation, especially in connection with the first Adam and the race, but in doing so they have also kicked against the doctrine of representation in connection with Christ and His people. It is on the principle of representation that the Son of God became the surety and substitute of sinners, and that His everlasting righteousness is imputed to His people as the ground of their justification before God. Thus the men who would overthrow the doctrine of the First Adam must inevitably destroy the doctrine of the Second Adam. In getting rid of the Scriptural doctrine of the Fall, they get rid of the Scriptural doctrine of salvation, and land their followers in error and destruction. Be it ours to cordially submit to the wisdom of God and the truth of God as unfolded in His Word, for in this submission will be our wisdom, safety, and happiness for an endless eternity.

J. S. S.

The late Rev. Alexander Auld,

OLRIG, CAITHNESS.

IT is with regret that we notice this month the decease of the well-known Rev. Alexander Auld, Free Church minister of Orlrig, who passed away on Thursday, 27th October, at the ripe age of 85 years. Mr. Auld was in failing health for some time, and so unable to take much part in public work. By his removal there has passed away a venerable personality and an interesting link with the past.

A native of Wick and a nephew of the "great Mr. Gunn," minister of Watten, Mr. Auld laboured for many years in Orlrig among the people of his own county, and his services were much appreciated. He was an able and original preacher, powerful in the use of illustration, and a master of allegory. His sermons on the Song of Solomon were remarkably quaint and striking. He also possessed a very keen insight into the workings of human nature, whether in the regenerate or unregenerate, and his apt remarks in this connection were not soon forgotten. As a man taught of the Spirit, he was exceedingly helpful to the Lord's people amid their various ups and downs, and had more than ordinary ability in speaking a word in season to them that are weary. A well-trained theologian, he handled difficult points with great skill. Few could deal better than he with the facts of man's inability and responsibility in relation to his acceptance of the free offer of the gospel, giving each aspect of truth its own appropriate place, and storming by a variety of reasons drawn from Scripture and experience the citadel of the sinner's heart. It may be remarked that there was nothing formal or "starchy" about Mr. Auld's utterances in the pulpit. He was at all times very natural and real in his preaching, and while he could express himself in

choice and dignified language according to the nature of the subject in hand, he often delighted his hearers by his homely turns of speech and fireside applications of the truth he was expounding. These almost invariably hit the mark, and could not fail to leave an impression either for better or worse in the consciences of his audience. In fact, there was a touch of genius about Mr. Auld's mental equipment that showed itself both in his sermons and his writings.

As an author, Mr. Auld has been favourably known for many years past, and his name in this respect will continue to be honoured with grateful regard for generations to come. He is most widely renowned for his famous book on "Ministers and Men in the Far North." This volume at its first appearance in 1869 was hailed with delight by people of all ranks and classes throughout the kingdom. He handled the characters and lives of the eminent worthies described with such ability and skill that the work was read with avidity and delight not only by the Lord's people who appreciated its spiritual character, but by a wide circle of persons who had only an intellectual or historical interest in it. It received warm eulogies from the London press and other newspapers north and south. A second edition was published in 1891, which is now sold out, but it is hoped that a third will soon be issued. Mr. Auld also wrote a *Life of Dr. Kennedy, Dingwall*, the only elaborate *Life* that has been written, and a substantial contribution towards a complete biography of that eminent minister of Christ. The author confessed it was "only a contribution," and while it may have been somewhat disappointing in respect of fulness and finish to many of the admirers of the great man whose career it portrayed, yet the fault, if any, was not Mr. Auld's, and the work is valuable in its own place as a memorial of the doctor. Mr. Auld published in 1874 a neat little volume entitled "*Memorials of David Steven*," which gives a very interesting account of that remarkable patriarch of the North. The substance of the narrative is now embodied in the "*Ministers and Men*," but the little volume itself, with portrait of David Steven, is still to be had, and is distinctly worth possessing.

Mr. Auld in his days of vigour took a prominent part in Church matters, and was a resolute opponent of innovations in doctrine and worship. Many Free Presbyterians regretted he did not see his way to associate himself with the testimony for truth raised by the Rev. Messrs. Macfarlane and Macdonald in 1893, but it was some satisfaction that he refused to enter the Union of 1900, and that he then declared his determination to stand at all risks by the doctrines and principles of the Free Church.

The writer desires to record this humble tribute to the memory of a man of gifts and grace who as preacher and author did good service to the Church of God in his generation, and is now fallen asleep. Much sympathy is felt for Mrs. Auld (a daughter of the late Rev. Dr. Taylor, Thurso) and family.

J. S. S.

Past Days of the Son of Man in Caithness.

EXTRACT FROM SKETCH OF REV. ALEXANDER GUNN IN
"MINISTERS AND MEN AND IN THE FAR NORTH."

COMING upon Caithness from the south, leaving behind the fertile woodlands of Ross and the birch-clad straths of Sutherland, a stranger sees the county lying before him a flat expanse, relieved by few prominent features; and should he unfortunately come upon it toward nightfall its cultivated tracts are often hidden from view by the veil of mist which, from the peculiar dampness of the soil, hangs over its surface. Very similar to this, its physical, was the spiritual aspect of Caithness a century ago¹—a desert, diversified only by a few green spots, and these concealed by the mist of Arminian error which surrounded them.

But "the time to favour" Caithness "had come," and the Lord's wisdom, in His way of doing so, was not less manifest than was His grace in doing so at all. Raising up from among her own people one who knew well their temper and training, the Lord gave him a heart right with Himself and consecrated to His service. He endowed him likewise with a greatness of mind and a fixedness of purpose capable of resisting error and of overcoming opposition, and He placed him in the centre of the "long desolations." One well-meaning, but weak, would not have suited this sphere; one neither weak nor well-meaning would have harmed it; but one who had the heart of a son, the arm of a servant, and the spirit of a soldier—such a one would suit it, and such a one was given to Caithness in the person of Mr. Gunn.

Mr. Gunn's personal appearance was striking. He was a man of marked features and of massive frame, with a majesty of manner and weight of bearing which we have never seen equalled. His habitually elevated tone of thought, his spirituality of mind, and the depth and earnestness of his convictions may account for this impressiveness of manner, which was such that those who had no special reason for approaching him never thought of doing so; yet, when he was known, he was found to be extremely affable. We need scarcely say, moreover, that the natural gifts of one who so powerfully swayed his fellow-men for good were of a high order. His intellectual powers, naturally strong, were disciplined by early and uninterrupted study; his memory was stored with varied information, and what we may call the emotional part of his nature was peculiarly susceptible of strong and abiding impressions. In him was much "deepness of earth," and divine grace not eradicating natural gifts, but sanctifying them, his character was one of rare moral power.

Of not a few of the solemn Sabbath services at Watten, in the closing days of Mr. Gunn's ministry, the writer, though then in

¹ That is about 1769.

early youth, has a vivid recollection, and having often heard these described by some of the most serious worshippers there, he may endeavour to present to the reader one of these days, which will also afford an opportunity of exhibiting the salient features of Mr. Gunn's ministry.

The old Parish Church of Watten, which stood nearly on the site of its present sharp-angled successor was pleasantly and conspicuously situated high up on one of the slopes that overlook the loch. It was of the old cross shape, and, if not a very elegant structure, was a time-honoured one, and its undying associations give it an unequally undying place in the memory of many, for of "this man and that man" it may be said "that they were born there."

Those few words *in memoriam* of the old church, such of these persons as still survive will not think out of place in this record, nor that we should remark that the various roads leading towards it were sheltered in winter and adorned in summer by unusually luxuriant hawthorn hedges; nor even that we should call to mind the old churchyard, now reduced, or rather raised to a dull uniformity, but which then, irregularly sloping from the church, was well adapted to the use made of it on sacramental occasions, when, on its grave-stones and hillocks, hundreds sat solemnly listening to the voices of the saintly ministers of Reay, Bruan, and Halkirk.

Along the roads leading to the church there might be seen such streams of people gathering that one wondered how the building could contain them, and it only did so by every pew and passage being filled, the people of Watten of a bygone generation cheerfully obeying the injunction to "entertain strangers," in the way of accommodating them with seats—for many strangers (that is, non-parishioners) were there. Indeed, at the outset of Mr. Gunn's ministry it was far otherwise. Very indifferent attendance on divine ordinances marked the county, and ministers and people thought little of it. This, however, was one of the things which in his own parish he at once rectified, and by and bye, to a church already well filled, persons from other parishes began to gather, for the fame of the minister of Watten began to spread. The matter of his doctrine was new (for, unhappily, as has been shown in the previous chapter, faithful evangelical preaching was then a novelty), and his manner of delivering it was powerful and stirring, and persons who had opportunities of hearing him at Communion occasions in the neighbourhood had such impressions left upon their minds as that they invariably felt "We must hear thee again concerning this matter."

On these occasions he generally preached in the open air with a power and unction that captivated the hearts of the godly, drew after him the minds of any who had a spark of Divine life, and pierced the consciences of many a careless sinner. We have had special opportunity of hearing of one such visit that Mr. Gunn

paid to the parish of Olig in the year 1816. On the Sabbath he preached in the churchyard. The text was one that dwells distinctly on the memories of men yet seemingly unconcerned who heard it—"Slay utterly old and young, both maids, and little children, and women; but come not near any man on whom is the mark"—(Ezekiel ix. 6); and his tones, they say, yet ring in their ears. This was a discourse evidently of extraordinary power. The congregation seemed spell-bound as he unfolded to them and enforced in a way that they had never before heard the authority of the Divine Lawgiver—man's responsibility—his position and character as a violator of God's law—the scheme of redemption originating in Sovereign grace issuing only through the blood of the Mediator, and reaching man in the way of creating him anew through the incorruptible seed of the Word by the power of the Holy Ghost—that those possessing this new creation and manifesting its fruits were the men on whom "the mark" was set, and that all others, no matter how near the sanctuary they seemed to be—ministers, elders, or other professors of religion—lay open to the stroke of the slayer.

During the discourse the wind took the top off the tent, and the heavy hand of the impassioned speaker sent the book-board before him into fragments; but these incidents, which on other occasions might have furnished matter of diversion, at this moment seemed but fitting adjuncts of this impressive scene. The language of the companies of people going home was "We have heard strange things to-day." One man crossing the Dunnet Sands remarked—"Mr. Gunn has in one day broken down what others have been building up in Caithness for the last thirty years." We have heard that a lad in the parish was so impressed by that sermon that his master, who observed his anxiety, said to him (hoping thereby, probably, to shake off his own convictions) "Never mind what you heard to-day, for, if what yon man said were true, nobody will get to heaven." So "some said he was a good man; others that he deceived the people."

Thus, as we have said, many who had an opportunity of hearing Mr. Gunn in neighbouring parishes, and to whom his doctrine became the "bread of life," could not longer put up with the spiritual fare dealt out to them at home, and so from the remotest parts of the county persons might be seen on a Sabbath morning traversing the distance between their own homes and the Church of Watten. Among these we cannot forbear mentioning David Budge—*venerabile nomen*—who for many years, in winter and summer, walked weekly from Barrock Hill to Watten. Starting alone from his own house, as he went on he was joined by others, till, when they reached Bower, they formed a goodly band, which, on the Hill of Watten, fell into the stream of parishioners. Acquaintanceship sprung up between persons from different parts of the county who met at Watten, which ripened into the warmest Christian fellowships, so that ultimately one element of happiness

in a Sabbath spent there was the satisfaction of seeing the faces of valued friends. Many a heartfelt greeting took place there when the streams of travellers met, while, let us also say that often, after the services were over, such friends parted with merely a silent pressure of the hand, their hearts being too much occupied and exercised by what they had been hearing to allow of anything else. We have known of companies reaching the town of Wick without a word almost being uttered.

Our readers will think that our review of a Sabbath-day's work at Watten proceeds rather tardily, but we cannot help weaving these to us interesting reminiscences into the narrative. Nor will we overlook even the old kirk-officer, William Ritchie, who, when from the steeple-window he spied the minister leaving the manse, which was about a mile off, began to ring the bell. When the minister arrived at the church-yard gate, William had a way of making the bell beat "quick time," and upon this signal every sound ceased, not merely the bell, but also the voice of Mr. John Finlayson, precentor, who, till that moment, according to ancient custom, had been reading the Scriptures to the assembled part of the congregation. The minister's grave step and thoughtful air, as he proceeded to the pulpit, always impressed the more discerning of his hearers, some of whom we have heard say that they had three sermons in Watten before the regular sermon began, viz., the minister's way of entering on the duties of the day, his manner of reading the Psalms and chapter, and of engaging in prayer. He left no doubt on their minds that he was one fully alive to the realities with which he was dealing; indeed, the very cast of his countenance showed how deeply he was impressed with the things "unseen and spiritual." If it was clouded and overcast, the dark side of truth would that day be presented; if on the other hand it was bright and beaming, there would follow a glorious display of the gospel provision with which his own soul was enriched. . . .

Evidence remains to this day that Mr. Gunn was diligent and careful in his preparations for the pulpit; that he took pains to present the truth in an orderly way, as best fitted to instruct the minds and impress the hearts of his hearers; and that he also clothed his thoughts in admirable language, which, while comprehensible by the most unlearned, could not be reckoned, even by the most fastidious, beneath the dignity of his subject. Thus, considering his natural gifts of mind—his spiritual acquaintance with revealed truth—its profound impression on his own soul—his power of thought and utterance—his zeal in his Master's service—his desire for God's glory and the salvation of souls—it may be conceived how telling his preaching was at all times; and when obtaining special enlargement of view and spirit, and bursting the bonds of prepared meditation, how he rivetted the attention of the careless and melted the hearts of the godly. Truly solemn, too, were the appeals he would frequently make to the consciences of

all, declaring that he had set death and life before them ; that not a drop of their blood would be found in his skirts at the "great day ;" and that he took heaven and earth to witness against despisers of the "truth as it is in Jesus." As might be expected of one who so "went forth bearing precious seed," he "returned, bringing sheaves with him."

Mr. Gunn had many seals given him of his ministry ; indeed, this is so well known among us as scarcely to require mention. For those brought into God's family through his instrumentality, and who received their spiritual upbringing by his hands, became almost all of them as the "sons of a king ;" their Christianity of a living, solid, and scriptural stamp ; so that they have been the religious leaders or "men" of the communities where their lot has been cast, and of whom a very few yet remain—salt and light—in our generation.

Any notice of religious services at Watten at that time would be incomplete without referring to the communion occasions there. These were lively times, when the ministers were (besides Mr. Gunn), Mr. Munro, Messrs. Cook, and latterly Mr. Taylor, Thurso ; when the "men" were not only those resident in the neighbourhood, but included many throughout Caithness and the Reay country ; and when among the "people" might be numbered not a few of the Lord's witnesses from all parts of the country. Now-a-days Satan, as an "angel of light" is informing us that it would be more orderly, and more for the comfort of those engaged in the ordinance, if persons not connected with congregations would stay at home ; if every one would eat—as "his own supper," so his own sacrament—at "his own home." But the Lord's people in former times, and we suppose still, were not of this mind. They thought that if the Lord was so pleased with the meetings of His saints, that where "two or three met in His name," He would make one of the company ; it was certainly not less likely that where a goodly number of them were gathered together, His presence would be "in the midst of them ;" and His presence they felt it was that made an ordinance worthy of the name. Moreover, the apostle speaks of being "filled with the company of his brethren ;" and those we speak of desired the same thing. Sacramental gatherings helped to bring this about—they were the only opportunities many of the Lord's people had of knowing each other in this world, and of holding pleasant and profitable intercourse. It was also good for those young in the faith to have, on such occasions, opportunities of beholding the "walk and conversation" of fathers and mothers in Christ. Example and precept the young would receive from them, such as would mould their own characters, for if the Lord write "living epistles," they are worthy to be "known and read of all men." It may be argued that numbers attend at communion seasons for no good end. But if even we had the power to prevent this, we would hesitate to use it. This is one of the numberless instances of the abuse of a good thing.

True, such persons are no help to the ordinance, but they have precious souls; and where is it more likely that the "other sheep, not yet of the fold," may be ingathered, than in the "green pastures," where the Good Shepherd feedeth His flock, and where His "remembrancers" are met together in His name and by His authority?

There were, therefore, as we have said, great gatherings at Watten. Ministers and people were helpful to each other. Critical hearing and sitting in judgment were not thought of, nor was there temptation to it—such soundness and power was found in the preaching, such spiritual desire marked the hearing. At the close of each day's exercises the leading Christian men and women and many others crossed the hill between Watten and Bower to the house of Mr. David Steven, where hospitality was extended on no limited scale. The wonder was how accommodation was found there for so many. Mr. Gordon, Thurso, used jocularly to designate this rendezvous "the barracks," and Mr. William Ross has told us that he has counted upwards of forty pious persons of note seated in Mr. Steven's apartment, which cannot be more than nine feet by twelve, but he would add "love makes room." Of these almost all have gone up to the Father's house—Mr. Ross himself among the last—but their names are familiar and fragrant to some still surviving.

Evening meetings would be held by these men in Mr. Steven's stackyard, which would be crowded by a large congregation, and these often did not break up till far on in the morning—such tokens of the Lord's presence would be manifest in the spiritual liberty and enlargement of the speakers and in the soul-refreshment of the hearers. These were the origin of the Sabbath night prayer-meetings, now held on similar occasions throughout the county.

Christ's Testimony in the Psalms.

THE following valuable paper was read by the Rev. Canon Fausset, D.D., at the Yorkshire Evangelical Union Conference, York, Friday, June 10, 1904:—

The peculiarity of the present attack on the Scripture is, that it is not by avowed infidels but by Christian professors. No longer do a Voltaire, a Paine, a Rousseau, a Gibbon, and a Hume assail God's written Word, but those ordained to be defenders of the Word assail its historical veracity. They would bring back the formless void from which the Spirit of God and the Word of God evolved order, light, and life. Many of them make the Inspired Psalms the object of their rash and irreverent criticism. One dignitary declared that he would, if he could, suppress the daily recitation of the Psalter in our churches, because of the imprecations upon enemies which occur in the Psalms. His objections would be just if these curses were the expressions of persona

revenge ; but he forgets the real author of the Psalms is the Spirit of God. David truly says, as the sweet Psalmist of Israel, "The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his word was in my tongue." St. Peter also reminds us that, so far from the meaning being restricted, as the critics suppose, to the sense of the writer, the writers themselves often searched what or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ, which was in them, did signify when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow: "Unto whom it was revealed that not unto themselves but unto us they did minister the things which are now reported unto you ;" and the same apostle declares, "No prophesy of the Scriptures is of private interpretation, for the prophesy came not in old time by the will of man, but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." Personal revenge is renounced by David, Ps. vii. 4, 5, 11, 12, and God is declared the Vindicator of His own cause. "If I have rewarded evil to him that was at peace with me, yea, I have delivered him that without cause is mine enemy, let the enemy persecute my soul." "God judgeth the righteous, God is angry with the wicked every day." God's people desire God's honour to be vindicated, and whatever mars it to be brought to an end. So Psalm cxxxix. 21, 22, "Do not I hate them, O Lord, that hate thee, am not I grieved with those that rise up against thee? I hate them with perfect hatred, I count them mine enemies."

So also, the prophet rebukes King Jehoshaphat, "Shouldst thou help the ungodly and love them that hate the Lord? therefore is wrath upon thee from before the Lord."

These Psalms warn us of the danger of loose views as to God's hatred of sin. We should enter into the mind of God in this condemnation of the serpent and the serpent's ungodly seed.

"The testimony of Jesus is the Spirit of prophecy" (Rev. xix. 10). Jerome describes the Psalms as "five books bound in one volume." They form a poetical Pentateuch answering to the historical Pentateuch. Each of the five books is marked by a closing doxology. They are an oratorio in five parts, with Messiah for their subject. Herein Messiah poured forth his prayers and praises, and depicts His sufferings for us, and His consequent glory, in which we shall share. The Psalter is the heart of the Bible placed, as the Tree of Life, in the midst of Paradise ; of it the Saviour says, "All things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses, and the prophets, and the Psalms, concerning me." It stands in the midst of the Scriptures as the hymn book of the universal Church.

The 22nd Psalm sets forth the Passion of Christ on Calvary, His unfailling trust, even when forsaken because of our sin laid on Him, though there was no sin in Him. "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" The piercing of His hands and feet, the parting of His garments, and the casting lots for His vesture, and the final triumph of His kingdom, are vividly depicted a thousand

years before the event. The 23rd Psalm describes His walking through the Valley of the Shadow of Death without fear, the Father being with Him; so the believer, by union with Him, appropriates the same words, and fears no evil in the dying hour. So from the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea, Messiah is represented in the 24th Psalm ascending into the Hill of the Lord, pure in hands and heart, and the heavenly gates and the everlasting doors lifting up their heads to let the King of Glory in.

The critics assert that Christ was mistaken in thinking that Psalm cx. was written by David, for He rests His argument on David's authorship, which the critics deny. "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand," Matt. xxii. 41-45. "If David call him Lord, how is he his son?" They justify their argument by asserting from Phil. ii. 7, that Jesus "emptied Himself" of His omniscience. But thus they war, not only against the Lord Jesus, but also against the Holy Ghost speaking by St. Peter, Acts ii. 37, and also by St. Paul, 1 Cor. xv. 25, and also by the inspired author of Heb. i. 13.

Some commentators limit Psalm xvi. 9, 10, to David as anticipating deliverance from bodily death; but here again the critic is answered by St. Peter and the Holy Ghost, Acts ii. 22-31. "David is both dead and buried; but he spake of the Resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption, this Jesus hath God raised up." Again, the Holy Ghost, speaking by St. Paul, Acts xiii. 35, "Thou shalt not suffer thine Holy One to see corruption." Answering to the marriage feast of the Lamb (Rev. xix.), consummating the New Testament, stands the 45th Psalm, the "Song of Loves," wherein the King appeared "in glory and in majesty," enthroned as God for ever and ever, the Bride brought unto the King, and her virgins, with gladness and rejoicings.

The critics make the date of most of the Psalms to be as late as the age of the Maccabees. But the titles (of time) utterly disprove this, and vindicate the authorship as in canonical ages. That the titles are authentic is confirmed by appearing in the majority of MSS. Their antiquity is proved by their having been unintelligible to the Septuagint, centuries before Christ. A forger would have sought to connect them more plainly with their respective Psalms' contents. The Orientals usually prefix titles to poems, as in David's love song over Jonathan, 2 Sam. 1-18, and in xxiii. 1. They are too enigmatical, poetical, spirited, and profound for a later collector. Selah indicates a pause, calling for calm reflection, therefore in Psalm ix. it follows Higgsaion, meditation, Shiggsaion, the aberrations of the wicked, Neginoth, all stringed instruments, Nehiloth, the inheritance: the Lord's people. As Alamoth means the female voice, so Sheminith the octave below the treble, i.e., the bass. Gittith, the wine press song (Ps. viii.) of David over Goliath of Gath. Muth-labben anagram for Nabal, the dying of the fool. Michtam, the secret of the Divine life. Ayjeleth Shahar,

the hind of the morn, the persecuted Messiah. Maschil, instruction. Mahalath, sickness (spiritual). Leannath, tribulation Jonath-elem-nechokim, the dumb, dove among strangers : "David among the Philistines." Al-taschith, "Destroy not," 1 Sam. xxvi. 9. Shusan-eduth, the lily of testimony. "Song of degrees," a song for the ascendings, viz., of pilgrims to the great feasts. The whole book is crowned with the five concluding Psalms. each beginning and ending with Hallelujah—a prelude to the everlasting Hallelujahs of the saints made perfect in light.

Meanwhile, attune thy heart to each Psalm—if it pray, pray thou ; if it mourn, mourn thou ; if it hope, hope thou ; the Psalter is the looking-glass of the soul ; the heart, the lips, the life must accord with the Psalm. May our experience be that of the sainted W. Pennyfather—"When wearied, the Psalms refresh me ; in joy they express my thankfulness ; in sorrow, they are the channel in which my grief flows, leading me away from myself to behold and see if there was ever 'sorrow like His sorrow.'"

Searmon.

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

THA nadur na fianuis anns an anam ghrasmhor a tha 'g iarruidh nach biodh e le focal no gnìomh a' neartachadh an t-saoghail 'nan staid. 'Suamhasach sin, anam ann an ifrinn a' fagail 'fhuil air neach tre'n t-siorruidheachd airson gu'n robh e le focal no gnìomh 'ga neartachadh an slighean peacach. 'Se sin a bh' aig an duine shaoibhir 'nuair a bha e ag urnuigh, bha eagal air gu'm biodh iad tre 'n t-siorruidheachd 'ga choireachadh airson an call. Nis tha *drap* de chaithris anns an anam ghrasmhor nach bi e a' neartachadh an t-saoghail 'nam michuram mu shiorruidheachd. Ach mur gleidh an Tighearn am baile gu diombhain ni am fear-coimhid faire.

Tha a h-uile anam a tha air a thoirt beo gu spioradail faireachail air anmhuinneachdan timchioll air fhein. An creutair a's naoimhe tha anns an t-saoghal tha anmhuinneachd ann a sgriosadh e mur bi e air a thoirt dhe air toillteanas Chrìosd. Cha-n iongantach ged a bhiodh iomadh ann an ifrinn le 'n lamhan dearg le fuil anaman eile. Bidh iomadh ann an ifrinn a' mallachadh an la a chunnaic iad a cheile anns an t-saoghal, an duine a' mallachadh an la a chunnaic e a' bhean agus a' bhean an la a chunnaic i an duine. Nis an t-anam grasmhor a tha 'faicinn sinn nach bi feum aig air caithris? Bidh a h-uile neach a tha air a thoirt beo gu spioradail ag amharc air ais air na peacaidhean anns an robh e beo. Bha cuid anns a' mhisg, bha cuid agus dheanadh iad breug, cuid mionnan agus bha cuid a' fochaid air diadhachd agus orrasan a bha beo airson siorruidheachd. Nis 'nuair a tha an Cruithear a' tighinn gu h-eifeachdach a dh'ionnsuidh an anam tha an creutair a' faotainn neirt gu bhi treigsinn nam peacanna sin ged a bhiodh

iad mar lamh dheas no suil dheas. Gidheadh tha anmhuinn-eachdan aca, agus cha-n aithne do aon an anmhuinneachd mar is aithne dhoibh fhein—'s ann ann an glòir a tha foirfeachd—an t-anam a tha tighinn gu aithne air anmhuinneachd bidh *drap* de chaithris ann, eagal gu'm bi e 'neartachadh nuinntir eile 'nam peacaidhean. Bidh iomadh fathasd a' moladh an Tighearna tre 'n t-siorruidheachd airson gu'm faca iad *drap* dhe mosthalachd na naomhachd agus thusa, anns nach 'eil sin chan eil do staid sabhailte.

Co luath 's a tha aon air a thoirt beo gu spioradail chi e na suilean a tha air. Cha bhi iongantas air an t-saoghal gu'm faic iad aon fo'n mhisg, ach aon air a thoirt beo gu spioradail tha sin a' dusgadh iongantais anns an t-saoghal. Nis 'nuair a tha an creutair ag amharc air a laigsean fhein agus na suilean a tha air nach bi e ri caithris air eagal gu'm bi e 'neartachadh an t-saoghail 'nam peacaidhean. 'S iongantach creutair bochd lan de laigsean a' dol a luidhe m' oidhche is e coguiseach nach do rinn e ni sam bith a neartaicheadh an saoghal 'nam eacaidhean. Ach mur gleidh an Tighearn am baile gu diomhain ni am fearcoimhid faire. A chum gu'm faigh e aithne air sin feudaidd gu'm faigh e tuiteam. Feudaidd gu'm faigh e ni's mo dh' fheum de'n tuiteam sin na gheibh an cealgair dhe mile urnuigh.

Tha an t-anam grasmhor anns an t-saoghal fosgailte do ribeachan an t-saoghail. Tha an saoghal lan ribeachan agus cha-n fhaigh na h-aindiadhaich greim ni's millse na anam grasmhor a ghlacadh ann an ribe. Cha-n 'eil ni a thoilicheadh am misgear na bu mho gu'm faiceadh e creutair anns am bheil *drap* de spiorad na caithris a' tuiteam anns a' pheacadh sin. Tha sinn a' leughadh air cuid a tha mar liontan, "lion an eunadair" a' glacadh anama, air chor 's nach 'eil aon anns an t-saoghal nach 'eil ann an cunnart a bhi air a ribeadh. Nis nach uamhasach sin gu'm biodh creutair 'na mheadhon air toirt anaman eile do dh' ifrinn le bhi 'gan neartachadh 'nan tligibh? Tha feum air caithris ach mur gleidh an Tighearn am baile gu diomhain ni am fearcoimhid faire.

Seall mar a tha Satan an deigh a huile anam. Ma tha toileachas sam bith aig Satan, 's ann ann an sgrios anaman a tha sin aige. Cha-n 'eil anam a tha e 'toirt do ifrinn nach 'eil e 'g amharc air mar bhuaidh a thug e air Dia; agus 's iomadh aon anns am bheil a' bhuaidh sin aige ann an sgrios an anama. 'S fhada o thoisich e air an obair agus 's aithne dha cionnus a bheir e mu 'n cuairt i. Cha-n 'eil miann anns a' chridhe nach aithne dha; agus b' fhearr leis aon anam grasmhor a ghlacadh ann am peacadh na mile eile. 'S aithne dha mar a bhiodh sin a' neartachadh an t-saoghail 'nam peacaidhean, agus a' lot Chriosd agus 'aobhair. Leigidh e leatsa bhi 'gad aoirneagan ann am peacadh mar a' mhue 'san lathaich. Ged a tha e ag radh riut a nis gu bheil an Cruithear trocaireach agus nach eagal duit ifrinn, 's e their e mu dheireadh gu'm bi thu air do dhamnadh. 'S iongantach an naimbdeas a tha anns an diabhul. Ged a bheireadh tu buaidh

air an diugh feuchaidh e riut a ris am maireach; seadh ged a sheasadh tu fichead bliadhna cha sguir e air chor 's gur iongantach sin aon a bhi air a thearnadh. Mur gleidh an Tighearn am baile gu diomhain ni am fear-coimhid faire.

Tha anns an anam ghrasmhor fhein de bhrosnuchadh air Dia 's nach iongantach ged a bhiodh an creutair a' dol critheannach tre'n t-saoghal. 'S iongantach gu'm biodh an creutair aon la gun an Tighearn 'ga fhagail da fein. Tha de mhi-thaingeachd anns a' chreutair airson mar a bha e air a ghleidheadh o iomadh ni o'n la a fhuair e aithne gu'm bheil anam aige, mar sin tha e a' brosnuchadh an Tighearna. Tha ann an altrum smuain pheacach olc nach aithne do na h-ainglibh, nach aithne do aon ach Dia. Càite am faic thu creutair a' gul airson a smuaintean peacach? Tha e cunnartach 'nuair a thig duine gu dochas air trocair a bhi 'g altrum smuainte peacach. Tha thu ann an sin agus mu'n do rainig thu air dochas trocair tha fhios agad mar a bhiodh smuain pheacach mar ghath teine a' dol tre d' anam, ma ta nach 'eil Dia co naomh a nis 'sa bha E an uair sin? 'S cunnartach sin, aon an deigh dha dochas ann an trocair fhaotainn a bhi luidhe fo pheacadh. Ann an sin feudaidh aon a bhi ciontach de ni airson am bi anaman eile a' fagail am fuil air tre'n t-siorruidheachd. Cha-n 'eil iad ach tearc a tha 'toirt an aire dha sin. Ach tha cuid, agus tha iad a' tuigsinn, mur gleidh an Tighearn am baile gur diomhain a ni am fear-coimhid faire.

'Se dleasdanas chreutairean bhi caithriseach mu eaglais Dhe. An neach a tha beantuinn ri aon diubh tha e beantuinn ri cloich a shula. Nis tha clach na sula iongantach anmhunn agus 'se dleasdanas a h-uile aoin bhi caithriseach nach bean e ri sin. Ach mur gleidh an Tighearn am baile gu diomhain ni am fear-coimhid faire. 'Se eaglais Dhe an t-aon chuspair de'm bheil curam air leth aig Crìosd. Tha gleidheadh diomhair an Tighearna mu'n chrui-theachd uile nach rachadh i 'na smal. 'S uamhasach an staid sin 'nuair a bhios na miannan uile a tha anns a' chreutair air an leigeil fuasgailte. Ciod an ifrinn a bhios an sin? Faic creutairean a' sabaid, ciod an naimhdeas uamhasach a tha 'n sin? 'S ann mar sin a bhios iad ann an ifrinn, a h-uile miann air a leigeil fuasgailte, O anam bochd, ged nach biodh ni bu mho ann an slainte an anama ach tearnadh o'n staid sin, cha bu bheag e.

Tha caithris-freasdail an Tighearna air an t-saoghal ach tha curam air leth aige dhe cuspairean a ghaoil a tha anns an eadarghuidhe. An ni a th' anns an eadarghuidhe feumaidh e bhi air cridhe Chrìosd. Tha E fein ag radh, "Feuch air dearnaibh mo lamh ghearr thu," agus a ris, "An dichuimhnich mathair a leanabh ciche gun iochd a dheanamh air mac a cuim? Feudaidh eadhon iadsan dichuimhneachadh ach cha dichuimhnich mise thusa." Tha iad sgriobhta air a chridhe, 'se an eaglais fìor-churam Chrìosd. Thusa tha ann an staid naduir tha E 'gad ghleidheadh ann an arduachdaranachd a fhreasdail. Ach 's iad so seudan an Tighearna agus tha iad iongantach faisg air. Do bhrìgh gu bheil

iad ag earbsa as tha gloir a Dhiadhachd ceangailte riu. Thainig e 'na urras orra, nis 's ann air an urras a tha ant -Athair ag amharc agus tha E fein a' labhairt air E bhi air a ghlorachadh annta ; agus co fhad sin tha Criad air a ghlorachadh annta tha curam aige dhiubh. Anam bhochd, ma fhuair thu aithne air d' eucomas air thu fein a ghleidheadh agus gu'n do thilg thu do ghleidheadh air fhein ann an sin thainig thusa agus an Run siorruidh gu cordadh agus bheir Criosd dhuit d'anam tearuinte aig an la ud. 'S ann an sin a chithear E air a chrunadh leis a' chrun leis an do chrun a mhathair E agus crunaidh iad E le iomadh crun. Crunaidh iad E le'n slainte shiorruidh agus ann an sin dealraidh airidheachd air an ainm.—Fear-saoraidh.

Instructive Letter to a Young Preacher by Christmas Evans.

DEAR BROTHER,—1. Consider, in the first place, the great importance to a preacher of a blameless life. You must, like Timothy, “flee youthful lusts,” as you would escape from beasts of prey; for there are kinds of beasts, living in the wilderness of man’s corruption, that will charm, by means of their beauteous colours, those that walk among their haunts; there is no safety but by keeping from them, and adhering to such as live by faith, and watch and pray. It will be well for you, while you travel through the coppice of youth, to keep from all appearance of evil. May you have grace to pass through the coppice of forbidden trees, without cutting your name into the bark of one of them, or you may be upbraided at critical times by those who may wish to prove that you are not better than themselves; even the *iota*, inserted by your hand, may be produced after many years.

2. I remember the words of Luther. that *reading, prayer, and temptation* are necessary to strengthen and to purify the talents of a minister. Read to extend your general knowledge, especially as to the plan of redemption, according to the Scriptures, in all its parts, from the election to the glorification, that you may, like a spiritual watchmaker, know all the relative cog-wheels, and be able to open them in the pulpit, and to connect them all by faith, hope, and charity, that they may occupy their own places, and exhibit their true results on the dial-plate; thus proving yourself a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. Be not like that thrasher, who presumptuously took his watch to pieces in the barn, and could not put it together again, but was obliged to carry it home in his handkerchief. The messengers of God, described in the book of Revelations, are full of eyes behind and before. You must use prayer to fetch strength out of Christ, like the homer to carry home the manna in, or the water-pot of the woman of Samaria. Without the prayer of faith the preacher will have “nothing to draw with,” from the well that

is deep—even *the deep things of God*. Temptation is requisite to prove the nature of the metal of the preacher's character and doctrine—"approved of God." The piece of gold in every true minister's ministry must be tried in some furnace prepared by Divine Providence. He must, therefore, do the work of an evangelist, fulfil his ministry, endure hardness and affliction, and thus prove himself a good soldier of Jesus Christ.

3. Avail yourself, in the morning of your days, of every opportunity to acquire knowledge useful for the ministry. Let it be your constant aim to turn every stream and rivulet of knowledge in the right direction, to facilitate the work of the ministry, for the good of souls and the glory of God; as the bee, in all her excursions amongst the flowers of the gardens and the hedges, gathers honey to enrich the hive, as the common treasury of the industrious race. Always have a book to read, instead of indulging in vain conversations. Strive to learn English, as you cannot have academical training. Learn your own mother-tongue well. Learn to write a good hand by frequent practice. Avoid vain conversation instead of growth in knowledge. Remember this, that you cannot commit some loved sin in private and perform the work of the ministry in public with facility and acceptance. For a preacher to fall into sin, be it a secret one, and to live in it, is as fatal, ultimately, as the cutting of Samson's hair. Be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus against all corruption.

4. With regard to the composition of your sermons: first, let the matter be evangelical. The doctrine of the Gospel is a mould from heaven, and not changed. It puts its own impress and shape on the professor that is melted into it, so that his justification, sanctification, and all his salvation flow from the merits of Christ; and all through God's grace, and not of ourselves. The Gospel, as a glass, should be kept clean and clear in the pulpit, that the hearers may see the glory of Christ, and be changed to the same image. Every duty is to be urged by evangelical motives. "Let us have grace," etc.

Hereby we can serve God in all the duties of the kingdom of heaven. The whole is summed up in living by faith, which worketh by love, to Him that died for us, and rose again for our justification. Secondly, let your divisions be natural to the text. Take care that your interpretation accord with the contexts. Two or three general heads; avoid many. Four or five remarks you may make on each head; see that they are fairly in the truth of the text. Thirdly, I am not inclined to make inferences or applications from the whole. When the preacher has expended his strength or ingenuity in endeavouring to impress and apply the truth to the minds of his hearers, application seems to me to be doing again what has been effected already. The blacksmith does not put the horse-shoe in the fire after he has nailed it to the hoof, and the cook does not spread the cloth again when dinner is over. Fourthly, beware of long sermons as well as long prayers.

When there is but one preacher, he should not preach for more than an hour; when there are two, both should not be more than an hour and a half, that the worship may close within two hours; whenever this time is passed, coolness and fatigue ensue. To put three ministers to preach (in one meeting) is a modern corruption, and likely to make some progress in Wales; while the English, generally, have but one sermon in one service. They excel us herein; for we do not read that, on the day of Pentecost, Peter, James, and John preached after each other; but Peter, "*one of the twelve,*" delivered that successful sermon. When we lose sight of the Scriptures and common sense we are driven to extremes, though it be with the kindly purpose of respecting strange ministers by putting them to preach.

5. Attend, also, my young brother, to your outward appearance in the pulpit. Beware of a proud, haughty appearance, with wandering eyes and unfeeling countenance, so that the people utterly fail to see the man of God in you. We must, in order hereunto, have something like unto Moses, when he had been on the mount with God, that will indicate seriousness, love to souls, a spirit of prayer, zeal for Christ, and longing for the salvation of men; like unto those who have felt the fear of perdition ourselves, and the infinite value of salvation by God's grace; and that we wrestle with God in order to be useful to souls. These things must be imprinted on our appearance and deportment, having transformed us, in some measure, to a heavenly form and habit. Our outward conversation should be conversant herewith, or men will despise us as hypocrites, without the fear of God.

6. Avoid, my dear, brother, all foolish bodily gestures.

7. We now come to the part of the subject upon which you are most anxious to have my thoughts: that refers to *the delivery of your sermons*. It is difficult to put general rules of rhetoric into execution. After reading all that has been said by Blair, Williams, Fuller, and the Archbishop of Cambray (Fenelon), who have spoken at length of Cicero and Demosthenes, it is easy, by endeavouring to follow them, to lose the spirit of the work, and thus, by seeking the form, to forfeit the life. Preach the gospel of the grace of God intelligibly, affectionately, and without shame—all the contents of the great box, from predestination to glorification. It was the closing and concealing of this box that occasioned the opening of the venomous Mohammedan box, as well as that of Popery, together with all the vain legality that is to be found among Protestants, established and dissenting. It may be said that they seek justification, but it is by the deeds of the law. The locking up and the losing of the doctrine of grace, through the merits of Christ, utterly destroyed the Jewish Church; for it was in the chest, which they locked up by their false interpolations of Scripture, that the "things which belong to their peace" were contained; "but now," says the Redeemer, "they are concealed from their eyes;" shut up under unbelief. "The things that per-

tain to their peace" belong also to our peace as Gentiles. The Deity of Christ, etc.; Redemption, etc. Excuse this digression, for the river of God's throne moved me along.

We were upon the best mode of delivering sermons for edification. It is not easy to reduce the rules of prudence into practice. I have seen some men of the highest powers, who understood Greek better than their mother tongue, attempting to preach according to rule, and to them the pulpit was like unto Gilboa; they neither affected themselves nor their hearers. The difficulty was the bringing of their regulations into natural practice. I saw one of those men, the most eminent for learning and genius, who found the right way, under the influence of a mighty fervency that descended upon him in the pulpit, so that his voice became utterly different from what it used to be, and his tongue at liberty, as though something was cut that had hitherto restrained his tongue and affections from natural exercise.

Here you have the sum and substance and mystery of all rules:—1. Let the preacher influence himself; let him reach his own heart if he would reach the heart of others; if he would have others feel he must feel himself. Dry shouting (or vociferation) will not do this. The shout of a man who does not himself feel the effect of what he says hardens instead of softening; locks instead of opening the heart. 2. The elevation and fire of the voice must accord with the fervency of the matter in the heart. A person said to me once, "Mr. Evans, you have not studied Dr. Blair's Rhetoric." That man, with his rules, was always as dry as Gilboa. "Why do you say so," replied I, "when you just now saw hundreds weeping under the sermon? That could not be had I not first of all been influenced myself, which, you know, is the substance and mystery of all rules for speaking." Wherever there is effect there is life; and rules without life have no power. Now, brother, follow the natural course of affection and voice. Raise not the voice while the heart is dry; but let the heart and affections shout first; let it commence within. Take this comparison:—Go to the blacksmith's shop; he first puts the piece of iron in the fire, and there is no sound of striking the anvil; he collects together the coals for heat; then he tells the boy, "Blow!" while he masterly manages the shovel, adjusting the coals, and asking sundry questions. He calmly looks at the fire heating the iron, and does not yet take hold of the hammer, nor order his assistants to use the sledge; but at length, seeing that the iron has attained the proper malleability, he takes it out, covered with sparkling fire, puts it on the anvil, handles the hammer, and orders his workman to take the larger one, and fashions it according to his pleasure; and so on all day long. Here, observe, he does not beat the iron in order to make it hot, for without first heating it the beating process is in vain. Equally vain is the hammer of vociferation, unless the matter is brought home with warmth into our hearts. We have often sought to produce effect, and to

influence our hearers, much as though the smith merely put the iron in fire and barely warmed it; it is contrary to the nature of things to use the hammer while the material is not duly tempered. Thus I have frequently, brother, found myself in preaching. You have, above, the mystery of all effective speaking, in Parliament, at the bar, and in the pulpit; remembering the difference in the subjects, and the sources of heat. In the pulpit we speak of the deep things of God; and we are to pray for and to expect warmth from the Divine Spirit.

You complain that you cannot get your voice into a manageable key, and yet to speak with liveliness and power. Many, with a bad voice, well-governed, have become powerful speakers; while others, with a good voice, have, in consequence of not mastering a natural key, and not being able to move themselves, been most ineffective speakers. I would direct you to fix your voice at its natural pitch, which you may easily do; you may then, with facility, raise and lower it according to the subject in hand. If you commence in too high a key you cannot keep it up long. First, you cannot modulate it as the occasion may require; and you fall into an unpliant, tedious monotony, and all natural cadence and emphasis is lost. Without attuning the voice into the natural key effective oratory is impossible. Secondly, remember not to speak in your throat or nostrils. If the former, you must soon become hoarse, and harsh loudness follows; the glory and vivacity are then departed, and, instead of facility and cheerfulness, you have the roarings of death—the breath failing, with forced screams, and harsh whisperings. Thirdly, raise your voice to the roof of your mouth; do not close your teeth against it, neither imprison it in the nostrils, but open your mouth naturally, and keep your voice within your lips, where it will find room enough to play its high and its low intonations, to discourse its flats and sharps, to utter its joys and sorrows. When you thus have your voice under control, instead of you being under its control, dragging you about in all disorder, you will find it your servant, running upon your errands, up and down, all through the camp, alternating in energy and pliability to the end of the sermon, and not becoming cold and weak, scarcely bearing you through, like Bucephalus, Alexander the Great's horse, which, mortally wounded, just brought his master out of the battle, and then expired. Fourthly, remember not to press too much upon your breath, when you have attained the natural use of it, by using very long sentences, without pausing at proper places, which (pauses) will add to the effect, as well as preserve the voice; so that you will be, like the smith, ready to strike the duly-tempered metal, prepared to give the suitable emphasis at the end of the paragraph. Let the matter raise the voice; do not attempt by the voice to elevate the subject. Fifthly, use words easily understood, that the people's affections may not cool, while the mind is sent to a dictionary, to understand your terms. The great work, the exploit

of a minister, is to win the heart to believe in Christ, and to love Him. Sixthly, bear in mind, also, the necessity of keeping the voice free, without (affected) restraint; give every syllable, and every letter, its full and proper sound. (It is one of the peculiarities and excellences of the Welsh language, and proves its Eastern origin). No letter has to complain that it is (condemned to be) mute, and neglected, and has no utterance. In English many letters have this complaint; but in Welsh every letter, even as the knights of the round table of King Arthur, has, without preference, its own appropriate and complete sound. Seventhly, remember, also, to enunciate clearly the last syllable in every Welsh word; that will cause your most distant hearer to understand you; while, without this, much of what you say must be inevitably lost. Eighthly, in order to all this, carefully attend to the manner of the best and ablest preachers, and imitate not their weaknesses but their excellences. You will observe that some heavenly ornament and power from on high are visible in many ministers when under the Divine irradiation, which you cannot approach to by merely imitating their artistic excellence, without resembling them in the spiritual taste, fervency, and zeal which Christ and His Spirit "work in them." This will cause not only your being like unto them in gracefulness of action and propriety of elocution, but will also induce prayer for the anointing from the Holy One, which worketh mightily in the inward man. This is the mystery of all effective preaching,

We must be endowed with power from on high: here is the grand inward secret. Without this we (often) perceive that it is impossible, with all academic advantages, to make good preachers of young men from any college, in the Church of England, or among the dissenters, in the English or the Welsh language. A young preacher must have the mystery of being "constrained" by "the love of Christ;" "the gift of God" must be kindled in him; and He alone, by the Spirit, can sustain that gift by the Holy Spirit. "Who is sufficient for these things?" May the Lord give you, brother, a good understanding in all things; and preserve in you the heavenly gift by the Holy Ghost! may it be rekindled where it is, and contributed where it is not! Without it we can do nothing for the glory of God or the good of souls.—
Affectionately, CHRISTMAS EVANS.

Letters of the late Alexander Kerr, Assynt.

(XIV.)

ACHMELVICH, 17th February, 1875.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—It is time for me to answer your last welcome letter, although I have not much news, unless I consider it news that I am spared yet on the foot-stool, and in my own sight only a cumberer of the ground. I am afraid that I am *that* in His sight also, who knows the heart and its motives and desires. When I

compare myself to those recorded in Scripture who lived by faith on the Son of God, how I see my own shortcomings, how I see my want of that living faith which is Christ formed in the soul—the hope of salvation. No wonder then that I am restless and dissatisfied at the want of this exercise of living faith, a sure token of which would be the love of Christ taking possession of the faculties of my being. No wonder that I am concerned to find in myself some marks of the true people of the Lord, seeing that I am fast approaching my latter end, and soon the *scale* will go to the one side or the other. Now, my dear, see that you make sure work of the salvation of your immortal soul. Nothing will stand the test at last, but your possessing a free pardon through the atoning blood of the Son of God, and a mark of your getting this would be that the constraining love of Christ would draw you after Himself through evil report and good report.

My wife is in the same weak condition, the family are well, but I am keeping feeble, especially in my breathing, and the palpitation I told you of before is not leaving me.

Remember me to W. M. and to S. M. and the rest of my acquaintances; and oh! choose the good part that shall never be taken away.—Your sincere friend,
A. KERR.

XV.

ACHMELVICH, 21st May, 1875.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—I received your last kind letter in due time, by which I understand you have not been well. I hope you are better by this time, and able to go about. Perhaps you will not be the worse of some touches of bodily sickness, for we are so much attached to the things of this present life that we need to be reminded that we and they will not always continue together. Now, if you are one of the Lord's own children, the smiting rod is not a token of wrath, but of chastisement for the good of your immortal soul; and your part is to submit to His hand, and to take up the cross, pleading the promise that He has given in His own Word that they that wait on Him shall not be put to shame. Blessed for ever be His name, that He made such promises to lost, helpless sinners, who in His sight were deserving only of His wrath. Blessed for ever be His name that He looked on such in their low, lost state, and gave for their redemption none other than His only begotten and well-beloved Son, "Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift." And, surely, my dear, if you know anything by experience of this adorable gift, you will praise the Lord even in the midst of earthly trouble.

I am not keeping strong, as I mentioned before, and if you will be writing to Donald Duff, tell him of my weakness, and of my feeling of being unprepared for the solemn change of entering on my eternal state.

My wife is in the same weak condition.—Yours sincerely,

A. KERR.

Rev. W. Scott, Australia, on Sabbath Observance.

THE following is from the "Clarence and Richmond Examiner" of July 15th.—

The subject of Sabbath Observance was taken up in the Woodford Dale Presbyterian Church on Sabbath morning of last week. There was a large congregation, and the Rev. W. Scott took as his text Exodus xx. 8, "Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy." He referred to the license which was being taken with the Lord's Day in their midst, both for pleasure-seeking and for ordinary work—a state of things which would make it criminal for the preacher to be silent. Their attention had been specially drawn to one phase of such Sabbath desecration in the district by what befel one of their river steamers the previous Sabbath when outside the Heads with a fishing party from Grafton. It seemed that the vessel just escaped being wrecked. It was a solemn thought, as he felt, the very possibility of so many being ushered into eternity in the act of violating God's Holy Law. This warning was surely suggestive! If God was slow to anger, they were to remember that still He was a God judging in the earth, and who would not always keep silent. The way in which the event had been described, however, merely as "a thrilling experience," seemed to indicate how far the generality were from taking it to heart. This was one of the saddest features of the times. It meant the absence of God's fear, and, therefore, a low moral standard of conduct. Yet it remained that God was speaking loudly in His Providences. In this connection, Mr. Scott instanced certain recent appalling disasters—that of the burning steamer, and, again, of the emigrant ship—as being the Lord's voice crying to sinning communities. The enormous loss of life, in circumstances so heartrending, appealed, he said, to their deepest feelings. But surely there was a lesson besides to every one with a conscience—the lesson taught by their Lord Himself: "Except ye repent ye shall all likewise perish."

The preacher observed that it was in respect of the practical ignoring of the claims of the Divine law, notwithstanding warning providences, that the Prophet had uttered the emphatic words: "Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and show My people their transgressions." Nor could that law be regarded by individuals or communities so long as its central command was increasingly trampled upon. Let them read the chapter where these words occurred (Isaiah l. viii.), and they would find that whilst it began as quoted, it concluded with these significant words: "If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on My holy day; and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable; and shalt honour Him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking

thine own words. Then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord, and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it." This was the Gospel definition of the Sabbath and its observance.

Church Notes.

Communions.—Oban and Helmsdale, 1st Sabbath of month; St. Jude's and John Knox's (Glasgow), Tarbert (Loch Fyne), Tain (Ross-shire), 2nd; Halkirk (Caithness), 3rd. John Knox's services at the Christian Institute, Bothwell Street.

Meeting of Synod.—The Synod will (D.V.) meet on Tuesday, 15th November, at St. Jude's Hall, Glasgow. The Rev. Alexander Stewart, Edinburgh, moderator, will preach at 12 noon.

The Late John Mackenzie, Gairloch.—It is with much sorrow we briefly notice this month the death of Mr. John Mackenzie, missionary, Gairloch, which took place on Sabbath, October 16th. The deceased was a pious man and useful missionary. His removal is a real loss to the Church. Much sympathy is felt for his widow and family in their great bereavement. We hope to have a fuller notice in a future issue.

Acknowledgment.—Rev. Neil Cameron begs to acknowledge with thanks receipt of ros. (Inverness-shire) towards St. Jude's Building Fund.

Pamphlet on the subject of Church Union received from Canada.

The United Free Misrepresentation of Events in 1893. Apology Received.—The editor wrote the law agents of the United Free Church in regard to the misrepresentation given in the recent case in the House of Lords in regard to the ejection of Free Presbyterian ministers from churches and manses in 1892, which was dealt with in the September magazine. He has received a reply expressive of regret for the statement made by counsel, and promising to insert a correcting foot-note in any future edition of the Authorised Report of the case.

The Free Church College.—On Wednesday, November 2, the Free Church inaugurated its tenancy of the New College, Edinburgh, by a sermon from Rev. Mr. Bannatyne and an address by Dr. Alexander, the new Professor of Divinity. The other Professors are Rev. Dr. Kerr, of the Reformed Presbyterian Church; Rev. Professor Morton, of the Original Secession Church; Rev. John Urquhart, of Bible Defence fame; and Dr. Hay Fleming, the eminent historian of St. Andrews. Mr. Andrew M'Culloch has been appointed general treasurer.