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**Professor Alexander's Book—****"DEMONIC POSSESSION IN THE NEW TESTAMENT."**

IT was matter of satisfaction to many who loved the truth in Scotland that as a result of the House of Lords' decision in the Church case the professors of the United Free Church—representatives of a new and unsound theology—were compelled to vacate the New College, Edinburgh, at the end of October last. The hand of God was specially recognised in this remarkable turn of providence, in view of the fact that these teachers were among the vanguard of a Church which had betrayed the true faith of the gospel, that had been committed to her trust. The present Free Church as victor in the legal contest took possession of the College, and proceeded to organise a staff of professors or lecturers for the current session. The local Presbytery ordained Dr. W. M. Alexander as a regular professor of theology, while the Rev. Dr. Kerr of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, Rev. Prof. Morton and Dr. Hay Fleming of the Original Secession Church, and Rev. John Urquhart of the Free Church were appointed lecturers, the first three, as members of other denominations, having kindly offered their services for a time.

Friends of truth had hoped that there was now a staff of teachers inaugurated in the New College to the theological views of none of whom could any exception be taken. It will appear from the sequel of this article that this pleasant expectation has been disappointed in the case of the leading member of the staff. Not long after Dr. Alexander was ordained, letters appeared in the newspapers calling attention to his theological opinions as embodied in a book entitled "Demoniac Possession in the New Testament." It was averred in these letters that his views were of the higher critical school, and were precisely similar to those of the United Free professors, which were condemned so much by the leaders of the Free Church. Quotations were given from the book in support of these assertions. At first we were not disposed to pay much attention to these newspaper effusions, seeing they emanated from prejudiced sources, and were inclined

to regard them as unfair criticisms of Dr. Alexander's work, but at length observing that no satisfactory reply was forthcoming from Dr. Alexander or the representatives of the Free Church, we procured a copy of the book and read it for ourselves. The result was the amazing and painful discovery that here was actually the work of a higher critic, and that Dr. Alexander's views of the composition of the Holy Scriptures were very much the same as those of Professors Marcus Dods and George Adam Smith. We need hardly say that it is with no desire to gratify the enemies of the Free Church that we take up the pen on this subject, but rather with a view to give what seems to be a necessary exposure of error, and that in the hope that the case will be satisfactorily dealt with by the responsible parties more immediately concerned. Dr. Alexander's book, which was published in February, 1902, shortly before he joined the Free Church, deals, as has already been indicated, with the subject of possession by demons or evil spirits as described in the New Testament, and professes to treat of "its relations historical, medical, and theological." It will be seen from the following quotations that Dr. Alexander does not regard the Scriptures as expressing throughout "infallible truth," but as embodying as their own many ancient superstitions of heathen races, and unreliable traditions in regard to events in the life of Christ Himself.

In Chapter II. he notices the "Demonology of the Old Testament." Under the head of "Some shadow figures," he says, "These are mostly the relics of ancient superstitions or imaginations," and "in ethnic phraseology they may be called good or evil." Some of these ancient superstitions relative to the shadow-figures of good demons he sets forth in the following paragraph, which the reader may study in detail for himself:—"The good.—By implication these are discoverable in the Fountain of Judgment at Kadesh (Gen. xiv. 7): in the dread sanctity of the oath by the Seven Wells (Gen. xxi. 31; Amos viii. 14); in the unchallenged use of the Teraphim (1 Sam. xiv. 13; Hos. iii. 4); in the animated rod of the diviner (Hos. iv. 12); in the fairy hosts and tree spirits (Can. ii. 7, iii. 5). These appear to belong to the dawn of history, and may be regarded as part of the heritage of primitive races." The Jews are here put on a level with heathen races. It is also something new and startling to have "the roes and hinds of the field" spoken of in the Song of Solomon, described as "fairy hosts and tree spirits." In the course of the same chapter, Dr. Alexander lets us understand that he has higher critical doubts about the unity of the prophecy of Isaiah, and evidently considers that the Old Testament may have been seriously tampered with. Thus he writes, "There are two passages in Isaiah which in their present form may be post exilic, but which are charged with ideas essentially primeval." These are Isaiah xiii. 21, 22, and xxxiv. 14, 15—passages which the most advanced rationalistic critics describe as not the composition of Isaiah, but of some later writer.

In Chapters III. and IV. Dr. Alexander treats of the "Medical Aspects of Demonic Possession," and the conclusion of his inquiry is that most cases of possession by evil spirits described in the New Testament are simply cases of mental disease and nothing more, and that the inspired writers merely employ "the language of the times" and give expression to the popular superstitious philosophy about evil spirits. The "data of the present inquiry," he affirms, "are primarily the narratives of the New Testament. But the descriptions often savour of the terminology of the animistic philosophy. To the latter, demons and spirits are natural enough; but to modern psychological medicine these are unknown as causes of disease. They involve a theory which is alien to the principles of scientific pathology" (page 61). Again, he declares in dealing with the narrative of the man with the legion, "The three Evangelists represent a Triple Tradition; but supply data which lead to one congruous result regarding the derangement under consideration" (page 72). Further, in handling the case of the boy who had a dumb and deaf spirit, he states, "This outstanding case of possession deservedly receives a prominent place in the Triple Tradition" (page 83). Here he makes the astonishing declaration that the gospels represent a Triple Tradition. This evidently means that they are not all solid fact, but are stories handed down from one generation to another, whose truth cannot be relied upon. They are partly true, and partly not. It is left to the modern critic to decide what is to be believed. This view overturns any sound doctrine of inspiration by the Holy Spirit, and leaves us with merely human erring documents, less to be relied upon than many secular histories that are esteemed as genuine truth throughout. "The Triple Tradition" theory of the Gospel narratives is one belonging to the higher, or rather, as they ought to be called, the lower critics.

Some samples of the way in which Dr. Alexander views New Testament incidents are the following. He appears to object to the idea of people being possessed by *many* evil spirits. This is what he calls poly-demonistic philosophy. Thus he says in regard to the case of Mary Magdalene, "While insanity was doubtless present, it is not quite easy to assign a precise meaning to the 'seven demons.'" "The best explanation is that which leads us to recognise here the operation of Babylonian influences. In the Magical Texts of Babylonia the 'seven spirits' are of frequent occurrence." The idea is, not that Mary was actually possessed of seven, but that this is a Babylonian way of speaking or writing, and simply "attests the severity of Mary's disorder." Dr. Alexander also takes up the narrative in Acts xix., concerning the miracles wrought during Paul's stay of two years in Ephesus, in which it is stated that "God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul: so that from his body were brought forth unto the sick handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them." What

comment has our author the boldness to make on this? It is the following, "The superstitions of the Ephesian Christians are thrust into unhappy prominence as well as their magical practices" (p. 100). Here the use of the handkerchiefs or aprons in healing is labelled superstitions and magical practices, while the wisdom of the inspired writer is challenged by the assertion that such things are "thrust into unhappy prominence." Evidently, Dr. Alexander does not believe that Luke was guided by the Holy Spirit in what he wrote. The use of "the shadow of Peter" in connection with healing is also described as superstitious, and Dr. Alexander holds that "there is no evidence whatever to prove that either Peter or Paul encouraged these practices." It may be answered that we have no proof whatever that the Apostles discouraged or disapproved of these practices. Could not the Most High use the very simplest means to accomplish His wonders of healing and deliverance? The whole tenor of the narrative suggests that the practices were quite approved by the Apostles. It is only a critic with a special idea to work out that would hint anything else. Dr. Alexander finishes up this paragraph of his discussion by asserting that "the grace of God is not of necessity bound to the correctness of a theory. Jesus responded to a genuine, though superstitious faith in the case of the sick woman (Matt. ix. 22)." By this kind of argument he tries to explain the fact that the people were cured, notwithstanding what he considers their superstitious methods, and instances the case of the woman with the issue of blood. His illustration, in our opinion, only exposes more and more the utter fallacy of his opinions. It is the first time we have heard that it was superstitious in the woman to touch the hem of Christ's garment with the expectation of a cure. Christ did not call it superstition; virtue immediately flowed out of Him for her healing; and He dismissed her with words of assurance and consolation, "Daughter, be of good comfort, thy faith hath made thee whole." Not a hint of any superstition in her faith. Dr. Alexander is surely not wiser than Christ Himself.

In Chapter IV. a footnote reveals the higher critic. Our author describes the mention of "evil spirits" in Luke vii. 21 as "an independent touch," and adds the suggestive query "Is it the hand of a redactor?" Rationalistic critics believe that the originals of the Holy Scriptures passed through many hands—the hands of redactors or editors who took the unhallowed liberty of tampering with the sacred books and inserting at will their own ideas or expressions in them—a base opinion that is entirely subversive of the divine authorship of the Scriptures, and an unholy speculation that is utterly unwarranted by historical facts. It is lamentable to find that a professor in the present Free Church, who has only recently declared anew his unqualified adherence to the Confession of Faith, should be infected with the principles of the pernicious higher criticism.

This review will (*D. V.*) be concluded in next issue.

## The Visions of Zechariah.

By the REV. ALEXANDER STEWART, EDINBURGH.

### Introductory.

“Your fathers where are they? and the prophets do they live for ever?”—Zech. i. 5.

IN the year 536 B.C. the Emperor Cyrus published a decree giving permission to the Jews who were in exile in Babylon to return to their own land. A considerable number availed themselves of this permission and went back to Jerusalem. They found Zion a wilderness and Jerusalem a desolation; their holy and their beautiful house where their fathers had praised God burnt up with fire, and all their pleasant things laid waste. They set themselves to repair the waste places, and in the very year of their return the foundations of the new temple were laid. But they had not proceeded far when they met with opposition from enemies; the work was interrupted, and at length quite suspended. The people lost heart; their zeal for the cause of God became almost extinct; a spirit of worldliness took hold of them; and they were fast losing all sense of their religious obligations. They were active enough in attending to their own material interests, but they neglected the things of God. For some sixteen years the foundations of the Lord's house had been laid; but the walls rose no higher; and the unfinished work was the scorn and the derision of the enemies of God.

It was at this time, sixteen years after the return from Exile, that the Lord raised up Haggai and Zechariah and sent them with a message to the people. They were contemporaries, these two prophets; Haggai began to deliver his message two months earlier than Zechariah; and they were both sent to stir up the people from their inactivity and indifference, and to encourage them to resume the work which had been so long neglected. Their words partook of the same character, mingling solemn warning with gracious encouragement, warning until the people were stirred to action, and encouragement as soon as their face was set on the way of obedience.

At the time at which Zechariah began to declare the word of the Lord, Haggai's first message had already taken effect. The people recognised the divine authority of his mission; they realised the guilt of their conduct in neglecting the Lord's work; and their hearts were again moved to obey the voice of the Lord their God. Zechariah reinforces the testimony of his brother prophet. He, too, begins with words of stern and pointed warning. The people were already to some extent penitent, but the wound needed to be deepened: and not till that part of his mission has been attained does the prophet pass on to convey to the now obedient people assurances, many and varied, of divine favour and help in the performance of their duty.

The words we are considering have their place in the first part of Zechariah's message. The voice of God to the nation is still a call to repentance; and that call is driven home to their conscience by a reminder of God's dealings with their fathers. He tells them that He had been sorely displeased with their fathers, and warns them against following in their fathers' footsteps. The fathers had had their own calls and warnings. The prophets had been sent to them too, and had spoken to them as the voice of God; but they had refused to listen to the prophets, and had turned away their face in unconcealed contempt. And what was the result of their disobedience? That is the point He is driving home. Let them recall the facts to mind: let them look back and consider. The fathers where are they? And the prophets do they live for ever?

These are the words whose meaning I shall try to explain:—

Your fathers where are they?  
And the prophets do they live for ever? } but—.

This is a passage in which a great deal of solemn truth is implied rather than expressed. It is rich not so much in its declarations as in its reserve. Two different lines of thought are brought before us in the two questions propounded, and over against each of these is placed a third, which is introduced by the word "but." The new consideration brought to view belongs equally to the two questions, but leads to entirely different results when applied to the fathers and when applied to the prophets. The fathers where are they? they are not: but—they reaped the fruit of their doings; this is one application. The prophets do they live for ever? No, they do not; but—the word spoken by the prophets has been fulfilled; this is another and an entirely different application. Let us try to follow out each of these lines of thought in turn.

I. *Your fathers where are they? but—.* Here we have, first of all, a warning against making the example of the fathers an excuse for continuance in sin. Pride of descent has always been a prominent feature of the Jewish character. They gloried in their ancestors, and were ready to regard a thing as right for them simply because it had been the custom of their fathers. They took a pride in carrying on the traditions of the past, and in maintaining the continuity of the national life and character. The customs and attainments of a former generation were therefore likely to be the standard by which each age was wont to measure itself. What was good enough for their fathers was good enough for them. The practices of the past were hallowed simply because they bore the stamp of usage.

This is a danger to which the people of Zechariah's day were exposed, and against which he is here warning them. Be not as your fathers, he says; and he proceeds to describe what their fathers had been. They had been a stiff-necked and disobedient people. The former prophets had cried to them, had warned them with the same divine authority underlying their words, had

counselled and entreated and threatened them, but all to no purpose. They did not hear nor hearken ; they did not even make a pretence of listening ; they turned away their ear from the message with studied scorn.

That was their character : what was their fate ? Your fathers where are they ? How did it fare with them in their neglect of God's message ? Did they prosper ? Were they successful in their warfare against the authority of heaven ? Did they find the path of disobedience a pleasant path and profitable ? The answer is implied in the question where are they ? Their graves are in a foreign land. There they died as exiles and as captives, degraded oppressed and enslaved. They would not be warned and they would not return ; therefore God's hand fell upon them, and they suffered for their sins. Where are they ? The history of well nigh a century of humiliation and captivity, of suffering and shame, culminating in their death in an enemy's country, is the answer. They disobeyed the word of God, but—God's word took hold of them, His justice pursued them, overtook them, arrested them, and visited them at length with the reward of their iniquities.

This is a warning which applies to us no less than to the Jews ; for we also are exposed to the same danger. It is the danger of making custom or usage the standard of right and wrong. It is the danger of imitating our fathers in their sins rather than in their godliness ; for this is the direction in which we are naturally inclined. We are ready to acquiesce blindly in a condition of things which is transmitted to us from the past, without examining whether it bears the stamp of divine approval as well as of human custom. It is indeed true that in many things it would be well for us if we came up to the standard of the past ; but the fact remains notwithstanding that men are in danger of excusing themselves in sin because their fathers indulged in it before them. They justify the path of disobedience because on that path they find the footsteps of their fathers. And these are footsteps in which we are naturally disposed to follow so long as they lead away from godliness and from God.

But we are called upon in these words to take warning from the experience of others. We are called upon to examine the testimony of the past, to listen to the voice of history, concerning the unfailing connection between sin and punishment. Disobedience of God must sooner or later receive its just recompense of reward. There may be prosperity in sin for a season. It may appear as if God did not know, as if there were no knowledge in the Most High : the wicked may boast of their success, and set their mouth against the heavens in their defiance of God. It may appear as if the eye of Justice had lost its keenness, or as if the arm of Justice had lost its strength ; but—there is a but ; and its weight will one day surely fall. God may suffer long in His great forbearance ; but the books wherein he keeps account with the children of men

are never allowed to fall into disorder. The day of reckoning may seem to tarry, but it will surely come.

There is another truth which lies on the surface of these words, and that is the transitory character of human life. This is of course one of the most threadbare of commonplaces; but it is also a solemn truth of which we need to be continually reminded. Our very familiarity with the thought causes us to lose sight of its supreme importance. The fathers where are they? They have gone the way of the whole earth. You will seek for them in vain in the land of the living. They had their day, and then they "ceased to be." They played their part in the world while they were in it, they contributed their share to the making of human history, they formed a link in the unbroken chain of human life; and then they disappeared, and were seen no more. Each individual life with all its mystery, its mystery to itself and to others, with everything in it that was common to its fellows, and everything else that was peculiar to itself; whatever kind of life it was, whether it was long or short, whether it was sorrowful or happy, completed the round of its earthly destiny and then vanished. Its joys and its sorrows, its hopes and its fears, its achievements and its failures, were soon left behind in the swift flight of time. One generation has succeeded another. One nation has gone down in the shock of opposing powers, and another has arisen on its ruins, only to fall in turn before a mightier still. We read of them in the annals of the past, but when we look for their place among the things that remain in the present, we have to echo the prophet's words—Where are they?

And as it has been with the fathers, so also shall it be with their children. The little island of our earthly life is girt about with the sea of death, and the "moaning of the bar" is ever in our ears. We are following our fathers into the silent land from which no traveller returns. Other tongues that are now only beginning to lisp will soon have to ask regarding us in turn—Our fathers where are they? The old sad message that the prophet was commanded to proclaim in the ears of his own generation expresses the truth for all generations—all flesh is grass and all the glory of man as the flower of the grass. On nothing that the eye can rest in this earth is their placed the seal of permanence. Man dieth and wasteth away. Yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where is he?

But the words we are considering carry us a step further. Your fathers, where are they? But——. There is no question about their mortality; they are gone, but is that all? Is there nothing beyond? Is thought compelled to stop at the grave? Is there nothing further to be said than that they are not here? It would seem as if the significant position of the "but" in relation to this question were designed to arrest our thoughts, and to lead us to set over against the mere fact of death another consideration. Death is not the end of existence. The meaning of death is not



everlasting unconsciousness. The fathers are not in time, but they do exist in eternity.

And how does it fare with them there? Ah, that is the question—where are they? That is the most solemn of all questions. But let us not forget that it is a question which admits of an answer. We can in a certain sense tell where they are. For their condition in Eternity depends on their relation to God in Time. What was their character here? How did they receive God's message? What was their relation to God's Word uttered through His prophets? Did they hearken and obey, or did they refuse and rebel? Examine their history, consider the record of their lives, and that will furnish an answer. For this we may be assured of, their life went straight on. Death made no radical change in their nature. It wrought indeed a mighty change; but it was a change along the lines of what was already there. It made a difference in degree, not in kind—a difference only of growth and development. The course of their life followed a direct line, the path of the righteous as the shining light, shining more and more unto the perfect day; the path of the wicked as a ripening of their nature unto an awful reaping—the reaping of unrestrained corruption in outer darkness.

The field of thought into which the word “but” is a gateway is one that is overwhelming in its solemnity. “But my words and my statutes, which I commanded my servants the prophets, did they not take hold of your fathers? and they returned and said, Like as the Lord of Hosts thought to do unto us, according to our ways and according to our doings, so hath he dealt with us.” Here to begin with you have the fulfilment of the threatenings of God. His word and his statutes took hold at length of those who had slighted them. The wrath of which they had been warned overtook them. It had been pursuing them; the Angel of the Lord had been following them hard behind; and at last, when the limit of forbearance was reached, the hand of Divine vengeance was stretched forth, and God did repay. Then they returned; then they came to themselves under the weight of God's anger; then they acknowledged that their punishment was just and right. It was only what God had threatened to do, and it was only the fitting reward of their own doings.

These words, doubtless, had a fulfilment in the earthly history of the Jews, but let us not forget that in the fulness of their meaning they carry us over into Eternity. They assure us, first, that every word of threatening which is uttered by the mouth of the Lord shall be fulfilled upon those who disregard them; and, secondly, that there will be a terrible awakening on the part of the impenitent when it is too late, and an awful acknowledgement of the righteousness of their doom from amid the very agonies of endless despair.

II. *The prophets do they live for ever? but—* This second question seems to anticipate an objection which might be urged

against the application of the prophet's words. It is true that the fathers have disappeared, but so have the prophets. They have died as surely as those to whom they spoke. In many of its outward features their end may have been just the same. They shared the common lot of men. Where is the difference—is there any difference at all?—between him that serveth God and him that serveth Him not? The prophet concedes all this concerning God's messengers; but over against the mortality of the prophets He places a "but," in the light of which it must be interpreted. "But my words and my statutes, which I commanded my servants the prophets, did they not take hold of your fathers?"

Let us notice first of all the significance of the fact that these two, the fathers and the prophets, are here placed side by side in this feature that is common to them both, namely, that they are dying men. The messengers who are charged with the declaration of the will of God have only a brief space wherein to accomplish their mission: the people to whom they are sent have an equally brief tenure of the day of privilege. How solemn is the bearing of this fact on the relations which ought to subsist between them. On the one hand there is the prophet or minister—for a prophet is just one who is commissioned to speak from God to men—entering on his work in the consciousness of the twofold truth that he is a dying man himself and that he speaks to dying men. He knows not when he may be called to give an account of his stewardship; he knows not when those whom he addresses may be removed beyond the reach of his voice for ever. The day of opportunity is brief on both sides. Oh then what earnestness, what zeal, what importunity, what watching for souls ought to characterise his discharge of his office.

On the other hand the same twofold fact ought to have its due influence on the attitude of the people towards the Word of God. To any people a true prophet is one of the greatest of God's gifts. He is God's representative, His ambassador on earth. His function is to warn of danger, and to point out the path of safety, to blow the trumpet when the sword is coming, and to declare authoritatively the will of God for the salvation of men. But the prophets do not live for ever; they are not always left to plead with men. Sometimes when their message is disregarded God removes them in the midst of their labours, and their removal is a mark of His sore displeasure. It is a sign that He has said, My Spirit shall not always strive with this people. They are joined to their idols, let them alone. How then in the light of this consideration should men prize the day of privilege, how diligent they should be in seizing opportunities, how receptive of God's message, how responsive to His call. They listen with ears that may at any moment become stopped for ever, to a voice that may at any moment become still.

But the great truth emphasised in these words is that the authority of God's messengers to men is not affected by their own mor-

talities. They are mortal men like their fellows, they are men of like passions, they have their share of human infirmity, they are far from being personally infallible. But the authority of their message, in so far as it is a message from heaven, is not affected by these considerations.

Men are apt to lose sight of the authority of Divine truth because it is delivered through a human voice. They see before them only a man, speaking, it may be, with stammering tongue, in weakness and in fear, and in much trembling, and they are too much occupied in passing judgment on the manner in which he acquits himself before them to hear the voice of the Eternal, of which he is the medium. They are so busy in examining the earthen vessel, and noting all its flaws, that they are blind to the treasure it contains. Again, they may see the prophet removed from their midst, cut off, it may be, in the midst of his days, with his work scarcely begun, and they are apt to regard that fact as detracting somehow from his authority. They do not realise that it is a fact that may be more significant for them than for him.

The prophets do not live for ever, but—the God of the prophets does. The prophets die; but the Word of the Lord lives. They are weak; but their Lord is Almighty. This is the blessed fact of which these words assure us. Notwithstanding the frailty of the human medium of expression, the Word of the Lord shall not return unto Him void; it shall accomplish that which He pleases, and prosper in the thing whereto He has sent it. Every word that He has spoken through His servants shall be fulfilled, every threatening and every promise shall surely be accomplished. He will vindicate His own authority, He will establish His own faithfulness; and He will vindicate His servants when He vindicates Himself.

Men are sometimes apt to be discouraged when they compare the privileges of a former generation with their own. There were prophets in those days—powerful voices to shake the careless out of their indifference, and to melt the proud and the hardened with tender, winning words. Men trembled when they reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, or hung on their lips while they poured forth in burning eloquence the glad tidings of the salvation of God. The children of God received at their hands their portion of bread in its season, and the very ungodly quailed before their authority. But the prophets do not live for ever, and they are gone. Their voices are silent, and when they ceased to speak it may have seemed as if God had left the earth.

Yes, but there is a "but." The human voice that formed the temporary vehicle of divine truth may become silent, but the truth itself is eternal. It is independent of time and circumstance. God lives and the Word of God lives. He is unchanging. His servants come and go; the influence which belongs to their own personality is transient and shadowy; but all that was divine in their

message lives and abides. We are called upon to consider the end of their conversation ; but over against that end we are enjoined to place the fact that Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, to-day and for ever. Throughout all the changes of human instrument the truth remains. They shall perish, but Thou remainest. They are the vesture, which waxes old, and is folded past, and vanishes away ; but the face of Truth itself is the same throughout all the years.

## **The late George Campbell,**

GLASGOW.

IT is with much regret we record this month the death of Mr. George Campbell, formerly postmaster at Kilmore, Oban, which took place suddenly at 35 Scotia Street, Glasgow, on the 2nd January. Mr. Campbell, who had reached the advanced age of 82 years or upwards, was the youngest and last-surviving of three worthy brothers, who were well known in religious circles in the Highlands in their day. They were sons of George Campbell, a godly Gaelic schoolmaster, who died at Scourie, Sutherlandshire, shortly after the Disruption of 1843. The oldest was the late Mr. Walter Campbell, missionary, North Uist, and the second was the late Mr. William Campbell, missionary, Wick. The third is the subject of this notice. For the last two years and a-half Mr. Campbell was closely identified with the John Knox's congregation in Glasgow, and often conducted its services, to the edification of the hearers. Office-bearers and people became much attached to him, and his sudden removal is felt as a painful breach in their midst. Though a man of such advanced years, he retained his vigour almost to the very last, and was out visiting friends two days before his decease. Mr. Campbell was a man of a lively, acute intellect, possessing more than ordinary understanding of God's Word and experience of its power, and, though marked by some peculiarity of manner, was a truly lovable and estimable Christian man. In some respects an outstanding personality, a brief account of him, we believe, will be interesting to our readers.

It appears that his spiritual concern did not begin until he had reached the years of manhood. Before then, to quote his own words, he was "very light and foolish, and very ignorant even of the letter of the Bible," though brought up under the instruction of a pious and intelligent father. His mind was wholly taken up with the world and its pleasures. At this time he went to hear that highly-honoured servant of Christ, the late Rev. Duncan Campbell, Free Church minister of Kiltarn,<sup>1</sup> whose text on the occasion was, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me, and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." (John

<sup>1</sup> The Rev. D. Campbell, Kiltarn, died on 21st October, 1873, aged 77 years.—ED.

vi. 37.) The hearer's impressions were of a melting nature—and these under the *first* part of the text—but they soon faded away and left him very much as he was before. He again heard Mr. Campbell, Kiltarn, at Alness, and on this occasion the impression was of a deep and lasting nature. The preacher in the course of his sermon delivered those solemn words of warning first spoken by Christ, "Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. But I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon than for you." The words struck "like balls of fire" upon the young man, and he almost fell from the seat where he was sitting. It is worth noticing for the benefit of preachers and others that no other part of the discourse, though containing excellent matter, had any appreciable effect. It was just the delivery with power of a portion of God's Word that went home to the heart of our friend, and was the beginning of a good work in him. After he came out of the Church, he began to reflect upon his experience, and thought that surely now he was converted, and he even contemplated the pleasure he would derive from the company of God's people whom he expected to meet at his father's house. But a disappointment awaited him; he found that he could not enter into or relish their conversation, nor enjoy their society. He was "shut up under the law," and the gospel had not yet come to him in the power of the Holy Ghost; though convinced of sin and the curse, he did not understand the way of salvation by Christ, nor had experienced the light and liberty of the children of God. His experiences of law and gospel were very distinct and separate from each other. Under the work of legal conviction he continued for a considerable time, kept at prayer and religious duties, making mention of the name of Christ, and yet having no understanding of Him, feeling himself getting worse and worse and beginning to think he was an undone outcast for ever. It was while under such painful reflections as these that he went with his brother Walter to a communion "in Dr. Mackay's Church," Inverness, at which the late Dr. Kennedy, Dingwall, was assisting. He heard Dr. Kennedy each day until Monday without any relief, but on Monday towards the close of the discourse his soul got a clear and marked deliverance. The text, if we are not mistaken, was Ps. xlv. 10, 11, beginning, "Hearken, O daughter, and consider and incline thine ear," and in his application Dr. Kennedy spoke with special power. In endeavouring to encourage and win sin-convicted souls, he made the striking remark (one that we have also observed in Whitefield's sermons) that Christ always accepts (or gets) "the devil's leavings," and shortly thereafter quoted the apostle's words, "Ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear, but ye have received the Spirit of adoption whereby we cry Abba Father." Here our friend felt the chains of bondage

and despair fall off, and was led into hope and liberty. Others in the audience seemed also deeply affected at this stage of the discourse. When he came out of the service, he felt as if he were in a new world. Everything had assumed a changed appearance. He saw a new beauty and attraction in the people of God; he beheld them "so near," when before everybody and everything appeared so dark and distant. The Scriptures were opened up to him in a way never experienced before; he understood more of them by that short experience of the Spirit's teaching than he did in all his previous lifetime of natural instruction. Even the earth and the skies had a new brightness for him. As may be expected, he could not contain himself, but expressed his delight at the change to his brother Walter, who prudently dropped a word of caution, "See that it will continue." And there is no doubt but it did continue in George Campbell's case, whatever ups and downs he may have had in his life's history.

Mr. Campbell, as has already been remarked, had a very acute intellect, which was much exercised on God's Word. His delight was in the law of the Lord, and in that law he meditated day and night. His conversation on particular texts and points of doctrine was very interesting and instructive. A little impulsive in his way, he was also at the same time remarkably sincere and single minded, genial and child-like in disposition—a man, indeed, who had the true "spirit of adoption." It was noticeable that the real breath of the Spirit often accompanied his remarks in ordinary conversation, and that to a degree seldom met with. He had also interesting reminiscences to relate of worthies he had seen and met in days of old, and especially of eminent ministers of the gospel whom he had heard. There were three of these whom he specially delighted to converse about—Dr. Kennedy, Rev. Archibald Cook, and the Rev. John Macrae (Macrath Mor). Of Dr. Kennedy's elevated doctrine and intimacy with the Lord in prayer, of Mr. Cook's holy character and original handling of divine truth and Christian experience, and of Mr. Macrae's rich, powerful preaching of the Gospel in a way suited to the varied wants and cases of the poor and needy in Zion, he would often speak in the most lively and edifying manner. He was greatly interested in these Gaelic sermons of Mr. Cook's which are appearing in the Magazine, and often described them with an intense sense of relish as "well-cooked meat."

Mr. Campbell was one who took a deep interest in the public cause of Christ, and in consequence of the passing of the well-known Declaratory Act in the Free Church, he left that communion in 1893 and associated with those who formed the Free Presbyterian Church. Though a good deal impressed with the recent decision of the House of Lords in favour of the Free Churchmen who remained along with the majority until the union of 1900, he ever

held that the right time to separate was after the passing of the Act referred to. Indeed, he sometimes said "We should have come out sooner—when the Assembly placed Dr. Dods in the chair, a man who denied the infallibility of the Word of God." This leads us to notice an outstanding characteristic of Mr. Campbell's in recent years, namely, a most fervent opposition to the errors of the Higher Critics in regard to the Holy Scriptures. In regard to this evil sign of the times he was all on fire; it was with him day and night; and he could hardly meet a friend on the street without denouncing, in the strongest terms, the deadly heresies and blasphemies against the holy Word of God by Professors in Presbyterian Colleges. The United Free Church in its maintenance of such teachers was the object, and that justly, of his severest condemnation. "That Church," he said, "supporting these Professors is the greatest curse that ever rose in Scotland." He often quoted in this connection the words of the inspired Apostle (Rev. xxii. 19), "And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book."

Mr. Campbell was 'a man of prayer. His prayers in public were for the most part accompanied with the unction of the Spirit, and were pointed, fresh, and stimulating. "The presence of the Lord" in religious exercises was what he most desired for himself and others, and the grand theme which he loved to dwell upon, and which often completely broke him down, was the glorious person of Christ as "God manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit." Mr. Campbell died as he lived. On his knees, in the usual attitude of prayer, "he was not, for God took him." To those friends, with whom he often walked in sweet counsel and fellowship during the closing years of his life, his memory will always be fragrant and precious.

"Help, Lord, because the godly man  
Doth daily fade away,  
And from among the sons of men  
The faithful do decay."—Ps. xii, 1.

J. S. S.

## Kitty Smith;

OR, "THEY THAT SEEK ME EARLY SHALL FIND ME."<sup>1</sup>

CATHARINE SMITH was a native of Pabay, a small island in Loch Roag, where dwell seven families. From their insular situation and poverty it has not been in the power of the parents to educate their children; but little Kitty is an example of the truth that all God's children are taught of Him, for when only two year's old she was observed to lay aside her playthings, and clasp her little hands with reverence during family worship;

<sup>1</sup> From *The Scottish Christian Herald* of 1836, thence taken from "History of Revivals of Religion in the British Isles."

and at the age of three she was in the habit of repeating the 23d Psalm with such relish and fervour as showed that she looked to the Good Shepherd in the character of a lamb of His flock. Her parents taught her also the Lord's Prayer, which she repeated duly, not only at her stated times but often in the silence of night. She frequently pressed the duty of prayer, not only on the children but on her parents, and she told her father that, in their absence, when she would ask a blessing on the food left for the children, her brothers and sisters would mock at and beat her for doing so. At another time, when she was probably about six years old, she was out with her companions herding cattle, when she spoke to them of the comeliness of Christ. They, probably to tempt her, said He was black. She left them, and returned home much cast down, and said, "The children vexed me very much to-day. I will not go with them, for they said that Christ was black, and that grieved my spirit." Her parents asked her what she replied to that. "I told them," she said, "that Christ is white and glorious in his apparel."

It is probable that Kitty was sufficiently enlightened to discern the moral comeliness of the gracious Redeemer, while her thoughtless comrades did not extend their ideas beyond personal beauty. They would have said anything that might produce the effect of provoking their playfellow, whose more intelligent spirit grieved for them that they "saw no beauty in Him" whom her soul loved, "that they should desire Him." Perhaps no Christian character is truly confirmed in faith and patience, without some trial of persecution, which both shows to the heart its own corruption, by the irritating effects of gainsaying, and affords an opportunity of proving that we are not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ. This dear child had her trial adapted to her age and sphere, and came forth on the Lord's side holding fast the word of life in as firm a way as a much more experienced Christian might have done.

The Rev. J. Macdonald of Ferintosh having preached in the parish of Uig, Kitty's parents were among the many who went to hear him. On their return they mentioned what he had said about the formality of much that is called prayer, and the ignorance of many as to its spirituality; they stated, according to their recollection of the sermon, that many had old useless prayers, and greatly needed to learn to pray with the Spirit. The child observed this, and two days after, said to her mother, "It is time for me to give over my old form of prayer." Her mother replied, "Neither you nor your prayers are old;" but she rejoined, "I must give them over, and use the prayers the Lord will teach me." After this she withdrew to retired spots for prayer. At one time her younger sister returned without her, and on being asked where she had left Kitty, she said, "I left her praying." Her father says that he has often sat up in bed listening to her sweet young voice,



presenting this petition with heartfelt earnestness, "Oh, redeem me from spiritual and eternal death."

From the remoteness of her dwelling, Kitty had never attended any place of public worship—but the Sabbath was her delight,—and often would she call in her brothers and sisters from the play in which they were thoughtlessly engaged, asking them to join in prayer and other devout exercises, and warning them that if they profaned the day, and disliked God's worship, they must perish. Her mother, observing the intent gaze with which she looked on a large fire, inquired what she saw in that fire? She replied, "I am seeing that my state would be awful if I were to fall into that fire, even though I should be immediately taken out; but woe is me, those who are cast into hell fire will never come out thence." Another day, when walking by the side of a precipice, and looking down, she exclaimed to her mother, "How fearful would our state be if we were to fall down this rock, even though we should be lifted up again; but they who are cast into the depths of hell will never be raised therefrom."

One day her mother found her lying on a bench with a sad countenance, and addressed some jocular words to her with a view to cheer her. But the child's heart was occupied with solemn thoughts of eternity; and, instead of smiling, she answered gravely, "O, mother, you are vexing my spirit, I would rather hear you praying." In truth, eternity was very near her, and the Spirit of God was preparing her for entering it. As she got up one morning she said, "O, are ye not wicked creatures who have put Christ to death?" Her mother, curious to hear what one so young could say on such a subject, replied, "Christ was put to death, Kitty, long before we were born." The child, speaking with an understanding heart, said, "Mother, I am younger than you, but my sins were crucifying Him." After a pause, she added, "What a wonder that Christ could be put to death when He Himself was God, and had power to kill everyone; indeed, they only put Him to death as man, for it is impossible to kill God." She used often to repeat passages from Peter Grant's spiritual songs, such as, "It is the blood of the Lamb that precious is." When she came to the conclusion of the verse, "It is not valued according to its worth," she would, in touching terms, lament the sad truth, that His blood is so lightly thought of. Being present when some pious persons spoke of these in Rev. vii., who have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, she said, "Is it not wonderful that while other blood stains what is dipped in it, *this* cleanses and makes white?"

Murdoch Macleod being engaged in the valuable duties of a Scottish elder in the little island of Pabay, Kitty wished much to hear him, but from bashfulness was ashamed to enter the house where he was employed in worship; she therefore climbed up at the window and sat there till all was over. Being asked what she had heard, she said she was amazed to hear that Christ offered Him-

self as a Saviour to many in our land who rejected Him, and that He was now going to other and more remote quarters to win souls. She then added with the pathos of a full heart, "O, who knows but He may return here again?"

Soon after she had completed her seventh year she was attacked by that sickness which opened her way to the kingdom of heaven. When her father asked whom she pitied most of those she would leave behind, she replied that she pitied every one whom she left in a Christless state. She suffered much from thirst during her illness, and her mother, reluctant to give her so much cold water as she longed for, fell upon the evil expedient of telling her that the well was dried up. The following day, when she saw water brought in for household purposes, poor Kitty's heart was grieved and she said, "O, mother dear, was it not you who told the great lie yesterday, when you said the well was dry—O, never do so again, for it angers God." During her illness she was enabled almost literally to obey the command, "pray without ceasing," and was often interceding with the Lord to look down and visit her native place. On the morning of her last day on earth, her father said, "there is reason for thankfulness that we see another day." Kitty opened her eyes and said, "O, Holy One of Israel save me from death," a petition often used when in perfect health, and evidently referring to spiritual and eternal death. Throughout the day she was generally silent, when her father remarked, saying, "I do not hear you praying as usual;" to which she replied, "Dear father, I pray without ceasing, though not because you desire me to do so." In her last moments she was heard to say, "O, redeem me from death." Her father, leaning over her, said, "Kitty, where are you now?" To which the reply was, "I am on the shore;" and immediately her soul was launched into the great ocean of eternity. In December, 1829, this lowly child was carried from her poor native island to the blessed region where the redeemed of the Lord find their home, and her name has left a sweet perfume behind it.

## Letters of late Alexander Kerr, Assynt.

### XVI.

ACHMELVICH, June 5th, 1876.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—I am in your debt now a long time, but the reason was my state of health. I was telling you about the palpitation and weakness I had, and this spring it was increased, so that the whole month of March I was confined to bed. I am now better and going about, but there is a swelling left more or less in all my body, which I believe is occasioned by the weakness of my heart. Dear friend, you said in your former letter that you were too much in the company of one "Doubt-the-truth." I approve of your confessing that, and I hope it is a burden to you. Now it is quite certain that every one in their natural state does

not only *doubt* the truth, but actually disbelieves it ; and they will do so until it is revealed to them as the truth of God by the Holy Spirit. Every soul that is still under the broken covenant and in an unregenerate state is ignorant of the gracious power of the Holy Ghost discovering to him the truth as it is in Jesus. You cannot change your own heart nor give yourself the saving knowledge of the truth, but at the same time see that you do not give willing quarter to your natural unbelief, or give willing place to the doubts that beset you, for Satan seeks no better than that poor pilgrims should be harassed by doubts and fears in their journey to Zion. Many thousand arrows has he in his bow, with which he is ever ready to vex and distress the poor soul that is seeking to know Christ and Him crucified as its own Saviour. So take you special care not to give heed to what comes from Satan or from your own unbelief.

I hope to hear from you soon, for I am weak and poorly, and may you get a sure standing on the foundation laid in Zion against which earth nor hell will prevail, however hot the battle may be for a time.

Hoping you are all well and my acquaintances among you,—  
Your sincere friend, A. KERR.

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XVII.

ACHMELVICH, 15th February, 1877.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—I got your last welcome letter in due course, by which I understand that you and yours are in health—a great blessing from the hand of the Most High. Oh! that we could improve our time in this world to the glory of God and the good of our never-dying souls. For myself I can see that my race is nearly run. I am sometimes so weak that I do not wish to speak above my breath.

I hope you make it your chief concern to seek evidence of your interest in Christ. Nothing but that will stand at last. The means of grace and the fellowship of the Lord's true broken-hearted people are a great blessing, for if we were deprived of these the world would be a wilderness indeed ; but we must not rest in these outward privileges ; we must apply by faith at a throne of grace for an interest in the finished work of Christ, which only and alone is acceptable before God. Poor guilty sinners should wonder—as they will wonder to all eternity—that such a salvation was accomplished and is now held forth in the gospel of the grace of God. Oh! the loveliness of Him who underwent all that was required to accomplish eternal salvation for lost, guilty hell-deserving creatures, and to whom the Father points us when he says, "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world."

Our boy Angus would tell you how feeble I am, and his mother still a prisoner also.—No more from your affectionate friend,  
A. KERR.

## A Plea for Purity of Worship.

Reasons of Protest against Innovations Introduced into the Public Worship of the Presbyterian Church in Canada. By the late Donald Fraser, Nairn, East Williams, Ontario, and other Office-bearers and Members of the Presbyterian Church. 1882

WE, whose names are hereunto adhibited, being office-bearers, members, and adherents of the Presbyterian Church, professing as we do to be Christ's witnesses, and, therefore, deeply interested in the purity, peace, and prosperity of His kingdom, feel it to be our duty, in this manner, to record our united testimony against certain things which we believed to be unwarranted and sinful innovations, introduced into the said Presbyterian Church in these latter times. We are indeed aware that by many, yea, by the great majority, of professing Christians, these changes are looked upon as real improvements and signs of progress, instead of being, as we believe, evidences of declension and decay. But we need not wonder at such widespread blindness and error of judgment in the present day as if it were something new and unprecedented in the Church of God. For thus saith "He who hath the seven spirits of God, and the seven stars," to the Church of Sardis, "I know thy works, that thou hast a name, that thou livest and art dead;" and to the Church of Laodicea, "I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot; I would thou wert cold or hot. So, then, because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth. Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing, and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked, I counsel thee," etc., etc.

Sincerely believing that our Presbyterian Church, in common with most other Protestant denominations, bears too much resemblance to those just referred to, we do hereby enter our most solemn protest against that lamentable conformity to the world, and that woefully mistaken policy which appears to actuate her rulers; when they vainly seek to conciliate worldly-minded people, whether old or young, and to win them over to the religion of Christ by such means as are not authorised or warranted by the Word of God. Whereas, in the face of all such time-serving carnal policy, Christ, the King and Head of the Church, distinctly affirms, "My kingdom is not of this world," and far from encouraging that course of perilous compromise with the world, which is so marked a feature of the present age, He issues the peremptory command, "Come out from among them, my people, and be ye separate, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you and will be a father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and my daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."

When we speak of unwarranted innovations introduced into the Presbyterian Church, with the view of conciliating the favour and friendship of worldly-minded professors, we refer more especially—

- I. To uninspired hymns.
- II. To instrumental music.
- III. To unscriptural methods of raising money.

I. The use of uninspired hymns in the praise of God instead of that Book of inspired Psalms which was given to the Church by her divine Head, and by Him appointed to be sung in all the assemblies of His people from the days of David down to our Lord's second coming. For the Church of Christ is but one and the same Church under both the Old and New Testament dispensations.

As, in drawing up this Testimony and Protest, originality forms no part of our object, we may here observe that we avail ourselves freely of the best treatises on the subject within our reach which have been published on either side of the Atlantic. Such quotations we shall mark in the usual way, viz., by inverted commas.

1st—It is objected against the Psalms that they are "dark and hard to be understood." To this it may be replied, "So are many other parts of the Old Testament, and even of the New." But the very excellency of the Psalms goes far to account for this. "Their depth of matter and meaning, their spirituality, their sublimity, and their transcendent loftiness of devotion, do certainly raise them above the comprehension of ordinary christians." It is a fact, however, which objectors would do well to note, that young christians, whose attainments are as yet low, derive more edification from reading other books than the Bible, and can really enjoy them more, whereas, afterwards, the higher they rise in gracious experience, the higher is their esteem for the pure Word of God, un'til at length every human production becomes comparatively insipid and dry. "Now, as it can assuredly have no good effect to promote in the public mind a preference of other books to the Bible, so neither can good effects arise from promoting in the public taste a preference for other compositions"—no matter how beautiful or excellent—"to those divine Psalms which the Holy Spirit himself has inspired." On this point Dr. Horsely says that, "Of all the Books of the Old Testament the Book of Psalms is the most universally read, and yet, perhaps, as little understood as any; not, however, from any extraordinary obscurity in them—for of all the prophetic parts of Scripture they are certainly the most perspicuous and plain—but it is greatly owing to some dulness of the faculties of the natural man upon spiritual subjects." And then he adds, "There is not a page of the book in which the pious reader will not find his Saviour, if he reads with a view of finding Him." The judicious Thomas Scott speaks very much in the same strain. Now, if the case be so, it must follow that those who cannot find Christ in the Psalms must be persons who do not concern themselves very much about finding Him anywhere.

2nd—Again, in this connection it has been objected that the Psalms "are unsuited to the capacities of little children. But

surely they are not more so than the rest of the Bible. And must we, then, have, not only a child's Psalm book, but a child's Bible?" But if the Psalms be unsuitable now, assuredly they were so when God gave them to the Church. And yet "there is no evidence that the children of the Jews or of the Apostolic Church," or even of our own Presbyterian forefathers, "were comparatively deficient in their religious knowledge," or in that respect a whit behind the hymn-singing children of the present day. No, nor are they now. They seem to have lost nothing by the want of the little religious song books at present so much in vogue; but rather, on the contrary, "their minds seem strengthened by their early familiarity with the infinitely superior songs of the Lord."

3rd—Again, there are some who are not ashamed or afraid to declaim against the unchristian spirit, as they express it, of some of the Psalms. Such declamation would be consistent enough coming from the lips of persons denying the inspiration of the Scriptures, or from those who condemn the Bible as a bad book; but it is hard to understand how such objections can be offered, "or even thought of," by any one who believes that the Psalms are part of the inspired Word of God. It is more like the language of blasphemy or downright infidelity. No doubt but the 69th and 109th Psalms are those especially pointed at by such objectors. But these Psalms refer to Judas Iscariot, the traitor, and are both of them quoted by the apostle in Acts, 1st chap.; and Peter speaks of them both as "Scripture" which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake before concerning Judas, who was guide to them that took Jesus. "Our Lord Himself used these very Psalms. Indeed they are His language. For it is He who speaks of the traitor in terms of such fearful but righteous denunciation, which some have been bold enough to denominate unchristian." "Surely such objectors betray either great ignorance or a total want of sympathy with the suffering Saviour and the Father who sent Him. A truly loyal subject will seek the safety and stability of his Sovereign's throne, even were his doing so to involve the destruction of his Sovereign's enemies. How much more ought this to be true of a leal-hearted subject of the King of kings!" Some have stigmatised the Psalms referred to as "cursing Psalms." But it can easily be shown that the imprecations for "divine punishment, either in them or in other Psalms, do not proceed from any vindictive disposition in the Psalmist," for they are uttered not on personal grounds at all, but from loyalty to Christ and sympathy with His justice and holiness. To be satisfied of this just look at facts. "Will anyone impute a malicious or vindictive spirit to the man who found his mortal foe in a cave, yet refused to put forth his hand against him, although urged to do so by his best friends? Or shall we ascribe cruelty or revenge to the man who, on finding his way under night into his enemy's camp, finds that enemy and all round him buried in sleep, and yet neither injures him himself nor suffers another to do so?" No—most

assuredly. But we affirm it to be one of the real and God-like excellencies of the Psalms, whatever modern sentimentalists may say on this subject—that they celebrate the awful justice of God, that righteous Lawgiver and Judge, “to whom alone vengeance belongeth.” Yes. His awful justice in vindicating His own truth, His own people, and the righteous claims of His own beloved Son—and that by visiting as they deserve the malignant enemies of the cause, of the person, and of the throne of the Lord Jesus Christ. “Whoever, therefore, thinks that he discovers cruelty or revenge, or any other anti-christian principle or passion in the book of Psalms, must either deny that it is inspired by God, or else admit that he has entirely misunderstood its spirit, its language, and its whole tendency.” If God be its author it is impossible it can contain anything not consistent with the divine character. And how it can come to pass that otherwise much esteemed Christian brethren can cast a slur upon the wisdom and goodness of God, who inspired the Psalms and gave them to His Church, by supplanting them with mere human compositions, would be a thing to us totally incomprehensible if we did not bear in mind the history of past declensions in the Church of God, on the one hand, and on the other the exceeding deceitfulness of sin in the human heart.

Without dwelling longer on this point, we may observe that an argument in favour of hymns has been taken from the alleged fact that at the present time many in the Christian Church possess the gift of song in a very eminent degree—implying, of course, that this gift may be used in providing songs for the Church of God. But the same gift doubtless existed in Old Testament times, and yet none but such as were especially called and inspired of God were employed in composing songs for such a purpose. In Apostolic times no doubt there were poets, but we never hear of any one of them undertaking to make hymns, and not one hymn can now be traced to those times; yet, surely it was not for want of persons capable of making them. No doubt Paul could have done it. If the mere fact of possessing poetical gifts conferred the right to make songs for the Church of God, who would be warranted to refuse singing them? Let the writer of hymns, therefore, first of all produce a divine warrant and authority. Gifts without express warrant are not sufficient. On the same principle any private member of the Church may possess the gift of speech in a high degree; but is he entitled on that account to mount into the pulpit and perform the functions of an ordained minister? It is not enough to possess the gift. There must be also a divine warrant to employ that gift for this specific purpose in the house of God. And as of speech so of song. Whatever may be a man's gifts, the first question is, Where is his warrant for making songs for the Church of God? We shall only add here that no Church as yet has ever been able to frame a hymn book acceptable to all its members and one at the same time of a permanent

character. No, and we venture to affirm never will. "Change, change, perpetual change, has hitherto ever been, and must ever be inscribed on every vain effort to obtain better songs than those of the Bible."

Here we must quote the pious Romaine, author of the "Life, Walk and Triumph of Faith," an English clergyman of last century. His words indicate that the revived piety of the English Church in his day was not confined to the followers of Whitfield or of Wesley only, and particularly that the duty of singing only the Psalms of David, and the danger of setting them aside, were ideas not confined to conscientious Presbyterians alone, but shared in by the most pious men of the Church of England. "In the third century," says Romaine, "we hear much of Psalm singing, and St. Augustine makes it a high crime in certain heretics that they sung hymns composed by human wit. The sense in which the Church of Christ understood this subject has been, till late years, always one and uniform. Now we leave the ancient beaten path. But why? Have we found a better? How came we to be wiser than the prophets? Ser than Christ, than His apostles, than the whole Church of God? They, with one consent, have sung Psalms in every age." Again, "What! say some, is it unlawful to sing human compositions in the Church? How can that be? Why, they sing them in such a place and such a place. Great men, and good men, aye, and lively ministers, too, sing them. Will you set up your judgment against theirs? It is an odious thing to speak of one's self, except it be to magnify the grace of God. What is my private judgment? I set it up against nobody in things indifferent. I wish to yield to every man's infirmity, for I want the same indulgence myself. But in the present case, the Scripture, which is the only rule of judgment, has not left the matter indifferent. God has given us a large collection of hymns, and has commanded them to be sung in the Church, and has promised His blessing to the singing of them. No respect here must be paid to names or authorities, though they be the greatest on earth, because no one can dispense with the command of God; and no one, by his wit, can compose hymns to be compared with the Psalms of God. I want a name for that man who should pretend that he could make better hymns than the Holy Ghost. His collection is large enough—it wants no addition. It is perfect as its author, and not capable of any improvement. Why, in such a case would any man in the world take it into his head to sit down and write hymns for the use of the Church? It is just the same as if he was to write a new Bible, not only better than the old, but so much better that the old may be thrown aside. What a blasphemous attempt! And yet our hymn-mongers, inadvertently I hope, have come very near to this blasphemy. For they shut out the Psalms, introduce their own verses into the Church, sing them with great delight, and, as they fancy, with great profit—although the whole practice be in direct opposition to the com-



mand of God, and therefore they cannot possibly be accompanied with the blessing of God." Let us wind up this part of our subject by a summary of answers to other arguments for the use of hymns, and to objections to the use of Psalms in divine worship, from a work by Dr. Gibson :—

1. 'It is objected that the singing of human compositions is not forbidden in the Word of God.' *Ans.*—Neither are we forbidden to observe seven sacraments. The absence of divine appointment in such a case amounts to direct prohibition.

2. 'Good men have composed hymns to be used in divine worship, and good men also sing such hymns.' *Ans.*—1st—The best of men are liable to do things which will dishonour God and injure the Church. 2nd—There are also many good men who would not dare either to compose a song to be sung in divine worship, or to offer up to God a song composed by man.

3. 'Those using hymns are at this moment more numerous than those using the Psalm Book.' *Ans.*—1st—It was not always so, and the time may come when it will cease to be so. 2nd—The multitude are not always right; nor hitherto have they commonly been right in matters of faith and religious practice.

4. 'But we are allowed to compose our own prayers; why not also our own songs of praise.' *Ans.*—1st—Right or wrong, it is undeniable that most worshippers neither do or can compose their own songs of praise. 2nd—God has given us a book of Psalms, but no book of prayers. He has also promised a Spirit of Prayer, but not a Spirit of Psalmody. 3rd—In prayer we express our own wants, but in praise we declare God's glory, and even though we can frame a form of words for the former purpose it does not follow that we are equally able to compose one for the latter purpose. 4th—Besides our wants are always changing, and therefore our prayers must vary, whereas God's glory is ever the same, and therefore the same collection of songs will serve for His praise from age to age.

5. 'But there is authority,' it is alleged, 'in the New Testament for singing songs of human composition, for we are told that Christ and His disciples sang a hymn.' *Ans.*—1st—Let it be proved that this hymn sung was not one or more of the Psalms of David. The best commentators think it was the great Hallel, which consisted of the 113th to the 118th Psalm inclusive. Besides, surely Christ was better qualified and had a better right to compose hymns than any mere man on earth.

6. 'It is argued by some that Paul enjoins the use of uninspired Psalmody when he says to the Colossians 'Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in Psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.' Some explain the word of Christ here to mean either the whole Bible or the New Testament, and therefore allege that the Apostle here enjoins the use of songs drawn from the whole Bible or from the

New Testament in particular. *Ans.*—1st—Let it be proved that the clause, 'Word of Christ' has either of the meanings alleged, and not simply the principles of the gospel. 2nd—Let it also be proved that the Apostle does here enjoin upon the Church to compose songs, drawing the matter of them from what he calls the word of Christ.

7. Others reason 'from the use of the three terms Psalms, hymns and spiritual songs.' But, 1st—Any inspired Psalm, according to the aspect in which it is viewed, may be called a Psalm, hymn or spiritual song. Such a use of language is not uncommon in the Scriptures, *e.g.*, the expression 'forgiving iniquity, transgression and sin.' 2nd—If these three terms (Psalms, hymns and spiritual songs) do really point out three distinct kinds of devotional poetry, then let it be proved that the Psalm Book does not comprise songs of these three different kinds. The Jews did apply the terms Psalms, hymns and songs indiscriminately to the Psalm Book, according to their own historians, Philo and Josephus, and probably Paul and the primitive Christians may have done the same. Besides, in the Septuagint translation of the Old Testament in use in the days of Paul, some of the Psalms are termed a Psalm, some an ode or song, and some alleluia, a Hebrew word, which, when used as a noun, is just equivalent to hymn. Is it not probable then that the apostle alludes to these three terms as titles of different Psalms?

8. 'It is inferred from 1 Cor. xiv. 20 that the Corinthians brought into their assemblies Psalms composed by themselves under a supernatural impulse of the Spirit, and of course not contained in the Book of Psalms. But let it be proved that those Psalms, by the unseasonable reading or repeating of which they disturbed their assemblies, were really composed by themselves, under the influence of the Spirit, and not rather selected from the Psalms of David.

9. It is alleged that the Psalms are not adapted to New Testament worship. *Ans.*—1st—God never changes, and of course His praise is always the same. 2nd—The Spirit of God was better able, in the days of David, to prepare songs suited to New Testament worship than mere men are now. 3rd—The Psalms everywhere speak most clearly of Christ, and His mediatorial work and kingdom and glory, and are often and largely quoted by the apostles to illustrate the way of salvation. 4th—The Psalms make much less reference to the peculiarities of the old dispensation than some books of the New Testament—for example, the Epistle to the Hebrews. 5th—We have no book of Psalms in the New Testament, and no command to prepare one.

10. 'It is objected that the Psalms are not sufficiently copious to furnish a complete system of Psalmody.' But, 1st—God is no more glorious now than He was in Old Testament times, and if the Psalms were sufficient then for showing forth His praise they are still sufficient. It is too much for any man to take upon him-

self to decide how large a system of Psalmody ought to be. 3rd—But the Psalm Book does really contain a much greater abundance and variety of matter than all the hymns which were ever composed by men.

11. Once more it is alleged 'we have no good metrical translation of the Psalms.' But, 1st—Let those who think so improve some of the best versions now in use, or else make a better one. Surely it is easier to make a good version of God's Psalms than to compose better Psalms than God has made. 2nd—It is better to sing an imperfect translation of God's Psalms than to sing the very best of man's making. But, 3rd—We *have* a good metrical version of the Psalms. In our Scottish version, it is true, there are some blemishes. It has some uncouth expressions, and some words now obsolete, and in some cases its versification is far from smooth, but for the most part both its expression and versification are very good, and those best able to judge affirm that its fidelity to the original Hebrew is not much if at all inferior to that of the prose version of the Psalms in our English Bible.

(To be continued.)

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## The late Neil Leslie, Dornoch.

IN the death of this man the Dornoch congregation has lost one of its dearest and most unassuming members, one who lived a blameless life and was respected by all who knew him as a man, in whom the root of the matter was for many years. The hand of trouble was often on his body, but he bore his troubles in a meek and submissive spirit, and of him it might be said that he was "patient in tribulation," always saying, "I might be worse; it is good to be where mercy is to be had." He took the Word of God as his guide, and was not shaken with every wind of doctrine. On the Sabbath before he died some went to see him, and were asking how he felt, when he replied, "I am here yet, waiting the moment when the call will come for me to appear before God." He desired to be spoken to about eternal realities, as it might be the last time they should ever meet on earth, and said, "All my troubles come because of the fountain I have in my own heart; nothing will do but to get washed from it and to be arrayed in the righteousness of Christ. I hope the Lord will receive me to Himself, but what will become of the wicked when he will die; there will be no one to support him?" He was a man who believed in the ruin of all men by the Fall and the need of being regenerated by the Spirit, and of having on the righteousness of Jesus Christ. He departed life on the 23rd of November, and left a widow and grown-up family to mourn his loss, with whom the deepest sympathy is felt. May the Lord take the sons instead of the father and make them noble princes!

E. M'Q.

## Christ's "Little Ones."

NOTES FOR BIBLE STUDENTS BY BENJAMIN B. WARFIELD,  
D.D., LL.D.<sup>1</sup>

(Continued from page 344.)

**I**T is worth while to observe, however, precisely what is set aside by the criticisms of Meyer and his successors. It is no more than that the term "little ones" means directly (Meyer says "schlechtin") "disciples," and was current as a well-known synonym of that term. It would be too much to claim that it could not be, or even never was, employed by the Rabbins to designate "disciples" figuratively. It would be too much to say even that the passage in the Bereshith Rabba referred to has no bearing on such an employment of it. We observe that, undeterred by such criticism, Dr. Edersheim still appeals to this passage (*Life and Times of Jesus*, Ed. 1, I., 652) to show that a fuller meaning might be borne to our Lord's contemporaries by the phrase "these little ones" than it bears to us. "It shows," he remarks, "that the phrase 'little ones' would naturally be understood as 'the children'" (inverted commas his) "who were still learning the elements and who would by and by grow into 'disciples.'" It would seem to be used here, then, in his opinion, not indeed of "disciples," but of "disciples in the making;" and on our Lord's lips, therefore, to designate His followers not exactly as "disciples," but at least as inchoate disciples.

How far this view is justified, and what the real bearing of the passage in the Bereshith Rabba is on the meaning of the phrase as used by our Lord, may perhaps be best estimated, however, by reading it more at large. We translate it from Wünsche's version (p. 191 seq.):—"What, then, was the distress in the days of Ahaz? Aram pressed from before and the Philistines from behind. It was just like a prince whom his tutor wished to destroy, but considered that if he killed him himself he would forfeit his life to the king, but if he should rather simply take his nurse from him he would die of himself. So also Ahaz said: Where there are no lambs, there are no rams; and where there are no rams, there are no sheep; and where there are no sheep, there is no shepherd; and where there is no shepherd, there the world can not subsist. Accordingly he thought: Where there are no children learning, there are no disciples; where no disciples, no sages; where no sages, no elders; and where no elders, there are no prophets; and where there are no prophets, there God does not let His Shechina rest on them (see Is. viii. 16). Rabbi Hunja bar Eleasar said: Why is the King called Ahaz? Because he destroyed the houses of assembly and instruction. Rabbi Jacob bar Abbi, in the name of Rabbi Acha, referring to Is. viii. 17, 18,

<sup>1</sup> These "Notes" are taken from "The Bible Student and Teacher." Dr. Warfield is a professor of theology in Princeton, New York, and a learned expositor and defender of sound doctrine.—ED.

"And I wait for the Eternal who hides his face from the house of Jacob" said: There is no heavier hour than that in which God says, "I hide my face" (see Deut. xxxi. 18); and from that hour I wait for the fulfilment of the word of Deut. xxxi. 21, "It shall not be forgotten out of the mouths of their seed." Of what profit is this? "Behold I and the children whom the Eternal has given me are a sign and a wonder in Israel" (see Is. viii. 18). Were they then his children? They were certainly His disciples. They were, however, so dear to him that they were as if his children. When King Ahaz began to destroy the houses of assembly and teaching they began all to cry. Woe!"

It is dangerous to launch out ever so little upon the sea of Rabbinical interpretation. But the central idea of this passage appears to be the importance of the rising generation. Ahaz, wishing to root out the worship of God in Israel, wisely began by destroying the Church and school, shrewdly arguing that if he dried up the supply of worshippers at its source the stream would die out of itself. And the Rabbis, so far commending this unrighteous ruler, remind themselves that in the rising generation is the hope of the nation and of the church and school alike. The passage cited by Wetstein thus appears to be in essence but a study of correlatives, the gist of which is that the hope of everything hangs on the children: when no children are in the schools then there can come out into the work-a-day world nothing good; sages, elders, prophets alike fail, and God can not visit His people. Of course it is all spoken from the Rabbinical standpoint, and it is children in the school that are in mind; but we can not see that the words "little ones" means in the context anything but just "children." That the idea, nevertheless, of the affectionate designation of "disciples" by the tender name of "children" was by no means foreign to the Rabbinical mind appears from the latter portion of the passage we have quoted. There Is. viii. 18 is interpreted as having reference to these children of the mind rather than of the body. The general result we derive from this passage is therefore that, although it affords no proof that the specific phrase "the little ones" was current among the Rabbis in the sense of "disciples," it does clearly exhibit that the affectionate application of the term "children" to one's disciples was by no means alien to Rabbinical feeling, as, indeed (since they too were men) it could not well be. Nothing could be more touching than the simple words with which our extract closes, which tell us that Isaiah's pupils were "so dear to him" that they were as his children; and nothing could more aptly illustrate the employment by our Lord of the designation "these little ones" of His disciples, if that phrase in its literal connotation denotes children.

The source of the suggestion to our Lord of the particular phrase, "These little ones," as a designation of His disciples, remains, however, even after we have heard the Rabbis, still to

seek. We have seen that it is natural to think and speak of one's disciples as his "children," and that the passage quoted by Wetstein from the "Bereshith Rabba" seems to indicate the use among the Rabbis of the term "little ones" for "children." But we are afraid that when we have said this we have not said quite all. It would seem that we must add that this particular term, as applied by the Rabbis to children, appears to be freighted not so much with affectionate feeling as rather with the simple implication of immaturity. If we may trust the Lexicographers, children were "little ones" to the Rabbis only as undeveloped and unripe things, not yet arrived "at years of discretion." The "katan" and "katanna" were simply the "boy" and "girl" in opposition to the mature man and woman. Although then this term for children was occasionally transferred by them metaphorically to their pupils, it was not in a very pleasant sense. The "little one" among the pupils was just an "abortion"—one who set himself up in his immaturity in opposition to his master's ripe learning, or one who, while yet fit only to learn, prematurely assumed the functions of a teacher (tract SOTAH 22a, quoted by both Levy and Jastrow *sub voc.*). It was assuredly not from this circle of ideas that our Lord derived his use of the phrase.

It is worth remarking further that this term, employed by the Rabbis to express the immaturity of childhood, never occurs in the Old Testament as a designation of children. Children are never spoken of as "little ones" in the Hebrew Old Testament. Readers of the English Bible will no doubt be surprised by such a statement, since the English Bible is sown thickly with such a designation. But this is wholly due to the English translators, who render thus a Hebrew collective noun (*taph*), the suggestion of which is not smallness of size, but trippingness of gait. To the Hebrew, in other words, children appealed not as "little ones," but as "toddlers" (Gen. xxxiv. 29; xliii. 8; xlv. 19; xlv. 5; xlvii. 12, 24; l. 8, 21; Ex. x. 10, 24; Numb. xiv. 31; xvi. 21; xxxi. 9, 17; xxxii. 16, 17, 21, 24; Deut. i. 39; ii. 34; iii. 19; xx. 14; xxix. 11; Josh. i. 14; viii. 35; Judges xviii. 21; 2 Sam. xv. 22; 2 Chron. xx. 13; xxxi. 18; Ezra viii. 21; Esther iii. 13; viii. 11; Ezek. ix. 6. Yet other terms with other implications are used in Ps. cxxxvii. 9; Job xxi. 11; Jeremiah xiv. 3; xlviii. 4; Zech. xiii. 7, where the term "little ones" occurs in the Authorised Version). This term ("*taph*"), moreover, is never rendered in the Greek Old Testament by the Greek phrase meaning "little ones" which our Saviour employs. The Greek phrase "little ones" in the sense of "children" is thus just as unexampled in Biblical usage as is the corresponding Hebrew one. (Students will perceive at a glance that such passages as Gen. xlv. 20; Is. lx. 22 for the Hebrew, and Gen. xlii. 32; 1 Sam. xvi. 11; 2 Chron. xxii. 1, in the Greek, where "little one" means distinctively "THE little one," that is, the smallest child, are not exceptions to this statement.)

Nor, indeed, would it have seemed much more natural to a Greek affectionately to designate children "little ones" than it did to the Hebrews. Their term for "little" did not easily suggest fewness of years, but rather smallness of size, with an implication of triviality; and when applied to people in a metaphorical sense it was apt to convey a tinge of reproach. No passage is adduced in Stephens' "Thesaurus" where it is used as a substantive, singular or plural, in the sense of "child" or "children." It occurs, no doubt, as an adjective qualifying the word "child": "You deceive me with words as if I were a little child," for example, we read in "Theognis" (254)—where its essentially uncomplimentary implication is apparent. But this is something very different from its use without substantive to mean "child" or "children." It is also found in an epithet attributed to individuals in the classics, as in the New Testament ("James the Less," or rather "the Little") and in Rabbinical Hebrew ("Samuel the Little"): thus we read in Aristotle of "Amyntas the Little" and in Xenophon of "Aristodemus, called the Little," and in Aristophanes of "Kleigenes the Little." But no more in the classics than in the New Testament or Rabbinical Hebrew is it inferiority of age that is expressed (cf. Meyer or Mark xv. 40). There seems thus to be no obtrusive point of connection in either Hebrew or Greek usage to explain naturally the selection by our Lord of "these little ones," conceived as a designation for "children," as an endearing diminutive to designate His "disciples."

If we search the Old Testament, indeed, for a possible point of departure for the framing of such a phrase as our Lord uses, there is but one passage which readily suggests itself. We refer to Zech. xiii. 7. This passage in our Revised English Version is as follows:—"Awake, O sword, against My shepherd, and against the man that is My fellow, saith the Lord of Hosts; smite the shepherd and the sheep shall be scattered; and I will turn My hand upon the little ones." This remarkable prophecy our Lord quotes (Matt. xxvi. 31; Mark xiv. 27), recognizing in Himself Jehovah's Shepherd, who is also Jehovah's fellow, and in His own apprehension and crucifixion the smiting of the shepherd by which the sheep of the flock should be scattered abroad. This recognition implies the application of the term "the little ones" in the last clause of the verse to His followers. The Hebrew vocable here employed is not the ordinary Hebrew word for "little" things used in later Hebrew for "children," nor yet the Biblical term so frequently rendered in our English version "little ones," but a word used in the precise form in which it here occurs in this passage only, but occurring in related forms often elsewhere, ordinarily with the implication of youthfulness (Gen. xix. 31, 34, 35, 38; xxv. 23; xxix. 26; xliii. 33; xlviii. 14; Josh. vi. 20; 1 Kings xvi. 34; Job xxx. 1; xxxii. 6; Jer. xlviii. 4), though sometimes also with that of insignificance (Judges vi. 15; 1 Sam. ix. 21; Is. lx.

22 ; Jer. xiv. 3 ; Micah v. 2). The implication of the word as used in this verse, as well as its general connotation, commends it powerfully to us as possibly forming the starting point for the forming of the phrase which our Lord uses. Clearly it is equivalent, not as Chambers and Shegg, for example, take it, to "the poor of the flock" of Zech. xii. 7, but rather to "the little ones of the flock" of Jer. xlix. 20, 50 ; l. 45—if indeed there is any distinction intended between "the little ones" and the flock at large, and these "little ones" are not rather to be conceived as the flock itself called "the little ones" in an access of tenderness, possibly with additional implication of the humbleness of their estate and the humility of their hearts (cf. in general Köhler). If we suppose our Lord's phrase to be based on this passage of Zechariah, the undamental implication of its employment would seem to be a conception of His followers less as His "children" than as His "little sheep" or His "lambs." The two implications are not, however, mutually exclusive, but, on the contrary, run into one another ; so that even in this contingency the passage from "one such little child" in Matt. xviii. 5 to "one of these little ones" in Matt. xviii. 6 would be neither inexplicable nor unnatural.

The suggestion that our Lord's phrase "these little ones" may find its root in Zechariah's "little ones," together with the uncertainty whether Zechariah's "little ones" are identical with the flock or must rather be looked upon, with the majority of the commentators, as only a portion of the flock—the truly pious remnant—raises the question whether our Lord by "these little ones" meant all His disciples or only a specially designated class of them. The latter has been quite commonly supposed, and interpreters have busied themselves in defining what are the characteristic qualities of this particularly specified class. Hahn, for example, strenuously argues that the disciples at large can not be meant, but that the designation presupposes that there are greater and smaller among the disciples (cf. Luke vii. 28) ; and that the essence of the exhortation, in Luke xvii. 2 at least, is that the greater must not despise the lesser. Similarly Godet supposes that the "little ones" are "beginners in the faith," "those yet weak in faith ;" and Alford appears to think that it is worth considering whether the "lower and less advanced converts" may not be meant. Surely, however, the idea of such distinctions within the limits of Christ's followers is not only without support from the contexts in which the phrase occurs, but is distinctly inconsistent with them. In Matt. x. 42, for example, such a distinction is definitely negated by the parallelism by which the "little ones" are identified with the "disciples." Its assumption would leave wholly out of account, also, the defining "these." Our Lord was addressing His disciples and speaking (verse 40) of the reception accorded to them. "THESE little ones" can therefore only mean them. The matter is even plainer in Mark ix. 42, where "these little ones" takes up again the "you" of the preceding



verse ; they are therefore identified definitely with the disciples at large. They are besides openly defined as "those that believe." that is to say, as "believers" in their essential character as such. Much the same may be said of Luke xvii. 2, in the context of which there is a distinction noted between brother and brother, but not between greater and lesser. While the whole drift of Matt. xviii. 5-14 is to exalt "the little ones" and to identify them just with that body of chosen ones to whose salvation the will of the Father is pledged. It may be taken as exegetically certain, therefore, that by "these little ones" our Lord does not intend to single out a certain section of His disciples—whether the weakest in faith or the most advanced in that humility of heart which is the fruit of a great faith—but means just the whole body of His disciples. This is, therefore, simply one of the somewhat numerous general designations which He gives to His disciples, by which to express His conception of their character and estate and the nature of His feelings towards them.

What, then, is the conception of His disciples and His feeling towards them which our Lord expresses in the use of this designation? In their answers to these questions, too, the commentators differ very widely among themselves. The disciples were called "little ones," thinks Reuss, because they were drawn from the most humble and least distinguished portion of society ; they were so called, thinks De Wette, because they were despised and meanly esteemed for Christ's sake ; they were so called, thinks Dr. Riddle, in recognition of their weakness in themselves, in the midst of the persecutions of the world. As many voices, so many opinions. Among them all the characteristically crisp and clear-cut note of Bengel on Matt. x. 42 commends itself to us : "'Little ones,' see chapter xi. 11 ; Zech. xiii. 7 : a sweet (suave) epithet for disciples." "A SWEET epithet"—that is, a loving epithet, a term of endearment. That surely is the main import of the epithet : it is an utterance of deep-reaching tenderness, the very expression of endearment.

Other implications may be present, but they are certainly secondary. Among these the chief one assuredly is the neediness of the disciples. The passages in which the epithet occurs are pre-eminent for their note of protecting care. They read like the cry of a mother's heart for her child ; they have in them something of the fireceness of the mother's protecting love (Matt. xviii. 6 seq ; Mark ix. 42 ; Luke xvii. 2) ; and all of the passion of her brooding tenderness (Matt. x. 42 ; Mark ix. 41). And they run up into that marvellous declaration of the eighteenth chapter of Matthew that no man and no thing can snatch the objects of this love out of the Saviour's hands. We think we should not go wrong, therefore, if, neglecting everything else, we should say that our Saviour calls His disciples "these little ones" because He thinks of them as the particular objects of His protecting care and gives in this designation of them a supreme expression to the

depth and tenderness of his love for them. It is thus the diminutive of endearment by way of eminence ; the purest expression, among all His affectionate names for His disciples, of the fondness of His love for them. They were His friends and His children : His sheep and His lambs ; but above all these they were " His little ones "—His " little ones " who needed Him and whom He would never fail in their times of need, even though their times of need be all times—as indeed they are.

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## The Prayer of the Destitute.

AUTHOR UNKNOWN.

My land lies fallow, Master, till me ;  
 My heart lies empty, Master, fill me ;  
 It plays the traitor, Master, win me ;  
 It faints, it dies, put new life in me ;  
 It goes astray, Good Shepherd, lead me ;  
 It sighs for hunger, come and feed me ;  
 It is so poor, give riches to me ;  
 It is so corrupt, O Lord, renew me ;  
 So ignorant, O wilt Thou teach me ;  
 Has wandered far, but Thou canst reach me ;  
 Is sore diseased, Physician, heal me ;  
 Exposed to danger, O conceal me ;  
 It trembles, in Thine arms, O fold me  
 Begins to sink, O Saviour, hold me ;  
 Is sinking fast, Lord, look upon me ;  
 So cold and dark, O shine upon me.  
 A poor lost sinner, come and find me.  
 A rebel, may Thy love now bind me.  
 A prodigal, wilt Thou receive me ?  
 A beggar, O wilt Thou relieve me ?  
 A backslider, wilt Thou restore me ?  
 Unholy, may Thy presence awe me.  
 Unfit to die, O God, prepare me.  
 So weak, on eagle's wings, O bear me.  
 So comfortless, Lord Jesus, cheer me.  
 So lonely, God of Love, draw near me.  
 By sin accused, Good Lord, acquit me.  
 Unfit for Heaven's pure service, fit me.  
 Unfit for work on earth, but use me,  
 A suppliant, O do not Thou refuse me.  
 Give me an offering, and I will bring it.  
 Give me a song, and I will sing it.

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**Communion.**—Dingwall, 1st Sabbath of month ; Stornoway, 3rd Sabbath.

## Searmon.

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

Salm cxxvii. 1. An dara searmon. (Andaracuid.)

THA amannan araidh ann anns an bheil feum air caithris. 'Nuair a tha *drap* dhe aonta an anama air a chosnadh do Chrìosd, mar a chi sinn a thaobh Rebecah, tha feum air. "An teid thu leis an duine? Agus thubhairt i, 'Theid.'" Cha b'e a shaoibhreas ach e fein a choisinn i. Cha-n e glòir shiorruidh ach Crìosd fein a tha cosnadh aonta an anama. Agus ged nach bu mho sin na ceud charuchadh an naoidhein anns a' bhroinn cha-n fheud sinn o fhocal Dhe a radh gu'm bi an *drap* sinn caillte. Ach far nach 'eil ni's mo na sin cha chomasach sinn o fhocal Dhe a radh nach bi an t-anam ann an ifrinn. Cha-n 'eil teagamh nach robh an uiread sin anns an talamh chreagach. Ach far am bheil an t-srad sin o ghras anns an anam buanaichidh e gus a' chrìch. 'S iongantach na briathran sin ann an Hosea, "Thigibh, pilleamaid ris an Tighearn, oir is esan a reub agus 's e a ni ar leigheas, 's e a bhuail agus ceanglaidh e suas sinn; an ceann da la ni e ar n-athbheothachadh, air an treas la daisgidh e suas sinn agus bidh sinn beo 'na shealladh. Agus bidh eolas againn; theid sinn air ar n-aghaidh a ghabhail eolais air an Tighearn." Cionnus? "Tha a dhol a nach air 'ulluchadh mar a' mhaduinn agus thig e d' ar n-ionnsuidh mar an t-uisge air an talamh." Nis far am bheil *drap* de aonta so an anama ri sin tha feum air caithris. Agus thusa, a fhuair sin, feuch nach eirich thu dhe do ghluinean gun ni eigin 'ga bheathachadh, agus biodh da shuil agad a' caithris, suil a' sealltuinn ri Dia agus suil ag amharc am bheil aonta d' anama air a chosnadh. "Thubhairt m' anam, is tu mo chuibhrionn." Theid am foirmealach bochd troimh an aoradh gun smuain air Dia no air anam.

'S iongantach sin, 'nuair a gheibh an t-anam sealladh soilleir air nadur a' pheacaidh, dearbhshoilleadh. Chi mise peacadh ann am urnuigh, peacadh 'nam shearmon, peacadh anns a h-uile ni a tha mi 'deanamh agus gidheadh feudaidd mi bhi aineolach air nadur a' pheacaidh. Thusa, a tha gun ghras cha-n 'eil thu 'ga fhaicinn ni's mo na am focal beag sin '*sin*.' Cha-n 'eil ann an sud ach focal beag th ri litrichean s-i-n, agus tha am peacadh cho beag sin 'nad shealladh gus am minich Spiorad Naomh nan gras e. Ged a dheanadh tu breug bidh sin cho beag 'nad shealladh ris na tri litrichean sin s-i-n no o-l-c. 'S ann an ifrinn a chi iomadh ni air bith ann am peacadh. A bhi fosgladh nadur a' pheacaidh, 's e sin toradh bas Chrìosd, agus 'nuair a tha sin air a thoirt do'n anam agus *drap* de nadur an aithreachais bidh aige mar a bha aig Iob. "Le eisdachd na cluaise chuala mi thu ach a nis chunnaic mo' shuil thu; uirre sin gabhaidh mi grain diom fein, agus ni mi

aithreachas ann an duslach agus an luaith.” Nis tha *drap* de’n bhruiteachd sin anns an anam iongantach milis a’ tighinn dluth do Dhia. Oh, cha-n ’eil suibean tioram agus cridhe cruaidh ’nan comhfhurtachd do’n anam ghrasmhor ach is maith leis a bhruiteachd so. Ach cha chomasach e ’oibreachadh ann fein agus tha sin a’ foillseachadh dha gur ann o Dhia a tha e. Agus thusa, a chuireas sin air falbh le peacadh feudaidd gu’m feum thu tighinn tre na lasraichean mu’m faigh thu air ais e, air chor’s gu bheil feum air caithris. Ach, “mur gleidh an Tighearn am baile, gu diomhain ni am fear-coimhid faire.” Tha mi ’smuaineachadh gur e dìreach sealladh de nadur a chul-sleamhnachaidh a bha aig Ephraim agus e ’ga chaidh fein; “gu deimhin an deigh dhomh bhi air mo philleadh, ghabh mi aithreachas, agus an deigh dhomh bhi air mo theagasg, bhuail mi air mo leis; bha naire orm—seadh geur amhludh a chionn gu’n do ghiulain mi masladh m’ oige.” ’S e am peacadh masladh na h-oige, agus nan dealraicheadh solus Dhia air chitheadh tu e ’na aobhair naire.

’Nuair a tha an t-anam a’ faicinn cho cruaidh ’s a bha e air Dia peacadh a mhaitheadh—(Thusa, a tha aineolach air luachmhorachd agus farsuinneachd bas Chrìosd agus a’ saòilsinn maitheanas a bhi ’na ni furasda, thoir an aire, ’se an diabhl a tha ’searmonachadh trocair dhuit)—chi e gur e maitheanas peacaidh an ni a b’ fhaisge a thainig riamh air cumhachd Dhe. Chuir e uile bhuadhan na Morachd air obair. ’S ann a gloir a thainig a’ cheisd sin, “cionnus a chuireas mi thu am measg na cloinne.” Tha an Spiorad Naomh a’ toirt seallaidh dhe sin, ach nach ’eil e eucomasach, gu’n d’ fhuair E ann am bàs Chrìosd na thug saorsa dha peacadh a mhaitheadh. ’Se ceartas a tha ’maitheadh peacaidh, ’s e ceartas a fhuair an rathad. ’S e a th’ ann—Dia ceart agus Fear-saoraidh. Thusa, a fhuair sin, tha feum agad air caithris. Ach “mur gleidh an Tighearn am baile, gu diomhain ni am fearcoimhid faire.” Cha-n ’eil ni a tha Satan ni’s mo an deigh air na gu’m faigheadh e sin air a thoirt o’n anam, oir nam faigheadh dh’ fhasadh an creutar dan ann am peacadh agus bhiodh e fathast ann am ifrinn. Mar sin tha feum air caithris, ach “mur gleidh an Tighearn am baile gu diomhain ni am fear-coimhid faire.” Cionnus a tha cridhe an t-saoghail air a ghleidheadh agus an ni air am bheil iad a’ sealltuinn fad an la?

’Nuair a tha *drap* de Spiorad na h-urnuigh air a dhortadh air an anam—’s iongantach *drap* de Spiorad na h-urnuigh nach gabh diultadh, “cha leig mi air falbh thu mur beannaich thu mi,” cha leig mi air falbh thu gus am maith thu mo pheacadh, cha leig mi air falbh thu gus an caith thu mach am bith mallaichte so,—ma gheibh thusa Spiorad na h-urnuigh tha feum agad air caithris. ’S iongantach anam bochd aig casan na Morachd nach comasach Dia a chur air falbh. Thoir thusa an aire air sin. Tha e priseil. Ann an so a nis tha iartus gu’m biodh am peacadh air a chaitheamh a mach agus ann an sin tha an t-anam agus an run sìorruidh a’ cordadh. Tha am peacadh uamharra grathail—sgeith a’ mhadaidh

—puinnsean na nathrach. 'Nuair a gheibh thusa gaol a' pheacaidh air a bhriseadh 'nad anam agus *drap* de ghaol na naomhachd a' tighinn a stigh, tha feum air caithris, oir is iomadh doigh a tha aig Satan gu sin a chaitheamh mach as an anam agus tha feum air faire.

Ann an so feudaidh mi radh gu'm bheil ni-eigin de nadur nan coigreach a' tighinn a stigh, agus mar a bhios an creutair an sin, dealraicheadh an Tighearn air luibhean feoir agus chi thu mar a tha sin ceangailte ri cuan siorruidh de oirdheirceas is bidh e duilich leat saltairt air. Nis thig an t-anam gu sin, gu'n toir smuain air siorruidheachd comhfhurtachd agus sith a stigh anns an anam. Ann an sin tha e a' faicinn gu'm bheil anns an t-siorruidheachd na bheir lan saorsa do uile bhuadhan an anama. Tha buadhan an anama iongantach farsuinn ach lionaidh siorruidheachd iad. Cha sasuich an saoghal an t-anam agus cha chaisg e a phathadh. Ach lionaidh siorruidheachd e. Nis tha dearrsaidhean de sin iongantach. Cha-n 'eil iad ach gle thearc anns an t-saoghal a tha 'gabhail a steach nadur na gloire. Ach o! smuainich air sin, anama air a chumail cruaidh cumhann tre'n t-siorruidheachd ann an slabhraidhean dorchadais.

"Mur gleidh an Tighearn am baile gu diomhain ni am fear-coimhid faire." Bha sinn ag radh gur e dleasdanas an anama ghrasmhoir a bhi ri faire air an t-saoghal agus cha bhi an t-anam grasmhor sona 'nuair nach teid a churam ni's fhaide na e fein. B'aithne do Chrìosd 'oirdheirceas fein agus bha lan shonas aig ann fein. Ach cha d' fhan a ghradh ann fein, chaidh e mach gu cuspairean eile. Nis tha e ag radh, "mur 'eil Spiorad Chrìosd aig neach cha bhuin e dha." Ach airson an t-saoghail feudaidh mi radh, ged a bhiodh na tha de naoimh air an talamh ri faire, "mur gleidh an Tighearn am baile gu diomhain ni am fear-coimhid faire," mar a dh' fheudas sinn fhaicinn ged a bha an duine 'na cheud staid naomh cha b'fhad gus an do rinn e clàir dhe fhein. Agus thusa, nach 'eil fo churam an 'Tighearn cha-n iongantach ged bhiodh tu ann an ifrinn. Tha thusa ni's fhusa sgrios na bha Adhamh. Mar sin ged bhiodh naoimh agus aingil ri faire, nam fagadh an Tighearn iad rachadh a' chruitheachd 'na smàl.

Tha de ardan anns an t-saoghal na dheanadh smàl dhe'n chruitheachd. Faic, labhradh aon rioghachd focal an aghaidh rioghachd eile agus cha riaruich ni ach dioghaltas. Tha bith ardain anns an duine a dheanadh clair dhe'n chruitheachd mur bhi gu'm bheil Dia a' riaghladh air chor 's gu'm feudar a radh, "mur gleidh an Tighearn am baile gur diomhain a ni am fear-coimhid faire." Tha de naimhdeas ann an nadur an duine anns an t-saoghal na mhilleadh a' chruitheachd mur b'e ceannsachd dhiomhair na Morachd a tha bacadh sin o bhi briseadh a mach. Ann an ifrinn bidh a h-uile ceannsachd air a togail diubh agus an naimhdeas air a leigeadh fuasgailte. O mar a bhios iad ann an sin a' coireachadh agus a' reubadh a cheile tre'n t-siorruidheachd. B'aithne dha Daibhidh ciod a bh' anns an t-saoghal 'nuair a

thubhairt e, "Tuiteam a nis ann an laimh an Tighearna, oir is lionmhor a throcairean, ach ann an laimh duine na tuiteam."

Tha spiorad uamharra sanntach anns an t-saoghal. Faic rìgh, cha bhi e riaruichte le aon rioghachd, dh' iarradh e rioghachd eile. Cha-n 'eile duine toilichte le a staid, am fear aig am bheil baile, cha-n 'eil e riaruichte, feumaidh e baile eile. Tha da urnuigh anns an t-saoghal agus tha'n Tighearn 'g am freagairt. 'S e urnuigh an t-seann duine, "tuilleadh talamh, tuilleadh talamh;" agus 's e urnuigh an duine oig, "bàs m' athar, bàs m' athar, gus am faigh mi fein am fearann." Faic na dhoirt an spiorad sannt sin a dh' fhuil anns an t-saoghal. Co a ghiuaineadh leis ach an Dia Siorruidh a tha cumail bacadh air? Airson caithris an anama ghrasmhòir air an t-saoghal agus gu h-araidh air a chloinn feudaidh e radh, "Mur gleidh an Tighearn am baile gu diomhain ni am fear-coimhid faire."

Cha bhi an t-anam grasmhor fad ann an cuideachd an t-saoghail gun 'urram do Dhia a chall, agus caillidh e speis an t-saoghail dha fein. Aon uair bhiodh eagal orra roimh ach nis ni iad gaire fochaid air, agus mar is fhaide tha e 'n an comunn 's ann is mo a tha e 'call 'urraim.

## Letter by Edward Blackstock.

CHRISTIAN COUNCIL.

1834.

**Y**OUR last letter, in my opinion, evidences a gradual growth in grace. I suppose you will say, Indeed it is *gradual*; but I do assure you that in general I find a gradual growth the best, even as you see it is in plants.

In my short time, I have seen several very promising characters, who have by no means answered my expectations of them, whilst their more lowly neighbours, though far less promising, have stood. And why should they not, since God is able to make them to stand? "And to Him the weakest is dear as the strong." Now, if there be in the flock one more weak than the rest, He carries that one in His arms, folds it in His bosom, and seems as if He never could make enough of it.

What an unspeakable mercy is it to you that God should quicken you by His Spirit, call you by His grace, bring you to His throne, and authorise you to call Him Father? To call you to Him in the time of your youth, and sweetly empower you to say, "My Father, my Father, Thou art the guide of my youth!" Surely those words belong to you. And be ye *thankful* for your election, redemption, vocation, and full and free salvation—thankful for a free pardon, the peace of God, justification and sanctification—thankful for providential and temporal mercies—thankful for the unspeakable gift, Christ Jesus, a throne of grace, the holy word, the blessed Spirit, and the hope of glory.

O how sweet it is to be thankful! When the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts, we hardly know where to begin, or where to make an end. O how sweet it is for Zion's babes and sucklings to sing "Hosanna" when the King of saints rides before them! "Rejoice in the Lord alway; and again I say, Rejoice." "Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord."

You have requested me to give you my thoughts upon Jer. xvii. 10. I will endeavour to do so. "I the Lord search the heart, I try the reins, *even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings.*" You, I have no doubt, wished for an explanation of the sentences I have marked.

The passage above cited shows how God will deal with those who die out of Christ. In eternity they shall know that God punishes the wicked for heart sins as well as for sinful actions. All who die out of Christ die under the law. The law takes cognisance of sinful thoughts and inclinations as certainly as it does of sinful actions. "To give every man"—every man out of Christ, every man at the left hand of Christ in the judgment; not to every man that is in Christ, or indeed to any man that is in Christ, for then Paul himself must be condemned, for in his flesh dwelt no good thing.

Christ took upon Himself all the sins of all God's elect, suffered for those sins and expiated them by His blood. In behalf of every one of the elect, law and justice received at the hands of Christ full payment; and "Payment God cannot twice demand—first at My bleeding Surety's hand, and then again at Mine." For "who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?" seeing it is God that justifieth.

If the saints stand before the judgment-seat at the last, it will only be to afford an opportunity for men and devils to witness their full, free and final justification; for as Christ is, so are they in this world; and as Christ is, so will they appear in the judgment. He must present them faultless before His Father with exceeding joy; and if so, they cannot be tried for heart sins there.

They are tried here, they are judged here, they are here brought to repentance for heart sins, as really as for outward sins. Nay, they are even chastened for heart sins. I have thought that in this life only God punishes one of His own children ten times more for heart sins than He does for outward sins, and yet there is not one drop of vindictive wrath in their cup! It is the kind hand of a kind Father that chastens them, and every stroke He gives them goes to His own heart. They are hardened here, they are justified freely by grace here. They have passed from death into life, they shall never come into condemnation, they shall never perish. Therefore, the words to which you have referred me must be understood to apply only unto such as die in their sins.

There are two "alls," two worlds, and two distinct manner of people spoken of in the Word. If the mystery and meaning of the Scriptures were as easily understood as the letter of

the Scripture is read, we should not need the Holy Ghost to teach us. The contrary, however, is the case; for no man can know the mind of God in the Holy Scriptures, but as he is taught it for himself by the blessed Spirit.

May you be favoured to seek peace and ensue it, as being in Christ freely justified by grace! Entreat the Lord by His Spirit to write in your heart the sweet precepts of the gospel, and especially the kindly law of love. Pray for an enlightened, tender conscience, and endeavour to look well to it; and should the heavenly Bridegroom, for the trial of your faith, go away for a little while, and leave His sweet peace behind Him in your soul, be very thankful for it, carefully shun whatever is calculated to remove it from you. Walk in truth, walk in love, walk in peace.

May the Lord confirm you to the end, that you may be blameless at the coming of Christ! . . .

ED. BLACKSTOCK.

**Acknowledgment.**—The Treasurer of the Dingwall congregation begs to acknowledge, with thanks, the sum of 20s, received for Free Presbyterian Manse Building Fund, per Rev. Mr. M'Farlane, from Miss Helen Urquhart, Glasgow.

**Corrections.**—On first page of last issue "three days of tribulation" should read "those days," etc. We regret also a number of slight errata in the Rev. John Macleod's sermon, such as "efficacy" for "efficacy" and "ender" for "under."

**Rev. John B. Radasi in Rhodesia.**—We have much pleasure in stating that the Rev. John B. Radasi had a safe and comfortable voyage to Cape Town, where he arrived on December 13th. He left there for Bulawayo, Rhodesia, on the 16th, and breaking his journey at Mafeking, Bechuanaland, he arrived at Bulawayo on the 21st. His first Sabbath at this town, which is to be the centre of his labours, was the last of December, when he held a public service. The audience consisted of a goodly number of men but few women. In a letter to a friend he states:—"The Matabeles are still uncivilised, but they seem to be a nice kind people, and willing to learn. They need the gospel of the grace of God and the prayers of the people of God. It is only the gospel that can take them out of the condition which they are in." He adds that he is glad to find a number of Psalms in one of the native hymn books, which he hopes to take out and get printed separately by permission. He observes that the country round about is full of thick forests, where there are still lions, wolves and other wild beasts. We have no doubt but the prayers of God's people among us will go up for Mr. Radasi in his new field of missionary effort, and we earnestly hope the Lord will abundantly bless his labours to the conversion of souls, and so to the extension of Christ's kingdom in the world.