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Professor Alexander's Book—

"DEMONIC POSSESSION IN THE NEW TESTAMENT."

(Continued from page 364.)

IT is evident from the quotations already given that the author of this book regards the composition of the Holy Scriptures from the standpoint of the higher criticism. His special views of demonic possession, as well as his particular statements on passages of Scripture, set aside any sound doctrine of inspiration. "The Evangelists represent a Triple Tradition," he says, and so their statements are not to be relied upon as fact. It is also his opinion that they give considerable expression to the ancient ethnic (that is, pagan) theory of possession by evil spirits, which originated in the primitive untutored mind. The Jews like the heathen ascribed insanity in its various forms to the presence of evil and unclean spirits, and the writers Matthew, Mark, and Luke did the same. It is clear, then, that in Dr. Alexander's judgment these Evangelists were not infallibly guided by the Holy Spirit in what they wrote. He manifestly regards the recorded history of Christ's life and work as a very uncertain quantity. In fact, the Bible as a whole is in his estimation not an infallible book. Some further quotations will make this clearer than ever.

In Chapter V. Dr. Alexander treats of the existence of genuine demonic possession, and at the beginning he lays down "two simple rules" for guidance in the inquiry. The rules are as follow:—" (a) Whatever is explicable on the principles of modern science is to be regarded as natural. (b) Whatever is inexplicable on the principles of modern science is to be regarded as supernatural." By means of these rules he finds "two classes of the possessed." "(a) Cases simply natural and not genuinely demonic. (b) Cases truly supernatural and genuinely demonic." Now, we remark that at least the first of these rules is open to decided exception. Modern science is not infallible; some of it is very untrustworthy. And, moreover, the principle that everything in

the Bible which any critic possessed of modern science chooses to set down as purely natural must therefore be so regarded is not to be accepted for a moment by loyal believers in the infallibility and authority of the Scriptures. The conclusion, indeed, to which Dr. Alexander comes, that there are cases "not genuinely demonic" though thus described, just exposes the unsound nature of the rules by which he is guided. No doubt, on page 148, he affirms "the veracity of the different authors of the Gospel narratives," but he holds at the same time, in the case of the Gadarene demoniac, that "a theory of the occurrence" is to be found in the narrative (pp. 149, 201). There is a lack of consistency among our author's statements. If a reporter inserts theories of his own as if they were solid facts in his account of any event or events, he cannot be said to be distinguished for veracity or truthfulness. And yet it is this sort of reporting which our author affirms is found in the Gospels. Dr. Alexander maintains that it is only those demoniacs in the Gospels that made confession of Jesus as the Messiah or Son of God that are real cases of possession by evil spirits; all the rest, and they are the greater number, though described as possessed with devils, were not so at all; they were simply insane and nothing more. This opinion is not supported by any sufficient grounds, and is entirely contrary to Scripture. Observe how he handles the case of Paul and the damsel "possessed with a spirit of divination" at Philippi. He holds that here "no genuine demonic activity is discoverable," though we are told most distinctly that Paul "said to the spirit, I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her." Dr. Alexander proceeds, "Was Paul then mistaken when he charged the spirit to go forth? It is possible that at this stage he was not fully emancipated from the traditions of the fathers; but even that cannot be proved. Rabbinic custom permitted a certain amount of personification in the nomenclature of disease. Paul may have used an ethnic formula without endorsing ethnic doctrine." Our author considers that the apostle, under the influence of Rabbinic custom, may have commanded a disease to depart under the name of a spirit, though he believed there was no spirit present. This cannot be admitted as likely or possible. The very thought is degrading. Is it credible that the apostle either would or could work a miracle by lying words?

In Chapter VII. Dr. Alexander deals with "The Difficulties of the Gerasene (Gadarene) Affair," and in this part of his work he exposes more conspicuously than anywhere else how far astray he is on the subject of the inspiration of the Scriptures. He no doubt strikes at Huxley the unbelieving scientist for his contemptuous attack upon the writers of the Synoptic gospels because of their narration of "the Gadarene and other like stories," but in resisting Huxley he falls upon the Evangelists themselves, and declares that they have put down their own surmises as truth. In dealing with the case of the man of Gadara,

who was possessed of an unclean spirit, and who met Jesus out of the tombs, he maintains that the spirits, whom Jesus commanded to depart, never entered the swine at all, though the three inspired Evangelists, Matthew, Mark, and Luke, most explicitly say that they did. The title of one of the subordinate sections of this chapter is "The Alleged Transmigration of the Demons." Dr. Alexander considers "anew the fundamental facts" as narrated in the gospels, and proceeds to affirm: "We recognise here a solid *nucleus* of fact, which *remains after* the application of the canons of historical criticism. That unassailable *residuum* comprises the cure of the demoniac and the precipitation of the swine. We recognise here also a *certain theory* of this occurrence. The facts are separable from the theory, and furnish material for testing its validity. The facts remain unchallenged; the soundness of the theory is legitimate matter of inquiry." (The italics are ours.) Dr. Alexander here affirms that only a nucleus of fact remains after the canons or rules of historical criticism have been applied to the statements of Matthew, Mark, and Luke. This residuum or remainder is no doubt "unassailable," but only comprises the cure of the demoniac and the downward rush of the swine. Other statements therefore are not to be accepted as truth; they only make up "a theory" as to how things happened. Dr. Alexander quotes Matt. viii. 31, 32; Mark v. 9, 10, 12, 13; Luke viii. 30-32. The Evangelists supplement one another in their narratives. Upon these, however, our author comments as follows:—"These remarkable differences of the Triple Tradition give us the theory emergent from the facts—1. The prayer of the demoniac becomes the prayer of the demons themselves. 2. Leave to remain in the district becomes a request to escape the abyss. 3. The word, Go, is interpreted as permission to enter into the swine." Let our readers observe that the gospels are again called "the Triple Tradition." And let them also particularly notice that Dr. Alexander in the most arbitrary manner undertakes to distinguish between what he calls the theory and the facts. He says in effect that the prayer of the demons was not theirs but that of the demoniac, that Luke improved upon Mark in asserting that there was "a request to escape the abyss," and that the word "Go" in Matthew is interpreted by Mark and Luke "as permission to enter the swine." What irreverent and unwarrantable handling of inspired records is this! Dr. Alexander then declares that "the possession of animals by demons is an ethnic idea:" that the transference of demons from human beings to objects animate and inanimate is likewise an ethnic conception:" and further that the idea of such a transference "could not be quite foreign to the Jews." The word "ethnic" has a pleasant, inoffensive appearance, and its meaning is apt to elude the ordinary reader not over skilled in scholastic terms, but it is just another word for pagan, heathen or gentile. And the position of our author is that the Evangelists, in stating that the devils entered the swine, give expression to a *heathen*

notion or opinion. Dr. Alexander then puts the question, "Did Christ sanction that belief by directing or permitting the demons to invade the swine?" And the substance of his answer is that He did not; that He never gave them leave to enter the swine, and that the evil spirits never did enter, though the Evangelists say most expressly—without the slightest suggestion or appearance of "a theory"—Jesus gave them leave, and that they entered the swine.

But this is not all the havoc our critic makes of the inspired records. He maintains that there are two opinions set forth in the narratives of Mark and Luke, one that of Jesus Himself, the other that of the demoniac and the evangelists. The first opinion is that there was only one unclean spirit in the man; the second that there were many such spirits; and Mark and Luke have "oscillations" between these opinions. Dr. Alexander quotes Mark v., verses 2, 7, 8, 10, 12, 13, and then adds in italics: "Jesus allows of only one demon throughout; Mark has one also in v. 2. The demoniac surmises a multitude; so does Mark in v. 12, 13." Similarly, our author quotes several verses from Luke viii., and adds in italics, "Jesus allows of only one demon throughout; Luke has one also in viii. 20. The demoniac surmises a multitude; so does Luke in viii. 30, 31, 32, 33." Now, what are these astonishing views based upon? First, on our author's disbelief in the idea of manifold possession; secondly, on the fact that the opening part of the narrative in Mark and Luke makes mention of only one unclean spirit; and thirdly, on the circumstance that it is after the man declares "My name is legion; for we are many," that a plurality of devils are referred to. In answer, it may be said that it is most gratuitous and unwarrantable to put the "one" in conflict with the "many." The one and the many are both in the narrative, and it has always been the sound commonsense way among reverent interpreters to recognise in it the presence of one chief or leading spirit and many others associated with him. There is nothing inconsistent or unthinkable in this. But Dr. Alexander has landed himself on the horns of a dilemma from which he will not easily extricate himself. Apart from the doctrine of inspiration, which is here set at nought, is it reasonable, or is it morally thinkable, according to his interpretation, that the evangelists, who were the loyal and devoted followers of Christ, should have put down the surmises of the demoniac and their own surmises in direct succession to, and positive contradiction of, the testimony of their Lord and Master Himself? Does it not come to this, that they regarded the surmises of the demoniac and of themselves as of equal value with the authoritative and unerring testimony of Christ? Can any Christian person admit such an unworthy idea for a moment? Does it even stand to ordinary reason? By no means. And yet this is the plain outcome of Dr. Alexander's interpretation of the inspired narrative.

Dr. Alexander, as has already been shown, holds that Mark and Luke had no warrant for saying that Jesus gave either the devil or devils leave to enter the swine (p. 205); He simply said "Go" or "Begone," as in Matthew. But even this account he regards as only "the nearest approximation" to the very word of our Lord on this occasion, while he also fails to get rid of the fact that Matthew records Jesus' answer, "Go," in response to a request from the devils, "to go away into the swine" (Matt. viii. 31). In any case he states that "neither direction to enter the swine, nor permission to do so, nor compensation for disturbance can be thought of here." His explanation as to how the swine rushed down into the waters is to the effect that they first heard the wild shouts of the demoniac and then "the great commanding word of Christ, addressed to the demon, 'Begone,'" and were driven by terror down the declivity (p. 211-12). It needs hardly to be emphasised how much of the higher critic is to be seen in this manner of dealing with the Holy Scriptures. Dr. Alexander agrees with the higher critics as to the dates of Ecclesiastes and Daniel, bringing them down to a late date before Christ, the former to about 200 B.C. instead of 975 B.C.

We do not attempt to deal with all that is objectionable in this book, but, in closing, we notice one other section, namely, "Appendix J," which is entitled "The Use of Popular Language by Jesus." Here Dr. Alexander endeavours to defend his conclusions at page 159, in which he affirms the "the lad with the dumb and deaf spirit" had no demon. He says, "The foregoing conclusions may seem to be at variance with the records of the evangelists," and then quotes Matt. xvii. 18, Mark ix. 25, and Luke ix. 42, on which he remarks, "Harmonists may attempt to reconcile these discrepancies by a process of amalgamation; while critics prefer to seek the archaic and germinal matter of the real original in the first Gospel. . . . The precise words used by our Lord on this occasion are evidently no longer recoverable. At most it can only be said that a formula was employed which was capable of being construed into the menacing of an unclean spirit. . . . This is not the only occasion on which Christ used language which was open to distortion by a crude literalism. The description of the forty days' temptation, the second advent, and the doom of the wicked have been much misunderstood on this wise." Our readers can study these quotations for themselves, but it is plain that, according to Professor Alexander, those who interpret the Scriptures literally, after the manner, say, that has been done in these articles, are guilty of what he calls "a crude literalism." It might be interesting to know, in this connection, in what way he interprets scientifically the Bible accounts of "the forty days' temptation, the second advent, and the doom of the wicked." He evidently adheres firmly to the opinion that "the real original" of the Gospels is only in Matthew, while he does not hesitate to assert that the words of Christ to "the boy with the deaf and

dumb spirit" are "no longer recoverable," though Mark states distinctly that Jesus said, "Thou deaf and dumb spirit, I charge thee, come out of him, and enter no more into him."

But enough. It is perfectly plain that Dr. Alexander is far from being sound on the fundamental doctrine of the Holy Scriptures. In professedly attempting to free Christ from the charge of agreeing with the superstitions of His age, he has handled the inspired records in rationalistic fashion. Truly, it appears most strange and unaccountable that the author of such a book should have found his way into the important positions of Principal and Professor in the New College, Edinburgh, under the auspices of the present Free Church, whose representatives profess strict loyalty to the Confession of Faith and the Word of God. There is verily room for inquiry.

Royal Church Commission.—This Commission, consisting of the Earl of Elgin, Lord Kinnear, and Sir Ralph Anstruther, has been sitting at the Merchant Company's Hall, Edinburgh, for several days during the past month. It was appointed by the King to make inquiry in connection with the property recently decided by the House of Lords to belong to the Free Church as against the United Free Church. and in view of the fact that the Free Church had acknowledged inability to utilise all the property thus adjudicated. Evidence has been led on both sides—Principal Rainy, Dr. Ross Taylor, Dr. Howie, Lord Overtoun, Mr. Lee, and a number of others representing the United Free Church, and Rev. J. Kennedy Cameron, Rev. D. M. Macalister, Mr. Archibald MacNeilage, Mr. J. Hay Thorburn, and others representing the Free Church. The Commissioners refused to take any evidence from the United Free on the subject of "donors' intentions" as outwith the scope of their commission. Lord Elgin also reprimanded some of the United Free witnesses for re-inserting in their evidence, which they were allowed to revise in proof form, certain passages which the Commission had excised, but which had appeared in the newspapers. In the evidence by Rev. J. Kennedy Cameron a passage appeared touching the Free Church and the Free Presbyterians, which certainly had no authority from the latter. It ran thus:—"There was no small probability of the Free Presbyterians and themselves entering into an incorporating union at a very early date." The Southern Presbytery sent a brief disclaimer to the Commission to the effect that "there was no authority from the courts of this Church for the aforesaid statement." Lord Elgin acknowledged receipt, and stated that the communication would be laid before the Commission. Church unions, we may be permitted to observe, are very delicate matters to handle, and it is desirable that men should be scrupulously careful not to say more than is fully warranted on such subjects.

The Visions of Zechariah.

By the REV. ALEXANDER STEWART, EDINBURGH.

I. The Rider among the Myrtle Trees.—Zech i. 7-17.

WE have seen that Zechariah's message begins with words of stern and solemn warning. It is a message whose successive aspects are suited to the varying circumstances of the people to whom it is directly addressed. They needed, first of all, a sharp reminder of their duty in connection with the Lord's work. They needed a deeper sense of responsibility, a livelier and more active zeal. This end is now regarded as attained. The warning has taken effect. With consciences quickened by that Word which is "sharper than any two-edged sword," and hearts in which the fire of devotion has been rekindled, the people have set their face again on the work they had so long neglected, and the walls of the second Temple are beginning to rise.

Then the character of the prophet's message completely changes. It is no longer stern and threatening: it is tender and full of encouragement. It is adapted to the altered circumstances which are the result of the people's obedience. They are engaged in a peculiarly trying work. They have returned to a land which they have found a wilderness. They are labouring among ruins which tell of the departed glory. They are a feeble people, comparatively few in numbers and largely destitute of resources. They are surrounded with strong and malicious enemies, who have opposed their work already, and who will as surely oppose it again. And to crown all they are harassed with disquieting inward fears. How can they in their weakness expect to build a Temple worthy to take the place of their former "holy and beautiful House?" Will God dwell among them in this new sanctuary as in the days of old? Will he accept the work of their hands? He is a jealous God. *That* at least they have learned from the long years of exile. In a word, this was their situation, "Without were fightings, within were fears."

It is to meet those manifold difficulties that the first half of the prophecies of Zechariah are directed. The Lord vouchsafed unto him in the course of a single night, in what particular form of manifestation we need not too curiously enquire, a series of visions, eight in all, which when interpreted to the people were designed to strengthen their hands and minister hope and comfort to their hearts in view both of dangers without and perplexities within.

The first three visions form a group by themselves. They have respect to outward troubles, arising from the hostility of enemies and the magnitude of the work itself. They convey to the weak and defenceless remnant the strongest assurances that God will remove every external obstacle that stands in the way of the growth and prosperity of his own Church.

Let us look at the first of these, the vision of the Horseman in the myrtle grove. During the silence of night there appeared to the rapt eye of the prophet a valley, at the bottom of which there grew a clump of myrtle trees. Among the myrtles stood a rider on a red horse. It is this still figure that arrests the prophet's gaze and dominates the scene. Behind him were other riders, some on red horses, some on speckled, or bay, and some on white.

Before proceeding further, let us seek to understand the symbolism of these appearances. First of all, then, "the myrtle trees which were in the bottom;" do they not fittingly represent the Church of God in the condition in which it was then placed? The myrtle stands in Scripture for the fruit of the Spirit. Instead of the thorn there shall come up the fir tree and instead of the brier there shall come up the myrtle tree. It is lowly, yet beautiful and fragrant, and its leaf is ever green. Here you have not only a lowly shrub, but a lowly situation. The myrtles were in a hollow, which appears to have been surrounded with hills. How appropriately this suggests the adverse circumstances in which the obedient remnant were at that time situated. They would have felt that they were "brought very low," sojourning indeed in a valley of Baca. And round them on every side rise the towering hills, not in friendly strength, as the mountains are round about Jerusalem, but in hostile confederacy, menacing their life. Such was the attitude of the surrounding nations.

But who is this mysterious horseman that stands "in the midst" of the myrtles? To that question there can be but one answer. It is the Lord Jesus Christ. To Him alone can the description given fitly be applied. First of all He is called a man, then the Angel of Jehovah, and last of all Jehovah Himself, for it is He who is to be understood as also the speaker in the 13th verse. This is the man who is God's Fellow, who then too, as now, was Mediator between God and men, and was wont to appear to His Church in human form. He is riding upon a red horse. The colour is significant. It speaks of war. He is a Warrior, this horseman, and a Leader and Commander of warriors; for behind Him stand other riders, some on red horses, the instruments of His vengeance, some on white, the messengers of peace, and others on speckled horses, signifying that in their mission judgment and mercy are blended.

"His state
Is kingly: thousands at His bidding speed,
And post o'er land and ocean without rest."

Here, then, is the first element of encouragement in the vision. The Church is weak and oppressed, her enemies are numerous and powerful, she seems likely to fall an easy prey to their hate; but Christ is in the midst of the Church, and therefore "she shall not be moved: God shall help her, and that right early." As John saw Him in Patmos, "walking among the seven golden

candlesticks," so to Zechariah, also "in the spirit," He appears among the myrtle trees, ever watchful of His people's circumstances, guiding their destinies, ready to interfere at any moment on their behalf. He may have seemed neglectful, uninterested, holding aloof from their affairs: Zion may have been saying "The Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me;" but here He is represented as ever standing in their very midst, with their walls continually before Him. He possesses numerous agents who scour the whole earth hither and thither, fulfilling His pleasure. He is the great Commander; and those other riders are the swift and strong instruments that carry out His designs. Does He see fit to strike a blow at the enemy, to thwart their plans, or restrain their violence, or punish their sins, then behind Him

"Bright harnessed angels stand in order serviceable;"

they of the red horses, whose mission is associated with judgment. Has the time come to favour Zion? does she need comfort and strength? does He wish to turn His hand in mercy and loving-kindness "upon the little ones?" there are the men of the white horses not less able and willing to obey his behests. Does He desire information regarding the enemy, the extent of his resources, or his plan of attack, or the disposition of his forces? then here too is his Intelligence Department, keen-eyed emissaries who "walk to and fro through the earth," noticing every detail, anticipating every move, and speeding back to report to their Lord. In short, we have here the symbols of resistless might and unfailing knowledge. Christ has a mighty arm, both to smite the wicked and to succour the righteous; He watches over the interests of His people with a sleepless eye, and He is ever ready to intervene in their time of need.

The prophet now proceeds to narrate the explanation he received of these appearances. By him stood an angel, who acted the part of an interpreter. Of him he asked about the riders in the myrtles, and the man on the red horse himself furnishes the information. "These are they," he says, "whom the Lord hath sent to walk to and fro through the earth." These messengers now hand in their report; they have been to and fro through the earth, and this is what they have to say regarding its condition—"Behold all the earth sitteth still, and is at rest."

These words refer to the condition of the heathen world, particularly the nations that were round about the chosen people. They sat still and were at rest. They appeared to enjoy peace and prosperity: they "sat still" in the midst of plenty, they were "at rest" in the consciousness of strength and security. What a contrast between their condition and that of the Jews—the one flourishing and powerful, the other feeble and afflicted, and tossed with disabling fears. This was a contrast of which the Jews would have been painfully conscious. It doubtless added to their perplexity. Their enemies had peace and plenty; *they* had trouble

and want. Did God know, and was there knowledge in the Most High? If He had a favour unto them, would He have dealt with them so?

But here we have an assurance which is designed to answer this troubled questioning. The Lord does know. Here are His messengers who have returned, and are representing to Him all the facts of the case. He knows the contrast; let them not be afraid that their way is hid from the Lord.

But more than that, He *acts* on His knowledge. The man on the red horse, who is here called the Angel of the Lord, now assumes the part of Intercessor. He is not unmoved by the intelligence which has been communicated to Him, and He makes it the subject of an appeal to Heaven. "O Lord of Hosts, how long wilt Thou not have mercy on Jerusalem and on the cities of Judah, against which Thou hast had indignation these threescore and ten years." Here is further encouragement. Christ is not a passive spectator of His Church's affairs. He is actively pleading her cause, and the voice of His intercession "rises like a fountain for her night and day." He is ever an advocate with the Father, presenting her case in the Court of Heaven. "How long," He cries, "will this condition of things endure, the Church afflicted, and the world at ease. 'Tis time Thou work, Lord; this height of the world's prosperity and this depth of the Church's adversity call alike to Thy justice and Thy mercy."

The Intercessor prevails. The result of His pleading is that He is able to speak to the interpreting angel "with good words and comfortable words;" and these words the angel in turn conveys to the prophet. Zechariah is commanded to deliver to the people a message which may be said to embody the substance of the vision. Let us briefly glance at the leading points in these "good and comfortable words."

(a) "The Lord is jealous for Jerusalem and Zion with a great jealousy." Let them not think that He views with indifference their sorrows and their dangers. However much their outward circumstances might seem to point to a different conclusion, yet they are very near to God's heart. He that touches them touches the apple of his eye. Them only has He known of all the families of the earth, and their very afflictions are an evidence of His love. They may seem to have been given over to their enemies' will, and to have been allowed to waste away in utter neglect; but in God's heart the fire of a great jealousy has been continually burning, and His loving hand has been about them when they knew it not.

(b) He is "very sore displeased with the heathen that are at ease." So little is worldly prosperity to be regarded as an evidence of divine favour. The heathen seemed prosperous and secure, but God is sore displeased with them; the Church is afflicted and tossed with tempest, but God is jealous for her with the jealousy of a great love. The heathen had exceeded the

bounds of their commission. "I was but a little displeased, and they helped forward the affliction." The meaning of these words is rather difficult to express. "In a little wrath" the Lord had given over His people into the hands of the heathen, because of their own unfaithfulness; the Assyrian was the rod of His anger; but the cruelty and oppression of the heathen had exceeded the measure of the divine chastisement. "In all the wantonness of insult and outrage, they had aggravated the affliction to the utmost limit of their power."

(c) He is "returned to Jerusalem with mercies." The time to favour her is come. The winter of her desolation is past, the rain of her chastisement is over and gone. Not alone have the Jews come back to Jerusalem: the Lord has returned also, and dwells in their midst. And the Temple shall be built; let them have no misgivings on that point; other hands than theirs have been at the laying of the foundations, and those same hands shall also finish it. The line also shall be stretched forth upon Jerusalem; the designer and the builder have their work to do to restore its former glories. The land shall enjoy prosperity. New cities shall spring up throughout its length and breadth, and the Lord shall comfort Zion, and manifest that He hath desired Jerusalem "for His habitation."

The truths taught in this vision are of abiding comfort for the Church of Christ. She is still in the valley surrounded by the frowning hills. She still seems afflicted and forsaken, while the world prospers and is at ease. But let us not forget the man on the red horse. He has not yet left His post. Still there He stands, and His eye has not grown dim with watching, nor His heart weary with waiting. He still knows all the phases of her changing need, He still pleads her case before His Father's throne; and when the time to favour her shall have come, He will again appear in His glory, and turn the shadow of death into the morning.

Sayings of Alexander Gair.

Christ raised Lazarus from the dead by the power of His God-head, but He wanted those who stood by to loose off his grave clothes. Although Christ brings the soul alive by His eternal power, He leaves many of its trials and temptations to be loosed off by His Church.

Speaking of the tree of life which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month, he asked the question, "Which is the dead month of winter?" and answered, "It's when you don't feel you have Christ, and when you have no sorrows for the want of Him. But even then the power of Christ is able to save you."¹

¹ These notes, along with other matter, were sent by one signing "A Sincere Friend" some years ago, but were overlooked.—ED.

Striking Notes of Rev. John Macrae

(MACRATH MOR).

THE following notes describe a remarkable incident in the early life of the late Rev. John Macrae, of Knockbain and Greenock, as told by himself:—¹

"In our late times people are satisfied with what they call a good sermon or lecture on the Sabbath. In the early days (of Mr. Macrae) when one was made spiritually alive to see how dreadful it is to be a sinner in a sinful state under the wrath, nothing could relieve or satisfy that one but Christ." Speaking thus one night in Mr. Kennedy's house in Kishorn, Mr. Macrae went on to tell how, at one time, in this desire to hear a sermon in which perhaps he might find Christ, he set out on a Friday from Arnisdale for Redcastle, a distance of 80 miles over hills and glens, finishing the return journey on Tuesday, with his feet weary; but he did not regret the trip. He knew that he could hear sermons nearer hand; but was Christ to be found in them? One asked him if that was the first time he was at Redcastle. "O no," he said. "I was then teaching a school in Arnisdale, but I have a vivid remembrance of the first time I went to Redcastle. I walked over the hills, and reached Strathconon on the Saturday, and called there on Roderick Mackenzie (Ruairidh Phadruig). At an early hour on Sabbath morning we both set out on the next tramp of twenty miles to Redcastle. In the parish of Urray, long before daylight, we came to a small cottage, well known to Roderick, but never seen by me. There was light in the window. Roderick opened the door and entered. In the first room an aged woman was sitting before a spark of fire on the hearth. Roderick passed on to the second room, and I followed. There we found lying on bed Eleidh Dhall (Blind Helen)—blind indeed in the world, but "light in the Lord," the word of life dwelling richly in her heart. Unaware of a stranger being present, the conversation between herself and Roderick was so richly experimental and encouraging that at last I ventured to say a word. She started, and sat up in bed, excitedly asking, 'Who is there? Who is there?' Roderick, to dispel her seeming fear, told her that it was a young man that was along with him, and that she need not be afraid. 'But,' she said, 'in my sleep last night I heard that voice preaching, and you will hear it yet from the pulpit.' In my thoughts at that time there was nothing in the world more unlikely than that I would ever be a minister. I frequently visited her after this, and I never met another woman like her, except one lady in Greenock, who besides her godliness had the advantages of education. When, in my study, I made up my mind to visit her. She always sent the girl to open the door, saying, 'Mr. Macrae is coming.'"

¹ The narrator is the late Mr. Duncan MacIver, cabinetmaker, Inverness, from whose manuscript this is taken down.

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

(Continued from page 387.)

II. When we spoke of innovations we referred to instrumental music in the worship of God. Against this novelty, now so generally introduced into the Presbyterian Church, we hereby lift up our earnest and united protest for several reasons.

1st—Because it is a great Scriptural principle laid down in our Confession of Faith “that nothing is to be used in the worship of God but what has been prescribed by Him in His Word.” But the use of instruments in divine worship, under the Gospel dispensation, is nowhere prescribed or sanctioned in the New Testament. Every well-taught child in the Presbyterian Church knows that what is forbidden in the Second Commandment is “the worshipping of God by images, or any other way not appointed in His Word,” and the Larger Catechism pronounces such worship to be only “will-worship, and therefore wrong.” At the coming of Christ the whole of the Mosaic economy, including, of course, the Davidic institution, ended, and was merged into the Spiritual Kingdom of Christ, when things literal received their spiritual meaning, and so the whole Mosaic ritual was abolished. This is manifest from the words of the Apostle to the Collosians :—“Let no man judge you in respect to a new moon or holy day,” which, be it observed, were the only times when the use of instruments in God’s worship would be lawful. Then in the fifteenth chapter of Acts we read of the “falling” of “the tabernacle of David,” and Paul calls the observance of days, months, etc., “the beggarly elements of bondage,” thus showing that all Mosaic times were typical only and so came to an end, the Sabbath law being excepted and continuing the same, because it was not Mosaic, but existed from the Creation. Hence it follows, seeing all divine sanction of instruments in the worship of God ceased entirely at the introduction of Christianity, the New Testament contains no authority whatever for their use either direct or implied; and surely this ought to settle the question for all who profess to take the Gospel for their rule or guide in such matters. God is, therefore, not to be worshipped now “with men’s hands” or fingers in manipulating either the strings of a harp or the stops of an organ.

2nd—Further, organs are a grievous and unwarranted misapplication of the pecuniary resources of the Church of God. They are often enormously expensive. The cost of the instrument itself, and the salary paid to the performer, make up together an extravagant sum, which ought to be laid out either on foreign missions, for the salvation of the perishing heathen, or else in assisting poor congregations at home to support ordinances, or in

upholding some charitable institution. Mr. Spurgeon tells, in one of his printed discourses, that "seven of the leading Ritualist churches in London, in the year 1872, contributed among them only £13 7s. for the support of foreign missions." And yet that one of their incumbents stated on another occasion, before a committee of his church, that the cost of his choir alone was £1000 sterling a year, "Oh, model church!" exclaims the good man, "with what wisdom has thou acted! Behold thou givest £2 for the salvation of the heathen and £1000 for a box of whistles with a set of singing men and singing women to make music withal! Theirs is a religion of sensuous gratification, not of winning souls to Christ. But if the world were indeed to be regenerated by organs it would be time for us to cease our ministry." Choirs may be objectionable for more reasons than one, and many congregations have no choirs, but only a precentor, and sometimes a very poor one too. But in both cases we can at least have human voices to call forth our sympathies in a way which organs never did and never can do. And what says the great John Owen? "It is a well known fact in the history of religion that when the religious life is strong and communion with God and eternal realities vivid and close, the fine arts are neglected in worship; but when the souls of men have lost the vivid sense of the divine presence and the joy of fellowship with the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, then there is a cry for pictures, statuary, and sensuous music to fill up the place left vacant by the receding presence of Jehovah."

3rd—But again. The Saviour declares the time is now come when those who would "worship the Father who is a Spirit, must worship Him in Spirit and in truth." The true worshippers are themselves the only harps or organs to be employed in God's service. We are "to sing with the understanding" and to "make melody in our hearts to the Lord." But an organ has neither understanding nor heart—being only an insensate, unconscious machine, made up of timber, metal, and other like materials. And to enable us to appreciate, as we ought, the true worth of its performances in God's service, we have only to think of Paul's words when he describes what is utterly worthless by calling it "sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal." That instrumental music has its uses, however, we do not mean to dispute. It may serve several good purposes in common society, but none of these can extend to any part of God's worship. Even an irrational animal, though endowed with the highest instinct, is wholly incapable of worshipping God; how much more is a dead insensate organ? Its advocates, however, call it only a "Help" in divine worship. But "does not help, in the performance of any action, imply its taking a part of that action?" which surely no dead instrument can do. We know that to many it would prove a hindrance rather than a help. But the organ has also sometimes been put on a level with the tuning fork. Well, we have no objection, only let it do just what the tuning fork does—that is, let it stop

before the singing begins, and then its opponents will have far less ground of complaint.

4th—Again, the great majority of hearers are not qualified to join in instrumental music without producing discord. This is acknowledged by some advocates of organs, and they say that in such a case those hearers ought to be silent. “But would it not be more seemly that the organ was silent?” True, if some were to raise their voices very high it might occasion a discord. But have not the friends of the organ also held it to be one of the excellencies of that instrument that it drowns the voice of discord, although in saying so they risk the admission that it may drown the voices of the worshippers as well? And so it would appear after all that to drown the human voice almost altogether is a help to devotion! In other words, the thunder peal of an organ is a help to the voice which it will not suffer to be heard at all except very faintly by the nearest ear! But “when a tornado or hurricane sweeps you helplessly before it or hurls you to the ground, would you say it was only helping you to walk or run?”

5th—Again, instrumental music in Christian churches is, comparatively speaking but a modern thing—not older at furthest than the full establishment of Popery in what are called the dark ages. It had no place in the Apostolic Church, nor for centuries afterwards, and “even when introduced it had nothing accompanying it belonging to the Davidic ritual—as for example, no Levite, no variety of other instruments, no particular tunes, and no temple.” Some of these things perished with the first temple, and all the rest at the coming of Christ. As Popery advanced, however, and corruption after corruption found its way into the Church, organs began to be gradually and stealthily introduced. And here it will not do to say, as has been sometimes said, that for nearly seven centuries Christians were too poor to provide organs. Even under Pagan persecution Christians were often the majority in some of the towns and cities of the Roman Empire, so that they could warrantably say to the heathen around them—“We have left you nothing but the temples of your gods.” And when Christianity became established by Constantine, with a view mainly no doubt to serve his own political purposes, we may say Christianity then commanded the wealth of the Roman Empire, and if Christians wanted organs then could they not have got them? Most assuredly they could. But they were not generally wanted. “But without anything like direct ecclesiastical sanction they found their way little by little into the Church, just very much as they do to-day, step by step through the sensuous and innovating tendencies of the age.”

6th—Again, we object to organs in the church because they help to make Christian worship sensuous. The Old Testament ritual altogether, according to the Apostle Paul, belonged only to the childhood of the Church. But such a ritual is now become unprofitable and vain, and is no better than a yoke and a bondage.

But it appears that the pure spiritual ordinance of Christ is not sensuous enough to satisfy the cravings for sensational effect which distinguish Christians of the present day. This love of the sensuous shows the growing power and influence of the senses over the intellect. But the religion of Jesus has no place for "art and man's device." For what do we mean by sensuousness? What, but a taste and a relish and even a passion for what comes in through the eye and the ear, rather than what comes out from the heart by the voice and the lips. The very attempt to defend sensuous worship just proves of itself the necessity that exists for an honest and resolute protest against the tendency of our times.

7th—Once more, the introduction of instruments into churches has a manifest tendency to engender strife and division in congregations and even in families. Those who bring in such devices are justly called innovators, because they are acting contrary to the fixed statutes and long established practice of the Christian Church, and, as we have already said, contrary to their own standards. Yet they dare not allege that such innovation is a duty, or that not to use instruments in divine worship can wound any conscience; whilst, on the other hand, they cannot but see that using them actually does wound the consciences of many of the most earnest and enlightened Christians. They can only say that instrumental music is expedient and they call it a help to devotion, although not a part of it. They are, therefore, on their own showing not bound by conscience either to practise it themselves or to press the use of it on others, and when they do the one or the other how can they clear themselves from the charge of disturbing the Church of God? Whereas the opponents of such novelties, on the other hand, "aim at no disturbing movements." They merely resolve to stand firm to the old terms on which both parties originally became members of the Church. Instruments are recommended not on the ground of Scripture or of conscience, but of taste only as a means of intensifying religious feeling and emotion—just as if feeling and emotion were of themselves real devotion, or even necessarily led to it. "The right emotion is that which comes from devotion, but true devotion never springs from mere emotion—"which may be, and most commonly is, no more than temporary excitement, a thing as evanescent as "the morning cloud and the early dew." Moreover, is not "the Lord our God a jealous God, who as King and Head of His Church challenges it as His own inalienable right to regulate and prescribe whatever relates to His own worship? "In vain," says He, "do they worship Me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men!" In every approach to Him ought we not, therefore, to ask: "Is this or that according to the will of God?" We must take heed lest we "offer strange fire before the Lord," and lest He meet us with the alarming question: "Who hath required this at your hand?" It is perilous to take a single step off the ground of divine precep

and prescription. Take heed," said the Lord to Moses, "that thou make all things according to the pattern shewn thee in the Mount." And God is the same God still. We must take heed, therefore, that we intermeddle not with His royal prerogative whenever we are tempted to adopt, without His positive sanction, anything whatever, merely because it seems to us adapted to do good. This has long been one of the plausible but most baneful errors of the Man of Sin himself. It lies in fact at the root of that system of corrupt Christianity which the whole Protestant world unanimously rejects as anti-Christian, notwithstanding its fine pictures and images and its grand and impressive ceremonial—having "a show of wisdom," but only "in will-worship"—unacceptable to God and fatal to all vital godliness. Adopt this principle but once and where shall we be able to fix its limits? Let human ingenuity, on any pretence whatever, once begin to meddle with the devotion of God's Church and where will it stop? "Doubtless it was as much in mercy and loving kindness to us men as it was a jealous regard to His own glory that the only King and Head of the Church did, from the beginning, so carefully exclude from His Church every device and invention of man—setting upon every ordinance and every institution the stamp and seal of His own sovereign authority." "Error in the Church is like the letting out of water, small and easily corrected at the first, but ever acquiring force and volume, until at length it breaks through all barriers and becomes fairly uncontrollable. Only admit one human device and soon another and another will follow." "To the law and to the testimony." If men "speak not according to this word it is because there is no light in them."

By divine appointment under the Old Testament ritual Psalms and musical instruments invariably went together; but what God thus joined together man is now putting asunder, and to please and conciliate the world a human is substituted instead of a divine Psalmody. And what a falling off is here. Psalms bear upon them a stamp of authority which hymns, be they ever so excellent, do not. They bind the conscience in a way which nothing human ever can do. If you use Hymns and exclude the Psalms entirely, and this is sure to be the result at last, we can warrantably affirm that you are guilty of despising an ordinance of God—whereas, if we confine ourselves exclusively to the use of Psalms, and refuse to make use of hymns at all, you know you cannot warrantably turn round and say of us that we are despising a divine ordinance. Finally, on this point, the advocate for Psalms, to the exclusion of all human compositions, is the only true and consistent advocate for union—union amongst all true Protestant denominations on earth; and how so? When Christians divide and break away from one another and from separate organisations it is well known they invariably adopt a hymn book containing something less or more of the grounds and reasons of their separation; and the New Hymnal clenches

the schism, strengthening and perpetuating it. Whereas, if all Christians adopted God's hymnal—the Book of Psalms—then schism would die, and sectarianism would have nothing comparatively to feed or foster it, and so division and mutual estrangement and alienation among God's people must cease and give place to universal harmony and love. Certain it is if ever Christians are “to see eye to eye” they must all be brought to use God's one book of devotion, the Psalms of David.

III. The only other innovation imported of late into the Presbyterian Church which we notice at present, and against which we feel it our duty to testify, refers to certain modes of raising money for ecclesiastical purposes. These modes are varied according to circumstances, and, while the main object in them all is the same, viz., the raising of money, yet different names are given them, and they are somewhat differently conducted. We refer to church bazaars, socials, tea-meetings, soirees, etc., etc. These gatherings are held either in public halls or in the basements of churches; or, where neither of these exist, as generally happens in country places, in the churches themselves—that is in the same places where Christians assemble on the Lord's day to worship God, to hear His Word preached, and from time to time where they sit down at a Communion table and “show the Lord's death till He come.” Now, waving a good many minor considerations, we object to all such novelties in the Church of God, amongst others, for the two following reasons—1st Because they secularise the Church of Christ; and, 2nd, Because they corrupt and degrade the Christian ministry. 1st All such things have a manifest tendency to secularise the Church of Christ. If money is needed, as doubtless it is, why not, after clearly describing the object in view, its nature and importance, appeal directly to the Christian love and liberality of the people—old and young? This course would at least be Apostolic, and Christian ministers could then say with Paul, “If we have ministered to you in spiritual things, is it any great matter if we should reap your carnal things?” and more especially when we have nothing selfish or personal in view! Every favourable response to such an appeal, however humble, would most certainly tend to strengthen Christian principle in the responding party, and his or her heart would be the better of it; whereas, approach the same persons with a mere carnal entertainment, whether in the form of food or of fun, and you deal with them on merely worldly principles; and so, in place of teaching them the holiness of giving for Christ's sake, you only foster in them, and in yourself at the same time a low conformity with the world, and help to make both parties more worldly than before. The object we have in view may be ever so good in itself, but we must seek its attainment in a way which is right and good also, or else adopt the Romish principle, “that the end justifies the means,” and, as Scripture expresses it, “do evil that good may come.”

But, in the second place, we are persuaded that such things tend to corrupt and degrade the ministry. In all those gathering, of whatever name, it is always the minister who must preside, and who, with the help for the most part of his brother ministers, is expected to furnish the mental food best adapted to the taste of the audience, which, being chiefly made up of the young and light-hearted and most thoughtless of all the surrounding neighbourhood, it is an easy matter to guess what the character of the addresses must be. It is unnecessary to advert to the many startling and painful, yet well-attested reports circulated as to the nature of those addresses. One thing must be obvious from the nature of the case, viz., that the dignity, the sacredness, and the peculiar weight and influence of the ministerial office, cannot but suffer seriously on such occasions, that is, if they are going to be made, as it is commonly called, "a success;" or, in other words, if they are to replenish the congregational treasury.

To be popular on such occasions, the minister must lay aside altogether, for the time, the character of Christ's Ambassador, and assume, in its stead, that of the harlequin or buffoon; and, by light jesting, witty puns, and mirth-awaking tales and anecdotes, and especially, if he has any talent that way, by putting forth his powers of mimicry with all its diverting tricks and gesticulations, no matter though it be at the expense of departed saints who were lately the salt of the earth. One is always quite safe and risks no libel suit in burlesquing the dead. By such means as these, we say he must elicit from his hearers thunders of applause, and keep them in a continual roar of merriment. But now we ask in all sobriety will not all this be damaging to his prospects of usefulness as a Christian minister? Will it not compromise the sanctity of his divine mission? Will not his light manner at the social or soiree go far to take off the edge of his sharpest and best chosen words in the pulpit and at the communion-table? In a word, we just ask can such lightness consist with the gravity of a bishop or overseer in the House of God? Or can it be thought in keeping with his ordination vows when solemnly set apart for the office of the ministry, by laying on of the hands of the Presbytery? We do not—we can not believe it. Therefore, we lift up our testimony against this most injurious innovation as no other than a prostitution of the ministerial office; and a device of the great Enemy to counteract, and, if possible, to frustrate the very end and design of the Gospel ministry.

DONALD FRASER, Elder.

"If I should see the sin of shame on the one hand, and the pain of hell on the other, and must, of necessity, choose one, I would rather be thrust into hell without sin than go into heaven with sin."—*Anselm*

The Higher Criticism and Foreign Missions.

ONE of the gravest aspects of the Higher Criticism is its bearing on Foreign Missions. It has hitherto been the singular glory of Christianity that it sent forth its messengers into all the world with a Book for which they claimed absolute inerrancy, to whose Divine authority they ever made their last appeal, and whose pre-eminence they were able to establish "by many infallible proofs." It would appear, however, that all this is now changed. The Bible is discredited at home—at least wherever the hypotheses of the Critics are accepted as facts; and men go across the seas to convey to the heathen the knowledge of a Book which is full of mistakes, which is defective even in its morality, not to speak of its history and its science, and in which the ruthless analysis of the Critic has left only a tiny residuum of truth. Can we wonder if missionary effort along these lines means failure? Can we wonder if the fervour and enthusiasm of other days are gone? What kind of reception can we expect for a Gospel whose light is so much darkness? No wonder that intelligent Mahommedans and Hindoos are rejoicing in what they regard as the overthrow of Christianity, and treating with scorn the pretensions of a religion whose sacred writings carry no greater authority than their own.

We have reason for thankfulness, however, that the Higher Criticism has not yet carried the mission field. There are still not a few, all honour to them, who are "faithful among the faithless." They have held their ground against the current of modern religious thought, and abide fearlessly by the teaching of the Bible regarding itself. They have their own battles to fight, and their own reproach to bear, as the faithful have had in all generations; they bear the burden and heat of the day in more senses than one beneath those tropical suns; but those who are on the Lord's side shall have the Lord of Hosts on their side; and the Cause for which they are contending shall yet triumph gloriously, however unpopular it may be to-day.

The following extracts are from letters of a young Presbyterian missionary in India. They throw a strong light on the condition of unsettlement and upheaval which prevails abroad, and are of interest and authority as expressing the views of a man who is face to face in actual practice with the situation created by the Higher Criticism.

"22nd May, 1903.

"Things are coming to a crisis now about the Higher Criticism. Since the Calcutta Conference upon the subject, a month or two ago, things have been gradually boiling up. Mr. — has been the means of strengthening more than one in the traditional views of the inspiration and inerrancy of the Bible, and the C.M.S. missionaries are, as far as we know at present, all sound, but unfortunately the L.M.S. and U.F. missionaries are not so. Mahommedans are rejoicing in the overthrow of the Bible, and

the Hindoos claim the same inspiration for their Vedas as do the Critical School for our Scriptures, and this is from the admissions about the Bible made at that conference. Dr. Paton, when last I heard him speak in Edinburgh, said 'how much it pained one to hear the professors of the Church proclaim as not the Word of God that which had been the means of salvation to the cannibals of the New Hebrides.' How much does it also pain one to find those who are supposed to be spreading the Word of God among the heathen, and feeding the Church upon it, instead of doing so, telling the native Church and the heathen that the Bible is no longer an infallible guide, that its books were not written at the time when they are said to be written, and that the human authors were not the men who have come down to us as such. The Pentateuch was not written by Moses, the Psalms were not written by David (some of the critics say that some of them were), Esther is a legend, and Daniel a romance: Abraham and the patriarchs belong to the region of myths, and Isaiah never prophesied of the Messiah. Professor G. A. Smith in his book distinctly states this last as a *fact*, even the 53rd chapter he refers to one of the prophets; and last of all that the Lord Jesus was not divine! And yet these people say they have a message to proclaim from the Bible! Surely He is coming soon when it seems as if even the elect are being deceived. Shall He find faith in the earth when He cometh? We who are out here feel the effects of these critical views far more than they do at home. . . . I know I have written strongly on this question; but it is only the truth; and one can hardly help doing so when one feels how much harm is being done by it out here. One is sorry for those who hold these views, and especially for those that began them, for they have already caused, and will yet cause, many of His little ones to offend; and 'Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap.'

"20th October, 1903.

"The fight for the Truth will soon be at its height, and although the despised 'traditionalists' may be few in number, yet we know the Lord is on our side. Mr. — has written an article on the 'Higher Criticism and Missions' for *East and West*, an S.P.G. magazine. If you noticed the *Christian* of the 8th, you would have seen a notice of it. His article is followed by another, 'The Higher Criticism an aid to Missions.' We have all read this article through, and fail to see where the 'aid' comes in. But Mr. — clearly points out that a missionary who holds the Critical views has no Divine message to give, and logically should cease to be a missionary. . . . Of course the missionaries out here say, 'We don't go in for the views of the advanced Critics, but we hold to those, such as Professor G. A. Smith, who are believing Critics.' But few, except those who have read his books, know how far Professor Smith has gone. He distinctly states that Isaiah liii. refers to Jeremiah, that the God of Israel was first a tribal God,

who gradually *evolved* to be the God of the universe in the knowledge of the Israelites ; that in the early history of Israel, up to the times of the kings, there is no real history, but only a collection of myths and legends which have probably grown up around a substratum of facts ; and he distinctly states that he doesn't wish anything more than this *substratum of facts*. Unfortunately, we are not so easily satisfied, and wish a good deal more. For if God's revelation to us be one of truth, which is in the Bible, then let us accept it. But if the Bible is not a true revelation, then it is no use as a guide in this life or as a director for our eternal welfare. The advanced Critics, as they are styled, merely carry out to a logical conclusion the views which are held by the moderate school, and this logical conclusion will sooner or later force itself upon the minds of all those who now claim to be 'moderate.' For us who believe the Bible to be God's Word, a belief upon which our Lord and His apostles set their seal, it is not a matter of 'views' but of fact. We believe—therefore have we spoken.

I don't think I mentioned how, when I came out here first, I was in a terrible state of doubt and anxiety. For if the Critical views were correct, what message had I to give? I can recall now my earnest prayers for leading and guidance into the way of truth and light ; and I feel thankful for the way in which I have gradually been led to see how false these Critical views are, and how firm is the foundation upon which our feet stand, even upon the 'sure word of prophecy.'"

These words speak for themselves, and need no comment. They afford a remarkable confirmation of a statement which has not long ago been publicly made in this country, to the effect that it would be a good thing if a section of the missionaries of India were "bundled home." Our heartiest good wishes are with those who, like the writer of these letters, believe, "and therefore have spoken."

A. S.

The Sabbath in Glasgow.—At a meeting of the Glasgow Town Council, held on Thursday, 23rd February, it was agreed to refer the question of the Sabbath opening of the Museums and Art Galleries to the ratepayers. A plebiscite is to be taken on the question, which measure will cost the city £1000. We believe, however, the Sabbath will be safer in the hands of the ratepayers than in those of the Councillors. The speeches of several of those who advocated Sabbath opening of the Museums and Galleries were very flippant and Sadducean. If the poll is not swamped by Romanists and Secularists, the voice of the average citizen, we are confident, will be for the closing of the Museum doors on Sabbath. It is observable that Councillor Battersby, the working man's civic representative, has always opposed Sabbath opening of public institutions.

Searmon.

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

1st November, 1863.

“Agus so, air dhuibh fios na h-aimsir a bhi agaibh, gur mithich dhuinn a nis mosgladh o chodal oir a ta ar slainte ni's faigse na 'n uair a chreid sinn.”—
 Rom. xiii. 11.

[S priseil staid an anama 'nuair a tha am bas agus siorruidheachd a' tighinn gu bhi 'nan comhfhurtachd do'n chreutair. An t-anam a thainig gu sin cha-n ann 'na chodal a rainig e air. Tha am bulc mor ag iarraidh a bhi beo fada gu bhi ni's fhaide mach a ifrinn. Ach, a chreutair, ged a bhiodh tu beo mile bliadhna cha bhi siorruidheachd ni's giorra dhuit. Agus ma tha thu glic, dean spairn gu ruigheachd air a' staid sin anns am bi am bas agus siorruidheachd 'nan comhfhurtachd dhuit. Agus gu cinnteach 'se sin an ni airson am bu mhath le cuid a bhi beo. Agus an t-aideachadh anns nach 'eil a bheag de sin cha mhor is fhiu e. Thusa a tha leantuinn nam meadhonan gun a bheag de sin cha do thoisich thu ceart. Tha na naoimh air an samhachadh anns an sgriobtur ri solus, “a dhealraicheas ni's mo agus ni's mo gu ruig an la iomlan.” Ach thusa, nach do thoisich ceart buanaichidh tu a'd' mheall laidir gu la do bhàis co fhad o Dhia 's a bha thu an la a thoisich thu. Agus tha aobhar agad a bhi rannsachadh ciud e am bunait air am bheil thu seasamh.

Tha an t-Abstol an so a labhairt air an uachdaranachd thimeil, agus bhiodh an saoghal so uamhasach a dh' easbhuidh air sin agus co fhad 'sa tha an riaghladh a reir aithne Dhe 'se comharrachadh Dhe e, mar a chi sinn anns a' 4mh earrainn. Agus tha e 'dol air aghaidh mar sin a' misneachadh clann Chrìosd. B' iad na creutairean 'bu neochiontaich, gidheadh 's iad a bu mho a bha fulang anns an t-saoghal. Agus tha an t-Abstol 'g am misneachadh leis na briathraibh so. “A ta ar slainte nis ni's fhaigse na 'nuair a chreid sinn.”

'S iongantach aon bhi air a ghleidheadh cho beo 's a bha e 'n uair a thainig an Cruithear an toiseach d'a ionnsuidh. Tha sinn a' faicinn gu'n do thuit clo codail air na h-oighean glic mar air na h-oighean amaideach, 'S iongantach sin aon bhi air a thoirt beo mu 'bhith-bhuantachd; ach 's e iongantas nan iongantas aon a bhi air a chumail beo. Oir cha-n 'eil ni ann an nadur ach ni a chuireadh siorruidheachd as an t-sealladh agus a chuireadh anam a cuimhne. C'aite an cluinn thu focal ach focal a chuireadh siorruidheachd as an t-sealladh? Agus 's e sin cuid de innleachdan an droch spioraid, air chor 's gur iongantach aon a bhi air a chumail beo. “Agus air dhuibh fios na h-aimsir a bhi agaibh gur mithich dhuinn a nis mosgladh o chodal.” Am bheil gaoisteanan liath a fàs 'nad cheann? Is mithich dhuit a nis mosgladh o chodal. Agus eadhon thusa, anam ghrasmoir, “is mithich”

dhuit “a nis mosgladh o chodal. Oir a ta ar slainte nis ni’s fhaigse na ’n uair a chreid sinn,” crìoch a h-uile trioblaid, crìoch a h-uile buairidh nis ni’s fhaigse na ’n uair a chreid sinn.

Ann an labhairt o na briathraibh so bidh sinn,

I. A’ fosgladh ni-eigin de’n t-slaiente so a tha nis ni’s fhaigse na ’nuair a chreid sinn;

II. Ag ainmeachadh cuid de na nithibh a ta ann an suil an anama ’nuair a tha e toiseachadh an toiseach air a bhi ’g amharc ri Crìosd airson slainte;

III. A’ cur na ceisd cia mar a dh’ fheudar a radh gu’m bheil an slainte nis ni’s fhaigse na ’nuair a chreid iad; ni’s fhaigse na ’nuair a thoisich iad an toiseach air a bhi ’g amharc ri Iosa Crìosd airson slainte;

IV. A’ sealltuinn ris a’ bhuaidh a tha aig sin air cloinn Chrìosd, gur-mithich dhoibh a nis mosgladh o chodal; ’se sin a’ bhuaidh a tha aig air an anam ghrasmhor. Agus ’s iongantach sin, mar a tha anam grasmhor a’ tighinn gu crìch a thuruis gu’m bheil e fàs ni’s beothail an aite a bhi ’fas meadh-bhlath. Agus nach prìseil e bhi mar sin? Ach ciod air bith aite am bidh thusa tre ’n t-siorruidheachd bidh tu fàs ni’s cosmhuile ris an aite sin mar an t-arbhar ag abuchadh airson an fhoghair. Ach

I Ciod a tha air ’fhilleadh anns an t-slaiente so? Tha slainte anns a’ sgrìobtur a’ gabhail a stigh tearnadh a cunnart no a trioblaid mar a bha Israel aig a’ Mhuir Ruaidh, ’muair a thubhairt Maois ris an t-sluagh, “na biodh eagal oirbh, seasaibh agus faicibh slainte an Tighearna a dh’ oibrìcheas E dhuibh an diugh.” Bha a h-uile dorus eile dùinte ’nan aghaidh agus cha robh fosgladh air bith mur dearnadh an Tighearn e, air chor ’s gu’m feudar a radh ris an fhuasgladh, slainte an Tighearna. Agus cha-n eil saoradh air bith ris nach fheudar slainte an Tighearna radh, ach tha sinne cho dall is nach fhaic sinn e. Faic Ionatan a ris. Bhlais e air mil agus thubhairt Saul, “gu cinnteach gheibh thu bas a Ionatain. Ach fhreagair an sluagh, am faigh Ionatan bas a dh’ oibrich an t-saorsa mhor so? Na leigeadh Dia; oir maille ri Dia dh’ oibrich e an diugh.” Faic, ’s ann o Dhia bha an t-saorsa. Ach ’s e slainte spioradail a tha gu h-araidh againn anns an t-slaiente so, slainte o eucailleann spioradail agus tearnadh a cunnartan spioradail a reir an sgrìobtuir, “a’ faotainn crìoch bhur creidimh eadhon slainte bhur n-anam,” agus ann an aite eile, “Cionnus a theid sinn as ma ni sinn dimeas air slainte co mor?” Cionnus a theid sinn as o fhearg Dhe? Tha Simeon a ris ag radh, “a nis, a Thighearn, a ta thu leigeadh do do sheirbhiseach siubhal ann an sith a reir d’ fhocail, oir chunnaic mo shuilean do shlaiente”—sin an aon mheadhon a chomharraich Dia airson tearnadh an anama, air chor ’s gu’m feudar a radh ris an t-slaiente so foirfeachd na slainte, agus sin a’ tighinn ni’s fhaigse air a’ chrùnadh na ’nuair a chreid sinn. An la a chreid an creutair an toiseach shaoil e a shlaiente gle fhad as, ach a nis tha i tighinn ni’s fhaigse agus sin ann an iomadh doigh.

Tha i tighinn ni's fhaigse ann an seadh litireil; agus a' tighinn ni's fhaigse 'na smuaintean. Agus 's iongantach sin creutair a' faireachadh a shlainte a' tighinn ni's fhaigse gu's nach fhada gus am bi a' chlach mhullaich oirre, a' glaothaich, "gras, gras." Tha slainte an anama a' toiseachadh ann am maitheanas peacaidh. Gus am bi am peacadh air a mhaithheadh cha bhi slainte anns an anam. Bidh e euslainteach. 'S e maitheanas peacaidh a' cheud cheum de 'n t-slainte. Ach fhad 's a tha an creutair marbh gu spioradail cha-n 'eil faireachadh aig air cionta. Ach co luath 's a tha creutair air a thoirt beo gu spioradail, tha aithne air cionta tighinn a stigh agus tha sin a' toirt a stigh eagal fearg Dhe. Agus co fhad 'sa 'se sin cor a' chreutair tha e eucomasach gu'm bi an t-anam sin slan, no gu'm bi sonas aige ann an itheadh no ann an òl no ann an codal. Fagaidh so e mi-chomhfhurtail ann an staid sam bith anns an t-saoghal. Rinn sin an crun falamh do Dhaibhidh bhi faireachail air fearg Dhe. An do chuir sin thusa riamh a mach a comunn diomhain? Thusa a fhuair e chuir e mach a comunn diomhain thu. Dh' fhag cionta lomnochd thu agus tha binn an damnaidh uamhasach a bhi mach air aon.

Bha rìgh ann aon uair a bha air a thoirt beo mu churam anama agus a bha fo throm mhulad. Thainig a bhrathair 'ga fhaicinn agus bha e feoraich, c'arson a bha esan cho bronach 's an rioghachd uile fuidh, gu'm feudadh e an neach a b'aill leis a chur gu bas agus an neach a b'aill leis a ghleidheadh beo. Cha do fhreagair an rìgh. Ach b'e lagh na rioghachd, 'nuair a b'e toil an rìgh aon a chur gu bas, ordugh a thoirt an trompaid bhais bhi air a seirm aig a dhorus an oidhche sin. Air an oidhche sin fein dh' orduich an rìgh an trompaid bhais a sheideadh aig dorus a bhrathar. Ghrad leum am brathair as a leabaidh agus ann an tiota bha e a' gul agus a' bron aig cosan an rìgh. An sin dh' fheoraich an rìgh ris, "C'arson a tha thu 'gul? C'arson a tha thu ri bron marsin?" Fhreagair e air chrith, "O, nach d'orduich thu an trompaid bhais a sheideadh aig mo dhorus?" Thubhairt an rìgh, "tha sin a' cur crith ort. Agus am bheil iongantas ort ged tha mise bronach 'nuair a sheirm an Dia uile-chumhachdach trompaid an damnaidh shiorruidh aig mo dhorus?"

O! a pheacaich gun churam, tha an la a' tighinn anns an seirm an Dia shiorruidh trompaid an damnaidh shiorruidh aig do dhorus agus cuiridh e crith ort nach fhag thu tre 'n t-siorruidheachd. Ma chronaich E peacadh dhuit-se dh' fheuch E dhuit cionta ann am peacadh a bha toillteanach air fearg Dhe. 'S iongantach sin, anam a' faicinn ann am peacadh ni a tha toilltinn fearg Dhe. An t-anam a chunnaic sin fhuair e sealladh nach comasach e a chrathadh dheth gus an tog an Tighearn fein dheth e, agus sin ann an rathad co-sheasmhach ri a ghloir fein. Tha am peacadh uamhasach 'nuair a bhios e air 'fhoillseachadh.

Ach gun dol ni's fhaide air so, cha do chomharraich an Cruith-ea peacadh a mhaithheadh ann an doigh no air chumha air bith eile ach creidsinn ann an Iosa Criosd. "Dhasan tha na faidhean

uile toirt fianuis gu'm faigh gach neach a chreideas ann maitheanas nam peacadh tre 'ainm-san." Agus "air dhuinne fios a bhi againn nach 'eil duine air 'fhireanachadh o oibribh an lagha ach tre chreidimh Iosa Crìosd, chreid sinne fein ann an Iosa Crìosd chum gu'm biomaid air ar fireanachadh o chreidimh Chrìosd agus cha-n ann o oibribh an lagha, oir o oibribh an lagha cha bhi feoil sam bith air a fireanachadh." 'S e so comharrachadh Dhe agus tha e co-sheasmhach ri a ghloir agus thusa a dhiultas Crìosd cha-n fhaigh thu maitheanas peacaidh.

'S e bhi maitheadh peacaidh cuid de'n aoibhneas a chuireadh roimh Chrìosd air a' chram-cheusaidh. Bhi faicinn an aireimh mhoir a gheibheadh maitheanas d'a thrìd bha sin mar *chordial* milis da. Tha e sgriobhta, "de shaothair anama chi E agus bidh E toilichte." C'uine a chi E sin? Direach 'nuair a chi E Dia a' maitheadh peacaidh. 'Sann air a' chumha so a thainig E do'n t-saoghal, a choimhlion E an lagh agus a bhasaich E, gu'm faigheadh a h-uile aon a chreideadh ann maitheanas peacaidh. Fhuair E an gealladh so agus 's e obair an Spioraid Naomh bhi toirt beo an anama agus a bhi foillseachadh obair Chrìosd da. B' aithne do Dhia o shiorruidheachd eucomas an anama air creidsinn. 'S e gras a thoisich an obair agus 'se gras a chrunas i. Cha robh aon air a thoirt beo air mhodh eifeachdach slainteil mu a shiorruidheachd nach d' thainig am Biobull gu bhi mar lasraichean teine eadar e is Dia. Agus 'nuair a tha am Biobull marsin do'n anam cha bha e cho furasda dha bhi 'faicinn trocair, 'nuair a tha bagradh Dhia mar lasair theine 'na aghaidh. 'Se obair an Spioraid Nèomh bhi 'foillseachadh Chrìosd do'n anam. 'S ann mar sin a dh' fheudas pobull Dhe bhi iomadh la ann am meadhonan nan gras le faireachadh air fearg Dhe. 'S e an Spiorad Naomh mar thoradh anns an fhocal a tha 'tionndadh aghaidh an anama air Crìosd airson gu'm biodh E 'na Fhear-saoraidh dha, gu'n cleachdadh E oifigean Fear-saoraidh dha. Agus ann an sin feudaidh an Cruithear ann an doimhneachd a throcair faireachadh air maitheanas a thoirt do'n chreutair. 'S e ni naomh ard-uachdaranachd ann an Dia bhi 'foillseachadh do'n chreutair gu'm bheil a pheacaidhean air am maitheadh. Cha bhiodh e 'na ifrinn mhoir ged bhiodh an creutair air 'fhagail a' bron airson na rinn e gu la a bhais.

(Ri leantuinn.)

"GRAVE, SWEET MELODY."—We meet to worship God. We worship God by offering up to Him the oblation of holy affections. In singing, we offer up this oblation in unison. It is then a service in which every believer is expected to unite. Hence the airs should obviously be simple. They should be emphatically expressive of solemn, tender, and devout emotion. However well adapted music may be to the expression of other emotions, if it fail here, it is at best an impertinence. Unless it fan the flame of devotion, it were better to omit it entirely, and lift up our souls to God in silence.—*Casket of Odds and Ends.*

A Valuable Letter on Revivals.

By the late Rev. ARCHIBALD ALEXANDER, D.D., First Professor
in the Theological Seminary at Princeton, New Jersey.

THIS letter, which is taken from the life of Dr. Archibald Alexander, was addressed to Dr. Sprague, who published a work on Revivals in 1832 :—

Princeton, March 9, 1832.

REVEREND AND DEAR SIR,—In compliance with your request, I send you a few thoughts on revivals. I am gratified to learn that you are about to publish some lectures on this interesting subject. I hope they will be extensively useful ; and if you should judge that anything which I may write would subserve a valuable purpose, you are at liberty to make use of this letter as you may think best.

1. A revival or religious excitement may exist and be very powerful, and affect many minds when the producing cause is not the Spirit of God, and when the truth of God is not the means of the awakening. This we must believe, unless we adopt the opinion that the Holy Spirit accompanies error by his operations as well as truth, which would be blasphemous. Religious excitement has been common among Pagans, Mohammedans, heretics, and Papists. And in our time there have been great religious excitements among those who reject the fundamental doctrines of the Gospel as, for example, among the Christians, who are Unitarians, and the Newlights or Schismatics of the West, and the Campbellites, who deny the proper divinity of our Lord and the Scriptural doctrine of atonement. The whole religion of the Shakers also consists in enthusiastic excitement. Hence it is evident that revivals ought to be distinguished into such as are genuine and such as are spurious. And the distinction should depend on the doctrines inculcated, on the measures adopted, and the fruits produced. “Beloved,” says the Apostle John, “believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God.”

2. Again a revival or religious excitement may take place when a few persons only are under the saving operations of the Holy Spirit, but when many are affected by sympathy and by the application of extraordinary means of awakening the feelings. I have seen a powerful religious impression pervade a large congregation at once, so that very few remained unaffected, and most expressed their feelings by the strongest signs, and yet, as it afterwards appeared, very few of them became permanently serious. Besides when the Spirit operates savingly on some, there is reason to think that his common operations are experienced by many. The minds of the people generally become more serious and tender, and many are deeply convinced of the necessity of religion, and engage earnestly in prayer and in attendance on other means of grace. Now, while so many are affected, but few may be truly converted, and no human wisdom is adequate to discern between those who are

savingly wrought upon and those who are only the subjects of the common operations of the Holy Spirit. The tree which is covered with blossoms often produces little fruit. The wind which agitates the whole forest may tear up but few trees by the roots. Thus there may be great and promising appearances, and yet very little fruit. Temporary believers may use the same language, and exhibit to others precisely the same appearance as true converts. This consideration should be sufficient to prevent the practice lately introduced of admitting persons to the communion of the Church at the very meeting at which they are first awakened. There may be cases in which well instructed persons of good character may be received to the Lord's table as soon as they profess a hope of acceptance with God, but these should be considered exceptions to the general rule. Often the impressions produced at a public meeting, when strong excitements are applied to awaken the feelings, are as evanescent as the morning cloud or early dew. Many who eventually become truly pious entertain for a while hopes which they afterwards are convinced to be unfounded; and to pronounce such persons converted at once, and hurry their admission to the Lord's table, would be the most effectual method of preventing their saving conversion. There may be an error on the other side of too long a delay and of discouraging real believers from approaching the table of their Lord; but the error is on the safe side. As to apostolical precedent, it is just as strong for a community of goods: and after all, there is no undoubted case of any convert being immediately received to the Lord's Supper. They were baptised immediately on their profession, but this in our view is a different thing; for we admit infants to baptism, but not to the other sacrament. And the fact is that in every part of the world the plan of placing young converts in the class of catechumens to be instructed even prior to their Christian baptism was adopted. God often leaves His servants to find out by experience what is most expedient, and does not teach everything by inspiration as in the case of Moses in judging the people of Israel. And if experience has uttered her monitory voice clearly on any point I think she has in regard to this; and I have no doubt that future experience will fully corroborate the lessons of the past.

3. A real work of the Spirit may be mingled with much enthusiasm and disorder; but its beauty will be marred and its progress retarded by every such spurious mixture. Thus, also, individuals who are the subjects of special grace may for a while be carried away with erroneous notions and extravagant feelings. We must not, therefore, condemn all as deluded souls who manifest some signs of enthusiasm. But under the same revival or general excitement, while some are renewed and engrafted into Christ, others may be entirely under the influence of error, spiritual pride, and delusion. When the Son of Man sows good seed in His field will not the enemy be busy in sowing tares? And, doubtless, it often happens that by the rashness, fanaticism, and extravagance

of a few persons, especially if they be leaders, an ill report may be brought up against a work in which the Spirit of God has been powerfully operating. The opinion that it is dangerous to oppose fanaticism lest we hinder the work of God is most unfounded. We cannot more effectually promote genuine revivals than by detecting and suppressing fanaticism, which is their counterfeit, and injures their reputation among intelligent men more than all other causes.

4. Often, also, there may be much error mingled with the evangelical truth which is preached in times of revival, and while God blesses His own truth to the conversion of men, the baleful effects of the error which accompanies it will be sure to be manifest. It may be compared to the case where some poisonous ingredient is mingled with wholesome food. I might here, perhaps, refer to some section of our own Church where the truth is not clearly inculcated; and it might be shown that there is danger of error on both extremes. But I choose rather to refer to those Churches which we all think to be erroneous in certain points. No denomination among us has had more frequent or extensive revivals than the Methodists, and we have no doubt that multitudes have been truly converted under their ministry; but the effect of their errors is manifest to an impartial observer. The same remark holds good respecting the Cumberland Presbyterians, who greatly resemble the Methodists in their doctrines and mode of promoting and conducting revivals. And, as an example from the opposite extreme, I would mention that portion of the Baptist Church which is tinctured with Antimonianism. They have revivals also, but their mode of treating the subjects is widely different from that of the sects last mentioned.

5. But I come now to speak of genuine revivals, where the gospel is preached in its purity, and where the people have been well instructed in the doctrines of Christianity. In a revival, it makes the greatest difference in the world whether the people have been carefully taught by catechising, or are ignorant of the Bible. In some cases revivals are so remarkably pure that nothing occurs with which any pious man can find fault. There is not only no wildness or extravagance, but very little strong commotion of the animal feelings. The Word of God distils upon the mind like the gentle rain, and the Holy Spirit comes down like the dew, diffusing a blessed influence on all around. Such a revival affords the most beautiful sight ever seen upon earth. Its aspect gives us a lively idea of what will be the general state of things in the *latter-day glory*, and some faint image of the heavenly state. The impression in the minds of the people in such a work is the exact counterpart of the truth, just as the impression on the wax corresponds to the seal. In such revivals there are great solemnity and silence. The convictions of sin are deep and humbling; the justice of God in the condemnation of the sinner is felt and acknowledged; every other refuge but Christ is abandoned; the

heart at first is made to feel its impenetrable hardness ; when least expected, it dissolves under a grateful sense of God's goodness and Christ's love ; light breaks in upon the soul, either by a gradual dawning or by a sudden flash ; Christ is revealed through the Gospel, and a firm and joyful confidence of salvation through Him is produced ; a benevolent, forgiving, meek, humble, contrite spirit predominates ; the love of God is shed abroad ; and with some joy unspeakable and full of glory fills the soul. A spirit of devotion is enkindled. The Word of God becomes exceedingly precious. Prayer is the exercise in which the soul seems to be in its proper element, because by it God is approached, His presence felt, and His beauty seen ; and the new-born soul lives by breathing after the knowledge of God, after communion with God, and after conformity to His will. There also springs up in the soul an inextinguishable desire to promote the glory of God, and to bring all men to the knowledge of the truth, and by that means to the possession of eternal life. The sincere language of the heart is, "Lord, what wouldst Thou have me to do?" That God may send upon His Church many such revivals is my daily prayer ; and many such have been experienced in our country, and I trust are still going forward in our Church.

6. But it has often occurred to me—and I have heard the same sentiment from some of the most judicious and pious men I have known—that there must be a state of the Church preferable to these temporary excitements, which are too often followed by a deplorable state of declension and disgraceful apathy and inactivity. Why not aim at having a continuous lively state of piety, and an unceasing progress in the conversion of the impenitent, without these dreadful seasons of deadness and indifference ? Why may we not hope for such a state of increasing prosperity in the Church that *revivals* shall be no longer needed, or, if you prefer the expression, when there should be a *perpetual revival* ? Richard Baxter's congregation seems for many years to have approximated to what is here supposed, and perhaps that of John Brown of Haddington and Mr. Romaine of London. And in this country I have known a very few congregations in which a lively state of piety was kept up from year to year.

7. We cannot, however, limit the Holy One, nor prescribe modes of operation for the Spirit of God. His dispensations are inscrutable, and it is our duty to submit to His wisdom and His will, and to go on steadily in the performance of our own duty. If He, the Sovereign, chooses to water His Church by occasional showers, rather than with the perpetual dew of His grace, and this more at one period and in one continent, than at other times and places, we should rejoice and be grateful for the rich effusions of His Spirit in any form and manner, and should endeavour to avail ourselves of these precious seasons for the conversion of sinners and the edification of the body of Christ. In the natural world the cold and barren winter regularly succeeds the genial and

growing seasons of spring and summer, and there may be an analogy to this vicissitude in the spiritual world. One thing we are taught, that believers stand in need of seasons of severe trial, that they may be purified, as the precious metals are purged from their dross in the heated furnace. Paul says, "For there must be heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest."

8. As genuine revivals are favourable to truth and orthodoxy, so spurious excitements furnish one of the most effectual vehicles for error and heresy. The Church is not always benefited by what are termed revivals; but sometimes the effects of such commotions are followed by a desolation which resembles the track of the tornado. I have never seen so great insensibility in any people as in those who have been the subjects of violent religious excitement; and I have never seen any sinners so bold and reckless in their impiety as those who had once been loud professors, and foremost in the time of revival. If I had time I might illustrate this remark by a reference to the great revival of the West, which commenced about the close of the year 1800, in the south of Kentucky; and by which the Presbyterian Church in that region was for so many years broken and distracted and prostrated—but I must forbear. When people are much excited, their caution and sober judgment are diminished; and when preachers are ardently zealous in revivals, serious people do not suspect them of holding errors, or of entertaining the design of subverting the truth. It is also a fact that the teachers of false doctrine do sometimes artfully associate their errors with revivals, and by continually insinuating or openly declaring that revivals take place only in connection with their new theology, they succeed in persuading those who have more zeal than knowledge that all who oppose their errors are the enemies of revivals. This artifice has often been played with much effect; and they have sometimes gone so far as to deny the genuineness of great revivals which occurred under the ministry of those holding opinions different from their own, or who neglected to bring into operation all the newly-invented apparatus of revivals.

You may perhaps expect me to say something on what are called *new measures*; but as I am out of the way of witnessing the actual operation of these means, I will not venture on a discussion which is both delicate and difficult further than to mention some general results, which, from a retrospect of many facts, I have adopted in regard to revivals of religion. On each of these I might largely expatiate, but my prescribed limits forbid it.

All means and measures which produce a high degree of excitement, in a great commotion of the passions, should be avoided, because religion does not consist in these violent emotions, nor is it promoted by them, and when they subside a wretched state of deadness is sure to succeed.

The subject of religious impressions ought not to be brought

much into public notice. It ought not to be forgotten that "the heart is deceitful above all things," and that strong excitement does not prevent the risings of pride and vain glory. Many become hypocrites when they find themselves the objects of much attention, and affect feelings which are not real, and where is humility and sincerity? Such measures turn away the attention from the distinct contemplation of these subjects which ought to occupy the mind.

On this account I prefer having the anxious addressed and instructed as they sit undistinguished in their seats rather than calling them out to particular pews, denominated *anxious seats*; and if the pastor can visit the awakened at their houses, it would be better than to appoint meetings expressly for them. But as this cannot be done when the number is great these meetings may be necessary; but instead of attempting to converse with each individual let the preacher address suitable instruction and advice to all at once; and if any are in great trouble and difficulty let them come to the minister's house, or send for him to visit them.

All measures which have a tendency to diminish the solemnity of divine worship, or to lessen our reverence for God and divine things are evidently wrong; and this is uniformly the effect of excessive excitement. Fanaticism often blazes with a glaring flame, and agitates assemblies as with a hurricane or earthquake; but God is not in the fire, or the wind, or the earthquake. His presence is more commonly with the still small voice. There is no sounder characteristic of genuine devotion than reverence. When this is banished, the fire may burn fiercely, but it is unhallowed fire. Fanaticism, however much it may assume the garb and language of piety, is its opposite; for while the latter is mild and sweet, and disinterested, and respectful, and affectionate, the former is proud, arrogant, censorious, selfish, carnal, and when opposed, malignant.

The premature and injudicious publication of revivals is now a great evil. There is often in these accounts a *cant* which greatly disgusts sensible men: there is an exaggeration which confounds those who know the facts; and it cannot but injure the people concerning whom the narrative treats. But I must desist.

I am, respectfully and affectionately yours,

A. A.

Correction.—In last issue, on page 399, near foot, "hardened" should have read "pardoned."

Acknowledgment.—The treasurer of the Dingwall Free Presbyterian Manse Building Fund begs to acknowledge with thanks the following donations received, per the Rev. D. M'Farlane:—Friend, Waternish, £2; Friend, Poolewe, £2; Friend, Poolewe, £1; Friend, Fearn, 5s.; Friend, Inverness, 10s. Mr. Wm. M'Lean, elder, Dingwall, received from a friend in Kinlochewe, 20s. Treasurer received from Mr. Hector Graham, jun., Invergordon, 10s.; also from Bracadale Congregation, 7s. 9d.

Letter from Rev. John B. Radasi.

THE following letter from our missionary, Mr. Radasi, has been received by the Rev. Neil Cameron, Glasgow. It will be perused with interest by our readers :—

Bulawayo, Rhodesia (P.O. Box 94),

December 29th, 1904.

MY DEAR MR. CAMERON,—I am very glad to inform you of my safe arrival in Bulawayo. I arrived in Cape Town on a Tuesday, and stayed with my married sister whilst there. On Wednesday morning I went to see the secretary of the Chartered Company in Cape Town. He was very busy that day, and told me to come on Thursday morning, and that he would try and do something for me. I went the following morning. He asked me a good number of questions about my people and myself. I told him that my father lived in Seymour, and that he was now a Government pensioner, that he had been a long time in the Government service at Seymour, and that he retired from it some years ago through ill-health; that he was a constable and interpreter, and used to write passes for natives; and that if he liked he could write or wire to the Resident Magistrate of Seymour, who would substantiate what I had said, or he could go to the Colonial office at Cape Town and look at the Civil Service list, and would find my father's name there. I told him that my father was also a Government post contractor—he has the contract for the Government mail from Seymour to Readsdales—and that he owned over 40 acres of land. I told him that he could go to the Commissioner of Crown lands and public works office in Cape Town to see a book there with a list of all the landowners. I suppose the secretary took me to be an American negro, or connected with the Ethiopian Church, which they are trying to suppress in Rhodesia, Natal, and Transvaal. Of course, I made it clear to him that I belonged to the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland, and had no connection whatever with the Ethiopian Church. He then asked me if I had a letter of introduction to the U.F. minister in Rhodesia—Mr. Jones. I said “No,” and that I did not belong to his Church at all. He then said he could not do anything for me, and so I left him. I went to see the general manager of railways in Cape Town, who received me very kindly, and arranged that I should go second class by train, and I paid only half-price, after filling up the enclosed certificate. I got the information that in all the Cape Government railways ministers can go half-price, if you go second class by rail. You book your seat, and you get a bed as well, and so I only paid £4 11s. 6d. second class from Cape Town to Rhodesia.

I left Cape Town on Thursday evening, December 15th, and broke my journey in Mafeking, Beuchanaland, stayed there for the Sabbath, and waited for the next train, which came on Tuesday morning, and arrived in Bulawayo on Tuesday afternoon, 21st

December. On my arrival here I hardly knew where to go to and what to do with my boxes. Of course, the natives in this part of the country are uncivilised and wear very little clothing, little children no clothing at all. The Matabeles live in small two-roomed mud huts, with fire made in the middle, no beds but mats to sleep on; no chairs; you have to sit on a mat on the floor. They don't live in the town, but are placed in locations. Of course, in Bulawayo and district there are about 6500 Europeans, and £15 per month may be taken to be the average cost of board and lodging for Europeans. Rhodesia is a very dear place. The cost of living is about three times as much as it is in England. In the Cape Colony it is twice as much as it is in England. There was then this difficulty. The natives don't let apartments, because they have none to let, and the Europeans charge enormous prices for board and lodgings. I just had to go to the Wesleyan native minister's manse, who has a large house, and get a room there for the time being. As his wife knew my people, he consented to let me stay with him until I can get a place. He then gave me a room, and I took my boxes there from the station. Of course he is not supposed to let any part of the manse, and so I don't pay for the room, but only for my board, which is £1 5s. a week with washing. It is summer here, and the weather is very warm. This country is full of big forests, and there are still lions, wolves and wild dogs roaming about. Last year the lions came so near Bulawayo that they ate some donkeys about four miles away. It's all thick forests round Bulawayo, and you cannot see the town at a distance, until you come right up to it.

I now come to the most pleasant part of my letter. I was very glad indeed to find so many Psalms in metre in the Wesleyan hymn book. I shall be very glad if they will give me permission to take them out of their book and print them separately. I have not seen the Kaffir Presbyterian hymn book yet. Very likely it will have some more Psalms. If all's well, I shall soon know how many Psalms there are altogether in metre in the Kaffir language. The Psalms are very beautiful in Kaffir. I hope the time will soon come when the whole of the Book of Psalms will be put in it in metre. I was preaching in Bulawayo to a small gathering of men and sang the Psalms. There were just about three or four women present. I understand it's very difficult to get the women to come to listen to the Word of God. The men seem to be very anxious to learn.

Rhodesia is under the British Chartered Company, and it seems as if I am in a foreign country. Its laws are quite different from those of Cape Colony. As soon as I arrived in Rhodesia, I had to go to the police and report my arrival. All natives without a pass are arrested. The Matabeles have to carry a pass for being in Bulawayo, and another special pass if they want to be out after nine in the evening, and another pass if they are going to the country. They have to report themselves to the police in every

place they go to, and ask permission to stay. If they wish to visit friends, they have to get a special pass. I had to go to the magistrate and ask for an exemption pass, and he gave me an exemption pass for Bulawayo and district. The Matabeles are just living in terror of being arrested, as there are so many kinds of passes wanted.

I hope you are all keeping well. I am always wondering how Mrs. F. is. I would like so very much to know. . . . I need the prayers of the people of God. The people here are still in great darkness, and nothing but the Gospel of the grace of God can lift them out of this condition. You will kindly remember me to all the friends.—Yours sincerely, J. B. RADASI

Professor Alexander's Reply to his Critics.

IN the *Scotsman* and *Glasgow Herald* of February 23rd there appeared from the pen of Professor Alexander, The New College, Edinburgh, a reply to those who have criticised his book on "Demonic Possession in the New Testament." In our opinion the reply is a most unsatisfactory one, and reflects little credit on the Professor. It is as follows:—

"Sir,—As the present situation of the Free Church is not unlikely to necessitate a summer session for our students, it may not be possible for me to issue a new edition of my book on "Demonic Possession" in the immediate future, as I had hoped to do. I need hardly point out here that my book was published precisely three years ago to-day—20th February, 1902—and that before I had joined the Free Church in that year. My article in the *Expository Times* on "St. Paul's Infirmary" was written before that date, having been in the hands of the editor almost three years. Both writings have undergone two series of reviews—the first on the whole quite fair, and apart from the present Church question; the second violently prejudiced mainly as a sequel to the existing crisis in the United Free Church. Though the first series of reviews included articles by the *British Weekly*, the *Bookman*, the *Missionary Record of the United Free Church*, and the *Critical Review*, in not a single instance was I called a "Higher Critic." That is the discovery or invention of the second series of reviewers; and the fact is in itself highly significant.

My aim in writing upon the subject of demonic possession is greatly misunderstood by some and grossly misrepresented by others. My intention was the very opposite of that of the "Higher Critics." They have scoffed at the mere idea of "possession," and assert that our Lord was as ignorant and as superstitious as His contemporaries. What, then, of His authority in religion? Or they declare that He accommodated Himself to the ignorance and superstition of His age. What, then, of His integrity? In repelling these charges of the "Higher Critics" I have furnished new, emphatic, and positive proof of the utter superiority of Christ to

all superstition, of the existence of genuine demonic possession in His age, of the reality and uniqueness of His healing ministry, and of the divine spotlessness of His integrity. In meeting the "Higher Critics" on their own ground and in turning their weapons against themselves I find that I have quite unwittingly left one or two references somewhat unguarded. These have been seized upon for controversial purposes, and riven from their context as single sentences, or as catch phrases, and given a construction which they were never intended to bear, and which I heartily repudiate. I have never advocated those theories, which postulate the importation of heathenism from Babylonia or elsewhere into the pure religion of Israel, or a deutero-Isaiah, or other mutilation of the Scriptures, or alleged discrepancies as annulling the historicity of the Bible narratives.

In regard to my views on "Demonic Possession" and "St Paul's Infirmary," I was careful to make it clear in the introduction to these writings that my conclusions were not regarded by me as final, but as simply tentative in part. None of my censors have had the fairness to note that fact. To the category of the purely tentative belong more specially the attempted separation of the demoniacs into two classes—"cases truly supernatural," "cases simply natural;" as also the observations on the destruction of the swine at Gadara. These were put forward as feasible conjectures or suggestions to meet certain difficulties, not out of any deference to the "Higher Critics," but in the most decided opposition to their rank scepticism on these points. Time has shown me that my views in these respects were unnecessary and immature speculations. As such I have no hesitation in discarding them in their entirety. Their aim was purely apologetic; and nothing could be further from my thought than any dishonour to the Bible as the Word of God. At my ordination as Professor of Divinity in the Free Church I had much pleasure in renewing my adhesion to the Confessional doctrine of "the infallible truth and Divine authority" of the Bible in the words of the formula—"Do you sincerely own and believe the whole doctrine contained in the Confession of Faith, approved of by former General Assemblies of this Church, to be founded upon the Word of God, and do you acknowledge the same as the Confession of your Faith, and will you firmly and constantly adhere thereto, and to the utmost of your power assert, maintain, and defend the same and the purity of worship at presently practised in the Church?" I have no sympathy and never had any, with that agnostic mood which is so largely prevalent in the adjacent Church. I still say to the "Higher Critic" what I have always said—"Take away from us the inspiration and Divine authority of the Scripture, and you take our all. Discredit our Lord as truly the Son of God and the All-sufficient Revealer of the Father, and you remove our very hope of salvation."

The present attempt to make me appear as one of the basest, or one of the highest, of the Higher Critics has only made me more determined than ever to combat their arrogant and soul-destroying Rationalism, which threatens to subvert the very foundations of our common Christianity.—I am, etc., W. M. ALEXANDER.

REMARKS.

It is only a few weeks since that it was publicly intimated that Dr. Alexander purposed to issue a new edition of his book. Now he declares his intention not to do so in the immediate future. The reason given is the prospective work of a summer session. But there is too plainly another reason, which he fails to mention, namely, that his critics have succeeded in showing that his book is so radically and extensively out of harmony with the creed of his Church that no mere emendations will meet the case. His unsound views have been effectually exposed, and, considering his peculiar position, one might reasonably expect in his letter the breath of humility, but instead of this it is the breath of indignation throughout. We shall attempt to judge nothing before the time, but it is our decided conviction that if the Free Church leaders thoroughly investigate this case, as they ought to do, it will be found that Dr. Alexander is a man who should never have come to occupy his present position. From all that is credibly reported of his ecclesiastical career, we are forced to the conclusion that he deserves very little sympathy in his present predicament.

But to notice some particulars of this remarkable letter. He states that the first series of reviews of his writings was "on the whole quite fair," but that the second series now appearing is "violently prejudiced." It is admitted that this may be the case with some of his critics, but not so with others, not so indeed with those who have dealt most thoroughly and effectively with his book. Any criticisms from Free Presbyterian sources have been quite unprejudiced, nor is there anything to show that the writer in the "Reformed Presbyterian Witness" for February has any unfair bias in the matter. The main question, however, to consider is—"Has the truth been told?" If it has, it is vain for Dr. Alexander to take refuge behind an argument of this nature. It is not surprising that the first reviews by the "British Weekly," the "U.F. Missionary Record," and other such like papers, should not have described him as a higher critic. These reviewers were no doubt, as they still are, in sympathy with his critical opinions, and they are not accustomed to apply the name higher critic to those who agree with themselves, because it has become a term of reproach. Moreover, it is not so much the erroneous character of his views that they presently strike at, but his inconsistency in occupying the responsible position of professor in a Church that is understood to condemn out and out the Higher Criticism. He would fain make out that his now being called a higher critic is the invention of his reviewers.

But it is no invention ; it is certainly a discovery, so far as some of us are concerned, and that a very amazing one indeed. And why, if it is an invention, does he withdraw that part of his book where his higher critical ideas appear most conspicuously ?

Dr. Alexander also tries to divert attention from the main point at issue in the present case. It is not so much the question of "demons or no demons," though that has an important relation to the point, but it is that of the way in which he regards the inspiration of the Holy Scriptures, in some respects a side issue so far as the professed object of his book is concerned, but all the same a matter of the most fundamental importance. If a man is wrong here, it matters very little where he is right. Dr. Alexander in his book no doubt sets himself against the extremest kind of higher critics—pure, unmitigated Rationalists. He endeavours (as we point out in our opening article) to free Christ from the charge of superstition. But what of all this when he sets the Redeemer and the inspired writers at variance with one another ? He lays the blame of the superstition upon the latter, and that indeed by admitting and describing things as superstitious which he had no warrant to do. His opinion is that Matthew, Mark, and Luke represent a Triple Tradition which embodies a variety of superstitions about demons. What, then, becomes of the fundamental doctrine that the writers of the Gospels and other books of Holy Scripture were inspired of the Holy Ghost in all that they wrote ? Further, it is positively untrue for Dr. Alexander to say that he has "never advocated those theories which postulate the importation of heathenism from Babylonia or elsewhere into the pure religion of Israel." Does he not say at page 11, in connection with the Belzebub controversy, "The appeal to 'the prince of demons' introduces us to Bel-Ea of the Babylonians. The Scribes and Pharisees were immersed in the pseudo-science of their times ; the Nine were crippled by the same?" He holds that the nine disciples who tried to cure the boy with the dumb and deaf spirit were crippled by the false science of their times, which they had in common with the Babylonians. Had the nine nothing of the pure religion of Israel ? Again, on page 14, he deals with "Creatures haunting the waters," as spoken of in the Old Testament, and declares: "These recall the Creation Legend of Cutha and the Babylonian myths of Berosus. Their importation from the East is possible." He uses the words "possible" and "may have been" in this connection all in the way of advocating the idea of importation from heathendom. Is it not equally serious for him to suggest that they had a place in the pure religion of the New Testament ? Further proof is found at page 202, where he maintains that the possession of animals by demons is an ethnic or pagan idea, as also "the transference of demons from human beings to objects animate and inanimate." This is no doubt in the chapter on the destruction of the swine at Gadara, which he now with-

draws, but his statement that he never advocated such opinions is distinctly misleading. In like manner in regard to mutilations of the Scriptures and discrepancies Dr. Alexander writes in his book after the manner of the higher critics. He suggests "a redactor," and as quoted in our opening article he writes in Appendix J not of "*alleged* discrepancies" but of discrepancies such as cannot be reconciled. We take the word "historicity" to mean "historical accuracy." He affirms *that* concerning the gospel narratives at page 148, and yet he denies it elsewhere. The real original is in the first gospel, not in Mark or Luke (p. 271). What comes then of the historicity of the latter two Evangelists? It cannot be relied upon. Surely then Dr. Alexander has held that the alleged discrepancies annul the historicity of some of the Bible narratives. That is also his *present* opinion, for he has not withdrawn Appendix J.

Dr. Alexander now discards his observations on the demoniacs as divided into classes natural and supernatural and on the destruction of the swine at Gadara. But in what terms does he discard these? As "unnecessary and immature speculations." That is not an adequate withdrawal. A man may have unnecessary and immature speculations which in nowise contradict the Scriptures or overthrow any fundamental doctrine thereof. Dr. Alexander does not admit the radical erroneousness of his opinions. This is in line with his repudiation of the name higher critic. Again, he declares that "his aim was purely apologetic, and that nothing could be further from" his "thought than any dishonour to the Bible as the Word of God." Thus speak all the higher critics who are within the bounds of the Christian Church. They profess to be defenders of the truth, and say that they believe in the Bible as the Word of God, though at the same time they affirm that it is full of traditions, errors, and inaccuracies. Dr. Dods and Dr. G. A. Smith, we believe, would have no difficulty in expressing their faith under these terms of Dr. Alexander.

We note Dr. Alexander's assertion, which may be too readily regarded by some as sufficient to cover all his errors, that at his ordination as Professor of Divinity in the Free Church he "had much pleasure in renewing" his "adhesion to the Confessional doctrine of 'the infallible truth and Divine authority' of the Bible in the words of the formula." This is so far good; but can it be regarded as sincere from a man who has described the first three Gospels as a Triple Tradition, who has followed the path of the higher critics in his method of dealing with the Scriptures, and yet who only admits that he was indulging in immature speculations, and has only withdrawn a part of his book, other portions equally erroneous being left undiscarded? We think not.

Literary Notices.

THE DOCTRINE OF INSPIRATION IN THE CONFESSION OF FAITH.
By the late Rev. John Kennedy, D.D., Dingwall.

This useful tract by Dr. Kennedy has been recently republished, and is deserving of a wide circulation at the present time, when the inspiration of the Bible is being called so much in question. Errorists in Presbyterian churches have tried to make out that the Confession of Faith does not commit them to the inerrancy of the Holy Scripture, but this is only an attempt to evade the plain meaning of words. The Confession declares explicitly that the Holy Scripture, consisting of all the books as they presently stand, has "God who is truth itself" for its author, and "is to be received because it is the word of God" (chap. 1 sec. 4). Again, the Confession speaks of "the entire perfection thereof," and "the infallible truth and divine authority thereof." These statements clearly imply verbal inspiration. Dr. Kennedy handles this and other points in his usual able manner, and we trust our readers will do their utmost to circulate this valuable tract for the times. It is to be had from Miss Mackay, 3 Buccleuch Street, Glasgow, price one penny, or 1½d post free; 12 copies for 10d post free.

THE SCOTTISH ECCLESIASTICAL CRISIS AND RIGHTEOUS RETRIBUTION. By W. Lancelot Holland, M.A. London: W. Wileman, 35 Imperial Buildings, Ludgate Circus, C.E. Edinburgh: Stevenson & Co., 9 North Bank Street.

Mr. Holland, once well known in Edinburgh as incumbent of St. Thomas's Episcopal Church, is now resident in London. He still takes notice of events in Scotland, and has written a tract on the recent judgment of the House of Lords in the Church case. Though having somewhat peculiar views on prophecy and other matters, Mr. Holland has always continued a loyal believer in the inspiration and infallibility of the Scriptures, and he very properly recognises in the blow that has fallen upon the United Free Church the just retribution of God for the way in which her teachers have treated His Word. He gives quotations from Professor G. A. Smith's work on "Modern Criticism and the Preaching of the Old Testament." Mr. Holland also handles in a very vigorous manner the message which the United Free Church, at the Convocation on 15th November in Edinburgh, issued to her people. He says: "All the corruption and festering rottenness which is eating away the very vitals of the truth was skilfully hidden under a cloud of fair words." Again: "If the United Free Church meant what it said and carried it out, the very first thing they would do would be to repent of the unutterable abominations they have sanctioned and have every intention to sanction to the end." It would be well if this pamphlet were read and pondered by many. The price is 2½d post free.