

THE

Free Presbyterian Magazine

And MONTHLY RECORD.

Vol. III.

OCTOBER, 1898.

No. 6.

The Union Movement.

THE BASIS OF UNION.

WE now intend to examine the basis of union, proposed between the Free and U.P. Churches, and approved of by their supreme courts. This basis was sent down by the last Free Assembly to the Presbyteries for their consideration and approval, and will be discussed by these courts ere the Assembly meets next year. It is almost unnecessary to say that a very important matter stands to be weighed not only by church courts, but by every thinking individual within the pale of the Free Church. A momentous step is about to be taken, a step which will obliterate in this connection the Free Church of Scotland for ever. No doubt, as was said in a former article, she became a new body when the Declaratory Act was passed in 1892, a body akin to the U.P. in principles. She retained, however, the name, outward organisation, and, in a sense, the historical connection of the Church of 1843. Now all this is to pass away, and her identity is to be wholly lost in that of another Church whose distinctive principles are quite alien to hers. For the sake of a mere accession of numbers, she is to enter into a union that despoils her for ever of all connection with the name, the glory, the testimony, yea, the very being of the Church of Scotland Free.

The general principle which underlies the new basis of union is one of open questions. Every individual that accepts it makes an open question of fundamental doctrines of the faith, doctrines for which our covenanting forefathers shed their blood. The martyrs of Scotland exalted Christ as king of nations as well as king of Zion, and the fathers of the U.P. Church (who were *not* the Erskines), renounced the glorious testimony of the martyrs in this and other important points. It is announced in the new Uniting Act that members of each Church are at liberty to maintain their own views of truth. This may be so in appearance, but not in reality. All views that do not form the basis of union must be kept in the back ground, if there is to be any union at all. The Constitutionalist may hold in the privacy of his own heart, and

may advocate from his own pulpit the Establishment principle, but that principle has been cast out of his Church's creed, and, therefore, he cannot insist upon anybody holding it. In the church courts he is bound to administer to candidates for office certain new questions that commit these candidates to nothing more than the principles of Voluntaryism, and he has no power in this sphere to advocate the Establishment principle. He is thus, in fact, compelled to renounce it; he may not do so in words, but he most certainly does so by his acts. It is utterly vain, therefore, to say, as is said in the new Uniting Act, that "members and representatives of either of the two Churches" "shall have full right, as they see cause, to assert and maintain the views of truth and duty with which" these Churches "have been specially identified, and which have been expressed in their public documents." This is only a subtle subterfuge to retain the presence and influence of some parties, especially of the Constitutional party in the Free Church. It is lamentable to observe that the latter seem to be quite ensnared by the Jesuitical provision above supplied for the retention of their views.

Let us now go on to notice the changes that are to be made in the questions put to office-bearers on taking office in the Church. The first thing we observe is *the new preamble*, to be printed at the head of the questions, and publicly read when they are put:—

It is hereby declared that the following questions are put in view of Act 1647 approving of the Confession of Faith; Act XII., 1846, of the Free Church of Scotland; Declaratory Act, 1879, of the United Presbyterian Church; and Act XII., 1892, with relative Act of 1894, of the Free Church.

It is also hereby declared that the documents referred to in question No. 4, and there named for brevity the Claim of Right of 1842, the Protest of 1843, and the Basis of Union of 1847, are respectively the "Claim, Declaration, and Protest adopted by the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland in 1842," and the "Protest of ministers and elders, commissioners from Presbyteries to the General Assembly, read in presence of the Royal Commissioner on 18th May, 1843," and the "Basis of Union adopted by the Synod of the United Presbyterian Church on 13th May, 1847."

In this preamble, we notice that the questions are to be put in view of the Declaratory Acts of the U.P. and Free Churches. The standards of the United Church are to be modified by these Acts, so that no one is asked to accept any views but such as are to be found in, or are consistent with, the erroneous Acts of 1879 and 1892. Again, the U.P. Basis of Union of 1847 is to be one of the Church's subordinate standards. The U.P. Church is a collection of fragments that seceded from the Church of Scotland, and from the Original Secession Church, and united into one body in 1847. They were Voluntaries that could not find rest for their feet in the Established Church or in the Church of the Erskines, and therefore had to form themselves into a new Church. Their

Basis of Union is now to be accepted as a doctrinal standard by the Free Church.

The next thing to be examined is the Questions themselves in their changed form. All are not interfered with, but the greater number are. We select some :—

Old Question 1. Do you believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the Word of God, and the only rule of faith and manners?

New Question 1. Do you believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament to be the Word of God, and the only rule of faith and life?

Here the changes are slight, and do not interfere with the sense. But we cannot help saying: what an awful mockery it is for many in the Free Church who do not believe that the Scriptures are the Word of God to answer this question in the affirmative! The leading theological professors treat the Scriptures as if they were nothing more than the fallible word of erring men, and the majority of the ministers follow the professors.

Old Question 2. Do you sincerely own and believe the whole doctrine contained in the Confession of Faith, approved by former General Assemblies of this Church, to be founded upon the Word of God, and do you acknowledge the same as the confession of your faith; and will you firmly and constantly adhere thereto, and to the utmost of your power assert, maintain, and defend the same, and the purity of worship at present practised in this Church?

New Question 2. Do you sincerely own and believe the doctrine of this Church, set forth in the Confession of Faith, approved by Acts of General Synods and Assemblies; do you acknowledge the said doctrine as expressing the sense in which you understand the Holy Scriptures; and will you constantly maintain and defend the same, and the purity of worship in accordance therewith?

It is clearly manifest that this new question does not commit anyone to "the whole doctrine of the Confession of Faith:" it only commits the person who answers to "*the doctrine of this Church, set forth in the Confession.*" Where is that doctrine to be found? Just in the recent Declaratory Acts of both Churches. It is well known that "this doctrine"—being of an Arminian, Popish, and Voluntary character—is quite opposed to that of the Confession, and so it is impossible to find it set forth in that document. The significance of this question is, however, that office-bearers are not committed to anything in the Confession inconsistent with the doctrine of both Churches, as already declared in their public Acts; this is but a very small portion of the Confession indeed. Again, it is to be observed that the Bible is to get a subordinate place in the United Church. The insinuation is made that there may be several senses put upon the Holy Scriptures. The United Churchman is asked to acknowledge the doctrine of his Church as "the sense" in which he understands

the Scriptures. There appears here the Popish error that the Church is the judge of the Scriptures. Indeed, this is the view that has plain expression in the last clause of the Declaratory Act of 1892. None need be surprised to find it here. Lastly, the words anent purity of worship have been changed. It is not the purity of worship approved of at the Disruption that office-bearers are now asked to maintain, but that kind of worship that is in accordance with the present doctrine of the Church. This, of course, asks all to acknowledge hymns and instrumental music as proper elements in worship. The United Churchman, whether he be an adherent of the Constitutional party, the Rainy party, or the U.P. party, will have to acknowledge by his reply to this question all the latest innovations in the public worship of God.

We hope to resume the subject in next number.

The Radical Cause of National Calamity.

AN ALARM TO THE PEOPLE OF GREAT BRITAIN.

A SERMON by the Rev. Dr. JOHN LOVE, Preached at the Scotch Church, London, on 27th October, 1794.

~~~~~  
*"But they rebelled, and vexed his Holy Spirit: therefore he was turned to be their enemy, and he fought against them."*—ISAIAH lxiii. 10.  
 ~~~~~

MY brethren, we are placed in this world that we may be witnesses of the works of God. The powers of reason are not bestowed on us for trivial purposes. From all that is above us, or around us, or under our feet, from all that we ourselves are, this voice issueth forth, "Stand still, O man! and consider the wondrous works of God."—(Job xxxvii. 14.) And if regenerating grace, accompanying the divine word, hath roused and illuminated our rational faculties, we can no longer with stupid indifference stalk up and down among the wonders of the Almighty. In the ordinary and tranquil state of the world, the objects and movements which appear will often fill us with astonishment, and draw forth our adoring acknowledgments and praises.

But there are periods when the visible operations of divine government become peculiarly solemn and interesting—when, if I may allude to the prophetic emblem, "the wheels are lifted up from the earth, their wings appear dreadful in their height, and the noise of the wings of the spirited living creatures, among these wheels, is like the noise of great waters, as the voice of the Almighty, the voice of speech as the noise of an host."—(Ezek. i.) Then even the blind world begins to look aghast, and the slumbering reason and conscience of the multitude are awakened.

And in such a period shall they remain asleep, who profess to be the children of light, the possessors of supernatural wisdom? God forbid!

Yes, my brethren! it is time for us, in the present embroiled state of the European nations, turning away from inferior causes, to look up to heaven with that question warm upon our hearts, "What meaneth the heat of this great anger?" For, if the state of things admits a remedy, if still it is possible to prevent or to suspend for a time the execution of deserved judgment, in this way alone must deliverance be obtained. The mighty hand of Him who created the worlds must be seen, acknowledged, and adored; and an inquiry must be made into the causes of that holy anger, which never can arise without a cause. And this must be done, not superficially, not deceitfully. The fatal disasters of the ancient Jerusalem were precipitated by that spirit, which is thus marked in the prophecy of Jeremiah: "Who is the wise man that may understand this, and who is he to whom the mouth of the Lord hath spoken, that he may declare it, for what the land perisheth?"—(Jer. ix. 12.) "They have healed the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, saying, Peace, peace, when there is no peace."—(Jer. vi. 14.) And the silent ruins of the city gave to the complaint of the lamenting prophet unutterable energy, when, beholding them, he thus spake: "Thy prophets have seen vain and foolish things for thee; and they have not discovered thine iniquity to turn away thy captivity, but have seen for thee false burdens, and causes of banishment."—(Lam. ii. 14.)

I proceed, therefore, in the name of the Lord of Hosts, whose messenger I am, however unworthy, to declare and testify that the source of all our public calamities is the wickedness of the country; and that contempt of the Holy Spirit of God, in His peculiar operations on the souls of men, is the central point of that wickedness.

This awful charge I mean to state as applicable to all the orders of society among us, from the highest to the lowest. The great of the land are not before me: I wish they were. Called by providence, and armed with heavenly strength, I should be glad to plead with them on this subject, face to face. But though, as members of the community, we are only a handful of obscure individuals, our exercises will not be unimportant, or unregarded by the King of Glory, if our spirits are sincerely broken by views of our own sinfulness, and of general rebellion against the Majesty of Heaven around us.

Contempt of the Holy Spirit of God, in His peculiar, gracious operations on the souls of men—this, this is the great, the general crime of the British Islands.

A heavy accusation exhibited against a great people! If it is groundless, I shall merit severe censure, as a false accuser of my country. Happy should I be, were it possible to prove the contrary of what I have stated, and to shew that there does

prevail, among the various classes of men, that humble esteem, veneration, and submission, which the person and operations of this blessed Agent demand. But I fear my proofs of guilt shall be irresistible, and by no means hard to be collected.

In order to form just ideas of our conduct towards the Spirit of Grace, it is necessary that we look back for a little into past ages. These countries for a long period were overwhelmed with the darkness, and polluted with the abominations, of the Popish superstition. Under that depraved system, the glories of the Spirit of Jesus Christ were dreadfully obscured. Instead of the beauty, power, and splendour of His vital operations, the Christian church held forth to the view of the world a multitude of deluded idolaters, whose veneration and hopes rested sacrilegiously on worldly pomp, human authority, uncommanded rites, fruitless austerities, and the imaginary powers of the idol Freewill.

At length, at the call of heaven, first in this island, afterwards in other countries, the eyelids of the morning were opened. Then the Spirit of Jehovah, who had all along in heaven rested un eclipsed on the High Priest and Mediator of the church, burst forth in these darkened regions.

In the reformers themselves, and in multitudes who embraced their doctrine, the nature and excellency were displayed of that unaffected spiritual religion which is produced by divine influence; and illustrious specimens were exhibited, what the almighty Spirit of grace can do in renewing the souls of men. Great opposition, as might be expected, was made to this resurrection of true Christianity, and the fires of persecution were kindled. But amidst those flames the perfumes of heavenly grace diffused their fragrantcy and rose accepted to the skies, as in the apostolic and purest following ages. And thus the world at large, and in a very special manner the inhabitants of these islands, were summoned to behold the majesty of the Holy Ghost, and to submit to His gracious operations.

Here I take up the complaint and accusation of my text, "But they rebelled, and vexed his Holy Spirit." Ah! why were the progress of Reformation, and the conquests of the pure Gospel, interrupted by the grovelling schemes of this world's policy? Why were dead forms and unwarranted ceremonies held fast, and exalted into the place of the power of godliness? Why was the sword of public justice drawn against the saints of the Most High? And why, when, after multiplied deliverances and provocations, the returning Spirit of the Lord in the present century lifted up His standard and rose in awful majesty to destroy the works of the devil, and to rescue myriads from Satan's tyranny—why was His offered return not universally welcomed? why was His sovereign procedure daringly reproached, and the memory of His wonders at length almost extinguished?

"When I remember these things, I pour out my soul in me."—(Psalm xlii.) With deep regret, I attempt to form the idea of the

glorious height of purity, to which, in these countries, religion might have been by this time advanced, had the early calls of infinite grace been humbly and uniformly obeyed. And I hear with awe the secret voice of the Holy One, thus complaining over an ungrateful people: "Your iniquities have turned away these things, and your sins have withholden good things from you. Will a man leave the snow of Lebanon which cometh from the rock of the field? or shall the cold flowing waters that come from another place be forsaken? O that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments! Then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea."—(Jer. v. 25; xviii. 14; Isaiah xlvi. 18.)

The schemes of divine providence are the schemes of Him who is eternal. Before God, a thousand years are as one day. Therefore the dispensations of God, towards different and distant ages, are mysteriously connected together. And sometimes on one particular race of men a tempest of judgments hath fallen, which had been gathering for ages. (See Gen. xv. 16; Matt. xxiii. 35, 36). Is this procedure unrighteous? No: for in such cases the children who feel the stroke have served themselves heirs to the crimes of their fathers, by inheriting their spirit and by bringing to maturity the wickedness which their ancestors had begun to exemplify.

Into a dark reckoning of this kind, I fear, the present race of men must enter. For we have imitated, we have gone beyond, the impiety of our fathers—"We have rebelled and vexed his Holy Spirit."

"The shew of their countenance doth witness against them" (Isa. iii. 9-25), said the holy prophet, when about to pronounce the awful sentence in the ears of Jerusalem, "Thy men shall fall by the sword, and thy mighty in the war." The prevailing spirit and dispositions of a people form the general look, dress, and demeanour; and when the exterior appearance, which is fashionable and approved, is such as plainly indicates levity, haughtiness, and estrangement from the spiritual world, the evidence commences of the crime concerning which we now inquire. Look at the multitude among us, you who are capable of judging in this matter. You need go no farther to discover the existence and wide dominion of that spirit which is in direct opposition to all heavenly influences. Nor shall these lesser marks of rebellion elude the notice of those divine eyes which are as a flame of fire, or escape the blasting rebuke of Him who hath said, "The eyes of the lofty shall be humbled."—(Isa. v. 15.) "Whom hast thou reproached and blasphemed, and against whom hast thou lifted up thine eyes on high? even against the Holy One of Israel."—(Isa. xxxvii. 23.) "Because the daughters of Zion are haughty, and walk with stretched-forth necks and wanton eyes, walking and mincing as they go; therefore the Lord will smite."—(Isa. iii. 16.)

The breath of public opinion, the current of general sentiment and speech on the subject of divine influences, or the profound

oblivion and silence in which that subject is buried, will soon convince an intelligent observer that we are a people laden with this iniquity. But I must not linger at the threshold; I hasten to mark out decisive proofs of this wide-wasting treason against the majesty of the Holy Spirit of the living God.

Of these, the first and most important is Sabbath-breaking, or the prostitution of sacred time.

Were it my design to establish the authority of this wise, good, holy institution, I might go back to the foundation of the world, and to the bowers of the original paradise; or I might call you to listen to that terrific voice of words which, issuing from the tempestuous darkness and flames of Sinai, conveyed terror to the breasts of millions while it pronounced the statute of heaven—"Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy." But I take it for granted that the institution is divine. My present object is to mark the atrocity of its violation, as implying a vile contempt of the influences of the Holy Spirit.

When the glorious Saviour, having finished the mysterious purchase of salvation, rose to endless life and dominion on the first day of the week, the honours of the Sabbath were justly transferred to that day; and its hours became peculiarly sacred and auspicious, as the season when mortals, humbly waiting upon God, might hope to be visited with those operations of the Spirit of Jesus Christ which apply the blessings of redemption. What, then, might be expected in a country wherein such a Sabbath is made known? We plead not for the formal austerities of hypocrisy; but we contend for it, and all the sophistry in the world cannot resist us, that to refuse a serious, diligent observation of the Christian Sabbath, with a view to the spiritual ends of its appointment, is to contemn those influences of the Eternal Spirit which bring salvation and heaven into immortal souls. Every Sabbath-breaker is such a despiser, every act of Sabbath-breaking expresses such contempt.

What, then, must be the state of a country filled with such rebels? Be astonished, ye heavens; be ashamed, thou sun, whom the Spirit of God placed in the skies—withdraw thy shining beams from the haunts of such transgressors; and thou solid earth, tremble under their steps, while they assemble in unashamed crowds, to declare before angels and men how much they despise the majesty and grace of thy Creator!

I form the idea of a conference between two of those degraded archangels whom the Scripture describes as "the rulers of the darkness of this world." Meeting in the aerial regions, they communicate to each other their horrid machinations and delights, and thus Belial accosts the fierce, ensanguined Moloch—"Whence, and whither is thy flight, admired hero of the sable abyss? What new exploit moves thy panting bosom, and touches thine eyes with fire?" To whom Moloch answers, "Where the slain are, there am I. Fields of blood are my garden of pleasure. Joyful is the

thundering pomp of modern scientific destruction. But chiefly am I pleased with the bestial crash of teeth, in the combatants approaching to close conflict. I am then equally delighted with the murdering rage of the conquerors and with the pale ghastliness of the slain. Satiated thus in yonder plains, I fly across the country, catching, as I pass, the groans and shrieks of widows, sisters, parents, brothers, and helpless children. But I hasten to a scene where most of all I feel myself a god; to mark, in the circle of modern statesmen, the simpering smile and the self-important obstinate shrug wherewith the report of disaster, and of the carnage of their countrymen, is entertained. No song of Homer is necessary to rouse these mortals to blood; a little inglorious money supplies all needful enthusiasm." Thus Moloch; and to him Belial speedily replies: "And when I, honoured Moloch, sweep through thy scenes of glory, the noise of oaths and curses is musical in my ear, and I mark with joy the transition in dying heroes from the confidence of fearless imprecation to the sullen horrors of cowardly despair. But seest thou yonder tufted green spot, just beside the smoke of my favourite city? There is the scene of my exploits. There I enjoy pleasure more sublime than the ferocity of blood, while I teach mortals outrageously to disdain the restraints of divine authority, to spit on whatever is sacred, and to give the back and not the face to the Author of salvation. And now the long labour of my legions is crowned with magnificent success. On that hated first day of the week, what is my ecstasy, while the thickening crowd is hurrying along with ardent countenance, as if the wretches expected something! At length the variegated rabble, and the pompous train of coaches and cavalry, overflows. What delicious confusion, what glorious universal eclipse of sober reason, what complete extinction of the fear and the very remembrance of God! With what consummate folly do they stare in one another's faces, what torrents of nonsense are poured from their lips! Sublime contrast to the abhorred solemnities of Christian worship. Perhaps conscience struggles a little in some apostate Puritan or northern stripling, but my breath soon suppresses the conflict, and I see the wreck of all the labours and cares of whining parents and ministers. Think not, O Moloch, my boasting to be vain. Thou rememberest that region of the deep abyss, peculiarly crowded and fiery, whence the shriek of despised salvation hath at times astonished the central palace. The thoughts of that mansion, and that soon they shall be lodged in it, solace me, and enable me to bear the contrast between their easy dream and my own ceaseless agonies. Besides, I glory in the wide extended influence of these my exertions. To the remotest regions of the globe, the plants of wickedness from this nursery bear with them the dishonours of the Christian name, and the sound of Hyde Park Sabbaths echoes my glory through every receptacle of the infernal universe. Nor art thou thyself, Moloch, unindebted to me: I give to thy warriors, and even to thy beloved

statesmen, their first education. Thy bloody ideas could not be fully painted in their breasts were not the awe of eternity and the sense of divine attributes swept away by my influence. But let us not contend; our claims of glory shall be adjusted at leisure, when the period of grace, which cruel partiality assigns to men, is ended. Go thou, and prosper; profanity and blood cannot be at variance; to our weak opponents we leave it to enfeeble one another with useless disputes; our kingdom hath long stood by harmonious exertions, and shall yet stand."

A second proof of alienation from the blessed Spirit of God, and contempt of His influences, is the profane waste of leisure time on other days besides the Sabbath.

Every person, even the meanest in society, ought to enjoy the privilege of some leisure time; to deny this, in ordinary cases, is oppression; and, in the usual manner of employing such intervals, a clear discovery is made of the spirit and dispositions of mankind. I hardly need to point out what must be the effects of just concern for salvation, and esteem of the influences of grace, in our disposal of the time which is properly at our own command. The wise will mourn over the ruin of immortal souls, while they see, all over the country, marks of apostasy in this respect from the paths of uprightness and wisdom.

Reasonable allowances must be made for recreations, truly harmless and useful for invigorating the powers of body and mind, but life is short, eternity is near, and its concerns—infinite in their importance—must not yield to the justling of business on the one hand, or of recreation on the other.

If I know the terrors and the love of God, and feel tender concern for the happiness of a friend, I will observe him in his leisure hours; it will give me pain to find him then a loitering trifler, nor will it much relieve me to discover that in such seasons he is constantly engaged in the pursuits of curious speculation, or in the gratification and improvement of an elegant taste. I will remind him that there are more serious concerns, I will counsel him to seek for pleasures more solid and sublime.

But what if my friend is seized with the madness of the times, and hurried into the whirlpool of fashionable amusement? Ah! now the chaos of his darkened mind is agitated, now there is no access for sober reflection, much less for subjects so solemn as the operations of the Holy Spirit of God. I must stand afar off, with the feelings of one who beholds from the shore, incapable of affording relief, a distant shipwreck, only I remember that "the things which are impossible with men are possible with God."

Can it be denied that the carnal, dissipated, lawless state of mind which pervades assemblies for vain amusement is attended with total presumptuous aversion to the influences of the Holy Spirit of God?

When the trump of luxurious wealth hath sounded its alarm, and the restless demoniacs of fashion are assembled in numerous

cabal, under the glittering, falsely hospitable roof; when animal vivacity, indulged sensuality, the pride of unfeeling prosperity, the refinement of deceitful immoral feeling, prostituted genius, hell-tinged profanity, and the steams of diversified folly, ascending from every corner of the sounding mansion, have mingled together to form the illusive dream of seeming enjoyment; then, before the moment of universal frenzy and confusion arrives, let there be placed unseen an enlightened observer, one whose breast glows with celestial fire; what abhorrence, what indignation, what unutterable compassion will work within him, and how deeply will he feel the opposition between the fermenting pestilential vapour of the satanical sacrifice and that pure incense of delight which breathes in the assemblies of the upright when made glorious by the presence and mighty influence of the Spirit of God? But at length, raised to something of the spirit of a martyr or apostle, let the Christian burst from his concealment, and if the venerability of years, of office, of acknowledged wisdom and piety—if the effulgence of heroic zeal and the tears of compassion can check the clamour of masculine mirth, and restrain the no less rebellious twitter of female gaiety, let him address himself in speech to the remains of rationality and conscience in the profligate assembly; let him remind the enchanted mortals that the God whom angels worship is present in that very spot, that they are immortal beings hastening to the divine tribunal, and in imminent hazard of being plunged into the lake of everlasting fire; let him testify to them of the salvation of God, of the love of Jesus the Redeemer, and of the sacred joys and pleasures which they may yet enjoy on earth and in heaven if, abandoning these vanities, they will resign themselves to the teaching and influence of— Ah! the roar is up; fanaticism-puritan. His voice is lost, the insulting hiss is become general, he must retire, breathing to heaven—"Arise, O God! plead thine own cause."

At the theatre, when all is sunk in haughty forgetfulness of God; after the proud have once more displayed their brilliancy and "set their heart as the heart of God;" after the eyes of vanity have for the last time wearied themselves in staring about; after the tears which real guilt and misery demanded have been wasted on fictitious crimes and calamities, and the whole crowd hath been shaken with the madness of laughter; after profanity hath unfurled its flag of defiance, with hell-bred gallantry setting at nought the names of the Most High, the tremendous operations of providence, and the terrors of damnation; after obscenity hath swallowed down its morsel of elegant filthiness, let a celestial spirit shine forth, eclipsing the luminaries of the place, and scattering around those terrors which were once felt at the sepulchre of Jesus of Nazareth; and in such strains as these let his voice announce the hastening doom: "Worms of the dust, enemies of the eternal God! you have long been the abhorrence of the inhabitants of heaven; you have disdained to seek Jesus who was crucified; the divine

sorrows, the pure delights which His spirit creates in repenting souls, you have rejected, you have treated with derision; now the day of your visitation expires. I swear by Him that liveth for ever and ever, you shall have time no longer!" Then let trembling rock the ground, let the fabric and its miserable assembly roll down the opening chasm, and let the cloud of dislodged spirits behold the majestic, unveiled, flaming countenance of their Judge. Would such vengeance be too severe? Let us not presume to say that it would; rather let us wonder that, amidst ages of provocation, such tokens of wrath have not appeared, and, if our impenitence is still continued, let us think with awe for what solemn catastrophe such a people as we may be reserved. "What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction?"—(Rom. ix. 22.)

A third evidence of general alienation from the ways of the blessed spirit of grace is the loud voice of diabolical language, and the display of impudent impurity, in the midst of us.

No long reasoning is necessary, in reference to the immediate subjects of such wickedness, to shew that they despise God in every respect, and especially as to His holy operations on the human soul. Such horrid apostates must be understood to have made up their mind on this subject, and to have virtually resolved on parting for ever with all divine friendship, and on lying down in the everlasting horrors of that prison which divine justice will make sufficiently gloomy and strong for their reception. And, if general abhorrence is not expressed against them, a few such monsters are enough to draw down judgments from heaven on a wide-extended empire.

Shall we hesitate, then, to pronounce that to be a blaspheming, a filthy kingdom, where such crimes walk about in daily triumph? Must we not say of it, "it is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird?"—(Rev. xviii. 2.)

Men may make light of it as they please, but the number and boldness of the profane and profligate among us is truly alarming, especially as it goes to prove that the detestable vices which the great and wealthy have long exemplified are now diffused through all the inferior orders of society. If there is, indeed, a majority of sober and virtuous characters remaining, where is their zeal and exertion to suppress such crimes? Shall it be imagined that the Holy Spirit of God is honoured, or will long rest, amidst a people who either commit, or witness with indifference, evils which He infinitely abhors?

But, it will be said, there certainly is in the country a great mass of sober, respectable, industrious citizens; these form the strong pillars of the state, on which luxury, heroism, and even religion itself must hang their trophies.

I come, I come to you, ye busy, plodding, commercial tribes,

whose souls are the seat of tormenting care, and your bodies of endless, worldly fatigue. In your prevailing spirit and ways, I discern a fourth alarming evidence of opposition to the influence of heavenly grace.

“Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you. Take no thought what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, or wherewithal ye shall be clothed : for after all these things do the heathen seek. Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness. How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God ! Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”—(John vi. 27 ; Matt. vi. 31 ; Mark x. 23 ; Matt. v. 3.)

Ye men of business, what think ye of these words of the Saviour and Judge of the world? Have they any meaning? Are you not conscious of that inward, deep-rooted distemper against which these statutes of heaven are pointed? Attend, I pray you, to one question further : What is your esteem of those mighty operations and influences of the eternal Spirit which bring men to regard such testimonies as these not as gloomy, absurd paradoxes, but as awful, delightful, practicable rules of conduct?

Ah ! here is discovered the dreadful crime against which I am contending. You prosecute, each of you, his scheme of worldly advancement. This, if the scheme is lawful, I blame not. You appear in the concerns of life with vigour and animation : this I approve. What then? You grasp at the things of a moment with the eagerness of creatures destined to spend eternity in such a world as this. You pant after money as though there were no God, no heaven of eternal pleasure ; your hearts are full of grovelling, debasing lusts. Here is your wickedness, and the central point of it is that you neglect, you refuse, you despise that blessed, almighty, gracious Agent who would change and purify your hearts, and fill them with heavenly delight.

Am I a false accuser? Are we indeed a spiritual people, heavenly-minded amidst all our ardours and hurries of business? I know there are many professors of better things than those I have alluded to. I admit that, here and there in the busy scenes of life, may be found a spiritual person who would gladly content himself with sober diligence in secular affairs, and who endures those carnal hurries which he cannot escape as a matter of trial and patience, trusting in infinite grace to prevent the mischief, and to repair the damages, which are attached to his unavoidable manner of life. But how few are these exceptions! And, when they are discovered, with what disdain and enmity do the carnal multitude look at them.

“How canst thou say, I am not polluted, I have not gone after Baalim?”—(Jer. ii. 23.) I appeal to every man’s, to every child’s observation. I appeal to the streets and houses, to the coffee-rooms, counting-houses, and workshops, to the highways and

fields, and to the roaring seas, where business is going forward. What is the breath, the spirit, the current of the times? Do we look like those who habitually hold communion with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, or like those who despise Him; like those who fear to exchange heaven for earth, or like those who are ready to sell all that is sacred for bags of money? And if the treasures of earth are indeed your god, what are your bags of money, your piles of goods, but so many idols of jealousy which one day the breath of the Almighty will consume! Ah, "cursed children" (2 Pet. ii. 14), if you will not repent, and give glory to God, let your money perish with you. You are going to hell, and you are, while on earth, drawing down the judgments of the great and dreadful God on the countries where you dwell. Hear, I beseech you, before it is too late, the testimonies of divine wrath against such characters as yours, and, while you hear, may that Spirit of Grace whom you have rejected wound and turn your hearts:—"The wicked boasteth of his heart's desire, and blesseth the covetous whom the Lord abhorreth. God is not in all his thoughts; his ways are always grievous; his mouth is full of cursing, and deceit, and fraud; his eyes are privily set against the poor; he lieth in wait secretly as a lion in his den. Break thou the arm of the wicked and the evil man. Wo unto them that join house to house, that lay field to field, till there be no place. Lo, they have rejected the word of the Lord, and what wisdom is in them? Therefore will I give their wives to others, and their fields to them that shall inherit them: for every one from the least even unto the greatest is given to *covetousness*; from the prophet even unto the priest, every one dealeth falsely. He is a proud man, neither keepeth at home, who enlargeth his desire as hell, and is as death, and cannot be satisfied. Wo to him that coveteth an evil covetousness to his house, that he may set his nest on high: thou hast consulted shame to thy house, by cutting off many people, and hast sinned against thy soul; for the stone shall cry out of the wall, and the beam out of the timber shall answer it. O thou that dwellest upon many waters, abundant in treasures! thine end is come, and the measure of thy covetousness. The Lord of hosts hath sworn by himself, Surely I will fill thee with men as with caterpillars, and they shall lift up a shout against thee. Thus saith the Lord God: O Tyrus, thou hast said, I am of perfect beauty. By thy great wisdom, and by thy traffic, hast thou increased thy riches, and thine heart is lifted up. Behold, therefore, I will bring strangers upon thee, the terrible of the nations, and they shall draw their swords against the beauty of thy wisdom. Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth: thou hast defiled thy sanctuaries by the multitude of thine iniquities, by the iniquity of thy traffic; therefore I will cast thee as profane out of the mountain of God; and I will destroy thee, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire."—(Psalm x., Isa. v., Jer. viii., Hab. ii., Jer. li., Ezek. xxvii., xxviii.)

The last awful proof of rebellion against the Holy Spirit of God I take from the apparent state of things in worshipping assemblies.

The most solemn thing out of heaven is Christian worship: who can entertain ideas of it sufficiently exalted? In gospel institutions are presented to the mind the infinite perfections of that one eternal essence which is all beauty and majesty, purity and splendour, love and felicity. Possessing this one glorious essence of Deity, there appear three divine Persons, mysteriously distinct and co-equal, and who, harmonious in their holy love, sustain distinct characters and offices in reference to the sinner's worship. The first displays the majesty of a Judge and Father; the second appears as a Mediator, presenting His own atoning blood; the third operates within, in the heart of the worshipper, and there imparts and seals salvation. Under such views, with what weight ought expressions like the following to fall on every approaching mortal:—"I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me. God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints. O worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness. Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God that worketh in you."—(Lev. x. 3; Psalm lxxxix. 7; xcvi. 9; Phil ii. 12, 13.)

But where shall be found among us the assembly of worshippers whose general aspect and deportment bear manifest impressions of such things as these? To form the idea of what a Christian assembly may and ought to be, I fear we must look away from almost everything that present times exhibit; we must go to the Scripture, and to the records of former periods, "the years of the right hand of the Most High."

In reference to the operations of the blessed spirit, I can imagine only two situations of a body of men united in Christian worship that can indicate a due regard to this glorious agent.

The one is that of a people "lamenting after the Lord."—(1 Sam. vii. 2.) I take it for granted that the spirit of Laodicean self-sufficiency is driven from among them, and that, conscious of former provocations, they have, in the spiritual sense, "put off their ornaments" (Exod. xxxiii. 5), and are waiting to see what the God of grace may do to them. It may easily be conceived with what unaffected seriousness and humiliation, desire and hope, such a people will appear in the sanctuary of God; and with what unfeigned sorrow they will retire disappointed, while the Spirit of power withholds his mighty influences. Vain would be the attempt to amuse them with the empty charms of a worldly eloquence, or to deceive them with speculative notions of unfelt salvation. Their complaint is not to man; their relief can come from neither man nor angel; He only who is God, infinite in power and in love, even the Holy Ghost, descending in the fulness of His grace, can "bind up their breach, and heal the stroke of their wound."—(Isaiah xxx. 26.)

He will "rend the heavens, he will come down" among such a people, "and the mountains shall flow down at his presence."—

(Isa. lxiv. 1.) Then they shall appear in the other situation, which belongs to those who duly regard His holy influences. In a Christian assembly, blessed with the abundant pouring out of the Spirit from on high, I should expect to see something like a general manifest *resurrection* from former inward death, while the published truths of the Scripture are, by the divine Author of them, mightily impressed at once on a multitude of souls, suitably to their various circumstances and capacities. In some countenances there would shine forth the serene elevation of heavenly delight, like the angelic aspect of Stephen the martyr; in others would appear the humble awe and contrition of the publican; in others the tender melting of her who washed her Saviour's feet with tears; in others the ardour of an invigorated struggle to enter in at the strait gate; in others the piercing look of inquiring anxiety; in others the consternation of an agonizing conscience, loaded with particular crimes, or with the sense of universal depravity; in others the confused stare of guilty ignorance. Nor should I be surprised though the impression of love, or of terror, from so mighty an agent, should in some cases overwhelm for a time the powers of animal nature, or break in a little on that external order which dead formalists are left perfectly capable in all points to observe. Marking such solemn seasons, and tracing their abiding fruits, the Christian pastor might break forth into joyful congratulations, like those of the apostles in their addresses to the primitive churches.

"O Lord, why hast thou made us to err from thy ways, and hardened our heart from thy fear?"—(Isa. lxiii. 17.) What spectacles are now exhibited under the name of Christian worship? Shall we think of the mutterings of stone-dead formalists, whose doings in religion are as remote from devotion as the performances in an Indian pagoda? Or shall we observe the freezing effusions of presumptuous heretics, who deny the very existence of the Holy Spirit? Or, approaching the crowd of more orthodox professors, shall we attend the pulpit comedy of some grotesque performer, encircled with the applauses of his sportive admirers? Are these things worship—Christian worship? Are they not "strange fire," against which the God of glory will exhibit solemn tokens of displeasure?

Of graver and more hopeful assemblies, may it not be said, in the prophet's words, "Ephraim is a cake not turned; strangers have devoured his strength, and he knoweth it not; yea, gray hairs are here and there upon him, yet he knoweth it not."—(Hos. vii. 8, 9.) Suffer me, my Christian brethren, to express in plain terms those apprehensions which a long course of observation hath obliged me to entertain. Is not the spirit of attention and regard wasted on inferior circumstances and ornaments, instead of the great, substantial things of the power of godliness? Are not common gifts, and the effects of mere animal vigour, often exalted above the genuine graces of the Holy Spirit? Are not the abilities, and even the graces, of men turned into idols of jealousy in the house of God, while that life and comfort is expected from

them which the preaching of angels could not of itself impart? Is not the power of the Holy Ghost almost forgotten among us? Of the sincere, are not many attempting to rear up on the divine foundation a superstructure of wood, hay, stubble? And are there not numbers of demure-looking people, whose Gospel notions fence them on all sides against all conviction and spiritual sensation, and who, if their false peace is a little disturbed, immediately fly from the means of conviction, or commence persecutors of those who endeavour to save them? Were men to be raised up among us, who, with the fire of a Welsh or a Livingstone, a Bolton or a Rogers, should enter into contest with the specious hypocrisies of seeming orthodox professors, what would be their probable fate? I fear they would soon be left to pour out their testimony to empty walls, in the ears of mourning, indignant angels; or, driven into the wilderness, they might be constrained to cry to their God for a speedy dismissal from an ineffectual and seemingly desperate conflict.

Praised for ever be the power and unsearchable mercy of the Lord of hosts, who hath still reserved in these countries a remnant of upright, heaven-born souls. But, if even these are generally fallen asleep, or sunk under unbelieving despondency or backsliding carnality, how shall they be roused and refined? Must we not come to this conclusion?—"The time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God."—(1 Pet. iv. 17.) "Awake, awake, O Jerusalem!"—(Isa. li. 17.) "Thus saith the Lord, Break up your fallow ground, and sow not among thorns. Circumcise yourselves to the Lord, and take away the foreskin of your heart lest my fury come forth like fire, and burn that none can quench it, because of the evil of your doings."—(Jer. iv. 34.)

Application.—My brethren, we have attempted to survey the horrors of guilt, the abyss of desolation, around us. Shall we, in the view of such things, indulge the secret operation of malignant pride? I hope not; there is enough to humble us, if we observe the faintness of our ideas of the evil of such crimes. Ah! I feel myself, at this moment, chargeable with all the wickedness I have described, because I can look at it with so little concern and abhorrence. O wretched heart within me, when wilt thou feel as thou oughtest for the glory of God, and for the crimes and dangers of immortal souls? Let us not, however, yield to despondency; let us strive, depending on grace, to work upon our hearts, depraved as they are, a solemn sense of the real state of our country, until our feelings in some degree resemble those of the man who said, "Rivers of waters run down mine eyes, because they keep not thy law."—(Psalm cxix. 136.) For this end,

1. Let your thoughts dwell upon the atrocious nature of this crime, and the reasons why it ought to be awfully punished.

Who can disclose the immensity of evil, which this wickedness contains in it, to despise the Holy Spirit of God in His most peculiar operations?

The object of this contempt is God, Jehovah, the great incomprehensible Creator of the universe. "Why," said Peter to Ananias, "hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost? Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God." It is He "who measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with a span"—who, as the supreme Creator, "moved on the waters," and drew forth the chaos into order and beauty. It is He "who garnished the heavens," and who creates each particular man. And must He suffer insult from mortal worms? Poor sinner, "gird up now thy loins like a man. Where wast thou when he laid the foundations of the earth? Hast thou an arm like God, canst thou thunder with a voice like him?"—(Acts v. 34; Isa. xl. 12, 13; Gen. i. 2; Job xxvi. 13; xxxiii. 4; xxxviii. 3, 4; xl. 9.)

In His lowest works, He is adored by the bright intelligences of heaven. But here are moles of the dust, treading with insolence on His sublimest operations, those which resemble the formation of man in paradise, or of the angelic hosts in heaven. Yea, we may affirm, without extravagance, that the effectual change of one depraved human heart is a work of a higher order than the creation of a thousand holy beings, a work more deeply expressive of infinite power, wisdom, majesty, condescension, and benignity. On the symptoms of this work, the angels of light fix their piercing eyes with adoring delight. Shall mortals deride it with impunity? Is the light of heavenly wisdom, the melting of penitential sorrow, the pure sweetness of love to God and man, infused by the Spirit of the living God, the proper subject of ridicule? Stand back, impure scorner, lest one slight flash of indignation from the Author of this work light up the hell within thee, and convey thee all flaming to the place of torment.

Let it be further considered that in the Christian dispensation the Holy Ghost is manifestly revealed as the last, the finishing, agent in whatever relates to the salvation of immortal souls. Therefore, to despise His influences is at once to reject all that is sacred in the infinite perfections of Deity, all that is precious in the love of the Father and in the purchase of the Son, all that is important in the truths and duties of Christianity.

Lastly, he who rejects the holy operations of the Spirit of the Lord virtually gives consent to all the crimes in this world, and to all the blasphemies in the world to come, which shall proceed from a heart "deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." Refusing to have the fountain purified, he chooses to be eternally filthy, and embraces all possible defilement.

II. That we may learn to shrink back with horror from the symptoms of this evil in ourselves and others, let us attend to the process of vengeance with which it stands connected. "He (that is, the Holy Spirit) was turned to be their enemy, and he fought against them." What strange punishment this glorious divine Person will, in the future world, inflict on His ungrateful, impenitent

adversaries, eternity shall reveal. I will call your attention at this time to those introductory and visible operations of His wrath which involve the public ruin of countries overrun with this iniquity. Ah! sinful nation, whoever thou art, who cherishest in thy bowels this cursed hatred of God, the Holy Ghost, in the time of His patience thy crest may be lifted high, but thy day is coming, when thou shalt tremble under the terrible majesty of His amazing operations!

For, in the day of wrath, the offended spirit of God will unloose the bonds and dissolve the cement of social union among such a people. This He will do by withdrawing that influence of His which creates common virtue, humane and generous affections, regard to justice, and disinterested public spirit, and by removing the secret barriers which restrain the ocean of human depravity. Then will that ocean swell and tumultuate; then unfeeling oppression on the one hand, and seditious turbulence on the other, meeting together, will reduce to chaos the improvements of ages.

He will take away the whole train of distinguishing abilities in the arts of peace and war. He will raise up no more men of genius, patriots, heroes, deliverers. If any should remain, He will infatuate their counsels and baffle their exertions. Who will do this? That holy Spirit, whose very name is contemptible in the ears of the wicked. Woe unto that people from whom He departs!

Against such a people He will prepare instruments of vengeance. The sun and moon, the stars in their courses, earth, air, fire, and water, or mean reptiles of the dust, will at His call operate destruction; or, if human adversaries are to be employed, He will rouse and inflame them. "He will lift up an ensign to the nations from far, and will hiss unto them from the end of the earth; and behold, they shall come with speed swiftly: none shall be weary nor stumble among them; none shall slumber nor sleep; neither shall the girdle of their loins be loosed, nor the latchet of their shoes be broken," &c.—(Isa. v.)

And, if still impenitence continues, He will bring into dread accomplishment such words as the following:—"I will walk contrary to you in fury; and I, even I, will chastise you seven times for your sins. If I whet my glittering sword, and mine hand take hold of judgment. I will make mine arrows drunk with blood, and my sword shall devour flesh. He will fill the places with the dead bodies. Death is come up into our windows, and is entered into our palaces, to cut off the children from without, and the young men from the streets."—(Lev. xxvi. 28; Deut. xxxii. 41, 42; Psalm cx. 6; Jer. ix. 21.)

And, when His stubborn enemies in multitudes are sinking into death, and hastening to the supreme tribunal, then He will frown upon them, according to those infinitely tremendous declarations: "Turn you at my reproof, behold, I will pour out my Spirit unto you. But ye have set at nought all my counsel. I also will laugh at your calamity, and mock when your fear cometh."—(Prov. i. 23,

25, 26.) "And they shall say to the mountains, Cover us; and to the hills, Fall on us."—(Hos. x. 8; Luke xxiii. 29, 30.)

III. Accept, and practically regard, these few scriptural counsels.

Be filled with thankfulness for that long period of manifold privilege which your country hath enjoyed, and that, beneath such a cloud of national guilt, you have seen so many years of ease and exemption from calamity.

Look back, with peculiar gratitude, to your solemn Christian feast on the preceding day, and to other similar seasons, which in long and august succession you have enjoyed; and if, at the table of the Son of God, you have unfeignedly mourned and panted after the sealing influence of His spirit; if that gracious, almighty Comforter hath there met you, and touched your inmost souls with the dying love of Jesus; if He hath anointed your eyes with eye-salve, so that, through the conflicts of life and the terrors of dissolution, you have seen the shining path into the holiest of all the heaven of heavens; be thankful, rejoice, hold fast that which you have: you have obtained that which the treasures of monarchs are too poor to purchase, and the loss of which they who, with unhallowed hands, have polluted this ordinance, debasing it to the low purposes of private or political hypocrisy, insulting Him whose sacred light shines and whose holy love burns therein, shall eternally deplore.

Repent of your personal share in the crime of despising the Spirit of the Lord. Make it sure that you are indeed subdued and governed by His blessed influences; and, the more you taste their excellent sweetness, let the thoughts of your having rebelled and vexed this glorious agent the more deeply wound and abase you.

Make serious preparation for days of calamity by "accepting the dreaded punishment of iniquity" (Lev. xxvi. 41), by mortifying the various principles of inward corruption, and by taking faster hold of the promises and perfections of your God.

Improve to the uttermost the interval of tranquillity which yet remains. Try what may be done for averting, or deferring, deserved judgments. As to political contentions, be sober, be cautious, be conscientious. If to any of you, without its being arrogantly hunted after, divine providence assigns a sphere of political action, seek your wisdom from God and His Word, not from the writings or counsels of the devil's children. If you love the welfare of your country, remember that all other means are vain in comparison of pleading with God for the pouring out of the Spirit from on high, and exemplifying in yourselves the power and glory of His genuine operations. Remember that short but important psalm, the 131st, and that weighty little chapter, Jer. xlv.

You that have attained to strength and establishment in the ways of God, pity the weak and straggling of the flock, and let your bowels be moved towards the perishing multitude, and whatever your hand findeth to do for their recovery, do it with your might. Stand afar off from the prevailing pollutions of the

times, whatever they are or may yet be. Give the decided example of boldly resisting the wiles of the devil. "Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong."—(1 Cor. xvi. 13.)

Long for the state of perfection and glory, in which the influences of the blessed Spirit of Jesus shall break in upon you as an overflowing flood, and shall raise you to a blessed impossibility of ever resisting or grieving Him in the smallest degree, and wherein you shall see Him fully glorified by every soul in the immense multitude around you.

In the meanwhile we shall be happy, whatever may be the times that pass over us, if, through the grace of that Holy Spirit of promise, whose cause, according to my imperfect measure, I have endeavoured to plead, we are enabled to rise to some degree of imitation of the illustrious pattern set before us in the following words (Hab. iii.):—"God came from Teman. His glory covered the heavens. He beheld and drove asunder the nations. I saw the tents of Cushan in affliction; the curtains of the land of Midian did tremble. The mountains saw thee, and they trembled. Thou didst march through the land in indignation. Thou woundedst the head out of the house of the wicked. When I heard, my belly trembled; my lips quivered at the voice; rottenness entered into my bones, and I trembled in myself, that I might rest in the day of trouble: when he cometh up unto the people, he will invade them with his troops. Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls: yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation. The Lord God is my strength."

Now, unto the three that bear record in heaven—the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost (and these three, one)—be glory, dominion, and thanksgiving, throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.

The Dying Prayer of Edward Sixth.

King Edward the Sixth died on July 6th, 1553, in the sixteenth year of his age, after a reign of six and a half years.

"O LORD God, free me, I beseech Thee, out of this miserable and calamitous life, and receive me among the number of Thine elect, if so it be Thy pleasure, although not mine, but Thine be done. To Thee, O Lord, do I commend my spirit. Thou knowest, O Lord, how happy I shall be. May I live with Thee for ever; yet would I might live and be well for Thine elect's sake, that I might faithfully serve Thee. O Lord God, bless, save Thy people of England, defend the kingdom from Popery, and preserve Thy true religion in it, that I and my people may bless Thy holy name for Thy Son Jesus Christ."

Diary of a Young Lady.

THE Rev. John Robertson, assistant, St. Jude's, Glasgow, has kindly favoured us with a brief diary kept by his sister, Miss Margaret Robertson, who died in 1853. By request, Mr. Robertson has written a short sketch of his sister, which we hereby give as a preface:—

The writer of the following diary was brought under deep soul concern in her seventeenth year. No outside influences are known to have in any way conduced to this. Her parents, having remained in 1843 in connection with the Church of Scotland, she was under the ministrations of the Rev. Dr. Craik, of St. George's, for a few years previous to her awakening to a sense of sin. Her mother, however, was careful in teaching her the Shorter Catechism, and making her commit portions of Scripture to memory, and this may be said to have been the only external advantage she enjoyed. Like other young persons, she continued thoughtless and worldly-minded till the Lord Himself began to deal with her about eternal things. Having every luxury that an indulgent father could give, her outward circumstances were fitted to make her cling to the world. Of a bright, prepossessing appearance, she was much admired and often invited to convivial parties, so that, unless the Lord had interposed, she would doubtless have remained a poor worldling. In the autumn of 1845, her mind became deeply impressed with a sense of her undone state as a sinner. This led her, naturally, to spend much of her time in reading the Word, and in prayer for divine illumination. The writings of Edwards, Love, Shepard, and Owen became her favourite study, and helped, no doubt, in guiding her in the ways of the Lord. Her concern was much increased in the summer of 1846 by the somewhat sudden death of her beloved mother, and from this time till her own end she was almost wholly occupied about eternal things and the cultivation of her mental powers, living a consistent Christian life. Through the influence of a friend who had been awakened about the same time as herself, she was led to attend the ministry of the late Rev. J. R. Anderson about the year the diary here given commences, and she continued to do so till Mr. Anderson left the Free Church. During this period, she became acquainted with the Rev. Messrs. Cook, both of whom thought highly of her, and expressed themselves as satisfied as to her true piety. She paid one or two visits to the manse at Daviot, at communion seasons. As these extended over several weeks, Mr. Archibald Cook had full opportunity of conversing with her and ascertaining the state of her mind; and his affectionate esteem of her is frequently expressed in those letters of his which have already appeared in this Magazine. It was during her last visit to Daviot, in the autumn of 1852, that she contracted the illness which necessitated her going to Torquay for the following winter. No marked improvement resulted, and she returned home the following summer on

account of the illness and death of her father. Advised to go to Pau for the winter, she left Scotland in September, but the long journey proved too much for her in her delicate state of health, and she died there on 14th November, 1853, at the early age of about 25 years. The diary here given is but a fragment, and exhibits almost exclusively some of the darker experiences through which she passed. It may be useful, however, as showing how truly exercised souls are concerned about not only their actions but their motives, and are wont to look closely into their state in the sight of God. She was not one who ever spoke confidently of her acceptance in Christ, but none could have been with her long without feeling that she was deeply impressed with a sense of divine things, and that she had undergone a saving change. A few days before her death, she said to me, "I am not without a little bit of hope; but, oh, it is a great, great, great thing to appear before Him."

DIARY.

January 11th, 1850.—I desire to search out the cause of this low state of soul. But what can I know of this, except it be shown me by the Lord? I seem to realise less now the cause of it than I did in the morning.

1st. I dishonour the Spirit by slighting His work and resisting His strivings. If one Person in the Trinity be lightly esteemed, all must be so. The Spirit alone can reveal Christ Jesus to the soul, and it is when He is seen that the glory of the Father is made manifest, shining in the face of the Son. It is the Spirit alone who can convince of sin, and, unless the soul be thus convinced, it will not feel its need of Christ as its righteousness or sanctification, and, not being sensible of these wants, it will feel no need of the promises and encouragements of the Word to support it against discouragements. Here comes a second cause of the low state of my soul.

2nd. Want of prizing the Word of God, and no felt sense of dependence on divine teaching to be enabled to understand it, also careless reading of it. If the Word be slighted, the soul cannot prosper, for it is that by which the soul is to grow. "As new-born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby."—(1 Peter ii. 2.)

3rd. Dealing in generalities, general confessions, general petitions. The Lord, I believe, would have His people to be particular, yea, I believe He will bring His people to be particular. True, the soul may get sometimes such a sight of its utter vileness that, like the publican, it may be constrained to cry—"God be merciful to me, a sinner," or like the psalmist, overwhelmed by the number and magnitude of his sins, say—"Who can understand his errors?" But, in the 51st Psalm, there is particularity—"Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight." But I have not been general in my confessions from a deep sense of the

depravity of my nature and the hopelessness of ever being able to make all my sins known. This rather has been my line of conduct—because it saved me the trouble of searching out individual sins and wants.

4th. I have been like the slothful man that “wistheth and hath not.” I have been satisfied by bemoaning (if my heartless complaining could be called bemoaning) my leanness, without being willing to put forth any energy to get out of my low state.

5th. I have, to a fearful extent, let my imagination run riot—not watching or striving against vain, carnal, foolish, sinful, and filthy thoughts. I might have added, under the third cause, want of thanksgiving. This most naturally flows from the other. If there be no special petitions, there can be no waiting for special answers, and without that there can be no intelligent thanksgiving. These, as far as I know myself, are the special causes of my barrenness, and with such a catalogue of causes no wonder the result should be just as it is. Deadness of soul, insensibility to the worth of my own and my neighbour's soul, darkness, without knowledge of God, consequently void of desire for His glory and of love to Him. I have need to be taught the very first lesson in the school of Christ, that I have a soul ready to perish, and therefore standing in need of salvation. Now my ease-loving soul will say, and mine enemy will help it, “You may now take your ease, you have done very well, you have come to a knowledge of what it is that lies in the way of your soul's progress, and after, it may be, you have confessed them to God, you may be satisfied.” Nay, but what use is it to come to a knowledge of one's sins, if it be not to take them to God? 1st. To seek forgiveness for the past. 2nd. To fill the soul with indignation at, and hatred of, them. 3rd. Grace to resolve, in the strength of the Lord, never to rest in warfare against them until they be for ever destroyed. The work before me is arduous, but courage, oh my soul! the Lord sends none a warfare against His enemies at their own charges. Christ came to destroy the works of the devil—these, surely, are His enemies—He is willing to be a law-fulfiller in, as well as for, the soul. My soul, I fear thou art high-minded just now, that these are not the words of a humble faith, but of a proud self-confidence. I fear, if thou goest to the field of battle in this spirit, thou wilt soon be overcome, and sit down in despair. Truly, I am surrounded by dangers. I would desire to be aware of my danger—this is my only safety. It is thus that the soul is made to feel its insufficiency, which it must be brought to feel ere the Lord will reveal the sufficiency of Jesus Christ.

13th (Sabbath).—What have I made of having endeavoured to search out the causes of my present state? Truly, nothing. My soul is as low as ever. To-day, heard a very solemn sermon on the words—“Our God is a consuming fire.” But, ah, I was unimpressed and cold. 1st. God is a consuming fire because He is pure. 2nd. In His jealousy and revenge. 3rd. In His wrath.

4th. In His power. Instead of seeing the glory of God, and loving Him, my heart had blasphemous rebellious thoughts, full of enmity to God, most sensibly on the second point. I came home with dark feelings, thinking it was needless to go on with such a miserable sort of religion. Mr. A—— spoke of the fear those have who are taught by the Spirit of appropriating words which did not belong to them. This, he said, was the ABC of religion. I think I am not a stranger to this fear. But what do I know of God? When have I seen His glorious majesty, so as to be constrained to serve Him with reverence and godly fear? I generally come into the presence of God with presumptuous boldness. This cannot be destroyed but by the Lord Himself. If I had any sensibility, I could not be as I am, so contented with a low state of soul, if my soul be indeed in any other state than a natural one.

16th (Wednesday).—This morning seemed to have some desire to exalt Christ, but was left to contend with horrible pride, and the question came to me—Do you know whom you seek to exalt? During the day, was much as I have been—very dead. Saw a dear friend in affliction, who appears to have got quickening to her soul by it. I thought I desired to thank God for that. In the afternoon, again, desired that God should be exalted, when the same fear presented itself that it might be an unknown God that I imagined I desired to be glorified. My soul seemed to rest in the assurance that, whether I could give God the glory due unto Him or not, yet He would be glorified. This question—whether I know God—I cannot answer in the affirmative; any glimpses I may think I have had, I am ready to fear are nothing. How far may one go in apparently high exercises, but which, not being intelligent, are nothing? We had a solemn meeting to-night; surely the Lord was there; to attempt to describe it, I cannot.

18th (Friday).—I have indulged to so fearful an extent in vain, carnal thoughts, that I feel as if I could not take the Word of God into my hand. This sin is the more aggravated, in that it has been committed after seeking to confess the same sin. I thought that the lashes I had got from conscience would arm me, in some measure, against a similar offence. How insufficient is everything but the grace of God to keep the soul from sin! This sin is in me, at present, most heinous, as it is entered into most willingly, and not by the force of strong temptation, for the Lord has most graciously enabled me, in some measure at least, to be willing to leave my temporal concerns in His hand. How vastly different is my present state of mind from what it was yesterday morning! Then I think I can say I had some sense of spiritual things, and felt, I think, some awe before God. Now such experience is all gone. If God, in His abundant grace, bestows anything upon a soul, the enemy is watching his opportunity to take it away. Hence the need of vigilant watching.

22nd (Tuesday).—No ability to pray, either this morning or yesterday. Corruption has been working most fearfully to-day. I

felt quite irritable, could not speak to my poor father, who is in a depressed state, with any tenderness of spirit. He asked me to pray, but I believe I would more willingly have done anything than that. I am more abominable than an incarnate devil. I go against even natural affection. Tried to confess this this afternoon, and to lay my case before the Lord, for, although I am as vile as to be an object fit only to be abhorred by an infinitely holy God, still, to whom can I go? I believe, were I to lay before the veriest slave of Satan the working of my heart to-day, he would loathe me. And, oh, I am so fearfully little concerned at this state of matters, that this shows more clearly that I am a sinner. "Christ came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."

(To be Continued.)

Mr. John Kensit in Glasgow.

MR. JOHN KENSIT, the leader of the crusade against Ritualism in the Church of England, addressed two meetings in the Christian Institute, Bothwell Street, Glasgow, on the 6th September. The arrangements for Mr. Kensit's visit were made by the Rev. Dr. Kerr of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, who was assisted by a committee. The first meeting took place in the afternoon at three o'clock. The chairman was Mr. James M'Michael, an elderly gentleman who has been associated with Protestant work for many years. He introduced Mr. Kensit in a brief speech. The latter then rose and addressed the meeting. Mr. Kensit is a short, dark, smart looking man, and his manner is full of animation. He possesses a clear, powerful, resonant voice, and a ready command of language. He expresses himself with fire and energy, and his pointed, vigorous sentences are fitted to tell with marked effect upon a popular audience. His ready wit serves as a useful instrument for holding up to deserved ridicule and contempt, the absurd practices of the Ritualistic party. The subject of lecture was "Idolatry in the Church of England," but as the time allotted for the afternoon was only an hour, he said his remarks would constitute simply a preface to the evening lecture. He began by saying that no minister of the gospel was a priest in the sacerdotal sense. He had not spoken many words when a man, who proclaimed himself a member of the Church of England, interrupted him, and continued at intervals to do so. This man said that there were priests in the prayer-book. Mr. Kensit then showed that the word priest was there defined as presbyter, elder, or minister, and not in the Romish sense. But he added, lifting the Bible, "Though it were in the prayer-book, to the word and the testimony," and he then went on to prove that there was no such thing in the New Testament from beginning to end. "Sham priests, sham priests," he declared, with great emphasis, were the

modern ritualists. He proceeded to show how Romanising practices began in the English Church; by putting the reading desk with the Bible to one side, covering the communion table with an embroidered cloth, and calling it an altar. In speaking of the change in the reading desk, he made allusion to a visit which he had paid to the Barony Church, Glasgow, that day. He said there were changes there being made which he did not like to see. At this stage, an interruption occurred from another and unexpected quarter. Rev. Mr. Paton, of St. Paul's Established Church, who was seated on the platform not far from Mr. Kensit, rose. He stated that he came to hear a lecture on "Idolatry in the Church of England," that he would not listen to any aspersions cast on one of his brethren, the minister of the Barony (Dr. Marshall Lang), whom he knew to be a faithful gospel minister, and that he begged leave to withdraw from the meeting. Mr. Paton, who is a brother of Dr. Paton, the well-known missionary, is an occasional lecturer on Protestantism, and secretary to one of our Scottish Protestant Societies. It was very bad taste on his part to make such an unseemly and unkindly interruption. We think it said very little for Mr. Paton's Protestant sympathies. The Established Church is invaded by a flood of Ritualism, and though Mr. Kensit should lift his voice against it when lecturing on "Idolatry in the Church of England," he was only making a suitable application of his discourse to the circumstances of his Scottish audience. Indeed, we felt that we would not have been surprised though many more had gone out under Mr. Kensit's lecture, the zeal and thoroughness with which it was animated being so contrary to the lukewarm, compromising spirit that is so prevalent in our country. In fact, before Mr. Kensit was done, many more did go out, not a few of whom were ministers, and some, to all appearance, priests, who had come to listen. In the scene with Mr. Paton, we were delighted to hear the voice of Mr. Kensit shouting amid the din, "Though all should leave, I must speak the truth." During the lecture, he spoke of the abominable Confessional now in use in the Church of England, and described a scene in connection with it he had personally witnessed. At one point he touched on the absurdity of bowing to the table, which was falsely denominated an altar, and two young ladies in the audience spoke out and said, "I bow to it." It is quite manifest there was a large unsympathetic element in the audience, but the greater number enthusiastically applauded the address throughout.

In the evening Mr. Kensit had a very large audience, every part of the building being filled. Rev. Dr. Kerr presided. In his opening remarks he spoke highly of Mr. Kensit's work, instancing in favour of what was called his violent methods, memorable scenes in Reformation history. Mr. Kensit then rose, and received a most enthusiastic reception. A few obstructionists began to shew themselves, but they were speedily ejected from the hall. Mr.

Kensit delivered a powerful address, in the course of which he gave an account of his own work and the various scenes in which he had recently taken part in connection with his crusade. The interest of the audience was sustained throughout, and great heartiness prevailed. He exhorted them to take their stand upon the Bible, and not be led astray by ministers or Church leaders. He warned them against traitors in the Scottish Churches, who were doing their best to lead the people astray with corrupt worship. The only improvement on the address which we would have desired was the omission of some jocularities, the use of which in our opinion weakened the effect; but we make some allowance for an Englishman. We sincerely wish Mr. Kensit all success in his work, and trust that the divine blessing may rest upon it. He has no doubt been the means of causing a considerable stir at present in the Church of England, and we earnestly hope that the tide of Romanism may receive a powerful check. Mr. Kensit has arranged for a thousand protests to be publicly lifted up in an orderly manner in Ritualistic Churches on the first Sabbath of November.

Ebenezer Erskine's Last Hours.

THE health of Mr. Ebenezer Erskine had, for some time past, been in a declining state. His originally vigorous constitution had been gradually yielding to the increasing infirmities of age. For a short while before his death, he had become unfit to sustain the accumulated load of official duty connected with the public situation which he occupied as a minister of the gospel. His affectionate people, in order to relieve him from the active duties of his office, invited his nephew, Mr. James Erskine, to take part with him in the work of the ministry; and this amiable youth was ordained to be the colleague and successor of his uncle on the 22nd of January, 1752. Only a short interval elapsed after the death of his brother Ralph, when Ebenezer was called upon to put off the earthly house of his tabernacle. When he heard of his brother's death, he exclaimed, "And is Ralph gone? He has twice got the start of me; he was first in Christ, and now he is first in glory." In a letter written to a friend soon after this event, he says, "According to the course of nature, it was my turn to have gone off before him. But the will of the good and sovereign God has determined otherwise, and that I should tarry behind for a while in this weary wilderness. It seems I am not yet made meet to be a partaker of the inheritance of the saints in light, but need to be more beaten in the wilderness with the hammer of affliction, before I come to the upper temple and sanctuary. But good is the will of the Lord."

Though he was at this time in a very debilitated state, through the severity of his trouble, yet at the earnest request of his people,

who were desirous to see and hear him once more before his departure from them, he went from his bed to the pulpit, and preached for half an hour from these words, "I know that my Redeemer liveth;" he then returned from the pulpit to his bed. This discourse was one which had been composed by him with a view to the improvement of the death of his brother. "His last sermon (his biographer informs us) was literally preached from his bed to a company assembled in his room, where he baptized a child, after discoursing on a text with which he had particularly wished to finish his ministry, viz., Psalm xlviii. 14, 'This God is our God for ever and ever; he will be our guide even unto death.'"

The following account of the holy exercise of this eminent minister, in his last illness, and of the concluding scene of his life, extracted from Dr. Fraser's interesting memoir, is deserving of a place in this record.

"His private conversation with relatives and other kind inquirers, during his last illness, was at once cheerful and edifying. He often expressed himself in language to this effect: 'I have always found my times of severe affliction my best times. Many blasts I have endured through life; but I had this comfort under them, a good God, a good conscience, a good cause.' When one of his elders thus accosted him, 'Sir, you have given us many good advices, may I ask what you are now doing with your own soul?' 'I am just doing with it,' he replied, 'what I did forty years ago; I am resting on that word, "I am the Lord thy God."' Another friend, surprised at the serenity and cheerfulness he possessed in the immediate view of death and eternity, put the question, 'Sir, are you not afraid of your sins?' 'Indeed no,' was his answer, 'ever since I knew Christ, I have never thought highly of my frames and duties, nor am I *slavishly* afraid of my sins.'

"To several friends who were conversing with him one afternoon, he expressed his assurance of perfect bliss in the following memorable words:—'O, sirs, my body is now become a very disagreeable habitation for my soul; but when my soul goes out of my body, it will as naturally fly into the bosom of Jesus, as a stone will fall to the centre.' Or, as others relate the anecdote, he said, what is entirely to the same effect, and what probably he also uttered, either then or about the same time; 'I know that when my soul forsakes this tabernacle of clay, it will fly as naturally to my Saviour's bosom as the bird to its beloved nest.' To a relative he one day said, 'While age and infirmities are increasing, I desire to wait all the days of my appointed time till my change come, looking out for the everlasting day of the immediate enjoyment of the Lord, when sighing and sinning shall have an everlasting end.' To another of his relations who came to see him, and began to comfort him thus, 'I hope you get now and then a *blink* to bear up your spirit under your affliction,' he promptly returned this spirited reply 'I know more of *words* than

of *blinks*. Though he slay me, yet I will trust in him. The covenant is my charter; and if it had not been for that blessed word, my hope and strength had perished from the Lord.' To his beloved children he unbosomed himself in the most endearing manner, mingling consolation with his dying counsels: 'Though I die, the Lord liveth. I have known more of God since I came to this bed, than through all my life.'

"During the night on which he finished his earthly career, Mrs. Fisher having come from Glasgow to visit her dying father, was sitting in the apartment where he lay, and engaged in reading. Awakening from a slumber, he said, 'What book is that, my dear, you are reading?' 'It is your sermon, father,' she replied, 'on that text, "I am the Lord thy God."' 'O woman,' said he then, 'that is the best sermon ever I preached.' The discourse had proved very refreshing to himself, as well as to many of his hearers. A few minutes after that expression had fallen from his lips, he requested his daughter to bring the table and candle near the bed; and having shut his eyes, and laid his hand under his cheek, he quietly breathed out his soul into the hands of his Redeemer, on the 2nd of June, 1754. Had he lived twenty-four days longer, he would have finished the seventy-fourth year of his age; and had he been spared three months more, he would have completed the fifty-first of his ministry, having resided twenty-eight years at Portmoak, and nearly twenty-three at Stirling."—*Mackerrrow's History of the Secession.*

Brief Notes of Sermons.

BY THE LATE REV. JOHN KENNEDY, D.D., DINGWALL.

XI.

"Who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us."—HEB. vi. 18.

I. The hope set before us.

II. The exercise of those who have laid hold on this hope.

I. The hope here set before us. There are three aspects in which "hope" may be viewed: the object of hope, the grace of hope, and the exercise of hope. But it is very plain that what is in the text is the object of hope; for it is said to be "set before us." I am to ask three questions about this hope: What is it? Where is it? Whence is it?

(1) What is this object of hope? It may be asked, how do we get at this object so that it becomes to us an object of hope? By faith, wrought in us by the Spirit of God. When we believe, then we begin to hope. First—in general—I may say this object of hope is salvation, salvation for poor sinners, just the salvation needed. That salvation is the gift of God. He gave His own

Son to die, that "whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." That salvation is applied by the Spirit. "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God." Thus is salvation all of grace from first to last. The giving is God's giving, and I only take as God gives me power to take what He has provided. But not only must I hope as a sinner, but also as a believer. I must hope on till I reach within the vale through the swellings of Jordan. Having believed, I have a right to salvation. I am Christ's, and He is mine, and as He is mine, I have the all of salvation that is in Him. But if I am in Him, I will be seeking preparation for going where He is. He is in heaven preparing a place for me, and I must by Him be prepared for going to the place He has made ready.*

(2) Where is this hope? It is where Christ is. "Oh," you say, "He is in heaven." True: but I am going to tell you three ways in which He is present on the earth. (1) In His omnipresence. He is God, and therefore is everywhere. Yet it is true no dwelling-place can contain God but His own being. (2) He is here in His word: near us, right before us in the Gospel. He is so near that He cannot be nearer, except when He comes into our hearts. He is standing knocking at the door of our hearts, and if we open, He will come in. It is He Himself that opens the door, and having opened the door, He enters to rule and reign within. (3) He is present by His Spirit. It is the Spirit that works faith in us, uniting us to Christ, and we are sealed in Christ by the Spirit.

II. The exercise of those who have laid hold of this hope. How are they exercised? They are fleeing for refuge to the hope set before them. Fleeing anywhere won't do. If a man were fast asleep in a burning house, and if a friend came through the smoke and shook him awake, that friend would not put him in danger by so doing, but he would awake him to a sense of the danger he was in. So is it when the Spirit convinces of sin: He awakens the sleeping soul to a sense of danger. But it would do the man no good to flee from one room of the burning house to another; he must leave the house ere he can reach safety. So is it with the soul. It won't do for it to wander over old covenant ground; it must come away from that standing ground. It is when a soul feels he can do nothing that hope dies, and he cries to God, "Save me, or I perish." It would do the man-slayer no good to flee, if he did not flee within the gate of the city of refuge; even one step outside the gate, the avenger of blood might slay him. So there is no safety for the soul outside the refuge

* Let none of our readers who did not know Dr. Kennedy misunderstand his frequent use of the pronoun "I." In one of his sermons he remarks upon this form of expression as follows:—"In saying "I" do not mistake me, for I mean every soul united to Christ."—*Ed.*

God has provided, even His own Son, Jesus Christ. It is to Him, as He is set before them, they must flee, and in Him they are safe, for He is their righteousness and their redemption. Laying hold of Him, they lay hold of God's provided salvation, even eternal life. "He that hath the Son, hath life."

XII.

"Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath: that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the vail; whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec."—HEB. vi. 17-20.

There are two great privileges set before us in this passage:

I. The great consolation.

II. The anchor within the vail.

I. The great consolation. This consists of the counsel and the oath of God, two immutable things. The counsel here is the revealed counsel. And what is the revealed counsel of God? Assured salvation to all who believe. That counsel is confirmed by an oath. God swore by Himself; by the infinity of His being, the beauty of His holiness, and the resources of His power. These are pledged for the salvation of all who believe. What ground of consolation the word and oath of God are! What more could I ask, and what less is given to the children of God? They have trials here. Yes. But even in the fire, when their skin is cracking and their flesh creeping, they can sing; for their source of consolation is above the reach of trial to affect it.

II. The anchor within the vail, both sure and steadfast. The use of an anchor is to keep the ship from drifting, to keep it fixed to the mooring ground. The anchor is cast down out of sight. So with this anchor. We cannot see it, for it is within the vail where the Forerunner has entered. But it is cast in sure ground, being where He is. He is within the vail, having finished righteousness which is accounted mine; and in Him, on the ground of His righteousness, I stand entitled to all the fulness of grace. Salvation is mine in Him as grace and glory. The cable that holds that anchor is good and strong. I have seen a good anchor, but the cable that held it was not good, and it snapped. But the two immutable things are the cable that holds this anchor, and it cannot break. But sometimes the anchor may be good, and the cable good, and yet the connection between the cable and the ship give way. I have seen that take place. The anchor was let down, and the cable let down, but the connection gave way, and the ship drifted away. But there is no fear of the connection of this cable with the vessel of mercy giving way, for the Spirit is the connection. It is the Spirit that renews us.

We are born of the Spirit into the family of God, and we are sealed in Christ by the Spirit. So this is an anchor sure and steadfast within the veil.

XIII.

"I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."—JOHN xiv. 2, 3.

I. Christ's departure and its gracious design. "I go to prepare a place for you."

II. Christ's second advent and its gracious design. "I will come again and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."

I. Christ's departure caused the disciples great sorrow; and yet it was to be a time of double blessing. They looked upon it as the greatest trial of their life, yet it was the Master's time of special blessing. "If I go away, I will send the comforter." It was to be a time of the effusion of the Spirit; and His going away was because He had to prepare a place for them in the Father's house. What of those who were in the Father's house, ere He went in in human nature? This I know that the slain Lamb was before their mind as a reality, if not as a present fact. And I know this also that they were under the Father's care, and He could ravish them. Nevertheless, to them in heaven the day on which Christ entered in human nature was a marked day. He is in heaven in a public capacity as the Head of His people, and as their Saviour. He, being there as Head, will have His members each one to enter there also by death so as to be with Him for ever. But this is a theme on which we cannot dwell at length.

II. Christ's second advent and its gracious design. He shall come at death. Why not bring His people over death or aside from it? Why should He? He has gone through death, destroying the sting of death, abolishing death; and why should He not bring in His people to the Father's house through that death which He has spoiled? His bringing of them through death is to His glory and to the confusion of the enemy. Why should I grudge Christ that double honour? He comes for the soul at death. "The souls of believers do immediately pass into glory." Christ plainly tells us this on the Cross, for He says, "To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise." What of the body? Christ has bought it with His blood. Need I wonder then that He shall exercise His miraculous power in raising it? Shall I shrink from being severed in twain, when that severance shall give me double honour from Christ? He shall come again and receive me, soul and body then united, to be for ever with Himself. That is rest to Him to have them with Him. "Thou art with me," He shall say. "I am with thee," the ransomed shall say; and that shall be rest indeed.

Notes from Dr. John Owen.

EVERY thing will do its utmost to preserve its life and being. So will sin do also; and if it be not constantly pursued with diligence and holy violence, it will escape our assaults. Let no man think to kill sin with few, easy, or gentle strokes. He who hath once smitten a serpent, if he follow not on his blow until he be slain, may repent that ever he began the quarrel. And so will he who undertakes to deal with sin, and pursues it not constantly to death; sin will after a while revive, and the man must die.

CONTESTS against particular sins are only to comply with light and convictions. Mortification with a design for holiness respects the body of sin, the root and all its branches: the first will miscarry, and the latter will be successful. And herein consists the difference between that mortification which men are put upon by convictions from the law, which always proves fruitless, and that wherein we are acted by the spirit of the gospel: the first respects only particular sins, as the guilt of them reflects upon conscience, the latter, the whole interest of sin as opposed to the renovations of the image of God in us.

THESE things (in disapproval of Popish practices) are not spoken to condemn even external severities and austerities, in fastings, watchings, and abstinences, in their proper place. Our nature is apt to run into extremes; because we see the vanity of the Papists in placing mortification of sin, in an outward shadow and appearance of it, in that bodily exercise which profiteth not; we are apt to think that all things of that nature are utterly needless, and cannot be subordinate unto spiritual ends. But the truth is, I shall much suspect their internal mortification (pretend what they will) who always pamper the flesh, indulge to their sensual appetite, conform to the world, and lead their lives in idleness and pleasures. Yea, it is high time the professors by joint consent should retrench that course of life, in fulness of diet, bravery of apparel, expense of time in vain conversation, which many are fallen into. But these outward austerities of themselves, I say, will never effect the end aimed at.

THERE is no imagination wherewith mankind is besotted, more foolish, none so pernicious as this, that persons not purified, not sanctified, not made holy in this life, should afterwards be taken into that state of blessedness which consists in the enjoyment of God. There can be no thought more reproachful to His glory, nor more inconsistent with the nature of things in themselves. For neither can such persons enjoy Him, nor would God Himself be a reward unto them. They can have nothing whereby they should adhere unto Him as their chiefest good, nor can they see anything in Him that should give them rest or satisfaction; nor can there be any medium whereby God should communicate Himself unto them, supposing them to continue thus unholy,

as all must do who depart out of this life in that condition. Holiness indeed is perfected in heaven, but the beginning of it is inviolably and unalterably confined to this world, and where this fails no hand shall be put unto that work unto eternity. All unholy persons, therefore, who feed and refresh themselves with hopes of heaven and eternity, do it merely on false notions of heaven and blessedness whereby they deceive themselves. Heaven is a place where as well they would not be, as they cannot be; in itself it is neither desired by them nor fit for them. "He that hath this hope," indeed, that he shall see God, "purifieth himself even as he his pure."—(1 John iii. 2, 3.)

HE that thinks to please God, and to come to the enjoyment of Him without holiness, makes him an unholy God, putting the highest indignity and dishonour imaginable upon him. God deliver poor sinners from this deceit. There is no remedy, you must leave your sins or your God. You may as easily reconcile heaven and hell, the one remaining heaven and the other hell, as easily take away all difference between light and darkness, good and evil, as procure acceptance for unholy persons with our God. Some live without God in this world—whether they have any notions of His being or no is not material—they live without any regard unto Him, either as unto His present rule over them, or His future disposal of them. It is no wonder if holiness, both name and thing, be universally despised by these persons; their design being to serve their lusts to the utmost, and increase themselves in the pleasures of the world, without once taking God into their thoughts, they can do no otherwise. But for men who live under some constant sense of God, and an eternal accountableness unto Him, and therein do many things He requires, and abstain from many sins that their inclinations and opportunities would suggest and prompt them unto, not to endeavour after that universal holiness which alone will be accepted with Him, is a deplorable folly. Such men seem to worship an idol all their days. For he that doth not endeavour to be like unto God, doth contrarily think wickedly that God is like unto Himself. It is true our interest in God is not built upon our holiness, but it is as true that we have none without it.

An t-Aonadh.

O CHIONN da mhios air ais thug sinn gealladh gu'n sgrìobhadh sinn rudeigin air a mhios a chaidh mu'n chuis so. Tha sinn duilich nach d' fhuair sinn so a dheanamh ach tha dochas againn gu'n teid ar leisgeul a ghabhail 'nuair a chuimhnicheas ar leughadairean cho beag cothrom agus a tha againn air a bhi aig an tigh agus cho duilich agus a tha e do luchd-siubhail uine fhaotainn airson airson sgrìobhaidh.

Bha da ni a bha 'nan ceisdean fosgailte am measg nan Cleireach Aonaichte 'nuair a bha an gluasad ann roimhe airson Aonaidh nach fheudadh a bhi mar sin air seann steidh na h-Eaglais Shaoir. B'e aon diubh sin mar a dh' ainmich sinn a cheana an ceangal a bu choir a bhi eadar Stàid agus Eaglais. B'e an t-aon eile ceisd mu theagasg mor na Reite—mu thimchioll na muinntir air son an d' fhuair am Fear-saoraidh bàs.

Bha da theagasg air an ceadachadh 'nam measg air a phuing so. Bha cuid a' teagasg gu'n do bhasaich Crìosd airson nan daoine taghta a mhain agus gu'm bheil an Crìosd so air a thairgseadh do'n t-saoghal air fad mar aon Shlanuidhear nam peacach. Bha cuid eile a' cumail a mach ged a shaor Crìosd na daoine taghta lè 'bhas gidheadh gu'n do bhasaich E airson an t-saoghail air fad mar an ceudna. Bha iad a' teagasg so a chum agus gu'm biodh bonn aca airson tairgse an t-soisgeil mar nach biodh e 'nan comas Crìosd a thairgseadh do pheacaich mur b' urrainn iad a radh rin gu'n do bhasaich E air an son.

Nis a mhuinntir aig an robh an dara beachd so 'nuair a bha iad a' tairgseadh Chrìosd do pheacaich bha iad 'ga thairgseadh cha'n ann mar Ughdair slainte dhoibhsan air son an d' fhuair E bas agus a reir mar nach e Crìosd mar ughdair slainte a bha iad a tairgseadh 'se ni nach b' ionnan agus slainte a bha iad a' tairgseadh. Ach 'se slainte an ni air am bheil feum aig peacaich agus cha'n fhiach ni nach slainte a thairgseadh do pheacaich no gu'n earbadh peacaich as. Ged a chreideadh peacaich gu'n d' fhuair a leithid so do Shlanuidhear bas air an son cha b' urrainn iad tighinn gus an codhunadh uaith sin gu'n do Shaor E iad no gu'n do dh' eirich E air an son agus mar sin cha b' urrainn iad bonn muinghin a thaobh Dhe fhaotainn tre chreidimh air Crìosd nach 'eil na Fear-saoraidh dhoibhsan uile air son an d' fhuair E bas. Oir mur biodh neach air a thairgseadh dhoibh ach Crìosd a bhasaich air son an t-saoghail air fad 'sann ris a Chrìosd sin a ghabhadh iad agus 'nuair nach 'eil E 'na Ughdair slainte do na h-uile air son an do bhasaich E a reir am beachd cha b' urrainn iad a bhi cinnteach ann a bhi 'gabhail ri a leithid so a Shlanuidhear gu'n d' fhuair E bas air an son. Mar so tha e soilleir ann an aite beachd na muinntir so a bhi 'toirt bonn dhoibh air son tairgse an t-soisgeil tha e 'toirt air falbh bonn-dochais agus muinghin na muinntir a chreideas ann an Crìosd.

Cha robh anns an dara teagasg so ach oidhirp dhaoine air a bhi ni bu glìce na gliocas Dhe agus cha bu leor mar bhonn airson tairgse an t-soisgeil leis an dream a bha dhe'n bheachd do ughdarras Dhe ann an gairm nam peacach dh' ionnsuidh mar nach biodh mac Dhe comasach no deonach air an dream a thig d'a ionnsuidh a shaoradh. 'Nuair a gheall E an dream a thig d'a ionnsuidh a ghabhail foghnaidh so mar bhonn airson Crìosd a

thairgseadh agus mar bhonn airson pheacach air son tighinn d'a ionnsuidh agus gabhail ris no earbsadh as, eadhon ged a bhios iad gun fhios an do bhasaich E air an son no nach do bhasaich. Nuair a thig iad d'a ionnsuidh agus a ghabhas iad ris gheibh iad E agus an sin feudaidh iad a bhi cinnteach gun do shaor E iad le a bhàs. 'Se so an doigh sgrìobturail airson muinntir a dh' fhaotainn a mach araon an taghadh agus an saoradh o Dhia. Nuair a shineas muinntir air bonn eile iarraidh seach ughdarras Dhe anns a ghairm tha aomadh ri 'fhaicinn annta air falbh o aonfhilleachd a chreidimh agus o theagasgan nan gras.

Nuair a bha an da theagasg so air an ceadachadh am measg nan Cleireach Aonaichte cha robh an Eaglais mar Eaglais a' togail fianuis sam bith air taobh na firinn anns na nithibh sin. Cha b' ionnan is sin a bha an Eaglais Shaor. Bha i a reir a steidh a' togail fianuis air taobh na firinn araon a thaobh ceangal Eaglais agus Stàid agus a thaobh teagasg na Reite. A nis nam biodh aonadh air a dheanamh dh' fheumadh aon do na h-Eaglaisean a steidh atharrachadh. Ach cha robh na Cleirich Aonaichte deonach tighinn leud oirleach air falbh o'n suidheachadh fein. Dh' fheumadh mar sin an t-atharrachadh a bhi air taobh na h-Eaglais Shaor agus bha a mhor-chuid do na ministearan ag iarraidh so.

Bha feadhainn ann ma ta a sheas gu duineil an seann-steidh fhein agus cha leigeadh iad le fianuis na h-Eaglais a bhi air a truailleadh nam b' urrainn iad sin a bhacadh. Chuir seasamh duineil an fheadhainn so stad air gluasad luchd an Aonaidh: oir rinn iad so soilleir nam biodh Aonadh ann gu'm biodh briseadh ann cuideachd. Oir bha a mhuinntir a sheas seann-steidh na h-Eaglais lan-shuidhichte air diultadh aonadh a dheanamh ach air steidh cho glan ris an te a bha aca.

Ach gheall sinn rudeigin a sgrìobhadh mu'n cheangal a tha eadar an t-Achd-mineachaidh agus gluasad an Aonaidh. Ged a sguir an dream a bha 'g iarraidh aonaidh dhe bhi 'ga iarraidh gu follaiseach cha do sguir an cinn-iuil a bhi feuchainn ris an rathad fhosgladh suas. Bha inntinn a' ghinealaich a dol comhla riu ann an so oir bha an oige ann an tomhas gle mhor a' dol air falbh o fhallaineachd creidimh agus dh' fhairich iad leabhar-Aidmheil a' chreidimh a bhi ro theann orra agus mar gu'm biodh e 'na chuing daorsa. Bha iad 'ga fhaireachadh a bhi mar so cha'n ann idir do bhrìgh agus gu'n robh e mi-sgrìobturail ach do bhrìgh agus gu'n robh e cho sgrìobturail's a bha e.

Dh' eirich iarrtus laidir am measg na muinntir sin airson ceanglaichean an leabhar-Aidmheil a bhi air am fuasgladh agus mar thoradh air an iarrtus so bha Achd-mineachaidh air a dheanamh 'na lagh anns an Eaglais Shaor anns a' bhliadhna 1892. Leis an

Achd so tha'n Eaglais Shaor a' ceadachadh eadardhealachadh beachd air nithe, a tha an t-Ard-sheanadh a' meas, nach eil a' dol a stigh ann am brìgh a' chreidimh ath-leasaichte. Buinidh e mar so do'n chuir a's airde anns an Eaglais tighinn gu codhunadh mar a chi iad fein iomchuidh mu dheighinn aidmheil na h-Eaglais. Tha na ceisdean fosgailte mar so air an ceadachadh.

(*Ri leantuinn.*)

Notes and Comments.

Note.—We regret that the more extended notice of the late Mr. Macdonald, catechist, Dingwall, promised in last issue, is unavoidably delayed through pressure of work, but expect it will appear very soon.

Coming Sacraments.—Wick on the last Sabbath of October, Oban on the first Sabbath of November, and St. Jude's, Glasgow, on the second Sabbath of same.

Call to Oban.—Rev. Alexander Stewart, probationer, accepted the call to Oban, and was ordained there on 30th September. A fuller reference to the ordination in next issue.

The Immoral Workman.—This workman passes under our observation daily. His immorality appears in his reckless appetite for drink. Regularly every morning at eight he deserts his work that he may indulge. As soon as the Act of Parliament authorises the publican to draw his bolt, this man is there to swallow his dose of fire. It takes him eight minutes to go and return from the spirit shop, and this time he boldly steals from his master. Not only so, but he takes the apprentice with him, thus teaching the young man to commit two evils. The youth, willing to exhibit an example of manliness, goes gladly and comes out smoking vigorously, not knowing that he is forging the fetters of a lifelong slavery. The man is a plasterer and his raiment is therefore soiled. A toil-worn form and labour-stained coat are things of honour if they are found in the way of righteousness, but the slouching gait and soiled garments of this poor ne'er-do-weel, hastening to sell his soul for a twopenny drink, are mere emblems of a ruined and depraved character. We emphasise this depraved workman because he is only one of many. His lawless self-indulgence is a prevalent feature of the age. What a distinction between these poisoned delights he seeks after and the "pure river of water of life proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb." Nevertheless even this man may drink, yea, may yet without reproach be drunken with these immense waters of life. It is our duty to stretch our heart to the conception of such grace as this, for what saith the Scriptures: "When we were yet without strength (as this man now is) in due time Christ died for the ungodly. Thus far are our meditations of this drink-loving workman.

Ten Thousand Dead.—This was the cost of defeat to the Dervish army at the battle of Omdurman, fought on Friday, 2d September. The victorious British-Egyptian army had barely 1000 killed. They fought with a long arm, and smote the foe ere he could come nigh. 40,000 wild Mohammedan fighters well-armed and disciplined, and brave even to contempt of death, fought against half that number of British and Egyptian forces and prevailed not. Their masses of valiant men were battered down with hailstorms of lead and iron that no foemen could stand against. Whatever be the public or private iniquities of the victors, we cannot doubt that this is a righteous decision of the God of battles, and another event in the long controversy between Christ and the False Prophet. For fifteen years the provinces of the upper Nile have been desolated by the tyrannies of these Mohammedan fanatics. Tens of thousands of human beings have been slain, outraged, or enslaved since the Mahdi arose in 1883, but now the wheels of vengeance have overtaken the oppressor, and the justice of heaven has been revealed in a manner terrible, but most praiseworthy.

The Murdered Empress.—On Saturday, 10th September, at Geneva, the Empress of Austria came to a tragic end. She was assassinated by an Italian miscreant, Lucchesi, an anarchist, who, looking for another victim, encountered the Empress, and without further ado, stabbed her. She died shortly thereafter, and her death crowns a black list of calamities to the royal house of Austria. Her sister, the Duchess of Alençon was burned to death last year at a Paris bazaar. Her eldest son, the Crown Prince, died a violent death in 1889, another son was drowned off the coast of Brazil, and another was shot while hunting. It is impossible not to feel sympathy for the stricken Emperor, who has endured the shock of so many calamities. The cruel author of the poor lady's death lies just now in prison. The act was committed in a State whose rulers profess to be wiser than God, that is, they have made a decree abolishing capital punishment. We hope, however, justice will not be frustrated, and that the conscience of the civilised world will be pacified by the terrible, but proper sentence of death to the murderer.

The F.C. Convention at Inverness.—This Convention took place on the 13th and 14th of September. It was opened by a sermon, preached in the Free High Church, by Dr. Whyte. Thereafter there was much speaking by the greater and lesser men of the Church, among whom were Principals Rainy, Salmond, and Miller of Madras, Dr. Ross Taylor, Rev. Messrs. Lee and Howie, Lord Overtoun, the Earl of Moray, &c., likewise Revs. Murdo Macaskill and Murdo Mackenzie, Rev. Dr. Winter, Dyke, and the popular evangelist, Rev. John M'Neill. The speaking was upon such topics as "The Ministry," "The Sacraments," "The Training of the Young," "Foreign Missions," &c., &c. On the second day the company breakfasted together. What

would interest the people of Inverness to a great degree was the unwonted spectacle of unanimity which the platform presented. The town has not seldom rung with the din of ecclesiastical war, but on this occasion the combatants of a generation were seen peacefully breakfasting together, their strifes all apparently hushed for ever. Now, it shall not grieve us to behold a scene of peace and quietness, if it can at all be proved that the peace is an honourable one. We are persuaded the war was an honourable and necessary one. It was a war for the crown rights of Christ, for the spirituality of New Testament worship, for the integrity of the Word of God. Such a war cannot be terminated by compromise, for the things at stake concern closely the honour of the Most High and the welfare of men. When matters came to an extremity, the "Seceders," as they are called, took one way to save the situation—a way that has been criticised and blamed—the constitutionalists took another way. We leave the world to judge whether it be not the old dishonourable way of procuring peace at the expense of freedom.

The sunshine of Principal Rainy's friendship is no doubt agreeable to a worn out "constitutionalist" fighter like Mr. Macaskill, but the relation between them, however disguised, is none other than that of the victor and the vanquished. This, however, is a beaten path we are now treading, and we forbear to enter further upon it.

With regard to the motives underlying this Convention, as also those actuating the busy journeyings of Dr. Whyte and Mr. Lee through the Highlands and Islands since the Assembly, we think there is a distinct suspicion of church politics about them. The restive Highland colt is shortly to be made to work between the shafts of the Voluntary cart, and the wise trainer thinks fit to reconcile him to the strange job by gently smoothing him down beforehand. We do not doubt that the pains which are being expended will have their reward, and that the Highlands, like the Lowlands, are pretty ripe for the new departure.

A Woman's Protest.—On the second day of the Free Church Convention at Inverness, the Rev. Dr. Whyte delivered an address on "Private Prayer." At the end, the chairman said that the members of the Convention would now engage in five minutes silent prayer. No sooner had he given this notice, than a lady at the end of the hall rose, and said in a clear voice, "Mr. Chairman, you will find a correct description of the leaders of this Convention in the second chapter of Second Peter," and raising her voice she repeated the words, "The second chapter of Second Peter." This done, she left the hall. The chapter referred to gives a vivid portraiture of several kinds of false teachers that were to rise in the visible Church. We are glad to see that the spirit of faithful, courageous witnessing for Christ has not yet wholly left our land, and that there are women who will lift their voices against iniquity when men are silent.