

THE

Free Presbyterian Magazine

And MONTHLY RECORD.

VOL. IX.

APRIL, 1905.

NO. 12.

The Welsh Revival.

IT is with some diffidence that we take up the pen on the subject of the Revival in Wales, as we find it difficult to come to any definite conclusion as to the character of the movement. Some of its fruits are of such a wholesome nature that one is disposed to think that a genuine work of grace may be going on among at least some of the people in that Principality, while other features that characterise the movement are apt to make us conclude that the whole is a wave of pure sensationalism. A true revival of godliness, though marked by some unprofitable mixtures, is the greatest of all blessings that can visit a community, while on the other hand a spurious revival, though it may have some good results, is largely a calamity. A few general remarks on several aspects of the present Revival may not be without benefit to our readers.

One noticeable feature about this movement is that it is on a much more impressive scale than any of the quasi-revivals that have taken place here and there throughout the country in recent times. The demonstrations of feeling have been stronger, and the effects upon towns and districts more marked and widespread. It is evident, however, that these things in themselves prove nothing in a favourable direction, unless other characteristics of a more essential nature are truly good, and such as will stand the test of God's Word. False religion, as well as true, may be attended with great emotion, and may affect the lives of vast multitudes. The Welsh are known to be a people of excitable temperament in religion, who have been in the habit from time immemorial of giving free vent to their feelings even in the most solemn public assemblies. Excitement in religious meetings anywhere is invariably contagious. Wild, as well as holy fire, is capable of spreading rapidly and widely. The Welsh are more readily stirred than others, and so it is necessary to get the more solid and satisfactory evidence before one is sure that any religious excitement among them, however intense, is a revival of true Christianity.

The most favourable feature of the present movement is the moral reformation that has attended it. Many have given up their drunkenness and crime. Publicans in some quarters are at a standstill; the courts of justice have often a clean ca:d. The attendance at theatres and other places of amusement has decreased. There is a great demand for Bibles. Whole villages and towns appear to be reformed. Where there was formerly little but profanity, now there is nothing but talk about religion. The dishonest person has become honest and paid his debt, while enemies have forgiven one another and become friends. Now, all this is very admirable and promising—and it is our most earnest prayer that it may be the outcome of a vital change among this people—but we feel bound to point a warning. There may be, and there has been, such a thing as reformation without regeneration. Men have renounced drunkenness and other forms of immorality, and become moral and even religious persons, without any solid evidence of a radical change of heart, a new birth. The reformation has often proved temporary; and sometimes the supposed convert has relapsed into a worse condition than before. The unclean spirit has gone out; the house has been swept and garnished; but no heavenly occupant has come in; the Spirit of God has not taken possession; and so the evil spirit returns “with seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and the last state of that man is worse than the first.” Christ also tells us of the stony-ground hearers, who “immediately received the word with joy” and grew up quickly, but who had “no root in themselves,” and so endured “but for a time; afterward, when affliction or persecution ariseth for the word’s sake, immediately they are offended.” It is quite possible therefore that notwithstanding so many hopeful appearances the reformation in Wales may only prove temporary, and that, like the case of the stony-ground hearers, the religion of many who are now so deeply impressed, may soon disappear as quickly as it came. Reformation, however valuable in itself, is not enough, and may assuredly take place where there is no permanent or saving work of God’s Spirit.

One of the most important and necessary inquiries to be made in connection with any apparent revival of religion is, whether the truth as it is in Jesus is preached to the people. It is by “the word of truth” that Christ convinces and converts careless sinners, and nourishes and edifies living souls. Sinners are “born again of the incorruptible seed of the word,” and being born, “desire the sincere milk of the word” that they may “grow thereby.” It is difficult to find out by the reports of the present revival as to whether any satisfactory measure of solid truth is being cast into the hearts of the hearers. In fact, the reports point to the conclusion that the doctrine preached is neither in quality nor quantity up to the Scriptural mark. As to the quality, it does not appear that Evan Roberts, the leading revivalist, preaches a very sound gospel. It is stated that his gospel has terrors for nobody, but

that all are called upon to look up to God as their Father, Christ as their Saviour, and the Holy Spirit as their Sanctifier. The true gospel of Christ has its terrible as well as its gracious side. Its rejection involves the unbeliever in aggravated condemnation and inevitable destruction. Mr. Roberts' gospel seems to be a gospel of love only. Nothing could be better fitted to soothe immortal souls in a fatal sleep for eternity. Indeed, this kind of gospel has been the foster-parent of spurious revivals in the past, and it is to be feared that Satan as an angel of light has not ceased his activities. But neither as to *quantity* is the doctrine preached up to the right mark. In fact, the spirit which prevails tends to exclude almost all preaching whatsoever. The audience take matters into their own hands; one person starts a hymn; another commences a prayer; while a third rises and delivers a testimony concerning his or her conversion. The scenes, it would appear, are often quite disorderly. Now, these proceedings are not like the work of Him who is the Spirit of truth and order. In former times, when people were much moved under divine influences, they could not get enough of the Word preached. Congregations were frequently known to refuse to disperse; and we have heard of a preacher who was under the necessity of conducting as many as four services in succession before the people retired. The more they heard of the glorious gospel of Christ, the more they desired to hear of it. But whether it be a good or a bad gospel that is presently being preached in Wales, the people do not appear to want much of it. In the present movement also, a great deal is made of the singing of soothing and assuring hymns by ladies with fine voices. This is one of the common methods of modern revivalists. The feelings of ignorant people are by this means readily stirred; they appropriate the language of the highest assurance of faith before they come to know that they have a soul, and they drink in words of comfort that were never intended for an unbroken heart. Thus they are filled with a false joy and find it easy to believe that Christ is their Saviour, and that all is well with them for eternity. Fine music has at all times a powerful influence over the human mind, and the devil knows this well. It is one of his active schemes to allure people on with syren strains along the pathway of false religion to a lost eternity. Joy, as may be expected, is the prevailing emotion among the Welsh converts. Far be it from us to depreciate true spiritual joy, that joy which is in the Holy Ghost, and which flows from a peace founded upon righteousness. This joy has godly sorrow, evangelical repentance, as its constant companion. But a joy that is not attended by sorrow for sin is to be feared and dreaded as a delusion. It bears too close a resemblance to the joy of the stony ground hearers. Observers make a special point of remarking that the present revival in Wales has far more joy in it than the great revival of 1859 in the same Principality.

Is it to be concluded, then, that this revival is all a delusion from first to last? We are very loth to come to such a point about it. There is some chaff in the very best revivals; and there may be some wheat even in the least satisfactory. As long as the Bible is used and valued, there is hope that the Spirit of God may be doing here and there His saving work. Besides, it is possible that there may be embedded in the minds of many in Wales truths which they have learnt from other sources than the present revivalists. Wales was very highly favoured in past times with great preachers of Christ's gospel, and the doctrines they taught and disseminated may still have a place in the thoughts of the people. These may act as a counteractive in a measure to the unwholesome influences that are presently at work. May the Most High grant that He would purge out the false leaven and cause His work and power to appear in manifest, self-evidencing glory among the people of Wales!

There is much need of a day of God's power among these lands of ours. Spiritual death, moral corruption, pernicious error are spreading almost everywhere. May the Lord revive His work in the midst of the years, and in wrath remember mercy!

An Eminent Sabbath Breaker.—"The Prime Minister," says the *World*, "now spends his week-ends at Dover, thence motoring over to Hythe or Deal for the golf course. It is," adds the journalist, "a very pleasant way of spending the Sunday." We beg to differ from this finding. We do not think it a pleasant method of Sabbath observance at all. A Prime Minister should have some regard to the law of God. The frame of mind indicated by this holiday programme of Mr. Balfour, and the complacent survey of it by the newspaper man who reports it, show what a length the worldlings of the twentieth century have travelled towards the goal of complete apostacy and ungodliness. Without a qualm they commit excesses which a former generation would shudder at. Nevertheless the God who shook Mount Sinai still rules the world, and He has not changed His principles of moral government. The authority of His Fourth Commandment has not lapsed although they have laughed it out of court. We expect therefore that if Mr. Balfour and the generation of like-minded press writers and golf players who attend his motions do not find a way to change their habits that the result will be a collision between their lawlessness and God's righteousness, and the same doom shall befall the brilliant politicians and social lights of the twentieth century as passed upon a generation of commonplace sinners long ago—"their carcasses shall fall in the wilderness."

Communions.—Edinburgh and Lochgilphead, 2nd Sabbath of month; St. Jude's, Glasgow, 4th; Wick and Greenock, 5th; Oban and Kames, 1st Sabbath of May.

Notes of a Sermon.

By the late Rev. CHRISTOPHER MUNRO, Strathy.

Preached at Kilmuir, Skye, on February 22nd, 1867.

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“ Thus said he unto me, Prophecy unto the wind, prophecy, son of man, and say unto the wind, Thus saith the Lord God : Come from the four winds, O breath, and breath upon these slain that they may live. So I prophesied, as he commanded me, and the breath came unto them, and they lived and stood upon their feet an exceeding great army.”—EZEK. xxxvii. 9, 10.

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I N the last discourse¹ on this passage is made some observations on the command given to Ezekiel to prophesy upon the dry, dry bones, and on the message given him to declare unto them, and the effects produced, which were that each bone came to its bone, that sinews were laid on them, that flesh came upon them, and they were covered with skin. But still there was no life in them. It is evident that, unless the work had gone on further, and if it had come to a stand at this stage, that they would soon fall back into their former condition, or be reduced to bones again. The only thing that could prevent this was the communication of *life*. This life is from the Lord God, for He is the living One, the fountain, the author of life. But, though this be true, He employs Ezekiel in performing this part of His work also, and gives him particular instructions concerning it. His former instructions were to address the bones, to declare their character and the Lord's purpose concerning them ; but now he is commanded to direct his words to a different object, namely, to *the wind*. In doing it, he was not to use his own words, but, as in the former case, he was confined to those put into his mouth by the Lord. “ Thus saith the Lord God, Come from the four winds, O breath,” etc.

Considering this literally, it is a well-known fact that no man can live without air, as also that wind is air in motion. Sometimes it is at rest, and when that is the case nothing stirs, and no sound is made by it. The lightest body is not stirred, and the waters of the sea and of lakes are at perfect rest and smooth like a mirror. But when the air moves, all this is reversed. Man, however, can live in it in either state. In order to this, it must enter his lungs and be respired, and this respiration of the air is what is called *breath*, and in common language is taken for life. But though it is essential to life, it is not life itself ; for air may be blown into a dead man's lungs, but this will not restore life. These two things, however, must go together, the principle of life and respiration. “ Come, O breath, from the four winds, and breathe upon these slain,” were the words which he was commanded to address the wind ; and they may be considered as a prayer to God for life. And as he prophesied breath came into them. It did not only

¹ See “ Magazine of June, 1904.

breathe upon them, but entered them. The Spirit entered into them, and they lived and stood upon their feet, an exceeding great army; not a multitude of people, but men prepared for battle.

The Jews on their return from Babylon had to meet enemies, some perhaps on the way, and others, as we know to have been the case, in the land of Judea, who attempted to put a stop to the work they had to carry on in building Jerusalem and the temple. Thus they required courage, prudence, steadfastness and armour, all of which they wanted during their bondage, for they looked upon themselves as dead men, for whom there was no hope. Now, however, they were revived or begotten to a lively hope, and stood up like men upon their feet, and were ready to undertake their journey to Jerusalem, not daunted by the dangers of the way, nor by the difficulties that they might meet on their arrival. They had men of God among them, godly priests and inspired prophets, who trusted in their God and encouraged the people to trust in Him too. And we know that their hope was not disappointed.

In applying these observations in the same manner as we did on the former occasions, we shall find some important doctrines of the gospel illustrated by them.

1. It is the Spirit's work to quicken or impart life to the dead. "It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing." The Spirit, you know, is the third person of the Trinity, and in all God's works He has His proper part to perform. This, we are told, He had in the work of creation. The material of earth and of the heavens was produced or created by the Son in accordance with the will and instructions of the Father. And when the mass of these things was made, then, we are told, that the Spirit of God moved or brooded on the face of the waters, by which we are taught that He was the Author of that life which pervades all creation. He had His share of the work of preparing a body for the Son, as you all may know. In applying the redemption purchased by Christ, His part is to render the gospel call effectual, and to sanctify and comfort believers. In doing this work He comes forth from the Father and the Son. That this is so may be seen here. "I will put breath into you, I will give you the Spirit, pour him forth unto you, and put him within you." The Spirit is omnipresent; but it does not follow from this that He quickens all, or that He enters into all as the Spirit of life. The prophet was commanded to call, as if it were, on the four winds to blow, in order to put breath into the dead bodies that now were lying around, which intimates that a particular effort of divine power or of the Spirit's power must be put forth in order to quicken any sinner.

There are some who maintain that the Spirit has been given to all men in the same sense, and that it depends on themselves whether they profit by it or not. This is contrary to Scripture and to experience. "The wind bloweth where it listeth." So comes the Spirit, according to the Saviour's teaching. He is said to be

poured, and He is said to come and to work. And whatever He resolves to do cannot be frustrated; His power is omnipotent; nothing is too hard for Him. When He comes to one who is to be quickened, nothing can resist His power. His coming after this manner is of His sovereign will; He is free, unrestrained. "The Spirit of grace and supplication" is one of the titles given Him in Scripture. That means that, as salvation is of grace, so the Spirit's coming is of grace. And yet men are commanded to pray for His coming, as Ezekiel was commanded here to prophesy unto the wind or the breath. It is His command and must be obeyed.

2. All things are of God, but His will is that man should ask them in prayer. It is His will that man should thus believe and realise his need of them—understand their value to some extent and who it is that can bestow them, and the manner in which He gives them—so that when man receives them, or any of them, he may give the whole glory to God, the author of every good and perfect gift. The duty of all, and especially of the Church, is to pray for the Spirit of promise. This was what Ezekiel did on the occasion mentioned here. It was not a command of his own to the wind he uttered, but the Lord's. It is therefore the Lord's purpose and promise to send the Spirit that the Church has to plead, which surely forms a sufficient ground of hope and expectation. "Thy dead men shall live; with my dead body shall they arise." All His people shall live. There is no period of time during which some of them are not found alive, and others are to be quickened. The living are called upon to pray for the Spirit's coming to quicken the dead, and their prayers shall not be disregarded. When He comes, then they live and rise up like an army. Formerly they were dead, doing no good, but living in trespasses and sins. They came to know this; they felt their deadness, felt their sinful and miserable condition, felt their bondage to the law, to sin and Satan. They received the Spirit as the Spirit of bondage, that is, to show them and let them feel that they were really in a state of bondage, which filled them with fear, a fear of God, in which love and confidence had no part—fear of death, of hell, and of wrath. They were brought low and felt themselves dead. When the Spirit breathes in them to give life, they are begotten to a lively hope that relieves them from despair, that enables them to trust in God or rest on Christ Jesus as freely offered in the gospel.

3. Those spoken of here are represented, after being quickened, as a great army, which teaches us, like many other passages of Scripture, that believers have to fight in this life. This implies that there are enemies to fight. Enemies are those who are near them and hate them, and have power to annoy and hurt them. These are the devil, the world, and the flesh which compose a numerous and powerful host that have taken up their position in proximity to them. *Satan* goes about seeking whom he may

devour ; he is never at rest, and has a numerous army at his command. He is the god of this world, and all the evil principles at work among men are under his command. There never was a more formidable enemy, and none who has had a greater army. There have been some generals among men who have made war and conquest their chief business, and who have been looked upon by whole nations as objects of fear and terror. At the beginning of the present age there was a general who struck all the nations of Europe with terror at one period or another of his extraordinary career. I remember people speaking of the state of alarm in which our own country was when it became known that he had intentions of invading our shores. But he was little or insignificant in comparison to the enemy that marches up and down through the whole earth seeking whom he may devour. He is not seen, and therefore he is not dreaded by the most. Yea, the most of men are in his camp, and fight with him against the Lord and His anointed. *The world* is another enemy—things seen and temporal—and from the hold that these things have on the mind and heart of man, it is called an enemy and acts the part of one in withdrawing the heart from allegiance to God and in keeping man so occupied that he finds no time to seek or serve the Lord. *The flesh* is another enemy, and is so because of its sinful desires and inclinations, its love of sensible things, its blindness, its unbelief, its indolence, its selfishness, its self-righteousness, self-wisdom, self-confidence, in one word, its rebellion against the divine will as revealed in the law and the gospel. It is the nearest enemy, and so the most dangerous.

4. The battle is the Lord's. He is the King of the army consisting of living souls. They receive Him as such: they enlist under His banner: they follow Him and endeavour to act under His instructions. His first instruction to them is that they put on armour both for defence and offence. Where are they to get armour? They are poor and cannot procure any, God has an armoury, and being their King, He provides them with a complete panoply. You know what those weapons are—that they are not carnal but spiritual, and must be used by all, both by men and women, for parties of either sex are taken for soldiers in this warfare. They must not then enter the army without weapons, for their enemies are provided with weapons also; they have arrows which are sharp, and bows that can shoot to a great distance. Satan has fiery darts for souls, by which he can wound and cast down if he cannot kill. The tongues of evil men are sharp swords; their teeth are spears, and they too have arms for defence. Their power, their craft, and want of all godly fear may be considered defensive weapons. They use gins and snares, and dig pits for taking those who are off their guard. The protection of living souls against these is to put on their armour and make use of it, and to follow and keep near the general, who is Christ, their king and captain. And as the warfare may be protracted, they

need support, which again must come from the King. "My grace is sufficient for thee; my strength is made perfect in weakness." "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." The promises of the covenant, together with the Holy Ghost and the fulness of Christ, constitute the provision made for them, and are such as shall never be exhausted, but shall keep up their life and vigour and hearts till the conflict is terminated. There are times of respite and days of battle, of hard-contested fields in this warfare; some of a more manifest, others of a more hidden nature; and the latter may prove more dangerous and terrible than the former.

5. There is a reward appointed by the King for each warrior, which is an inheritance in the heavenly Canaan. Each tribe and each family in Israel had an inheritance allotted for them in the land promised to Abraham. They had all to fight for the country, and when it was subdued they received their inheritance by lot. Each was satisfied with his own, for there was no quarrel among them with regard to any of their lots. So here each shall receive what the Lord will appoint him, and with that he shall be satisfied for ever, and in enjoying it, shall serve and praise God as the God of his salvation,

We have now gone over the principal points in this passage, namely, man's original state, his state as a sinner, the means employed for bringing him to life, and the manner in which that life manifests itself, namely, by knowing God and engaging in the spiritual warfare.

We all have come into the world spiritually dead, and there is no way of deliverance from it and from eternal death, but one way, even through Christ and by being made partakers of the redemption purchased by Him. God's way of applying this redemption is by certain appointed means, which he has made known in His Word. Some of these are external, such as the Word read and preached, the sacraments and prayer; the other is spiritual and unseen, the Holy Spirit. He commands the Word to be read and preached, and at the same time commands men to hear it. He promises the Spirit, and exhorts all to seek the Spirit.

This then is our duty. *Do you desire life?* Use the means in dependence on the Spirit. Give the Spirit no rest. Beware of resisting Him, lest He cease striving with you. Rest not in the means, for of themselves they cannot quicken you, and therefore cannot save you. *Do you ask the Spirit?* Those, who never pray, do not ask Him. And there is none here to whose ear this command of God has not come, and why do you refuse it obedience? "I cannot pray" you may perhaps reply. Why not? "O, I do not know how to pray." Well, this would be a very good errand for you to God, namely, to beg of Him to teach you. Cannot you tell Him your ignorance, your inability, aye, and your unwillingness to pray? Tell Him your carelessness, your folly, and beg of Him to teach you and make you wise. And let me tell you this, that if you do not begin till you first know how to

pray you will never pray. "The living" pray, and must not faint, and yet they never think that they can pray as they ought. "But if I should begin to pray I would then be looked upon as a hypocrite, unless I gave up my folly and vanity, and many things in which I delight." And what is the meaning of this saying or sentiment? It is plainly that you are too fond of sin, and will be by no arguments persuaded to turn from it unto God. Will you say then that you make choice of it for ever, that you choose the pleasures of sin, which are but for a moment, along with everlasting torment, in preference to life and eternal happiness with Christ? You will not allow the case to be so, but it is nothing less; and God grant that you may not be convinced of the truth of it at last by actual experience.

If you have been quickened by the Spirit, you are a soldier in God's army, and here you must fight. Some, when they begin to think of religion, are ready to imagine that, were they to get faith, to get the Spirit and Christ, then they would have a life of peace and joy, ease and comfort here. No doubt this is partly true, but their life of faith is on the whole a life of conflict. They are called unto this; there is provision made for them, there is armour and a Captain; and there are enemies in abundance to beset their path. They who are called then must know this, must understand their position. Do you clearly understand, do you know your enemies? Do you know how they carry on their warfare, do you resist them by the armour of God? If so, then you must be a living soul. Let not such expect anything here but fighting, watching and praying, and in doing this let them remember who is their strength, their shield, who can teach their hands to fight and their fingers to conflict. Look unto Jesus, your Captain, and when overwhelmed by numbers cry for help, and He will always prove a ready help in time of need. Faint not, yield not; but resist steadfastly. And to encourage you, look forward to the prize of the calling of God in Christ Jesus.

The time is short in which you have to fight, and the hotter it may be, the shorter most likely its duration is to be. And if you are faithful unto death, you shall be made more than conqueror, and then you shall have peace, rest and enjoyment at home, where no enemy shall ever appear to threaten, annoy or wound you. Then you shall stand in Mount Zion above with the Lamb, and sing a new song, which none but the redeemed shall know. You shall stand on the sea of glass which is before the Throne with harps in your hands and walk the streets paved with gold in white robes, following the Lamb whithersoever he goeth.

Where then shall His enemies appear? Where can appear the unbeliever, the impure, the unrighteous the unholy? Shall they be in existence? Yes; for none shall ever be reduced to nothing. It is fearful to think of their condition then. Is it not high time for us all to ask with all earnestness, "Where then shall we be?" for each to ask, "Where shall I be?" If you die Christless, you must

perish; you must be shut out of heaven, and never see life there, never sing nor be joyful and happy, but be filled with woe for ever.

A Letter from Rev. John B. Radasi.

THE following letter has been received from Mr. Radasi by the Rev. John R. Mackay, M.A., Inverness:—

BULAWAYO, RHODESIA (P.O. Box 94),
February 9th, 1905.

MY DEAR MR. MACKAY,—I hope you are keeping well, and that your dear mother is keeping well too. I have been often thinking about her, and wondering how she is. I am sure I shall never forget the kindness and interest that you all showed me. I hope all the kind friends in Inverness are well. I am not feeling as well as I was in Scotland, although thankful to say I am not in bed. I suppose its on account of the excessive heat; it is hotter here than in the Cape Colony, and the water here is far from being good. I understand it's safer to boil it before drinking it, having allowed it to cool; but a thirsty person can hardly wait for that.

I went to preach to some native kraals in Gwanda, and held services in a hut. The place is about ninety miles from Bulawayo by train, and then you walk a little distance to the kraals. You cannot go anywhere here without getting a pass from the Commissioner of Police. The law is that all natives must carry passes, and report themselves to the police authorities wherever they go. I obtained an exemption pass for Bulawayo, but when I go away out of Bulawayo I have to go and get another. You must produce a pass here from the police before you can get a railway ticket. Of course, the pass officer asks you where do you want to go to, and what are you going to do there, and then he gives you so many days to go to that place. I feel here as if I were in a foreign country, and not in British territory at all. The laws are so different from those of Cape Colony. There are monthly passes. . . . I had to get a special pass when I went to Gwanda, and another one when I returned. Of course, I told them I was going there for missionary work. Neither are private houses respected, as long as they belong to natives. A policeman is quite at liberty to come and ask for passes there.

This is a dreadful place for Sabbath breaking. It is very, very sad indeed to see the Sabbath breaking that is going on. The Europeans here think nothing of horse-racing, playing cricket and all games on the Sabbath day.

I have no place to preach in. I just have to preach anywhere—in a hut or outside. There are in Bulawayo, though it's such a small place, eight European churches and four native. The native churches are United Free Church, Wesleyan Methodist, Baptist, and Church of England. And some of these churches have just a very few people attending them.

I have to explain to you how these missions here were formed, and how they form missions among the heathen. Of course, now the whole country belongs to the Chartered Company, and it is not easy to get land without paying for it. All these Churches here have bought ground and built churches on it, manse, and schools, at their own expense. When you start a mission among the uncivilized natives first, they expect you to put up your own church, and manse, and school, as the uncivilized natives do not understand the value of these things. It is only when they have embraced Christianity, they begin to understand and value these things, and see that they are for their benefit. It is then you ask them to give something. Of course, a person cannot tell how long it will be before the mission would be self-supporting. And so starting a new mission is rather an expensive thing, especially in a place like Rhodesia, where everything is so dear. As far as I understand, although some of these native missions here in Bulawayo were formed about 14 years ago, they are not yet self-supporting. Of course, the natives who have embraced Christianity do give something, but I understand that they are still greatly assisted from Europe. Of course, had the country still belonged to the King and his chiefs, you would not need to purchase the ground to build upon. You would ask the King of the country to preach to his people, and if he consented he would give you the ground to build your mission upon for nothing.

The country is divided into large farms. These farms are either owned or rented by Europeans, who generally place a certain number of native tenants, and draw rent from them, and the rest are owned by the Government. Where the land is owned by farmers, before you can preach in the native kraals there, you have to get permission from the owner of the farm, and if he says "Yes," you have then to ask the people themselves if they would like you to preach to them. And if you want to go and preach in the place where the natives are on Government land, you ask permission from the Police Commissioner and from the headman appointed by the Government. If either of them refuses, you cannot preach. I have not seen yet any *native reserves*—I mean land entirely set apart for natives, where it can never be taken away from them unless they rebel against the Government.

This country is a very difficult country to travel in. There are practically no means of conveyance. The trains only go to a few places in Southern Rhodesia—from Bulawayo to Gwelo, Gwanda, Selukwe, and Salisbury; but Salisbury is in Mashonaland. The horses and cattle here don't live; they die. There are very few horses, and their prices are from £45 to £75 each, and you cannot be sure that they will live long. Only well-to-do Europeans have them, and the police. The missionaries generally use bicycles. Mules are used for ploughing. They are able to live in this country, and they are £25 each. Of course, the natives plough their patches of ground with their hands. On that account it is

very difficult indeed to go any distance inland. The country is not half opened up yet. It is still walked by footpaths. There are very few roads, and these only go to the small villages, where there are Europeans. The country is still full of forests, and it would not be safe to go without a guide.

Dear Mr. Mackay, I fully understand that we have not got the means to build churches, and manses, and schools, and to pay for evangelists, as the other Churches can, as we are a poor, struggling Church. Of course, others spare no money in building churches, manses, and schools, and entering into great expenses, although some of these churches are half empty. And I fear, too, there is *very little Gospel preached in them*. Of course, our Church went out penniless, and left everything to uphold our testimony. I always think of what you said once in the course of your sermon, "The salvation of one soul is to God worth more than the whole material universe."

You remember, I spoke to you some time ago about an uncle of mine. You remember my telling you that my father was a preacher, and that an uncle of mine was also a preacher. Of course, they were not paid for it. My uncle is dead. He died a little over two months ago, and his last words were: "I am going home; I am going to rest forever; but I cannot help but cry when I think of the mercy of the Lord to such a great sinner as I am."

Please remember me to all the friends in Inverness, and to all your people at home. . . .

Yours sincerely,

J. B. RADASI.

A Good Prayer.—A little African was one day heard to pray thus—"Lord Jesus, my heart bad too much. Me want to love You, me want to serve You, but my bad heart will not let me. O Lord Jesus, me can't make me good. Take away this bad heart. O Lord Jesus, give me new heart! O Lord Jesus, me sin every day. Pardon my sin! O Lord Jesus, let me sin no more!"—From "Casket of Odds and Ends."

What to Do, and How to Do It.—The remark of Rev. John Newton below deserves to be written on the tablet of every heart—"I see in this world," he observes, "two heaps—one of human happiness, and one of misery; now, if I can take but the smallest bit from the second heap, and add to the first, I carry a point. If, as I go home, a child has dropped a halfpenny, and if, by giving it another, I can wipe away its tears, I feel that I have done something. I should be glad, indeed, to do great things, but I will not neglect such little ones as this." These little things are what we all can do, and we should encourage ourselves with the thought, that

"The drying up a single tear hath more
Of honest fame than shedding seas of gore."

—From "Casket of Odds and Ends."

Historical Proofs of the Scriptural Authority of Infant Baptism.

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

IT seems that Dr. Archibald Alexander, during the early years of his ministry (1797-99) fell into doubt for a time in regard to infant baptism. This led him to make a thorough study of the subject with the result that he became quite satisfied as to the entire Scripturalness of it. He drew up a statement of the evidence for infant baptism, beginning with the historical proofs. His treatment of this part of his inquiry, which is republished below, is remarkably able and convincing, and the evidence brought out is, in our opinion, unanswerable:—

About this time (says he, probably indicating some part of the years 1797, 1798, or 1799) I fell into doubt respecting the authority of infant baptism. The origin of these doubts was in too rigid notions as to the purity of the Church, with a belief that receiving infants had a corrupting tendency. I communicated my doubts very freely to my friend Mr. Lyle, and to Mr. Spence, and found that they had both been troubled by the same. We talked much privately on the subject, and often conversed with others in hope of getting some new light. At length Mr. Lyle and I determined to give up the practice of baptizing infants until we should receive more light. This determination we publicly communicated to our people, and left them to take such measures as they deemed expedient; but they seemed willing to await the issue. We also communicated to the Presbytery the state of our minds, and left them to do what seemed good in the case; but as they believed that we were sincerely desirous of arriving at the truth, they took no steps and, I believe, made no record. Things remained in this posture for more than a year. . . .

I determined now to begin anew the examination of the subject, and to follow the evidence which I might discover, to whatever point it might lead me. I had been too much disposed to reject certain kind of evidence, as tending to favour the superstitions of popery, but now I resolved to give any species of evidence and argument its due weight, and to abide by the consequences. Accordingly, I applied my mind to the subject with great intensity. . . .

I began with the historical proofs of the early existence of this practice. At the beginning of the fifth century infant baptism was undoubtedly universal. This is evident from the frequent mention of the subject by many writers, while none can be found who doubted of its lawfulness. When Augustine urged on Pelagius that the denial of original sin would lead to the denial of infant baptism, Pelagius rejected with horror the thought of withholding baptism from children, and declared that he had never known or

heard of an heretic who denied it. The practice had not been brought in recently, or the change would have been known to such men as Augustine, Jerome, and Pelagius.

But we have other testimonials to the universality of the practice. About the middle of this century a council was held at Carthage over which Cyprian the martyr presided. A question was here propounded by a presbyter named Fidus, respecting the proper time of administering this sacrament to infants. The doubt was whether it should be deferred to the eighth day, as in the case of circumcision, or should be administered at an earlier time. The opinion of the council, consisting of more than sixty bishops, was unanimous, that it was unnecessary to wait, but that the ordinance might be administered at any time after birth. Now when an incidental question arises and is discussed, relative to the baptism of infants, and there is yet no intimation of any doubt being entertained respecting the lawfulness of the thing itself, it furnishes far stronger evidence that all received the practice without dissent, than if the same council had given a unanimous decision in favour of the practice; for this would have induced a suspicion that some must have denied or doubted the practice, in order to make it necessary that such an opinion should be formally expressed.

We must go a step further. Origen was born and grew up to manhood before the close of the second century, though he wrote and flourished in the former part of the third century. Origen was a man of extraordinary learning, and possessed a memory which retained almost everything he ever acquired. In several places of his writings he mentions infant baptism, but does not speak of it as a new thing, lately brought in, but declares that it had been handed down by tradition from the apostles. But if it had sprung up after the apostles' days it must have been so near to Origen's time that he could not be ignorant of the fact. A universal change in a public and interesting ordinance could not have taken place in a very short time. Some Churches, at least for a while, would have adhered to the apostolic practice. Some discussion must have occurred. This would have drawn attention to the subject; and such a man as Origen, living as he did the greater part of his time in Palestine, could not have been ignorant of so great a change in the subjects of baptism, if it had been introduced after the death of John. Suppose that some one in our day should pretend that infant baptism was not practised by the Reformers, Luther, Zwingle, and Calvin. Though we are separated from them by an interval the double of that which intervened between John and Origen, yet would any learned man now be at a loss to know the truth of the facts in question? If infant baptism arose and became universal before the time of Origen, or rather the time to which his knowledge extended, it must have originated very near to the times of the apostles, and its spread must have been exceedingly rapid, and at the same time marvellously silent, for in little more than half-a-century it

was accomplished ; and yet learned men living at the close of that short period knew nothing of the change, but ignorantly supposed that the practice had been actually derived from the apostles.

That this is the genuine testimony of Origen (and not an addition of Rufinus) is confirmed by the state of the fact in the days of Cyprian, a little after his time. For the Council of Carthage, referred to above, must have believed that the practice came down from the apostles ; for they were of opinion that baptism came in the room of circumcision, as appears by the letter of Cyprian to Fidus. How so great a change could have taken place without anything being said about it, or any opposition being offered, always appears to me unaccountable. It seemed altogether reasonable to think that if adult baptism had been the only baptism practised by the apostles, and by all churches in the age immediately subsequent to their time in the many countries of the world over which Christianity had extended itself, it would be scarcely possible that in the short space of three or four hundred years there should not be found a single church upon earth which adhered to the primitive practice. And as to the fact of the universal prevalence of infant baptism in Asia, Africa and Europe as early as the time of Augustine, in the beginning of the fifteenth century, even the Baptists do not pretend to dispute.

But we must carry up the universal practice to a much earlier period. When the system of Pelagius was charged with leading to the denial of infant baptism, he utterly rejected the consequence, and declared, as has been said above, that he had never heard of any, even the most daring heretic, who called in question the propriety of infant baptism. Now if it had been denied by any part of the Church within a hundred years of this time, he who travelled so widely in Europe, Africa and Asia, and was well acquainted with the condition of those regions must have known it.

I repeat it, such a change in the subjects of an important sacrament, which was the badge of Christian profession and the door of entrance into the visible Church, could not have been made without much discussion. Opinions may and often do spread rapidly without attracting much attention or leading to much controversy. But this cannot be the case in regard to a religious rite performed in the presence of the Church. Let us suppose that some time after the decease of the last apostle some Judaising teacher, not contented that under the Christian dispensation there was no place for the infants of believers, should have determined to extend to them the ordinance of baptism. With converts from Judaism he might have found it easy to satisfy them that as the Christian Church was derived from the Jewish, and was enlarged in its extent and privileges, it could not be that infants who had been included in all the preceding covenants of God with His people, should enjoy no privilege whatever in the Christian Church ; that therefore

as baptism signified the same thing emblematically as circumcision, and stood precisely in the same place in the Christian Church as circumcision in the Jewish, infants ought by clear analogy to be admitted to baptism. Suppose, I say, the person who first introduced infant baptism to have used this argument with the Jewish converts. It would not be surprising if he should bring some of them over to his opinion. Suppose the practice to have commenced at Jerusalem or Antioch. It is a problem worthy of consideration by Antipedo-baptists, how long it would have taken to extend the practice throughout all the churches in the whole world. Could it without a miracle have been accomplished in one century? And let it be remembered, that the more rapid the progress, the greater exertion demanded. If the change went on gradually, without exertion, the progress must have been slow, and a change so universal could not have taken place in one or even two centuries. But if the advocates for infant baptism were very zealous and made use of great efforts to introduce the practice, there must have been a great running to and fro, many discourses delivered, and many writings circulated. Surely a change wrought in this way would have left its impression upon the literature and history of the age. How then does it happen that not a vestige of these arguments and endeavours nor any notice of them should come down—I do not say to our times—but even to the times of Origen, less than a hundred years after the practice commenced?

But even supposing it possible that all documents relating to this universal change should have been irrevocably lost, so that not the least hint of any author remains concerning it, is it not a marvellous thing that among so great a multitude of Churches planted by the apostles, and entrusted to their disciples and immediate successors, not one should adhere to what they must have known was the uniform practice of the apostles? If the innovation was begun at Jerusalem, and was received by the Churches in Judea, can anyone bring himself to believe, when some advocate of the new practice came to Antioch, where Ignatius was bishop, or to Smyrna, where Polycarp presided, or to Rome, where Clement, the companion of Paul, had his residence, that such a novelty would receive no opposition from these apostolic men? Would they not have been as staunch for confining baptism to believers, as the Baptist Churches now would be, if any should seek to persuade them to baptize their children? And with much more reason, for they could say to the innovator, "However plausibly you may argue in the way of analogy, we *know* that the uniform practice of all the apostles was different, and that in all the Churches planted by them and their coadjutors there never was an infant baptized. We have conversed with the apostles, were instructed by them, and have laboured with them, and can testify to all the Churches that what is now attempted to be introduced is an innovation, unsanctioned by apostolic precept in practice." And as such opposition would undoubtedly have

been made by these holy men, would it not have had influence to retard the progress of the error?

It will manifestly not satisfy the demands of the case to fix the introduction of infant baptism so near to the days of the apostles. We must come lower down in the second century. Let us then place the commencement of the practice in the latter part of this century. And as this is absolutely necessary to the maintenance of the hypothesis, so it is convenient on another account. Tertullian, the only man of antiquity who has uttered a word unfavourable to the institution, lived about this time. Indeed, if the usage was not apostolic, it must have been introduced in the later part of the second century. Earlier it could not be for reasons that are incontrovertible; later it could not be, for we find it soon afterwards so firmly established and so universally practised that such men as Origen and Cyprian had no knowledge of its being an innovation, but believed that it had been derived from the apostles.

When I first read Tertullian's testimony, this hypothesis appeared very plausible; for it had been pertinently asked, how can it be supposed that such a man as Tertullian would oppose infant baptism if it had been universally practised from the time of the apostles. But if the practice was just beginning to prevail, nothing would be more likely than that this learned but austere man should set his face against it, and dissuade from the practice. Whatever may be doubtful, one thing is certain, namely, that it was customary at this time to bring young infants to baptism, and that for certain reasons which he assigns, Tertullian dissuades from the practice. But when the whole passage is impartially considered, it makes very little in favour of the opinion that infant baptism was a new thing, an innovation just commencing. If this had been the fact, it would undoubtedly have suited his purpose to mention it. But Tertullian had evidently adopted this opinion, afterwards current, that sins committed after baptism could not easily be pardoned. This led many, among whom was the Emperor Constantine, to defer their baptism until the near approach of death. Tertullian did not confine his discussions to infants, but extended them to young persons generally, and to widows, which shows that his objection did not arise from the circumstance of infancy, but from the consideration stated before. From all that is said by the early fathers concerning infant baptism, I drew the conclusion that it had been generally practised without any dispute having ever arisen respecting it. And it is certain that it must have been common before the time of Origen and Tertullian, for it could not have become general between that time and the time of Augustine without having been known; since that is a period of history in which we have many writers and much more detailed information respecting the affairs and customs of the Christian Church than in the preceding period between the apostles and the beginning of the third century.

And that this practice did prevail in that earlier period may be gathered from the testimonies of Justin Martyr and Irenaus.

Here then it appeared that infant baptism could be traced up to a period bordering on the apostolic age. How could this be accounted for on the principle of the Baptists? Could it have crept in and become universal within a few years after the apostles? Here I was brought to a stand, and though I had laid it down as a principle from which I would not depart, to receive no doctrine or practice for which there appeared no foundation in the Holy Scriptures, I had come to a state of mind in which it appeared much more profitable that it had its origin with the apostles than that it had been privily brought in afterwards. I was prepared, therefore, *to examine the Scriptures without any bias against the doctrine.* I could not but believe that if the apostles had sanctioned the practice some vestiges of it would be discernible in the New Testament. For, taking my stand at the period when all acknowledged it to have become universal, I had to admit that so far as it relates to historical probability there was much more likelihood that silently and without dispute it should have descended from the apostles than that it should have come in and gained a universal prevalence in opposition to the practice of the apostles. All the facts are in accordance with the former supposition; all are unaccountable upon the latter.

I asked myself whether there was anything in Scripture which had an analogy with infant baptism. The rite of circumcision immediately occurred to my mind, as bearing at least some resemblance to it. I had been wont to consider the argument founded on the assumption that baptism succeeded in the place of circumcision as weak and inconclusive, for it seemed to involve a begging of the question. But I was willing to examine how far the analogy between the two institutions extended. And the more I considered the subject the stronger did this analogy in the main points appear. Circumcision, as well as baptism, was a religious rite instituted by God Himself. Circumcision had an emblematical or mystical signification; it evidently represented the regeneration of the heart; and here the import of the two rites appeared to be not only similar or identical; for all admitted that baptism sets forth emblematically the washing away of sin. Then as to the subjects of the two ordinances, both in the case of adults required faith in the recipient. Paul asserts that Abraham received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised. If a stranger wished to join the Israelitish Church, he was required to be circumcised, and in order to this he must profess his faith in Jehovah, the God of Israel, and avow a resolution to comply with all the precepts of the Mosaic law; just as the adult heathen, when he applied for baptism, was required to profess his faith in Jesus Christ; and to promise obedience to His commands. Circumcision was the regular entrance into the Israelitish community as baptism into the Christian Church.

From a view of these points of resemblance, our inference was clear, namely, that all the ridicule cast upon infant baptism is misplaced, because the very same might be cast on circumcision, of which the infant could know as little as of baptism. Again, the Jews esteemed circumcision a great privilege, and Paul admits that it was every way profitable. Now, if there is nothing come in its place, then are the privileges of the Christian less than that of the Jew; but Paul teaches that the Gospel dispensation is by far the more glorious.

About this time a friend lent me a volume of Dr. Hammond's works, in which I found a treatise on Infant Baptism. This presented the subject in a new light. The author, making little use of the common arguments, undertakes to derive the doctrine from two sources, neither of which is in the Bible, but which both serve to illustrate what is there. The first of these is Jewish Proselyte Baptism; the second is the practice of the primitive church. Not having read this treatise for nearly half a century, I cannot pretend to state the author's reasonings; but I will give my own views of the arguments derived from these sources.

Where a law is given to any people, a knowledge of certain common and notorious things is presumed by the legislator; for to enter into a minute description of every circumstance would be tedious and cumbersome. A law of the State of New Jersey inflicts a heavy pecuniary mulct on any one who is engaged in "gill-fishing," but does not define what sort of fishing this is. If it should be necessary, in some other country, to interpret this law, it would be requisite to refer to such documents as would show what was commonly understood by the term, and without such explanations the law would be unintelligible. So in England, there are laws against poaching, but to a common reader in this country, where no such offence does or can take place, explanation is indispensable. Many canons of the Church can be understood only by a reference to the history of the times. If a law should be found in the Jewish code, directing proselytes from the heathen to be circumcised before admission to the privileges of the Israelitish Church, one unacquainted with the Mosaic institutions would be at a loss to know whether this included infants; but if he should turn to the seventeenth chapter of Genesis he would see at once that infants as well as adults were intended. Here, then, the question arises, whether any custom existed among the Jews in our Saviour's time which would enable them to determine to whom baptism was to be administered under the command, "Go, proselyte all nations, baptising them." If the command had been, "Go, circumcise all nations," the case would be clear; but had the Jews been acquainted with the rite of baptism? I am aware that Dr. Owen, Dr. Gill, and Dr. Jennings, with others, deny that any such practice existed among the Jews previously to the time of our Lord. But after weighing the evidence exhibited by Lightfoot, Selden, Hammond, Wall, and

other writers profoundly versed in Hebrew antiquities, I am fully convinced that the rite of baptism was not a novelty among the Jews when John began his ministry. If the rite had never been known before, it would have been necessary to explain minutely what the nature of the ceremony was, and not merely to designate it by a single word. When certain priests and Levites were sent from the Sanhedrim to John to inquire who he was, there was no question about the rite itself, which would naturally have been the object of inquiry if they had never heard of it before, whereas the only query was about his authority to administer it. "If thou are not the Me^sias, Elias, or that prophet, why baptisest thou?" The testimony against proselyte baptism is purely negative, and may all be summed up in a single sentence. The practice is never mentioned by Philo and Josephus, Jewish writers that lived nearest the time of Christ, nor by any other writer until the Talmud was written, two centuries or more after the Christian era. To this it may be answered, that mere negative testimony is in any case of very little weight, unless it can be shown that the witnesses had occasion to mention the fact, if it had existed. Again, when any practice is fully establishd and familiar to all, there is seldom any mention of it by writers, sacred or profane. When any discussion arises, then, of course, it is frequently referred to. After the Israelites were fully settled in Canaan, we hear nothing of circumcision for centuries, while all admit that it was universally practised. From the creation till the time of Moses we have no distinct mention of the Sabbath, and yet we know that from the beginning God blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it. There is nothing said in the New Testament about the admission of proselytes to the Jewish religion from the heathen; and although Josephus mentions many who were proselyted, he enters into no description of the ceremonies observed at the admission of such. The traditionary laws of the Jews, giving a minute account of all the rites and ceremonies of the temple service, were committed to writing in the Talmud. Here we have the most full and particular testimony concerning the ceremonies observed in making Jewish proselytes. Maimonides, one of the most learned of the Jewish rabbins, has given us a most minute account of proselyte baptism. As to *the mode* of baptism, I hold it to be a dispute about a very trivial matter. The mere mode of applying water, when used emblematically and sacramentally, cannot be an affair of very serious importance, unless indeed the very mode of application be emblematical. Thus, in the Lord's Supper, it is of no consequence whether the bread is of wheat or barley, leavened or unleavened; but it is of importance that the bread be broken, because that action of breaking the bread is emblematical of the breaking of Christ's body, and cannot with propriety be omitted, as it is by the Romanists, who place an unbroken wafer on the tongue of the communicant. If immersion in water is that in the sacrament which is significant, then this action or mode, and no other, should

be used. The Baptists have therefore endeavoured to prove that baptism was intended to signify and represent the burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ, as a primary object, and then our death unto sin, and the like. But this is not the idea set forth in the Scriptures. They never speak of baptism as being a commemorative ordinance, like the Lord's Supper. They never represent the thing signified as being the burial and resurrection of Christ. It does indeed signify our spiritual burial and resurrection—that is to say, it signifies the washing of the soul from the impurities of sin. Baptism is everywhere represented in connection with the remission of sins.

If now it could be demonstrated that John baptised by a total immersion of the body, and that the Apostles did likewise, we should be no more obliged to use this mode than to use unleavened bread at the Lord's Supper, being sure, nevertheless, that no other kind of bread could have been eaten at the Passover. We are no more bound to follow this mode than the mode of reclining on couches at the Lord's table, the latter being as important a mode as the manner of applying water to the body, *unless*, as I said before, the thing intended to be signified or represented in baptism is held forth by the very action or mode of immersion, which can never be proved. We are at liberty, therefore, to depart from what we know was an original mode, *provided* that mode was only incidental and unconnected with the essential meaning of the sacrament.

But we have conceded too much. So far is it from being true that all baptisms mentioned in the New Testament were by a total immersion of the body, it cannot be proved that this was the mode in a single instance.

Free Church Opinion and Professor Alexander's Book.

WE regret to observe that any opinion that has been elicited as yet from Free Church sources does not encourage the hope that the case of Professor Alexander and his book will be satisfactorily dealt with.

The subject was taken up at the Free Presbytery of Inverness on March 7th. The Rev. Murdo Mackenzie thought the book should be withdrawn. Rev. D. Maclean, Moy, stated that he had read the book, but that "there was not a word, except, perhaps, a slight expression used in one place, which went to show that Dr. Alexander in any way doubted the infallibility of the Bible." Rev. T. Ellis, Grantown, and Rev. R. Finlayson, Daviot, were satisfied with Dr. Alexander's disclaimer. So the discussion ended.

We ask any unbiassed person to study carefully the quotations from Dr. Alexander's book, and his apology, already commented on in these columns, and we shall wonder if such will think that

the majority of these ministers have properly grasped the situation. It appears to us that Mr. Maclean, Moy, plainly convicts himself of either intellectual incapacity or wilful blindness by the remarks he makes. He would require to read the book a second time. There are *many* passages in it that imply a disbelief in the infallibility of the Bible. More than that; it is absolutely clear that one of the main underlying and regulating principles of the whole work is a disbelief in such infallibility. For example, in his preface, Dr. Alexander states that "there is a criterion of genuine possession to be discovered and applied." This most emphatically implies that some cases stated in the New Testament to be possession by evil spirits are not genuine, and that a test must be found whereby to distinguish between those that are genuine and those that are not. Does not this tell us at the very outset that the author enters upon his enquiry with a settled disbelief in the infallibility of the Bible record? Much of his work, as a necessary consequence, is an attempt to prove that it is not demons but mental diseases which afflicted many persons who are said in the New Testament to be possessed with evil spirits. Medical science is all very good in its own place, but there are things in the spirit sphere that are entirely beyond its philosophy. We refuse, in fact, to tear the Word of God in shreds for the sake of any human science whatsoever. The New Testament distinguishes between purely physical diseases and cases of demonic possession, and it is our most sacred duty to take our stand upon the distinctions there made, and not to yield for an hour to the theories of modern scientists, which violate these distinctions. In regard to Dr. Alexander's disclaimer, we pointed out in our former article on the subject that he does not discard all the unsound statements of his book, and that those opinions he does withdraw are only discarded "as unnecessary and immature speculations," a description which in nowise admits the radical erroneousness of the views referred to. The soundest divine may entertain sometimes "unnecessary and immature speculations," which do not overthrow any doctrine of God's Word whatsoever, far less undermine that Word itself. There are speculations and speculations; but Dr. Alexander's are such as affect the very foundations of Christianity. We affirm, then, that if Free Churchmen are satisfied with his disclaimer, they are much too easily satisfied, and practically proclaim themselves incapable of being guardians of "the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." In the speeches noticed above, much is made of the circumstance that, according to the testimony of students, Dr. Alexander has taught nothing unsound since he joined the Free Church, but this is not sufficient to vindicate his position. His book, which is still in circulation, is the formal expression of his views to the world at large, and by it alone will he be judged before the general tribunal of the Christian Church. No mere partial apology can obviate this result.

In the *Free Church Record* for March a strange opinion is expressed on the subject of Church discipline as bearing upon the present case. The editor takes to task Dr. Howie, of the U.F. Church, for a reference in a letter of his to the views of the Free Church professor. Certainly Dr. Howie's remarks come with very bad grace from a man in his position—that of a leader in a Church that is riddled through and through with the Higher Criticism. But the editor's reply is constructed so as to answer criticisms that have come from other parties, Principal Donaldson, St. Andrews, and the rest. The editor states—(1) "That when Professor Alexander wrote and published the book he was in communion with the U.F. Church, subject to her judicatories, and teaching her students; (2) that no fault whatever was found with the book by anyone connected with the U.F. Church; on the contrary, it was favourably received by prominent men within its pale; (3) that if it be the bad book now represented, the guilt of its publication and allowing it free course rests on the U.F. Church and not on the Free Church, which can have no jurisdiction over an office-bearer for something done before he acknowledged her judicatories. Dr. Alexander did not become a member of the Free Church until after the publication of his book. He did so after stating to the writer that he adhered to the Confession of Faith and felt no need of the Declaratory Act. He taught and lectured to the students and lay preachers of the Free Church as an outside teacher, and delivered lectures in presence of others well qualified to judge of his soundness during the intervening period before he was admitted as a probationer of the Free Church. Since he answered the questions and signed the formula of 1846 in November, 1904, when he became subject to the authority of the judicatories of the Free Church, he has said or done nothing worthy of condemnation, but very much that is worthy of commendation. Even Dr. Howie might hesitate to take a man to task for something done when the man was not subject to his authority. There is such a thing as equity in ecclesiastical procedure, although Dr. Howie and his friends have abundantly shown that they do not believe in it."

The sum of these statements is that because Dr. Alexander published his book before he joined the Free Church, and because he has said or done nothing worthy of condemnation since then, therefore it is not equity for the Free Church to deal with him by any process on account of his book. Now, this manner of reasoning appears to the writer utterly unsound. When did Dr. Alexander actually issue his book? Was it twenty years before he entered the Free Church, during which time he might possibly have changed his mind two or three times on many subjects? No; but only a very few months. Did he inform the Free Church that he had changed his views on the inspiration of the Bible? There is not the slightest evidence that he did. In fact, such is the gulph between these views and the sound doctrine of Holy

Scripture that we cannot imagine a man passing from the one to the other without a very decided mental revolution, such as the world would have heard something about, and such as would have borne fruit in the public withdrawal of the book by the voluntary act of the author. Nothing of the kind has manifestly taken place. But we ask further, "Is it correct to affirm that 'the Free Church can have no jurisdiction over an office-bearer for something done *before* he acknowledged her judicatories'?" The idea is quite absurd. Let us use an illustration. Suppose a man has committed some crime unknown to his fellows, and a few months after enters the communion of a Christian Church. A year or two elapse, and then the crime is discovered. Would it not be competent for that church then to deal with him, simply because he had done the evil deed before he entered its pale? Surely it would. Or has it come to this, that in the case of the Free Church, once a man has joined it, he is safe from discipline no matter what evil he may have committed before then? But let it be most carefully noted that the offence now discussed is not one merely past; it is absolutely present. The book continued to live after it was published, and as already pointed out, it is in circulation at the present moment. Dr. Alexander's offence against truth still proceeds apace.

May we be allowed to say that what the Free Church requires at the present time is a few men who will take their stand with sincere and determined resolution upon the Word of God and the Confession of Faith, who will brook no worldly compromises in matters of doctrine, worship, or discipline, and who will see to it that it is only men of truth and principle that shall occupy office in the Church? Shilly-shallying and covering up in matters of the most vital moment to the Church of God on earth are contemptible in the extreme. What is a multitude of church buildings, etc., if the truth of God is not conserved? It is in the truth, and the truth alone, that the strength of a Church consists. Apart from this, no matter how big or how rich the organisation, all is sham and a snare. We do sincerely pray that the Free Church may yet be led to act in a way that shall be satisfying to all the demands of truth. Some people, we believe, are angry with us, because we have criticised Professor Alexander. We are sorry they should be so affected. As indicated in a former article, it is with no desire to gratify the United Free Church that we have taken up the pen in this connection. With that body we have never had any sympathy whatever. If Free Churchmen, however, by their action, or want of action, expose themselves to criticism, we are bound by every sacred obligation to condemn them as well as others. God is our judge, before whom all must soon appear, that, from first to last of all our comments on the career of this Church, we have been animated simply by a sincere (though no doubt imperfect) desire for the glory of God and the good of His cause!

The Visions of Zechariah.

By the REV. ALEXANDER STEWART, EDINBURGH.

II. The four Horns and the four Carpenters.—Zech. i. 18.

THIS second vision is very similar to the first, and may be said to supplement its teaching.

The prophet lifted up his eyes, and saw four horns. The interpreting angel still stood by his side, and of him he asked the meaning of this new appearance. He was told that these were the horns that had scattered Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem. Then the Lord showed him four carpenters; and, in answer to his inquiry regarding the purpose these were designed to serve, he was informed that they were come to fray the horns, and to cast them out.

As we have already seen, the Jews who had returned from exile were "a feeble folk," comparatively few in numbers, weak in resources, and exposed to constant attacks from their Gentile neighbours. The design of this vision is to encourage them by the assurance that God would overcome and scatter all their enemies, and, against every danger that threatened them, provide a fitting defence. Stronger is He that is with them than all they that can be against them.

This was also the message conveyed by the first vision—the vision of the horseman among the myrtle trees; but in the former case the truth was set forth in broad, general terms without any specific reference to the manner of its accomplishment; in this case the assurance is more explicit and particular, and bears more directly on the special circumstances in which the people were placed. They were confronted with a plain and definite danger, and their encouragement, in order to be effective, must be as pointed and distinctive as the circumstances to which it referred.

The horn is, of course, a symbol of power; and the number four implies that, in this case, hostile forces were operating from every quarter, north, south, east, and west. Many find in this vision a particular reference to the four great world-powers which at different periods in her history were the deadly enemies of the chosen nation—the Assyrian, the Babylonian, the Grecian, and the Roman. According to this view the words have a prospective reference, for neither the Greek nor the Roman empire had yet arisen. It is perhaps better, however, to regard the description as applying generally to the facts of the existing situation. The Jews were actually surrounded with powerful enemies—Assyrians and Samaritans on the north, Egypt on the south, the Philistines on the west, and Moab and Ammon on the east. These horns are represented as having already been at work; they had "scattered Judah so that no man did lift up his head." Hemmed in on every hand by insolent foes, dispersed and enfeebled through repeated

onslaughts, the Church of God was well-nigh paralysed with terror: its spirit was crushed; its power of resistance was broken. No man did lift up his head.

But over against this formidable combination the prophet saw four carpenters, and he was given to understand that their mission had reference to the horns. They were sent to fray them, and to cast them out. The word rendered "carpenter" means a workman generally, and might equally well be translated "smith." We are to understand it as meaning an artisan in the general sense. And when the carpenters are said to "fray" the horns, the meaning is not that they are to cut them off, or file them down; the word is used in its old sense of "terrify;" hence our more common word "afraid." The carpenters are the instruments of Divine retribution. By them the insolent oppressors shall themselves be terrified, the proud boasters shall be thrown into confusion, the overpowering confederacies shall be made to lick the dust.

This is the encouragement of the vision. However strong and fierce and proud the enemies of the Church of God may be, He has unfailing resources to check and counteract all their designs, and in His own time, and in His own way, He will arise and strike terror into their hearts, and scatter them in confusion, and deliver His people from their power. When the prophet looked first, he saw nothing but the four horns. They appeared to be an irresistible combination. They seemed to feel no fear, and to have known no defeat. They were in possession of the field, and carried themselves with all the pride of acknowledged supremacy. But when the Lord showed him the four carpenters, and explained to him the nature of their work, then he saw that the horns were not so invincible after all, and that the situation was not by any means so hopeless as at first he had deemed it.

Similarly the eye of man must have regarded the case of the feeble remnant, surrounded on every side by haughty and pitiless enemies, as desperate in the extreme. It seemed as if "the proud waters" must go over their soul. Horns to right and to left, and before and behind; it seemed as if they were in the very jaws of death. But the vision of faith, which God Himself bestows, could see four carpenters over against the four horns, for every danger an answering defence. For every horn that Satan or the world can put in the field, God can place a carpenter against it. He can put down army for army, leader for leader, man for man, force for force. The God of Israel has infinite resources, and cannot be outdone. However unopposed and irresistible the world may seem, He is controlling all its movements. He has forces of His own at work. He has instruments ready to His hand, and with these He takes the proud in their own craftiness, and turns aside the shafts of their malice, and causes their very wrath to praise Him. The agencies of Satan are many and varied, but for every legion that can take the field under the leadership of Satan, Christ can put forward an opposing force of His own, while maintaining at

the same time, at His disposal, His countless ranks of willing reserves.

And however strong and secure the world may be, it takes but a little movement of Divine power to strike terror into its heart. God's carpenters can fray the proudest horns. The world was now at rest and quiet, secure in the consciousness of superior might; but God has only to bring His workmen on the scene and direct their efforts, in order to throw the world into confusion and dismay. The ease is gone, the security is broken, the strength has oozed away, the men of might fail to find their hands. The Lord has affrighted them, and they came to "know themselves to be but men."

It might appear an unequal contest on the face of it, this, between the horns and the carpenters. It is probable, although of this we have no mention, that the prophet saw not only the horns, but the animals to which they belonged. Behind the horn in each case there was strength, as of an angry bull. And the means brought forward to oppose those formidable combatants might seem altogether inadequate for such an end. It might appear as if the carpenter must go down and be gored to death before the charge of the wild animal with the horn. Certain it is that God's workmen are often chosen from among the weak things of the world, and that the task assigned them often seems hopelessly out of proportion to their powers. David has to go forward with his sling and his smooth stone from the brook, to meet the Philistine giant with the great sword and the spear like a weaver's beam. Gideon and his three hundred followers with no more imposing equipment than trumpets and pitchers, are called upon to face the army of the Midianites, whose numbers were as the sands of the sea shore. A handful of weak, unlettered fishermen of Galilee are commanded to go into all the world and preach the gospel unto every nation, and bring all the nations of the earth unto the allegiance of Christ. It seemed a very unlikely thing when Luther nailed his theses to the door of the Church of Wittenberg that here was a carpenter who was to fray the horn of the Church of Rome, and cause that huge fabric to shake to its foundations. But this is God's way of working. He chooses the feeble things of the world to confound the mighty; He makes use of human weakness as the medium for revealing the glory of His own strength, and thus makes it abundantly plain that the excellency of the power is of God and not of man.

But there is another element that must not be overlooked in this contest. On the one side you have a horn, on the other an artisan—that is, brute force opposed to intelligent skill. This is the reason why the carpenter is more than a match for the horn. He has wisdom and understanding. He can arrange plans. He can handle tools; and trained skill is ever too much for mere natural force, however imposing. Hence it is that God's workmen shall ever be more than conquerors. They have opposed to them

forces that at first sight appear overwhelming in their superiority. But there is a hidden knowledge which enables the frailest "thinking reed" to triumph over all the onsets of unreasoning strength. Satan indeed has craft and cunning; but the devices of Satan are foolishness when opposed to the wisdom of God. And the world attacks in wild fury, and strikes in blind rage; but its policy is short-sighted and its strength is misdirected.

But the workmen of God need not to be ashamed. To begin with, they have His own Spirit within them, and He it is who teacheth their hands to war and their fingers to fight. They have heavenly wisdom and heavenly skill. God's Spirit instructs them when, and how, and where to strike, when attacking the forces of sin. And so their bow abides in strength, and the arms of their hands are made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob. So, also, the worm Jacob shall thresh the mountains, and beat them small. Then they have good tools, and some measure of practical knowledge of their use. It is the kind of weapon that David had, and Gideon had, and that the Lord of Glory Himself had—the sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God. The sword of the Spirit in their hands, and the light and life and strength of the Spirit in their hearts—there you have the two indispensable requisites of workmen not needing to be ashamed. And it is by reason of this equipment that God's carpenters, otherwise weak reeds shaken with the wind, are filled with strength and courage to "fray and cast out" the wildest and most powerful horns that can rise against them.

This vision has its message to the Church for all time. The angry horns threaten her from north, south, east, and west. She seems exposed to every attack, and likely to fall an easy prey to their fury. But in every time of need God can bring forth His carpenters. There are no gaps in the "walls and bulwarks" that encircle His people. From whatever quarter the enemy threatens, his advance can be opposed by the workmen of heaven. God can raise up men in every emergency to be His servants, and equip them with the gifts and graces necessary for the peculiar work to which He calls them. However furious and determined the powers of darkness may be, "He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision." And this is His message to the wicked that oppress His Church, "Lift not up the horn."

"Lift not your horn on high, nor speak
With stubborn neck. But know
That not from east, nor west, nor south,
Promotion doth flow.

"But God is Judge; He puts down one,
And sets another up.
For in the hand of God Most High,
Of red wine is a cup."

"He that endureth to the end shall be saved."

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.”—
Roin. xiii. 11.

THA da shlabhruidh air an anam agus 's ann ann am maitheanas peacaidh a tha iad air am fuasgladh, ach 's ann aig an anam a tha air a thoirt beo gu spioradail a tha faireachadh air na slabhruidhean sin. Tha sinn a' leughadh air aon a bha deich mile talann ann am feich agus 'nuair nach robh ni aige leis an dioladh e rinn an Tighearn truas mor a ghabhail dheth, leig e a chead da agus mhaith e na feich. Faic, dh' fhuasgail se e.

An duine aig nach robh an trusgan bainnse, thubhairt an Kigh ris na seirbhisich, “air a cheangal duibh eadar chosan agus lamhan togaibh leibh e agus tilgibh e 'san dorchadas iomallach.” An la a chronuicheas E peacadh dhuitsa ceanglaidh E thu air a leithid de dhoigh 's nach fhuasgail aon eile thu. Ciod e an t-slabhruidh a bhios ort? Mallachd Dhe, 's e sin slabhruidh a ni na diabhuil agus na h-aindiadhaich truagh tre'n t-siorruidheachd.

'S e slabhruidh eile gaol a' pheacaidh. Tha sinn a' leughadh air aon 'nuair a fhuair i an t-slabhruidh so, a ghuil aig cosan an Tighearna. Thubhairt E rithe, “Tha do pheacanna air am maitheadh.” Bha neach eile air a ghiulan d'a ionnsuidh air a leabaidh agus thubhairt E ris, “A mhic, tha do pheacanna air am maitheadh dhuit. Eirich, tog do leabaidh agus imich.” Agus dh' eirich esan air ball. Bha creutair bochd eile air a cheangal aig Satan ochd bliadhna deug, “gun chomas aice air chor sam bith i fein a dhireachadh.” Thubhairt E rithe, “a bhean, tha thu air d' fhuasgladh o d' anmhuinneachd.” Ciod am fuasgladh a bha sin? Direach, maitheanas peacaidh. Agus 's iongantach sin, 'nuair a tha sin a' tighinn a mach o'n chaithir ghil an an gloir dh' ionnsuidh an anama. O! 's iongantach sin an Cruithear a' labhairt air maitheanas ann an cluasan an anama. “Glan mi le hiosop agus bidh mi glan, ionnail mi agus bidh mi ni's gile na sneachd.” Ciod e an hiosop? Direach, an gealladh le fuil Chriosd a' glanadh an anama. O an saoghal bochd! Tha iad riarichte le bhi 'g iarruidh maitheanais. Ach ann an onfha Iordain 's e faireachadh air maitheanas a bheir fois.

'Nuair a tha Dia a' maitheadh peacaidh tha E a' cur soluis uir air nadur a' pheacaidh anns an anam 'nuair a smuainicheas aon air a' Chruithear agus air peacadh a' milleadh sonas Dhe agus a h-uile creutair naomh. 'Se so ni nach fhaic creutair gun ghras; 'se an t anam a fhuair maitheanas a gheibh soillseachadh sam bith air so. Faic gu'm bheil sin air chuimhne, “agus b' aithreach leis

an Tighearn gu'n do rinn E an duine air an talamh agus thog e doilgheas da 'na chridhe." Faigh thusa soillseachadh air so agus ni sin ifrinn gle bheag ann do shealladh an coineas ri do pheacanna, chi thu ni ùr ann do pheacanna. Nis 's ann o sin a bhios an creutair a' basachadh do'n pheacadh. Cha bhi peacaich ann an ifrinn 'nan onoir do'n diabhul, bidh iad a' foillseachadh an spioraid uamharra salach a bha anns an diabhul. Ach thusa a bhios ann an glòir bidh tu foillseachadh a mach an spioraid a tha ann an Crìosd a tha glan naomh a thug ort bhi treigsinn an t-saoghail agus a' gabhail grain de chomunn an t-saoghail. 'Se creutair bochd a' gul anns na cùiltean no creutair bochd air a leaghadh le naire fo fhaireachadh air maitheanas peacaidh a bhios nan comunn agad-sa.

Air na creutairean bochd so bidh an Cruithear a' leigil truailidheachd fuasgailte. Tha neasgaidean salach a dh' fheumas ruith fhaotainn, anamiannan, agus tuigidh an t-anam nach dean ni sona e gus am bi sin air a chaitheamh a mach. Tha aineolas air Dia, tha monmhor, tha mi-reite ri toil Dhe, tha doimhneachd de aingidheachd anns an anam agus bidh sin a' tighinn beo anns an fhaireachadh mar tha Dia a' tighinn dluth air an anam. An sin tuigidh an t-anam nach dean meadhanan nan gras sin a thoirt air falbh as, gur e ni a thigeadh a mach a doimhneachd arduachdar-anachd a chaitheadh a mach e. Tha gaol a' pheacaidh iongantach duilich a chaitheamh as an anam is feudaidh an creutair bhi iomadh la fo eagal nach ruig e air. O cha-n 'eil ni cosmhuil ri drapan a' tighinn a mach a bith Dhe. O! tha maitheanas peacaidh iongantach. Ged a gheibheadh an creutair e gidheadh bidh sealladh aige air an eadardhealachadh tha eadar e fein agus Dia. Mar sin cha tig ladarnas andàna stigh 'san anam agus cha chaill e a bheachd air oirdhearcas maitheanais ged a gheibheadh e sealladh air fichead uair san la.

Ach 's ann aig a' bhas a gheibh e sin ann am foirfeachd. Aig a' bhas thig a tobar na naomhachd tuil air an anam a ni e ann am priobadh na sùla ullamh airson gloire. O ma ta nach iongantach sin, aon a' faicinn a shlainte ni's fhaisge na 'nuair a chreid e? Ach is eigin gu'm basaich an corp. Thainig binn a' bhais a mach air, agus cha-n e sin a mhain ach tha de thruailidheachd anns a' chorp 's gu'm feum e bhi air a ghlanadh anns an uaigh. Sibhse a bhios air an laimh dheis chi sibh mar a bhios na tha thruailidheachd anns an talamh air a thaomadh a dh' ifrinn aig an la mhor. 'S ann o'n aonadh eadar Crìosd agus cuspairean a ghaoil a tha e gu'm bheil an cuirp air an glanadh anns an uaigh. Tha patran cuirp nan naomh air a tharruing ann an Crìosd agus feudaidh sinn a radh gur ann air sin a tha Dia ag amhaic agus leis gu bheil E toilichte. Feudaidh na naoimh ann an glòir fhaicinn ann an daonnachd Chriosd oirdheirceas na staid ris am bi an cuirp fhein air an cumadh. Agus 'nuair a chi na naoimh an t-oirdheirceas sin ann an Crìosd nach fheud sinn a radh gu'm bi fadal naomh annta airson an la sin sam bi an cuirp air an toirt a mach cosmhuil

ri a chorp glormhor-sa. O 's ann an sin a bhios an t-slainge air a crunadh, Tha sin aig na naoimh anns a' ghealladh agus anns an eadar ghuidhe, "Athair, is aill leam an dream a thug thu dhomh gu'm bi iad maille rium far am bheil mi; chum gu'm faic iad mo ghloir a thug thu dhomh." O! nach bochd an creutair ann an so an diugh agus gun fhios nach bi e ann an ifrinn mu'n tig ceann na bliadhna so? Gidheadh an àite a bhi 'cleachdadh mheadhonan gu dol as 's ann a tha e a' cleachdadh a h-uile meadhoin 'is comasach e gu bhi 'cur 'anam agus siorruidheachd a cuimhne. O! chi sibh iad fathas d a bha gle bhreagh anns an t-saoghal, ciod e na h-uile bheisdean a bhios iad 'nuair a chi iad an iomhaigh anns an diabhl. Ach a nis an dara ceann: 's e sin

II. Cuid de na nithibh a tha'n suil an anama 'nuair a tha e an toiseach ag amharc ri Criosd airson slainte. Gu bhi fosgladh so, tha na sgrìobtuirean ag innseadh co e am Fear-saoraidh, gu bheil E ionann ri Dia, gur e Cruithear neimh agus talamh. "Co thusa gu'm biodh eagal ort roimh dhuine a gheibh bas agus roimh mhac an duine a nithear mar am fear agus gn'n di-chuimhnicheadh tu an Tighearn do Chruithear a shin a mach na neamhan agus a leag steidh na talmhainn?" Tha am focal ag innseadh dhuinn co e am Fear-saoraidh gur e Dia. Agus tha mi cinnteach, thusa a fhuair anam beo nach earb thu e ri aon is lugha na Dia. 'Se sinn carraig pobull Dhe. "'Se d' Fhear-saoraidh Ti Naomh Israeil goirear Dia an domhain uile mar ainm ris." Nis tha E ann fein comasach an t-anam dheanamh sona tre 'n t-siorruidheachd, oir "annsan tha uile iomlanachd na Diadhachd a' gabhail comhnuidh gu corporra."

Tha an sgrìobtur ag innseadh dhuinn mu'n chrich airson an d' thainig Criosd stigh do'n t-saoghal agus an do ghabh E nadur an duine, gur e bha 'na shealladh tearnadh an anama agus ceann na nathrach a bhruthadh. Airson sin ghabh E nadur na daonnachd ann an aonachd ris fein chum anns an nadur sin gu'm bruthadh E ceann na nathrach agus gu'm basaicheadh E airson anamanna bochd; oir as eugmhais dortadh fola cha-n 'eil maitheanas peacaidh. Nis tha na sgrìobtuirean 'gar misneachadh gu bhi tighinn a dh' ionnsuidh Chriosd mar a tha sinn agus a bhi sealltuinn ris airson slainte. Mur bhiodh an sgrìobtur cha biodh coir againn. Ach 's e an sgrìobtur, "Feuch Uan Dhe a tu toirt air falbh peacaidhean an t-saoghail," "Thigibh am ionnsuidh sibhse uile a ta ri saothair agus fo throm uallaich agus bheir mise suaimhneas dhuibh," "An ti a thig am' ionnsuidh cha tilg mi air chor sam bith a mach e," "Thigibhse am' ionnsuidh agus gheibh sibh fois do 'ur n anamaibh." Agus ma gheibh thusa aithne air d'anam cha-n fhaigh thu fois ann an ni air bith eile; cha-n fhaigh thu fois a' do dheasdanasaibh. Ach ann an Criosd gheibh thu carraig. Agus cha-n iongantach ged a thubhairt an Salmadair air a' charraig sin, "ni'n gluaisear mise."

(Ri leantuinn.)

A Scrap of Spiritual Divinity.

(PREACHER UNKNOWN.)

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" There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth."—Luke xv. 10.  
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JESUS cared for one sinner. One sinner is enough to make all heaven weep. "One sinner destroyeth much good." But one sinner's repenting can fill all heaven—the God of heaven—the holy angels, his friends—can fill all heaven with joy. You may think it a sorry sight to see a poor, wretched creature going into a corner, and falling down, with shame and confusion of face, before the God of heaven and earth—looking into the desperately wicked heart, which, not his eye but God's can go to the bottom of, and seeking to see as deeply as he can—and going through a past life, and seeing the sins (of which he knew the facts) now, for the first time, in the sinfulness of them! And going from the life to the heart, and from the springs of evil in the heart to the nature, the poor creature, convinced of sin, convinced of unbelief, convinced of want of power to believë, convinced of contrariness of nature to the things to be believed, to the holy promises to be believed, lies down a lost wretch in the hands of a Sovereign God, of whom he has heard that He is gracious, that there is forgiveness with Him—taking law commands to the footstool of sovereign grace, and begging of the God of grace what the God of holy justice demanded, even repentance toward God, and faith toward the Lord Jesus Christ. You may think that it is but a sorry sight. You may think the man deranged, exaggerating matters. You may try in your whole-heartedness to administer such light gospeling as you have found sufficient to cure the scratches of your skin, to the deep wound of this heart, in which the arrow of God sticks. That is a deep grief. There is one grief infinitely deeper, namely, the agony of Christ's soul. But, save that, there is no sorrow like this sorrow.

Well, this may be your wonderment and your pity, but it is heaven's joy. Heaven is intensely rejoicing. There is joy in the Father's heart, in the Son's heart, and in the hearts of angelic natures, his friends, whose delight is in obeying God; they join in redemption's joy, though they share not in redemption, save in its joy; it's disinterested joy to them. Yet they have one joy with God, rejoicing in this joy. He and all His friends are rejoicing over one sinner. And among us this day, who is to be this one? If we have no one penitent among us, surely it will not be because we have not a sinner. I am one, and thou art one, and one is enough to give all this joy. And ought we not to love repentance, and to desire it, and to implore it, and to cherish it, from this very consideration, that we sinners are able, through grace, to fill all heaven with joy, and with a joy greater than is caused by the

continued preservation in holiness of the holy angels who never sinned?

Letter of late Donald Mackay, Student.

STRATHY POINT, May 16, 1904.

DEAR FRIEND,—It is a long time since I got your letter. I was in your house in W—— for a few nights; I was at the Sacrament. When we see Mr. Macdonald (Shieldaig), we see what it makes a man when he lives near God. It is a great privilege to be in the land where there are a few who bear His image in some measure, and it is a great thing that the Lord has not left Himself without a witness. There is no witnessing for the truth, but what there is of God in man. That is to say, no man does witness for Christ's sake, except it come from above. Fellowship with the Lord is a great thing. It would be better for us to have a little fellowship with God than to have all the world. Yet it is to experience this nearness that would make us count it so. There are durable riches and honour with Him, and the Holy Spirit can reveal these things to the soul. O how desirable would it be to come to nearness to God, and a forgetfulness of the world! I speak of this as a thing only desired by me, not as a thing obtained. Let me know how are the party that stand for the truth coming on in Glasgow. . . . They ought to be very highly esteemed, those the Lord has given to stand for Him in such dark days. When you think of them as Christ's, bought with His blood, how precious are they! They are not of the world as He is not of the world.

Be sure and write soon. May the Lord pour upon you of His Spirit very abundantly. Give yourself more and more over to Him, for He is the only good portion for time and eternity. Mr. ——— hopes that you will be found a witness on the side of truth when it is trampled under foot. . . . I desire your prayers, wishing you the love of God.—I am, your dear friend,

DONALD MACKAY.

Reason—Its Proper Place.—Some say their reason declares certain doctrines of revelation to be untrue, and that is enough. Your reason! And what, pray, is your reason? How much is its dictum worth? What weighs your reason in the great scale of minds? Who made it a judge of what its Maker ought to reveal, and ought to be, and ought to do; and to affirm that this may be true, and that may not be true? Do you say that God enkindled this light within you? True; but He meant it to illuminate its own little sphere, and not to boast itself a sun, and plant itself in the heavens, in its Maker's place and stead.—From "Casket of Odds and Ends."

Is it Right?

From "Casket of Odds and Ends."

This is a question which, it seems to me, is not asked with sufficient frequency or seriousness, even by those who profess to be Christians. By this question should every course of conduct and every case of conscience be tested.

Is it right? "Well, I do not think any special harm can result from it." That is more than you can decide. None but God can foresee consequences. Though it may seem to be but a slight deviation from the rigid law of rectitude, it must do harm to yourself, and may result in injury to others. A little wrong is an "offending in one point." "Little foxes destroy the vines."

Is it right? "Why, everybody does so." "Thou shalt not follow the multitude to do evil." We are not responsible nor accountable in masses, but as individuals. We never lose our personality in a crowd, and every wrong done in association with others is as distinctly marked as though it were done in solitude, and must be answered for alone.

Is it right? "It is popular. I shall be commended and praised for it." But human praise cannot change the inherent character of the action. There is no alchemy in words and smiles to transmute the dross of wrong into the gold of right. Better have the approval of thine own heart than the empty praise of crowds.

Is it right? "It seems expedient." Well, the right will always be found the expedient in the end. But some persons think that strict right may, in some cases, be sacrificed to a present expediency. Expediency in such a case is but a euphonism for wrong. It means, let us do a little evil that good may come. But evil never yet begot good. Good is never the progeny of such adultery. It is a universal law that every seed produces fruit of its own kind, and though God may sometimes, in His wise providence, crush the evil seed that human expediency has planted, and deposit, invisibly to us, good seed in its place, yet the damnation is no less just of those who say, "Let us do evil that good may come."

Is it right? "It is human nature." But human nature is all wrong, and grace is given us for its subduing and sanctification. He who follows the impulse of his carnal nature is supplying aliment to strengthen the "old man with his deeds." It is a sad proof of our degeneracy that the right almost always implies self-denial, self-crucifixion.

Is it right? "It is pleasant." Sin makes itself palatable to our depraved nature. But when right and enjoyment present themselves as claimants for our choice, and we must give up the one to gain the other, which shall be sacrificed? Woe to us if we trample upon right in our scramble after pleasure.

Is it right? "If it is not, I cannot help it." But this you know to be untrue. If you do wrong, it is because you choose to do it; all things considered, prefer it.

The Message.

Isaiah li. 6.

Lift up your eyes to the heavens high,
Behold the beauties of the distant sky!
How vast, majestic, and sublime!
Yet all shall pass away with time.

'Tis the word of the Lord,

And it shall be,—

A message, friend, to you and me.

Look on the earth, with its mountains grand,
Its seas, its rivers, and fertile land—
How rich the store in every clime!
Yet all shall pass away with time.

'Tis the word of the Lord,

And it shall be,—

Spoken from Eternity.

But, hark! glad tidings the last note brings,
And rich, O rich, its measure rings!

“Salvation shall for ever be,

And righteousness eternally.”

'Tis the word of the Lord,

Who cannot lie.

A message from the Throne on high.

Pray, seek that God in His wond'rous love
Would send the Spirit from above,

The power to give that we may take

Salvation free. for His own name's sake.

'Tis the word of the Lord,

And the message doth run,

“Ask in faith, and it shall be done.”

Helmsdale, 1905.

J. A.

A Good Result of the Welsh Revival.—The Carnarvon authorities have resolved to close the harbour against Sabbath traffic, notwithstanding that a considerable amount of income has hitherto accrued from Sabbath excursion steamers from Liverpool and elsewhere. The motion was resisted by some, but was eventually carried. This zeal for the Sabbath is a result of the recent religious movement in Wales.

Acknowledgments.—The Rev. N. Cameron begs to acknowledge, with thanks, £5, for St. Jude's Building Fund, from “A Lady Friend;” £1, from “A Lady Friend,” New York; also 10s. from a Friend, and £1 from “California.” The treasurer of the Dingwall congregation begs to acknowledge, with thanks, 10s., received from “A Friend in Applecross,” per Rev. Mr. S. M'Farlane, for Manse Building Fund; also £2 os. 6d., from friends in Aviemore, for same object, per Mr. Lachlan M'Lean, jun., Inverness.