

THE  
REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN.

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EDITED BY

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NEWBURGH.

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“Ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.”  
“Bind up the testimony, seal the law among my disciples.”—*Isaiah.* [Jude.]

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## INTRODUCTION.

Many considerations shew the present age to be an eventful one, especially to the Church of God. "The time of the end," mentioned by Daniel, approaches, and, as it draws near, the pages of the sealed book are more fully unfolded, that the wise may understand the things that are written therein. Proximity to this period brings in view the providential operations of the Mediator, by which the church and the world are to be prepared for the introduction of the Millenium. The events that must precede the ushering in of the latter day are marked in prophecy as of no ordinary character. Times, such as the world has never seen, and changes, more important than any that have ever taken place, are to be experienced by those whose lot is to witness the accomplishing of these events and to pass through the changing scenes that shall follow each other in quick succession, until they issue in the deliverance of God's people, "even every one that shall be found written in the book." All who believe the time of this deliverance to be near at hand, and who hail its accomplishment by the prevalence of correct principles, by the destruction of antichrist, by the overthrow of the ungodly kingdoms of the world, and by the removal of every thing that opposes the elevation of the mountain of the Lord's house above the tops of the mountains, regard the present age as the one presented in vision to the prophet. At such a time the dispensations of divine Providence are fraught with more than common interest to the Christian. They claim his best attention.

Enlightened observation, directed by the sure word of prophecy, harmonizes with it, and shews the present age to be eventful. Many run to and fro, and knowledge of various

kinds is increased. Though too little attention is bestowed on subjects of the greatest importance, and much investigation employed about matters of minor import and for the gratification of an unfruitful curiosity, yet information, useful in a greater or less degree, is diffusing more generally throughout the world than at any former period. The scriptures of truth, with the swiftness of winged messengers, are making their way to the remotest corners of the earth, teaching the doctrines and announcing the precepts that shall, ere long, prevail over all the delusions and vain imaginations of depraved man. The spread of intelligence is preparing the way for breaking the chains of ignorance, bondage, superstition and idolatry, by which a large proportion of mankind have hitherto been bound. It is also the means of providing the channels in which a knowledge of the glory of God will hereafter run until it fill the earth. Rapid and increasing, it portends much that is eventful.

Unprecedented effort is employed by men of all ranks in the various departments of the business of human life. Much that is beneficial and to be praised is undertaken and prosecuted with vigor; while much that is evil and to be condemned is commenced with zeal and carried forward with energy. A great work is on the wheels of Providence. Human agency is to be laid under contribution for its accomplishment. God seems to be exciting mankind to enterprize and effort, that their instrumentality may be ready when he shall call upon them to employ it. As hurried blasts of wind indicate an approaching change in the elements, so in the present unusual bustle we are apprized of coming changes,—eventful in their character and important as they pass. He who looks upon all things that are done as overruled by the Almighty for the accomplishment of his own great purposes, will see, in the existing state of exertion, and the indications which it furnishes, evidence of a more than ordinary result.

The earth and heavens are shaken. The spirit of revolution is abroad among the nations. Brooding upon the chaotic mass of the kingdoms of the old world, its influence in quickening into action the causes that are to operate in establishing a new order of things, bids fair soon to be irresistible. The principles of civil and religious liberty are gradually undermining the systems of despotism, by which the unalienable rights of man, bestowed on him by his Creator, have been withheld from millions through successive ages. These principles, destined, ere long, to subvert the foundations on which tyranny rests, already make despots tremble—tyrants feel

for their crowns, and task-masters grasp more tightly the scourge by which they seek to hold their bondmen in subjection. Discord, anarchy and faction—always fruitful sources of agitation—greatly abound. Even the civil institutions of our own land are shaken, by their prevalence, to such an alarming extent, that the sober and reflecting begin to call in question the stability heretofore claimed for them. In the church, commotion succeeds commotion with astonishing and fearful rapidity. Among all denominations of Christians, not one is found which is not, or has not lately been, agitated to an unusual extent. Men of corrupt minds, by attempting to change the laws, ordinances and forms of the house, have endeavored to unsettle the whole established system of truth and order in the several ecclesiastical communities to which they have respectively belonged, or with which they continue dishonestly associated. They have occasioned trouble, originated strife and caused contention, the effects of which are fitly represented by the shaking of the heavens; for indeed the whole ecclesiastical firmament has experienced a mighty agitation. The divisions of Zion disturb her peace and mar her tranquility. The reflecting mind, turned to the agitated state of the world and the church, finds much to deplore; but at the same time views with interest, and dwells with anxiety, upon every movement that takes place—knowing that they all present, in prospect, the establishment of a better condition of things, both civilly and ecclesiastically. The things that cannot be shaken will remain; while the removal of all that is unstable will prepare the way for the new heavens and new earth, to which the attention of the people of God has been long and earnestly directed.

Error is prevalent. Various old heresies, dressed up in different costume from that in which they were severally attired in former ages, are zealously propagated and palmed off upon the Christian community as improvements in Theological doctrine. Their revival under new forms gives them the appearance of novelty, by which so many are always ready to be captivated. Their advocates maintain them with much zeal—often with great *shew* of piety—call to their aid new measures, which claim to be the only means of effecting good—and accommodate them in every way to the unsuspecting, the thoughtless, the ignorant and the carnal. False doctrine, in its grosser forms, and heresy, refined by metaphysical subtilities, are means through which the enemy comes in like a flood. Connected with the prevalence of error is the frigid neglect of truth, or the cold reception with which it is

embraced, even by a majority of those who profess to be orthodox. A false notion of charity, joined to a dread of giving offence, has sealed the mouths and paralyzed the arm of many who might be expected to receive cordially, and maintain fearlessly, the system of evangelical doctrine. The distinction between truth and its opposite is not sufficiently maintained. The importance of the one and the danger of the other are neither understood nor estimated as they should be. Many prominent gospel doctrines are permitted, in consequence, to lie buried in the streets, instead of being exhibited in their simplicity and beauty, and pressed upon the attention of men as great principles, worthy of God to give, and of them to receive. Many dangerous errors are allowed to circulate without opposition, instead of being exposed in their native deformity and pernicious tendency.

Proportioned to the neglect of truth and the prevalence of error, is the abounding of immorality. Bad principles produce evil practices. The disregard of good ones takes off the restraint which they always exercise when receiving proper attention. It would be easy to trace the gross profanation of God's holy name, the desecration of the Sabbath, the rejection of the Scriptures, the indulgence of fleshly lusts, with many other iniquitous practices, that call for righteous retribution from the hand of an avenging God, to the incorrect sentiments that occupy, in the minds of men, the place of those principles which the Creator has given to regulate the conduct of his rational creatures. Every day's observation evinces that the whole state of things in the moral world is deteriorating. Vice, in various forms, is becoming fashionable, because sanctioned and practised by men in high places, whose example the throng that crowd the lower ranks are always prone to imitate. An intemperate pursuit of wealth, constant political ferment, and a spirit of speculation calculated to banish the industrious habits of former years, exercise a baleful influence on the public and private morals of the community. The professors of religion seem to yield to the spirit of the times; suffering themselves to be evilly affected, and lending their countenance to many of the evils that injuriously affect others. All these things indicate the approach of those fearful days which God will bring upon the earth on account of the iniquities that his soul hateth.

He who diligently observes the signs of the times, as they are presented in the condition of the civil, moral and religious worlds, cannot fail to see much that is awfully portentous. But as God does not leave himself without witness, enough

is manifested to encourage the observer to look forward to the time of the end, when all the important events, of which the present age is, and is to be, so fruitful, shall have been accomplished. In the mean time, the responsibility, the duties, the trials and the dangers of Christians—always great—are vastly increased. They are required to come out from among the workers of iniquity—not to be partakers of their sins, lest they be made to partake of their plagues—to employ their best exertions in opposition to existing evils and in furtherance of the means through which God will bring order out of confusion—to be prepared for present action and for future prospects. The witnesses of the Redeemer should be wise as serpents and harmless as doves. All they speak and all they do should be according to the law and the testimony. Intelligence should mark their course, fidelity should characterize their conduct, a holy zeal should burn within their bosoms, hope should animate them, and in patience they should possess their souls. As their testimony holds a prominent place among the means through which God will destroy the works of darkness and bring good out of abounding evil, they especially should be diligent observers of the “signs of the times,” that they may know what Israel ought to do.

To aid the christian, to assist the witness in the intelligent, zealous and faithful discharge of duty, during this eventful period, is incumbent upon every one in proportion to the opportunity offered for casting in his mite. And to avail ourselves of all assistance furnished, is equally incumbent. None can, without sin, withhold the hand when there is call for work. None may, with impunity, neglect to profit by the means calculated to assist in performing the service to which they are called.

To contribute a humble share in forwarding the work which God, in his word and providence, assigns to his servants, is the design of the REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN. This it proposes to do, chiefly by illustrating and applying the doctrines, and enforcing the practices, that are enjoined upon the followers of the Lamb; calling attention to these under the aspects that impart to them new interest in this eventful age. Connected with this leading object, the refutation of prevalent errors, an exposition of corruptions in the doctrines, worship, discipline and government of the Church, reviews of theological works, notices of scriptural, enlightened and benevolent enterprizes, with an impartial examination of the “signs of the times,” will find a place in its pages. It is designed to enlighten the understanding and improve the heart—not to gratify a prurient curiosity, nor please a trifling fancy.



Custom, and that frankness—generally safe, always honorable,—which the public have a right to expect, demand of the editor a statement of the course intended to be pursued.

1. He will exercise exclusive control in relation to all matter to be inserted in the pages of the Reformed Presbyterian, and its management generally. As the chief responsibility rests with him, justice requires that this be allowed without incurring the displeasure of any one, whose wishes may not in every respect be met. It will be his interest, desire and aim to please, as far as obligation to truth and duty will admit. Farther, fear or favor shall not influence. At the same time, counsel and advice will still be thankfully received; and all suitable suggestions attended to, as far as practicable.

2. No pains will be spared in endeavoring to render the work useful and interesting to all who may desire to have their attention turned to the principles of eternal truth and righteousness presented in the Bible, and happily embodied in the Westminster Confession of Faith, Catechisms larger and shorter, and other subordinate ecclesiastical standards, harmonizing with these, in doctrine, worship, discipline and government—to corruptions that mar the church's beauty, and interfere with the sanctification of her members—to seek for the old paths, the footsteps of the flock, that they may, like our fathers, walk therein and find rest to their souls.

3. The claims of Messiah to universal government, and the obligation of the divine law upon men of all ranks, and upon all communities of men, associated nationally or otherwise, will be maintained, under the conviction that Jesus Christ "is made Head over all things," and that the statutes of Jehovah are universally binding.

4. No access will be given to communications calculated to unsettle the landmarks above pointed out; but if, at any time, misrepresentation of persons, doings or things, be unfortunately made, a correction of the mistake will be thankfully received and cheerfully inserted or acknowledged.

5. It cannot be expected that matter appertaining strictly to each of the general heads mentioned in the Prospectus shall be found in every number. The limits of the work preclude this. It is not necessary to the end proposed in the undertaking.

6. The Editor depends upon his brethren, who hold the pens of ready writers, to contribute frequently to the pages of the work. The diversity of taste, capacity and extent of intelligence, that will be found among its readers, requires that diversity of style, method of illustration, &c., which can

be furnished only by the co-operation of different writers. Besides, every reader expects *variety* in a periodical publication. It is gratifying and encouraging to be able to announce that several have promised their contributions stately; and others have engaged to give their assistance as they find opportunity. The necessity and advantage of preparing with great care the communications intended for insertion, are, very respectfully, intimated. The number of *families*, into which the work will be received, is greater than the number of *individuals* that ordinarily wait on one man's instructions in the sanctuary. With what care, then, should "a word in season" be prepared, when the several members of these households and others—from the aged disciple to the youthful pupil in the school of Christ—from the *man* of full age, requiring the strong meat of the word, to the *babe*, needing the "sincere milk," are at once to have access to all that may be furnished by this monthly messenger. Besides, should they be found deserving, parts, at least, may claim the attention of some whose eye may meet them in coming years. Let the opportunity of making a present exhibition of the testimony and of recording it for a succeeding generation, be improved *carefully*.

In conclusion, the work is commended to God, whose blessing alone can render it useful in answering the end for which it has been undertaken. It is presented to the Christian public, claiming a humble rank among the journals of the present day, under the belief that, numerous and diversified as they are, there is room for another, whose object is the advancement of the glory of God, in the defence of his truth and covenant cause.

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#### THE TRUE CHRISTIAN CHARACTERIZED.

Many millions of men, in Pagan and Mahometan nations, "are without God and without hope in the world." They are aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and from the covenants of promise. They know nothing of the Christian system, and are utterly ignorant of Christ its author. They cannot, in any sense, claim the name of Christian; and though some, without authority from either Scripture or reason, have maintained that the less grossly immoral, and the more orderly and intelligent, among them, may be saved, yet none has adventured to call them Christians. In seeking after the characteristics of the true Christian, they are to be left out of the enquiry.

In those nations, that are called Christian, there are also many millions, who, though they would consider it a reproach to be called Pagans or Mahometans, yet do not claim to be true Christians; and did they put in such a claim, it could not even be recorded for examination. Their sins go before them for their condemnation, even without formal trial, at the bar of Christian opinion. They have the name unchristian written on their foreheads, so plainly, that he who runs may read. Not a few of these ungodly men profess to entertain a speculative belief in the truth and divine origin of the Christian revelation, acknowledge its excellency as a system of morals, and profess an intention, probably in some degree sincere, to embrace, profess and practice it, when they find a convenient season. They know and admit that at present they are not true Christians, and are not offended when the disciples of Jesus refuse to number them among his faithful followers. At the same time such persons wish to be comprehended in some general manner under the name Christian, as applicable to doctrinal, not practical believers. Their knowledge and theoretical belief affecting the natural conscience, and the regard which they entertain for their character, among "the people of the saints of the Most High," lead them to avoid the more gross and scandalous sins of the profligate, and to obey, as to their outward form, many precepts of the gospel. In numerous ways these collateral effects of the doctrines of grace are productive of good to human society and even to the church. They may be in many respects amiable and worthy of respect, for their decency of deportment, public spirit and social affections. Yet, however near they are to the kingdom of Heaven, they have never yet entered, and there is reason to fear many of them never will enter by the straight gate into the city. In characterizing the true Christian, we must, however painful it is, leave them where they leave themselves, altogether out of the account.

There is left, after all this exclusion, a vast assemblage, whose claims to be true Christians remain to be tried by the law and the testimony. This trial of character is of the highest, most solemn and most interesting import to all who seek to participate in the blessings of God's salvation—to all who would not be deceived in relation to their real condition before God, and their prospect of attaining to the blessedness and the glory of the kingdom of Heaven. Delicacy and great caution in a business of this nature are very necessary, that, on the one hand, the presumptuous may not be encouraged in their self-deception and false hopes; on the other, that distressed,

timid and weak believers may not be perplexed with still greater doubts and fears. Guided by the light of Scripture let us proceed.

1. A sanctified understanding and belief of pure gospel truth, is a characteristic of the true Christian. This is often called "soundness in the faith." For this David prays:—"Let my heart be sound in thy statutes, that I be not ashamed." Ps. cxix. 80. The term "*heart*," in this prayer, is nearly equivalent to the word *mind*. It embraces the soul and all its faculties. The word "*statutes*," as commonly in the cxix. Psalm, embraces the whole system of gospel truth and law. It is a prayer, then, that he may be orthodox in the doctrines that he receives. The danger of error is intimated in the latter clause of the verse. "He that believeth shall not be ashamed." "The hope of the Christian maketh not ashamed." "Fear not, for thou shalt not be ashamed." This soundness of the heart, then, is vital in the true Christian. If he were permitted to embrace error for truth, his discipleship would be put in jeopardy. One only and certain means of preserving the professor of the faith of Jesus from shame, is the soundness of the heart in the statutes of the Lord.

Christ asserts this principle. "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." Joh. viii. 32. Those that remain in sin are in bondage to their lusts and to the devil. The true Christian alone is emancipated from this bondage and brought "into the glorious liberty of the sons of God." The means employed by our great Deliverer, he tells us himself, is the knowledge of the truth. All this is in harmony with what the Holy Ghost says in Isaiah liii. 11. "By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many." The knowledge of which he speaks is saving faith. "Being justified by faith." Rom. v. 1. And faith is so called because it embraces a sanctified perception of the truth of Christ as its first and one of its chief ingredients. It must be so, for "we are born again by the word of God that liveth and abideth for ever." 1 Pet. i. 23, 25. When the Holy Spirit "convinces of sin, of righteousness and of judgment to come," it is by the application of the truth contained in the Holy Scriptures. It is never by a new revelation, or by impressions made on the mind without the word. He takes of the things which are Christ's as they are recorded in the pages of inspiration, and shews them to the sinner. Now, as this conviction by which the sinner discovers his need of a Savior is wrought by means of the truth, it must be known, and in theory believed, antecedently to conversion, and this belief of the

truth—the same truth, becomes saving, when the principle of new life is implanted in regeneration. The sinner cannot believe in him of whom he has not heard, or accept of a Savior of whose person, offices and worth, he is ignorant. “They that know thy name, shall trust in thee.” So then, as the whole work of conversion from sin to holiness and progressive sanctification, until the believer arrives at the stature of perfect man in Christ Jesus, is effected by the saving application of gospel doctrine: a sanctified apprehension of the truth is characteristic of the true Christian.

Though saving grace is not the test of fitness, in the courts of the church, for admission to ecclesiastical privileges, yet, in the court of Heaven it is indispensable. And in the judgment of charity every one admitted to sealing ordinances must be considered a real disciple of the Lord Jesus. Hence, the church has formed creeds and confessions as tests of orthodoxy, not merely to ascertain what doctrines are maintained by those who apply for admission to her communion, but, as far as can be known, what evidence applicants can give of the genuineness of their christianity, by their knowledge of the doctrines of these formularies and their profession of faith in them. In one word, the use made of subordinate standards by the church from the days of the apostles to the present hour, has been on the ground that soundness in the faith is one most prominent characteristic of the true Christian.

Turretine, in his very elaborate and conclusive argument against the Papists and in vindication of the Protestant reformation, rests the chief weight of his conclusion on the purity of doctrine in the Reformed church. His maxim is, that wherever the truths of the gospel are embraced without adulteration, there is the church of Christ. This is the stronghold of Protestantism. It is as impossible that an individual should be a true Christian without a saving knowledge of the truth, as that there should be a true church where the gospel doctrine is lost or unknown.

To all this some one may reply:—How can I know that the principles which I embrace are indeed the very truth of God? The difficulty arises from ignorance of the perspicuity of the Holy Scriptures, which are “so plain that he who runs may read.” But in addition to the clearness of the light which shines in the gospel, we have the footsteps of the flock to guide us. To say nothing of remoter ages, it is consolatory to reflect on the wonderful and almost divine harmony of the confessions of faith adopted by the reformed church in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Some of them, as the

Confession of the Synod of Dort, and the Westminster Confession, are more ample, better digested and more luminous than others. But among them all, as far as they go, there can scarcely be detected the smallest discrepancy. How is this to be accounted for in systems exhibited by nations remote from each other, of different manners and speaking different languages, as the Genevans, the French, the Germans, the Bohemians, the Hungarians, the Hollanders and the Britains? In no other way than that they all derive these pure waters of life from the same fountain—the infallible word of God. In them all there is nothing Popish, nothing Arminian, nothing Hopkinsian, nothing Socinian or Arian. There is no danger of error when following in the footsteps of that great cloud of witnesses who have travelled onward and upward to realms of glory.

Again some latitudinarian, who is ready to admit the genuineness of his christianity to every claimant, however corrupt in doctrine, may exclaim—What! do you require of every man to know and believe all that is contained in the creeds of the Protestant churches before you will admit his title to be esteemed a true Christian? Are there not some doctrines revealed in the Scriptures that are mere circumstantials? Do you call them all essentials? The zealous witnesses for the truth are often assailed by such unmeaning clamour, which “darkens counsel by words without knowledge.” That there are babes in Christ, as well as full-grown men, all will admit. But even “a babe desires the sincere milk of the word.” He who does not is not even a babe in Christ. When the true Christian has access to the means of knowing “the way of God more perfectly” he will embrace the truth which he is taught as certainly as the living child will desire the pure milk for its nourishment. We all see through a glass darkly, for there is still some darkness remaining in the understanding of the most enlightened Christian. But surely if soundness in the faith is in the least admitted as a test of true christianity, it cannot be gainsaid; that the more extensive the knowledge and pure the faith of any one is, the more luminous is the evidence that he is a true Christian. As this outcry is usually made in relation to terms of admission into the church, it is utterly out of place. For we ought to have the best evidence the nature of the case will admit, that in receiving an applicant to the fellowship of the saints we do not give the bread of children to dogs, or cast pearls before swine. In this matter we go no farther than our fathers in the church have gone.

Those who go out from the church, because they are not of it, are said "to make shipwreck of the faith." They forsake the profession of sound doctrine that they may accommodate themselves to worldly and carnal men, and so lose the evidence given, in their former orthodox profession, that their christianity was genuine. The strength of the evidence against such backsliders is proportional to their dereliction of truth.

As to essentials, God has given in his word no truth that is not a part of the *system* of revealed religion, and so every truth is *essential* to the beauty and symmetry of the whole. And though a good man is ignorant of much that God has made known, yet no one may *reject* any truth, however men may call it little, circumstantial, or by any other epithet of reproach. And as to fundamental truths, "The church is built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone; in whom *all* the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord." Eph. II. 20, 21. In this text, "the apostles and prophets," are words designating the *whole* doctrine which they taught. All the truths taught by them are in the foundation, and in this view are fundamental. He who removes one of these foundation-stones in so far weakens the edifice. This noise, for it is nothing more, relative to essentials and circumstantials, is designed to sew pillows under all arm-holes; it endangers the souls of men by teaching them lightly to esteem the *doctrines* of the apostles and prophets, and it corrupts the church by bringing into her communion the ignorant, the unstable, the erroneous and the unholy.

2. Saving faith in the promises. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." Were saving faith no more than the assent of the understanding to the truth of all that is revealed in the gospel; this, our second characteristic of the true Christian, would be identical with the first. But though there is no exercise of justifying faith without a holy perception of the truth, and assent to it by the understanding, yet much more is required in order to the existence of that grace of the Spirit. Were the mere belief of the truth of the proposition "he that believeth shall be saved" all that is meant by the word "believeth" in the text, it would require very little self-examination in many, perhaps in most cases, to ascertain whether one is a true believer or not. Perhaps most men, who give any reflection to the subject, know what they think as to the truth of the proposition, and yet thousands, both of the regenerate and unregenerate, have doubted as to the reality of their saving faith. "With the heart man believ-

eth unto righteousness." Here, as often in other texts, the word "heart" means not the understanding only, but all the faculties of the soul. "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." Ps. cx. 3. This willingness, wrought in the heart by the power of the Holy Ghost, in regeneration, involves the renovation of the will, by which it is enabled to choose what it formerly rejected. Men approve of what they choose, so far, at least, as to esteem it a present good; for the will is always moved in its choice by motives. When the sinner receives Christ by faith, the act is performed in the cordial approbation of him, as an infinitely excellent and suitable Saviour. "With my soul have I desired thee," is the language of faith. The whole plan of salvation through the covenant is perceived to be desirable and is desired. "He hath made with me an everlasting covenant ordered in *all things* and sure: for *this is all my salvation and all my desire.*" All this, so desirable in the eyes of the believer, is perceived through the medium of gospel truth, or rather, it is the truth itself; for every gospel doctrine is an article in the covenant of grace. This covenant, embodying all the principles of evangelical truth, is desirable,—and it is fully and cordially approved as lovely, because Christ is its sum and substance. Love of the truth—of the way of salvation, and of Christ; is embraced in the faith of God's elect. It is impossible that all this should exist in the soul without more. Christ is actually received, by an act that appropriates him and his salvation to the sinner himself who believes. "Look unto me and be ye saved," is the call of God. The sinner in faith does look for himself in the hope of salvation. He has an assurance in the truth of the promise, that relying on it he shall not be disappointed. So that faith is opposed to doubting. "O! thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?" Many doubts, indeed, there are, and these most painful in the hearts of the best believers; but they are as opposite to the nature of faith, as indwelling sin is to the principle of saving grace. It is only by appropriating Christ and the blessings of God's covenant, as these are offered in the gospel and conveyed in the promises, that doubts are dispelled, and the night of darkness that they bring over the soul, turned into day.

When, by faith, the alarmed, convinced and distressed sinner finds the Saviour "a very present help in time of trouble," he holds him fast, which is otherwise defined, "resting on him alone for salvation, as he is freely offered to us in the gospel." "I held him, and would not let him go, until I had brought him into my mother's house, and into the chamber of her that con-



ceived me." Song, III. 4. So that faith is not a transient act, but an abiding principle. In brief, in saving faith, Christ and the covenant-way of salvation through him, being perceived by the understanding, enlightened by the Holy Ghost, is cordially approved, embraced with assured confidence, and relied on for salvation. This is a peculiar endowment of the Christian, by which he is mystically united to his Redeeming Head, partakes of all the benefits of the covenant of grace, and is called by a new name which the mouth of the Lord of hosts hath named.

3. This faith worketh by love, and purifieth the heart.— Though the approbation of Christ as a Saviour, which enters into the essence of justifying faith, is of the nature of love, and though faith never is and never can be separated from love, yet love is a distinct operation of the will. As God in Christ is infinitely amiable, and an object worthy of all the heart, so the believer loves him for this excellency. The language of his soul is:—"Thou art fairer than the children of men; grace is poured into thy lips." Psal. XLV. 2. "Because of the savor of thy good ointments, thy name is as ointment poured forth, therefore do the virgins love thee." Song, I. 3. "How great is his beauty!" Zec. IX. 17. "Whom have I in heaven *but thee?* and *there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee.*" Psal. LXXIII. 25. That love to God, which the law requires, "with the whole heart, soul, strength and mind," is awakened by the view which a believer has of His glory and beauty; but yet there never has been an exercise of this principle in any of the creatures separate from a perception of his goodness, of which the person who loves him is made to partake. Angels love God not only for his infinite loveliness, but for the goodness by which he replenishes them with the perfection of blessedness. It is evidently impossible for them to separate these motives to love their Creator. David says:—"I love the Lord, because he hath heard my voice and my supplication." Psal. CXVI. 1. That is, for all the mercies of which he had been made to partake. That "disinterested love of being in general," of which Hopkinsians treat so largely in their sermons and theological works, never existed any where but in the mouths of men and on paper. It is in view of the goodness and mercy of Jehovah, that Paul exclaims in the transports of love and admiration:—"O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments and his ways past finding out!" Rom. XI. 33. It is in the plan and work of redemption, wherein he bestows the greatest blessing on us, that the

most glorious display of the divine excellency is made both to angels and men. "To the intent that now, unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places, might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God." Eph. III. 10. So that the view of those divine glories of the Godhead, which excites the emotion of love, is presented together with his ineffable goodness to the believer. That love, which is characteristic of the true Christian, diffuses itself over all the exercises of his affections. It is that *charity*, which the apostle of the Gentiles so graphically and feelingly extols in the 13th chapter of his epistle to the Romans, without which all other gifts are nothing. The truth which reveals the excellency of the divine perfections, the saints who are created anew after the image of God, and the church in which is revealed his manifold wisdom, are all, in their own order, the objects of his love. On this love to God and man "hang all the law and the prophets." It is in the exercise of this holy and heavenly emotion that the soul of the believer is "filled with joy unspeakable and full of glory." "We love him because he first loved us." "O love the Lord, all ye his saints."

4. Heavenly mindedness—heavenly affections, prevail in the true believer. "Our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ." Phil. III. 20. "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth." Col. III. 1, 2. The true Christian considers himself a stranger and pilgrim on the earth; and he seeks a better country, even an heavenly. By the fall, in which man preferred the gratification of an earthly appetite to the favour of God, and the eternal glory and felicity of all his posterity, his affections became corrupt and disorderly, so that having become carnally minded, he prefers earthly things. Hence God is not in all the thoughts of the natural man. His treasure is on earth, and there are his meditations, his plans, his affections, his desires, his all. "He minds earthly things." His affections never rise on high, or ascend above the grovelling enjoyments of sensual gratification. However learned, however orderly, however liberal, however kind, his affections are all earthly. All his aspirations are after worldly riches, honour and pleasure. The Christian is of another spirit. Renewed in the whole man, other and higher and holier and nobler objects occupy the first place in his soul. Hence, he is ready, when God calls, to yield up property and "take joyfully the spoiling of his goods," for the hon-

of Christ, a good conscience, and the interests of the church. What he surrenders is not his inheritance; that is secured where moth and rust corrupt not, and where thieves do not break through nor steal. He parts not with things that have the uppermost room in his heart, but with what he esteems as less than nothing and vanity, in comparison of the excellency of his Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. He will part with life, and with a good name, dearer to him than life, at the call of God; and even "rejoice and be exceeding glad" when men say all manner of evil against him falsely for Christ's sake. For none of all these things are the leading objects of his affection; and he counts his life not precious when the honor of the church's Head, the cause of truth, or the testimony of Jesus demands its surrender. While ungodly men desire no other heaven than what they seek to enjoy on earth, the true Christian says with Job, "I would not live always." VII. 16. Though he cannot attain in full to the strength of Paul's faith and desire after heaven, yet he knows well that "to depart and be with Christ is far better." How many are there in this carnal age who will bear to be tried by this test? How many are there, alas! who profess the name of Christ that, after all, are habitually saying,—"Who will shew us any good thing?"

5. **Lowliness of mind distinguishes the man of God.** He esteems himself "less than the least of all saints," and says with Job, "Behold! I am vile," and with Isaiah, "I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell among a people of unclean lips." He is "of a meek and quiet spirit, which in God's sight is of great price." While he holds fast the form of sound words, and surrenders no truth to please any man or nation, and "contends earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints, he does not strive contentiously, nor cry, nor cause his voice to be heard in the streets. All this he has learned of Christ, "who was meek and lowly." His humble, meek and quiet temper is far from that spirit of insubordination, which glories in resisting all parental, ecclesiastical and civil authority. He has, by the grace given to him, subdued the riotous, tumultous and fierce passions which agitate the bosoms of the wicked. By faith he sees the glory of God and is self-abased; he knows his own many infirmities, and has compassion on the frailty of others; he has subjected himself to the yoke of Christ, and is submissive to them that are over him in the Lord.

6. **The true Christian is zealous for the glory of God and for the purity and prosperity of the church.** Like Elijah, he

is "very jealous for the Lord God of hosts." In this respect he has the image of Christ, who says:—"The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up." He gives himself not up to detestable neutrality in the cause of God. His zeal is according to knowledge, not ignorant, bigotted, or fiery. It is burning, indeed, like that of the seraphim, kindled by fire taken from the altar of the Lord. Hence it warms and enlightens, but does not scorch or wither. It is sober, grave, and instinct with dignity and greatness of soul; for it is imparted by the indwelling of the Holy Ghost. Passion and petulance are as unlike it as the lurid fires of Etna and Vesuvius are unlike the genial warmth and light of the sun. We have illustrious examples of it in the splendid constellation of martyrs that shine in the firmament of the church's history.

7. The last characteristic of the true Christian, that we specify, is holiness of life. "He walks in all the commandments and statutes of the Lord blameless." "I will shew thee my faith by my works." He prays in secret morning and evening. If the head of a family, he worships evening and morning in his household. He attends the fellowship meetings of the saints. He sanctifies the Sabbath, attends on the Lord's day of rest to all Sabbath-day duties, and avoids worldly reading, thoughts, conversation, company and business. He maintains a conscience void of offence towards God and man. He is a friend to the rights of man, and "will not follow a multitude to do evil."

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THE ADVANTAGES OF INTELLECTUAL CULTIVATION WHEN SUBSERVIENT TO TRUE RELIGION.

Man has been distinguished by his Creator, as in other things, so eminently in the intellectual endowments of the soul, above all the lower creation. It is the possession of this faculty of mind that places him at once in an elevated position, and opens to his view a prospect the most extensive and diversified, replete with every thing that is interesting. The wide range of creation, magnificent and wonderful in its structure, variety, harmony and magnitude; the deeply momentous moral concerns of a being accountable before an invisible and infinite Judge; the awful mysteries involved in a future and endless state of rewards and punishments; and the covenant system of divine mercy in a Mediator; all fraught

with interest to a being endowed with intelligence and stamped with immortality, are spread before the mind of man.

Let us consider in a few particulars what this extraordinary endowment is, not in a philosophical definition, but in a brief description of its most obvious properties. We may then perceive in a clearer light the distinguishing goodness of the Creator in bestowing it on man, and the obligations it imposes to cultivate it to his glory and our own advantage, with the materials he has most liberally furnished.

The mind is not a distinct part or member of the soul, but a power, faculty or habit in which it acts on objects in a manner or method peculiar to itself. It discerns, it is contemplative, and its property in this respect is beautifully and significantly indicated in the figurative language of the Scriptures, "the eyes of the understanding." It is, however, not only perceptive in its actings, it is also recipient, and introduces into the soul such a discovery of the varied objects it contemplates, as affects deeply every power capable of being moved. The imagination is brought into play—the passions are roused into action—conscience is called upon for its voice—and the memory is tasked to retain its discoveries. And here the Scriptural figure has a farther illustration: through the eye is received a representation, most minute but exact, of all the multifarious visible objects with which we are surrounded, and the interior pictured retina awakens those various sensations which the outward scenery is calculated to produce. The mind has an adaptation, therefore, to discern and receive within itself a distinct perception of the objects presented to its view, as certainly as the organ of sight in its functions.—Knowledge, to it, is light and aliment. Whoever reads, exercises this visual organ of the soul. The thoughts of the writer, or the facts of the narrative are before the mind—they are received into the soul and affect it in the manner, or in the degree that dulness or quickness of apprehension—stupidity or sensibility—a slumbering or an awakened conscience—carnal or spiritual affections—admit of its being affected. Whoever waits upon God in institutions of divine worship with attention, exercises this same faculty of the soul, while it contemplates the rich display of heavenly and spiritual objects made in the word of God and in other holy ordinances. These the mind perceives, these it also introduces into the soul and there awakens and brings into exercise those many sensations which grace, tincturing the natural faculties, enables it to produce. Whoever pauses for a little to behold the wonderful works of God in creation, on the earth beneath, or in the firmament above, then too, exercises this faculty while he con-

siders their beauty, variety, extent and magnificence, and in that exercise of the soul introduces such a representation of them as to awaken delight, admiration, reverence and awe. Like the eye, it must be directed to, and rest upon, the objects to be contemplated—like the eye, it is the inlet of these objects to the soul—and like the eye, too, it must be cleared of every film to discern them clearly and to advantage.

To recommend the cultivation and improvement of this faculty of the soul, and its direction to such objects as will secure its advantages in true religion, is the object of these few thoughts. And surely if we consider for a little the singular beauty and excellence of the organ of sight in our bodily organization and constitution, and the eminent place it holds there, we must be sensible of its great value and ought to entertain a deep sense of our obligations, on that account, to Him “who formed the eye” and endowed us with an organ so essential to our security and enjoyment. How much more then ought we to be impressed with our obligations in this respect, if we consider that the one is temporary and limited, set in a frail and decaying body, is for the most part conversant with the things of the present life, and is soon to be closed in death, and enveloped in the long darkness of the grave—but the other is a faculty pertaining to an immortal soul, is capable of being conversant with the past, present and future, to dart its glance far into the regions of distant creation, to behold the wonderful doings of an invisible God, and to contemplate the destinies of eternity. This is an eye which shall never be closed—it has awakened to perceptions which it can never lose—the wide range of Jehovah’s doings in wisdom, in power, in wrath or in mercy, it must forever see, and in seeing them introduce into the soul such apprehensions of them as at length to excite, in a degree the most intense, all the sensations of transport, felicity, or horror and wretchedness without end. Of how much moment then, and how great the obligations to give such a direction to, and make such an improvement of, the intellectual powers of the soul as shall glorify the Creator and tend to our lasting security and advantage.

The great field of contemplation is spread before us in the ample volumes of creation, providence and revelation. These are classed together, for they have never been separated in the Church of God. Often, indeed, they have been torn asunder, to the disparagement or rejection of one or of the other, according as the profane contempt of infidelity, or the crude perceptions of professed believers, have actuated the judgments of men. An infidel denies divine revelation, and pre-

tends to derive all religious principles from creation and from providence, as these are discerned by the light of human reason. And, unhappily, men have professed to submit to divine revelation, who have weakly impugned the glorious discoveries of the Being and attributes of God as these are given in the works of creation and providence. Perhaps it may be just, although it may be thought too severe, to assert that both have equally erred, and that the very same principle of impiety has in each case led to results so extremely different: as the radii of a circle start from the same centre though they continue to diverge as they advance. For in truth the very same infinite, eternal and immutable Being, whose power and godhead are disclosed to all intelligent beings in the works of creation, is He, and only He, whose arm is displayed in Providence, and whose voice is heard in his word. And He, who speaks in the volume of divine revelation, is He, and only He, who "laid the foundations of the earth, who spread abroad the heavens" with all their host of shining orbs, and who yet, as He has done in all ages, "upholds all things by the word of his power." The first and earliest discoveries of the glory of God were made to man by the stupendous works of creation and the movements of divine Providence—the first and earliest intimations of divine revelation to man in his state of innocency were from that Being so revealed—the first and earliest intimations of the revealed mercy of God were so exhibited as to proceed evidently from the same source from which all creation had derived its existence; and the mysteries of divine revelation, as they were developed in the steps of divine Providence, and the successive and finished discoveries of the Holy Scriptures, have all their importance from their being the revelations of the Creator of heaven and earth. Let not the pretensions of a crude and ignorant faith, and the arrogance of daring and avowed infidelity presume to separate what God, in all his ways, has so constantly united.

In truth one great object of divine revelation has ever been to recall men from a foolish and stupid idolatry, more gross, or more refined, to the knowledge and acknowledgment of the Creator of heaven and earth. For four thousand years the weekly Sabbath called the Church to contemplate, in the glorious mirror which creation presents, the being and perfections of that God who "in six days made heaven and earth, the seas and all they contain, and rested the seventh day;" and to behold in the structure of the heavens, the vast spectacle which was spread before all created intelligences—the materials to strengthen her faith. "The Lord, the everlasting God,

the Creator of the heavens and the earth, fainteth not neither is weary." The souls of the truly faithful, refreshed with the repose of that holy and instructive day, and elevated with the sublime and magnificent discoveries of the majesty of the throne of God, and of his dominion and power displayed in these astonishing works, would the more clearly perceive how justly it is attributed to Him, that "he weighs the mountains in scales and the hills in balances, that all nations are before him as nothing, or as the dust in the balance." "By faith," true, unfeigned, intelligent faith, "we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which do appear." Hence it is that the faith of the Church has been eminently fixed upon a Being, whose prerogative it is "to call the things that are not as though they were," and to glorify Him, "the invisible things of whom are," in creation, "clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and godhead." Hence the unutterable, the inconceivable condescension of the Most High rises upon the soul, when in these vast and glorious works of his hand it discovers some glimmerings of Him, of whom the very light, with which he is clothed as a garment, serves to conceal his absolute perfection from man. "When I consider *thy* heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars which thou hast ordained, then say I, what is man that thou art mindful of him, or the son of man thou shouldst visit him." From all which it appears that results, intimately connected with the glory of God, and the improvement, security and happiness of man, flow from a proper consideration of the system of creation; that it is no way inconsistent with the authority or dignity of the Holy Scriptures; and that it is indeed a just and appropriate tribute of reverence to Him who is the author both of the works of creation, and of divine revelation so to "magnify his work which men behold."

It is evidently therefore an appropriate application of the intellectual powers of the soul, to be employed in the acquisition of such knowledge as shall extend our acquaintance with the perfections of God in the wonders of creation. How consistent this is with true religion has already been seen. But it is objected that great scientific attainments have been usually attended with infidelity, and that both individuals and nations, who have been eminent in natural science, have also been distinguished for infidelity. The objection is not so formidable in reality as it is in appearance: and is in part false as it regards the fact. There have been men eminent for science,



whose enlarged and elevated minds have explored the wonderful discoveries of the divine glory in the system of creation, who have referred all their knowledge and attainments to the same Being whose glory is displayed in the Holy Scriptures. To them, the magnificent and sublime science of astronomy, and various other departments of natural philosophy, have appeared to lay open more fully, the infinite wisdom, the wonderful power, the goodness and majesty of God, and to increase the splendour of his mercy in Christ Jesus, by disclosing more fully the glory of its author. In them, natural science was productive of no infidelity; it confirmed, expanded, and enlightened their faith, and raised in their professed esteem, the worth of the Holy Scriptures. And if there have been men, whose darkened understandings have seen no divine hand in the structure of the heavens and the earth, and whose limited capacity could not rise to the contemplation of His eternal power and godhead, so visibly and clearly displayed, what shall be said in reply to the fact, that men also are found who have before them the bright beams of divine revelation, and yet disown it and declare they see nothing there of the invisible majesty of the only, true and everlasting God? If it be further objected that great numbers, that a large majority, of those who have all the advantages of natural science, are nevertheless abandoned to the delusions of infidelity, what shall be said, when it is also evident that multitudes, that a great majority, of those who have the Holy Scriptures, are living in avowed and practical infidel rejection of their authority? And that even of those who profess to receive them in part or in whole as an inspired revelation from heaven, multitudes, nay we have reason to apprehend, a large majority, do not see their truth, discern the glory of their author, or truly and effectually improve their discoveries to man? Must we not admit that in both cases, the guilt is incurred of holding the truth in unrighteousness? That in both cases the sin is precisely the same, and is the effect of the vitiated and depraved condition and character of fallen man. In the one case his eyes are not opened to behold the glory of God in the works of creation; in the other they are closed against the glory of the same God in the records of revelation. But how vain is it in the one case to make the infidelity of man an objection to the aid and light of natural science, when it is in the other an equal objection to the authority of divine revelation. In each case the sin is the same, is against the same God, and attended with the same doom in <sup>the</sup> wrath of God which is revealed from heaven against *all* ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who hold the truth in unrighteousness."

There exists therefore no reasonable objection against the application of the mind to the consideration of the works of God as they are spread before us in the fabric of heaven and earth. And to this end it must be lawful to avail ourselves of all the advantages which science can afford. If the heathen kingdom of Tyre contributed to the materials and the rearing of the building of the temple of the true God in Judea, let it not be accounted unreasonable that Religion shall avail herself, in her public and social, or in her individual interests, of the aids of science, and make it minister as an handmaid in the temple of truth, rearing in the soul to the glory of Jehovah. It is true indeed that all have not, amidst the multifarious avocations and duties of human life, the time to devote to such pursuits. But many have more than they give, and many, who have both the time and the intellectual endowments adapted to such acquirements, are hindered from attending to them by remaining unacquainted with their value. Let such especially be earnestly adjured to lay aside their misapprehensions and most groundless prejudices, and be assured that the cultivation of their minds with the knowledge of God's works, is an employment most becoming a rational and immortal being. In them they will see the radiance of the divine majesty and glory of Jesus Christ, beaming forth more and more conspicuously in the orbs that shine in the firmament of heaven and in the whole system of nature, whose author He is; and will find all true science, while kept under the discipline of true religion, most subservient to their moral improvement here; and their knowledge of that God whose glory they will certainly behold hereafter. In a future number it will be attempted to exhibit more in detail the immediate practical benefits resulting from such an application of the mind, and then the advantages of combining with such pursuits the study of revealed truth, as this last is essential to man's eternal salvation and happiness.

H. Q.

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The following Memoir of a much beloved and very valuable minister of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, was prepared by the Reformed Presbytery of Pittsburgh, of which he was a member, and entered on its records as a tribute to his worth. It is the wish of the Presbytery that it appear in "The Reformed Presbyterian."

T. S.

## MEMOIR OF THE REV. JOHN CANNON.

Among the tokens by which God expresses his displeasure at the sin of his Church, the removal, by death, of her "*pre-*

*cious sons,*" is worthy of special notice. "The righteous perisheth, and no man layeth it to heart; and merciful men are taken away; none considering, that the righteous is taken away from the evil to come." Those that "know the rod and who hath appointed it," will not fail to cry for help in such a time of need. "Help, Lord, for the godly man ceaseth, for the faithful fail from among the children of men." In proportion to the usefulness of an instrument, and the importance of the station which he occupied, will be the weight of the loss sustained by his removal. The fall of a general, or the fainting of a standard bearer, is always a severer public calamity, than the slaughter of many subalterns or private soldiers.

To observe and record the dispensations of divine providence, and mark "the signs of the times," is the Church's incumbent duty, and will be to her a profitable exercise. When her Lord addresses her in the language of affliction, she should attentively hearken, and wisely improve his admonitions. When he sees need to remove an under shepherd, let the flock learn to cleave with stronger faith to Jesus, "the Shepherd and Bishop of their souls."

"The memory of the just is blessed." Yes, though he be brought "to the house appointed for all living," and his dust be mingled with the clods of the valley, yet his name and memory will be cherished, with fond affection, by the godly in succeeding generations. Gratitude to her living Head, as well as due respect for his ambassadors when their warfare is accomplished, requires the Church to record her testimony to their faithfulness.

The Reformed Presbytery of Pittsburgh, is, in the providence of God, called on to perform this melancholy, though dutiful task. One of its members, **REV. JOHN CANNON**, is no more. The Lord, who does all things well, has dismissed his servant from his station in the church militant, and called him, there is good reason to believe, to enter on the enjoyment of the rich reward of grace, in the church triumphant.

It is not our design to give a lengthy or labored eulogy on the character of our departed brother. We wish merely to record a few facts, to save from oblivion, by handing down to posterity, a brief history of this minister of Christ, whose praise is in the churches.

Rev. John Cannon was born Nov. 19th, 1784, in the town of Dungiven, Derry County, Ireland. His parents were in the full communion of the Presbyterian Church. On emigrating to this country with their whole family in 1788, they settled in Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania; and owing to

their dissatisfaction with the use of human psalmody in the worship of God in the Presbyterian Church, they left her communion and joined the Associate Reformed Church under the pastoral care of Rev. Mr. Jamison. John, who was their youngest child, evinced, in early life, an inclination and capacity for learning. Under private teachers he made some progress, and afterwards he entered Jefferson College where he graduated in September, 1810, receiving the degree of A. B. The honorary degree of A. M. was afterwards conferred on him by the same institution. In the autumn of 1811, he commenced the study of theology under Rev. Samuel B. Wylie, then professor of theology in the seminary of the Reformed Presbyterian Church. May 23, 1815, he was licensed by the Philadelphia Presbytery to preach the everlasting gospel. Having accepted a call from the congregation of Greensburgh and vicinity, he was ordained Sept. 16, 1816, to the office of the holy ministry, and settled its pastor. There he continued to labor with considerable success in the reformation cause, till his death, which took place Feb. 2, 1836.

At a meeting of the Synod in 1821, he was appointed to visit the Church in South Carolina, to aid in settling some difficulties which existed in that quarter. This mission he performed, and of the success of it, he has left the following account in his own hand writing:

"April 3, 1822. I went by an appointment of Synod, on a commission to South Carolina, where I met with Mr. Lusk, my fellow commissioner. There, in five weeks, Christ, by us, settled all disputes in that part of our church, rectified disorders, ordained Messrs. Maddan and H. M' Millan, administered the Lord's supper, and organized the Southern Presbytery. By God's blessing, I arrived safely at home on the 8th of June."

His pastoral labors were blessed to his flock. In about six years after his settlement, at his own request, the people of his charge were divided into two distinct congregations. Over one of these he remained as pastor, devoting his time, strength and talents, to the advancement of their spiritual interests. His zeal for his master's glory, and his desire to profit the souls of men, prompted him to undergo fatigue and exposure, even contrary to the dictates of worldly prudence. Neither ashamed of the gospel, nor weary of the cross of Christ, he sought opportunities of exhibiting the precious truths, and inculcating the sacred duties, presented in divine revelation.

For a number of years before his death, he labored under a disease of the liver. From this cause, he was at times quite unwell. Fatigue and exposure increased the disease. Still,

while at all able, he refused to desist from preaching. To a member of his presbytery, who had written him, suggesting the propriety of ceasing his public labors for a little, till his health would be restored and confirmed, he replied, in a letter, dated Feb. 12, 1835, as follows: "God has again restored me to a comfortable measure of health, except that I have at present contracted a cold. My health was not injured by my attempts to preach. Friends have said that I have exposed myself too much in preaching. But, dear brother, I am persuaded that I have been too remiss in ministerial duty, and I think that my affliction has been more for this than for any other cause."

On the last Sabbath of August, 1835, he dispensed the sacrament of the supper in one branch of his congregation. So impaired was his health, that he was able to preach but little during the solemnity. This was the last of his public labors. He became greatly debilitated. The disease exhibited symptoms of dropsy. Medical skill was employed in vain. Death had received his commission. His earthly house of this tabernacle gradually dissolved, until, the immortal occupant being gone, it crumbled into ruins, and dust returned to dust.

He seemed to have clear views of his "acceptance in the Beloved." To his near friends he expressed himself in language of strong faith in the only Saviour. That Jesus whom he preached to others, did not fail himself in the hour of trial. Having committed his spirit to the God of truth, he confidently trusted him with his family and flock. Frequently and fervently did he, in solemn prayer, commend them to him in whom he believed. Their loss is his gain. He is gone to his father's house, to join the innumerable company, which are within the rainbow that surrounds the throne.

Of the distinctive principles of Reformed Presbyterians, he was an able and consistent advocate. Being persuaded of their truth, he embraced them, while at Jefferson College. In doing so he had to forego prospects and opportunities of worldly aggrandizement, that are full of attractions to the youthful and aspiring mind. But this was to him no sacrifice. An offer of preferment to a post of honor and profit, made about the time of his quitting college, he decidedly refused, "esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than earthly treasures." His whole after life demonstrated the sincerity of his attachment to the Reformation cause. During the trials of the church occasioned by the instability and defection of some of her ministers, he exerted an extensive and salutary influence. When the crisis arrived he was found at his post. His elec-

tion to the Moderator's chair at the important Synod of 1833, shows the high estimation in which he was held by his brethren. To the principles and practices of the church his attachment continued unabated till the day of his death.

Shortly after his settlement in Greensburgh, he was married to Martha, eldest daughter of Robert Brown, a member of his Session. By her he had eight children, the youngest of whom was born about two weeks before his death. All these with their amiable mother survive him. By them his death is severely felt and deeply lamented.

In his disposition was united firmness of purpose with the greatest amiability of manners. He possessed a noble generosity of spirit. His friendship was warm and sincere. His zeal was prudent and uniform. These qualities with others rendered him esteemed and useful as a neighbor, father, pastor, and presbyter. His mode of preaching might be called diffuse. He did not always tie himself down to systematic discussion, but frequently would follow a train of ideas, whether doctrinal or practical, beyond the limits of a regular plan. In this perhaps, at least in part, consisted his aptness to teach, a qualification which he undoubtedly possessed. He had a happy turn for managing difficult cases of discipline. During nineteen years of pastoral labor, there was neither appeal nor reference from his session to a superior court.

In person he was about middle size. His form was proportionate and straight. His complexion, hair and eyes, were dark. His countenance was grave, expressive and pleasing. Such was the man, whose memory will long be savory to his brethren, and with whose bereaved family and congregation the Presbytery tenderly sympathize.

His remains lie in the burying ground in the village of New Alexandria, and, over his grave, private friendship has placed a stone bearing the following appropriate inscription :

“And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever.” Dan. xii. 3.

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REPORT OF COMMITTEE ON CORRESPONDENCE WITH AMERICA,  
*Adopted by the Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church in Scotland,\* as declaratory of their views on the application of their principles to the British and American Governments.*

1. It is still matter of deep regret that our correspondence with the sister Church in America should be directed to its di-

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\* This Report was adopted also by the Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church in Ireland, at its sessions held a few months after the meeting of the Scottish Synod.

visions, rather than to its union and progress in the great cause in which they and we have now been so long united. The circumstance of there being on our table a recent communication from only one of the sections into which the Reformed Presbyterian Church has been divided, prevents us from entering fully into the subject, and from giving a final declaration of our sentiments. At the same time, our affectionate concern for the union of our American brethren with one another, and with us, in the cause of truth, will not permit us to remain altogether silent. We express our sentiments from the documents already before us.

2. The Synod are most solicitous to perpetuate ecclesiastical union with their American brethren, on the ground upon which this union has been formed and hitherto maintained. They and we have agreed not only in general principles respecting Magistracy, *but in the particular application of these principles* to our several existing institutions. It is unnecessary to remind our brethren of the protest against the civil constitution of these realms under which the Reformed Presbyterian Church in Britain has been formed, and of the practical separation which we have endeavored to maintain. Of the application of our general principles in this country, our brethren in America have expressed their approbation, as many of them had done before they left the country of their fathers. The Synod have always understood that there *was a similar application* of our general principles to the *American civil institutions, particularly to the federal government.* Against its participation in the system of slavery, against the absence in it of any recognition of Christianity, or even of a Deity, and against the promiscuous admission into its offices of persons, irrespectively of moral and scriptural qualification, our brethren in America had faithfully testified, and upon this footing had maintained a distinct ecclesiastical standing among the American churches. The Synod are assured of this, not only from the correspondence and writings of individuals, but from the authorised exposition of her views by the Church herself, and from her well-known practice. Upon this footing, the Reformed Presbyterian Churches in Europe and America were united, and their members, in the intercourse obtaining between the countries, had readily made a similar application of their general principles to the respective civil institutions of both countries, as Providence cast their lot; our brethren assuming the ground of the American Church, in this particular, when they emigrated to the United States, and as readily resuming the same ground with us, when they returned to Europe.

3. The Synod deem it still their duty to maintain the same standing with regard to the civil constitution of Britain, and to act consistently with their dissent and protest; and they regard the same thing to be obligatory upon the church in America, according to her circumstances. The reason of this, in both cases, is the immorality essentially connected with the respective civil constitutions. The immorality, indeed, is not the same in both cases, but in both it is of such a magnitude as to require and justify separation, on the footing of a testimony. The Synod regard Magistracy as founded upon the law of nature, the moral law, and as being the ordinance of God, commanding obedience, for conscience sake, only when erected and administered according to this law. The law of nature which defines the rights and duties of man, is fully ascertained in the revealed moral law. The republication of this law in the Scriptures is accompanied with seals of its divine authority, imposing an indispensable obligation upon the individuals and the communities to whom it is made known, to acknowledge and obey it, and constituting the rejection of it, a heinous immorality. In the Holy Scriptures, precepts are addressed to civil society and its rulers, with all the authority of God, and of Jesus Christ, his High Plenipotentiary. A community enjoying revelation as the people of the United States have done, and refusing to acknowledge it, and promoting to legislative, judicial, and executive power, persons destitute of the qualifications it prescribes, acts an immoral part. The circumstance of the moral law being revealed in the Scriptures, does not found this law upon grace; nor is magistracy founded upon grace, when placed under the regulation of the clearly revealed moral law; or when, in connection with a special dispensation of mercy, it is put under the feet of the "head of all principality and power." The moral law defines the rights of man with certainty, and makes the best provision for human happiness; and the Christian system does not interfere with the obligation of the moral law, otherwise than clearly to reveal and powerfully to enforce it. The law is established by faith. The Synod cannot regard the non-recognition of the law of God, on the part of men forming themselves into a commonwealth, in the circumstances in which America is placed, in any other light than that of a *great immorality in which no enlightened Christian should participate*, and against which he ought to testify. This immorality is not to be concealed from our view, nor palliated by its apparent negative character. Where Christianity is rejected amidst the light of its evidence, there exists a positive opposition to God and to Christ,



which is equally incompatible with duty to God and true philanthropy. On these accounts, the Synod has abstained from all direct acknowledgment of authority constituted upon immoral principles. They owe this to God to testify to his honor; they owe it to themselves that they may not be partakers in the guilt; and they owe it to their neighbor to reclaim society from a state which is offensive to God and liable to his displeasure. They are thus constrained to make a practical application of their principles. There are thousands of professing Christians in our land, of estimable character, who assent most cordially to our general principles, who do not see it to be their duty to take the ground of a public testimony and practical separation, which we have assumed. By incorporating with the civil constitution, and recognising it as the moral ordinance of God, we would at once lose our distinctive standing, relinquish our testimony, and condemn and undo the faithful contendings of our fathers, from the time of the first erection of our church.

4. The Synod do not find themselves inclined, or able, or warranted, to interfere with the details of the unhappy dispute in which their brethren have been involved, or with the ecclesiastical proceedings which have been adopted. They have recommended, and they still earnestly recommend, to their brethren, mutual submission and conciliation in the spirit of the gospel. The Synod consider that there were evils essentially connected with the government of the United States which justified the American church in refusing to acknowledge it as the moral ordinance of God, and that these evils continue, and require the same public testimony and practical course of conduct. On this ground they have been united with the American brethren in ecclesiastical fellowship. They cast an eye of affectionate concern over the great ocean that rolls between them and their brethren, solicitous to find them occupying the ground they had decisively assumed, and so honourably maintained. They *cannot* regard the acknowledgment of the American government as the moral ordinance of God, and those practical connections with it, which *imply* this acknowledgment, *to be consistent with the testimony in which the Reformed Presbyterian Churches in Britain and the United States have been united.* They beseech their brethren to hold fast their profession, for they cannot endure the thought of the American brethren being separated from one another, or from them. By the authority and excellence of the grand principles of truth, and by the bonds in which the Churches, in the two quarters of the world, have been connected, they entreat

their brethren to remain united, faithful and steadfast. They beseech their brethren abroad to raise and maintain a faithful standard, to gather and unite the brethren from Europe that are every year thronging to their shores. For the sake, also, of the Church in Europe, endeavouring, in midst of agitation and trial, to contend for the Redeemer's inheritance of the nations, they pray them to encourage their hearts and strengthen their hands, that they may hold fast to the end, and finish their testimony in the last days of the Antichrist. Remember the brotherly covenant. They wait for a renewed assurance that you continue steadfast, immovable, abounding in the work of the Lord. They live if ye stand fast in the Lord. They shall joy to behold, as heretofore, your order, and the steadfastness of your faith in Christ. And for the sake of their brethren themselves, they beseech them, after having been honoured of God to plant in the American soil the germ of the Reformation, in its civil bearings, not to abandon it when it is taking root. They or their posterity may yet see its buddings, growth, fruit, and shadow, prove a blessing of the highest order, to their vast and growing Empire.

WM. MACLACHLAN, *Modr.*

A. M. ROGERSON, *Syn. Clerk.*

TO THE PATRONS OF THE PROPOSED "CAMERONIAN."

*Dear Brethren,*—Not having obtained a sufficient subscription to enable me to prosecute the publication you were pleased to patronize, and perceiving that a brother who has greater opportunities, and more leisure for conducting a Periodical, than the subscriber, has consented to undertake one, I have transferred my subscription to him in hopes that the relinquishment of my proposed work in his favor will meet with your entire approbation; and though the price be somewhat higher than your subscription contemplated, yet I trust the additional number of pages, and superior variety of interesting matter will more than counterbalance the difference in price. With feelings of gratitude for your kind and liberal patronage,  
I remain yours truly, C. B. M'KEE.

Thankful to the Rev. Mr. M'Kee for the kindness above expressed, and desirous to obtain for the "Reformed Presbyterian" the patronage given to the "Cameronian," subscribers to the latter work are respectfully solicited to give their names to any of the Agents of the former, or send them to M. Roney, at Newburgh, N. Y. Agents for the "Cameronian," by acting for the "Reformed Presbyterian," will confer a favor that will be gratefully acknowledged by the  
EDITOR.

## ECCLESIASTICAL STATISTICS.

The annexed table gives the statistics of the religious denominations and heretical sects in the United States as nearly as information, at present accessible, furnishes data for computation. It accords, generally, with the statements of judicious Geographers and Gazetteers. What a melancholy view of the state of religion in this country does it present! After making large allowance for the members attached as adherents to the various denominations and sects, about two millions are left, who put in no claim to any religious belief. The most liberal judgment, that can be formed in the exercise of that charity which "rejoiceth in the truth," must exclude from the pale of the Christian Church, all that are ranked as sects in the enumeration. Of the denominations mentioned, Episcopalians, Lutherans, Methodists, United Brethren and Cumberland Presbyterians are Arminian in sentiment. A majority of the General Assembly and Congregationalists are Pelagian, Arminian, or Hopkinsian. Thus, of the whole number of inhabitants in this "land of churches and bibles," about one seventh are avowedly infidel. Of the remainder a large proportion have no genuine claim to Christianity. Those whose claims may be admitted, differ greatly in sentiment; a majority of them holding opinions that have been condemned as heretical by the Church in her purest times. They are not all Israel that are of Israel. Besides, the Church of God is divided into sections—the beauty of her unity marred, and her energies crippled by division. Zion's breach is wide as the sea. Her walls tell of her woes. Blame rests somewhere; and it is safe to say, they are most chargeable who depart farthest from the truth.

Denominations.	Ministers.	Cong.	Com'ts.	Sects.	Preachers.	Cong't'ns.	Membs.
Reform'd Presbyterians	25	34	4300	Unitarians	149	170	15000
Associate Church	80	160	16500	Swedenborgians	29	33	—
Associate Reformed	90	165	17000	Quakers	—	450	—
General Assembly	1300	2170	173350	Christians	300	800	32000
Dutch Reformed	159	194	21000	Free Com. Baptists	35	—	3500
German Reformed	120	400	40000	Free Will do.	300	370	16000
Congregationalists	1000	1250	150000	Seventh Day do.	30	40	2000
Culvinistic Baptists	2950	4400	320000	Six Principle do.	25	30	1800
Cumberland Presby'ns	69	80	9000	Mennonite do.	200	250	30000
Episcopalians	520	635	72000	Junkers	40	40	3000
Lutherans	212	800	50000	Shakers	45	16	—
Methodist Episcopal	1900	—	440070	Universalists	150	300	—
Associate and other Meth.	350	—	35000	Papists	—	1270	219000
United Brethren	23	23	2000				

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EXPOSITION OF ROMANS VIII. 1—4.

ONE excellency of the word of God is the peculiar fitness with which its various parts are adapted to each other. When one alarms the sinner by announcing the danger to which he is exposed, another shews the way in which he may escape. When one awakens fears in the mind of a believer, on account of transgressions committed, another allays his apprehensions by presenting the safety secured to all God's people. When one declares that "judgment came upon all men to condemnation," another meets the case by "he that believeth shall not come into condemnation." A striking exemplification of this excellency is furnished in the 7th and 8th chapters of this epistle. The Apostle describes the power of indwelling sin—a source of great uneasiness to the believer—saying "I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Chap. VII. 23, 24. Knowing that the uneasiness which he experienced from the power of corruption was, in greater or less degree, common to all the people of God; that the struggle between the law in the members and that of the mind, was felt by every regenerate man; and that these, with other things, often occasioned disquietude in believers' minds, he shews in the 8th chapter the security of all that are united to Jesus Christ, their spiritual Head. Thus an antidote to all the fears occasioned by sin, satan or the world—by things present or things to come, is presented in the assurance that they shall not all be "able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." At the same time the necessity of perseverance in Godliness is pressed by the consideration that only such as

walk after the Spirit can avail themselves of this consolation, or have evidence of participation in the promised security. To each of these thoughts the mind is directed in the first verse of the passage under consideration: "*There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.*"

This conclusion the Apostle draws from the whole argument, managed with so much ability in the preceding chapters of the epistle. Having clearly demonstrated that the ground of justification is not obedience to the light of nature, as the Gentiles contended; nor the deeds of the law of Moses, as the Jews maintained, but the imputed righteousness of Christ alone; and having proved the restoration of the person justified to God's favor, he affirms the freedom from condemnation of all them that are in Christ. The elect are in him *federally* as represented in him their Head, in the covenant of grace. This however is not the sense of the Apostle here; for the elect, though *thus in Christ*, "are *by nature* the children of wrath, even as others." "He that believeth not is condemned already." Ingrafting into Christ, or union to him, by saving faith is the meaning of the phrase.

The truth and nature of this union are strikingly presented in Scripture. "I am the vine, ye are the branches." Joh. xv. 5. "Ye are the body of Christ and members in particular." 1 Cor. xii. 27. "We are members of his body, of his flesh and of his bones." Eph. v. 30. "As thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us." Joh. xvii. 21. Believers are married to Christ, in which relation two become one flesh. To them thus united there is no condemnation.

Condemnation is a judicial declaration of guilt and sentence to punishment. They who hold the doctrine of eternal justification, necessarily teach, by maintaining such an error, that the elect never were condemned; for, if justified from eternity, they must, from eternity, have been free from condemnation. No sentiment is farther from the truth. "By the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation." Rom. v. 18. The elect are "*by nature* the children of wrath, even as others." This error is based on the maintenance of another equally fatal and untrue, viz: that the elect are justified through Christ's righteousness, simply as it is theirs *legally* or *federally*. Opposed to this opinion is the declaration "He that believeth not is condemned already." And also—"We have believed that we might be justified." All have, for sin, been condemned; and every one continues under the sentence until it is removed in the act of justification. In this act all the believ-

er's sins, past, present and to come, are freely and fully forgiven. The cause of condemnation being removed, the sentence has no longer a place. It is cancelled, never to be renewed. This, however, does not imply freedom from sin as an indwelling principle. "There is not a just man that liveth here and sinneth not." The Apostle still found a law in his members, bringing him into captivity to the law of sin. Hence he does not say there is nothing deserving condemnation in them that are in Christ Jesus. Sin that is condemnable remains in them as long as life remains; but Christ, by his obedience to the law, satisfied all its demands on their behalf. For them he rendered an atonement to offended justice. His righteousness—always meritorious—is theirs, and is everlasting. Believing in him they "shall not come into condemnation." Evidence of this is furnished in their after character and conduct. "*Who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.*"

Flesh, when contrasted with Spirit, signifies in the scriptures, indwelling sin or corruption, that principle which produces carnal, fleshly lusts and sensual appetites. Spirit denotes the principles of grace, wrought in the soul by the operations of the Holy Ghost. These are contrary the one to the other; the flesh lusting against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh. They consequently lead their respective followers in different ways. Those who are led by the one, travel in the paths where carnal gratifications are to be found—the paths that lead to death. They who follow the other, being in search of spiritual enjoyments, go in the ways of God, in which the Spirit leads to life and blessedness. The language is figurative, denoting the manner of life. To walk after the flesh is to be guided by the principles of corrupt nature. To walk after the Spirit is to be influenced by his counsel and regulated in our conduct by the direction of God's word. They that are in Christ, though not entirely freed, until the end of their days, from the flesh, its affections and its lusts, are not habitually governed by its dictates, do not follow it as a guide, nor delight in the course of sin, which it points out. On the contrary, they give themselves up to the Spirit's direction, earnestly desiring to be obedient to his commands, to be led by his influence and to be strengthened by his assistance, that they may hold on their course with joy. Let it be remarked, this walk does not procure union to Jesus Christ. It flows from and gives evidence of being in him. It is not the cause why any are freed from condemnation; but is descriptive of the persons interested in this privilege. They, as others, were naturally inclined to walk after the flesh only.

Sin reigned unto death in their members; and it required an Almighty agency to change their course and rescue them from their condition. This was found, not in themselves, but in the Spirit's quickening influence: "*For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.*"

Different interpretations have been given of "the law of the Spirit, &c." There is evidently a contrast between it and "the law of sin and death." Ascertaining the meaning of the latter will assist in determining the signification of the former. In the 23d verse of the preceding chapter the Apostle says—"I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin," and in the next verse—"Who shall deliver me from the body of this death." A comparison of this passage with the one under consideration evidences the law in the members to be the same with the law of sin and death. He calls it the law of sin, and groans to be delivered from it as a body of death. Here he says he was made free from the law of sin and death. The law in the members undoubtedly means corruption of nature, elsewhere said to "work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death." "The law of sin and death" therefore denotes corruption of nature. This is often contrasted with the grace of the Spirit. "I find a law in my members warring against the law of my mind." "Ye are not in the flesh but in the Spirit." "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit." Indeed, so common is this contrast, that, in the Epistolary writings, mention is seldom made of the one without the other. The law of the Spirit of life then signifies the principles of grace implanted in the renewed soul. This interpretation is in conformity to the general tenor of scripture. No other so agrees with the context. It accords with the last clause of the preceding verse, and strictly with verse 13th. "For if ye live after the flesh ye shall die, but if ye, through the Spirit, do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live."

Grace is fitly denominated a *law* because of its commanding influence and governing power:—the law of the Spirit of life, as he has life in himself, quickens them that are dead in trespasses and sins, and invigorates their life by his vivifying influence. This is "in Christ Jesus," inasmuch as his obedience, death and intercession are the ground thereof. This law delivers believers from the reigning influence and controlling power of sin, and frees them from spiritual and eternal death; so that they shall never be condemned. The means by which this was effected is presented in the next verse. "*For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the*

*flesh, God sending his own Son, in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh."*

The moral law is primarily intended, which could free the sinner, neither from the guilt nor the power of sin. It convinces of sin, it condemns for sin, but cannot condemn sin. Being unable to justify the sinner, it is of course unable to free him from condemnation. The reason assigned is weakness, not in itself, not because of any defect in the law, but *through the flesh*. Man having broken the law, it, as a covenant of works, contained no provision for him. Having become unable to obey its precepts, it could impart no power, could render no assistance. The business of a law is not to make men honest, virtuous, &c. It prescribes the rule of action and denounces a penalty in case of transgression. The law of God does not free men from the commission of sin, nor from sin committed. It makes known the rule of duty and presents the sentence of condemnation due to the violation of its precepts. Through the flesh, therefore, it is weak, the sinner, by reason of corruption, being unable to keep it. It has no power to condemn sin.

As the law was inadequate to man's necessity, God sent his own Son to do what it could not effect. Moved with infinite compassion for the fallen, impotent, condemned sinner, to whom the law could afford no assistance, He laid help upon one who is mighty. In the fulness of time he *sent* him into the world, being every way qualified to do what the law through weakness could not accomplish. He was sent *in the likeness of sinful flesh*. The idea is not that Christ assumed a mere appearance of human nature; for he "was made of a woman." "The word was made flesh and dwelt among us." Nor that he took upon him the *sinfulness* of flesh; for he "was holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners." The phrase expresses the reality of his incarnation and shews his assumption of true and proper humanity—the nature of them that had sinned. Truly he was sent in the *likeness* of sinful flesh; for he was born of a woman, numbered with transgressors, subjected to the pains, infirmities and miseries, occasioned by sin, and made to endure the punishment which it merited. Being the surety of the elect, their iniquities were laid on him. For their transgressions he was answerable, and at his hand avenging justice exacted satisfaction. In the likeness of sinful flesh he was sent, and sent *for sin*. This may be understood either literally, or as a sin-offering. In the former sense, the meaning is that on account of sin he came. Though the eternal love of God was the moving cause of the mission



of his Son, yet, had sin not existed, the Son would not have been sent. The prince who sends an army to quell an insurrection in some distant province of his empire, does so for the maintenance of his authority. But had the rebellion not existed, no expedition would have been undertaken. The philanthropist who visits the abode of some sufferer, to afford relief, is prompted by benevolence and compassion. But had there been no such suffering, he would have made no such visit. Love influenced the Father to send his Son: but sin was the reason without which the mission would neither have been planned nor executed. Since, however, a reason is assigned for this, in the following clause, it is better to understand the phrase of a sin-offering. Christ is often so spoken of. "He gave himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God." "Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many." "Who through the eternal Spirit offered himself," &c. All the sacrifices under the law typified Him, who was *sent* to make an expiation for sin by the sacrifice of himself. Thus "God sending his Son—for a sin-offering, *condemned sin in the flesh.*"

In this clause, *flesh* is put for the human nature of the Lord Jesus Christ. Human nature had sinned, and in this, sin required to be condemned. The whole man was corrupt—the understanding darkened—the will depraved—the affections alienated from holiness—and the members rendered servants of unrighteousness. Before any could be freed from condemnation for sin, it must be condemned in the nature chargeable with it. This condemnation is not simply God's disapprobation of sin, though this was hereby manifested in a remarkable degree. A law maxim is, "He that is condemned can neither accuse nor rule." The authority of such an one is null. Sin being condemned *in the flesh* of Christ the sinner's substitute, its condemning power was thereby destroyed, its dominion broken, its authority rendered void. The believer is freed from it as a law and from the death which it deserved. Though it still is found in his members and there carries on a perpetual warfare against the law of the Spirit of life, it shall never triumph. It contends only as a disarmed foe. It is but the old man, which, like the house of Saul, becomes weaker and weaker, while the principle against which it struggles increases in strength. Often indeed its power is exerted and often felt. But it has no ability to bring the believer into condemnation. All its accusations are without avail; for it is no more than a condemned malefactor. The effect of this is, "*That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us.*"

Perfect, personal and perpetual obedience is what the law had a right to demand, and what it does actually demand, of every man. Under the sanction of a heavy penalty its claims are enforced. "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them." He who fails in rendering any part of the obedience enjoined, does not fulfil its righteousness, and consequently cannot escape the sentence of condemnation. And though man by transgression lost all ability to keep the law, yet it neither lost its right to demand obedience, nor relinquished the righteousness which it required. Continuing an unchangeable, abiding rule of duty, to dispense with the smallest of its requisitions was impossible. While it was weak through the flesh, unable to condemn sin, or afford assistance to the sinner, its power to enforce obedience remained unabated. Man is not only unable to give this, but by violating the covenant of works, subjected himself to the penalty due to disobedience. It is impossible therefore that he, in his own person, or by his own exertions, can ever fulfil the righteousness of the law. He can neither meet its present claims, nor satisfy for past offences chargeable upon him because of its infraction. Hence the Apostle says, "fulfilled *in us*"—not *by us*. Christ was made under the law. In room of the elect he fulfilled it, magnifying and making it honorable. They are in time united to him by faith. Being in him, his righteousness is their righteousness and by it the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in them, both as to the satisfaction required and the obedience due.

They who maintain the sinner's natural ability to do what God requires, making his impotence to consist only in unwillingness, and they who teach that God has accommodated his law to man in his fallen state, enjoining no more upon him than he is *now* able to perform, oppose directly the sense and language of the Holy Spirit by the Apostle in this passage. If either theory were true, there would be no such weakness of the law as is here presented. The fulfilling of its righteousness is all it claims. If the sinner can do this, or if the law is accommodated to his condition, by the relinquishment of such exactions as he is unable to meet, why must its righteousness be fulfilled *in him*. On either supposition he may comply with its demands, and through compliance escape its condemnation, or procure justification. But, "by the deeds of the law no flesh living can be justified." The same reasoning applies to those who maintain that good works are meritorious, and that men can live without sin, shewing the incorrectness of their erroneous positions. The truth is, Hopkinsians and Ar-

minians avowing the above sentiments, seem not to understand the nature of the divine law as "exceeding broad," "holy, just and good:" nor the effect of transgression upon the sinner in rendering him unable and unwilling to do any thing spiritually good, or pleasing in the sight of God.

The Apostle's doctrine is equally opposed to the Antinomian scheme, which asserts the believer's freedom from the law as a rule of life. Therefore he adds in the end of the 4th verse, "*Who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit.*" This language is descriptive of those *in whom* the righteousness of the law is fulfilled. It shews that they are the same persons described in the first verse as *in Christ*, for they submit to the same direction and are led by the same guide. It also evinces the righteousness by which the law is fulfilled to be the righteousness of Christ, received by faith and imputed to those who embrace it, contrary to the explanation sometimes given of this passage, that holiness produced by the sanctifying operations of the Spirit is intended. This is never called the righteousness of the law, nor do we, by it, obtain freedom from condemnation. Justification in the order of nature precedes sanctification, is an act completed at once, and implies the fulfilment of the righteousness of the law *in the person* justified.

The whole doctrine of this passage is fraught with encouragement and consolation to believers in Christ. The mystical union between him and them is indissoluble. He is their living Head. They are members of his body. Justified freely by his righteousness, the sentence of condemnation is removed, no more to have place against them. Sin is condemned. It can no longer have dominion over them. They are not under the law as a covenant of works. Its righteousness is fulfilled in them. Made alive by the law of the Spirit of life, they are led by and walk after him—not after the flesh. To the land of uprightness he will conduct them, to be ever with the Son of God, who was "sent in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin," but is now, in that same flesh, glorified. Their bodies shall be made like unto his glorious body. Freed from sin and perfected in holiness, they shall unremittingly praise the name of Father, Son and Spirit, for the love manifested in the economy and accomplishment of that redemption, which brings glory to God and everlasting salvation to those, who through it, are freed from condemnation.

'The following "brief outline" gives evidence that the Sermon, of which it is a synopsis, was one of no common character. It was preached at the opening of the Reformed Presbyterian Synod, in Ireland, by the Moderator—the Rev. James Smyth. We at first intended a Review of this excellent, comprehensive and forcible view of Witness bearing, but we have concluded to give the document and let it speak for itself.

## BRIEF OUTLINE OF A SERMON BY REV. JAMES SMYTH.

Isaiah xliii. 10.—"Ye are my witnesses saith the Lord."

WITNESS is a term borrowed from the courts of law. It is applied to a person who gives evidence upon oath for the purpose of deciding controversies. The word translated witness or martyr, is by some derived from a word which signifies the hand, because witnesses, in former times, lifted up the hand in giving testimony upon oath. The cause of truth is on trial before the world, and those who give testimony in its favour are witnesses for God. In old Testament times, those who supported the cause of Jehovah, against the pretensions of idols, were called witnesses. In this chapter the Prophet Isaiah challenges the votaries of idols to advance proof of the divinity of their gods—to bring forward their witnesses—to defend their cause; and, in the words of the text, God calls forth his witnesses. Ye Israelites, that are called by my name, are my witnesses, and so is my servant whom I have chosen. He is the true and faithful witness. All the prophets who testified of Christ, and the great Prophet of Israel himself, are appealed to as God's witnesses.

When Jesus Christ was about to ascend to glory, he appointed his apostles to be witnesses for him in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and to the uttermost parts of the earth; and the Apostle Peter declared—"You are witnesses chosen before of God, of all things which he did both in Jerusalem and Judea." The apostles and primitive pastors were witnesses for Christ against Jewish unbelief and misrepresentation, and those who suffered death for the testimony of Jesus, rather than deny the truth, are in every age emphatically called witnesses or martyrs—"It is the cause that makes the martyr." "The witnesses are those faithful men, of whatever age, nation or church, who, during the apostacy of the Roman empire, maintain the doctrines of Christianity, and insist on their whole application to the moral order of society both in church and state; bearing their testimony against all who refuse submission to Messiah, the Prince of the kings of the earth."\*

\*See M'Leod on the Revelation.

“Ye are my witnesses saith the Lord,” is a declaration addressed to you, fathers and brethren, ministers and elders, of the church. Ye are my witnesses to give evidence for me before the world, in opposition to every species of error; testifying against corruptions in the doctrine, worship, discipline, and government of the house of God.

In illustrating the text, I shall

- I. Speak of the character of their witness-bearing.
- II. The testimony they should display.
- III. Motives and encouragements to this duty.

1. *The witness should tell the truth.*

It is requisite that he give a faithful account of what his eyes have seen, and his ears have heard; otherwise, the innocent may suffer, and the guilty escape with impunity. It is peculiarly required of the witnesses for Christ that they be faithful. They should “witness to small and great, declaring none other things than those which Moses and the prophets testified concerning Christ.”

2. *A witness must tell the whole truth.*

He should suppress no part of it. God’s witnesses are bound to give a full testimony in behalf of the truth. The Apostle John says—“That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you;” and Paul said—“I have not shunned to declare the whole counsel of God.” Nor should the minister “keep any thing back that might be profitable to his hearers.” The plan of salvation should be clearly and fully unfolded; the whole range of doctrines and duties illustrated. Not contented with dwelling on a few favourite topics, wearying the hearers with incessant repetitions, he must preach both the law and the Gospel—the law in all its extent, its reasonableness, equity, and permanent obligation; the Gospel in its simplicity, freeness and fulness. No part of the Church’s testimony should be suppressed, however unpalatable to the men of the world. The faithful contendings of the witnesses in former times should be exhibited, that others may be encouraged to walk in their steps.

3. *A witness should be consistent.*

Inconsistency invalidates the testimony. As the whole system of truth revealed in the Bible is consistent with itself, and the Spirit of God is never inconsistent with himself, so the witness for Christ is bound to exhibit a consistent testimony.

4. *Witness-bearing should be explicit.*

The witnesses for Christ should give clear and direct testimony. “To the law and to the testimony if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.”

Current opinions and practices should be brought to the test, in the most plain and pointed manner. Every system that has assumed the general name of Christianity, the witnesses should examine. There may be a profession of Christianity without Christ. All who deny the divinity and supremacy of Christ should be testified against as Christ's enemies; and against all encroachments on the royal prerogatives of Christ, his witnesses should lift up a faithful testimony.

5. *A witness should be impartial.*

Partiality vitiates the testimony of a witness among men. The witness for Christ should neither regard the frowns nor the smiles of men. The Psalmist says—"I will speak thy word to kings, and not be ashamed;" Nathan said to David—"Thou art the man;" and Azariah said to Uzziah the king—"It appertaineth not to thee, Uzziah, to offer incense, but to the priests, the sons of Aaron: go out of the sanctuary." The witnesses should keep themselves from corrupting bribes;—a gift blinds the eye and perverts judgment.

II. The testimony which the witnesses are to exhibit.

This testimony must embrace, in general, all revealed truth—the whole system of doctrines and duties contained in the Bible. I shall only specify a few particulars:—

1. *God's witnesses are to declare that he is the only living and true God, in opposition to dumb idols.*

Idolatry is peculiarly abhorrent in the eyes of Jehovah. He is a jealous God, and will not give his glory to another, nor his praise to graven images. The idolatry of ancient and modern times originated in improper views of a Mediator. The witnesses for Christ should testify not only against heathen, but Anti-Christian idolatry, Warnings against Popery are now less frequently given than in the days of our forefathers. Against all the usurpations and encroachments of the man of sin, ministers should lift up a warning voice.

2. *The unrestricted reading of the Word of God.*

The Bible is God's gift to man. It is a lamp suspended from the arch of heaven to illuminate the path of the traveller to the new Jerusalem. To interfere with the free circulation of the Word of God is as arrogant and presumptuous as to attempt to restrain the genial influences of the luminary of day. The Word of God is not bound; we should pray and struggle that it may have free course and be glorified. Expediency is substituted for duty in these eventful times. Great Britain has given its power to the Beast. To silence the clamours of Popish demagogues, the rulers of this land have, in effect, con-

sented to banish the Bible from the schools of the nation, and thus to leave the rising generation the dupes of ignorance and misrule. At such a time, the witnesses should not be silent, but lift up an uncompromising testimony for the free and unadulterated circulation of the Word of God.

3. *That the Bible should be taken as the supreme law of the land.*

The Word of God is to be taken not only as the rule of personal conduct, but as the directory of public administration. The civil rulers in Israel had a copy of the law delivered to them at their investiture with office, as their guide in all official duty. The Bible prescribes laws to kings and subjects; its sovereign authority extends alike to all. "It walks," says an able writer, "without fear into the palaces of kings; it approaches them with dignity as they sit upon their throne, and proclaims, with the tone of authority—'He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of the Lord.' It goes thence to the hall of judgment, and, with the mien of a superior, addresses the judges as they sit on the tribunal—'Ye shall not respect persons in judgment; defend the poor and the fatherless; do justice to the afflicted and needy; rid them out of the hand of the wicked.' From the courts of justice it goes out to the multitude, and proclaims their submission to every ordinance of man, for the Lord's sake."

Nations should own and obey the laws laid down in the Bible, and walk in its light—then would Sabbath profanation be suppressed, profane and impious swearing be punished, and all idolatry and heresy discountenanced—and the throne and sanctuary cleansed; then would the wicked be removed from before kings, and their thrones established in righteousness.

4. *The propriety of covenanting in New Testament times.*

Covenanting is a standing duty under every dispensation. It is founded on the law of nature, and, consequently, is of permanent obligation. The Old Testament prophets, contemplating New Testament times, predicted covenanting as a standing duty, Isa. xix. 10, 21; xlv. 5; and xlv. 23. If personal covenanting be dutiful, national covenanting is equally binding. The church is *one* in every age. The charter of her privileges—the covenant of grace, is unchangeable. Her covenant Head is the same, and her relation to this Head, as a covenant people, remains unchanged. The witnesses should declare that those moral and religious engagements into which the church entered in former times are of permanent obligation. "If it be but a man's covenant, yet if it be confirmed, no man disannulleth or addeth thereto," Gal. iii. 15. Such

were the federal deeds of our venerated forefathers. The National Covenant of Scotland stands as a grand monument to perpetuate the triumphs of true religion over Popery; and the Solemn League and Covenant is the testimony of the church and nation against Erastian encroachments and Prelatic domination. These engagements, entered into by the representatives of the nation, and being in their nature moral, as they are based on the moral law, continue binding on the nation during its social existence.

That civil contracts are binding on posterity is universally admitted. Is not society as much bound to maintain public faith in religious covenants as in civil contracts? The obligation is even stronger; for, in addition to the pledge between man and man in civil contracts, there is an explicit engagement to God, with all the solemnity of an oath, to be faithful in promoting the great work of reformation.—See Exod. xiii. 19; Deut. xxix. 15; and Mat. xxiii. 35.

#### 5. *The supremacy of Christ.*

The Scriptures abundantly declare that Christ is King in Zion, and to the ends of the earth. Jehovah says, Psalm ii.—“Yet, or notwithstanding (of the opposition of all his enemies) I have set my King upon my holy hill of Zion.” “God gave him to be Head over all things to the church;”—all persons, all blessings, and all dispensations, are put under his control. The witnesses should testify against all Erastian encroachments—all attempts to transfer the royal prerogatives of King Jesus to an earthly crown. “The glorious sovereignty of our Lord Jesus Christ, as the alone King and Head of his church, is sadly encroached upon and opposed by the royal supremacy in causes ecclesiastical. The king is acknowledged as supreme head or governor on earth of the Churches of England and Ireland. The civil sovereign is thus declared to be the head or fountain of Church power, and constituted the judge of controversies. “Henry VIII. transferred the supremacy from the Pope’s crown to his own. The Church of Scotland has also subjected and subordinated their ecclesiastical meetings to the civil power.”\*

“Cargill, in his last testimony, says—This is the magistracy I have rejected that was invested with Christ’s power; and seeing that power taken from Christ which is his glory, and made the essential of the crown, there is no distinction we can make that can free the conscience of the acknowledger from being a partaker of this sacrilegious robbing of God. By this, the fountain of Church power and authority is lodged in the

\* Act and Testimony, pages 112 and 142. Belfast edition.



king's person, and Christ is deprived of his dignity, and de-throned as Head and king of Zion."

The witnesses must faithfully contend, also, for Christ's Headship over the nations of the earth. If it be true that all power in heaven and earth is given him by the Father; that God hath highly exalted him, and given him a name above every name; that he is made Head over all things to the church; that he hath set him far above all principality and power, might and dominion; and that kings and judges of the earth are commanded to kiss the Son—then should the witnesses testify to the nations that it is their duty to swear allegiance to the "Prince of the kings of the earth."

6. *A faithful ministry and a Scriptural magistracy.*

All admit the propriety of Scripture qualifications in a Gospel ministry. Divine Revelation is equally explicit in pointing out the qualifications of the magistracy;—*ability, piety, integrity, and zeal*, are necessary qualifications for the magistrate. A due measure of Scriptural qualifications is necessary in a Gospel land; but in these covenanted lands not only Scriptural but covenant qualifications are necessary. This is the distinctive feature of our testimony at present. The witnesses in their testimony should assign this article an important place. See Exod. xviii. 21; 2 Sam. xxiii. 3; Isa. xlix. 23, and lx. 11; 2 Kings xviii. 3, 4, 7; Psalm ii. 10.

7. *A testimony against abounding immorality.*

Faithful witnesses are bound to testify for God in the midst of a corrupt and perverse generation. Against lying, profane swearing, Sabbath profanation, and intemperance, they should raise a warning voice. The last evil might be placed first, as it is the precursor of almost all crimes. Now that much light has been shed upon the causes and consequences of intemperance, the ministers of the Gospel should not say to their congregations, *go*, but *come* and destroy the demon of intemperance. Let them not perpetuate this baneful practice by partaking of spirituous liquors, more or less, as a common beverage. Touch not, taste not, handle not. Against all known sin, and for every commanded duty, the witnesses must lift up a faithful testimony.

III. Motives and encouragements to the duty.

1. *The command of God.*

"To obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams." What he said to the angel of the church of Smyrna he says to you—"Be ye faithful unto death."

2. *A regard to the glory of God.*

God's glory is the end he had in view in all his works. When the indulged ministers of Scotland said respecting Car-

gill, what does this man mean ; will he get *more* than heaven—*more* than we will get ? Yes, said that faithful witness, I will get *more*, for I will get Christ glorified on earth. Faithful witness-bearing glorifies Christ.

3. *Enemies will be intimidated that would otherwise triumph.*

Queen Mary feared Knox more that a regiment of soldiers. Cargill's excommunication struck terror to the heart of the perfidious Charles and his unholy companions. Had Israel turned back, Pharaoh would not have been destroyed.

4. *A regard to your own souls.*

The watchman will free his own soul if he gives faithful warning ; if not, the blood of the people will be required at his hand.

5. *A regard to the souls of men in general, and the rising generation in particular.*

The souls of men are precious—they are destroyed by error and immorality : witness faithfully, and pluck them as brands from the burning. Fathers have received the law and the testimony in trust, as executors or trustees receive property for children. If you fritter away any part, curses shall be written against you—woes unnumbered shall descend upon your heads.

6. *The example of Christ.*

He is the true and faithful witness. He witnessed a good confession before Pilate ;—for this he was born, to bear witness to the truth. He has set us an example ; let us walk in his steps. His example has the same power as a command.

7. *The example of the prophets, apostles, martyrs, and confessors of Christ, in every age and nation.*

“Wherefore, seeing ye are encompassed with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight and the sin that doth most easily beset us, and run with patience the race set before us, looking unto Jesus.” Paul said—“I count not my life dear ;” “I am ready to die for the name of Jesus.” Review the history of the faithful witnesses from Abel, the first martyr, to Renwick, the last of the Scottish martyrs, and be encouraged to walk in their steps.

8. *From a view of the reward.*

It is called a *crown*. A crown is the highest point of human ambition. The crown of the faithful servant is a concentration of all excellencies and glories. It is called a “crown of life,” and a “crown of glory.” Moses had respect to “the recompense of reward.” Christ himself had a regard to “the joy set before him.” Let the faithful servant keep the eye of faith fixed on this crown : then shall he run and not be weary,

and walk and not faint ; and having finished his course, and kept the faith, he shall come to the possession of this crown. He shall sit down with the Redeemer on his throne, and reign with him forever and ever.

APPLICATION.

*To the Congregation.*—The name of Christ has been named upon you, therefore ye should depart from iniquity. In your respective circles, study to witness for Christ ; recommend his cause by precept and example.

*To Ministers and Elders.*—Fathers and Brethren in Christ Jesus, view yourselves as witnesses for God in the respective places where Providence has appointed you to labour. Contemplate the cause of God before the world, opposed by corrupt society, and yourselves called upon to give testimony in behalf of Christ. Study fidelity. It is required of a steward that he be faithful. A witness must give a *full, consistent, explicit, and impartial testimony*. If you are not faithful to Christ, you will not be faithful to the souls of men.

You are bound to testify against evils both in church and state. Were you, like many around you, incorporated with the kingdoms that have given their power to the beast—did you swear oaths of allegiance to those governments that are in rebellion against the Prince of the kings of the earth, there would be a gross inconsistency in raising your voice against those evils that are essential to them, and which you would then be sworn to maintain. Of such an ensnaring connexion you are yet free. You have not said a confederacy with those with whom others have said a confederacy. You cannot stand unconcerned while so many attempt to trample the Mediator's crown in the dust, disregard his laws, persecute his church, and confer distinguished honours on his enemies. Say to them, as Elijah did to Ahab—Ye are troublers of the nation. Such faithful declarations many suppress, owing to the fear of man ; but such pusillanimity is unworthy of the genuine successors of our renowned ancestors, who sealed their testimony with their blood. Now that the storm of indignation is overpast, many come from their lurking places where they took refuge during the persecution, claim to be the sons of those eminent men, and say, we will garnish their tombs. Like the generation which the Saviour reprov'd, they garnish the tombs of those whom their fathers deserted and betrayed. The *back-sliding indulged* were like Esau in the day of Jacob's trouble. Now, their successors come forward with their hands full of corrupting bribes, chained to an Erastian, Prelatic, and now semi-Popish constitution, and modestly pretend to be the genu-

ine successors of the Scottish martyrs. Shades of Cargill, Cameron, and Renwick! do you sanction the claims and approve of the relationship? Had you been of the same spirit with your pretended sons, you might have saved your lives from an ignominious death.

Remember that a chief article of the church's testimony at present is the subjection of nations to the Messiah. When God the Father raised him from the dead, he set him above all principality and power, and commanded rulers to "kiss the Son." The necessity of Scriptural qualifications in those who rule is now your distinctive principle. Some maintain, with you, that Messiah is head of the church, and a few others co-operate with you in maintaining the great duty of covenanting in New Testament times;—but in advocating the necessity of Scriptural and covenant qualifications in the rulers of these lands, you stand alone.

Be encouraged to fidelity from the consideration, that the truth is mighty and will finally prevail. The witnesses overcome by the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony. Ministers—you are set as sentinels upon the walls of Zion to warn the people of the enemy's approach. Free your own souls, and you will be instrumental in delivering others.

At your post of observation observe the signs of the times, that you may give to enquirers a satisfactory answer. Observe every cloud that rises out of the sea; though but the size of a man's hand, it may, ere long, cover the whole face of the heavens, and be poured out in desolating judgments on the earth.

Give evidence, by your conduct, that your testimony is not maintained for strife, debate or political purposes, but from a sincere regard to the glory of Christ. Many, at this time, shout for the Bible, who know it not, and in whose heart its principles have never operated. In all your struggles for truth, keep it in mind that the weapons of your warfare are not carnal, but spiritual, and mighty, through God, to the pulling down of strongholds. Persecution in every shape, and under every form, we utterly disclaim. Rely we must upon the agency of his Spirit to accompany the word for accomplishing the work. Jehovah's word shall not return to him void. Let us prayerfully commit the word of our testimony to him who brings forth the righteousness of Jerusalem as brightness, and her salvation as a lamp that burneth. Never think of supporting those iniquitous thrones which are at present violently shaken as a prelude to their removal. Covet not the purple and scarlet and fine linen, at the expense of your fidelity to Christ; rather walk on with "the called and chosen and faithful,"

wearing sackcloth; in the end it will prove a badge of distinguishing honour. For the honour of your religion—for your love to the Saviour—for your desire to promote peace and truth in the world—for your attachment to the memory of the martyrs, whom you desire to follow, and for your regard to the rising generation, bind up the testimony, and transmit it faithfully to posterity; carry forward the standard till it shall have been planted on the walls of the millenium church. Never think of going down to the plains of Ono to confederate with backsliding churches, or incorporate with corrupt states, but invite them up to the gates of Jerusalem. “Be ye faithful unto death, and I will give you a crown of life.”

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#### ON THE EFFICACY OF PRAYER.

“Prayer,” according to the Westminster Divines, “is the offering up of our desires to God for things agreeable to his will, in the name of Christ, with confession of our sins, and thankful acknowledgment of his mercies.” It is an act of religious worship which consists of four great parts, viz: *adoration, confession, petition, and thanksgiving*. It is the first aspiration of divine life—hence it was said of Paul, after his conversion, “*behold he prayeth*”—it is the pulse of the believing soul, which furnishes the most unequivocal symptoms of the health or sickness, strength or weakness of moral subjects. Prayer, in its very nature, is the language of indigence, and dependence, desire and expectation. It is also the instituted means of obtaining blessings from the hand of God. He has declared that he will be “inquired of” by mankind for the good which he is pleased to confer upon them. “Ask, and ye shall receive; seek and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you;” are Scriptural encouragements to engage in this duty. When the cry of the oppressed Israelites, in Egypt, came up to God, then did he come down to deliver them. If men acknowledge God in all their ways, he will undoubtedly, direct their steps—if we are found of him in the way of duty, he will be found of us in the way of mercy.

Prayer is the expression of earnest longing after God and holiness. That this duty may be performed aright, men must have some knowledge of the extent and variety of their wants; they must understand their true interest and happiness, and set a superlative value on the favour and image of God; they must study to pray in *spirit* and in *truth*—not with a *carnal*,

but a *spiritual* frame. Assisted by the spirit, and under his precious influence, they will guard against formality, and fear lest at any time they should draw near to God with their lips, while their thoughts wander abroad amid a thousand vanities. The faithful present the very desires of their heart to God, through the merits and mediation of the Divine Jesus. No sinful being can approach the immaculately holy and glorious Jehovah *immediately* in religious worship—when sinners are permitted to worship God it is only through a perfectly pure Mediator. The holy Angels, and Adam, before the fall, worshipped God without a Mediator, but sinful men must approach the Majesty of Heaven in the name, and through the merits of a Mediator, who is perfectly pure.

Infidel and profane writers have put forward two objections against the duty of prayer. They say, “why do you pray to God at all, for he is omniscient, and therefore does not need to be informed of your wants or sins by your prayers. He knows what things you require before you ask them.” And they repeat the inquiry with a different design—“Why do ye pray to God at all? Can you suppose that your prayers will compel or incline Deity to change his perfect will?” To these objections we reply—It is not the design of prayer to inform the Omniscient Jehovah of our sins or our wants. Prayer is the offering up of the very desires of the heart to God. It is, therefore, the omniscience of God that constitutes him the only hearer of prayer, and his command makes it obligatory on us to pray to him, and to regulate our thoughts and desires according to truth and as in his presence. Christ enforces the duty, and regulates the manner of prayer by this very argument—viz. the omniscience of God. In Mat. vi. 8, 9, he says—“Your heavenly Father knoweth what things you have need of before you ask him. Therefore pray ye, Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name,” &c. It is not the design of prayer to inform God of our sins or our wants, but to impress our own minds with a deep sense of them, and thus to prepare the mind for receiving the pardon of sin, and the supply of all our wants.

Neither does prayer consist in asking God to change his will—the very reverse is the case. Prayer consists in the desires of the soul offered up to God for “*things agreeable to his will.*” The spiritual worshipper says—“Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?”—“It is the Lord,”—“the will of the Lord be done,”—“not my *will* but thine be done,”—“*thy will* be done on earth as it is in heaven.” He does not wish to ask things that are not agreeable to the will of God, nor does

he desire that his petitions should be heard and answered, save in accordance with the Divine will. On the contrary, his prayers and hopes are strictly conformable to the will of God. "This is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us." The design of prayer is not to bring down the perfect will of God to a conformity to our wills; but to bring our wills to entire conformity to the perfect will of God.

The Scripture abounds with examples of the *efficacy* of prayer—of these we shall only specify a few.

Abimelech, on a certain occasion, received a complete deliverance from the calamity that afflicted himself and his family, as an answer to the prayer of Abraham, Gen. xx. 17, 18—"So Abraham prayed unto God: and God healed Abimelech, and his wife, and his maid-servants; and they bare children," &c.

Again, as an answer to the prayers of Abraham, God assured him that if *ten* righteous persons should be found in the cities of the plain, they would be spared, and not consigned to that punishment which their sins had so eminently deserved. God remembered Abraham in preserving Lot from the overthrow of those wicked cities, and did not execute vengeance till *he* had arrived at a place of safety.

Farther, in answer to the prayer of Job, God pardoned the sin and folly of his three friends in not speaking of him the thing that was right, Job xlii. 8—10.

The Patriarch Jacob, on a certain occasion, wrestled with God in prayer, and as a prince he prevailed—"Yea, he had power over the angel, and prevailed; he wept, and made supplication unto him: he found him in Bethel, and there he spake with us," Hos. xii. 4. The consequence was, Esau's heart was softened, and his rage quelled. He went forth as an enemy, but met and embraced Jacob as a brother, Gen. xxxii. 28—xxxiii. 4, 5. This instance fully confirms the Scriptural declaration, that "when a man's ways please the Lord, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him," Prov. xvi. 7.

Again, many favours were conferred upon the Israelites in answer to the prayers of Moses. When God, in his anger, sent fire among them, which consumed them even in the uttermost part of the camp, the people cried unto Moses, and when Moses prayed unto the Lord, "*the fire was quenched.*" He stood many times between the living and the dead—when his hands were lifted up, Israel prevailed, and Amalek was subdued—by his prayers for the Israelites they were not only delivered from many evils, but preserved from utter extinction.

Samuel, the prophet, prayed to the Lord, and the Lord thundered on the army of the Philistines, and wrought a great deliverance for Israel. But time would fail us to speak of David, Solomon, Asa, Jehoshaphat, Hezekiah, Nehemiah, &c. who, in answer to their prayers, obtained great deliverances. David was a man of prayer, as he was the man after God's own heart, and in answer to his petitions was he delivered many times out of great depths; and Solomon, as the return of his petitions, obtained wisdom superior to all his contemporaries. When Asa was attacked by a huge host of Ethiopians, "he cried unto the Lord his God, and said, Lord, it is nothing with thee to help whether with many, or with them that have no power; help us, O Lord our God, for we rest on thee, and in thy name we go against this multitude,"—(2 Chron. xiv. 11.) and, in answer to his prayer, the Lord discomfited their enemies, and delivered Israel. As the reply, also, to the prayer of Jehoshaphat, (2 Chron. xx.) the Lord set every man's sword against his fellow, and made the Ammonites, Moabites, and the inhabitants of Mount Seir, the instruments of each other's destruction.

At Hezekiah's prayer, his life was lengthened fifteen years; and in answer to the prayer of Nehemiah, the temple was rebuilt, and the enemies of Zion restrained. When Daniel prayed, Gabriel was sent to him from Heaven, to explain to him the perplexing visions that he had respecting God's dispensations to the Church in future times.

We may suppose that the conversion of Paul was an answer to the prayer of dying Stephen; and we may conclude that the believers at Damascus were heard in their cries for protection from that cruel persecutor in a manner that exceeded their expectations—those also at Jerusalem, when they prayed for Peter's deliverance from Herod, (Acts xii.) obtained a more favorable and immediate answer than they could have expected.

The petitions of Cornelius came up before God, and an Angel was sent, directing him to send for Peter, "who should teach him words whereby he, and all his house, should be saved." The Prophets and Apostles, Martyrs and Confessors of Jesus, lived on prayer, and received many great and wonderful blessings, as the fruit of their waiting on God in this ordinance. Our Covenanted forefathers were eminently men of prayer; like their great Master, they often spent whole nights in prayer, after the severe labours of the day; in this way they enjoyed sweet communion with God, and obtained, out of the fulness treasured up in the New Covenant Head,



new supplies of grace and strength, fitting them for the glorious services which they performed in their day, and for the fiery trials which they endured.

From this long series of Scriptural examples, we may fairly conclude, that almost all real blessings are given to men in answer to prayer. We do not say that prayer *merits* any blessing from the hand of God, or that it by any means can change the purposes of the Supreme Being. All blessings are bestowed upon man by the unmerited mercy of God, but prayer is a channel through which they descend to earth—without it they would never be obtained. There is as regular a connexion between prayer, and blessings in answer to it, as between ploughing and sowing and the harvest that follows. “For every one that asketh, receiveth, and he that seeketh, findeth.” Asking here is made the condition of receiving, and if we do not ask we will not receive. In John xvi. 23, Christ says, “whatever ye shall ask of the Father, in my name, he will give it you.” With respect to the good asked here, the promise is unlimited, and as to the certainty of receiving, it is absolute; and in 1 John, iii. 22, the Apostle says, “whatsoever we ask we receive of him.”

The efficacy of prayer is declared and confirmed by the Apostle James, in very direct expressions and examples. “The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.” “Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain, and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months. And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit.” In the same chapter, the Apostle saith, “Is any sick? let him call for the elders of the Church, and let them pray over him. \* \* \* And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.” (James v.) The preceding remarks furnish the most direct encouragement for pious parents to pray for their disobedient and rebellious children. No parent can be said to discharge aright his parental duties, who does not spread over his offspring the shield of his prayers. Should a pious parent, however, intercede long for his child, without receiving, in his reformation, an apparent answer, and in despondency think that his earnest and long-offered prayers are fruitless, let him rather say, “How do I know, that although they have not yet procured the desired good, they may not have averted far higher degrees of evil? How do I know but that they will be fully answered in due time, and in proportion to the days

wherein we have seen and felt sorrow and anguish, shall we have gladness and abundant joy?" The same observations are applicable to pious children, with regard to wicked parents, and to religious wives respecting irreligious husbands.

We shall conclude this paper with an example of the efficacy of prayer in modern times, calculated to corroborate the preceding observations. The following narrative is abridged from a missionary paper, stating the conversion of an individual in the village of Berwick, in Wilts, England: "The first convert, in this place, was the wife of a day-labourer. Prior to this period the parties lived in peace, but now, because the wife would not abandon the profession and practice of religion, she is harshly treated by her husband, and frequently, during the winter season, was she turned out of doors. Being a prudent woman she did not wish to expose the cruelty of her husband to her neighbours, but retired to the fields and adjacent woods, and there found that comfort in prayer which she could not obtain under the roof of him who ought to have been her protector. Greatly distressed, but not in despair, she resolved to set apart one hour every day to pray for the conversion of her persecuting husband. To this she daily attended during a whole year. Observing no change in her husband's conduct, she resolved to persevere six months longer. This she religiously observed up to the last day, when she retired, at twelve o'clock, as usual, and, as she thought, for the last time. That same day her husband returned home to dinner in a state of deep dejection, and, instead of sitting down, as usual, to his repast, he retired to his chamber. His wife followed and listened, and to her grateful astonishment, he who used to mock had returned to pray. He refused to eat, and returned to his work till the evening. On his return, his wife affectionately asked him what was the matter? "Matter enough," said he, "I am a lost sinner." "About twelve o'clock this morning," continued he, "I was at my work, and a passage of Scripture was so impressed upon my mind as not to be easily removed, and I am sure I am lost." His wife encouraged him to pray, but he replied, "O wife, it is of no use, there is no forgiveness for me." Smitten with remorse at the recollection of his former conduct, he said to his wife, "will you forgive me?" She replied, "O yes, that I will." "Will you pray for me now?" "That I will, with all my heart." They fell on their knees and wept, and made supplication. His tears of penitence mingled with her tears of gratitude and joy. Their house, from that day, became a Bethel, where the voice of prayer and praise was constantly heard.

## GOSPEL TRUTH THE LIFE OF TRUE RELIGION.

The great importance of knowing and receiving Gospel truth is manifest from the undoubted fact, that *whenever the doctrines of the Gospel have been either withheld or perverted, the interests of vital piety and holy living have always, in a corresponding degree, declined.* Not only does the Bible represent all departures from the faith as evil and destructive of Christian character and hope, but all ecclesiastical history serves at once to illustrate and confirm the melancholy representation. When we open the Apostolic epistles to the churches of Corinth, Galatia and the Hebrews, we shall find, by carefully attending to the strain of address, that many of the members of those churches had listened to the persuasions of false teachers, and had materially departed from "the faith once delivered to the Saints," and that they had no less degenerated in zeal and practical godliness. Some of the errors which they had embraced, are specifically stated; and the pictures given of their practical influence, are indeed melancholy! In the second and third centuries, when the ministers of religion began to swerve from the simple and genuine doctrines of the gospel, the benign influence of their ministry, and all the most precious interests of vital piety, and of holy living, began, in the very same proportion, to decline. When *Augustine* arose, toward the close of the fourth century, the doctrines of the gospel had been very imperfectly preached for nearly two hundred years. Of course he found both orthodoxy and piety at a very low ebb. He and his pious coadjutors, grieved at the degeneracy of the Church, consecrated their whole strength to the great cause of Gospel truth. They opposed, with unwearied zeal, the Pelagian and semi-Pelagian errors of the day; and did more to refute heresy, and to extend and establish sound doctrine, than had been done by any since the Apostolic age. The consequence of this revival of orthodoxy, was the immediate revival of vital piety, and of gospel purity; the blessings of which, on a large part of the church, were precious and lasting. In several subsequent periods, whenever there was a revival of the knowledge and preaching of sound doctrine; good morals and practical godliness never failed to be revived in a corresponding degree.

In the days of *Godschalcus*; of *Claudius* of Turin; of the *Waldenses*; of *Wickliffe*; and of *Huss and Jerome*, it was manifest that practical piety rose or sunk, just as sound or erroneous doctrines bore sway. The same great fact was most

impressively exemplified at the period of the Reformation. When the great doctrines of the gospel, which had so long been withheld or perverted by the corrupters of the church, began to be proclaimed by Luther, Calvin and other Reformers, in their scriptural simplicity, pure and undefiled religion began immediately to spring forth, from this living seed, in the same proportion. And, on the contrary, when, toward the close of the sixteenth century and during the seventeenth, orthodoxy declined in all the Protestant churches, and in some of them to a deplorable degree; there was, in every one of them, a corresponding depression of zeal, and of all the great interests of practical religion. Of these churches the history of few is more melancholy, and more solemnly instructive, than that of the *Huguenots* of France. For more than three quarters of a century after their emancipation from the thralldom of Popery, they were among the most pure and flourishing churches in the Protestant world. And as long as their pastors continued to be sound in doctrine; faithful in adhering to their excellent Confession of Faith; and indefatigable in instructing their children and youth, and all classes of the people in gospel truth, in private as well in public; notwithstanding all the frowns and persecutions of a hostile government, they prospered, multiplied, and were comparatively happy. But no sooner did orthodoxy decline in those churches; no sooner did *Cameron*, *Amyraut*, and other Divines of talents, learning and influence, begin to verge towards semi-Pelagian opinions, than an immediate and sensible decay ensued in piety, in zeal, and in pure morals. Indeed it seemed as if, from the time that the infection of these errors became in a considerable degree extended, their peace was interrupted; their unity broken; their comfortable standing, even with the civil government, destroyed; until on their whole state was written—“*Ichabod, the glory is departed.*” And to the present day, their glory has never been restored. As they went on to sink lower and lower in error, they became also more and more depressed in every thing that constitutes the true excellence and happiness of the church.

No less instructive on this subject is the history of the churches of *Geneva* and *England*. As long as simple gospel truth continued to be preached, and generally received in those churches, the effect was uniformly benign. “The word of God had free course and was glorified.” Sinners were convinced and converted; saints were edified and comforted; and the churches “walked together in the fear of the Lord, and in the consolations of the Holy Ghost.” But just

in proportion as doctrinal error gained ground among them, every thing good declined. Discord, strife, division and moral and spiritual desolation, became more and more prevalent and held a gloomy reign, until evangelical truth was again revived. But why should we dwell in detail on particular cases? The fact is, the principle of which we speak, is universal in its application. Never, it may be safely asserted, did an exception occur. The prevalence of doctrinal error, and the decline of practical religion, have always gone hand in hand. And there is another fact equally remarkable and instructive. When false doctrines have begun to appear in any church, the course has too commonly been from one degree of heterodoxy to another, until the lowest point of depression was reached. And this is more peculiarly apt to be the case, when those who once professed to stand upon orthodox ground, suffer themselves to be enticed into error. Those who were from the first *bred* in some moderate doctrinal error, often remain during their whole lives, at the same position. But when men apostatize from a scriptural creed, they, with deplorable frequency, have been found to continue in their downward course, until they reached the bottom of the declining plane. A late excellent and judicious writer never penned a more plain and melancholy truth, than when he said—"The progress is easy and almost unavoidable, from controversial opposition to *personal Election*, to the explaining away of Original Sin, Regeneration by the Holy Ghost, Justification by faith alone, and even of the Atonement and Deity of Jesus Christ."\* All history attests the truth of this humiliating and alarming statement. The principle is by no means obscure which renders it as natural in theory, as it is certain in fact, that *apostates are ever apt to sink to a lower point in doctrinal and moral degeneracy*, than those who never held a high place in the scale of profession.

DR. MILLER.

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\* Dr. Scott's preface to his translation of the acts of the Synod of Dort.

The doctrine of universal or indefinite atonement has become very prevalent and is every year gaining ground among several denominations of Christians. The import of the doctrine is—that Christ died for the sins of every man in the world alike, and thereby put all mankind in a salvable state. The legitimate inference from the doctrine is—that it is left to the sinner, and depends on him to accept or reject the redemption, procured equally and alike for all. The advocates of universal or indefinite atonement admit, that multitudes,

notwithstanding Christ's dying for them and his purchase of redemption thereby, do eternally perish. To their consideration, we submit, without remark at this time, the following *Dilemma*, extracted from a treatise of the learned and godly Dr. Owen, entitled, "*Salus Electorum, sanguis Jesu*; or, the death of Death, in the death of Christ." And we take this opportunity of recommending the work, from which the selection is made, to the careful and prayerful attention of all our readers. They will in it find the all-important subject of "*Redemption and Reconciliation by the blood of Christ*," clearly stated and illustrated with much ability, distinctness and precision. It is held up, in the light of sacred scripture, to the understanding, and its importance pressed upon the attention by a master hand.—EDITOR.

DILEMMA ON UNIVERSAL REDEMPTION.

"God imposeth his wrath due unto, and Christ underwent the pains of hell for, either all the sins of all men; or all the sins of some men only; or some sins of all men. If the last, some sins of all men; then have all men some sins to answer for, and so no man shall be saved; for if God "should enter into judgment" with us, though it were with all mankind for one sin, "no man living shall be justified," Ps. cxliii. 2. "If thou, Lord, shouldst mark iniquities who shall stand?" Ps. cxxx. 3. We might all cast all that we have, "to the moles and to the bats; to go into the clefts of the rocks, and into the tops of the ragged rocks, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his majesty." Isa. ii. 20, 21. If the second, all the sins of some men only; this is what we affirm, that Christ, in their stead and room, suffered for all the sins of all the elect. If the first, all the sins of all men; why then are not all freed from the punishment of all their sins? You will say because of their unbelief, they will not believe. But this unbelief is a sin, or not. If not, why should they be punished for it? If it be, then Christ underwent the punishment due to it, or not. If he did, then why must that hinder them, more than their other sins for which he died, from partaking of the fruit of his death? If he did not, then did he not die for all their sins. Let them choose which part they will."

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PROCEEDINGS OF THE REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN SYNOD IN IRELAND.\*

The Synod met at Moneymore, on the 19th July, 1836, and was opened with a Sermon by the Moderator, Rev. Thomas Boyd of Belfast, from Acts. xx. 28. "Take heed, therefore,

\* Prepared from minutes of Synod and statements of proceedings in the Covenanters.

unto yourselves and to all the flock, over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the Church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." Twenty Ministers and twenty-three Ruling Elders were present. Absent, Rev. Messrs. Gamble, Britten, Boggs and Ewing. Rev. W. J. Stavely was chosen Moderator. Rev. Andrew Symington, D. D. Professor of Theology, and Rev. Wm. M. Lachlane, Moderator of the Scottish Synod, were delegates from that judicatory and were cordially admitted to seats in the court. "The presence of these esteemed brethren was regarded with peculiar interest by all the members; and their judicious counsels, faithful attachment to the testimony of Jesus, and holy zeal for the advancement of the truth, had a most happy influence on the whole of the proceedings." The evening session was spent in devotional exercises, conducted by Rev. Dr. Symington, Thomas Houston and J. Paul.

*Wednesday, 20th July.*

The Northern, Eastern and Southern Presbyteries reported. These reports "contained evidence of the peaceful and prosperous condition of the Church, and were in general, highly satisfactory." Three communications from the Faculty of the Royal Belfast Institution, were read and referred to a committee to report thereon. The chief that is of general interest in these papers, relates to the principles and manner according to which the science of Moral Philosophy is taught in that Institution, and a proposal to establish a chair of Christian Ethics.

The annual report of the Board of Directors of the *Missionary Society* was read by Rev. T. Houston, one of the Secretaries of the Society. This Report abounds with interesting and cheering intelligence to all the friends of the Reformation cause, shewing that, in different places hitherto considered inaccessible, opportunities are readily afforded for displaying the banner of truth; and that the results are more than equal to the sanguine expectations entertained.\* Mr. Houston urged the necessity of increased Missionary operations, and especially pressed the duty of devising measures for spreading the Gospel among the *native Irish*, through the medium of their own language. Other members of the Court participated in an interesting discussion on this point. Rev. W. M. Lachlane, a native of the Highlands of Scotland, to whose opinion on such a subject much influence is due, strongly recommended the measure. He could speak of things which he knew. Synod agreed to encourage Students to study the Irish

\* We will endeavor to find room for an abstract in our next.

language with a view to Missionary labors, and enjoined the Directors of the Society to prepare a memorial on the best means of spreading the Gospel among the people contemplated. Instead of the ordinary vote of thanks to the Board of Directors, Synod, judiciously as we think, agreed to unite in prayer to God for a blessing upon the Missions of the Church. Dr. Symington, at the request of the Moderator, led in the duty. Provision was made for supplying the various missionary stations under Synod's care with the dispensation of gospel ordinances.

*Thursday, 21st July.*

Dr. Symington and Mr. McLachlane, the Scottish Delegates, addressed the Synod. "These addresses were distinguished by spirituality, pathos and clear and comprehensive views of public events that effect the interests of religion, and of the church's duty at the present eventful crisis."\* The committee to whom were referred the communications from the Faculty of the Belfast Institution, reported. The Synod appointed a committee to confer with the Faculty, and also with committees from the Synods of Ulster and the Secession Church, should such be appointed, respecting the subject of Moral Philosophy, and it was unanimously agreed, that if no professor be appointed, who will teach that science on Christian principles, the Students shall attend, as during last session, the class conducted by Dr. Cook and Mr. Molyneux.

The plan of education for candidates for the ministry, after particular examination, was adopted as the *interim* regulations of Synod on that subject. This plan requires, besides other extensive literary and theological acquirements, a full knowledge of the originals of the sacred Scriptures, and of the distinctive principles of a Covenanted testimony, and attaches marked importance to the evidences of practical religion. The Rev. J. Stewart was, at his own request, relieved from an appointment to prepare a document on the elective franchise. Presbyteries were ordered to submit their records hereafter to Synod for inspection and revision, and directed to inspect and revise the records of Sessions. The Synod also recommended, that Presbyteries frequently visit the congregations under their care. The committee previously appointed to report respecting the cases of Ballyclare and Liverpool congregations, and of W. Russell, Student, reported; utterly *disapproving* of a candidate for ordination being allow-

\* A brief sketch of these eloquent, faithful Addresses, will be given to our readers as soon as practicable.



ed to offer explanations on the Formula at time of ordination. After some discussion, the report was adopted by a large majority. Synod appointed the last Thursday of November to be observed by its members and the people under its care, as a day of Thanksgiving, and the last Thursday of January, 1837, as a day of Fasting.

Friday, 22d July.

*Church in America.*—The minutes of last year, and those of the Scottish Synod relating to the church in America, and also a letter from the Western Subordinate Synod in America, were read. It was then resolved, on motion of Mr. Dick, "That this Synod adopt the *decision* of the Synod in Scotland, and the *Report* founded on it." The following extract from the Minutes of the Scottish Synod, shews what this decision is. "It is moved, seconded and unanimously agreed—that it is the opinion of this court, that there are moral evils essentially connected with the government of the United States, of such magnitude, that no one holding the principles of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, on the subject of civil government, can consistently recognize it as the moral ordinance of God, or practically unite with it."\*

The Committee appointed to have reprinted the "*Auchin-saugh Renovation*," "*Short Account of Old Dissenters*," and the "*Explanation and Defence of the Terms of Communion*," reported that an edition of 1,250 copies had been printed. Arrangements were made for circulating them. Mr. Smyth gave notice that he would at next meeting move—"That if any of the people under our care be engaged in the traffic of Ardent Spirits, such be required to abandon this demoralizing employment." A memorial from some members of the Newtonards' congregation, formerly before Synod, was taken up. "The memorialists wanted certificates (from the session) that would entitle them to privileges in another congregation." Synod agreed that they "obtain certificates of their present standing, on settling their accounts with the congregation, the boundaries of which are to remain unaffected by their removal." A memorial from the Knockbracken congregation was read, in which memorialists express their deep concern, "to witness in some quarters principles avowed, which appear to be opposed to the great doctrine of a national establishment of the true religion, and which have a tendency to draw the members of the church into an approval of the measures of the present civil administration. Memorialists also greatly lament the prevalence of

\* The Report referred to above as "founded on" this decision, we gave in our last number.—See page 27.

a report, that (some) Ministers and Elders of the Reformed Presbyterian Church should, of late, have joined hands with those who impugn the doctrine of a national establishment of Christianity, and that Ministers are said to be engaged in conducting publications, in which portions of our Westminster standards are directly denied or turned into ridicule, in which sanction is given to gross libels on the standards and practice of the Reformed Church, and the doctrine of a national establishment of true religion is opposed.—Memorialists earnestly request Synod to make a public declaration to the Church and to the world, of the doctrine of the Church respecting the duty of nations and civil rulers, to whom the light of divine revelation comes, authoritatively to establish the true religion and to protect and support the Church of Christ.”

*Saturday, 23d July.*

Discussion on the Knockbracken memorial was resumed. It was moved by Mr. Dick and seconded by Mr. Smyth, “That our religious profession and ordination vows imperatively demand of us, in the present circumstances of the Church, a distinct and solemn declaration, that while we decidedly disapprove of existing civil and ecclesiastical establishments in these lands, we cannot make common cause with any of the political parties of the day, or with such as deny and oppose the principle of a national establishment of the religion of Jesus Christ. That we refer this petition to a committee of Synod with express injunction to endeavor to have in readiness a matured report on the subjects to which it relates; and that we affectionately beseech and warn all members of this Church to abstain from all acts contrary to the spirit of the foregoing declaration.” An amendment, or rather substitute, was moved by Mr. Paul and seconded by Dr. Henry. After a lengthened discussion, in which Messrs. Dick, Stewart, T. Houston, Cathcart, Cameron, Stott, Tolland, Dr. Symington, and Messrs. Sweeny and Chancellor, Ruling Elders, supported the motion; and Messrs. Paul, Henry and Alexander, spoke in favor of the amendment; the motion was carried, *thirty-one* members voting for it, and *eight* members voting for the amendment—the minority being four Ministers and four Elders of the Eastern Presbytery. Mr. Paul dissented in his own name and in the name of those who adhere to him, and intimated his intention of assigning reasons in due time. Rev. Messrs. Henry, Alexander and C. Houston, with Messrs. Adrain, Jamison, McVicker and Close, Ruling Elders, adhered to Mr. Paul in the dissent. Messrs. Dick, Alexander, Stewart and Sweeny were appointed a

committee to prepare the "declaration" mentioned in the above motion; and Messrs. Stewart and Dick to receive and answer the reasons of dissent. The next annual meeting of Synod is to be held at Moneymore, on the 2d Tuesday of July, 1837.

We have been induced to devote considerable space to the above sketch of proceedings, partly by the importance of the business transacted, and partly by the known interest which many of our readers take in the affairs of our brethren in Europe. We rejoice in the decided stand taken against the false and infidel philosophy, which has too long occupied the place of Christian ethics, in many literary institutions both European and American. Similar fidelity by all the friends of truth, would soon base the system of liberal education on Christian principles—the only foundation on which it ought to rest; and prevent the minds of many youth from being cast in the mould of Pagan—often immoral and unchaste—Classic writings, and systems of Philosophy and other branches of science, semi-infidel or worse.

The *Missions* of the Synod form an important part of their proceedings. The exertions made in this important cause is worthy of all praise, and, what is better, of imitation. The success attending the efforts made, shews that the Church is the true and only proper Missionary Society. Irresponsible Boards are not the way to evangelize the world, for the plain and sufficient reason, the Church is God's institution for accomplishing this desirable and all important object. "The law shall go forth out of Zion and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem."

The united decision of the sister Synods respecting the Church in America, meets our entire approbation. Some may have thought they deferred too long an expression of opinion on the subject. Taking into consideration the difficulty of forming a correct judgment respecting important events, that transpire at a distance, the untiring and ceaseless efforts made, on a certain quarter, to represent the whole matter as merely personal involving no principle whatever, the misrepresentations contained (as we are told) in private communications, and (as we know) in official documents—such as a *printed* "Circular" which never *circulated* on this side the Atlantic, and the laudable desire still manifested by our brethren in Europe to afford opportunity for those who have abandoned the testimony to retrace their steps; we do not wonder at the seeming delay. The report given in our preceding number, puts to rest all speculation on the future course of those Synods. It is based upon the grand principle, that Covenanters can acknowledge no government that is not Scripturally constituted; sets forth, as the ground of their and our ecclesiastical intercourse hitherto, that Covenanters in America maintained as actual a state of separation from the government of the United States, as Covenanters in Britain do from the civil constitution of that realm, and that on this ground *alone* the intercourse can be continued. The resolution given above, on which this report is founded, contains the sentiment and declares the practice of every true Covenanter.

The decision, growing out of the Knockbracken memorial, is a complete triumph of truth and attachment to Reformation principles, over any and all innovation on the subjects referred to, which *half-way* men would introduce into the Church's testimony.—EDITOR.

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EXPOSITION OF ROMANS XIII. 1—7.

Few portions of the word of God have been more perverted than the passage now to be considered. The power of government has been so often abused for the oppression of the people, and for the promotion of iniquity, that the panders of tyrannical misrule have attempted to furnish an apology for the iniquity of rulers by wresting the doctrine of the Apostle in this chapter, for the justification of immoral governments. It might be sufficient for the refutation of these false glosses to remark, that the whole tenor of the gospel is favorable to the rights of man, and to the cause of rational liberty, while it is hostile to all injustice, oppression and immorality. Were it true that this part of the divine word supports the claims of tyrants and usurpers, it would be directly opposed to the whole doctrine, import, and spirit of the other parts of the inspired volume. But an inspection of the text itself vindicates it from the imputation of supporting the claims of despotism and immoral power. The origin and character of civil government, as the ordinance of God, and the duties of the subjects, are delineated with the brevity, perspicuity and power of an inspired pen.

I. *The origin of Magistracy.*—It is from God. In verse 4th the magistrate is called, *Theou diakonos*, “the minister of God;” or more literally, “God’s deacon.” The same word is often employed in the New Testament to designate the minister of the Gospel. 2 Cor. iii. 6, “Who hath made us able ministers (deacons) of the New Testament.” It is also the official title of those who are appointed of God to manage the temporalities of the Church. 1 Tim. iii. 8, “Likewise the deacons.” It is even used as a title of the Lord Jesus Christ. Rom. xy, 8, “Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister (deacon) of the

circumcision." This official designation of the civil ruler does not intimate that he is an ecclesiastical officer, or that by his office he may exercise rule in the Church, or govern in ecclesiastical affairs. But it imports that as the rulers in the house of God derive their authority from God, so the magistrate is appointed of God to the station which he occupies—is clothed with God's authority, and derives from Him all his legitimate power. Indeed all right to govern any of Jehovah's moral subjects, must be derived from Himself, otherwise it is usurpation. All men are the creatures, the property, the subjects of Jehovah, their supreme Lord; and no one may presume to govern them, without authority from his and their absolute sovereign. Hence the power of which the Apostle here treats, is a ministry derived from God, and he who administers it is the deacon, servant, or minister, of the Lord. The title by which such an one is designated here, is analogous to that by which the judges are called. Ex. xxi, 8, "Then his master shall bring him to the judges," literally "to the gods." They receive this most honorable appellation, because the judgment in which they are employed, is God's judgment. Deut. i. 17. So they are styled Ps. xcvi, 7. "Worship him all ye gods," angels and civil rulers. And Ps. lxxxii, 6, "I said ye are gods." John, x, 34, "Is it not written in your law, I said ye are gods." Such titles could not have been given by inspiration to the magistrate, were he not armed with all his authority from God.

It would not have been necessary to dwell so long on this point, which ought to be taken as an axiom in government, were it not the baleful prevalence of the modern infidel maxim, that the people are the ultimate fountain of all civil power; and that rulers are not, as such, bound to subject themselves to God. Civil government is indeed styled the "ordinance of man." 1 Pet. ii, 3, "Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man, for the Lord's sake." This of course means every *moral, legitimate* ordinance of man; for men ordain many wicked things, as Popery, Mahomedanism, Brahmanism and despotism, which are not to be submitted to. "Shall we obey God or man? Judge ye." It is called the ordinance of man, because God conveys the authority through the people, whose suffrages are necessary to the legitimate exercise of power. He who rules without this is a usurper, and of course is not God's minister, for God will not sanction usurpation.

Again, it is from God; for "the powers that be are ordained of God," verse 1st. The words here rendered "are ordained," possess great emphasis in this connection. Literally,

“the powers that be are set in order as an army.” Hence the power is said, verse 2d, to be “the ordinance of God.” It is arranged by him according to his own plan. He has not left to corrupt men to model all civil institutions and enact all laws according to their own devices. As the rulers are the ministers or servants of God, so they must minister, or perform their official services, according to the laws of the God of Heaven, whom they serve. They must do nothing—enact no law, render no judgment, nor form any constitution, that is not according to his will. In framing constitutions, in enacting statutes, and in rendering judgments, if they contravene the law of God, they may be the servants of a sinful people, or of their own lusts—avarice, pleasure or ambition; but they are not the ministers of God. What God has not authorized, and what he does not approve, is not his work. Were a minister to a foreign power to presume upon the transaction of any business contrary to his instructions, or even unauthorized by the power conferred on him; however he might act in the name of minister, he would not, in that matter, be the minister of the nation, that gave him his mission. God is the author of the moral code which the civil ruler must administer, if he act according to the commission that God gives him. These laws or ordinations of God, for the regulation of “the powers that be,” are partly revealed in the law of nature, in which civil government was instituted, and more clearly in the Holy Scriptures, which contain a new exhibition of the same law revealed in the book of nature. This very chapter contains evidence of the truth of this position; for here undeniably, and by the admission of all, the Apostle utters maxims of civil policy, addressed both to rulers and subjects for their direction in civil things. The whole subject of civil rule is discussed at large in the Old Testament scriptures—in the law, in the Psalms, and in the Prophets. And all scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for instruction. It is most preposterous to affirm, as has often been done, that the Bible gives no direction for the constitution or administration of civil government; but only binds men to passive obedience and non-resistance, however tyrannical or immoral the power. Then civil government would not be ordained of God as his ordinance to man for good, and he would merely bind men in his word to yield, on pain of damnation, implicit subjection to the wildest misrule—to tyranny the most dishonoring to himself and most subversive of the rights of man. Such doctrine may suit the Jesuitical sycophants of lawless power, but should never be embraced by the enlightened disciple of Christ, or the friend of human liberty.

Again, its origin is from God; for, "there is no power but of God," verse 1st. The kind of power to which the Apostle refers is intimated in the word by which it is designated. In the Greek language, the word *dunamis* signifies physical force, such as is exerted by a machine, or by the bodies of men and other animals. The word *exousia* denotes moral power, or that with which parents and other rulers are endowed. It is the latter of these terms which is here employed. It sometimes means honor, prerogative, or privilege; as in John i, 12, "To as many as received him, to them gave he power (*exousian*) to become the sons of God." Though it properly signifies legitimate authority, yet it is sometimes otherwise applied, as the term god is often given to idols, or false gods, and even to Satan, who is called "the god of this world;" because they claim to be gods and are so called by men. The word here translated power is once used to express authority originating from the prince of darkness. Rev. xiii, 4, "The dragon which gave power (*exousian*) to the beast." But it is evident the Apostle here means legitimate authority derived from God; for he says, "there is no power but of God." He cannot possibly mean to affirm, that the power which the dragon, or devil gave to the beast out of the bottomless pit, is of God, as that which he here describes is from Him. He asserts that there is no magistral power, such as he intends, but that which is ordained of God. This clause of the 1st verse has been rendered, "It is not a power unless *it be* of God." This translation is just, natural, and according to the Greek idiom. Though the meaning of the original is clearly and forcibly expressed by so rendering it, yet the sense is not varied from that of our common version. There is no magistral power, such as that to which I refer, but that which is derived from God, the fountain of all law and government. As if he would say, I leave out the power given by the dragon to the beast, all the power that has no better source than rapine, plunder, bloodshed, usurpation, or the mere will of the people, without regard to the constitution and ordination of God—all the immoral power of immoral men, who *do not pretend* to rule in God's name and by virtue of his authority, or who, if they do so pretend, ought not; for having no commission from him, they are not his government. "There is no power but of God;" evidently an elliptical sentence in our translation—"There is no power but" that which is "of God." To make the Apostle mean, that there is no power however immoral and grossly wicked, but may justly claim God for its author, is so utterly preposterous, not to say blasphemous, that it seems strange

how any respectable, much less any christian man, could have entertained it for a moment. God has therefore ordained civil government and the principles on which it is to be administered ; and what is not according to this ordination is none of his. That this is the true interpretation of the passage appears if possible more plainly from :

II. *The character of the powers.* They are “higher powers,” occupying an elevated station, conspicuous and honorable. They are advanced to a place of great dignity. This designation embraces the throne on which they are seated, the crown they wear and the sceptre of righteousness which they wield. Elevated to a station which gives them great influence, high honor and much power, they should be of pure moral character. They should be able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness. “He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God.” As the place which they occupy is eminent and holy, as they are clothed with the authority of the God of Heaven, as they are his servants, they ought not to be infidels, nor drunkards, nor Sabbath breakers, nor profane swearers, nor card players, nor “*vile adulterers.*” When such men “bear rule, the people mourn.” Being placed on high, they, by their evil example, shed a baleful and blighting influence upon all ranks of society below them. “Honor is not seemly for a fool ;” and in the style of scripture every heretic and immoral man is foolish. All classes of men perceive how absurd and improper it is for a minister of religion to be debased by immorality ; and should it appear less so, for one who reigns over men, executing, in God’s name, as his minister, the laws of Heaven, administering the divine ordinance of civil government ? The truth is, a grossly immoral man never can be *truly* exalted, or advanced to *real* honor. Nero, though he filled the throne of the Cæsars, was the most debased of the Roman people, because he was the most wicked man in the empire. “The higher powers” designate such a constitution of civil government and such officers to administer it, as may justly claim, and are really entitled to the high respect and civil homage of the saints of God, to whom this epistle is addressed. The phrase “higher powers,” is pregnant with grave and holy import. It suggests that a halo of majesty surrounds the throne which God has erected, and on which the civil ruler as his deputy sits to dispense, on his behalf, blessings to a whole nation.

These powers exist over a people to protect them. Hence civil rulers are figuratively called *shields*. Ps. xlvii. 9. “The shields of the earth belong unto God.” The protection of the



commonwealth against foreign enemies is committed to them ; and for this purpose the arms and resources of the nation are entrusted to their care. They are bound to protect the church against her enemies. It is for this purpose emphatically, that the blessing of civil government is continued in the world since its inhabitants fell under a curse by the violation of the covenant of works. "Kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and their queens thy nursing mothers," Isa. xlix, 23. As a father protects his children, so they are to spread the shield of their authority over the church for her protection. For this purpose these "higher powers" are given into the hand of the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the "Prince of the kings of the earth." "He is made head over *all things to the Church.*" All kings are commanded to obey him. "Be wise, now, therefore, O ye kings ; be instructed, ye judges of the earth. Kiss the Son." Ps. ii. 10—12. "Yea, all the kings shall fall down before him." Ps. lxxii. 11. They are high over the nations, but they are under Christ in his mediatory character. When they presume to exalt themselves so high, as not to acknowledge him, they debase themselves to the rank of rebels against *him* "by whom kings reign." They are powers placed on high for the protection of the rights of all the citizens. "Defend the poor and fatherless" is the command of him whose ministers they are. They are placed as shields to defend the lives, the liberty, the property, all the immunities of all their subjects—to see that the strong do not enslave or oppress the weak ; and when they neglect to do these things, or take part with the oppressor, they cease to be "higher powers" in the sense of the Apostle. When they strengthen the arm of the oppressor, they subvert one great and essential principle of civil government, and act in a spirit directly at war with one of the chief ends of the institution of this ordinance. Who could believe that this passage is part and parcel of the word of God, if its language were : "Let every soul be subject to the higher powers ; for the powers that be are ordained of God," to aid the strong in enslaving and oppressing the weak, the poor and the unoffending ? That civil power has often been, and still is, thus misused, does not impeach the ordination of God. It only illustrates the depraved lusts of men, "who pant for the dust on the heads of the poor."

Again, rulers are armed with the sword—an instrument of death, to slay the enemies of the commonwealth in lawful war, to punish capitally those who are worthy of death, as well as to inflict less degrees of punishment on those who incur the minor penalties of the law. Had capital punishment

been improper, were all civil pains simply disciplinary, and war in every form unlawful, the higher powers would have been armed with the rod and not with the sword. The ensign of executive power in the commonwealth of Rome, was a bundle of rods and an axe, to intimate that the penalties of the law, extended, in some cases, to the taking away of life, and that punishment was both disciplinary and penal. These Roman *fascēs*, as they called them, were designed to import the same thing as the sword of the civil magistrate in this epistle.

Farther, these rulers are characterized as “a terror, not to the good works, but to the evil.” Verse 3d. “He is a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.” Verse 4th. So they that do evil have reason to be afraid. To the same purpose is the account of the law. 1 Tim. i, 9, 10, “Knowing this that the law is not made for a righteous man; but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers, for murderers of mothers, for manslayers, for whoremongers, for them that defile themselves with mankind, for men stealers, for liars, for perjured persons, and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine.” All this evidently refers to the penalties of the law, which, by the divine code given to the Jews, were to be inflicted by the sword of the civil magistrate. For otherwise, the law is made for the righteous man. “We are under law to Christ.” 1 Cor. ix, 21. To evil doers the magistrate is a terror under the gospel dispensation; for all this, the Apostle adds, “is according to the glorious gospel of the blessed God.” Verse 11. That civil power which is not, in its constitution, laws and administration, a terror to these evil works, cannot be the civil rule here contemplated by the Apostle.

Another characteristic of these higher powers is, that they reward the good. “Do that which is good and thou shalt have praise of the same.” Verse 3. Of the same import is 1 Pet. ii, 14, “Governors are for a praise to them that do well.” The rewards of state are not conferred on the Sabbath violator, the profane swearer, the adulterer, the gambler, the atheist, the deist, and the idolator. All that is praiseworthy and godly is encouraged by this righteous power. The very genius and spirit with which it is instinct and animated, and that which imparts to it vital energy, is the encouragement and efficient promotion of every thing that glorifies God, by the advancement of moral order, general purity of life and conversation, public and private peace and prosperity, and the goodness and felicity of the citizens of all ranks.

Such is the origin of this holy ordinance of civil government and such its character. Like the moral law revealed in the garden of Eden, originating from God the Creator, as Lord and sovereign of the universe, it is given into the hand of the Lord Jesus Christ, who illustrates its high, holy and benevolent import, in the word of inspiration, that in its constitution and administration men may not be left to grope in the dark, feeling after, but not finding what is for the general good, and often mistaking the right for the wrong; but that, "giving heed to a light shining in a dark place," they may be guided by that "wisdom which cometh down from above." These doctrines, so plainly uttered by the inspired penman, are adverse to the claims of tyrants, and disagreeable to unholy men who regard not the gospel. From them a denial of these precious truths, and opposition to their practical bearings, were to be expected. But that they should be impugned by any who profess to love our Lord Jesus Christ, to reverence his good and holy and just law, and to desire to see men of all ranks living in holy obedience to God, cannot be thought of without astonishment and pain.

III. *The duty of subjects* is here given in considerable detail. Every soul must be subject to the power. *He must subject himself*, so the word literally imports. This subjection must be "not only for wrath, but also for conscience' sake." Verse 5. It must not be rendered through mere fear of provoking the displeasure of him who bears the sword, but from a pious and conscientious sense of the duty which he owes to one who is clothed with divine authority to govern him, and who has a right from God to command his obedience. He rules in the name of Jehovah, and he that despises his authority, dishonors *him* "by whom kings reign." The reason of the obedience is not, that the people have set him up as a ruler. This would be absurd, it would be, the *people obeying themselves*. The ruler is the representative of those who elect him, and to obey *him* because he represents *them*, is to make themselves both rulers and subjects. The reason, and the only reason, assigned by the Holy Spirit, is, that they "*are ordained of God.*" When the reason does not exist, the duty is not enjoined. His being, "a terror to evil doers and a praise to them that do well," is resolvable into the general principle that he only executes the divine law as God's minister.

Another duty is expressed negatively. Thou shalt not resist; for this is the force of the phrase: "Whosoever resisteth, &c." No attempt must be made to subvert the power, to change the existing order of things, or bring it to an end.

In God's law, where a sin is forbidden, the contrary duty is commanded. "Thou shalt not steal" involves the positive, thou shalt be honest. Active support, by swearing oaths of allegiance when necessary, and using all our energy to perpetuate the government, because God has ordained it, and of course imparts to it his blessing and support, is enjoined. The magistrate bears the sword; and they who take the weapon of the ruler into their own hand, as is done by men in mobs and riots, resist the authority of the ruler and do as much as in them lies, to bring the power into contempt, and even to demolish it utterly. When resistance is forbidden, under pain of damnation, all revolutionary movements are prohibited. The object of all revolutions is to abolish the existing authority. But, that authority being ordained of God, the attempt to overthrow it is rebellion against Jehovah, and so merits damnation.

Another duty of the subject is fear. "Wilt thou not then be afraid of the power." verse 3. "Render fear to whom fear" is due, verse 7. This does not mean a slavish dread, such as that of the bondman, who trembles through fear of the cruel taskmaster's lash. It is the respect and reverence entertained for what is great, honorable, excellent and beneficently powerful. A dread of provoking wrath may be a subordinate ingredient in this sentiment; but is not that which characterizes it as the most prominent feature. "If thou do evil, be afraid, for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God." The reason of the fear is, that the ruler is the servant or minister of the Lord of hosts. If he were revered as the representative of the people, the people would reverence their own creature; in other words, they would regard themselves with reverential dread. God never commands men to do homage to themselves, but in all their doings to honor him. The honor enjoined in verse 7 is the same sentiment under another aspect. God has honored rulers by making them the higher powers and endowing them with a portion of his Spirit and of his glory, so that they are called gods; and therefore they are to be held in high estimation. No act should be done, no word spoken, designed or calculated to bring their persons or their government into contempt. They who do so, "speak evil of dignities and are foaming out their own shame." When Christ calls Herod a fox, and Paul calls Cæsar a lion, they are not speaking evil of dignities; for neither Herod nor Cæsar, as we shall shew hereafter, was God's minister. Ungodly rulers, who are furious and cruel as the roaring lion, or who climb into power, like the cunning fox, are not designed here by "the powers that be."

Finally, "pay ye tribute also"—render it to whom it is due, verses 6, 7. "For they are God's ministers." (*leitourgoi.*) Their ministry, though not in the church, nor exercised in ecclesiastical affairs, is sacred; therefore they must be supported. They that serve God on the throne, must live by the throne. A part of the property that God gives us, must be contributed to support his ministers. It yet remains to enquire whether Paul in this passage referred to the Roman Cæsar, ascribing the characteristics of civil power in the passage to him: and to make some general observations on the whole subject.

(To be continued.)

THE ADVANTAGES OF INTELLECTUAL CULTIVATION WHEN  
SUBSERVIENT TO TRUE RELIGION.

(Continued from page 23.)

In a former number some remarks were made of a general nature designed to recommend the cultivation of the mind in a knowledge of the divine perfections displayed in the works of creation and providence, and to vindicate this branch of intellectual improvement from some of the most popular objections. The subject is now resumed with the view of suggesting some counsel as to the means, and of pointing out the advantages of such an attainment.

It would be useless, and worse than useless, to overlook the intimate connection of such knowledge step by step with serious piety as its end, and the uniform dependance of piety itself on the word of God as its indispensable aliment and guide. To enlarge the mind, therefore, with a useful and practical knowledge of the glory of God in his works, the most obvious means is to familiarize it with the representations which are made of his glory in that respect in the Holy Scriptures. And here the value of divine revelation in this respect, and one important end of its gift to man, are clearly discovered. For as it is evident that men have in all ages had the splendors of creation spread before them as a most stupendous, magnificent and beautiful representation of the glory of the Creator, yet have they been most strangely insensible to such a display—so on the other hand the Holy Scriptures, replete as they are with direct and expressive references to that glory, teach us how important a circumstance in the system of God's dealings with intelligent creatures that glory is, and how lost and dark-

ened man is to acquire the knowledge of it. It is by taking up the torch of revelation and holding it to the works of the Almighty Creator that he may see what is otherwise invisible. Here, therefore, faith and piety are at once directed, assisted and elevated by such an application of the word of God.

In the very introduction of the sacred records there is a detailed account of the creation of the heavens and the earth and all the host of them. Here is one fact embodied in the history of six days, of greater magnitude, more awful and stupendous in its own nature, more pregnant with interest to intelligent beings, than any other recorded in the sacred history onward during a period of four thousand years to the crucifixion of the Messiah. Is it for nothing that this vast fabric, this system, to man boundless in its extent, endless in diversity, indescribable and inconceivable in its magnificence, order, beauty and sublimity—is it for nothing that all this is recorded on the authority of divine inspiration, as emerging out of nothing, and the details given minutely of the developements of power, wisdom and goodness infinite? And yet how few of those who read the scriptures, and read them too with devotion and with attention, are in the habit of pausing at this very vestibule and porch of the temple of divine truth? How few are there that have considered this fact of more interest than the subsequent details of inspired history? Do we not often read with a livelier interest the narrations of the events which mark the truly instructive lives of the patriarchs, than ever we considered this great, this wonderful movement of the Most High and Everlasting God? And why should we? If we contemplate with interest the moral principles developed in the lives of these great and holy men, if we attend with interest to the display of divine truth, goodness, power and wisdom in the providence of God towards them—can we correctly pass by unheeded a work far more glorious, presented to our view by the same inspired record, in the creation of all things visible and invisible? The evident disproportion between the vast universe and a solitary item in the system, between the calling the whole into being out of nothing, and supporting or directing a particular part when in existence, shews us how we ought to appreciate the one and the other. And it is from a careful and correct consideration of the Mosaic account of the creation that true religion derives some of its strongest weapons to defend itself against the secret stratagems and the open assaults of infidelity. Safely therefore may we recommend the careful perusal of the history of the creation, and a frequent meditation on that subject. It is the

word of God—it is the word of God narrating the *beginning* of his ways—it is the word of God presenting to our view the vast theatre of the universe, peopled with intelligent beings, and telling when, how and for what ends they were called into existence.

To this must naturally be added those passages of the Scriptures which directly refer to this display of the divine power, and with which the sacred writings are abundantly stored. It will appear remarkable to one who attentively considers this subject—when he remembers how small a part of the meditations of the pious it forms, how rarely it becomes the subject of godly conversation, and how very unfrequent it is made the matter or even reference of pulpit or ministerial instruction—how copiously it is nevertheless treated of in that volume which is on all hands confessedly the matter of pious meditation, the elements of godly conversation and the foundation of ministerial instruction. In the books of Moses throughout there are frequent allusions to it and numerous passages dwell upon it in language the most sublime—in the book of Job—in the Psalms—the Prophets—and in the didactic and epistolary passages of the New Testament, it is constantly kept in view.

Nothing is more obvious and peculiar in the whole system of religion given to the ancient people of God, than that from the beginning of the world they were directed to the worship of the Creator of heaven and earth as the only legitimate object of faith and divine worship. As such he was known from Adam to Noah; from Noah to Abraham; from Abraham to Moses. Hence when Moses appeared in the peculiar character which he sustained as the servant and messenger of God to the people of Israel for their deliverance from Egypt, he asserted his commission and authority from no other than the same glorious Being who had been long known among them. “The Lord God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you.” And one institute preeminent in its nature, the renovation of the Sabbatical law, was founded immediately upon a principle of faith of old acknowledged, the authority and example of Jehovah who in six days made heaven and earth and all they contain, to whose dominion all creation was subject, and whose incomparable glory was displayed in that dominion. “There is none like unto the God of Jeshurun, who rideth upon the heavens in thy help, and in his excellency on the sky.” “He stretcheth out the north over the empty place and hangeth the earth upon nothing.” “Is there any number

of his armies and upon whom doth not his light arise." "By his spirit he hath garnished the heavens." "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth." "My help cometh from the Lord which made heaven and earth." "Give thanks unto the Lord who made the heavens, who stretched out the earth above the water, who made great lights, the sun to rule by day, the moon and stars to rule by night; for his mercy endureth forever." "Happy is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help whose hope is in the Lord his God, which made heaven and earth, the sea and all that is therein."\* The whole of the 104 Psalm is a descant upon the glory of God in the works of creation and providence.

In these and various other passages of the Holy Scriptures, we see what aliment is furnished to the mind for the most profitable meditations on the works of God, presented to us in his word, teaching us to entertain more elevated conceptions of his incomparable excellency and his glorious majesty, and satisfying the souls of the pious with an inexpressible sense of the security which his favour and protection afford.

In the New Testament in like manner is the same subject exhibited to the minds of the pious in a variety of the most instructive and interesting lights. When our Redeemer would present the awful sovereignty and grace of the Father, he raises our minds to consider his supreme and boundless dominion over the whole creation. "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and revealed them unto babes, even so Father for so it seemed good in thy sight." Is the personal and essential glory of Jesus Christ to be demonstrated? We are told that "all things, visible and invisible, were created by him, and that the worlds are upheld by the word of his power." Of him it is said, "Thou, Lord, in the beginning, hast laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of thy hands; they shall perish but thou remainest; and they shall all wax old as doth a garment; and as a vesture shalt thou fold them and they shall be changed, but thou art the same and thy years shall not fail." But it would be endless to recapitulate the practical and instructive references to the works of creation and providence contained in the Scriptures. Enough has been shewn to make it evident that they furnish ample materials to enlarge and rejoice the pious with holy and profitable meditations on the works of his hands, and to shew

\* Deut. 33, 26. Job 25, 3, 26, 7, 13. Ps. 19, 1, 121, 2, 136, 5, 9, 146, 5, 6.



us also that such meditations are becoming godliness: and that a proper acquaintance with God's word has a direct tendency to familiarize the mind with his works. Indeed it is evident that the word of God was given to minister to such meditations, and that they form an essential part of true piety. Thou, Lord, hast made me glad through thy work: I will triumph in the work of thy hands: O Lord, how great are thy works, and thy thoughts are very deep. A brutish man knoweth not; neither doth a fool understand this.

But it is not enough to content ourselves with the general views suggested by such testimonies of the Holy Scriptures. These only exhibit God's works for our admiration and our devout consideration. To understand their extent and the import of his words it becomes us to investigate with intelligence and piety, these works themselves, that by arriving at some suitable apprehensions of their nature we may discern and admire the glory of their author. This, I confess, more especially addresses itself to those whose period of life, whose pursuits and occupations admit of such studies. And yet when it is considered how large a portion of the time of the most active in the necessary avocations of human life, passes away in indolence, or frivolous indulgence and conversation, and of those whose leisure is greater, how much is appropriated to reading and studies useless if not hurtful—it will be found that there are far more who can spare some time to such studies, as render the mind conversant with the works of God, than might, at first, be supposed. There are many familiar practical treatises on the science of Astronomy, and other parts of the system of creation, that furnish, with ordinary attention, some useful and most interesting and instructive representations of the wonders of creation. We gaze upon the firmament with a vacant mind, incapable of making any just reflections on the astonishing distance, magnitude and variety of those orbs, which cover the heavens with such glory. The daily rising and setting of the sun, the succession and variety of day and night and of the seasons, are continual illustrations of the wisdom and power of God, which for the most part are unseen through ignorance, and unheeded through our worldly or mistaken appetites. A very small degree of attention to the science respecting these lights of heaven which rule in succession, by day and by night, would make us understand more clearly how the "heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament sheweth his handy work; how day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth forth knowledge."\*

\* Psalm 19, 1, 2.

It is only by such studies that this degree of knowledge can be obtained ; but by such studies the minds of the devout are elevated and almost transported when they consider the sublimity, the regularity and the order with which these distant worlds continue, as through all ages since creation; so now, to move in the vast firmament which they occupy. "Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God of Hosts!" "O Lord, how manifold are thy works ; in wisdom hast thou made them all—my meditation of him shall be sweet, I will be glad in the Lord."\*

But such is the extraordinary disinclination of the human mind to an application of its powers to any elevating object, and even when imbued with piety, to any thing that does not appear to be connected with immediate advantage, that such contemplations are considered with drowsiness, or condemned at once, as uncertain, useless or unimportant at the best; and it is often objected, what advantage can be gained by an acquaintance with the distance and magnitudes of these orbs of heaven so remote as they are from us, and so little as we are related to them? An answer is at hand assuredly sufficient, when it is considered that they are the works of the Almighty, spread before us that in them we may contemplate the glory of the Creator in many important respects. "For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and godhead."† And the more clear and distinct our apprehensions of their true nature, the more clear and distinct must be our apprehensions of the infinite magnitude of the power and wisdom displayed in their creation. It is strange that men, and even pious men, if engaged in the purchase of a farm in the country, or a lot in the city, will measure the feet and the inches with the most diligent precision, and will even employ the scientific attainments of others to be assured of the exact dimensions of a little ground; and although elevated by their Maker's gift of intelligence and reason, to a high eminence and a glorious inheritance, with the creation of Jehovah spread before them, and his bible in their hands telling them that "the works of the Lord are great, sought out of all them that have pleasure therein,"‡ can yet deem it a trifling occupation and unworthy of attention to explore and consider with intelligence these his glorious works. The mistake is obvious—revelation and reason must concur in assuring us that we ought to learn to "magnify his work which men

\* Rev. 15. 3. Psalm 104, 24, 24. †Rom. 1, 20. ‡Ps. 111, 2.

behold ;" and that it is wise and pious to enlarge our minds with sound knowledge in connection with, and as subordinate to, divine revelation.

H. Q.

(To be continued.)

## ESSAYS ON PURGATORY.

## NO. I.

In discussing the subject of Purgatory it is not my design to charge upon the Popish church any sentiment that is not avowed by her acknowledged writers. A clear statement of the doctrine of Papists on the subject is furnished in the following quotations from approved manuals of elementary instruction, put into the hands of the laity. I quote first from a work entitled, "The Catholic Christian instructed in the sacraments, sacrifices, and observances of the Church," by way of question and answer—by the Most Reverend Dr. Challoner.

The 14th Chapter is entitled, "Of prayers for the dead and of Purgatory." p. 121. "Q. But are not they, who have passed this mortal life, arrived to an unchangeable state of happiness or misery, so that they either want not our prayers, or cannot be bettered by them?" "A. Some there are, though I fear but few, that have before their death, so fully cleared all accounts with the Divine Majesty, and washed away all their sins in the blood of the Lamb, as to go straight to heaven after death ; and such as these stand not in need of our prayers. Others there are, and their numbers are very great, who die in the guilt of deadly sin, and such as these go straight to hell—and therefore cannot be bettered by our prayers. But besides these two kinds, there are many christians who, when they die, are neither so perfectly pure and clean, as to exempt them from spot or stain, nor yet so unhappy as to die under the guilt of unrepented, deadly sin. Now such as these, *the Church believes* to be, for a time, in a middle state, which we call Purgatory ; and these are they, who are capable of receiving benefit by our prayers. For though we pray for all that die in the communion of the Church, because we do not know the particular state in which each one dies, yet we are sensible that our prayers are available for those only that are in this middle state."

This Dr. is a smooth writer. He pares the Popish dogmas as far as possible, of their roughness, that the reader may not be alarmed by their deformity. Others have not his "cunning craftiness," but exhibit the doctrine of Purgatory in its true

and native aspect. I quote next from another Papal manual entitled, "True Piety, or the Day well spent."

Page 214. "Without supposing a general combination of the whole Catholic world to deceive posterity, it must be acknowledged that the doctrine of Purgatory has no other origin than the *Eternal fountain of truth*. No Roman Catholic can therefore entertain the smallest doubt of it. It has been expressly defined by the Church, and has ever been considered as an Article of Faith. But nothing more concerning it is necessary to be believed, than that the souls detained in Purgatory are relieved by the suffrages of the faithful. What its precise punishments are, whether the anguish be merely mental, or whether the souls detained there are tortured with elementary fire, what the duration of their punishment is, whether days, months, years, or ages, we know not with absolute certainty; the Church having decided nothing upon any of these particular subjects. Yet that the pains of Purgatory far exceed whatsoever torture we are acquainted with on earth, seems clearly to follow from the design or object of this purgation. Its design is *to atone adequately to the rigor of infinite justice* for the offences committed by the creature against the Creator: *to atone* thus by sufferings undergone in the *sinner's own person after death*; when there shall neither be mercy nor merit; but an *atonement* inexorably enacted to the full, or until the very last farthing be discharged.—The souls in Purgatory love God indeed; their whole being is a Holocaust of love; but that very love in Purgatory must augment the afflictions of those that are detained there.—Besides, though it be not an article of faith that they are tormented by real elementary fire, it is still the opinion of St. Austin and of the other holy Fathers, founded upon the word of St. Paul, as well as upon the traditionary authority of eminent prelates in the first ages of the church. St. Thomas, after St. Austin and St. Cyril of Jerusalem, are of opinion that the fire of Purgatory differs only in duration from the fire of hell. It is farther to be observed that these illustrious and suffering souls are now **totally** unable to relieve themselves. They look to the *prayers*, to the *alms* and other good works of their brethren on this earth, which administer comfort to them and shorten the term of their punishments, in virtue of the communion of saints; all which considerations call upon us to interpose daily and assiduously in their behalf."

Here is Purgatory presented without disguise. According to this author, it is a place of "atonement inexorably enacted to the full;" made "by sufferings undergone in the sinner's

own person," and that "adequately to the rigor of Infinite justice." At the same time, these suffering souls are said "to look to the prayers, alms, good works" of the faithful by whose "suffrages" they are relieved—the term of their punishment shortened. Thus the sinner's sufferings are made the ground of atonement for sin. Infinite justice is represented as relaxing its rigor on account of prayers offered for the dead. "Good works" denote works of supererogation, or overplus of righteousness, which some can spare for the benefit of those in Purgatory; and "the suffrages of the faithful" and "*alms*" denote the monies paid to priests for their services at the altar in offering masses and otherwise officiating on behalf of departed souls, detained in a place of excruciating suffering. All this it is declared "has no other origin than the Eternal fountain of Truth."

I propose in this stage of the discussion to shew, that this abhorrent, blasphemous doctrine has its source, not in the "Eternal fountain of Truth," but in the ancient Pagan philosophy. To Plato is the Papal church indebted for her Purgatory. The following quotations from the "Phædon of Plato"—a dialogue on the immortality of the soul, translated from the original Greek by Madam Dacier, evince the truth of this. Page 160—3. "There is another pure earth above the pure heavens where the stars are, which is commonly called ether—all about it there are several abysses in its cavities. These abysses are bored through in several parts and have pipes communicating with one another, through which there run, rivers and fountains of fire.—They form several large currents, but there are four principal ones, the greatest of which is called the Ocean. Opposite to this is Acheron, which runs through the desert places, and falls into the marsh, which from it is called the Acherusian lake, whither all souls repair upon their departure from the body, and having stayed there, some a longer, some a shorter time, &c.—Between Acheron and the Ocean, there runs a third river which falls into a vast space *full of fire*. This is the flaming river called Phlegeton. Opposite to this is the fourth river, which falls first into a horrible place called by the name of Stygian, where it forms the formidable lake of Styx. This river is called by the poets Cocytus. Nature having thus disposed of all these things, when the dead arrive at the place whither their demon leads them, they are all tried and judged, both those who have lived a holy and just life, and those who have wallowed in injustice and impiety. Those who are found to have lived neither entirely a criminal, nor absolutely an innocent life, are sent to

the Acheron. There they embark in boats and are transported to the Acherusian lake, where they dwell and suffer punishment proportionable to their crimes, till at last, being *purified and cleansed from their sins*, and set at liberty, they receive the recompense of their good actions. Those whose sins are *incurable*, are thrown headlong into Tartarus, where they are kept prisoners forever. But those who are found guilty of *curable* sins, though very great ones, such as—killing a man, and repenting for it all their life time, must of necessity be cast into Tartarus; but after a year there, the tide throws the homicides back into Cocytus and the parricides into Phlegeton, which draw them into the Acherusian lake. There they cry out bitterly and *invoke* those whom they have deprived of life *to aid them* and conjure them for forgiveness. If they are prevailed with, they pass the lake and are delivered from their misery.—Those who have distinguished themselves by a holy life, are received above into that pure earth where they dwell; and those of them who are sufficiently purged by philosophy live forever without the body.”

Let the candid reader compare this account of a future state with the quotations from the Popish writers descriptive of their Purgatory, and he will find the conclusion irresistible that the latter has its source in the former. To illustrate and confirm still farther the heathen origin of Purgatory, I proceed to shew from historical records that the Church was very early corrupted by the Platonic philosophy; that some of the most eminent Fathers even of the second century, preferred the *Philosopher's cloak* to the humble garb of the primitive Presbyters. I quote from Mosheim, vol. 1, p. 164. cent. 2d :

“Towards the conclusion of this century, a new sect of Philosophers arose of a sudden, spread with amazing rapidity throughout the greatest part of the Roman empire, swallowed up almost all the other sects, and was extremely detrimental to the cause of Christianity. *Alexandria* in *Egypt*, which had been, for a long time, the seat of learning, and, as it were, the centre of all the liberal arts and sciences, gave birth to this new philosophy. Its votaries chose to be called *Platonics*; though, far from adhering to all the tenets of Plato, they collected from the different sects, such doctrines as they thought conformable to truth, and formed thereof one general system. The reason then, why they distinguished themselves by the title of *Platonics*, was, that they thought the sentiments of Plato, concerning that most noble part of philosophy, which has the Deity, *and things invisible*, for its objects, much more rational and sublime than those of the other philosophers.

This new species of Platonism was embraced by such of the Alexandrian Christians as were desirous to retain, with the profession of the gospel, the title, the dignity, and the habit of philosophers. It is also said to have had the particular approbation of *Athenagoras, Pantanus, Clemens the Alexandrian, and all those*, who, in this century, were charged with the care of the public school,\* which the Christians had at Alexandria."

Page 255, cent. III. "This victory was principally due to the influence and authority of Origen, who having been early instructed in the new kind of Platonism, *blended it unhappily with the purer and more sublime tenets of a celestial doctrine*, and recommended it, in the warmest manner, to the youth who attended his public lessons. The fame of this philosopher increased daily among the Christians; and, in proportion to his rising credit, his method of proposing and explaining the doctrines of Christianity gained authority, till it became almost universal. Besides, some of the disciples of Plotinus having embraced Christianity, on condition that they should be allowed to retain such of the opinions of their master as they thought of superior excellence and merit, this must also have contributed, in some measure, to turn the balance in favour of the sciences. These Christian philosophers preserving still a fervent zeal for the doctrines of their *Heathen chief*, would naturally embrace every opportunity of spreading them abroad, and instilling them into the minds of the *ignorant and the unwary*."

Vol. II. page 38, cent. V. "It will not be improper to observe here, that the famous *Pagan doctrine*, concerning the purification of departed souls, by means of a certain kind of fire, was more amply explained and confirmed now than it had formerly been. Every body knows, that this doctrine proved an inexhaustible source of riches to the clergy through the succeeding ages, and that it still enriches the Romish Church with its nutritious streams."

These extracts shew, that the church and the early fathers were corrupted by the doctrines of the *Platonic school*. The Doctors of the Alexandrian school, the great seat of learning in the second century, were deeply tainted with the Pagan philosophy. Among the Pagan doctrines of their adoption, was this one of Purgatorial fire, as a part of the eclectic system of the new Platonics. In the fifth century this doctrine was more fully developed; and became a source of revenue

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\* "The title and dignity of Philosophers delighted so much these honest men, that though they were advanced in the church to the rank of Presbyters, they would not abandon the philosopher's cloak. See Origen, Epist. ad Eusebium, tom. 1, opp. p. 2, edit. de la Rue."

during the *dark ages*, to a debased and licentious priesthood. Moshelm gives a graphic description of the debasement of the Roman clergy in the tenth century, and the profitable account to which they turned the Platonic doctrine of a Purgatorial fire.

Vol. 2, p. 406. "The state of religion in this century was such as might be expected in times of prevailing ignorance and corruption. The most important doctrines of Christianity were disfigured and perverted in the most wretched manner, and such as had preserved, in unskilful hands, their primitive purity, were nevertheless obscured with a multitude of vain opinions and idle fancies, so that their intrinsic excellence and lustre were little attended to; all this will appear evident to those who look with the smallest degree of attention into the writers of this age. Both Greeks and Latins placed the essence and life of religion in the worship of images and departed saints, in searching after with zeal, and preserving with a devout care and veneration, the sacred relics of holy men and women, and in *accumulating riches upon the priests and monks, whose opulence increased with the progress of superstition.* Scarcely did any Christian dare to approach the throne of God, without rendering first the saints and images' propitious by a solemn round of expiatory rites and lustrations. The ardor also with which relics were sought, surpasses almost all credibility; it had seized all ranks and orders among the people, and was grown into a sort of fanaticism and frenzy; and if the monks are to be believed, the Supreme Being interposed, in an especial and extraordinary manner, to discover to *doating old wives and bare headed friars* the places where the bones or carcases of the saints lay dispersed or interred. *The fears of Purgatory*, of that fire that was to destroy the remaining impurities of departed souls, were now carried to the *greatest height*, and exceeded by far the terrifying apprehensions of *infernal torments*; for they hoped to avoid the latter easily, by dying enriched with the prayers of the clergy, or covered with the merits and mediation of the saints; *while from the pains of Purgatory they knew there was no exemption.* The clergy, therefore, finding these superstitious terrors admirably adapted to increase their authority and to promote their interest, used every method to augment them, and by the most pathetic discourses, accompanied with monstrous fables and fictitious miracles, they labored to establish the doctrine of *Purgatory*, and also to make it appear that *they had a mighty influence in that formidable region.*"



What a picture! Yet this is the condition to which Popery tends to reduce its votaries; and such a state of society is the glory of the Popish priesthood; and in such a state of society was the doctrine of Purgatory matured. It has not its source therefore in the "Eternal Fountain of Truth," but in the darkness of Pagan ignorance and superstition, and was matured by a corrupt priesthood in a most degenerate age. To my present purpose is a striking passage of a lucid writer on this subject. "Papists lay great stress on the antiquity of their doctrines and practices; and we must allow they have antiquity to plead on behalf of their Purgatory. When captious Papists have asked us, "Where was your religion before Luther?" we have been accustomed to reply, "In the Holy Scriptures," and this is the truth. And when we ask Papists "Where was your Purgatory before Gregory the Great?" they can tell us, if they please, and tell us truly, "In the writings of heathen poets and philosophers." These are the worthy ancestors of modern and indeed of ancient Papists: and Cardinal Bellarmine (Bellarm. de Purgat. book I, chap. 11) founds an argument on behalf of Purgatory upon this very circumstance, that the ancient Heathens believed in it."\*

It will be perceived by a review of the extracts from Popish authors that the doctrine of Purgatory proceeds upon the principle that Jesus Christ has not fully satisfied for all the sins of his people; but that the sinner himself must satisfy for certain of his sins, which if he fail to do before death, he must go to Purgatory and expiate them in that place of torment, where "atonement is inexorably enacted to the full." In opposition to this exceedingly heretical and abhorrent view, it will be shewn hereafter, that Jesus Christ has fully satisfied for all the sins of all whom he redeemed, and that they, believing on him, are immediately at death "received up to glory." Also the arguments of Papists in support of their delusion will be refuted. In the mean time, let the reader "beware lest any man spoil him through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world and not after Christ."

W. L. R.

\* Mr. Gavin's Protestant, vol. II. p. 202.

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LIFE OF JOHN ROGERS, THE PROTO-MARTYR, UNDER QUEEN MARY.

This individual, a brief sketch of whose life we lay before the reader, is known as the Proto-Martyr, having been the first that suffered Martyrdom in the reign of Queen Mary. He was educated at Cambridge, where he attained to great pro-

iciency in literature. Having been chosen by a company of merchants to be their chaplain, he removed to Antwerp, where he continued several years. There he became acquainted with some individuals who had fled thither from the persecution of the Papists under Henry VIII. of England. Through them he was brought to a knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus Christ, and he readily embraced it when known. He united his labors with those of Tindale and Coverdale in the laborious work of translating the Scriptures into English; and by this means became so familiar with the doctrines of the Gospel that he was ever after an intelligent, zealous and untiring advocate of gospel truth and worship against the idolatrous tenets and practices of the Popish church. Being called to the pastoral charge of a congregation at Wittenberg, he continued to labor there with great faithfulness and success until he was sent for to England by Bishop Ridley, during the reign of king Edward. Returning to his native country, he preached faithfully and zealously until the accession of Queen Mary. In the beginning of her reign, he very earnestly exhorted the people to adhere steadfastly and perseveringly to the doctrine they had been taught, and to beware of "pestilent Popery," idolatry and superstition. His zeal was not long overlooked; and accordingly he was soon called before her privy council, where he answered so scripturally, sensibly and boldly that for that time he was dismissed. But after the Queen's proclamation prohibiting such preaching as he and others employed in defence of the truth and against Popery, he was again called before the Popish Bishops, who seemed to thirst for his blood, and after examination was committed prisoner, first to his own house and afterwards to Newgate, in which latter place he was confined a long time among the malefactors in the prison. In January, 1555, he was examined during several days before Bishop Gardiner and others, in an illiberal and cruel manner, not being permitted to speak nor answer for himself, nor to defend his doctrines in writing.

On the 29th of the same month, Gardiner and others pronounced sentence against him, setting forth that he had "held, taught and obstinately defended heresies and damnable opinions, such as that the Church of Rome is Anti-Christ; and that, in the sacrament of the altar, there is not substantially and really the natural body and blood of Jesus Christ."—"We do therefore judge and condemn thee, John Rogers, as guilty of most detestable heresies, and as an obstinate, impenitent sinner, refusing to return to the lap and unity of the HOLY MOTHER

CHURCH; and that thou hast been by law excommunicated; and being an heretic, to be given over to the secular power."

When this sentence was read, Mr. Rogers again attempted to speak, but was not permitted. He then asked of them to permit his wife, who, he said, was a poor stranger in the kingdom,\* to see him before he suffered; but this also was denied, and she was absolutely prohibited from visiting him. Being remanded to prison, he employed the time that transpired between the pronouncing of his sentence and the day fixed for his execution, in close intercourse with God, in recording the questions propounded to him with the answers he would have given, had he been permitted; and in preparing his dying testimony on behalf of the truth which he was soon to seal with his blood. For a full account on these points the reader is referred to Fox's Martyrology. We give the following as a specimen of the true wisdom, piety and zeal of this great and good man:

"But here (says he) they will cry out; Lo these men will be still a John the Baptist, an Apostle, a Prophet, &c. I answer, We make not ourselves like them in the gifts and power bestowed of God on them, to the working of miracles and the like; but that we claim to be like them, in believing the same doctrines and in suffering persecution and shame for the same. We preach their very doctrine and none other, which we have proffered to prove again and again. And for this cause, we suffer the like reproach, shame and rebuke in the world; suffering the same persecution, to the loss of our goods and even of our lives, being assured of a joyful resurrection, and to be crowned in glory with them, according to the infallible promises made unto us in Christ, our only and all-sufficient Mediator, Reconciler, Priest, Sacrifice and King; who for us, as well as them, hath pleased the Father, pacified his wrath due to our sins, and in whom we shall be without spot or wrinkle in his sight; although we, of and in ourselves, are polluted with many filthy sins, which if the measureless and unspeakable love of God in Christ did not put away, by not imputing them to us, would have brought us to everlasting damnation and death perpetual.—In this and in no other sense do we affirm ourselves to be like the Prophets, Apostles, and Martyrs. And so far ought all christians to be like them, according to the measure of faith and diversity of the gifts of the Spirit, that God hath given unto them."

"But let us now consider, that if it be God's good will and pleasure to give the members of his beloved Church into the

\* He had married at Antwerp.

hands of their enemies, it is to chasten, try and prove them, to bring them to an unfeigned acknowledgment of their natural perverseness and disobedience towards God and his commandments, that they may be brought to a true and earnest repentance, and to sigh and cry for the forgiveness of their sins, and for the aid of the Spirit daily to mortify and subdue all evil desires in future. In truth he doth but chasten them for a little time according to his fatherly love and good pleasure; while their enemies, into whose hands he giveth them for a time to be chastened and tried, he will utterly and everlastingly destroy. Let Herod tell what he got by killing James and by persecuting Peter and Christ's beloved spouse, the Church. Verily God thought him not worthy to have death ministered by men or angels, or any other creature than the small, filthy vermin, which were appointed to destroy his beastly, tyrannous body. Pharaoh and Nebuchadnezzar, with all their pride and might, must at length let God's people go from their hands, their bonds and their cruelty; for when they could obtain nothing but extreme cruelties and death, then did God arise as one awoke out of sleep and destroyed those enemies of his flock with a mighty hand and stretched out arm. And think ye that the bloody Bishop of Winchester and his bloody brethren, shall escape? Or that England for their offences, and especially for the countenance and maintenance of their idolatry, and for wilfully following them in it, shall not be sorely punished? If God look not mercifully upon England, the seeds of destruction are already sown in her by these tyrants and anti-christian prelates, papists and traitors to God and their country. And yet they speak of mercy, of blessing, of the Catholic church, of unity, of power, and of strengthening the realm. This double dissimulation will appear in the day of the Lord's visitation, when those crown-shorn tyrants who have shown no mercy to the poor godly sufferers, shall have judgment without mercy."

The fourth of February, 1535, was the day fixed for his execution. On the morning of that day he was awakened out of a sound sleep by the wife of the keeper of the prison, who suddenly warned him to make haste and prepare for the fire. He manifested great composure of mind both by his conversation and conduct. Being brought before Bishop Bonner, he "was degraded" as preparatory to his execution. To Bonner he said he had one favor to ask, which was that he might be permitted to speak a few words to his wife and children before his death. This request being inhumanly denied and insult added to the denial, he calmly replied, "You shew your char-

ity what it is." The appointed hour having arrived, he was delivered up to the Sheriffs of London to be taken to Smithfield, the place where he was to suffer. One of them asked him whether he would revoke his abominable doctrine and his evil opinion of the sacrament of the altar. His reply was, "What I have preached, I will by the grace of God, seal with my blood." The Sheriff responded, "Then thou art an heretic." That, said Mr. Rogers, shall be seen at the day of judgment. The Sheriff saying he would never pray for him, he answered, "But I will pray for you." As they proceeded towards Smithfield, Mr. Rogers repeated devoutly the 51st Psalm, many of the people that followed rejoicing exceedingly in his constancy. His wife and ten children by her side, with one at her breast, met him by the way, this being the only opportunity afforded them of seeing one another any more in the flesh. This truly affecting scene, while the sight of his wife and children seemed to be very pleasing to him, appeared not in the least to shake his confidence nor disturb his composure; so graciously was he supported by Him, who hath promised, *I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.* When he came to the stake, he showed great constancy and patience. Not being allowed to speak much, he briefly exhorted the people to continue steadfastly in that faith and true doctrine, which he had taught them, for the confirmation of which he was not only willing cheerfully to endure all such bitterness and cruelty as he had been already called to suffer, but also most gladly to resign his life and give his body to be burned in the flames, for a testimony of the same. Pardon was now offered him, upon condition of his recanting. This he firmly refused with the magnanimity of a true Martyr, preferring death to life obtained upon such terms. He suffered with the greatest patience and fortitude, "washing his hands as it were in the flames," and ejaculating with his last breath, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit."

Thus died, triumphant in the faith, this blessed Proto-Martyr. In his death was realized the truth of the ancient observation, "That the blood of the Martyrs is the seed of the Church;" for multitudes, instead of being intimidated, were encouraged by his example, while not a few, who before seemed to care for none of these things, were led to investigate the principles and search after the cause for which such learned and pious men were contented to die, "not counting their lives dear."

REPORT OF THE REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN HOME AND FOREIGN  
MISSIONARY SOCIETY IN IRELAND.

(Abridged from the Covenanter.)

Amidst the sublime visions that cheered the solitude and gladdened the heart of John in Patmos, that was one of peculiar interest in which he beheld an angel on his flight through the expanse of heaven, having "the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people." This venerable servant of Christ had been cut off from the employment of proclaiming a Saviour's love to perishing sinners. How consoling the discovery, that although he was in exile, the work was still going forward; and that even after successive heralds of the cross had rested from their labors, the everlasting gospel would still be made known, until the proclamation would be made to every nation under heaven. Regarding the vision vouchsafed to John as no less a command and a promise than a prediction, we recognize in it our imperative duty to go forward in the holy cause of evangelizing the nations. The will of the Church's Head is, that the gospel should be preached to every creature under heaven. A Covenanted Testimony is deserving of our best energies, as it is destined hereafter to gather together and unite the scattered followers of the Lamb, and to purify and bless the nations. The herald of mercy is on the way. His lofty movements indicate the direction the Church should follow. The flight of the angel, the first herald of reformation, began with the Waldenses, the Lollards, the Culdees and other witnesses of the truth. Our imperative duty is to imitate their fervent zeal, and to follow the illuminated track which they marked out, in proclaiming the everlasting gospel as the grand means of emancipation from anti-christian superstition and Pagan darkness.

With these views of their own and the Church's privileges and duties, the Directors submit to Synod a brief account of their proceedings, &c. during the past year. Grateful for the divine kindness experienced in the cordiality and unanimity which have characterized the doings of the Board, we proceed to notice the Society's HOME OPERATIONS.

*Ballyclare.* This lately erected congregation has been regularly supplied with preaching, on alternate Sabbaths, and had dispensed the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. The season was highly comfortable and refreshing. The number of communicants was upwards of fifty; and it is believed

many of the large concourse of strangers, carried away strong impressions in favor of the excellence and privileges of the Covenanted Church. The congregation has also been ministerially visited by the Rev. S. Cameron, who reports favorably of the religious knowledge and practice of the people. We can state that the members walk consistently with their profession and manifest a steadfast attachment to the testimony of Christ.

*Coronery.* This small congregation have made considerable progress towards erecting a house for public worship. Their pastor, Rev. W. Gibson, is indefatigable in promoting the undertaking. He is also assiduous in instructing the young in a knowledge of the scriptures and catechisms, and preaches frequently at Missionary stations in the vicinity. The attendance is good and the prospect encouraging. Various works on the Covenanted testimony have been circulated, and in King's county, copies of the Confession of Faith, &c. have been anxiously enquired after and joyfully received. Amidst difficulties unknown to others, Mr. G. and his people continue to hold fast their profession. The cause of truth, under the divine blessing, will prevail in this remote and formerly neglected region.

*Tassagh.* For two years great interest has been excited here by the preaching of Reformed Presbyterian ministers. The audiences have been very numerous, Several have acceded to the communion of the church, and many persons have been led to see the evils of the *new National System of Education.*

*Dublin.* This city was visited by the Rev. Messrs. Dyck, Smyth, Graham, Henry and Stewart in succession, by whom the preaching of the word was dispensed regularly for six months. On application of the society, the Board agreed to continue the supply. Rev. Thomas Houston consented to visit the people, and continued with them one month. He was succeeded by Mr. James Reid, licentiate. The use of a house for public worship has been obtained, free of expense, through the kindness of *G. Matthews, Esq.* who has manifested a lively interest in the mission. The members of the church in Dublin, though few in number, are zealously attached to the testimony, prayerful and blameless in their outward walk, and earnestly desirous of promoting the cause of pure and undefiled religion among the neglected population of the metropolis. The prospect of accession to the church is not great; but it is desirable in a place so important to continue the supply of gospel ordinances. It seems to be the voice of

Divine Providence to go forward, waiting the time, when the gracious Lord who sitteth on high, will render the "day of small things" a day of great things, and when "they of the city shall flourish as the grass of the earth."

*Mourne and Grange.* Strong desire exists throughout these districts to enjoy gospel ordinances in their purity. The Directors regret that they have not been able, from the limited means placed at their disposal, to supply the people with preaching as they could have desired. The Rev. W. Gibson has visited the former place and attended to family visitation. We trust from arrangements made, that through the instrumentality of the Missionary Society, a more extensive sowing of the good seed will obtain, and greater cultivation be given to that already sown in these districts.

*Finvoy, Newry, Killinchy, Omagh, Donegall* and other places, have enjoyed, in limited degree, the watering of the word during the past year; but for want of laborers and pecuniary means, none of these places have obtained the amount of cultivation that is desirable. For all these and other places, we need several laborers in addition to those that are already in the vineyard—the fervent prayers and pecuniary offerings of those who are concerned for the revival of the Lord's work throughout the land. Let us extreat the glorious Lord of the harvest to afford these means and bless them. Then shall we see the broken down walls of the sanctuary built up, the widely neglected districts of the land becoming fruitful in plants of righteousness, and the wilderness and solitary place putting on the freshened verdure and bloom of a garden which the Lord hath blessed.

ENGLISH MISSION.—In accordance with Synod's instructions, Rev. John Nevin has been ordained and has entered upon his pastoral duties in *Liverpool*. Various circumstances have hitherto prevented the erection of a house of worship as was designed, and also rendered impracticable the dispensation of the sacrament of the Supper, as was contemplated. It is however satisfactory to learn, that the congregation enjoy mutual peace and concord, under the assiduous attention of their pastor to his ministerial duties.

The supply granted at last Synod to *Manchester* has been duly furnished by the Western Presbytery. Several have acceded to the communion of the church. With consent of the Board, application has been made to the Scottish Synod for aid in addition to that which can be furnished from this country. Our brethren there have kindly consented to give some assistance. The Directors believing this to be at present



their most promising Missionary station, earnestly recommend it to the consideration of Synod. When unexampled efforts are made for advancing the cause of orthodox Presbyterianism in England, we have a special call and peculiar encouragement to unfurl the standard of the testimony and plant it in those large commercial and manufacturing districts, which form so many centres of communication with the whole kingdom. To such an effort we are pledged by our covenant. The scattered children of the covenant, residing in England, demand it of us, and present circumstances, both in reference to the English hierarchy and to the cause of Orthodox Dissent, encourage us to make the attempt. It is high time to commence a vigorous sowing of the seed of the reformation corn, assured that though we may have passed off the stage of time before the season of ingathering shall have come, the Lord will yet own his covenant, and make it the glory of England, as it is destined to be the glory of all lands.

BRITISH NORTH AMERICAN COLONIES.—At the date of our last communications from the British Provinces, our Missionaries were in good health and were prosecuting their arduous work with vigor. At their various widely scattered stations, the interest of the people in their ministrations continues unabated. Although opposition is made from different quarters, numbers are from time to time added to the church. The missionaries, besides preaching on Sabbath and very frequently on week days, attend regularly to the instruction of the young, to visiting and catechising the members of the church, and to meetings of Presbytery and Sessions. They earnestly importune the Board to send them additional laborers. Believing this to be a most important field of missionary enterprise, and regarding the present as a suitable time for attempting the wide dissemination of gospel truth in a country, which seems destined, at no distant day, to become a great and independent empire, the Directors would most gladly afford such help to the missionaries there as would enable them more effectually to prosecute the mission. They earnestly recommend their case to the Synod and to all who feel an interest in the undertaking. In some parts of the Colonies, the people are making extraordinary efforts to obtain the public ministrations of the Word by ministers of the Reformed Presbyterian Church. A house of worship has been erected in St. Johns, and the people have petitioned the Synod here, through the Presbyteries in the Colonies, for a Pastor.

In conclusion, the Directors regard the Missionary enterprise of the Reformed Covenanted Church as involving a most mo-

mentous responsibility. Whether they view it in reference to the present state of those who inhabit the dark and destitute parts of earth, or in respect to future generations, they are ready to exclaim "*who is sufficient for these things.*" At the present time men's hearts are failing for fear in contemplating the changes that are unfolding in the moral history of the world, and in looking forward to those wonderful events that, as they rapidly approach, cast their shadows before. Amid all that is perplexing in such anticipations, it is matter of unfeigned and continual thanksgiving, that Zion's King presides supreme over all changes, and that he controls and directs them for the advancement of his own glory and the best interest of his body, the Church. The doctrine of the Messiah's exalted Headship, while it powerfully declares our duty in relation to the coming of his kingdom, at the same time assures us, that the amplest success must ultimately crown our exertions. The reins of government are in wise and powerful hands. He must reign till he hath put down all opposing authority and rule. The political changes of the nations—the movements in various sections of the Church and in the precincts of Mahomedan delusion and Pagan darkness, furnish indubitable evidence, that the glorious Mediator has already taken his fan in his hand and is about thoroughly to purge his floor—and that his work of overturning is even now commenced, which will not cease till the interests of Antichrist shall be completely ruined; and the mountain of the Lord's house established above the hills. Oh! let us feel, from such solemn and cheering considerations, the imperative call to awake to redoubled exertions, for the diffusion of the Lord's light and saving health throughout the nations. Let us beware lest indifference or worldly-mindedness prevent us from embarking, with all our energies, in this high and holy enterprize. In a service of this kind, there is no neutrality. He that is not with us is against us. As covenanted witnesses for Christ we have all professed more than others. Let our steadfast devotedness to the Lord's work attest that, notwithstanding our limited means, our doings correspond with our profession. Under the gracious encouragement of the Lord of Hosts, let us urge forward our enterprize of mercy, in the full assurance that our labor shall not be in vain in the Lord—that the saints of the Most High God will yet take the kingdom and possess it—and that, despite of all opposition, "the kingdoms of this world will" ere long "become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ."

## ITEMS OF INTELLIGENCE.

**WARS IN AFRICA.**—Along the whole line of coast, from the Gallinas to Grand Sesters, wars rage with unabated fury among the tribes. They increase with the demand for slaves, and are instigated and urged on by those monsters in human shape, the slave traders. These fiends are always to be found near the scenes of African warfare, ready to purchase the victims of that cruelty which they excite among the natives, and which they carry out with awful refinement in the slave factories, on board the prison ships, and at the marts where they expose to sale the bodies and souls of human beings. Thousands every year lose their lives, in the wars waged for the purpose of taking prisoners to be bartered to the traders, and thousands more are torn from all that are dear to them—husbands from wives, parents from children, brothers from sisters, and all from the land of their birth—to be consigned to all the horrors that await them in the “*tender mercies of the wicked,*” who sell, buy, hold and work them as beasts of burden.

Poor bleeding Africa! And must thou thus be lacerated continually with fresh incisions, be made to bleed anew at a thousand pores, be kept in constant ferment, and thy sons doomed to a continuance of their accumulated sufferings, to satisfy the cupidity—never satiated—of avaricious men, who are callous to all sense of thy wrongs, and who often add insult to injury by speaking of “bettering the condition” of those that are brought from thy shores? Do we inquire into the cause of all this evil? It is found in Slavery. So long as men are found to hold their fellow men in bondage, men will be found to engage in the traffic and to originate and perfect the schemes by which it may be prosecuted. Let slavery be banished from the earth, and an end will be put at once and forever to the trade carried on by “men-stealers” and to all the horrors and abominations that accompany it.

**SUFFERINGS IN THE SHETLAND ISLANDS.**—From a representation of deficiency in the necessaries of life, in the Shetland Islands, in consequence of the failure of the whale and herring fisheries, and a deficiency of the crop for the last season, the Synod of Scotland appointed a committee to make enquiry, and on their report it has been ascertained that the inhabitants of fourteen parishes, numbering about 30,000 have the means of sustenance for not more than four months. In the island of Syke, in addition to the deficiency of food, the inhabitants have suffered extremely from want of fuel during the severe cold of last winter, their peat having been destroyed by the unfavorable state of the weather during the season of preparing it. The turf huts generally and many of the cottages were pulled down, and their materials appropriated for fuel.—*Boston Daily Adv.*

The Eastern Subordinate Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church meets in New-York on the 9th inst. at half past 7 o'clock, P.M.

The Southern Presbytery holds its semi-annual meeting in New-York, to commence on the 8th inst. at half past 7 o'clock, P.M.

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EXPOSITION OF ROMANS XIII. 1—7.

(Continued from page 74.)

We are now to enquire, whether the Holy Spirit characterizes in this passage the imperial government of Rome, and enjoined on all the saints in the empire to be subject to it, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake. If this be the import of the text, then the constitution and frame of the Roman government was the ordinance of God, the reigning emperor and all the subordinate officers of state were God's ministers. On this hypothesis the principles of that government were such as God approved; for they originated from himself, and the rulers, supreme and subordinate were inducted into office by the Lord Jehovah, as really and truly as the government of Israel was an institution of Heaven, and Moses and Joshua inaugurated by God to rule over his covenant people. If the Roman Government be here meant, then Christians were bound to incorporate themselves with the empire, yield conscientious and entire support to the existing magistrates, and pray that the government might be blessed of God, prospered and perpetuated. All this they would be enjoined to do, on pain of damnation. Still more, as no scripture is of private interpretation, and as the epistle is addressed to all the Lord's people, wherever they dwell, and under whatever government they live, it binds all, if this application be just, to recognize as the ordinance of God, every government under which they are; and to support and maintain it, because God is its author. All attempts on the part of subjects, to revolutionise the government of any country would be rebellion against God, and an attempt to abolish what is established by divine authority. In one word, on this suppo-

sition, passive obedience and non-resistance to every government on earth, however constituted or administered, would be enjoined, on pain of eternal damnation. In a republican country, where the doctrine of human rights is so zealously maintained as in these United States, those who believe the Bible to be the word of God will be slow to assent to all this.

If this were the meaning of the Apostle, no book in the world could be more adverse to the liberty of nations, or to the rights of subjects, than the Bible. These general principles make the application of the apostolic treatise, to the Roman Cæsars, altogether inadmissible. But there are many other cogent reasons, which demonstrate that such an application of it, was not and could not possibly be intended.

The seven headed and ten horned beast of the sea described by John, Rev. xiii. it is agreed by all Protestant commentators, was the Roman government. Let the reader consult Newton, Lowman, Johnson, Faber, Durham, McLeod, and Stephen on prophecy, and Henry, Guise, Gill, and Scott in their expositions of the book of Revelation. The seven heads are the seven forms of government. The imperial form or seventh head existed at the time when the Epistle to the Romans was written. "Upon his heads *was* the name of blasphemy." Rev, xiii. 1. Every head, that which gave life and motion to the whole body, is labelled by the Holy Ghost, with the name blasphemy. God would not so label his own holy ordinance of civil government. In the third verse, we are told "the dragon gave him his power and seat and great authority." The dragon is the old serpent, the devil and Satan.—The devil gave this beast, or the Roman government, his *dunamin*, physical force, *thronon*, actual investiture, and *exousian*, governmental influence. And v. 6. "He opened his mouth in blasphemy." His laws, edicts and administration were blasphemous. How could they be otherwise issuing from a head of blasphemy? Again, "he made war with the saints," v. 7. So far from being a praise to them that do well, he waged war with the righteous. Instead of the saints of God yielding subjection for conscience' sake, it was the ungodly world that rendered allegiance to the Roman power. "And all the world wondered after the beast, and they worshipped the dragon, which gave power to the beast, and they worshipped the beast." verses 3. and 4. "And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life, of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." v. 8. The same beast is referred to, chap. xix. 19, 20, "And I saw the beast and the kings of the earth and their

armies gathered together to make war against him that sat on the throne and against his army. And the beast was taken and with him the false prophet, that wrought miracles before him, and with which he deceived them that had the mark of the beast and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast into the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone." So far from the saints being bound to acknowledge the Roman government, John here instructs us that those who do so are *deceived*: so far from its being a duty to do homage to it as God's ordinance, those who do so are cast into the bottomless pit. "Let him that readeth, understand."

This beast of the sea is the same as the fourth beast described in the seventh chapter of Daniel. "I saw, in the night visions, and behold a fourth beast dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly, and it had great iron teeth: it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it." v. 7. The same description is repeated in the 19th and 23d verses. Henry, in his commentary on this passage, says: "We understand the fourth beast to signify, the Syrian empire, or the Roman, or the former as the figure of the latter." Again: "It has a *farther reference*," besides that to Antiochus, "and foretels the like persecuting power and rage, in Rome heathen, and no less in Rome papal against the Christian religion. And John, in his visions and prophecies, which point precisely at Rome, has plain reference, in many particulars, to these visions here." To this agree Scott, Gill, and other protestant commentators. Dr. Scott expressly calls the beast of the Revelation, and of Daniel, or the Roman government, "*the Devil's vicegerent*." That government described by Daniel and by John cannot be the power referred to by the apostle in the 13th of Romans. A beastly, blasphemous, tyrannical power, "devouring and stamping to pieces," the nations, dreadful and terrible, devoted of God to destruction, his "body to be destroyed"—or its constitution to be annihilated, and "given to the devouring flame" as the reprobate are cast into hell—that power cannot be ordained of God. It cannot be that the same power originates from "*the bottomless pit*," and receives its investiture from the great red dragon, and also emanates from heaven, and is constituted by God. It is true that some commentators have adopted all this, and yet it is most preposterous.

2. The apostle cannot mean, in this chapter to the Romans, the Roman government; for he clearly sets aside this view of the passage, in his first epistle to the Corinthians, vi. 1—7. "Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law

before the unjust—I speak to your shame.—Now, therefore, there is utterly a fault among you, because ye go to law one with another. Why do ye not rather take wrong? Why do ye not rather suffer yourselves to be defrauded?” The province of Achaia of which Corinth was the capital, had before the writing of this epistle been subjugated to Rome and was a part of the empire. Roman judges presided in its tribunals. He forbid christians to go to law, before Roman magistrates. Would he have done so had they been God’s ordinance? To settle the “*matters*” that one citizen has against another, is one object for which God has instituted civil government. So it was in Israel. Moses says: “When they have a matter they come to me and I judge between one and another.” Ex. xviii. 16. Would God have reprov’d his people, for appealing for the security of their rights to that very power, which he had ordained for the preservation of them? Was there ever such a reproof given to the Israelites for making application to those judges that we know were ordained of God? Besides, the apostle designates the Roman authority in Corinth “*unjust.*” This was not merely, nor chiefly, because the judges were ungodly men, however true it is that they were so. But because their authority was unjust and unrighteous. The judges were not personally more unholy men, than the Roman emperors—that they could scarcely be. Many of them were not more corrupt than magistrates usually are. But their authority derived from the emperor, a head of blasphemy, was unjust and so not approved of God. This is the reason that there was “utterly a fault” among christians in going to law with one another before them. The act of “sueing at the law,” their brethren, before an illegitimate power, which they could not acknowledge as God’s ordinance, was altogether unworthy of them, and inconsistent with the allegiance which they owed to Christ their king. That the apostle should have recorded such a reproach of God’s ordinance, as he does here of the Roman courts in Corinth is impossible.

3. An inspection of the passage, and testing by it the Roman government, apart from all other reasons, demonstrate that the pagan government could not be intended. “The powers that be are ordained of God.” The Roman government did not profess to derive its power from God. “The world by wisdom knew not God.” They were “without God,” (*atheoi*) atheists, literally. Such is the account which this apostle gives of the wisest of the Greeks and Romans. The Romans, indeed, had their Jupiter Stator, Jupiter the founder of the city. But the Jupiter of the heathen was not the true God.

The God who created the heavens and the earth, they did not acknowledge as the God of the empire. The government that does not profess, nor admit that God is its author cannot be the ordinance of God. Professing to derive all its authority from a false god, or from the sword, and making no pretensions to honor the living God, how could it be esteemed his ordinance? Had the emperors been interrogated, whether as emperors or as men, they acknowledged the Christian's God of whom Paul wrote, they would have answered promptly and decidedly in the negative. Would any nation recognize, as an ambassador from a foreign power, one who set up no claim to that function, and who even denied that he was its minister? Is it less absurd that he should be esteemed a power ordained of God, who professes no subjection to Jehovah? Again, the power described, is not a terror to good works, but to the evil! Was not the government of pagan Rome, a terror to all christians and adverse to their whole system of doctrine, and to all their devotional duties? Nero, in the providence of God, was the reigning Emperor, when this epistle was written. Of him all history bears witness that he was an enemy of all that was good, and that there was no more certain way of incurring his displeasure, and becoming the object of his wanton cruelty, than by doing good works. Indeed, "good works," in the scriptural sense of that phrase never were and could not be encouraged, by the Roman magistracy.

A third characteristic is: "Do that which is good and thou shalt have praise of the same: For he is the minister of God to thee for good." Even in relation to the common social virtues, this could not be affirmed of the emperor or of other officers of the Roman state. These good works are in part enumerated, in the latter part of the chapter, from the 8th verse to the end. Among them is "casting off the works of darkness" or the rejection of all pagan idolatries. Would the government praise the christians for this? Among the good works, for which they should be praised of "the powers that be," is the "putting on of the armour of light," the whole christian panoply—the reception and profession of all gospel truth, a faithful testimony against all sin, using the sword of the spirit which is the word of God, and the practice of all the holy duties of the christian religion. Would the disciple of Christ, "have praise of the same" for all this? Was the power God's minister for the encouragement of all these good deeds?

So far from it, the emperor was *pontifex maximus*, high priest of all the pagan idolatries, and was the head of the college



of augurs, or soothsayers, and this in his imperial function, as a part of the imperial dignity. The twenty-six thousand gods of the Roman pantheon, or temple of all the gods, were under his protection, and their worship patronised by a fundamental maxim of State. The supreme power of the empire, was the head of all the idolatries of the world, as really and emphatically as the Roman pontiff is the head of the Popish idolatry, and as the pope is the civil governor of the ecclesiastical estate. When Nero and other emperors, persecuted with fierce and relentless cruelty, the early christians from the days of Paul, to the age of Constantine, they acted in the true spirit of their magistracy, and according to the constitution of the empire. The tendency and professed aim of the christian religion was to extirpate pagan idolatry, and exalt the worship of the true God on the ruins of all blind pagan devotions. The Roman government was, in its very constitution, a praise to all that christianity sought to abolish, and a terror to all that it sought to promote. That power did not execute wrath on him that did evil, but on him that did good. In one word, there is not one characteristic of the power here delineated, that could with any semblance of plausibility be thought applicable to the imperial government of Rome. Nor can it be plead in behalf of any government that does not answer to the attributes of God's ordinance here described.

It may now be proper to show the futility of some of the reasons that have been assigned for applying this text to the Pagan Cæsars.

1. It has been said—What was the use of these precepts to Christians in the apostolic age, if they did not refer to the existing order of society? We reply—The uses were many.

1. To teach the early christians that, though the whole system of Jewish civil regimen was speedily to be abolished in the dissolution of their commonwealth, yet that civil government is an ordinance of God under the New Testament.
2. To point out the nature of the ordinance as originating from God, as its author, and not from the sword of the conqueror, nor from the will of a majority of the people, nor from them at all, as its ultimate source; and as a holy ordinance for the encouragement and preservation of order among men.
3. To teach them what kind of a government they should seek to have established when the saints of the Most High should take the kingdom.
4. To make them the depositories of a record which they must transmit to unborn generations for the instruction of all nations, whithersoever the gospel might be sent, and to render those inexcusable who would refuse to

subject their civil constitutions to him who is Lord of all. 5. To place before them a picture of God's ordinance, that testing by it the unholy institutions of the Roman empire, they might be warned against the danger of doing homage to usurped, corrupt and Pagan thrones of iniquity, as to the ordinance of heaven. Many laws were given to Israel, in the wilderness, which could only be executed when they were afterwards settled in the promised land. Many commands to honor Christ in human nature, which applied to people who were to live many hundreds of years after their promulgation. "A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up like unto me from among your brethren, Him shall ye hear." "Unto us a child is born, and the government shall be upon his shoulders." "When he bringeth the first begotten into the world, he saith, let all the angels of God worship him." The Bible is a book for all ages and nations.

2. Much stress is laid on the phrase, "the powers that be," as if they must have been in existence at the time when Paul wrote. If there were any force in this argument it would be equally available in all nations and ages, and apply to all governments, however impious and tyrannical. And, indeed, such extension, tyrants, and the minions of tyrants, have sought to give the passage. This would be in effect to affix the sanction of Heaven to all the corrupt thrones that corrupt men have ever erected. But the phrase, "powers that be," simply imports that the ordinance of civil government continues an institution of Heaven under the gospel dispensation. Without using this phrase, or some one equivalent, the apostle could not have delineated civil power as a divine ordinance which men must there, and wherever men exist, institute, in subjection to God and according to his law, or be guilty of sin against Jehovah their Lord. Besides many things future are expressed in the present tense. "God is gone up with shouts," referring to the ascension of Christ from Mount Olivet, many hundreds of years afterwards.

3. It is urged that unless the civil authorities of the empire be meant, the passage would be calculated to mislead christians. The reply to this is at hand. He describes the power. Had he barely enjoined subjection for conscience' sake to the powers that be, and given no tests by which to try the power, whether it is good or bad, there would be some plausibility in the argument. But even in that case, the obedience to be rendered, and the power to whom it is due, must be interpreted by comparing them with other portions, and the general tenor of Scripture. But as it is, nothing is more untrue

than that a sensible man could be led into the belief that Paul intended to point out Nero, as 'God's minister to men for good, a terror to evil doers and a praise to them that do well.' If any one would say to you:—Enter into intimate friendship with your neighbor, make him your bosom friend, bring him into the privileges of the church, for he is a holy and devout servant of God, and exemplary in all christian duty, would you be in danger of applying this advice to an ignorant and base profligate?—Indeed, the minions of corrupt power in applying this passage to tyrants whom, in their sycophancy, they flatter, overlook every thing contained in it except the phrases, "powers that be," "obedience for conscience' sake" and "he that resisteth receiveth damnation," and thus are guilty of a base perversion. Some have no doubt done this ignorantly; others have been guilty of a wilful abuse of this part of the word of God.

This exposition shall now be brought to a close by some general remarks.

1. God is the ultimate source of all legitimate power to rule. That power that cannot be traced to him as its author, is set up in opposition to him, and wickedly arrogates claims adverse to the universal Lordship of Jehovah. For the exercise of power legitimate, were that possible, and yet not derived from God, the occupant would not be accountable to God. Yet we know that men "shall be judged for *all* the deeds done in the body, whether they be good or evil." It is most preposterous to maintain that nations, all citizens and rulers, as such are not accountable to God in civil things, and of course that they may revel in all the most wanton and cruel abuse of power, without provoking the wrath of the Lord God omnipotent. It is not so, blessed be God; and therefore let tyrants and corrupt rulers tremble. The day of retribution comes.

2. In framing constitutions of civil government it is the duty of the people to acknowledge, formally and explicitly, the God of heaven as supreme Lord. "All kindreds of the nations shall do homage to him." That every individual is bound by the most imperative and solemn obligations to acknowledge the Lord in all his ways; and that he who does not, breaks the law of God and dishonors his Maker, will be admitted by every Bible believer. Is it less the duty of two men, or two millions of men, when associated together in a civil capacity? We are told this would be to unite church and state, and to impair the right of conscience. If this objection has any weight, then it is wrong to express, nationally, any respect, even in the least degree, to God. Hence, there would

be a class of important actions, in which men are under no law to God and can commit no sin, nor perform any duty. Does not the whole Word of God, all christianity and conscience cry out, against such disregard of Him in whose hand are our life, breath, being and all our ways?

In lands where the Word of God is made known, it is the duty of nations to subject their civil institutions to Jesus Christ as Mediator; for "he is Lord of all," and "made Lord of all to the glory of God the Father." These, and a thousand other texts prove that he as Mediator has all things committed to his hands, and hence it is as much the duty of the kingdoms of the world to recognize his mediatory authority, as to acknowledge God the Father. In truth, the Father cannot be acknowledged, while the claims of the Son as Mediator are disregarded. "All kings shall bow down before him. All nations shall serve him." Out of Christ, God will accept no obedience.

4. The Holy Scriptures are the rule of national as well as of personal duty. This proposition is so consonant to the whole tenor of the bible, and commends itself so forcibly to christian piety, that we cannot but wonder it should ever have been impugned by any one who professes to love the law of the Lord.

5. The constitution should declare the Bible the paramount law of the Lord. If it binds nations as the rule of duty, it is treason against Heaven not to recognize it as such.

6. There ought to be provision made in the constitution, for the admission of good men only to office, and for the exclusion of wicked men from places of power and trust.—"He that ruleth over men must be just ruling in the fear of the Lord." "When the wicked bear rule, the people mourn." It seems to be generally admitted by Christians, that no man should give his suffrage for an immoral man, and that if he does so, he sins against God, encourages vice by rewarding it and harms the nation. Yet many think that to demand constitutionally moral qualifications, would interfere with the rights of the ungodly. But what all are bound to do, surely all may agree together to do. Temperance men insist much on this argument to promote the cause of temperance. Why is it not applicable in civil as well as in temperance constitutions? It is really anomalous and wonderful to hear intelligent men declaim vehemently against the corruption of public morals by the malign example of public men and yet to find them opposing all constitutional barriers against the evils of which they complain.

7. Rulers are bound to be nursing fathers to the church. They are ministers of God to men for good. Christ is Head over all things to his body the church; and Rulers are subjected to him for the good of the church. And hence they are bound to rule, in subserviency to the spiritual and eternal interests of men.

8. The rights of all are to be protected. Hence, the *permission* of that slavery which holds millions of unoffending men in bondage, much more its *guarantee*, is subversive of one of the great ends of civil government. It is to strengthen the arm of the oppressor, which it was instituted to break.

9. It is the duty of all for conscience sake, to yield subjection to such authority, as is legitimate on peril of Jehovah's indignation.

10. Allegiance is not due to those who rule without authority from God; and to swear oaths binding to sin, in constitutions of government, is to cast off the law of the Lord, and to obey men rather than God.

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#### CHRISTIAN ZEAL.

The temperament of the public mind, in this country and age, is feverish and inflammable. Many run to and fro,—society, in all its departments, is in a state of continual fermentation. Progress slow and sure, does not satisfy. The most rapid advance hardly keeps pace with excited desire. The spirit of the age demands the destruction or the *reform* of every thing old, and endeavors to satiate the lust of excitement by the production of endless novelties. Laws, sciences, and manners, are in a state of revolution. It would be matter of astonishment were the religious world to remain uninfluenced while all is moving and whirling around it. It has been affected. New doctrines and novel practices have arisen, startling to the conscientious Christian. These have generated by a natural reaction, a tendency to fanatical, unscriptural affections. From its very nature this spirit is characterized by alternations of high wrought excitement, and deep depression. At present, it has sunk below the level, but the same principles and causes are at work, and unless counteracting influence be brought to bear, we may anticipate a speedy return to the alternate condition in its rise as much above the just medium.

The child of God who desires to maintain a consistent character, and to exhibit in his life the genuine fruits of faith,

may be, in two ways, evilly affected by the circumstances above alluded to. He is in danger of coming too much under their influence, and of being drawn into the vortex; or he may be driven to the opposite extreme, and settle down into a cold, inactive, lethargic tone and temper of mind. To keep the safe medium between extremes, he finds difficult. To avoid, on the one hand, the unnatural heat of enthusiasm, and on the other, to suffer no diminution of that zeal which is an eminent christian grace.

The bible enjoins upon us a course of conduct characterized by the due mixture of sobriety and fervency. "Be sober." 1 Pet. i. 13. "Let your moderation be known to all men." Phil. iv. 5. "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might." Ec. ix. 10. "Be fervent in spirit." Rom. xii. 11. These precepts are not opposed to each other. They discourage the wildness of unrestrained zeal, while they command the active, energetic, and unceasing employment of every power of mind and body in the discharge of duty to God and man. The latter of these is required of every true believer. An inspired Apostle teaches us that "it is good to be zealously affected always in a good thing." Elijah, the prophet, says of himself, "I was very jealous for the Lord God of Hosts." And "the disciples remembered that it was written of Christ, the zeal of thine house hath eaten me up." The paramount importance of eternal things, as they relate to the glory of God and the welfare of man, urges the true believer to unwearied, unremitting exertion in running the race set before him. Compared with the plan of redemption, all other subjects to which the attention of mankind can be directed, are trifling and insignificant. The doctrines that reveal and unfold it afford ample scope for the exercise of the most enlightened understanding; the blessings which it confers are numberless and excellent; the anticipations which it opens up are inconceivably glorious. The warmest affections of the pious heart are kindled and invigorated by that faith which has for its object such doctrines and promises. "The angels desire to look into these things." The spirits of just men made perfect, will eternally delight in their increasing knowledge of them. As much as eternity exceeds the brief hour of human existence, do the spiritual interests of man surpass any, even the noblest objects belonging to this world only. The philosopher, the statesman, the man of business, pursue with avidity and engrossing interest, their various enterprizes. Should the christian be less earnest with regard to that in which he professes to have the greatest concern? Should he not be as diligent to

acquire and diffuse the knowledge of God—to promote the interest of Christ's kingdom—to obtain an incorruptible crown and unfading inheritance, as they are to secure that “knowledge which passeth away”—to add to the extent and glory of earthly empires, or to amass riches which make to themselves wings and fly away toward heaven? Let us meditate for a little on *Christian zeal*, directing our attention to such characteristics as may be profitably used in our attempts to discriminate between this grace, and its counterfeits.

I. *Zeal is a fruit of the Holy Spirit's saving operations.* Stephen, the first martyr after the resurrection of Christ, was a man “full of the Holy Ghost.” “Be fervent in spirit,” is a precept implying that fervency is a spiritual gift whose author is the Holy Spirit. Zeal is the lively and vigorous exercise of the system of graces which constitute and adorn the believer who is “born of the Spirit.” Strong faith is one of its constituents. The beauty, the surpassing excellency, the heavenly glory of divine things, apprehended by faith, arouse the whole man to put forth his strength in their attainment. Love to God and man awakens ardent desires to glorify Him from whom these good gifts come, and to bring others to participate in the substantial blessings communicated by them. A “good hope through grace” of immortality, which the gospel alone brings to light, animates its possessor to seek for the “pearl of great price;” though it cost him all the “goody pearls” of this life, and amply repays, as it awakens him to the importance of making every effort to free his fellow men from their sins and miseries. Each of these graces is a fruit of the Spirit. The same almighty agent can alone call forth, by his presence and saving energy, their lively exercises. Fanaticism, and fiery and distempered enthusiasm, are mere animal excitements. They are the results of fancy, feeling, a restless temperament, or active sensibilities, wrought upon by erroneous views or wrong impressions of divine truth. Zeal is spiritual; they are carnal. The fire of the genuine grace is kindled at the altar, and fed by pure aliment; its counterfeits are of earthly origin, and subsist upon fleshly nutriment. Gospel doctrine which increases the activity of the one, extinguishes the others.

II. *Zeal is directed by intelligence.* Paul bears record of Israel, that they “had a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge.” Rom. x. 2. He was himself, previously to his conversion, exceedingly zealous. “Concerning zeal, persecuting the church.” He persecuted “ignorantly and in unbelief.” Knowledge is the first element of the christian character.

“They that *know* thy name will put their trust in thee.” Ps. ix. 10. Ignorance is the mother, not of true devotion, but of superstition, bigotry, and furious, unhallowed passions. Ecclesiastical history furnishes ample and deplorable evidence of the truth of this remark. It is inscribed in deep and indelible characters upon every stone of the great building of Papal idolatry and tyranny. It has been written in the blood of martyred millions. We can read it in the dark and gloomy spirit of Pagan devotion, ancient and modern. The ignorant zealot rushes on in darkness, or he is misled by false lights. He knows not how nor whither he goes. But “wisdom is profitable to direct.” Wisdom points out the object, provides the means of attaining the desired end, and teaches the best modes and most suitable time to use them. Zeal is guided by that saving acquaintance with the true nature and design of the gospel which is derived from the scriptures, and imparted by the Holy Ghost. It is *truth* and not *error* that God blesses for the production of any good end. Error, as well as sin, may be and is overruled by the great Moral Governor of all things to promote his wise and gracious designs; but it is not *blessed*. “Sanctify them by thy truth—thy word is truth.” Joh. xvii. 17. It is possible to be a bigot even in a good cause, through ignorance. Where a cause is embraced and maintained, *merely* from habit, education, or the force of circumstances, without a proper acquaintance with its nature, and without such evidence as shews its accordance with the divine will, attachment to it, however warm, is deficient in an essential element of true zeal. The grace of which we treat is never found separate from correct knowledge of its object, and an intelligent comprehension of sufficient grounds for its exercise in the promotion of a known object.

III. *Zeal aims at the promotion of the glory of God.* It is “à zeal of God.” The jealousy of Elijah was “for the Lord God of Hosts.” “Fervent in spirit, serving the Lord.” The true Christian seeks in *all things* to glorify God. His are not mere selfish efforts. He cherishes no merely selfish and personal objects. He “shews forth the praises of God who hath called him out of darkness into his marvellous light.” He “glorifies God in his body and spirit which are his.” Remaining imperfection may excite some flames of unholy passion; and party interest will sometimes intermingle with holier influence. But these are not the prevalent causes impelling him to action. To promote the glory of God in his own personal sanctification, and preparation for heaven and in the coming of the Redeemer’s Kingdom, he considers his chief



end. For this he labors—spends and is spent. We would not by these remarks even seem to favour the absurd notion of perfect disinterestedness which some who “err from the faith” have taught as constituting the very essence of true piety. The intelligent child of God prefers the Scriptural view of this subject, and seeks the enjoyment of God as the means of glorifying him. Zeal has an eye to that which an able divine denominates “God’s public glory.” The glory of God as the great moral Governor of the universe, regulating and ordering by the precepts of the moral law, in the hand of Christ, the affairs of nations as well as of individuals. We have an example of this grace directed to this object in the case of Elijah. Great exertions to promote the interests of individuals, without any regard to the condition of the public interest of Christ’s Kingdom, argues very imperfect views of christian duty.

IV. *The zealous christian opposes error and sin.* The Lord’s prophets were animated by the true spirit of Christian heroism in their zeal against the iniquities of Israel and the abominable sins of the surrounding nations. Elijah was “jealous for God” when he denounced the wrath of Jehovah against the tyrannical Ahab, the ungodly Jezabel and the apostate, idolatrous tribes of Israel. He was moved by the same spirit in that most remarkable transaction of his eventful life, of which we have the record in the xviii. chap. of 1st Kings—the execution of the divine law upon the false prophets of Baal. To this event he seems to allude particularly in the words that we have more than once quoted. “The zeal of the Lord’s house consumed” our blessed Redeemer in his rebukes uttered with authority, against the Scribes and Pharisees. He expelled those who defiled the temple, driving them out ignominiously with “a whip of small cords.”—How nobly has this grace in its nature and power, been illustrated in the lives, faithful contendings and triumphant deaths of the martyrs of Jesus. They hazarded all, even life itself, in opposing Pagan, Papal, and prelatical usurpations and vices. We have a “great cloud of witnesses” to direct our footsteps. Christ Jesus himself has in this gone before us.

The false sentiment, that it is inconsistent with the due exercise of Christian charity, faithfully and impartially to rebuke every departure from “the law and the testimony,” should not for a moment be entertained. Is it charitable to be silent when “damnable heresies” are spreading over the land? to suffer without interruption, soul destroying delusions to slay their

tens of thousands? Does it evince a christian spirit to permit the truth and law of God to be trodden under foot without an effort to rescue it? Not so did our great exemplars. Not so will the enlightened child of God act. He adopts as his maxim the scripture proverb, "He that rebuketh a man, afterwards shall find more favor than he that flattereth with the tongue," Prov. xxviii. 23 : and as his rule the command of God to Isaiah the *evangelical* prophet, "cry aloud, spare not ; lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and shew my people their transgressions, and the house of Jacob their sins." Isa. lviii. 1.

V. *Zeal has no affinity with passionate violence of temper or conduct.* "Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger and clamour, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. Eph. iv. 31. "The servant of the Lord must be gentle." "Cease from anger and forsake wrath ; fret not thyself in any way to do evil." Violent passions are unfriendly to growth in grace. And when they break forth in the conduct bring reproach upon a cause, however good. In confirmation of our position, we can again refer to the perfect example of the Redeemer. To his zeal we have more than once made allusion. His tenderness and meekness were not less remarkable. Frequently were they manifested in the most touching manner. But a few days before his crucifixion, and in full view of that event, we find him uttering the following pathetic lamentation over that unhappy city which was about to be guilty of his blood. "Oh ! Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often would I have gathered thy children together even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not." Mat. xxiii. 37. Who more bold, and fearless and uncompromising than Jeremiah the *weeping* prophet. Yet with the awful denunciations of the divine indignation which he was commissioned to bear to his sinful countrymen, he mingled his tears. "Oh ! that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people." Jer. ix. 1. Harsh, passionate, invective, is removed to the farthest possible distance from open, firm, manly, Christian rebuke.

[To be continued.]

## THOUGHTS ON MAINTAINING A TESTIMONY FOR TRUTH.

The idea of a testimony, always proceeds on the ground of a controversy, or litigation, presumed to exist. The controversy referred to, in the following remarks is between God and the votaries of error; and relates to the truths of religion. Error relative to the character, government and revelation of God occupies a prominent place in the opinions and practices of the greater part of mankind. This controversy, embraces the whole of divinely authenticated truth, in all its precepts and doctrines: there is no exception. And as God will not permit his truth to be gainsayed with impunity, He calls upon all who profess to fear Him, to come forward to the bar of public opinion and give testimony, in defence of His controverted and despised truth. "Ye are my witnesses saith the Lord" is the call which was made upon the ancient people of God; and is still obligatory upon us. "Contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the Saints." And the martyrs for truth are said to overcome "by the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony."

It is a dictate of right reason, corroborated by the whole tenor of scripture, that the entire truth revealed by God, is worthy of all acceptance. Every part of divine revelation, whether of the Old or New Testaments, has a relation to the Lord Jesus Christ and his work of saving sinners. Even, such parts as seem most remote and disconnected from Christ and his work of salvation, have a place in the inspired volume, only because of their relation to these. According to the boundless wisdom of the Almighty, even the apparently unimportant facts and circumstances of private life, or the details of history and chronology are all made subservient to the grand transaction of saving sinners by the obedience and death of the Lord Jesus. They constitute, it is true, only subordinate, but at the same time, essential parts of the grand temple of truth. To remove, or break down a single pin, however small, of this temple is an act of presumption on the part of man, and an attempt to desecrate the sanctuary of God. It is a strange infatuation to indulge the opinion, that any part of divine revelation, is either useless or non-essential. If it is not a matter of practical consideration whether a particular truth in a given instance be acknowledged or neglected, why does it form a part of Divine revelation? Is it to be supposed that the great work of salvation which is embraced in a very small volume should yet contain much or even any

extraneous matter? Such suppositions are a reproach on the wisdom of the all-wise God. We have no right to say, respecting this or that truth, it is "non-essential." We are *bound* to receive whatever God has revealed to us. And here it may be added, that we know of no doctrine or sentiment presented in Scripture that may not have a practical influence on mankind.

It is dangerous for men to parley with error, and thrust out of its place any truth as a non-essential of religion. Once admit this principle, and where would we end? The character of such an act on this principle is the fairest response that can be given to the question. Their views of christianity are loose, vague and unscriptural. That well-meaning professors of religion should hold such views is no vindication of them; nor does it in the least lessen the sinfulness of lightly treating the truth of God. Nor, will the consideration that a man may be saved, though his knowledge of the truth may be very imperfect, be of any avail as an apology for setting aside any known truth, or looking upon it as a matter of indifference. A man may be saved while, at the same time, his work may be burned up, as straw and stubble, and he himself saved "as by fire."

Thus, the subject on which we are called to give testimony is the whole truth of God, without daring, on any pretence, to make exceptions as to particular parts of it. Every doctrine, and every precept, and every sentiment fairly deducible from these is embraced within the scope of the Christian's testimony: The truth, all the truth, and nothing but the truth. The Bible, in its length and breadth of revelation, is the subject on which the testimony of the Christian is to bear.

The particular facts and circumstances of a controversy give a direction to the manner of managing it. Called upon, as we are, to be witnesses for the whole truth of God, it is important that we know the facts of the case, that we may the more successfully serve the cause of truth. Truth is openly opposed and denied; this is the most prominent fact in the controversy. Divine truth is impugned at the bar of public opinion: it stands as if it were on *trial* before the world. There is scarcely a doctrine or principle in the christian religion that is not directly or indirectly controverted. The most simple and primary elements of christianity are dispensed with, as if they formed no part of, nor had any relation to, our holy religion. Truth is trodden under the feet of prevalent public opinion; and every truth has its antagonist in some one of the heresies of the day. To illustrate what is meant, we partic-

ularize a few instances. The revealed character of God, made known in the Scriptures, as subsisting in the persons of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, is not only denied, but ridiculed, and that, too, by men presuming to call themselves christians ! The supreme divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the personality of the Holy Spirit, are also, by the same men, peremptorily denied ; and denied too, on grounds which manifest the grossest disregard to the authority of revelation. The perfect righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ, as the grand and only basis of a sinner's hope, is repudiated by a very numerous class of professors—the absolute sovereignty of God in the salvation of sinners is scorned—and the original depravity and guiltiness of men find no place in their views of the christian religion. The mediatorial offices of Christ are practically nullified by the same professors of religion ; virtually they leave nothing to the church but the names of prophet, priest and king. A prophet—but no security for correct instruction : a priest—but no satisfaction for sin, no redemption by his blood : a king—but neither government nor empire, a mere pageant to whom no allegiance is admitted to be due, and to whom as little is rendered ! Thus the very foundations of christianity are assailed, and truth contradicted ; and what is perhaps the worst feature of the case, all this is done under a profession of friendship.

Infidels avowedly reject the oracles of truth, and profanely refuse to admit any thing that cannot be brought within the comprehension of human reason. The most clearly revealed facts are denied because they relate to matters beyond the reach of human judgment. This infidel spirit gives a character to the prevailing opinions of society respecting civil institutions among men : it is embodied in the constitution, laws and administration of the land in which we live. “The Prince of the kings of the earth” receives no national homage from the United States of America. As a nation they are virtually infidel. The same remark is in some respects applicable to nearly all the nations of the earth ! “The kings of the earth have set themselves, and the rulers take council together, against the Lord and against his annointed.” “The general tone of thinking of the present day is favorable to infidelity. We have abundance of superficial and sensible reasoners, men who have faith enough to believe all that they see ; philosophers who are indeed of the earth, earthy. The metaphysics of Germany, as we have before observed, tend to Pantheism, but the metaphysics of most in France, and of many in England, lead directly to materialism and atheism.”

Antichristianism, in both its ecclesiastical and civil aspects occupies a very large place in the world. Popery is little else than a compound of ancient heathenism and modern infidelity, with some of the principles of christianity, exhibited in a most corrupt and superstitious form. In the conclusion of the preceding paragraph we have quoted a passage from one of the most learned works of modern times, respecting the infidel tendency of the present day; we quote another, giving the writer's view of popery. "Popery is paganism under a thin disguise of christianity, and accordingly, in all things it is but a gross and material counterfeit of true and spiritual religion. The church of Christ is ever one and the same, and popery aims at the same identity and universality; but instead of the true church, which is a spiritual body with Christ for its head, popery is but a putrifying and noisome carcass—a collection of unregenerate men, the doers of every evil work, with those who love and those who make a lie, with the Pope, not the Saviour, for their head."\* This system is in the attitude of hostility to the whole truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ: and therefore called antichrist, in scripture. Nor is it to be concealed, that popery is rapidly on the increase.

Truth is often lightly esteemed, even, when it may not be denied: it is thrown into the back ground, and is thus neutralized by the manner of receiving it. Truth is thus jostled out of its place; and the effect is perhaps as injurious to religion as if the truth had been openly opposed. Lukewarmness and indifference relative to the truth of God is most abhorrent to Him, and most baneful to religion. "I would that thou wert cold or hot. So then because though art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth." Rev. iii. 15, 16.

The application of truth to actual practice is opposed. It frequently happens that when the truth may not be denied, but admitted, the party refuses to act on it, in practice. It forms part of the professed creed of the individual; but it is lifeless: this is holding the truth in unrighteousness; and separating what God has connected. It is the will of God, that truth should produce action; the principal, nay we may say the entire value of truth, consists in this. For we are chosen unto salvation through belief of the truth and sanctification of the Holy Spirit. "Now are ye clean through the word which I have spoken unto you." Truth is the means, sanctification is the end. The appropriate effects of divine truth are not

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\*Errors, regarding religion, by James Douglas, Esq. of Cavers

produced, though the understanding should be enlightened, if the heart is not improved, and the practice made better by it. But men often know the better, while they follow the worse; thus they sin, with their eyes open, to their guilt; and their judgment condemns their conduct. And, as far as they are concerned, the result is the same as if the truth had been denied. One of the most forcible illustrations, that perhaps can be given on this topic, is when men acknowledge the superiority of the Scriptures over human reason as a rule of life, and yet, refuse to apply these scriptures, to all their conduct. Who with the bible in their hand, and its truths before them, can yet turn back to the glimmering of nature's light, to seek instruction relative to social duties! It is the will of God that men should unite together in society; the scriptures contain the principles on which social order is to be maintained—as to its constitution, laws, administration and officers. But, these principles are carefully excluded from every department of civil government. It is a bible truth that Messiah is “King of kings and Lord of lords,” that kings and judges should do him homage, because “He is Governor among the nations.” But men act as if no such truth existed; nay, the popular opinion goes farther, and declares that the truths of the bible are not applicable to legislators and rulers in their official characters. The truth being controverted, as we have shown, and the facts of the case being such as to expose it to danger, there is need of witnesses to defend it—to enforce its obligation—urge its importance—and claim for it the strongest practical regard. Bearing testimony to the truth of God is a great task, and requires great qualifications. This merits particular attention. We say not that every professor of religion is a witness for the truth of God, yet we aver, that every professor ought to be a witness; but the *duty* of being a witness, and the *fact*, are indeed very different things. While it is admitted, that every professed christian should be a witness, for the whole truth of God, it is a matter of regret that the honor of being witnesses is claimed by very few. This state of things, is just what we are led to expect from the statements of scripture. The scriptures speak of the church as an hundred and forty-four thousand, while the witnesses are distinctly said to be two only. “I will give power to my two witnesses, and they shall prophecy a thousand two hundred and threescore days clothed in sackcloth.”

Intelligence, is a necessary element in the character of a witness; he should be a man of understanding. In a court of judicature the value of evidence in many cases, depends

much on the intelligence possessed by the witness; and obscurity and doubt, may be cast over a question by his ignorance or stupidity. General knowledge and understanding are especially called for in one that would bear testimony to the truth of God. But, something more than general knowledge is required in this case, it is required that a witness should be *familiar* with the subject of testimony. He should be acquainted with it, in its various bearings and aspects; so that he may not be taken by surprise when upon any emergency he may be called to give testimony. It is difficult to calculate the amount of injury that may be done to the truth of God by a zealous but ignorant or injudicious man, driven onward it may be, by the laudable motive of duty, but who is destitute of the peculiar qualification of practical intelligence. It has sometimes happened that truth has suffered more from a well meaning but imprudent friend, than from open enemies. The use which we ought to make of this consideration is, that professing to be witnesses for truth, we are bound as we love the truth, to make ourselves intimately acquainted with it—study it, in its various parts—closely examine the points on which it may probably be assailed—furnish ourselves with scriptural arguments in its behalf—and so, stand fully prepared, with the sword of the spirit which is the word of God.

Considerable danger may accrue to a cause if testimony is given by a witness, under the influence of fear. This will be particularly felt in the case of a religious testimony; if influenced by shame or apprehension of harm, a witness gives testimony, it must of course be materially modified by these. The result will be either the entire or partial suppression of truth. If the timidity of a man is such that he will permit himself to be brow beaten, by intolerant opposition—stand in dread of reproach—be in fear of bodily harm—or act under the influence of the fear of wordly loss and inconvenience, he *may* be a good man; but he is certainly disqualified for being a witness. From such a man truth will never receive the decided and unbiassed support which it demands. Unwittingly, it may be in some cases, but at the same time, a real modification, or concealment of the truth, will be the result, that thus the loss or inconvenience occasioned by a frank and manly avowal may be avoided. It is not without anguish of mind that we hear, or read of men, who have long maintained a noble testimony for truth, drawing back when the hour of severe trial comes; and thus save themselves from reproach or wordly loss, or prolong their lives;—



preferring the world to a good confession or an honored martyrdom ! The command of Christ is "fear not them who can only kill the body, but fear Him that can destroy both soul and body and cast them into hell fire." The conduct of the apostles is an exemplification of the precept. "And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness."

Unimpeachable sincerity and honesty of profession is imperatively required of a witness. It may have happened, that men destitute of this qualification have rendered important services, to the cause of truth ; but it is far more likely that they shall injure, than promote the truth by their services.

For once that truth has been supported, a thousand instances have occurred where the truth and testimony of Christ, have been betrayed, by men whose professions were not under the influence of sincerity in the heart. There are many inferior motives that may lead a man to act on the side of truth ; while perhaps the love of truth itself, never entered into his mind. For a time such a man may appear a steady friend ; nay remarkably active and zealous, in the cause of truth : but not having the root of principle in him, when the hour of trial comes, or his own sordid views of interest may require it, he becomes a recreant to the cause of truth—trims his sail to every breeze that blows, whether that of popular applause, ambition, pride, or it may be, revenge ! Far different, is the successful witness, he is a man of the utmost sincerity, and uncompromising fidelity ; it is the testimony of such a witness, flowing from a love of truth, as the truth of God, which we may hope to be blessed and made successful in opposition to error.

There is an expected consistency, between the professions and conduct of a witness, which is of the utmost importance to his testimony. We have no doubt, that the absence of exemplary conduct, on the part of professed witness has done incomparably more mischief, to the cause of Christ, than all the zeal, and all the services of such individuals have ever done good. When such disgraceful inconsistency appears in the conduct of professed witnesses, what is the conclusion to which the world arrive ? not only that such are inconsistent, (would to God this were all) but they conclude also, that religion has little reality !

A testimony for truth should possess a definite and explicit character, "for if the trumpet" says Paul "give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself for the battle ? So likewise you, except ye utter by the tongue words easy to be under-

stood how shall it be known what is spoken ; for ye shall speak unto the air." A testimony that possesses not the character of perspicuity, must, so far as it is not understood, be useless. The witness may mean well ; but his testimony must be a failure. But, sometimes a designed ambiguity has been cast over a testimony for the purpose of leaving a postern by which the individual may make his retreat when he finds it convenient to change his policy. This must be avoided, as we would avoid the reproach of being hypocritical and double minded men. No truth should be suppressed, or even partially concealed ; the testimony should be an exact reduplication upon truth—the whole truth of God.

There ought to be an adaptation of our testimony to the opposition which may be offered to truth. As the errorist shifts his ground and changes his mode of attack, he must be fully and consistently met and resisted. As the skilful general will place the greater part of his disposable force, where the enemy makes the greatest assault ; so the faithful witness for truth will make his testimony bear on that point which for the time may be most opposed. We give an illustration of this. The existence of God is that upon which all religion is built, and the belief of this lies at the foundation of all truth. The Supreme divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ, is a doctrine of the greatest magnitude, a truth, apart from the belief of which, we are persuaded christianity cannot have a place in the heart. Now, a vast number deny this truth, while few, if any, deny the former. This then is a sufficient reason why it should receive a greater share of attention than the former, because it is exposed to greater opposition. This consideration provides us with a satisfactory answer to the question why do covenanters so frequently discuss the doctrine of the Kingly office of Christ—attach so much importance to it, and the practical duties which flow from it ? The reason is, the truth relative to the kingly office is more opposed and contradicted than any other : therefore their testimony is made to bear particularly on this subject, and the practical duties which flow from it.

Publicity enters essentially into the character of a testimony ; a man may privately admit a truth and profess his belief in it : but, this is no testimony. To obtain the character of a testimony it must be made public : it must be laid alongside of the opposition, thus to meet and resist it ; so that the remedy may be equal to the evil. It is the duty of the church thus to give publicity to her testimony : for while every member should hold himself bound to the performance of

the duty, individually, as far as it is within his power; the church collectively, as one whole, should frankly lay her testimony before the world in behalf of truth, and in opposition to all error. In the days of the prophet Elijah there were seven thousand in Israel who had not bowed the knee to Baal, nor kissed his image: but, not one of these were witnesses against the prevailing sin of idolatry. It is true they did not commit idolatry themselves; but, neither did they bear testimony against the sin, when committed by others. They concealed their sentiments from public notice, to avoid the storm and danger that a public expression of their sentiments would have excited against them. Elijah stood alone as a witness against the idolatry of Israel: because he alone openly and publicly denounced idolatry, proclaiming it to be an outrage on the character and worship of God.

To a faithful exhibition of "the testimony of Jesus Christ" we look with certain hope and confidence for the diffusion of correct knowledge throughout the earth, of the character, worship and government of God; and the duties which we owe him as his rational creatures. To this we look for the final triumph of righteousness in the earth: righteousness in doctrine, and in practice; the righteousness of truth and the righteousness of holiness. By the means of the testimony of Jesus, these shall triumph over individuals and societies, over national and ecclesiastical establishments—men shall be sanctified and nations shall do homage to Messiah the Governor of the nations. To this, we look forward by faith, as the means by which the infidelity of the civil constitutions of our own land shall be removed—to the time when our officers shall be peace, and our exactors righteousness. SIGMA.

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SELECT SENTENCES.

It is vain for men to turn away their thoughts from that eternity which is before them, as if they were able to destroy it by denying it a place in their imaginations. It exists in spite of them. It advanceth unobserved; and death, which is to draw the curtain from it, will quickly usher them into it.—*Pascal.*

The knowledge of God, without the knowledge of our own misery, is the nurse of pride. The knowledge of our own misery, without the knowledge of Jesus Christ, is the mother of despair. But the true knowledge of Jesus Christ exempts alike from pride and despair; by giving us at once a sight, not only of God and of our misery, but also of the mercy of God in the relief of our misery.—*Idem.*

## ECCLESIASTICAL PROCEEDINGS.

The Southern Presbytery of the E. S. Synod, of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, held its semi-annual meeting in the city of New-York, commencing on the 8th May and continuing its sessions by adjournment for four days. A discourse was preached at the opening of Presbytery, by the Moderator, Rev. J. Chrystie, from Dan. II. 44. "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever." After sermon the court was constituted with prayer by the Moderator. There were present, Rev. Messrs. W. Gibson, Dr. Willson, J. Chrystie, C. B. M'Kee, W. L. Roberts, J. Fisher, M. Roney, D. Scott, and J. M. Willson, Ministers; with Messrs. Jas. Miller of Bovina, Jas. Beattie, Coldenham, Wm. Brown, Newburgh, Wm. Boyd, 2d church, N. Y., A. Bowden, 1st do. Joseph Sterret, Philadelphia, John Ford, Baltimore, and M. J. Johnson, Albany, Ruling Elders. Absent, Rev. R. Gibson on a voyage to Europe for his health. The Rev. J. M. Willson was chosen Moderator, and M. Roney continued Clerk.

*Fifteen* papers were laid on the table; of which 3 were Calls, 8 Petitions for supplies of gospel ordinances, 2 related to matters of Discipline, 1 was a Remonstrance from the congregation of Coldenham against the translation of their pastor, and 1, a memorial from the session of the 2d church N. Y. respecting the observance of days of Fasting and Thanksgiving appointed by the judicatories of the Church.

The Calls were severally acted upon and presented, with the following results; viz. that on Rev. C. B. M'Kee, by the congregation of Rochester was accepted; that on Mr. F. Gailey, by the united congregations of Galway, Broad-Alban and Princeton, declined, and ordered to be returned: that on Rev. Dr. Wilson by the United congregations of New Alexandria, Greensburgh, &c. declined, Dr. W. asking and obtaining leave to present and have placed on file certain written reasons for declining.\* The Remonstrance from the Coldenham congregation was strong and affectionate, very numerously signed by both members and adherents and explained and enforced by the Ruling Elder from that session. The members of Presbytery gave a free expression of opinion, while the motion for presentation was pending, in which it

\* See Document No. 1.

appeared they were unanimously of opinion, that the translation contemplated in the call would be improper, under all the circumstances. A committee, consisting of Rev. Messrs. Chrystie and Scott, was appointed to draft a letter, to be transmitted to the Pittsburgh Presbytery, communicating the result, and expressive of the mind of this court in relation thereto.

Petitions for supplies and remaining papers were referred to appropriate committees. In compliance with a written request from Rev. R. Gibson, provision was made for furnishing to his congregation such supplies as can be afforded, till next meeting of Presbytery. On enquiry it appeared that all the ministers present had complied with the direction, given at the preceding meeting, to preach one or more discourses on "Occasional Hearing." The committee on Discipline, to whom had been referred the memorial respecting the observance of days of Fasting and Thanksgiving reported. The report was accepted and adopted.\* From the report of the committee on sessional books, it appeared that the sessions of Newburgh, Coldenham, 1st and 2d churches, N. Y., Philadelphia, Baltimore and Albany, had attended to the direction of Presbytery to submit their books for inspection; and that the records in these books are kept correctly, except that those from Baltimore, Coldenham, 1st and 2d churches New York, are not signed by the Moderator and Clerk; and registers of members, baptisms &c., are wanting in the books from Baltimore and the 2d church, New-York. Resolutions were passed enjoining upon all sessions under our care, that have not complied with the directions hitherto given, to complete their records; and also the submitting of records for inspection at each spring meeting of Presbytery. Each session and the several societies, under care of Presbytery, were directed to prepare and submit at next meeting, a statistical table, embracing the number of officers, families, members in full communion and by baptism, noticing the annual additions. Ministers appointed to supply vacant congregations were directed to examine the sessional records in such congregations as they severally visit.

The committee on supplies reported. Report accepted and adopted, making provision for the dispensation of the sacrament of the Lord's supper in the vacant congregations of Conogocheague, Kortright and Bovina, Galway and Broad Alban, and Sterling; for the organization into a congregation, of the societies of Utica and New Hartford; for the moderation

\* See Document No. 2.

of Calls in Conogocheague, and Galway and Broad-Alban, and for furnishing supplies of preaching to vacant congregations and societies.

Mr. J. Acheson, student, read an essay on Church History which had been assigned him at last stated meeting. After criticisms and remarks by the members, it was unanimously sustained as a piece of trial, and a subject of farther trial assigned him. His examination and that of Mr. Andrew Stevenson, taken under the care of Presbytery, having been attended to, directions were given them severally for the farther prosecution of their respective studies. A committee was appointed to attend to the installation of Rev. C. B. M'Kee over the congregation of Rochester. Committees were also appointed critically to examine the several documents published in overture by General Synod, and report at next meeting. The draft of a letter to the Pittsburgh Presbytery, respecting the declining of the call from New Alexandria, was adopted and ordered to be signed by the Moderator and Clerk, and transmitted, with the extracts from minutes and reasons of Dr. Willson, to which it refers, to that sister judicatory.\* Presbytery appointed its next semi-annual meeting to be held at Philadelphia on the 3d Tuesday of October, 1837, at 7 o'clock P. M. to be opened with a sermon by the Moderator.

The above sketch of proceedings gives but a brief outline of the business transacted by the Southern Presbytery at its late meeting. Harmony and unanimity prevailed among the members in all their deliberations and decisions, to an extent seldom equalled, we think, in courts as large, whose attention has been directed to as much business so greatly diversified. It is truly encouraging, and matter of abundant thankfulness, that the officers of the Lord's house enjoy peace on the principles of truth and righteousness, when seated on thrones of judgment—that *two or many* can walk together being agreed, going up "to Israel's testimony" and waiting on the thrones of our New Testament David's house. Let all the rulers in Zion and all the Lord's people, appreciate such blessings and so improve them, as to secure their continuance and the advantages which flow from them. We subjoin the following documents, believing they will be read with general interest.

## DOCUMENT NO. 1.

*Reasons for not accepting the call from New Alexandria.*—The Moderator and members of Presbytery will, I trust, under

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\*See Document No. 2.

the circumstances, permit me to read, and will put on file my reasons, for not accepting the call that has been made upon me, by the congregation of New Alexandria.

Since intimation was given me by the much respected brother, who presided in the moderation, that this call was made out, it has been with me a subject of very much reflection, and not a little anxiety and prayer for light and direction, that I might know what is for the general interest of the church, and of course my own duty in the matter. The promptitude and the unanimity of the people of New Alexandria, and their liberality, I trust, I shall always remember with gratitude and affection. I do also feel myself much indebted to the western brethren for the interest they have taken in this business, and the desire which they have manifested for my settlement among them. That any disappointment of their expectations should result from the course which I take, is painful. Yet I am constrained, according to all the light I have, to decline the acceptance of the call, for the following reasons:

1. When I accepted the appointment to the Professorship, I did not consider myself pledged to remove to the West, nor did I think the Synod would view it in that light. It depended on so many contingencies—the call from the congregation, the means of support, the extent and situation of the congregation, and the means of removing my family,—that I did not think it at all engaging myself to remove to the West.

2. I am under many and great obligations to the Coldenham congregation, whose unremitting kindness I have experienced for a long series of years, and among whom, I trust, there is some evidence that by the blessing of God my imperfect labours have not been altogether in vain. Should I leave them, it is probable, in the present state of the church, they would be for some years destitute of a fixed Pastor. With a large body of young people, who have grown up around me, and who from year to year are coming forward to the communion table, to be without a pastor long, would be a very great deprivation, and one to which they should not be subjected by me without very grave reasons. It is true, did the general interests of the church demand it, even a consideration so weighty as this, ought not to prevent the acceptance of the call. But I cannot perceive that these general interests require me to leave such a people destitute.

3. From the commencement of my ministry, now about twenty years, I have been connected with our ecclesiastical proceedings in the eastern judicatories, all my habits have

been formed among the people here, I know the congregations. If it please the Head of the Church to spare me, these considerations give me greater facilities of usefulness in Coldenham, and in other congregations in the church. To enter, at my age, on another, remote, and in some respects, diversified field of labour, would be inexpedient, and promise less usefulness. I have once made trial of removing to a far less distance, and have found much to deter from a similar experiment.

4. I have a large family. The distance is great, so that the business of commencing the world anew, under such circumstances, is an enterprize in which I think I ought not to embark, without stronger reasons than have presented themselves to my mind.

5. Our many vacancies east of the mountains, which require and will for some years require, so much aid from fixed pastors, seem imperatively to demand that ministerial labours should not be diminished, while the call for them would be increased. It is true, there are many vacancies in the West, but the facilities of travelling there are much less, the labour much greater, and a professor, especially of my age, could do little, or rather nothing, in supplying them.

6. After all, the insuperable objection in my mind, is the scattered state of the congregation of New Alexandria and those connected with it. Of this I was not aware, while the subject of the location of the Seminary was under consideration. There are four places of preaching, lying very considerable distances apart, and the roads for some months in the year are bad. It would require a young man in the full vigour of life and health, to perform the necessary pastoral duty to such a congregation, without any other engagement. To discharge these duties, and fulfil the labours of a Professor of Theology, is, I am sure, more than I, or indeed I think, any one man, could perform to the edification of the church.

7.\* The opinion of the members of Presbytery, fully expressed on the question of presenting the call, that a translation from Coldenham to New Alexandria, would not benefit the interests of the church in a case of this kind, ought to have great weight in dissuading from the acceptance of the call, and cannot be disregarded by me in this matter.

For these reasons, I have been constrained to decline the acceptance of the call. I request that this paper be put on file by Presbytery, and a copy of it transmitted to General Synod.

JAS. R. WILLSON.

\* This 7th reason was prepared after the action of Presbytery in the case.



## DOCUMENT NO. 2.

*Report on the observance of days of Fasting and Thanksgiving.*  
—Your Committee deem it a matter of just concern, that there should be in the minds of any of our people, such misapprehensions of duty in relation to the observance of days either of Fasting or Thanksgiving as are referred to in the memorial from the session of the 2d congregation New-York, and judge the matter of which it treats deserving your serious attention. They therefore recommend the adoption of the following preamble and resolutions.

Whereas it appears there are misapprehensions in the minds of some of our people respecting the obligation of days of fasting and thanksgiving appointed by the judicatories of the Church, esteeming it consistent with such days to pursue their ordinary worldly business, and being satisfied with the appropriation of a part, and sometimes of a very small part, to religious services; Therefore,

Resolved, as the sense of this court, that days of fasting and thanksgiving, lawfully appointed by the judicatories of the Church, in agreeableness to the calls of Divine Providence to such services, constitute a dedication of such portions of time wholly to God, and cannot, without sin, be appropriated to worldly avocations or carnal recreations; and that therefore such days, being so dedicated to God by the authority of the Church, acting in his name and according to his word, should be observed with the like sanctification with the Sabbath, and devoted wholly, by families and individuals, to such religious services private and public as are calculated to promote humiliation and repentance and to strengthen and perpetuate a grateful remembrance of the Lord's goodness among his people; and that nothing, but what is of unavoidable necessity, should interfere with such duties.

Resolved that this be intimated at an early period to the several congregations, with instructions suited to produce conviction of the nature and obligation of the duties by the several ministers of this Presbytery.

## DOCUMENT NO. 3.

*Letter to the Pittsburgh Presbytery.*—Dear Brethren and Fathers—The above extract will inform you that the Rev. Dr. Willson has declined accepting the call from the congregation of New Alexandria, &c., and the enclosed document will furnish you his reasons for so doing.

In communicating this information, it is proper dear Brethren and Fathers, that we should add our opinion in the case, giving our decided and unanimous approbation of the measure. Dr. Willson's long continued connection with this part

of our church, his intimate acquaintance with its condition and interests, his own time of life, and especially the useful and happy pastoral relation subsisting between him and his congregation, all concur in rendering the removal contemplated highly inexpedient. A remonstrance signed by nearly one hundred members and numerous adherents, which would have been greatly increased had time allowed its further circulation for subscriptions, in a most feeling manner interposed to prevent his translation. We trust therefore that our Brethren and Fathers in the church, and the people of the New Alexandria congregation, will be satisfied that this measure, under all the circumstances, is indispensable duty and will be, though it may prove in some respects a disappointment, ultimately for the interests of the church.

With all respect and affection in the Lord,—We remain,  
Dear Brethren and Fathers, Yours &c.

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CONVENTION OF THE ORTHODOX OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

The Convention called by the committee appointed by the minority of the General Assembly of 1836, met in Philadelphia on the 11th May, and continued its sessions for several days. Delegates were present from sixty-four Presbyteries. Part of the proceedings are worthy of the struggle which the orthodox, in that body, are making for the cause of truth, and have our warmest approbation; while a part shews, that on some points—slavery especially—they are far from coming up to the standard which the maintenance of the whole truth requires. The same aversion to a division of the Assembly, which has been manifested for years, seems yet to prevail with many. Sentiments most abhorrent were openly avowed in the convention on the subject of slavery, and the members from non slave-holding states generally seem to have stricken hands with those from the slaveholding, so far as to agree, that the subject ought to remain untouched by the Assembly. The spirit evinced on this subject is a “dead fly” in the whole ointment. The annexed list “of errors alleged” by the convention “to have obtained currency in the Presbyterian church” is truly startling; but no more startling than correct. Heresies the most baleful have been permitted to enter in and grow up among the members of that church, until we fear they have gained the ascendancy. Discipline has been neglected or shunned, until we fear the friends of truth will find themselves unable to apply it. Still we rejoice that the “errors alleged to have obtained currency” have been specifically enumerated and that the convention resolved “That the next General Assembly should express their decided condemnation of them.” They ought to have resolved, that the Assembly should take efficient and determined measures to rid the church of the men who hold them; or that they would at once separate themselves from a community in which errors so gross and destructive are tolerated. The following is the list alluded to.

1. That God would have been glad to prevent the existence of sin in our world, but was not able, without destroying the moral agency of man; or, for aught that appears in the Bible to the contrary, sin is incidental to any wise moral system.
2. That election to eternal life is founded on a foresight of

faith and obedience. 3. That we have no more to do with the first sin of Adam, than with the sins of any other parent.— 4. That infants come into the world as free from moral defilement, as was Adam, when he was created. 5. That infants sustain the same relation to the moral government of God as brute animals, and their suffering and death are to be accounted for on the same principles as those of brutes, and not by any means to be considered as penal. 6. That there is no other original sin than the fact that all the posterity of Adam, though by nature innocent, or possessed of no moral character, will always begin to sin when they begin to exercise moral agency; or that original sin does not include a sinful bias of the human mind, and a just exposure to penal suffering; and that there is no evidence in Scripture that infants in order to salvation, do need redemption by the blood of Christ and regeneration by the Holy Ghost. 7. That the doctrine of imputation, whether of Adam's sin, or Christ's righteousness, has no foundation in the word of God, and is both unjust and absurd. 8. That the sufferings and death of Christ were not truly vicarious and penal, but symbolical, governmental and instructive only. 9. That the impenitent sinner is by nature, and independently of the renewing influence or almighty energy of the Holy Spirit, in full possession of all the ability necessary to a full compliance with all the commands of God. 10. That Christ never intercedes for any but those who are actually united to him by faith: or that Christ does not intercede for the elect until after their regeneration. 11. That saving faith is the mere belief of the word of God, and not a grace of the Holy Spirit. 12. That regeneration is the act of the sinner himself; and that it consists in a change of his governing purpose, which he himself must produce, and which is the result, not of any direct influence of the Holy Spirit on the heart, but chiefly a persuasive exhibition of truth, analogous to the influence which one man exerts over the mind of another; or that regeneration is not an *instantaneous act*, but a progressive work. 13. That God has done all that he *can* for the salvation of all men, and that man himself must do the rest. 14. That God cannot exert such influence on the minds of men as shall make it certain that they will choose and act in a particular manner, without impairing their moral agency. 15. That the righteousness of Christ is not the sole ground of the sinner's acceptance with God; that in no sense does the righteousness of Christ become ours. 16. That the reason why some differ from others in regard to their reception of the gospel, is that they make themselves to differ.

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ESSAY ON PURGATORY. NO. II.

As a refutation of the principle upon which the doctrine of Purgatory is based, I prove in the first place,—That the satisfaction of Christ is all-sufficient for every one that believeth, and consequently secures his immediate admission at death into heaven. This sufficiency is proved

1. From the infinite dignity of His person. Jesus Christ is the second person of the Godhead. "There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word and the Holy Ghost : and these three are one." "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth."—The Word as the only begotten of the Father, "in the fulness of the time" assumed human nature, taking it into union with his own divine person. It is the glory of Jesus of Nazareth, that he hath not a *human* but *divine person*. The human nature of Christ never subsisted a moment by itself, as separated from the divine person of the Son of God. The human nature is real, and distinct, not confounded with the divine ; nevertheless its subsistence is in the divine person. "Great is the mystery of godliness, God manifest in the flesh." "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and his name shall be called the mighty God." His name shall be called Immanuel—*God with us*." If we maintain the distinct personal subsistence of the human nature, we substantially reject the doctrine of the divinity of Christ. The hypostatic union of the Divine, and human natures, in the person of the Son of God is a scriptural and essential doctrine. It is one of the great mysteries of Godliness. A fact revealed to our faith, and a vital truth. It presents our blessed Redeemer before us, as *divine* ; and explains the profoundly mysterious expression, "*in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily*."

The vital importance of this doctrine appears, when viewed in connection with the sacrifice of Christ. Who "hath given himself for us, an offering, and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savour." The victim in this sacrifice, is the human nature; but that nature *as subsisting in the divine person* of the Son of God. The sufferings, and other obediential actions of the Saviour are the sufferings and actions of the humanity; but in estimating their value, they are to be viewed relatively to the *divine person*, in which the humanity subsists. By reason of the hypostatic union, what is done by either nature, is considered as the work of the person; and hence it is that the actions and sufferings of the human nature of the Redeemer, are suppositively transferred to the divine person, as the actions and sufferings of that person. This view of this interesting subject, explains that wonderful passage, Acts xx. 28, "Feed the church of God which he hath purchased with his own blood." The blood of God! The subsistence of the human nature of Jesus Christ in the divine person of the Son of God, dissolves the mysteriousness of this expression. The divine person sustained the humanity subsisting in it, under the pressure of infinite wrath; and transferred to all its sufferings, and actions, an infinite dignity and value. The price of our redemption, therefore, is *infinitely precious*; consequently the satisfaction rendered to law and justice, by the obedience unto death of Jesus Christ, is an *all sufficient satisfaction*. He hath truly, "finished transgression, made an end of sins, made reconciliation for iniquity, and brought in an everlasting righteousness."

Is not such a satisfaction *sufficient*, for all, and every one, to whom it is applied? It is a satisfaction rendered by a divine person: *it is the blood of God*, by which we are purchased; and must the expiations of purgatory be added to this infinite satisfaction, to render it effectual? The doctrine is derogatory to the divine dignity of the Redeemer; and "on it is written the name of blasphemy."

2. The all sufficiency of the Redeemer's satisfaction is farther evident, from the *unity* of his offering. Why the accumulated expressions relative to the unity of Christ's sacrifice, by Paul in his epistle to the Hebrews, if purgatorial atonement is notwithstanding requisite? The doctrine of Paul excludes the idea of such fiery expiations. "Wherefore *he is able also to save them to the uttermost* that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them. For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than

the heavens; *who needeth not daily*, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did *once* when he offered up himself." vii. 25—27. "So Christ was *once* offered to bear the sins of many: and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time, without sin unto salvation." ix. 28. But this man, after he had offered *one sacrifice for sins*, forever sat down on the right hand of God. "For by *one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified.*" x. 12—14. These passages need no comment. They teach unequivocally, the *unity and perfection* of the satisfaction of Christ. No more sacrifices and expiations for sin are necessary. His one offering and sacrifice of himself, hath accomplished the great work of our redemption—*perfected forever them that are sanctified.* Upon Purgatory, the papal sacrifice of the mass is based. By their "bloodless sacrifices," they pretend to relieve the suffering souls in purgatory. But the unity and perfection of Christ's sacrifice for sins, taught in the above passages, destroy them both. They both fall before the sword of the spirit. Christ's one and perfect sacrifice, renders the mass utterly futile and blasphemous, and demonstrates the falsehood and absurdity of purgatory.

3. The approbation of the Father as Supreme Judge, bears strong testimony to the sufficiency of Christ's satisfaction.

If we have the Father's testimony that he is fully satisfied with the atonement rendered by Jesus Christ, what need we more in proof of its sufficiency? He gives us ample testimony. We have it in the designation of his son, as the mediator, and in his mission of him into the world. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned." John iii. 16—18. Would the Father have sent his son into the world *knowing* that he was not qualified to render ample atonement to law and justice? "He laid help upon one who is *mighty* to save, and he that believeth on him is not condemned," no, not even to the pains of purgatory.

We have it at the time of the baptism of Christ, "And, lo! a voice from heaven saying, *this is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased.*" Math. iii. 17. Would the Father have been *well pleased* with him, if he was incompetent to render—and therefore would not render an all-sufficient satisfaction? He would not—neither would he have declared his delight in him

as a sacrificial victim, at his public consecration to his work of rendering satisfaction. But the highest evidence of satisfaction on the part of God the Father, is given in the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. "The gospel of God concerning his Son Jesus Christ, declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of Holiness, by the resurrection from the dead. Rom." i. 4. "And what is the exceeding greatness of his power, which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead." Eph. i. 19—20. The creditor does not free the debtor or surety from prison, until he hath paid the uttermost farthing. The sepulchre was the prison of Christ. If he had not "by himself *purged our sins*," would the Father have delivered him from the prison house? He brought him forth however, and thereby gave a demonstration that "he was well pleased for his righteousness sake."

The *consequent exaltation* of Christ is an additional testimony of the satisfaction of the Father. "Who when he had by himself *purged our sins*, sat down on the right hand of the majesty on high." Heb. i. 3. "And set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come; and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things, to the church which is his body." Eph. i. 20—22. If Christ had not rendered to the Father an all-sufficient satisfaction by his obedience unto death, would the Father have thus gloriously exalted him? He exalted him *with his right hand*, giving thereby direct testimony, that he is well pleased with his satisfaction. So the scriptures speak. "He humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross, wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth: and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father." Phil. ii. 8. 11. It would not have been *to the glory of God the Father* to exalt Christ to his right hand, if his obedience unto death had not been amply satisfactory to the divine law and justice. His exaltation is abundant proof of the sufficiency of his atonement.

This approbation of the Father thus largely manifested as supreme Judge, should settle the question as to the sufficiency of the satisfaction rendered by the Son of God. The Father being thus pleased with the atonement by his Son, will he *dis-*

*honor that Son* by requiring of those for whom he died, and to whom his redemption has been applied, *additional satisfaction in their own persons*? Will he do that which no just earthly judge would do—exact the debt to the full, to the uttermost farthing, from the surety, and demand again payment from the original debtor? Such is not the character of the judge of all the earth: He will do right. Such a transaction may be consistent with papal justice, or rather *papal cruelty*, but it belongs not to the tribunal of the Christian's God, "The habitation of whose throne is justice and just judgment." Let the apostle speak. "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." Rom. viii. 33—34.

4. The *effects* of his satisfaction demonstrate its sufficiency.

1. It has procured for all those for whom he died the means of grace and opened the way for the efficacious operations of the Spirit. "When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men, and he gave some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors, and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." Eph. iv. 8—13. "I will pray the Father and he shall give you another comforter, that he may abide with you forever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him; but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." John xiv. 16—17. "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear that shall he speak; and he will shew you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you." xvi. 13—14.

The Holy Spirit is a *voluntary agent*. He comes of his own free will. Yet the *guilt* of the sinner was a barrier in the way of his saving operations. *That* being removed by the atonement of Christ, he comes in the name of Christ—receives of the things that are his, and shews them unto his redeemed.

2. The satisfaction of Christ has procured reconciliation with God. "For if when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son; much more, being re-



conciled, we shall be saved by his life: and not only so, but we also joy in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom also we have now received the atonement," or reconciliation. Rom. v. 10—11. "And having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself." "And you that were sometime alienated, and enemies in your minds by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled in the body of his flesh through death, to *present you holy, and unblameable, and unreprouceable in his sight.*" Col. i. 19—22.

3. *Full remission of all sin*, has been purchased by his precious blood. "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace, wherein he hath abounded to us in all wisdom and prudence." Eph. i. 7. 8. "Be it known unto you therefore men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins; and by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses." Acts xiii. 38—39. "Therefore being justified by faith we have peace with God, *through our Lord Jesus Christ.*" Rom. v. 1. "For this is my blood of the New Testament which is shed for many, for the remission of sins."

4. Acceptance with God. "To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved." Eph. i. 6.

5. Adoption into the family of God. Gal. iv. 4—7. "But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son made of a woman, made under the law, to *redeem them* that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son unto your hearts crying Abba, Father.—Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a Son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ." See Rom. viii. 15. Eph. i. 5.

6. A title to heaven is embraced in the purchase of his blood. "In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." Eph. i. 2. See also Acts xxvi. 18, 1. Pet. i. 34.

7. *Sanctification* or complete fitness for heaven. "Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood, he entered in once into the holy place having obtained eternal redemption for us. For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh—how much more shall the blood

of Christ, who through the eternal spirit offered himself without spot unto God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God." Heb. ix. 12—14. "Christ loved his church and gave himself for it that he might sanctify and cleanse it by the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." Eph. v. 25—27. See 1. John i. 7.

8. Final glorification. "The spirit itself beareth witness with our spirits, that we are the children of God, and if children, then heirs, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ: if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together—for I reckon, that the sufferings of *this present time* are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." "Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and *whom he justified, them he also glorified.*" Rom. viii. 16, 18, 30." "Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me, *be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory.*" John xvii. 24. See also Heb. xii. 1—2.

Here are eight distinct blessings—scripturally proven to be the effects, or purchase of the satisfaction of Christ: from the simple means of grace—to the perfection of the soul in holiness and glory.

What more is requisite,—what more can be desired? He that believeth in Christ "*hath everlasting life*, and shall be presented faultless in the presence of his glory with exceeding joy." In no one of the numerous passages quoted, is there any mention of any other *meritorious cause* of remission, or purification, than the blood of Christ, nor of any *efficient agent*, but the Holy Spirit, applying that blood. Here is no mention of a purgatorial fire to accomplish what the blood of Christ fails to perform. The reason is, His blood is sufficient for every one that believeth, and consequently secures his immediate admission at death, into heaven. There is no need of purgatory. It is derogatory to His merit—it robs him of the travail of his soul, and tarnishes the bright jewels of his diadem of Glory. It is "a doctrine of Devils"—a cunningly contrived scheme of "false prophets, and false apostles" to promote their selfish and wicked ends: whilst it dishonours Christ, and destroys immortal souls. Let us pray that we may not be given up to this "strong delusion," but that our "robes may be washed, and made white in the blood of the Lamb," that we may be qualified to sing with gladness the song of praise "*Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our*

*sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God, and his Father : to him be glory, and dominion forever and ever, Amen."*

W. L. R.

(To be continued.)

From the Covenanter.

LIFE OF THE REV. JAMES RENWICK,

*The last of the Martyrs.*

"The memory of the just is blessed."

This declaration, which has been verified in countless instances in the memorials of departed believers, has a striking application to the character and actions of the renowned martyr whose name is prefixed to this paper. Long as the remembrance of eminent worth and piety shall be cherished in the Church, and the cause for which the Covenanters of the 17th century contended unto blood shall be esteemed valuable, so long will the memory of Renwick live, and his name will be associated with all that is heroic, and godly, and devoted. The last of the "worthies" who jeopardized their lives in the high places on behalf of "Christ's Crown and the Covenants," he suffered perhaps more than any one who went before him; and none of the intrepid leaders of the glorious army of Scotland's martyrs displayed more invincible fortitude and attractive piety than the youth who brought up the rear, and whose name closes the list of that bright cloud of witnesses. Short was his time of service and sufferings, but great and glorious were his achievements; the termination of his earthly career was inexpressibly happy, the crown which was given him illustrious beyond conception, and he now stands among the chief of the innumerable multitude who are before the throne, having come out of *great tribulation*, and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Who would not desire to emulate the devotedness and fervent zeal of this young martyr, and who, in contemplating his triumphant death and exalted reward, would not say with intense desire—"Let me die the death of Renwick, and let my last end be like his?"

That the witnesses for the truth may be animated to follow the footsteps of those who have gone before them, we offer a brief sketch of the life and character of the *last of the mar-*

*tyrs*, to which we may afterwards append a few extracts from his works—the *Informatory Vindication*, his *Sermons* and *Letters*.

James Renwick was born in the parish of Glencairn, Nithsdale, on the 15th of February, 1662. His parents, whose outward circumstances were low—his father following the occupation of a weaver—were distinguished even in that remarkable age for eminent piety. It is recorded of his father that, after he had witnessed the early deaths of several of his children, he was accustomed to comfort his wife by saying, that whether his children died young or old, his great desire for them was, that they might be heirs of glory. His pious mother, who had suffered much from domestic affliction, had sought from the Lord with great importunity, that not only her son might be an heir of the kingdom, but that he might be spared to serve the Lord in his generation. The Spirit, whose operations are mysterious, sometimes brings to humble, waiting believers a gracious answer of prayer, by inspiring them with a presentiment of the fulfilment of their requests, amounting to an assured belief that their petitions were heard, and a well-grounded hope of future favour. Such an answer did He condescend to give in relation to this son of his parents' vows. At his birth, his mother regarded him as a child of promise, and solemnly dedicated him to God: and his father, who died in 1676, while his son was yet a boy, expressed before his death his persuasion, that, though his time on earth would be short, the Lord designed him for some important service in the Church. The expectations of his godly parents were not disappointed. Soon did he give striking evidence of being sanctified from the womb. At two years of age, it is said he was observed to aim at secret prayer; at six, he was able to read the Bible, and at that early age he gave evidence that Divine things had made an impression on his heart. While studying the history of the creation, as recorded in the book of Genesis, he was led into deep and painful mental exercises relative to the Maker of all things, the mode of creation, and the numerous invisible worlds that had been called into existence by the Divine command. For a period of two years, these subjects excited in his youthful mind painful doubts and apprehensions, and though, as his knowledge of revelation advanced, he obtained more satisfaction, his thoughts at times so distressed him, that he represents himself, on a certain occasion, being in the fields and meditating on the mysteries of creation, so assailed with temptations to Atheism, that he cried out looking to the surrounding moun-

tains—"If these were all devouring furnaces of burning brimstone, I would be content to go through them, if so be I could be assured there was a God." These exercises at so early a period discovered at once the vigor of his intellect, and the sovereign and mysterious ways in which the God of salvation leads his children, as he conducts them to rest in believing, and prepares them for extensive usefulness in their generation. The grace of the Saviour brought to young Renwick relief from his perplexities. Receiving the word as a divine testimony, he not only came to serenity of mind, and a fixed belief in the being and perfections of God, but to a comfortable sense of his own interest in him. The faith, which is the fruit of Divine operation, at once dispelled his doubts, and inspired him with a blessed hope; and the Apostle's striking declaration was to him verified—"Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God: so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear."—(Heb. xi. 3.)

If we except these exercises, with the delight which in childhood he manifested in reading the word, and in secret prayer, and his conscientious and uniform obedience to his parents, little remarkable occurred in the history of James Renwick's youth. His means for prosecuting study being extremely limited, with considerable difficulty he finished the course of preparatory education at school: and afterwards, in attending the University at Edinburgh, he was assisted by the benevolence of some pious and liberal Christians, who had been attracted by his amiable disposition, and who were desirous of promoting the advancement of promising young men to the ministry. For a short season while attending college, it would seem, he was led away from the path of duty into some youthful vanities, through the company of some young men to whom he acted in the capacity of a tutor; yet it is certain that the period in which he gave place to juvenile indiscretion was very short, and that the Spirit whose gracious guidance he had enjoyed all along, not only speedily reclaimed him, but rendered his partial aberrations the means of leading him to increased diligence and devotedness. At the close of his studies in the University, he refused to take the oath of allegiance to the reigning prince, the flagitious Charles II., and was, in consequence, denied his share of the laureation in taking a degree—an honor which, however, was privately conferred on him afterwards. During the latter part of his residence in Edinburgh, Renwick had his eyes opened to the evils of the time, both in church and nation, and he became

more decided in his attachment to the few scattered and persecuted witnesses for Christ, and to the cause for which they suffered. At this period, the violence of the persecution was somewhat abated. Instead of persevering in the attempt to exterminate Presbyterianism by force, the evil men who held the reins of power endeavored to "corrupt by flatteries" the ministers and leading Presbyterians, and to lull the people in security, while they wreathed round their necks the yoke of Prelacy and despotism. The bait was for a time but too successful; many of the ministers accepted an Erastian and ensnaring *indulgence*; the Presbyterians were divided in judgment; the great mass of them succumbed to the yoke; while only a few continued faithful to their solemn engagements, who unawed by the rage of the persecutors, and uncorrupted by the enticements of the powerful, steadfastly maintained their integrity. This faithful few, who fully held the principles exhibited by the church of Scotland in her purest days—the principles yet displayed in the doctrinal formulas of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, were, at the period to which we refer, in a very distressed condition. Whatever favour was extended to those who complied with the corruptions of the times, for them there was only unmitigated cruelty, and the design of the abettors of Prelacy seemed to be to waste them till they had made a full end. Their faithful ministers had been cut off by violent deaths, or remained in exile, and save the intrepid Donald Cargill, there were none in Scotland to testify for the liberties of Christ's Church, and against the grievous enormities of the age. Deprived, in a great measure, of access to public ordinances purely administered, the scattered children of the Covenant, fearing the Lord, "spake often one to another," and cultivated Christian communion *in private meetings for prayer and religious conference*—an institution singularly blessed in those times for fostering vital godliness, and which has been productive of the same fruit among their descendents even to our day. From their steadfast attendance upon this institution arose the epithet, *Society people*, by which they were designated during the last days of the ministry of Cargill, and from his death downward till the accession to their fellowship of the Rev. John M'Millan in 1706. Rather than violate their consciences, and countenance the ministrations of those who had apostatized from their former testimony, and had bartered the liberties of Christ's church, they cultivated together private Christian communion, and animated each other in holding fast their profession, and in contending earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints.

For a considerable period after Renwick's mind became alive to the unfaithfulness of the indulged ministers, he was unacquainted with any who had preserved their garments undefiled, and were free from the prevailing defections.

A trying and melancholy occasion served to strengthen his resolution to separate from those who had been guilty of defection, and brought him into connexion with the faithful Covenanters, the Society people. He was a spectator at the execution of the Rev. Donald Cargill, which took place in the Grassmarket, Edinburgh, July 27th, 1681. The dying testimony, with the constancy and composure of the martyr, produced a powerful impression on his mind; he was impressed with the excellency of the cause which could sustain a dying man amid such trials, and he determined at all hazards to cast in his lot with the suffering people of God. In his forming such a determination, we have a singular exemplification of the truth of the maxim, that "the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church;" and we see, likewise, the striking effect produced by the internal operation of the Spirit of God. In the face of dangers the most appalling, with the array of the inveterate prejudices and cruel hostility of an evil world around him, and the prospect before him of privations and sufferings the most distressing, and of death in its most dismal aspect, Renwick was constrained to give himself to the Lord's service, and he embarked in the cause of the persecuted Covenanters with the fixed resolution to suffer the worst, rather than surrender the least truth for which they contended, or to take part with their adversaries. The presence of Mr. Renwick in the meetings of the faithful adherents of the Covenants, served to comfort them in the midst of their trials, and to inspire them with renewed fortitude and courage. On making his accession to them, he told them he had been much grieved at the defections of the times, and distressed because many were backward about bearing testimony against prevailing sins, justifying themselves from that misinterpreted Scripture—"The prudent shall keep silence, for it is an evil time," which, said he, I could never understand of a silence of omission of duty, but only of submission to the Lord. "When I consider," he added, "that ministers must be instant in season and out of season; that they must set the trumpet to their mouth, and show Israel their sin; it is afflicting to observe how unlike to this ministers are now. I saw nothing among them whom I was acquainted with, but every one studying his own safety, and nothing like giving a testimony against the wrongs done to the cause of Christ." The

fervour of his spirit, and his intrepidity, were manifested by the part which he took with others of the brethren in removing, at imminent hazard, the bodies of five martyrs that had been lately executed at the *Gallow-lee*, and were buried at the place where they had suffered; and soon after, in order to preserve union among the friends of the Covenanted cause, and to exhibit a public testimony against the oppressions of the tyrant, Charles II., and the inroads of popery, he joined with others in emitting the *Lanark Declaration*. This celebrated paper was drawn up at the time that the bigotted Papist, the Duke of York, afterwards James II., first presided as the representative of his brother, the reigning monarch, in a parliament held in Edinburgh, and was publicly proclaimed at the Market Cross in Lanark, January 12th, 1682, Mr. Renwick being one of the party of intrepid men who proclaimed it. It was the laudable practice of the faithful witnesses for Christ, in those days, diligently to observe the *signs of the times*; to consider attentively what the cause of truth demanded of them; and then to testify publickly, in discourses from the pulpit, and in their published Declarations, against every step of defection from the good ways of the Lord. Thus they freed themselves from a participation of national sins, and did what in them lay to avert divine judgments from themselves and the nation. These bold measures, so unlike the timid and time-serving policy pursued in our day, exposed them to aggravated trials; but the sufferers had the warrant of the highest authority for taking them, and there is abundant evidence left on record, that in them they enjoyed the light of the Divine countenance. With them it was never a question—"What will the world think of our conduct?" but what does the concern of Christ's glory and the Church's interests demand;—this being once settled, they went forth and uncompromisingly performed their duty, when they well knew that bonds and afflictions awaited them. The *Lanark Declaration* was an excellent manifestation of the principles by which the public conduct of the martyrs was actuated; it contained a bold and manly rejection of the authority of the oppressor, Charles Stuart, because of his tyranny and perjuries, and a solemn protest against the iniquitous measures pursued by himself and his counsellors, for the destruction of the cause of truth. At the time of proclaiming it, Renwick, and those who took part with him in the transaction, burnt the Test and act of Succession of the Duke of York to the Crown, and confirmed the Declarations formerly published at Rutherglen and Sanquhar.



Persecuted and reproached as the Societies were at this time, their spirits were far from being subdued;—in spite of opposition, they fearlessly endeavored to perform present duty, and, leaving the consequences with God, they waited with patience for the return of expected and promised favor. Their *public spirit* is especially worthy of commendation. Unlike the *professed* friends of truth in latter days, they never sat down in the quiet enjoyment of their own privileges, while the public affairs of the church were in disorder; and they never hesitated, because of the expense or the sacrifice of ease that it might cost them, to do whatsoever their hand found to do with their might, for the promotion of the Lord's work.—Shortly after the publication of the Lanark Declaration, the Societies, in order to clear away the aspersions cast upon their cause and conduct, which had been industriously circulated by enemies among the Reformed Churches abroad, and to provide a faithful public ministry, deputed Alexander Gordon, Laird of Earlstoun, a man of piety and influence and a tried friend of the Covenanted cause to visit the United Provinces of Holland, and to represent their case to the ministers and churches in that country. He was afterwards succeeded in this service by Sir Robert Hamilton, who had fled thither after the battle of Bothwell Bridge, and who was unwearied in his exertions on behalf of the persecuted remnant in Scotland. The universities in Scotland being closed against students who would not take ensnaring oaths, approving of the powers that wielded the sword of persecution and of their iniquitous measures, and there being no method left of obtaining ordination to the ministry but through the hands of the Prelates or the Indulged, James Renwick and two others, William Boyd and John Flint, young men of approved piety and considerable literary attainments, at the earnest solicitation of the Societies, followed the commissioners to Holland, with a view to prosecute their studies, and obtain ordination to the work of the ministry to be exercised in their native land.

(To be continued.)

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#### SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

In all the writings of the prophets and apostles, in the Psalms of David, and in the oral instructions imparted by Christ, when on earth, they referred to the moral and religious aspects of their times, and the passing dispensations of God's providence. They in so doing, instructed their disciples, and

all the successive followers of Christ to observe attentively the signs of the times, in which they live. While the farmer observes the character of the seasons, and the progress of the crops—the merchant, the changes in the state of the market—and the politician, the shiftings of the popular breeze, the christian observes with attention the aspects of the moral, social and ecclesiastical heavens—high and noble objects, that he may know what Israel ought to do. It seems to be agreed by all that the times in which we live, portend great events, soon to be disclosed in the providence of God.

One remarkable peculiarity of our times is, that Christendom, for twenty-two years, with a few minor exceptions, has enjoyed repose from war. So long a period of general peace, has not occurred among the nations of Europe, since the crucifixion of Messiah. For nearly one quarter of a century, there has been no general war among christian nations. “The whole earth has been comparatively at rest and quiet.” The tendency of war has been thought, and justly to be, to the corruption of public morals, by cherishing fierce, turbulent, and licentious passions, and by enfeebling the energy of the means employed for the cultivation of the social virtues. But it may well be questioned, whether the descent of society in the downward career of error, vice and disorder, was ever more accelerated, in the civilized world, than it has been in this unusual repose of the nations. Of the state of society in Europe, we are not so well advised, as we are respecting that of our own country. Ten or fifteen years ago, we heard from almost every quarter, gratulations on the encouraging prospects of society—the mighty influence of local revivals of religion, in multiplying the number of converts, and in restraining the vices of men—the benign and irresistible energies of such benevolent institutions, as Bible, tract, missionary, Sabbath-school, and temperance societies, in the diffusion of truth, in the illumination of the public mind, and in arresting the progress of immorality. All these were joyfully hailed as the dawn of an enlightened, holy and blessed millenium. It is now found, by most painful experience, to have been a bright illusion, and that there were evils counterworking, in the social machinery, to such extent, as to prevent the benign results so fondly anticipated. It is now admitted, perhaps by all intelligent and good men, that no more has been accomplished than to retard somewhat the march of error and disorder. We hear all sensible men complain of the disjointed condition of the times, and the baleful progress of moral evil, almost threatening the dissolution of the

social fabric. If this is in very deed the condition of things among us (and who can doubt it?) we have reason to thank God that the eyes of good men are opened to see it, and that they are not still deceiving themselves with delusive expectations, and reposing on their arms, as if the victory were already achieved. But let us enter a little into detail.

It is perfectly certain that popery is making rapid strides in the increase of its devotees, and the enlargement of its influence in Protestant countries, and in none perhaps, more than in our own land. The work advances of building chapels, many of them sumptuous, in our cities, villages and country places, and organizing congregations to occupy them, the erection of academical edifices, and filling them with pupils, in many instances, chiefly the children of Protestant parents, the education of their priests of idolatry, and the importation every year, of thousands of Papists from Ireland and Germany. They are multiplying their publications by the press, in books, magazines and newspapers, and with a boldness, unknown here in former times, proclaiming many of their most abominable dogmas, and setting forth their arrogant proscriptive claims. They are courted by the political parties for their suffrages; and between the contending parties, they so hold the balance, that in the state of New-York, into whichever scale they cast their weight, it predominates. And in the election of a President, New-York state holds the balance so that, in reality, the making of a President, as O'Connell boasted in Dublin some years ago, is their work. They are ascending to places of power in the nation, and doubtless intend to seize and occupy all the great offices of state in the nation. When a system like Popery, whose very ailment is ignorance, and wickedness, makes so rapid progress in any country, it is a sure symptom that the moral condition of society is on the decline.

Infidelity about the close of the French Revolution, seemed to be abashed both in England and America, and christianity came off triumphant in the conflict with deism, which had lasted nearly a quarter of a century. For a period of about fifteen years, there were few infidel publications issued from the press. But within ten years it begins again to raise its head, issue its blasphemous publications, and rally its scattered forces. The reports of Colonel Johnson, now Vice President, in the Senate, and House of Representatives of the United States, and in fact approved by Congress, on the subject of the Sabbath mail, gave new energy and hope to the enemies of the word of God, on this side of the Atlantic. - The friendly voice,

uttered in loud accents, from the capital of the nation, imparted fresh courage to the mustering ranks of infidelity, while it reverberated from the remotest parts of the commonwealth. Deistical societies were organized,—periodical journals were set on foot, and to a considerable extent patronized, while public lecturers, both male and female, belched forth their blasphemies. For several winters in the Legislature of New-York where infidelity is triumphant, the most virulent attacks have been made on revealed religion, and thence circulated by the newspaper press among the mass of the people, where they have been hailed with acclamation, by the ungodly and profane. Papists and deists, in their periodicals, are confederated together, and cheer each other as professing to contend for the rights of man. It is from this confederacy, so natural in itself, and drawn together more closely, as it is by the principle of elective affinity, that the greatest danger is to be apprehended to true religion and the rights of men. Popery always corrupt in doctrine, worship, and morals, has never failed to be arbitrary, tyrannical and persecuting, where its dark spirit had a field on which to expatiate itself. The deism and moral debasement of the French Revolution, eventuated in a gigantic despotism. Among those who profess in various forms an attachment to the protestant faith and worship, error has within the last twenty years made the most alarming progress in the American churches. Twenty-five years ago, it was not known, to the christian public, that there were more than three or four Unitarian ministers in the congregational churches of New England. Now there are probably three hundred, who openly and avowedly deny the doctrine of the trinity of persons in the Godhead, and of course the true and proper divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the whole doctrine of salvation by his atoning sacrifice. Harvard University, with great revenues, and more than twenty learned professors, and above three hundred pupils is altogether under their control. The whole country and especially the north eastern states are deluged with their publications, from the penny pamphlet, and petty magazine, to the imposing octavo volume. They are erecting rich and splendid edifices in the great cities of the land, for their heretical assemblies, to which the ungodly and opulent votaries of fashionable follies resort, under pretence of worshipping God.

The Campbellites, who are generally anti-trinitarians, have rent the Baptist church within a few years, drawing off from its ranks many thousands, claim to have many hundreds of

congregations, and are in rapid progress of augmentation. Professing great veneration for what they call primitive christianity, they are hostile to almost every important article of the christian's faith, and lead in the paths of ruin their deluded thousands.

The *Christians* also, a low and vulgar sect of Unitarians, given up to wild fanaticism, lead away after them multitudes of deluded followers. The Mormonites, who seem to be animated by the spirit of Mahomet, pretend to the discovery of a new Bible, to heavenly visions and revelations and miraculous powers, have not been without considerable success in the propagation of their impudent imposture. Some men of formerly reputable standing, as citizens, and even members of protestant churches, have been carried away by their delusions. Indeed the most abominable impurities of doctrine, and polluted worship, of the dark ages, seem to be revived, exhibited and embraced in this age, which until within two or three years, was lauded as the most enlightened that ever blessed the world. The angel of the bottomless pit has again opened its dark recesses; and its smoke has darkened the atmosphere of these states.

The Presbyterian Church under the care of the General Assembly, as is known, has grown into a large body, has numerous colleges, and academies under its control, and several theological seminaries. Many of its members are opulent and influential citizens of the community. Among its adherents are many learned and professional men. There is so much of the Presbyterian form of government infused in its constitution as imparts to it a much greater concentration of power than belongs to other large denominations. Its members have the control, in a great measure, over Bible, missionary, tract, and temperance societies, and Sabbath schools, in the middle, western, and southern States. Such a body has great power, either for good or evil. Within twenty-five years, if we believe the declarations of those who have been its leading and orthodox men, the increase of error, among them has been rapid and alarming. The imputation of Adam's sin to his posterity, and of the righteousness of Christ to believers for their justification is denied by a large part of the ministers of this body. The Arminian doctrine of universal atonement, and the natural ability of man to believe and perform good works are maintained, preached, and published. All attempts to inflict censure on those who thus impugn the doctrines of that confession, to which they are sworn, in their ordination vows, have been defeated, until the late meeting

of the General Assembly. From the result of these efforts persevered in for several years, it appears, the errorists have ruled the body. Jarring opinions on doctrines and points of order, have produced most vehement conflicts, and withal there has been confessedly, a great decay of vital piety, and growth of a carnal and worldly spirit, and of corruption in christian morals. From the able and persevering efforts made by many orthodox men, for some years we had hoped much; but part of the proceedings of the late convention of the Old School men, leaves us less to expect on this quarter. The zeal of southern men to hold their slaves and of northern men to aid and abet them, appears to be stronger than their zeal for sound doctrine and the glory of God on this subject. Negro slavery is the great corrupter and curse of the United States. While continued and favored by the professors of religion, as it is by a majority of this body, and of Congregationalists, Episcopalians and Methodists, it will be found to be, as it always has been, the abomination of moral and spiritual desolation.

The spread and prevalence of so many pestilent errors and idolatries could not fail to corrupt the public morals. This corruption has extended to all ranks of society like a spreading leprosy. If one half of all which is published in the political journals of the day, is true, the immorality of men in power is enormous and loathsome. Profane swearing, Sabbath violation, harlotry, and gambling are not held among many prominent statesmen, to be disreputable. "This is a lamentation, and shall be for a lamentation." When the palace, the benches of justice, and the halls of legislation, where the holiness of God should be shadowed forth in the moral purity of their occupants, are polluted by such vices, what floods of iniquity, issuing from the fountains, must overflow the land, emitting their pestilential exhalations, which spread blasting, mildew and death! The land is filled with violence. The Sabbath is desecrated by steam-boats, stages, tide-waiters, hotels and hosts of travellers, to an extent never before known in our country. In the city of New Orleans, the theatres, and commercial houses are open, military parades are held, and all kinds of shameless revelry practiced openly before the sun, on the Lord's day. And what in the sight of God, is perhaps a more aggravated violation of the holy day of rest, many, yes multitudes of Protestant professors of religion, converse freely and habitually, even around the doors of the house of worship, on all worldly topics, while at home they indulge in the same unsanctified conversation, in the

reading of secular newspapers, and in every thing of a worldly nature, except servile labour. Murders, suicides, robberies, and house breaking are most alarmingly multiplied.—“Blood toucheth blood,” and in many instances the arm of the law is paralyzed. In nothern cities many men wear deadly weapons, thus deliberately arming themselves to shed blood on the provocation of a word. All this is new among us.—Mobs, riots, disorderly assemblages, and tumults have filled the land with violence—dwellings have been demolished, churches dismantled, school-houses destroyed, property wasted, store houses plundered of their contents, and peaceable citizens murdered. Mobs have generally originated among the lowest kinds “*of lewd fellows,*” such as those that formerly assailed the house of Jason; but those of the few past years, have been excited and led on by men who are esteemed to hold a respectable rank in society. They are even applauded by the present occupant of the presidential chair, as emanating from a noble zeal for the constitution, laws and usages of the nation, as spontaneous bursts of praiseworthy patriotism! What makes this feature in the aspect of the times more odious is, that they originated in an opposition to the cause of human liberty, to prevent all discussion of the duty of emancipating the millions of unoffending men, who are cruelly enslaved in this otherwise free country. They now take banks, commerce, and churches into their plans of operation. It is not long since an armed force patrolled the streets of the city of New York, to preserve the city from devastation, by the hands of these *zealous and enlightened patriots!*

A spirit of wild and most extravagant speculation has taken place of the sober and honest transaction of business, and occupied all the avenues of trade, with schemes of gambling, so that commerce, unable to go forward in its operation, has in a great measure ceased to move.

In religion, there is an almost universal deadness—all is apathy in the things of God. To so great an extent does this prevail, that with all the skill of the Methodist denomination in moving the passions, there has been a remarkable failure in their operations during the past year. Instead of their ordinary annual increase of thousands, their numbers have decreased. We do not mention this fact, as approving either of their creed, or the means to which they resort to swell the list of ecclesiastical proselytes, but merely to illustrate the utter unconcern of men about religious things in every form, except the pomp and idolatry of Popish superstition. The moral, political and ecclesiastical heavens, indeed gather blackness.

For all these iniquities, Jehovah, the Lord of hosts, is pleading a controversy with the nation, and making it feel the lighting down of his arm. He thunders in the heavens in his ire. The aspects of the seasons have changed from benignity to wrath. Unseasonable frosts have cut off the fruit and the vines, and fruit trees have been blasted, and many of them have withered and died. Mildew and drought have blighted, and armies of insects have devoured the harvests. The herds in the stalls, through lack of grass and other provender, have been impoverished and diminished. Pestilence, in the form of cholera, has ridden his pale horse over the land. Two or three thousand savages kept the armies of a great nation at bay for nearly two years, and at last have been subdued only after the expenditure of six or seven millions of dollars, and the loss of many lives. Fierce and angry passions generated in that cupidity "that pants for the dust on the head of the poor" slave, threaten the dissolution of the whole fabric of society.

Pecuniary distress has fallen on the nation. Rich men weep and howl, for their treasures are gone. The cholera raged chiefly among the poor; the frosts, insects, drought and mildew distressed the farmer; and the derangement of business, like a howling tempest, overturns and lays in ruins, wide and spreading, the strong holds of the opulent, crushing in their fall all mechanical employments. In one moment great wealth has come to nought. The opulent, slave-holding planters of the south are filled with dismay. The labors of their bondmen avail them not; they are even deprived, in many instances, of the means of furnishing them with their scanty pittance of food. In their despair some have even talked of *killing a part of their slaves*, that they may be able to feed the remainder. In this state of things the price of provisions has risen to rates so unusual as to distress, in some degree, all classes of society. It even reacts on the farmer. Public and private improvements, of which we boasted with loathsome pride, have been suspended. Frightful conflagrations, in villages, cities, and country places, and other appalling disasters, have destroyed more lives and property in two years than had been lost during any ten years before. In all these the finger of God has been most remarkably visible, pointing to Sabbath violation, and the oppressions of slavery. Yet ungodly men will not hear the rod, nor him that hath appointed it. Overtrading, government circulars, negligence of masters of vessels—all true as means in God's hand, are talked of; but most people look no higher than these second causes.



A dark and portentous cloud hangs over society; the winds howl, the lightnings glare, the thunders roar, and mens' hearts fail with fear. "God reigneth; let the earth be glad." "He maketh the clouds his chariot, and travelleth on the wings of the wind." "Let Israel hope in the Lord."

The intelligent christian, however, can see "the Spirit of the living creatures in the wheels." An organized body of men, both in Britain and in our own land, still abide by the ancient landmarks, bear witness against all these evils, and speak in accents so loud as to be heard afar, even in the roaring of the tempest. Their numbers, though "the dragon may have drawn away in his tail the third part of the stars of heaven," are steadily increasing, while harmony and vigor characterize their strivings "for the faith once delivered to the saints." The vessel in which they are embarked holds on her steady course notwithstanding the rage of the billows and the howlings of the storm.

The work of translating the Holy Scriptures, and the diffusion of them among all ranks of society, and among Pagan nations, goes forward still; and thus seed is sown which, in due time, "will shake with prosperous fruits, like trees on Lebanon." An angel is flying in the midst of heaven—having the everlasting gospel to preach to all nations. We have the promise of God, that "every thing shall live whithersoever the waters come."

The efforts which are made to arrest the progress of the baleful evil of intemperance, reveal not only its abominations, but disclose many collateral iniquities which have been preying, almost unobserved, on the vitals of society. Thus the attention of all good men has been drawn to the danger of these corruptions, and they have been awakened to a sense of the necessity of vigorous measures for their reformation.

The tocsin of alarm has been sounded against Popish idolatry, superstition and tyranny. Both in the pulpit and by the press many loud and faithful warnings are given to beware of the growing power and influence of "the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth." The spirit of protestantism, which for many years had been slumbering, begins to awake in the land. Many a christian soldier buckles on the armor in which victory was achieved in the days of the reformation. "When the enemy comes in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord will lift up a standard against him." God, we trust, is raising up men who "will wax valiant in fight and turn the battle to the gate."

About one hundred thousand, and their numbers are rapidly augmenting, are associated together to plead the cause of injured humanity, who blow loud and long the trumpet of African emancipation. The whole land is shaken by its reverberations. Neither mobs, riots, tumults, presidential, governmental and legislative denunciations, nor the threats of slaveholders, and their abettors, can silence its voice, which swells louder and louder on the breeze.

It is a favourable symptom that sober, intelligent and godly men now begin to open their eyes on the evils of the times and the judgments of heaven. Many begin to discover the dishonor that has been done to God and his law in the corruption of the civil institutions of the land, and to deplore the evil of elevating profane men to the highest places of power in the commonwealth.

Finally, the truth and importance of the doctrine that the Holy Scriptures are the rule of civil government, and bind presidents, governors, legislators and citizens, gain ground daily among all good men. Temperance men and the enemies of slavery appeal continually to the Bible as the great depository of law, and call on all men to live according to its precepts. This truth, in its various ramifications and applications, is destined to the purification of the nations. The word of the Lord is mighty through the energy of the Holy Ghost to the demolition of the strong holds of sin and Satan. "Let God arise, and let all his enemies be scattered."

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CONVENTION OF THE ORTHODOX OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

In our last No. we gave a list "of errors alleged," by the convention, "to have obtained currency in the Presbyterian church." We now give the "memorial" adopted by the convention and laid before the General Assembly in relation to said errors and to evils affecting ecclesiastical order and discipline in that denomination.

When any portion of the Church of Jesus Christ is called, in His providence, to take a step which may materially affect their Master's cause, and influence, for good or ill, the destinies of large portions of mankind, through successive generations;—it is a very plain, as well as solemn duty, to state clearly the reasons of their conduct—the evils of which they complain—the objects at which they aim—and the remedies which they propose. This Convention, consisting of one hundred and twenty-four members, of whom one hundred and twelve are delegated by fifty-four Presbyteries, and twelve by minorities in other

Presbyteries, all of which members are ministers or ruling elders of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America; after mature deliberation, full consultation with each other, and earnest prayer to God for direction, have agreed on the following memorial, and do hereby respectfully lay it before the General Assembly, now in session—and through it before all the churches, and the whole world, as our solemn, and as, we trust, effective testimony against evils which faithfulness to God, and to the world, will no longer permit us to endure.

That we have not been rash and hasty, nor manifested a factious opposition to errors and disorders, which were only of small extent, or recent introduction is manifestly proven by the fact that these evils have been insiduously spreading through our Church for many years—and that they have at length become so mature, and so diffused, as not only to pervade large portions of the Church, but to reign triumphantly over the body itself, through successive General Assemblies. On the other hand, that we have not been wholly faithless to our Master and to truth, we appeal to the constant efforts of some through the press and the pulpit—to the firm and consistent course of some of our Presbyteries and Synods—to the faithful conduct of the minorities in the Assemblies of 1831, 2, 3, 4, and 6—to the Act and Testimony—to the proceedings of the conventions of Cincinnati in 1831, and Pittsburgh in '35 and to the noble Assembly of 1835.

We contend especially, and above all for *the truth*, as it is made known to us of God for the salvation of men. We contend for nothing else, except as the result or support of this inestimable treasure. It is because this is subverted, that we grieve; it is because our standards teach it, that we bewail their perversion; it is because our church order and discipline preserve, defend and diffuse it, that we weep over their impending ruin. It is against error that we emphatically bear our testimony—error dangerous to the souls of men, dishonoring to Jesus Christ, contrary to his revealed truth, and utterly at variance with our standards. Error not as it may be freely and openly held by others, in this age and land of absolute religious freedom; but error, held and taught in the Presbyterian church, preached and written by persons who profess to receive and adopt our Scriptural standards—promoted by societies operating widely through our churches—reduced into form, and openly embraced by almost entire Presbyteries and Synods—favored by repeated acts of successive General Assemblies, and at last virtually sanctioned

to an alarming extent, by the numerous Assembly of 1836.

To be more specific, we hereby set forth in order, some of the doctrinal errors against which we bear testimony, and which we and the churches have conclusive proof, are widely disseminated in the Presbyterian Church.\*

METHOD OF REFORM.

Such being the state of things in the Presbyterian church, we believe that the time is fully come, for the adoption of some measures which shall speedily furnish relief from the evils referred to. Under this conviction, we present ourselves respectfully before you, praying you to lose no time in so adjusting the important matters at issue, as to restore at once purity and peace to our distracted Church. We are obliged to record our most solemn and settled belief, that the elements of our present discord are now too numerous, too extensively spread, and essentially opposed, to warrant any hope that they can in any way be composed, so long as they are compressed within the limits of our present ecclesiastical organization. Mutual confidence is gone, and is not to be restored by any temporising measures. This is a sad but a plain truth. It is a result over which the church has long mourned, and at which the world has scoffed—but for the production of which we, and those who agree with us, cannot hold ourselves responsible, firmly believing as we do, that we are, in this controversy, contending for the plain and obvious principles of Presbyterian doctrine and polity. In a word, it needs but a glance at the general character, the personal affinities, and the geographical relations of those who are antagonists in the present contest—to be satisfied that our present evils have not originated within, but have been brought from without—and are, in a great degree, the consequences of an unnatural intermixture of two systems of ecclesiastical action—which are in many respects entirely opposite in their nature and operation. Two important families in the great Christian community, who might have lived peacefully under different roofs—and maintained a friendly intercourse with each other—have been brought beneath the same roof—and yet without an entire incorporation. Contact has not produced real union, except in comparatively few instances; on the contrary, original differences of opinions and prejudices in relation to the principles of government and order, in many points of great practical moment, have, for a number of years, been widening instead of narrowing—and those who would have been friendly as neighbors, have at last by being forced into the

same dwelling,—after many and painful conflicts, furnished abundant evidence of the necessity of some effectual remedy. We cannot consent to meet any longer upon the floors of our several judicatories, to contend against the visible inroads of a system, which, whether so designed or not, is crippling our energies, and which, by obvious, but covert advances, menaces our very existence. We are in danger of being driven out from the home of our childhood.

While, however, we complain, and testify against the operations of this unnatural, unwise, and unconstitutional alliance just referred to, we wish it to be distinctly understood that we do it, chiefly because of our sincere belief that the *doctrinal purity* of our ancient Confession of Faith is endangered—and not because of the preferences we have for a particular system of mere church government and discipline. We hold the latter to be important mainly from their relation to the former. Hence, we wish it to be distinctly understood, that we have not, nor do we wish to have, any controversy with the system of Congregational church government upon its own territory. Towards the churches of New England, which stand fast in the faith once delivered to the saints—towards the distinguished and excellent brethren in the Lord in those churches, who are now testifying against the errors which are troubling *them*, as they are troubling *us*; we entertain the most fraternal esteem and affection. Let there be no strife between us; and there will be none, so long as there is no effort made by either body to intrude upon the domestic concerns of the other. We want no more than to be allowed the fair and unimpeded action of our own ecclesiastical principles. We desire to stand upon our own responsibility—and not to be made involuntary sharers in the responsibility of other bodies and systems of action, with which we cannot entirely harmonize. We desire to perform our Master's work upon principles which we prefer, because they are the first principles of our own ecclesiastical government—recognising at every step, the propriety and necessity of responsibility, and refuse to commit to any man or body of men, large and important trusts without the right of review, control, and if needs be, speedy correction.

These being our views, we earnestly urge upon the attention of the Assembly, the following items of reform:

1. While we wish to maintain as heretofore, a friendly correspondence and interchange of annual visits, with the evangelical associations of New England, we are anxiously looking to the General Assembly in the hope and belief that it will take into immediate consideration the plan of union adopted by the Assembly of 1801, (See Digest, p. 297, 298.)

—and that it will perceive in the original unconstitutionality and present pernicious operations of that plan, reasons for its immediate abrogation. 2. While we desire that no body of Christian men of other denominations, should be prevented from choosing their own plans of doing good—and while we claim no right to complain, should they exceed us in energy and zeal—we believe that facts, too familiar to need repetition here, warrant us in affirming that the organization and operations of the so called American Home Missionary Society, and American Education Society, and its branches of whatever name, are exceedingly injurious to the peace and purity of the Presbyterian Church. We recommend accordingly, that they should be discountenanced, and their operations as far as possible, prevented, within our ecclesiastical limits. 3. We believe that every Church, Presbytery, or Synod, now in nominal connection with this Assembly, but which is not organized on Presbyterian principles, should be immediately brought into order, dissolved, or disconnected from the Presbyterian church. 4. We believe that it is highly important that, at the present time, Presbyteries should be directed to examine henceforward all licentiates and ministers applying for admission from other denominations, on the subjects of theology and church government, as well as personal piety, and ministerial qualifications, and to require of them an explicit adoption of the Confession of Faith, and Form of Government. 5. We desire that immediate measures be taken, in order that such members of any Presbytery as hold any of the errors, or practise any of the disorders now testified against, may be subject to discipline; that such Presbyteries and Synods as tolerate them, may be cited and tried, and such of these bodies as are believed, to consist chiefly of decidedly unsound or disorderly members, may be separated from the Presbyterian church—provision being made at the same time for the reunion of orthodox churches, private members, or ministers, who may be found in any of them, with other convenient bodies. 6. As these are times of high and dangerous excitability in the public mind, when imprudent or partisan men may do great injury, especially when they have facilities for operating on a large field, this Convention is of opinion that the General Assembly ought to make known to our national societies, not previously noticed in this memorial, that the Presbyterian Church expects of them great caution in the selection of their travelling agents, and that it ought to be regarded as peculiarly unkind in any of them to give to the correspondence or general bearing of their institutions, a bias against the strictest order, and soundest principles of our beloved branch of the church of Christ.

## GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

The proceedings of this body at its late meeting have excited great attention and awakened a more general interest than the doings of ecclesiastical bodies ordinarily produce. So large a denomination, exercising so much influence, cannot be effected so materially as this has been, without affecting, directly or indirectly, in greater or less degree, the whole community. It is well known that error in doctrine and measures unscriptural and at war with every feature of Presbyterianism have for years abounded in this body of christians to an alarming and lamentable extent. Wholesome discipline was neglected until the efforts made at length to apply it proved unavailing. For a considerable time, this church has been divided into two parties, technically called of late the Old and New school parties. Besides these, there was a considerable number called *peace men*, who professed to take neither side, but somehow managed to be found voting and otherwise acting with the party that seemed for the time to have the ascendancy. In this way they were still on the strong side. What the Assembly did and what they refused to do in 1836 summoned the energies of the old school men and caused them to employ unremitting exertion in preparing for the late meeting. The convention noticed in our last No. matured the plan of acting and memorialized the Assembly in relation to prevalent errors and abuses, recommending such measures as seemed to present the proper remedies for the evils complained of. The orthodox, being *this year* the majority in the Assembly, acted on the wise principle of using the power when it was in their hands and proceeded in earnest to introduce a reform, which has long been called for, and which had it been attended to in season might have been easily accomplished without a *tithe* of the trouble, strife, hard feelings and evil speakings which the bare introduction of it has now occasioned, to say nothing of the eventful results which bid fair to follow the measure. This case furnishes, and in our opinion will for some time continue to furnish, another evidence of the danger of tampering with corruption in doctrine and worship and with evils in discipline &c. until they ripen to maturity. It is always better to take such things in the bud. As the case now stands, we regard the measures taken as important to the welfare of that denomination and to the cause of truth and righteousness.

The Assembly commenced its sessions on the 18th May, and continued by adjournment till the 8th June. The Rev. Dr. Elliott (Old school) was chosen Moderator by a majority of 31 votes. After considerable preliminary and other business, in the transaction of which it appeared evident the Assembly was already *divided* virtually though not formally, the memorial of the Convention was presented to the house by the committee of bills and after much discussion was read and referred to a committee to report thereon. The report of this committee was made the basis of much of the important action of the Assembly. That part of it which has led to the most important results, and the adoption of which brought matters to a crisis, relates to the plan of union with Congregationalists adopted by the Assembly in 1801. It is as follows.

“Resolved, 1, That between those branches of the church of Christ in our country, there should always exist a mutual respect and esteem, and that no reasonable efforts should be omitted to keep a good understanding.

2 That it is expedient to continue the friendly intercourse which is now kept up between this Church and the Congregational Churches of New England.

3 But as the Plan of Union, formed in 1801, for uniting Congregationalists and Presbyterians in the same churches in the new settlements, was originally unconstitutional on the part of the general Assembly, having never been submitted to the Presbyteries or ratified by them, and as the General Association of Connecticut had no authority on its part to make such a compact to bind even the churches of that state, and still less to bind those out of its own bounds, and as the plan is found to be in its operation unnatural and injurious, it is hereby declared to be abrogated.”

On this last resolution a long and animated discussion was continued until a call for the *previous question*, sustained by a vote of 129 to 123 cut off debate. The resolution was then adopted by a majority of 33; 143 voting for and 110 voting against it. The adoption of this measure struck deeply. The “Plan of Union” being declared unconstitutional, and of course null and void from the beginning, it appeared to be a plain case that Synods and Presbyteries organized on the footing of the provisions of that plan and yet not Presbyterian in their mode of government, ought in fact never to have been recognized as constituent parts of the General Assembly; and that much less, the plan being now abrogated, could they be considered as entitled to the *representation* hitherto allowed them. It only remained to ascertain these,



specify them and apply the operation of the resolution, to pronounce them out of the Presbyterian church and consequently their representation cut off. The first movement was made in relation to the *Western Reserve Synod*, respecting which it was, after much warm debate, "Resolved, that by the operation of the abrogation of the Plan of Union of 1801 the Synod of the Western Reserve is, and it is hereby declared to be, no longer a part of the Presbyterian Church of the United States of America." This resolution was adopted by a vote of 132 to 105. A similar resolution was subsequently adopted relative to the Synods of Utica, Geneva and Genesee, so that four Synods were cut off, embracing Presbyteries so called, from which a delegation of FIFTY members were on the floor of the Assembly. These delegates with others of the New school party protested against the acts of excision.

Other steps taken in carrying out the reform introduced by the Old school were, condemning and testifying against the doctrinal errors specified by the Convention, recommending that the Home Missionary Society and American Education Society cease to operate within the congregations under the care of the Assembly, dissolving the 3d Presbytery of Philadelphia, enjoining upon inferior judicatories the exercise of discipline, &c. &c. The above mentioned proceedings and those immediately connected with them, occupied so large a share of the Assembly's time, that various papers reported by the committee of bills and considerable judicial business were referred to the next meeting. In this way the *slavery question*, brought fairly before the Assembly in more ways than one, was given, for the present, *the go by*. An attempt to devise a plan for effecting a voluntary separation of the two parties in the church proved unavailing, the committee of five from each side appointed for the purpose, being unable to come to any agreement as to when and how the division should be effected, though they were unanimous in opinion that such division ought to take place.

The question now naturally arises, how will this matter issue? The fact that the minority entered their protest at every step against the measures that seemed materially to affect their standing, and the following proceedings at a meeting held by them on the day after the adjournment of the Assembly, go far, in our opinion, to furnish an answer so far as the New School party is concerned.

*Meeting of the Minority.*—"Agreeably to notice previously given in the Assembly, a meeting of delegates from the Syn-

ods which had been excinded, and of such other members of the minority as chose to attend, was held in Rev. Mr. Barnes' church on Friday afternoon, June 9th. Rev. Baxter Dickinson was called to the chair, and Rev. E. W. Gilbert was appointed secretary. The meeting was opened with prayer; and after statements from several gentlemen, the following resolutions were adopted: viz.

Whereas the majority of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, at their late sessions in this city, have abrogated the Plan of Union between the said Assembly and the General Association of Connecticut, with respect to the organization of churches on our frontier, which had existed for 36 years, and been attended with the most happy effects in regard to the peace, purity, and extension of the church, especially in the new settlements on the whole line of our Northern and Western borders; and whereas the said majority of the said Assembly, as the alleged consequence of the abrogation of the said Plan, and without citation or trial, have declared four Synods, embracing more than 500 ministers, and a still larger number of Presbyterian churches, to be out of the Presbyterian church represented in the said Assembly: and whereas the Assembly did, in like manner, without hearing or trial, declare the third Presbytery of Philadelphia to be dissolved: and whereas the excision of the said Synods and the dissolution of the said Presbytery have been effected on the ground of the alleged existence, within the same, of great errors in doctrine and irregularities in practice, of which no proof was exhibited in the Assembly; have been passed by the said majority against the strong and continued remonstrance of the minority, and with the declared purpose of producing a division of the church: Now therefore, it is

*Resolved*, by the minority of said Assembly,

1. That we have no evidence of the existence, in the Presbyterian church, at the present time, of any greater diversity of doctrinal belief, than has heretofore existed in this branch of the church of Christ.

2. That we believe that there are, in the Synods and Presbyteries now excinded, no greater irregularities of practice, than in the other portions of the Presbyterian church.

3. That in the opinion of the said minority, the alleged errors and irregularities furnished no justifying occasion for the division of the church, even on terms of amicable and mutual agreement. Much less could they justify the violent measures, resorted to by the majority to effect this object.

4. That, for these and other reasons, we regard the acts of the said Assembly, abrogating the Plan of Union, and cutting off said Synods and Presbytery, as wholly unjustifiable and without any warrant from the constitution, as oppressive and revolutionary in their character, and as therefore *null and void*.

5. That, notwithstanding our opinion that the errors in doctrine and irregularities of practice referred to, furnish no proper occasion for a division of the church, yet we have been constrained to admit that, by the alienations produced by slanderous publications, and by the action of the late Convention and the General Assembly, a controlling portion of which was composed of the members of said Convention, a division has probably been rendered unavoidable.

6. That it be recommended to all the Presbyteries which have acted with the minority, and all the Presbyteries which disapprove of the violent, revolutionary measures of said Assembly, to send up a full representation to the next General Assembly; and that they instruct their commissioners to claim seats for the commissioners from those Presbyteries which have been unconstitutionally excinded; and that, in case their seats shall be denied them, said commissioners take immediate measures for a separate and constitutional organization of the General Assembly, as constituting the only true General Assembly of the Presbyterian church of the United States of America.

7. That, whereas the constitution of the Presbyterian church (chap. 22 sec. 3) recommends that the "expenses of ministers and elders, in their attendance on the judicatories, be defrayed by the bodies respectively which they represent," and whereas it is understood that the party in the church of whose acts we complain, have been in the habit of appropriating their collections to the support of their own delegates, therefore resolved, that it be recommended to the Presbyteries which accord with us in views, to make liberal collections for the support of their own commissioners.

8. For the purpose of carrying into effect the foregoing recommendations, the Synods, Presbyteries and Churches are earnestly requested to adhere to and maintain their present organizations, and firmly to resist any and every attempt which may be made, by circular letters or otherwise, to change their present ecclesiastical relations.

9. That the minority of the late Assembly do adhere firmly to the confession of faith and form of government of the Presbyterian church, and relying on the fidelity of the Presbyteries which they represent, are determined to maintain their adherence to the same."

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ON FAMILY WORSHIP.

This most important religious service, and inestimable privilege, it is feared is little considered and understood in its true character. It is proposed to offer some reflections which it is hoped may rouse to its observance where it may be neglected, and to its better improvement where it is observed,

It is a duty clearly indicated by the light of nature, and therefore not so expressly commanded, as implied and supposed in the Holy Scriptures. Men who are so scrupulous as to require an express precept on the subject, ought therefore rather to look for a recorded and distinct prohibition to satisfy their scruples, than fight with the dictates of reason and religion on so obvious a matter, and live in its habitual neglect. All nations who have lived within the sphere of traditions from divine revelation and who have possessed any marks of civilization, have preserved amidst all the corruptions of idolatry, their household deities, and the forms of domestic religion. It seems reserved as a preeminence in impiety, that men living under the light of the Gospel, should trample under foot both reason and revelation and expel or exclude religion from the domestic circle.

There are two important considerations which manifest it to be a scriptural duty. First, The nature of God's covenant with his people. This is a covenant which embraces parents and children in one common and social relation to God. "I will be thy God and the God of thy seed." Hence the blessing of this covenant is a blessing that is promised to and bestowed on *families*; "in thee and in thy seed shall all the *families* of the earth be blessed."\* As the privileges

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\* Gen. xii. 3, xxviii. 14.

of the Covenant are bestowed on *families* as such, it imposes social duties on families as such, and the same obligations and duties that are enjoined on the father of the family as the head are required in connection and union with him from the different members according as they are able to co-operate with him in their observance. Thus the sanctification of the sabbath, while the law is especially addressed to the head of the family, is imposed equally and in connection with him, on all the members and inmates of the household. And when God said to Abraham in that covenant in which he revealed himself as the God of Abraham and his posterity, "Walk before me and be thou perfect," it was addressed to him not in his individual character, but as the head of his household, whom he was thus taught to unite with himself in the solemn worship and service of God. The commendation he afterwards received, shewed not only his own faithfulness in the matter, but the extent of the obligation; "I know him that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord."\* And it is evident that during the whole patriarchal age down to the Sinai Covenant, all the religion in the world, consisted mainly in the observance of family religion, the domestic altar, domestic sacrifices and domestic instruction. The supposition that family and social religion then expired, has no countenance either in the Scriptures, or in reason, but is repugnant to both. Many ages after this we are told that "the voice of salvation and rejoicing was heard in the tabernacles or dwellings of the righteous."

Second, The sacramental sealing and dedication of all the members of the family included in the covenant relation, confirms the obligation of family religion in the social worship of God. Under the Old Testament when the covenant of grace became more clearly developed, the interest of the children of the pious in that covenant was sealed by circumcision. Under the New Testament the Apostle shews that all who are Christ's are Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise; and of that promise baptism is the seal.† Now baptism itself is a sacramental application of the blood of Christ signifying that the parties baptized, as they are received into a covenant relation, so they are solemnly consecrated to the service of God, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and bound to all the duties of such a consecration. Each family becomes a church, a holy temple, a spiritual house, in which

\* Gen. xviii. 19. † Gal. iii. 29.—Acts ii. 38, 39.

each member and all collectively, are to offer spiritual sacrifices to God. Hence arises clearly the obligation of family worship in such services of religion as are appropriate to the domestic circle, in solemn praise, reading the scriptures and prayer. The duties enjoined of old on parents to teach their children when they were in the house, and by the way side, are summarily commanded in the New Testament when fathers are directed to "train up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." But how could there be any consistency, if religious instruction were to be daily inculcated, and yet no godly example exhibited in religious worship? What sight, consistent with religious truth, would that be of parents living in the habitual daily neglect of prayer, of praise and of the worship of God in reading his holy word? If example and precept are ever to go together it would be in this instance.

It is most agreeable to reason and to scripture that this duty consist of praise, in singing the psalms of the scripture, in reading the scriptures, and in prayer, and that it be daily observed in the morning and in the evening. Our dependence on God's goodness and care are manifestly indicated with each returning day and each returning evening. "It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord, and to sing praises unto thy name O most High; to shew forth thy loving kindness in the morning, and thy faithfulness every night." "And these words which I command thee shall be in thine heart; and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shall talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up." "Praying always with all prayer and supplication, and watching thereunto with all perseverance."\* Such injunctions are then most clearly complied with in their spirit and in their form, when the head of the family associates his household with himself in those duties which have been named, and daily, morning and evening, gathers, them for this solemn and holy offering to God. And that it may be observed to advantage, care should be taken so to order domestic concerns, as that it may be observed at suitable and stated hours decently, orderly and reverently. Let all be present and let each member of the family be furnished with a Bible and with the Psalms, that they may the more certainly derive instruction from the scriptures read, and join intelligently in the psalm sung.

\* Ps. xcii. 1, 2.—Deut. vi. 6, 7.—Eph. vi. 18.

The effects of such a holy, instructive, and sanctifying observance in a family must be powerful and salutary, and though in many instances they may not be evident, yet the seed of God's word then sown, though it may remain long in the cold and barren soil of the human heart, will doubtless, according to his holy promise and the constitution of his covenant, prove the means of regeneration, sanctification and comfort to his elect. Its influence on the social circle must be highly advantageous in promoting and maintaining that domestic subordination, so essential to domestic tranquility and happiness, and forming and cultivating religious and moral principles in individual character essential to a correct, uniform and godly life. That it does not in all instances produce these effects is no objection against its real obligation and value, but furnishes an argument of the Divine sovereignty and an evidence of our misimprovement of so great a benefit. That it does illustrate its benign and precious influence in multitudes of instances is a strong confirmation of its divine authority, and an evidence which the pious alone can properly appreciate of its value and utility.

In order to its proper improvement it appears important that a regular course should be observed throughout. The practice of assembling the whole family at a seasonable hour should not be overlooked. All the members of the household, not prevented by absence, sickness, or extraordinary circumstances, should be present, a matter perhaps not generally or sufficiently considered. When once it is admitted that it is a divine institution, it should be considered as paramount in its obligations, and none of the mere ordinary avocations of the household be admitted as a justification or reason for the constant or stated, or even frequent absence of any of a household whom the Lord by his word calls to join in his service at the domestic altar. Care should be taken, and such hours chosen as shall admit of and secure the presence especially of all the younger members. The "olive plants" which are destined to flourish in the garden of the Lord should be early, and in their tender age, watered and carefully cultivated with the gentle dews and rains which this holy institution provides, and any neglect here is the more painful as the duty is so obvious, the advantage so great, and the observance so delightful to the eye of a pious observer. There are few sights more pleasing, few sounds more grateful, than those furnished by a family in which all are engaged in rendering homage to God and receiving instruction from his word. The holy and joyful anticipations which they awaken

in the mind of the believer, are also most reasonable : God's covenant and testimonies are thus certainly applied, and the light of the morning of the resurrection only will clearly evince how much of the work of Divine grace has thus been successfully accomplished.

In the prosecution of these domestic religious services it is desirable also that a due order be observed in the reading of the Scriptures and in the singing of the praises of God. The propriety of selecting on some occasions, appropriate portions of the scriptures for family instruction cannot be disputed. It is evident, however, that as "all scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable," so all should be read, and read in a regular course, beginning with the first chapter of Genesis and ending with the last of the Revelation. Should it be suggested that there are genealogical records, and special judicial laws and peculiar directions and regulations, apparently of no importance or interest now, it is sufficient to consider that these all form particular parts of the whole, that all is from God, and that a becoming reverence for the glorious Author requires of us to give throughout a respectful consideration of what he has been pleased to comprehend in a Revelation designed for our instruction to eternal life. Besides, even should it appear that these are parts of less interest than others, and of less essential importance to be known or observed, we are not qualified to form a judgment on this subject, and to make a suitable discrimination between the more or less valuable and important, without being acquainted with the whole. It is therefore an act of justice to ourselves and others, and a decent reverence for the Scriptures themselves, to aim at obtaining and communicating an acquaintance with the whole word of God throughout, that we may the better know his will and our duty in all respects. As for the fastidious and mawkish delicacy, and mock modesty which find, in any language used in the Bible, in any event or institution which it records, a reason for passing it by unread or unheard, it is perhaps sufficient to say, that such persons claim for themselves more purity, delicacy and modesty than they allow to the Holy Spirit, under whose guidance such language was employed, and such events recorded by the inspired penmen. A striking evidence that such affected and misnamed delicacy, purity and modesty have not been learned from the Holy Spirit, or in the school of Christ, but from another spirit, and in a very different school. Besides, it may be remarked that if there are passages in the Scriptures that give rise to sentiments and feel-



ings repugnant to delicacy and chastity, this is occasioned not by the Scriptures themselves, but by the impure and unholy objects on which their influence is exerted. Whatever is truly impure and unchaste, these Scriptures condemn with a majesty, holiness and severity no where else to be found, and at the very instant that through man's depravity whatever is repugnant to purity and modesty arises in the heart they condemn and disown it. The sun shining powerfully on a putrid mass or a dead body, brings more actively into operation its loathsome properties, but hastens also the process of dissolution and the final and entire extinction of the putrid mass of corruption. So God's holy word may, in acting upon the impure heart of fallen man, dead in trespasses and sins, develope more effectually the internal depravity, while, at the same time, it is the only means of hastening the extinction of the power of indwelling sin, and banishing, by its power, the unholy exhalations, and destroying at length the deadly mass of corruption in the old man.

In confirmation moreover of the importance of going through, in order, the whole Scriptures in reading in the family, and through the whole book of Psalms, the only inspired system of Psalmody, and one would conclude therefore, the only safe and absolutely perfect manual of devotion—it may be remarked that the variety they contain is innumerable, and their suitableness and application to the varying circumstances of individuals and families indescribable. Not to dwell on the diversified views they afford of the Being, Perfections and counsels of God, of his Providence and of his Grace, best illustrated as they arise and are spread before the mind of the devout by the gradual and majestic diffusion of light over the heavens and the world in the dawn of day, a bright and morning star, the diversified innumerable colors painted on the clouds, the splendour of increasing light, presenting to a devout mind a spectacle at once transporting and even overwhelming with its magnificence—not to dwell on the holy progress which the saints make in such knowledge and in such meditations—we may remark that the adaption of the instruction, the warnings, the reproofs, the consolations of the word of God to the circumstances of a family, and of its individual members young and old are endless. How many rising purpsbes of sin may be nipped in the bud—how many misconceptions of principle may be silently corrected—how many temptations not yet observed and understood by the instrument or the subject of the temptation may be early and effectually prevented—how often pious purposes in a mind

yet wavering may be confirmed—how often unuttered distress and trouble may be healed or alleviated—in fine how much sin may be prevented—how much sanctification promoted—how much consolation may be imparted—can only be understood by Him who sees all the circumstances of a family and Himself is employed with unceasing influence in applying in the soul “that word which is quick and powerful and sharper than any two edged sword and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.”

On this subject much might be said. Enough it is hoped is here suggested, what was principally designed, to furnish materials for reflecting on a subject of great interest to individuals, to families, the church of God, and ultimately to the nations of the earth, all whose *families* are to be blessed, in the Blessed and Blessing seed of Abraham. Great must be the advantage of a family, great the advantage of the church, and great will be the glory and felicity of the nations when this duty shall prevail in its holy and happy influence.

H. Q.

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LIFE OF THE REV. JAMES RENWICK,

*The last of the Martyrs.*

(Continued from page 142.)

On their arrival in Holland, Mr. Renwick and his companions in study took up their abode at the University of Groningen, which was at that time celebrated equally for the piety as for the learning of its professors. The fact that the scattered and persecuted Covenanters at such a period, at no little hazard and expense, sent their Candidates for the ministry to a foreign University, when the seminaries of their native land could not be attended, but under sinful compliances, shows the value they set upon sound learning, and furnishes the best refutation of the assertions of the profane novelist, who has reproached them with ignorance, and represented their ministers as illiterate and vulgar. We have seen that James Renwick had graduated at the University of Edinburgh: he had afterwards prosecuted his theological studies with assiduity and zeal; his fellow-students had made similar proficiency; and yet the *Societies*, consisting of a number of poor, dispersed, persecuted people, called them

not to the exercise of the ministry among them, till they had completed a full course of study, and had received ordination from one of the purest reformed churches then enjoying a regular organization. These facts, while they attest the laudable concern of our renowned forefathers for the advancement of Christ's cause, exhibit them at the same time as the patrons of solid learning, and the steady supporters of good order; they likewise prove beyond dispute, that their exertions were not the effervescence of zeal without knowledge, but that they sprang from fervent love to Christ and his truths, and were directed by the unerring standard of the Divine Word.

In a foreign land, James Renwick prosecuted his studies under a solemn sense of the duty which he owed to the Great Head of the Church, and to the people who anxiously looked forward to the enjoyment of his public labours. While at Groningen, he displayed the same faithfulness and public spirit for which he had formerly been distinguished, by contending earnestly against the corruptions of the churches around, and by reproving the over-heated zeal of some who professed adherence to the Covenanted Testimony. Among other trials which he was called to endure, John Flint, one of his fellow-students, ran into various excesses, attempted to injure the reputation of Mr. Renwick, and ultimately relinquished the pursuit of the ministry. Amid these difficulties the future martyr displayed the eminent meekness and fidelity that had heretofore characterized him. One of the accusations which the fellow-student, whom we have mentioned, exhibited against him, previously to his ordination, was, that "he employed too much time in meditation and prayer, to the neglect of his study"—a circumstance this, that discovers his abounding piety even while exercised with perplexities, and his sense of what constitutes the chief preparation for the work of the ministry. The following testimony to his fitness for the ministerial office is borne by the excellent Sir Robert Hamilton, in a letter to the Societies, dated from Leewarden, May 24th, 1683.\*

"When our worthy friend, Mr. Renwick, last came over, I was very inquisitive (being for a long time greatly weighted with that business) to know of two things from him—1st. How it was betwixt him and the Lord, as to his state and interest. 2dly. As to his inward encouragement and call from the Lord as to his undertaking in that great work of the

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\* *Faithful Contendings*, p. 84.

ministry. To both which I had great satisfaction from him; as also of his lively uptaking of the Lord's way with his church and people in this day, all of which are engaging to me. After this parting with me, and going to *Groningen*, I received a line from him, with a short account of a notable piece of soul exercise he was in at that present, which was after this manner—"To the praise of his free grace, I must speak it, when he helps me either to pray or meditate, he is not wanting; but in other things I do not find him. However, I think this may be the cause of it, I cannot win to use and keep them in their own places:—there are some things good in themselves, and good when made a right use of; but to me they are as *Saul's* armour to *David*, I can put them on, but I cannot walk with them; and I cannot say but I could put them on, unless I should lie of the Lord, who, blessed be his name! hath given me in some measure a disposition."

"After reading this letter I found my heart greatly tied to him, and I was strongly overpowered with the impression, that Mr. Renwick was presently to be ordained, and that I must lay out myself therein; and, as I thought, obtained great certainty, that whatever difficulties should be in the way, they should be removed; for He himself should concern himself in it."

The period requisite for finishing the necessary studies at the University having expired, by a concurrence of singular providences, the way was prepared for Mr. Renwick's ordination. Various difficulties presented themselves, besides the unusual nature of the case, tending to impede the work, or altogether to prevent it. The Reformed Church in the United Provinces, though sound in the great leading articles of the Christian faith, and Presbyterian in government and discipline, had declined since the period of the Synod of Dort, and had admitted various abuses, inconsistent with a strict and full adherence to a faithful testimony for the truth. The *Cocceian* errors had gained some ground in the church of Holland, and various professors and ministers, who were recognized in full standing, had embraced them. It was usual for the Professors of the Universities to ordain young men to the ministry when their destination was to the service of a foreign church; and the subscription of the Catechisms and Formulas of the Dutch Church was indispensably required from all the candidates for the ministry. These circumstances appeared to form an insurmountable obstacle, towards the attainment of the object to which Mr. Renwick and the friends of the Covenanted cause in Scotland looked forward with anx-

ious desire. No compliances could they make which were contrary to the testimony which they had espoused, and to the solemn professions which they had made; and therefore, the way seemed shut against their obtaining the regular faithful ministry of the word on the footing of truth and a good conscience. What human prudence could not foresee or human wisdom accomplish, the Lord himself effected, in pity and love towards his afflicted church. Previously to the departure for Holland of the students sent by the Societies, the *Rev. Wm. Brackel*, a pious Dutch minister of Leewarden in Friesland, had become deeply interested in the cause of the persecuted remnant, and written to them letters of condolence and encouragement. Sir Robert Hamilton, who sojourned at this time in Holland, was a man of fervent piety, indefatigable zeal and perseverance, and ardently devoted to the cause of the Covenanted Reformation. His exertions on behalf of the Societies were unwearied. Co-operating with Mr. Brackel and other ministers, whom he excited to take a lively concern in the sufferings and present state of the Church of Scotland, he obtained an appointment for the ordination to be performed by the Classis of Groningen—both he and Mr. Renwick refusing to allow the Professors of the University, or the ministers of Embden, to ordain, because among them there were persons of Cocceian sentiments. Notwithstanding this departure from established usage, the professors willingly bore testimony to Mr. Renwick's proficiency in study and ministerial gifts, and the ministers who ordained him, not only heard and approved of a discourse delivered at the time, in which the forms and corruptions of the Dutch Church were exposed, but likewise declared that the work was evidently the Lord's, and that they would proceed in it though all the kings on earth were opposed to it. After the usual examinations, Mr. Renwick was ordained in the presence of Sir Robert Hamilton, and Alexander Gordon, Laird of Earlstoun, the other Commissioner, before whom also he was permitted to subscribe the Westminster Confession and Catechisms, instead of the Formulas of the Dutch Church, against which he objected. The piety manifested by all concerned in this solemn transaction, is deserving of commendation, and various were the tokens of the Divine presence enjoyed in it. The Societies had set apart time for special fasting and prayer before the students had set out for Holland. Before Mr. Renwick was called in for examination preparatory to ordination, he and the Commissioners of the Societies engaged in earnest prayer together; and while he was employed with the Clas-

sis before the act, Sir Robert Hamilton says in his letter to the Societies, he and some other Christian friends were engaged in his own room, praying that the Lord's countenance and blessing might rest upon the work. These supplications were heard and graciously answered. The ministers who ordained Mr. Renwick testified that they all had much satisfaction in him—that he appeared the whole time he was before them so filled with the Spirit, that his face seemed to shine—and that they had, throughout the whole transaction, evident tokens of the Lord's gracious presence with them.—One minister declared, that he had been twenty years a minister in that place, and that he had never seen nor found so much of Lord's Spirit accompanying a work as this; and all engaged to remember the case of the afflicted sufferers both in public and private, and offered themselves to a similar service in future if required, whatever might be the hazard. One circumstance farther deserves to be noticed, as tending to show how the Lord prepared the way before the face of his servants in this important affair. Several ministers and others, residing in Holland, who had complied with the defections of the times, and who corresponded with the indulged at home, used their influence to prevent the ordination, and had prepared a libel to present against Mr. Renwick and the Societies who sought his labours, to the ministers of Groningen. This might have had the effect of retarding the work, and of ultimately preventing it altogether; but the paper did not arrive till the day after the ordination, and the Dutch ministers to whom it was addressed were persuaded, that the charges which it contained were calumnious and unfounded, and that the appointment of Mr. Renwick to the ministry in his native land was a measure that would remarkably conduce to the advancement of the Redeemer's glory, and the welfare of his church.

Soon after his ordination, Mr. Renwick, having an earnest desire to communicate the glad tidings of salvation to the persecuted followers of Christ in his native land, embarked on board a vessel for Scotland at the Brill. Here being detained a few days for want of a favorable wind, and being annoyed by some profane seamen pressing him to drink the king's health, he left that vessel, and set sail in another bound for Ireland. After various perils at sea, he at length arrived in *Dublin*, where he remained for a short time.

In Ireland, Presbytery, under the form of a Covenanted Testimony, had obtained, at an early period, an extensive footing. The *General Assembly* of the Church of Scotland, in

the purest time, from 1638 to 1649, had annually sent over a number of ministers to preach the word, and dispense ordinances to multitudes who eagerly desired the bread of life. A writer of that day\* testifies, that the people were so forward in taking the Covenants, especially in the Counties of *Down* and *Antrim*, that in some instances their pastors found it needful to restrain their ardour, till they should be better instructed. Several eminent Covenanted Ministers from Scotland settled in Ireland; and when afterwards, through the violence of the Prelates, the faithful pastors were obliged to flee to Scotland for safety, there remained many people sincerely attached to the principles for which the martyrs contended unto blood. The Presbyterian Ministers of the North of Ireland, it is true, generally took part with the *Resolutionists* in the unhappy dispute relative to the admission of malignants to places of power and trust in the army and nation, in the first days of the reign of Charles II., in Scotland. Yet afterwards, it should appear that many repented of this step, and chose suffering rather than the abandonment of their testimony. In February, 1660, a Convention was held in *Dublin*, before the restoration of Charles II. *Mr. Cocks*, a Presbyterian Minister, was appointed chaplain, and two ministers from each of the Provinces attended, to give their advice relative to the settlement of the church. The Convention issued a proclamation for a public Fast, in which breach of Covenant was assigned as one of the reasons. *Patrick Adair*, the minister who represented Ulster, before setting out, was instructed by his brethren to use his best exertions for promoting the reformation, and guarding against Episcopacy and Sectarianism. Through his influence, the ministers assembled at Dublin agreed to advise the Convention to own the *Solemn League and Covenant*, with a view to its renovation; but the scheme was defeated by one of their number, *Mr. Vesey*, of Coleraine, who was afterwards made Archbishop of Tuam. At the Restoration, the Presbyterians of the North sent two deputies, Messrs. Keys and Richardson, to London, to wait upon Charles II., and to petition for the settlement of religion according to the Covenant. Through the timidity and defection of some Presbyterian Ministers in London, they were prevailed upon to expunge that part of the address which related to the Covenants, and was directed against Prelacy. On their return, when they related the gracious reception which they had experienced from his Majesty to a meeting of

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\* Adair in his MSS.

ministers held in Ballymena, we are told by a living witness—"The brethren did signify their dislike of that alteration of the address, that being more displeasing to them, than all they had done was pleasing."\*

In common with their brethren in England and Scotland, the Covenanters in Ireland suffered by the oppressive measures adopted by Charles and his Prelatical counsellors for the overthrow of the Presbyterian Establishment. Of *sixty-five* ministers in the Province of Ulster, five only conformed to the requisitions of the men in power, whilst the rest cheerfully submitted to deprivation of their livings. The steadfastness thus manifested did not however continue, amidst the cruel oppression and deceitful policy that characterized the reign of the two infamous royal brothers. Very generally the Presbyterian Ministers in Ireland apostatized from their former engagements, and accepted the ensnaring *Indulgence*. Some indeed, continued faithful. Two ministers from Ireland were among the ranks of the Covenanters, and fell at Pentland; † at a later period, several are mentioned in the details of Wodrow, who cast in their lot among the sufferers in Scotland, when they could not exercise their ministry in Ireland, without succumbing to regulations which would have defiled their consciences; and in the worst times, one minister, *Rev. David Houston* for many years preached the Word, and dispensed ordinances faithfully, throughout the County of Antrim and the neighbouring counties, when others had made defection. About the period of James Renwick's visit to Dublin, Alexander Peden found a temporary shelter from persecution in the North of Ireland, and many private individuals, scattered throughout various parts of the Province of Ulster, then and afterwards remained steadfast to their Covenant engagements. The ministers, however, had generally ceased to hold fast former attainments, and in Dublin and the South, where Presbyterianism had never obtained a firm or extensive footing, it is not to be wondered at that Renwick should discover few in any measure attached to the Covenanting cause. We are informed that while resident in the metropolis, he had various disputes with the Presbyterian Ministers relative to their defections, and though he could not bring them to forsake courses of backsliding, yet did he produce some convictions on their minds, and impressed them besides with a high opinion of his piety and zeal.

\* See Adair's MSS. quoted by Dr. M'Crie in the Act and Testimony of the Original Seceders.—Appendix p. 173.

† Rev. John Crookshanks and Rev. Andrew M'Cormack.



It was, perhaps, owing to his having found out in Dublin some persons well-affected to the Covenanting cause, as well as to his perceiving some salutary effect from his exhortations and reproofs, that the Societies, at a general meeting held at Darmede, (3d October, 1683,) agreed to address a brotherly letter to *Friends in Dublin*. After stating the grounds of their sufferings and testimonies, they write in the style of affectionate counsel:—

“Therefore, being all engaged in one common cause, and bound in covenant together, and having some knowledge of your case, and also of your desire to know and follow duty, we thought it expedient to write unto you, ye having been, to the grief of our souls, led aside by the cruel and subtle dealing of adversaries, and the treachery and unfaithfulness of those who gave themselves out for your leaders, desiring, as brethren, that ye would lay to heart the sad case our church is reduced unto, by reason of our sin against the Lord; and consider what is called for at your hands, if either you desire to see his return again to Britain and Ireland, or to transmit his truths to the succeeding generation, as to the shaking yourselves clean of the abominations of the times, and also withdrawing yourselves from these backslidden ministers, altogether unfaithful to our wronged Lord and Master.”

Then, having given them direction relative to certain steps of declension, and having sent them a copy of the certificate of Mr. Renwick's Ordination, they add:—

“O beloved friends and covenanted brethren, go on in your duty, and follow no men but them who will follow the Lord Jesus Christ; consider truth as naked, abstracting from all persons, and resolve firmly in Jehovah's strength to stand to it alone, albeit none should stand with you; and never take carnal reasons and arguments to plead yourselves out of your duty, but consider ay the case, whether it be duty or not, in all its circumstances; and if found to be so, then up and do it upon the greatest hazards; and think not to walk so as the abused laws of man shall not reach you, for if they do not, the law of God will; for they are now confronted one against another, and the cry is gone forth from the Lord to all that will side themselves with him, to take his part against a cruel and treacherous generation. “Say not a confederacy unto them, neither fear ye their fear, nor be afraid.” But “sanctify the Lord of hosts himself, and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread; and he shall be a sanctuary unto you.”—Isa. viii. 12, 13, 14. “Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and be a father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.”—2 Cor. vi. 17, 18. “O come out from among them, that ye be not partakers of their sins, and that ye receive not of their plagues; for their sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered their iniquities.”—Rev. xviii. 4, 5. O make haste and get in under the shadow of the Lord's wings, and give up with every false and wicked way, that now ye may be hid from the fiery indignation; for he “is coming to shake terribly the earth, and to punish the inhabitants thereof for their iniquities.” There is “a sword bathed in heaven to come down upon Idumea, and upon the people of his curse:” and spare whom he will, he will not spare ministers, yea Presbyterian ministers, for they have betrayed the interest of Jesus Christ; yea,

not only consented unto, but concurred with enemies spoiling him of his princely robes, and of the power he hath in his own house: they have made sad the hearts of the righteous, whom the Lord hath not made sad; and strengthened the hands of the wicked, that he should not return from his wicked way, by promising him life; and have seduced the people, by seeing visions of peace for them in their backsliding courses, when there was no peace from the Lord.

“O dearly beloved in our blessed Lord, follow none further than they follow Christ; and cease to hear the instruction which causeth to err from the words of knowledge; and “mark and avoid them who cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned, for they that are such, serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own bellies, and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple.”

After leaving Ireland, Mr. Renwick was exposed to various dangers at sea, and was at length obliged to land in a remote part of the Scottish coast, the ports then being narrowly watched by the persecutors, lest any of their prey should escape. In September, 1683, he commenced his public ministry, lifting up the standard where it had fallen, when Cargill and Cameron were cut off. At the General Meeting at Darmede, held in the following month, he read to the adherents of the good old cause the *Testimony*, of which we may afterwards give an account, usually designated *Renwick's Testimony*. At the same time, he entered upon a course of most laborious exertion, in preaching the Word and administering discipline and ordinances, frequently amid manifold perils and dangers, to a widely scattered people. The following extract from the Diary of *James Nisbet*, who at that time was numbered among the suffering party, shows the fervour and zeal with which he entered upon his arduous and self-denying public labours:—

“I went sixteen miles to hear Mr. James Renwick, a faithful servant of Jesus Christ, who was a young man, endued with great piety, prudence and moderation. The meeting was held in a large, desolate muir. He appeared to be accompanied with much of his Master's presence. He preached on Mark xii. 34. In the forenoon, he gave us several marks of the hypocrite, with pertinent applications. In the afternoon, he gave us several marks of a sound believer, and made a large, full, and free offer of Christ to all sorts of perishing sinners. His method was clear, plain, and well-digested, suiting the substance and simplicity of the Gospel. This was a great day of the Son of Man, to many poor exercised souls, who this day got a Pisgah view of the Prince of Life.” At another time, he says—“Towards the latter end of this year, I had the happy occasion of hearing Mr. Renwick preach, on Song iii. 9, 10, where he treated sweetly on the Covenant

of grace. O that was a sweet and great day of the Gospel, for he handled and pressed the privileges of the Covenant, with seraphic-like enlargement, to the great edification of the hearers. Sweet and charming were the offers he made of Christ, to all sorts of hearers of the Gospel.”\*

[ To be continued. ]

\* Nisbet's Diary.

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THE AGENCY OF GOD IN THE INFLICTION OF EVIL:—AND WHY HE DOES INFLICT IT.

The word evil, though one of very common use, has an extensive latitude of meaning. It is used in different senses: and, like many others, its meaning in a given case, can only be ascertained by its relation to the context. In the remarks which we now lay before our readers we use the word as expressive of physical evil—external trouble, suffering, calamity. It is so used by the sacred writers as in Amos, iii. 6. “Shall there be evil in a city, and the Lord hath not done it?”

In this use of the term, evil is caused by God; and the infliction of it, forms an important part of the administration of his government of individuals and societies. This is a truth, which, perhaps more than any other, is liable to be neglected.—Indeed, men generally act, as if the evils which are endured by individuals or societies were altogether disconnected with the providence of God, when in fact they are inflicted by him. Not even a sparrow can fall to the ground irrespective of his will. It is a practical forgetting of God to attribute to secondary causes the events of providence, whether evil or good; it is the very spirit of Atheism, and is followed by the most injurious consequences to religion and morality. The Almighty claims to himself the high prerogative of inflicting evil on the children of men, and of communicating good to them; and reproves them severely for despising the truth. “I form the light and create darkness: I make peace and create evil: I the Lord do all these things.” “Except the Lord do build the house, they labour in vain that build it: except the Lord keep the city the watchmen waketh but in vain.” Is. xlv. 7. Ps. cxxvii. 1.

It does not correspond with the Divine plan of government, however, to operate directly and immediately in the production of evil: the ordinary course of God, is to employ a sub-

ordinate agency of means; through the medium of such means, He inflicts evil upon individuals, cities, and nations. This is indeed the ordinary way by which God proceeds in all his providences, means are subordinated to his designs, and by these he accomplishes what he has designed. And the means as well as the end are ordained by Him. He determined to inflict evil. He determined too, the means by which it should be inflicted; and the whole train of events and circumstances that might render them operative.

These means are numerous and exceedingly varied. Sometimes the agency of man is employed: man is made the means of bringing evil upon man, while the immediate object he has in view is the gratification of his ambition, pride, malice, or cupidity; but the sufferings of others are the effects: and are to be seen in the desolations and horrors of war, encroachments on the rights of men, slander and reproach, and every wicked work. And here it ought to be remembered, that however deserved the evil may be, as coming from the hand of God, and determined by him; that man often acts very sinfully as the instrument by which the evil is inflicted.

Sometimes the beasts of the field become the instruments of evil to those whom God would afflict. And sometimes the most insignificant insects cut off the hope of the husbandman, at one time, by destroying the precious seed; at another by devouring the fruits of harvest. "When your gardens and your vineyards, your fig-trees and your olive trees increased, the palmer-worm devoured them: yet have ye not returned unto me saith the Lord: "that which the palmer-worm hath left, hath the locust eaten; and that which the locust hath left, hath the canker-worm eaten; and that which the canker-worm hath left, hath the caterpillar eaten,"

Sometimes, the elements of nature are the means by which God sends evil upon the sons of men. By an unseen hand, the wind that had been at rest, is awakened; and, as if aroused into anger, careers over the deep, while the stately ships with their crews and cargoes, that had been gliding onwards in apparent safety to their respective havens, are in a few hours or perhaps moments strewed as wreck upon the waters. The merchant and the ship-owner mourn over their bankrupt fortunes, and their families are reduced to poverty: widows and orphans weep over husbands and fathers lost, and their cheerless homes proclaim the reality of their experienced evils. The solar heat during the summer months has only to range above the usual warmth, and the traveller be-

comes exhausted and the labourer sinks under its influence : or in winter, the cold becomes intense, and the sailor is frozen before the mast, the traveller perishes on the highway and the friendless poor suffer in their wretched dwellings. The stream that moves gently onward to the ocean—and which man renders subservient to his pursuits of business or of pleasure, suddenly swells beyond its accustomed channel and desolates the neighbouring country ; and thus the fruit and the toil of years are swept into destruction, while the unresisted flood pours contempt on the feeble efforts of man.

The thunder rolls ; and the lightning's streak is seen to quiver through the heavens, and the terrified animals that had crowded together under a neighbouring tree fall lifeless. Or perhaps the calamity is still more dire, the electric fluid enters the habitation of man, and the unsuspecting inmates in the midst of joy are struck dead ! Or it may be, the common element of fire obtains the mastery over man, and covers with wide spread desolation whole squares and streets of buildings. The stillness of night is disturbed by the alarm and dismay of the terror-stricken inhabitants, while the irresistible conflagration leaps from house to house, and from street to street, and man looks on, helpless and confounded : the accumulated wealth of years—the millions that had been collected from all quarters of the globe are in one night consumed : and thousands of individuals dependant on their daily labour are reduced to want. This is no ideal picture drawn from fancy ; it is one of fact ; and strong as are its lineaments, they are less deeply marked than the originals furnished in frequent scenes of too recent occurrence to need particular description.

Sometimes, disease is made the means of scourging the inhabitants of the earth. God in his righteous providence frequently visits nations, by sending among them epidemical diseases, which very speedily become the means of consigning vast numbers to the grave ; and of inflicting unspeakable suffering upon such as survive. " I have sent among you the pestilence after the manner of Egypt, saith the Lord. " Such calamities, by whatever names they may be known, are the servants of God in doing his pleasure among the sons of men. Modern times furnish us with an awful illustration of this kind, in the disease of Cholera. More than fifty millions of human beings (or upwards of one sixteenth part of the whole human race) are said to have been cut off by this angel of destruction, in a few years. It has passed from East to West, and scourged the nations in its course. Its

deadly march through our own land is yet fresh in our memories, when the stoutest heart was appaled, and universal mourning and bereavement filled the land !

Sometimes, the sources of national wealth are dried up ; while bankruptcy and want swell the aggregate of suffering. "He that earneth wages, earneth wages to put it into a bag with holes." "Ye looked for much and lo it came to little, and when ye brought it home I did blow upon it saith the Lord of hosts." The present mercantile crisis, in the United States, is an extraordinary example of the kind to which we have referred.—A whole nation cast down from the very summit of an almost unexampled mercantile prosperity ! And, how sudden, how rapid the change from prosperity to ruin ? The work comparatively of a moment ! Many, who a few months ago, could command hundreds of thousands, are now bankrupt—the most extensive chartered companies cannot meet their pecuniary obligations.—In one word, as a commercial people we may be said to be bankrupt. Unless we are destitute of all religious impressions we will recognize the hand of God in these things.—He has blown upon our prosperity and it has come to nought.

We have now presented our readers with sufficient illustrations of the Agency of God in the infliction of evil ; and some of the means by which he inflicts it. We proceed next to inquire why God inflicts evil upon individuals or nations.

The answer to the inquiry is,—Sin. Sin, is the sole cause of every kind of suffering: individuals and nations despise the authority of God, therefore he afflicts them. We establish this view of the subject by referring to two, of many cases recorded in scripture which shew that sin is the cause of suffering. "So Gad came to David, and told him, and said unto him, shall seven years of famine come unto thee in thy land ? Or wilt thou flee three months before thine enemies, while they pursue thee ! Or, that there be three days pestilence in thy land ? now advise, and see what answer I shall return to him that sent me. And David said unto Gad let us fall into the hand of the Lord. So the Lord sent a pestilence upon Israel, from the morning even till the time appointed : and there died of the people, from Dan even to Beer-Sheba, seventy thousand men." 2 Sam. xxiv. 13, 15. "And I also have given you cleanness of teeth in all your cities, and want of bread in all your places: yet have ye not returned unto me saith the Lord, and also I have withholden the rain from you, when there were yet three months to the harvest, and I caused it to rain upon one city, and caused it not to rain upon another."

er city; one piece was rained upon, and the piece whereupon it rained not withered. So two or three cities wandered unto one city, to drink water; but they were not satisfied; yet ye have not returned unto me, saith the Lord. I have smitten you with blasting and mildew; when your gardens and your vineyards, your fig-trees, and your olive-trees increased, the palmer-worm devoured them: yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord" Amos, iv. 6, 9.

Thus we learn from scripture, not only that the evils we have been considering come from God, but also that sin is the procuring cause.—The curse comes not causeless. Men commit sin, therefore the judgments of God are abroad in the earth.

As it respects the infliction of evil because of sin, there are two distinct ends which God accomplishes,—the one is *chastisement*, the other is *punishment*. In the righteous providence of the Ruler of the universe, He punishes impenitent, sinful individuals and nations: while in mercy He chastises such as are not given over to impenitence and judicial wrath. The Lord Jesus Christ, to whom as Mediator, is committed the dispensation of universal providence, never suffers his own people to continue to live at ease in sin. He invariably afflicts them to preserve them from this, and make them sensible of its evil character,—the abominable thing which He hates. "If they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments: then will I visit their transgressions with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. Nevertheless, my loving kindness will I not utterly take from him nor suffer my faithfulness to fail." Ps. lxxxix. 31, 33. The evils, that in providence are sent upon wicked men come in the form of punishment; are part of the judicial wrath of God: and precursors of that ever-during indignation which shall finally overtake impenitent transgressors. The Almighty does not always inflict punishment upon wicked men in this world; sometimes he suffers them to go on in their sins, till the measure of their iniquity be filled up: and in the state of future retribution their sins meet deserved punishment. "Depart from me ye cursed into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels." The providence of God as it respects nations is different: national sins are always visited with national sufferings in this world. Nations shall have no distinct national existence in the future state of retribution; therefore, the evils to be inflicted upon them, are inflicted in this world. The part which individuals have taken, whether rulers or people, in the sins of a nation, shall like their other

sins, if unrepented of, bring upon them the indignation of God. But, besides the accountability of individuals, the nation as a community or a whole, is accountable for its national doings. A nation is a moral person; performs moral acts, and is therefore under moral responsibility to the Governor of the Universe. The revealed will of God is addressed to nations and rulers, as well as to individuals: and transgressions of God's will, where it is known, shall as certainly bring his judgments upon nations, as upon individuals. That legislators, rulers and judges are not bound to be regulated in their official actings by the law of God, is a principle that involves treason against his government; and is subversive of his authority over mankind.—It is essentially infidel, and in every respect worthy of the modern philosophical scepticism, from which it springs!—a principle that threatens destruction to the very form, as well as power, of true religion.

Nations being moral persons, are capable of contracting guilt;—contracting guilt, they become liable to punishment;—and their national existence being restricted to the present life, their national sins can only in this life, meet with national punishment. “Come near ye nations, to hear, and hearken ye people. For the indignation of the Lord is upon all nations, and his fury upon all their armies.” Is. xxxiv. 1, 2. “Put them in fear, O Lord, that the nations may know themselves to be but men.” Ps. ix. 20.

The evils which God brings upon nations, are sometimes of a corrective kind: national calamities are sent upon them, that they may learn righteousness; and give “glory to the God of heaven.” In other cases, the evils which God inflicts upon nations are properly judgments: they continue to rebel against him, though warned and admonished, and finally he destroys them, so that they may not have a name or place among the nations of the world. Where are now the Chaldean and Assyrian empires? They with many others have long since perished. And, so perish shall every nation that persists in rebellion against God. The instructions of Divine revelation, and the calls of Providence shall not always be despised with impunity: the day of retribution shall overtake every impenitent nation as well as individual. “For behold the Lord cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity.” Is. xxvi. 21.

SIGMA.

[ To be continued.



## REVIEWS.

*Chalmers and Brougham, on Natural Theology.*

1. On the power, wisdom and goodness of God, as manifested in the adaptation of external nature, to the moral and intellectual constitution of man. By the Rev. Thomas Chalmers, D. D. Professor of Divinity, in the University of Edinburg. Philadelphia, Carey, Lea and Blanchard, 1833, pp. 308, 12mo.

2. A discourse on Natural Theology, shewing the nature of the evidence and the advantage of the study. By Henry Lord Brougham, F. R. S. and member of the National Institute of France. Philadelphia, Carey, Lea and Blanchard, 1835, pp. 190, 12mo.

What is called Natural Theology, of which these two works treat, consists in tracing the evidence of the being and attributes of God in the works of creation and providence. "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handy-work." Ps. xix. 1. "O Lord, how manifold are thy works! in wisdom hast thou made them all!" Ps. civ. 24. "For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse." Rom. i. 20. These and many other analogous texts teach that natural theology is a study, proper, needful, and edifying to the christian. The sublime and heavenly meditation of the eighth Psalm, was awakened by the contemplation of the starry heavens. But the earth also is full of the riches of the wisdom and goodness of God. All the investigations of natural philosophy, mineralogy, chymistry, botany, zoology, and physiology, bring to light testimonies of design and wisdom in these departments of nature. Two examples shall suffice in this place for illustration. The egg of birds consists of three parts, the white, the yolk, and the chick. The yolk is lighter than the white, and is attached to it by a membrane below its centre of gravity. As the chick is in the yolk, it follows that in whatever position the egg is placed, the chick is always uppermost, and so is kept nearest to the warm breast of the hen, during the period of incubation. Now, it is a fair deduction from this discovery, that the egg was made by one, who knew the doctrine of the specific gravity of fluids, and of the centre of gravity; and that he so formed it to keep the chick nearest the warmth of the hen. This minute and beautifully delicate arrangement was necessary for the propagation of the feathered race, and their continuance through their succes-

sive generations. Hence, there must be wisdom in all this, and a being who is wise—that is God. Here is goodness, too, for the birds thus propagated minister to the sustenance and enjoyment of man. Again, the three humours of the eye, in their form, density and position are constructed most accurately according to the doctrines of optics, which were not discovered until late ages, and which demonstrate that he who formed the eye knew all the laws of light, and adapted to them, the whole constitution of the organ of vision.

But there are other and what may be called ultimate adaptations, not of one material substance to another, but of the outward or material world to the constitution, and faculties of the human mind. By sight, hearing, and our other senses, we acquire a knowledge, not only of the material world, around us, but of other created minds besides our own, and of the existence and attributes of the infinite mind. Sounds that are produced by the action of material substances, and perceived by an ear adapted to receive their impressions, communicate by articulate speech thoughts to the mind, which is so formed as to acquire knowledge through this medium. So that in all this there is a magnificent display of power, wisdom and goodness, which must necessarily have been exercised in these wonderful formations and adaptations. While the business of philosophy, in the strict sense of the word, is to examine the elements, the formations, and the laws of material substances, whether organic, or inorganic, living or dead, it is the province of natural theology, to use the facts thus discovered in proving the existence, and illustrating the glory of the attributes of the Godhead.

The illustration of the divine attributes from those adaptations, which we have denominated ultimate, is the professed object of Dr. Chalmers' book. Lord Brougham's thesis is to demonstrate that the deductions of natural theology, are strictly according to the process of the experimental philosophy. These subjects are discussed with such perspicuity and force as we should expect from the most eloquent and popular divine, and the most learned and distinguished statesman in Europe. The style of Dr. Chalmers is diffusive, that of Lord Brougham concise. The diction of the former is splendid, that of the latter sententious and nervous. Chalmers is sometimes turgid, Brougham sometimes obscure. Their peculiar modes of treating their subjects partake of the characteristics of their style. Brougham adheres strictly to his subject throughout, except perhaps his very curious and interesting dissertation on dreams. Chalmers is discursive,

and indeed, introduces much that is not properly within the field marked out in the Earl of Bridgewater's will, and assigned to him by the trustees. It is in these words:—"the adaptation of external nature to the moral and intellectual constitution of man." It is stretching very far the phrase "external nature" to make it comprehend all that is external to one mind, or all the social relations. The greater part of his argument on this topic is beautiful, instructive and edifying. "*Sed non erat his locis.*" This was not the place for it. Of this, the author was partly sensible, and labours with some ingenuity, to shew that it is within his prescribed limits. But he fails in this. More than one half of his book is occupied with this extraneous matter. He passes over his limits in another respect—by discussing the adaptations of the material world around us to our physical constitution. He is sparing, however, here, and brings it directly and beautifully to bear on his main topic. After all, so far from marring the usefulness of his book, by these enlargements of his jurisdiction, he renders it more interesting and profitable.

But we have a much more grave objection which extends to the doctrine of one whole chapter, entitled—"On the supremacy of conscience." He speaks of the "dictates of conscience." "Conscience" (he says) "on the other hand is felt to have the right—the legislative office being that which properly belongs to her." (p. 44.) Conscience is a judge, not a legislator. If God has endowed her with a law-making power, her laws must be obeyed. But we know, for the apostle Paul tells us that,—"*even the conscience is defiled.*" Again, Christ says—"they who kill you will think they do God service." Men act according to the awards of conscience, in the commission of the most abominable crimes,—in making their children pass through the fire to Moloch, and also in the practice of all kinds of the most loathsome idolatries. In these they sin against God and man. Who will dare to deny it? Dr. Chalmers sees this difficulty and attempts to remove it; but he utterly fails. He says (p. 58.) "Let the mists of ignorance and passion and artificial education be only cleared away; and the moral attributes of goodness and righteousness and truth, be seen undistorted, and in their own proper guise, and there is not a heart, or a conscience throughout earth's teeming population, which could refuse to do them homage." Divested of the overloaded verbiage, all this simply means, that if the understanding is enlightened, the conscience will give a right decision. But it is not. What then? Plainly its awards are corrupt. Not

only the darkness of the understanding, the perverseness of the will, and the defilement of the affections, but the depravity of the faculty of conscience itself, corrupt its awards. It is not then supreme. That a grave and learned Theological professor, should have fallen into this canting of a popular and very noxious error is really very painful. It greatly enfeebles his otherwise able argument.

Dr. Chalmers in another place, though at the expense of discrepancy with other parts of his argument on the subject of conscience, gives the true account of her office. "The law of conscience may be regarded as comprising all those virtues, which the hand of the Deity hath inscribed on the tablet of the human heart, or on the tablet of jurisprudence; and the argument for these being the very virtues which characterize and adorn himself, is that they must have been transcribed from the prior tablet of his own nature." (p. 54). This is the truth, happily expressed; and the inference is logically and beautifully drawn. It corresponds exactly with the scriptural account of this faculty. "For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these having not the law, are a law unto themselves: which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the meanwhile accusing, or else excusing one another." Rom. ii. 14, 15. In all this, there is nothing of legislative authority or of dictates. The law of God is inscribed on the heart, and the business of conscience is to read the tablet, ascertain the law, and apply it in accusing or excusing, i. e. in condemning or acquitting, as a judge.

On the subject of civil government, Dr. Chalmers's discussions are of a complexion, not likely to be received favourably in this republican commonwealth. The hereditary monarchy of Great Britain, is his model. He does not maintain, with some sycophants of despotic power, that whatever government may exist in the providence of God, is legitimate. "In a season of national anarchy the actual power and the legitimate authority are often disjoined from each other." (p. 44). This is certainly true. But he evidently means, and it is so explained in other parts of his book, that when, in times of revolution, the people take the power into their own hands, and dethrone the hereditary monarch, the authority then exercised is not legitimate.

We give the following as a specimen of the author's best manner and because it contains a correct view of the folly of the H<sup>o</sup>pkinsian doctrine of disinterested benevolence. After

a beautiful developement of the power, propriety, utility and felicity of the family affections, he goes on to say:—"Such is the mechanism of human affections, as it comes direct from the hand of God. But many have been the attempts of human wisdom (folly?) to mend and to meddle with it. Cosmopolitism, in particular, has endeavoured to substitute a sort of universal citizenship, in place of the family affections—regarding these as so many disturbing forces; because, operating only as incentives to a partial or particular benevolence, they divert the aim from that which should, it is contended, be the object of every enlightened philanthropist, the general and greatest good of the whole. It is thus that certain transcendental speculatists would cut asunder all the special affinities of our nature, in order that men, set at large from the ties and the duties of domestic relationship, might be at liberty to prosecute a more magnificent and god-like career of virtue; and, in every single action, have respect not to the well-being of the individual, but to the well-being of the species. And thus also, friendship and patriotism have been stigmatized, along with the family affections, as so many narrow-minded virtues, which by their distracting influence, seduce men from all that comprehensive virtue, whose constant study being the good of the world—a happy and regenerated world, it is the fond imagination of some, would be the result of its universal prevalence among men." (pp. 126-7).

In Lord Brougham's Address, we are sorry to perceive that he seems to adopt the extravagant hypothesis, that the world existed many thousands of years before the creation of man; inhabited only by plants and animals. This is the theory of Cuvier, and is adopted by Dr. Jamieson, both of whom profess to be firm believers in Divine revelation.

"In these (says Lord Brougham) curious enquiries (geological) we are conversant not merely with the world before the flood, but with a world which, before the flood, was covered with water, and which in far earlier ages, had been the habitation of birds, beasts, and reptiles. We are carried as it were, several worlds back." It is a sufficient reply to all this—that it is contrary to the plain and necessary import of the Mosaic history, which is perfectly reconcileable with all the facts and is corroborated by them. This is the principal error in this very learned and useful dissertation. It is much, that a great statesman has written on Theology, a book in which he avows his belief in the living and true God, in his creation of the world, in his providential government of it, in

the truth and divine origin of the Holy Scriptures, in the immateriality, and immortality of the soul of man. It lacks, indeed, much of that vein of piety, which vivifies and adorns the pages of Dr. Chalmers. But still he conducts his researches in a suitably grave and reverential manner. When will any of the distinguished politicians of our own country, publish such a book? Has any one of them attempted any thing in this way, for sixty years?

We close this article by the following brief extract from Lord Brougham's Address: "The immateriality of the soul is the foundation of all the doctrines, relating to its future state. If it consists of material parts, or if it consists of any modification of matter, or if it is inseparably connected with any combination of material elements, we have no reason whatever for believing that it can survive the existence of the physical part of our frame; on the contrary, its destruction seems to follow as a necessary consequence of the dissolution of the body. It is true that the body is not destroyed in the sense of being annihilated; but it is equally true that the particular conformation, the particular arrangement of material particles with which the soul is supposed to be inseparably connected, or in which it is supposed to consist, is gone and destroyed even in the sense of annihilation; for that arrangement or conformation has no longer an existence, any more than a marble statue can be said to have an existence when it is burned into a mass of quick-lime. Now it is to the particular conformation and arrangement, and not to the matter itself, that the soul is considered as belonging by any theory of materialism; there being none of the theories of materialists so absurd as to make the total mass of the particles themselves, independent of their arrangement, the seat of the soul. Therefore, the destruction of that form and organization as effectually destroys the soul which consists in it, as the beauty or the intellectual expression of the statue is gone when the marble is reduced to lime-dust. Happily, however, the doctrines of materialism rest upon no solid foundation, either of reason or experience." (pp. 65-6.)

We ask the earnest and united attention of all whom it may and ought to concern to the following communication from "One of the Superintendents" of the Theological Seminary, the resuscitation of which was decreed by General Synod at its last meeting. "Schools of the prophets" have from a very early period been cherished by the church and regarded as greatly conducive to the advancement of her interests and prosperity. An efficient ministry is one of the divinely instituted means of converting sinners and extending the boundaries of Zion, of bringing the nations of the earth to a knowledge of God, and of subjecting them to the authority of Messiah. All experience shews that schools, whether of a lower or a higher grade, are indispensably necessary to the acquisition of knowledge. Science has still flourished through the medium of literary institutions. Almost every religious denomination of the present day employs its best exertions in giving support to at least one theological seminary. The present condition of the Reformed Presbyterian Church and of society both religious and civil, makes it our incumbent duty to furnish the advantages and encouragement, which a seminary affords, to individuals of piety and talent who have devoted themselves to the service of God and his Church in the work of his ministry. We have now a goodly number of promising young men, engaged in theological studies, or prosecuting studies preparatory thereto. Numerous vacant congregations and societies are calling for the bread of life. The work of the Witnesses is urgent and daily increasing both in magnitude and importance. In a word, "the harvest is great." Let the church do her duty—one important part of which is presented in the following communication—and "the Lord of the harvest will send forth laborers."

EDITOR.

#### THE THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY.

A school of Theology is an institution of vital importance to the interests of the church. The cause of pure and undefiled religion is never in greater jeopardy, than when those presume to teach, who have need that themselves be taught the first principles of the oracles of God. When the ministers of religion, along with being sound in the faith and pious, are learned, they are a blessing to the church, and from their faithful labors, the most beneficial results will be realized.

The want of an institution of theological learning in the Reformed Presbyterian church has been felt to be a serious loss, and the act resuscitating the Seminary may be considered among the most important, passed at the last meeting of Synod. It is to be regretted however, that owing to the non-arrival of the minutes sent to the West, the transactions of the late synod are but matters of rumour to most members of the church residing within the bounds of the W. S. Synod. This is still more to be regretted, as the agent appointed to collect funds designed to make the Western Synod the field of his labor during the present summer, but finds

himself embarrassed in the undertaking, for want of previous information among the people in relation to his appointment and duties.

To remove as far as possible this difficulty, it may be necessary to state, that the Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church at its late meeting in Allegheny town, decreed the establishment of a Theological Seminary. New Alexandria was appointed its location—and Rev. Dr. Willson elected Professor. A board of Superintendents was chosen and a committee of finance, and an agent appointed. New Alexandria is a thriving village of Westmoreland county, Pennsylvania. It is situated in a pleasant and healthful portion of country; and in the centre of the flourishing congregation lately under the care of the Rev. John Cannon deceased.

The speedy organization of the Seminary is certainly very desirable. Our theological Students are still pursuing their studies under the direction of their respective presbyteries. This must be the case until the seminary be organized. The time is near at hand when the superintendents should make arrangements to have the seminary in operation the approaching winter. The act of Synod contemplated this. Every consideration serves to urge the necessity of this measure. Scarcely any thing can be done in raising funds until the people see that the Synod determines to carry its act into execution. An important duty and a heavy responsibility rest with the superintendents. I trust the chairman will soon convene the board at some convenient place.

It may be necessary to add, that the agent, Mr. Philip Mowry designs, so soon as the committee on finance meet to devise a plan, and to give him his instructions, to set out on his agency.

It is fondly hoped that our people will manifest no insensibility in relation to this important work. Let every one remember that he is but a steward of the wealth which God has given him, and now when the church calls, let him "render to God the things that are God's." "The liberal deviseth liberal things, and by liberal things shall he stand."

ONE OF THE SUPERINTENDENTS.

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#### INCREASE OF THE AFRICAN SLAVE TRADE.

In 1817 a treaty was concluded between Great Britain and Spain for the suppression of the slave trade. By this treaty, commissioners appointed by the two governments, to reside in Cuba, were to form a court for the adjudication of



such ships as might be seized with slaves actually on board. The British commissioners from time to time make reports of proceedings to their government, which are submitted to Parliament and published by their direction. The subjoined extracts from a report dated Jan. 1st, 1836, shew a painful increase of the inhuman traffic during the year preceding; and shew also the participation of our own country in the awful guilt, contracted by the continuance of a practice at once insulting to the God of Heaven, reproachful to all civilized nations, and at war with every principle of righteousness. It is vain for pro-slavery men, and the apologists for American slavery, to attempt to conceal the fact, or palliate the crime; in this land of boasted freedom, Negro slavery has its strong hold. In no country throughout Christendom does this system of iniquity receive so much encouragement, or find so much defence and support—all circumstances taken into account—as in the United States. The increased demand for slaves here furnished, the constitutional and various legal enactments which throw around it the broad shield of law, the action and *refusals to act* by Congress and State legislatures, meetings called and resolutions passed in its favor and against all interference with the evil, or those indulging in the sin, the supineness and countenance of many churches, the attempts by mobs instigated and led on by men in high place, and other means to suppress all freedom of speech and of the press on the subject, the bantering of Southern slaveholders, and the tame submission by Northern men, with many other causes—all conspire to make this land of liberty the very citadel of Negro slavery. The christian, the philanthropist, the patriot, must blush, and ought to sorrow deeply, when he hears of “considerable sums of money” having been, in a few weeks, deposited by American citizens in mercantile houses in Cuba for the purchase of negroes stolen and brought direct from their native land:—or when he learns that a commission of British subjects report officially to Parliament, that they “doubt much whether this freedom (of Africans) will be more than nominal under *American* masters, or whether the whole system may not be founded on some plan of *smuggling them across the frontier of the slave states of the Union.*” Without further remarks, however, we give the extracts, requesting the reader to ask himself the stale question—“What have we in the free states to do with slavery?”

“Never since the establishment of this mixed commission, has the slave trade of the Havana reached such a disgraceful pitch as during the year 1835. By the list we enclose, it

will be seen that FIFTY slave vessels have safely arrived in this port during the year just expired. In 1833, there were twenty-seven arrivals, and in 1834, thirty-three; but 1835 presents a number by means of which there must have been landed upward of 15,000 negroes.

“In the spring of last year an American agent from Texas purchased in the Havana 250 newly imported Africans at 270 dollars a head. This perhaps would have been scarcely worth mentioning to your lordship, had we not learned that within the last six weeks considerable sums of money have been deposited by American citizens in certain mercantile houses here, for the purpose of making additional purchases of negroes for Texas. According to the laws of Mexico, we believe, such Africans are free, whether they have certificates of freedom or not; but we doubt much, whether this freedom will be more than nominal under their American masters, or whether the whole system may not be founded on some plan of smuggling them across the frontier of the slave states of the Union. However this may be, a great impulse is thus given to the illicit traffic of the Havana. We thought the first experiment to be of little consequence; but now that we perceive fresh commissions arriving in the Havana for the purchase of Africans, we cannot refrain from calling your lordship’s attention to the fact, as being another and great cause of the increase of the slave trade.”

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REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN SYNOD IN SCOTLAND.

This Synod held a second meeting during the past year, in October. Rev. James Ferguson was chosen Moderator.—The first forenoon of the meeting was spent in devotional exercises. Missionary affairs occupied much of the time of the court, great interest being taken in various plans devised for advancing the Covenanted cause. The Northern mission and that in the West Highlands were represented as in a prosperous condition. From Rev. James M’Lachlane, the Synod’s missionary in Canada, cheering intelligence was received. There is a prospect of sending ere long two laborers to his aid. A call on the Rev. Wm. Symington by the West Campbell street congregation, Glasgow, having been formerly offered to him, he referred the matter to Synod’s decision. It was resolved; “That the pastoral relation between a minister and congregation ought not to be dissolved except for the most weighty reasons; that there are in the

present case no sufficient reasons, and therefore the court declare that the call ought not to be sustained &c." Synod resolved to prepare an "Address to spirit dealers and spirit drinkers, entitled a Remonstrance or Expostulation" delineating the evils of the practices; and recommended sessions to deal with such church members as may be engaged in the traffic, endeavoring by instruction and persuasion to induce them to renounce it.

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GENERAL SYNOD OF ULSTER.

This Synod has resolved that the mode of administering oaths, by kissing the book, is unscriptural, superstitious and on many grounds objectionable and that the Government should be petitioned for a removal of the grievance. Also that they will not longer receive any exceptions to, or explanations of, the Westminster Confession of Faith from candidates for the ministry; but will require subscription to the following formula: "I believe the Westminster Confession of Faith to be founded on, and agreeable to the word of God; and as such, I subscribe it as the Confession of my faith."

We hail with joy the spirit evinced by these acts. It manifests a disposition to return to the good old ways. The common form of administering oaths both in this country and England, is a prostitution of a holy and solemn ordinance. The popish church derived it, like other parts of her superstitious system, from the heathen; and protestants have too long given countenance and sanction to the idolatrous practice. It destroys the solemnity of an oath, making it an unmeaning ceremony. It is an act similar to that which Job describes as "iniquity to be punished by the judge." Chap. xxxi. 26, 27. Idolators in Hosea's time said "Let the men that sacrifice, *kiss* the calves." Hos. xiii. 2. How much better, in God's sight, is the conduct of those who profess to approach Him in an act of religious worship—the oath—and *kiss* the skin of calf, or sheep, or goat! Besides, what can be more inconsistent than, on the one hand, for an infidel magistrate or other officer to administer an oath by causing men to kiss a book, or fragment of a book, the truths of which he ridicules and treats as inventions of priests and impostors; or on the other hand, for Deists, Socinians and Papists to be taken as bound by the solemnity of an oath, when they have kissed a book or fragment, the contents of which they regard as lies!

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CHRISTIAN ZEAL.

(Continued from p. 111.)

VI. *The christian actuated by true zeal has a lively regard for all known truth and duty.* The language of his heart will be that of David, the man after God's own heart; "My soul breaketh for the longing that it hath unto thy judgments at all times." "The law of thy mouth is better unto me than thousands of gold and silver." "My zeal hath consumed me, because mine enemies have forgotten thy words." Ps. cxix. 20, 72, 139. "Judgments, laws and words," are used throughout this psalm in their most extensive signification. They designate, with other equally expressive titles, the whole revealed will of God—the Holy Scriptures as the rule of faith and duty. "Judgments and laws" are names expressive of the character of the system of truth taught in the Bible, as it is given to direct the conduct—"words" signify the same revelation, particularly as it is given to be believed. Now, the inspired Psalmist makes no exception. He clearly designs to embrace *all* divine truth. He does not say, I long for such of thy judgments as are, in my opinion, essential; nor, I prize much the most important statutes embodied in thy law; nor, I am zealous for so many of thy words as contain fundamental doctrines. No: he includes in his vehement expression of strong affection and fervent zeal the *whole* law as a whole. In another place he employs language that puts the matter beyond doubt. "Then shall I not be ashamed when I have respect to *all* thy commandments," verse 6. They shall be ashamed, "who break one of these least commandments and teach men so." Matt. v. 19.

In the above quotations, David speaks the common sentiments of all enlightened believers. They love all the gracious words that proceed from the mouth of God ; and their earnest desire is, that others should love and regard them. "Rivers of waters run down their eyes, when they see how wicked men—keep not God's law." They dare not cast reproach upon the Divine wisdom, by rejecting as useless, or by refusing to contend for, any principle that the Redeemer, as the great Prophet, has made known to men. Moreover, every wise man is aware that the value of a system of doctrines and its efficacy depend not only on the worth of the leading doctrines which compose the system, but upon their order, consistency and unity also. The pins and rivets of an engine are small matters out of their proper places ; but they are *essential* parts of the machinery, without which the disjointed and unconnected bars and beams could not act to produce the desired effects, or answer their intended ends. Some truths may be the pins and rivets of the great system ; yet are they not, on that account, less essential. The intelligent christian is equally zealous for these, in their proper place and order, as for those which ignorance or indifference considers as the only important doctrines. Worldly men and worldly minded professors may call this bigotry and fanaticism, and other abusive names ; but it is none of these ; it is wisdom.

Spurious or ill directed zeal frequently seizes upon a single point of doctrine or of duty, detaches it practically, if not in theory, from the system of which it is but a part, and wastes its energies in vain efforts to elevate this solitary item to the disparagement of all others with which it is connected. This defect, in whatever system of self improvement or general reformation it may be found, is a radical one. Nor does this at all militate against a very important practical rule observed by every wise and faithful follower of the Lamb ; namely, that the greatest effort must be made in the most favourable quarter and under the best attainable circumstances. The skilful general discovers the weak point of his adversary, and there makes his attack : or he finds opportunity of pushing his own defences in a particular direction, or of acting to advantage in a particular quarter, and proceeds accordingly. It would, however, be consummate folly to look no farther than to the mastery of "the weak point," or to cease the advance when one column has marched, without bringing forward the main body to occupy the ground gained. There are "present truths." Circum-

stances may render the times more favorable to the promulgation of some principles than of others; or the concentration of human depravity in particular channels of error or vice, may require the soldier of Christ to give a certain direction to his opposition; while in either case, the whole truth is maintained and its claims enforced—and every erroneous scheme of doctrine and all immorality are faithfully denounced. So to vary and proportion the presentation of truth, as most directly and effectually to promote its interests and overturn sin, is a nice and difficult point in the work of the faithful, conscientious witness.

This characteristic of true zeal has another aspect. It is not satisfied with present attainments, but presses forward to a better acquaintance with God's will. Like Paul, he who possesses it says: "not as though I had already apprehended, or were already perfect." Phil. iii. 12. David, even in advanced life, prayed that God would "teach him his statutes;" "open his eyes" &c. Ps. cxix. throughout. The more a man loves the truth and delights in duty, the more earnest will be his desires to have his views enlarged and purified. *Zealous* christians are, without exception, *enquiring* christians.

VII. *Zeal is practical in its nature.* Principles are useless if not reduced to practice. "All scripture is profitable for doctrine &c.—that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." 2. Tim. iii. 16, 17. The use of doctrine is here put first in order, but the perfection of the man of God in good works is the end which all that precedes is designed to accomplish. The truly zealous believer begins with himself. He attacks his own sins—his indwelling corruption; he seeks to promote his own spiritual improvement. Paul says, "For behold this self-same thing, that ye sorrowed after a godly sort—what zeal it wrought in you." 2 Cor. vii. 11. The context shews clearly, that this zeal was directed against their own sins. They began by plucking the beam out of their own eye. But they did not end there. They went on to purify the church by excluding him, who had polluted it. A readiness to apply, for purposes of either private or public reformation, his professed principles, is a good test of the sincerity of a man's zeal for them—perhaps we may say safely—of the reality of his belief in them. Particularly does this hold good with regard to religious principles. He who rightly believes them, knowing that God is their author and salvation their end, will assuredly apply them. If an individual has such belief in the

doctrine, that Jesus Christ, in his mediatorial character, has dominion over all men in all their varied relations—public and private, as constitutes the faith of the christian, will he rest satisfied without endeavouring to obtain a universal recognition of the doctrine in its true application.

Plain, and even self-evident, as these truths are, it is still a lamentable fact that men are not always willing to *apply* the doctrines which they profess to believe. Some are more inclined to muster up objections against their practical application, or to find apologies for its neglect, than to take the direct rule of duty as their guide. Thousands in the Northern States, who admit that slave-holding is sinful, refuse to carry out the doctrine in urging its immediate abandonment. Many assent to the doctrine that the revealed will of God, contained in the Bible, should be the supreme law of the land; but start back from the consequences of the admission in its practical bearings. Why is this? The reply lies upon the very face of their conduct. To assent to a truth "*in the abstract*" is an easy matter: to apply it requires self denial. Truth carried out in practice, brings a man into direct contact with an unholy world, and with sinful propensities. To use endeavours to spread it and advance the influence of its application, requires sacrifice of worldly ease, earthly property and reputation among men. The entangling cares of the world, the snares which it spreads and the deep corruption of the human heart, sufficiently account for this painful fact. The zealous disciple takes up his cross and follows Christ, whether it be through good or bad report. Like Paul and other martyrs, he "counts not even his life dear" for the sake of the cause which he has from the heart, espoused.

VIII. *Zeal is permanent and increasing.* David "longed for the judgments of God *at all times.*" "The path of the just man is as the shining light, which shineth more and more unto the perfect day." Prov. iv. 18. Paul "pressed forward." For many years with unabated, growing zeal, this diligent servant of Christ proclaimed the doctrines of the cross and urged the duties which they inculcate. The opposition of enemies, the apostacy of professed friends, the threats and actual violence of furious persecutors, the advance of age, the toil of labor, diminished not his ardor. We find him, near the end of his life, and when a prisoner in Rome, laboring with unwearied constancy and zeal in preaching the gospel, to the spread of which he had devoted the vigor of his days. It is a mistaken notion, that ardent, fervent efforts in maintaining and promoting any cause cannot

be long continued. If such efforts have their origin in mere animal feelings, or if these mingle with them in considerable degree, they will undoubtedly decrease as the excitement of passion abates. The temporary exhilaration caused by the intoxicating draught soon subsides, and the inebriate sinks into a state of unnatural depression. This seems to be an unavoidable law of the animal economy. Mere excitement where there is nothing more, cannot very long be kept up to the greatest height. This is equally true of those excitements in which the mind bears the chief share, as of those which influence chiefly the corporeal system. The history of many religious excitements—called by their authors and advocates, “revivals of religion”—got up in past years by men of erroneous sentiments, through the instrumentality of a system of means devised and adapted to work powerfully upon the passions, without enlightening the understanding or informing the judgment, abundantly confirms the truth of this observation as applied to professed zeal for religion. The subjects of these “revivals” were for a time all-alive to religious matters, in many instances abandoning their ordinary business and pleasures to attend “protracted meetings” and extra devotional exercises. But the fire in a few weeks or months burned out; and they have now left in their room a state of spiritual apathy and deadness—equally to be deplored with the distempered frenzy and temporary zeal which have occasioned it. While all this is true, it is equally true that zeal, however great, which is “according to knowledge,”—intelligent in its origin and controlled by correct principles and sound wisdom, will wax brighter and brighter. As faith grows, love will burn with a more vehement flame. The nearer the believer draws to the great fountain of light and warmth—“the Sun of Righteousness,”—he discerns more of the ample extent of truth and duty; he understands them better, and appreciates them more fully. His efforts to arrive at perfection are more vigorous and unremitting. His desire for the general diffusion of a knowledge of the truth and for its adoption becomes stronger and stronger. His desires urge to greater exertions. Grace expands, and purifies, and warms, and elevates them. Thus zeal kindled at the altar will burn with constant and increasing fervour here on earth and hereafter in heaven, the place of holy, intense and unceasing devotion of the whole man to God and to his service.



THE AGENCY OF GOD IN THE INFLICTION OF EVIL:—AND  
WHY HE DOES INFLICT IT.

(Continued from p. 181.)

History, whether sacred or common is filled with records of the judgments of God; it tells of nations' guilt, but tells also of their punishments: there is an existing connection between the one and the other, and blind indeed must we be if we do not recognize it. "The Lord's voice crieth unto the city, and the man of wisdom shall see thy name: hear ye the rod and who hath appointed it." Mich. vi. 9.

We thus learn, that when God in his providence afflicts a nation it is a characteristic of wisdom to make a practical use of it. "Hear ye the rod, and who hath appointed it." When national calamity becomes our own lot, there is neither wisdom nor safety, in trying to hide from ourselves or others the cause of God's controversy with us. In the present crisis it is our duty to speak unreservedly. The commercial distress which presses so heavily upon the United States, demands frankness of manner and faithfulness of application. If the country is in a state of suffering, it is because there are reasons for it; the curse comes not causeless, nor do troubles spring from the ~~ground~~. Faithfulness to God and a regard to the best interests of our country, both urge us to inquire why he afflicts us. That God has a controversy with this nation, no seriously minded person will, we presume, deny; although there may be a diversity of opinion as to the particular sin or sins which may be the cause of the controversy. The present calamity is not a solitary judgment; it is one of a series, which have followed each other in rapid and alarming succession. In 1832, the disease of Cholera swept over the land, with all the characteristics of a national judgment; but, this was endured in common with other nations. And, in proportion as it had produced alarm during its continuance, it appears to have been followed by hardness of heart and national impenitency. "I have sent among you the pestilence after the manner of Egypt: yet have ye not returned unto me saith the Lord." Amos, iv. 10. In the close of 1835, the commercial metropolis of the United States suffered immense loss by fire; a whole section of the city was reduced to ruins; nor could the closest enquiry explain its origin. In no other spot of equal dimensions in the empire could so much valuable property have been destroyed by the devour-

ing element. And it is presumed, we do not overstep the bounds of sober interpretation of providence, when we call the conflagration of New-York a national judgment. As a commercial nation the United States was thus smitten on the head: and we may add in the faithful accusation of scripture reproof "yet have ye not returned unto me saith the Lord."

The universal distress which pervades the land, from south to north, is a loud and renewed call to national repentance. A third time, during a very brief period, God has thus stretched over the land the rod of an avenging and warning providence; saying, "hear ye the rod and who hath appointed it." But, there is no general conviction in the community that sin is the cause of this evil; those who are most deeply involved seem disposed to attribute it to any but the real cause. By one class, the evil is wholly ascribed to excessive speculation; by another, to the mal-administration of the executive government. We have no doubt that business has been overdone by excessive speculation; we know that there have been gross acts of mal-administration on the part of the executive of the United States. To consider these as the causes of the present calamity is by no means meeting the case: they may, and doubtless have had their influence as means: but the unseen hand of the Almighty has directed the machinery of means for the accomplishment of his own righteous judgment. "O ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky, but can ye not discern the signs of the times." Matt. xvi. 3. "The Lord's voice crieth unto the city." Have wisdom to understand it! True wisdom lies in making a suitable improvement of the judgment, by returning unto him in the exercise of repentance and reformation.

The love of the world—the acquisition of wealth has been rapidly growing for some years past, till finally it has assumed the character of an all-absorbing passion, governing and directing nearly the entire community. At Mammon's shrine, the national homage is paid: while the worship of God is awfully neglected. The god of this world hath blinded the understanding so much that the mass of the population act as if the only end of their being was the acquisition of riches and personal aggrandizement. The things of sense have well-nigh possessed the minds and desires of the present generation to the exclusion of those that are spiritual. Time is thus preferred to eternity; and its passing pleasures to the realities of a blessed immortality. The con-

sequence of such a state of things is a prevailing profligacy of manners—an increase of immorality. Christianity with its duties and obligations, is despised ; over-reaching speculation, and fraudulence in business, are *practiced* or *countenanced* by the most influential of the community ; violence and force assume the authority of law, and not unfrequently end in deeds of blood ; sabbath breaking, duelling, gambling and theatrical amusements, are common characteristics of the times. And shall not God visit the land because of these things? Will He permit prosperity to be always abused without calling the guilty to an account? Infidelity has obtained a wide and welcome reception, throughout the land ; infidel principles are *avowed* and *acted* upon, by legislators and rulers, while the truth of God's word is trampled upon by both. The instrument which binds the United States together as one nation is such, as far as religion and morality are concerned, as might be found among a people who knew nothing of the existence of the divine law. The constitution of the United States is infidel ; it contains no acknowledgment of God—the Supremacy of the Lord Jesus Christ, over the nations,—the truth of the christian religion,—or the obligation of the Holy scriptures. The United States have by this compact placed themselves in the fearful condition of being a people without God.

While referring to national sins as causing judgments, it would be highly culpable to overlook the sin of slave-holding. This is properly a national sin : and one, we are persuaded, that has an intimate connexion with the present commercial and other distress. We shall not now enter upon the evidence that slave-holding is a *national* sin ; we only remind our readers, that slavery is recognized in the constitution, of the United States, “by bestowing upon the domestic tyrant who holds hundreds of his fellow creatures in bondage, an influence in making laws for free-men proportioned to the number of his own slaves.” This alone, would be sufficient to bring home the charge of national guilt. Congress has admitted into the Union slave-holding States ; and thus recognized the lawfulness of slave-holding. Congress, which is the national legislature, has full powers over the district of Columbia, and the Territories ; yet slavery exists in them ; nay more, the district of Columbia is the great slave-market of the United States. And, as if in solemn mockery of the sacred names of justice, liberty and humanity, man—man made in the image of God, is within the very sight of the Capitol, brought under the Auctioneer's hammer, and bid

off, like cattle, for dollars and cents!! If slave-holding is sinful; and none will doubt it who is not under the influence of interest or prejudice; then, verily is the United States guilty, exceedingly guilty: and God by his providences seems to indicate clearly, that the nation shall not pass with impunity. The crime seems written on the punishment; and cannot be misunderstood by an attentive observer of passing events. The sin of slavery stands pre-eminent among the sins of the land; and to it the present dispensation of Providence has an especial reference.

The friends of humanity have for some time been calling upon the slave-holding states to abolish slavery; the national legislature has been petitioned to exercise the power with which it is invested; to abolish it in the District of Columbia. And what has been the result? The south has been maddened into rage; and Congress has virtually denied the right of petition on the subject. The door has thus been shut against all constitutional redress. The self-interested, and the sycophantick in the north, have made common cause with southern slave-holders. The calls of reason and religion have been met with passion and brutal violence. Neither southern taskmasters, nor their northern abettors, can now plead ignorance; duty has been set before them, and they have been urged to perform it: yet have they not repented. As God, in his providence, as well as in his word, has been commanding them to let the oppressed go free; and as they have not done it, He is now visiting them with calamity. The cotton crops of the south have failed; the unrequited labors of the slaves have so far, not enriched their masters: when they "looked for much lo it come to little." The product of those crops was anxiously looked for as the means of liquidating their debts. The northern merchants as well as others who had advanced monies on them have suffered, and are suffering with the planters. Slaves who were readily bought up, at from one thousand to fifteen hundred dollars each, only a year ago, are now selling at four hundred. The immediate consequence of the failure of the crops raised by slave-labor is one general insolvency, from New Orleans to New-York, A few months ago, one firm in the former city failed, and that has been followed by a crowd of others in both cities to the amount of hundreds of millions of dollars. This rapid change from prosperity to adversity ought not, and cannot with safety be overlooked. It has added another, to the many warnings of providence: it is a loud call to the duty of national repentance. If this call is

treated as former ones have been, we know not whether God may give another: He may say of this nation as he did of Ephraim; "He is joined to his idols, let him alone" till the cup of iniquity be filled. Nothing but repentance and reformation can save the nation from this doom. Let every christian know that he has a duty to perform to his country and to his God, in this crisis; it is, to give a public testimony against prevailing national sins.—To proclaim, to all, the duty of repentance. The morals of the people need reformation; prevailing vices must be curbed and put to shame:—the infidelity which has so deeply imbued the civil institutions of the country, both the general and state constitutions, must be eradicated; christian principles must take the place in these, which they ought always to have occupied, and give a renovated character to the laws and their administration. Public offices should be filled with men of religious character and integrity; men who instead of taking the lead in immorality should be a terror to evil-doers and a praise to them that do well.—The national disgrace of slave-holding must be wiped off by letting the oppressed go free. The safety of our country and its permanent prosperity depend upon our national repentance and reformation: Sin must be forsaken or the avenging justice of God shall overtake us. "The irreligion of our nation and of our rulers is the source of all our dangers. Other means may become the instruments of our punishment and ruin, but, it is sin that brings them to bear with fatal effect upon us, and which gives its poison to the sting of every earthly calamity. As long as the rulers and the people forget God, He will forget them. Since He is not in all their thoughts, to their own devices they shall be given up, and shall eat abundantly of the fruit of their own evil ways." But, repentance, may not yet be too late "Therefore also now, saith the Lord, turn ye unto me with all your heart, and with fasting and with weeping, and with mourning. And turn unto the Lord your God: for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil."

SIGMA.

## LIFE OF THE REV. JAMES RENWICK.

*The last of the Martyrs*

(Continued from p. 176.)

In September, 1683, as we have already seen, Mr. Renwick commenced his ministerial labours in Scotland among a scattered and persecuted remnant who continued faithful to the covenants of their fathers, and, under the severest privations and sufferings, maintained the testimony and good order which had once been the glory of their country. At this distant period, we can form a very imperfect idea of the difficulties which he had to encounter in prosecuting his work. The people for whose benefit particularly he engaged in the service were broken, dispirited, in many cases, through the wiles of the adversary, and exposed continually to the most violent deaths at the hands of their oppressors. The leading men in the councils of the nation were bent on the utter subversion of Presbytery, and the establishment of Prelacy, and, together with it, of arbitrary power; and, as the faithful Covenanters, the *Society people*, chiefly stood in their way to the accomplishment of their designs, they resolved to show them no mercy. Add to all this the bitterness of a large number of Presbyterian ministers who had accepted the *Indulgence*, and of their followers, who had once solemnly vowed adherence to the Covenanted cause, but who now, to cover over their own apostacy, hesitated not to vilify their brethren who remained faithful, and to arm against them the persecutor's rage.

Such were the trials that met the intrepid Renwick at the very entrance of the public service in the church to which he was appointed. In nothing intimidated, however by his adversaries, he went forth as a good soldier of Christ in the strength of the Lord, and was abundantly supported and encouraged under his manifold afflictions. At the first meeting at which he preached in public, he delivered a full and explicit *Testimony* against the defections of the times, stated clearly the principles which he resolved to maintain, and earnestly recommended to the people "to hold up his case to the Lord, and pray for spiring and strengthening, assisting and accepting in the great work to which he was called; that he might be helped to hazard life and all, for the testimony of that day, which, he said, the Lord assisting, he would seal with his blood."\* The text of his first sermon was Isaiah

\* Renwick's Life by Shields, p. 35.

xxvi. 20—"Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee ; hide thyself, as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast." In handling this appropriate subject, his method was at once simple and striking: he illustrated—"1. The invitation, *Come.* 2. The persons invited, or the determination thereof, *my people.* 3. That which they are invited into, the *chambers* of the Lord's protection and presence. 4. Their carriage, and that which they are to do there, *shut thy doors about thee and hide thyself.* 5. The safety of these chambers, being an hiding-place, or rather the determination of the continuance of their hiding, *until the indignation be overpast.*" The testimony which he thus declared, justified though it was by the example of the most eminent reformers of former times, and displaying as it did the singular faithfulness and undaunted courage of the youthful martyr, excited against him odium in every quarter. The most bitter invectives by the indulged, from the pulpit and press, were industriously circulated against him ; enemies were stirred up to more than ordinary rage; pretended friends blamed him; and too few were found to cheer him in his labours, or to enter heartily into the measures which he adopted for the advancement of the truth, which, though bold, were Scriptural and judicious. The common calumny cast upon those who have witnessed for Christ in all ages, against corruption in the Church and oppression in the state—of abetting separation and schism in the one, and sedition in the other—was thrown upon him from all quarters, and some even hesitated not to denounce against him Divine judgments. Notwithstanding these reproaches he was mightily supported in his Master's work ; his labours in preaching and catechising were most abundant, and many seals were appended to his ministry.\* The council hearing of his diligence and success, and inflamed to madness by his faithful and uncompromising maintenance of a cause which they laboured assiduously to root out of the land, increased their vigilance in the work of persecution. Renwick they denounced as a traitor and rebel ; his followers were pursued without mercy ; and every method was tried which depraved ingenuity could invent, or the most envenomed malice could execute, to destroy the faithful and silence their testimony. Pursued by the rage of enemies, his life was continually in jeopardy ; and often his only accommodation for a shelter and resting-place, after the most fatiguing exertions in his ministerial work, was a cleft of the

\* The number of Mr. Renwick's adherents must have been far greater than his enemies would have us believe, for we find that, in the space of three months, he baptized no fewer than six hundred children.

rocks, a den in the mountains, or a retreat in some unfrequented moss. During these trials, which, but for Divine support administered, must have exhausted his constitution, and borne down his spirits, there is evidence the most abundant and satisfactory that he maintained eminent spirituality of mind, and that intense love to the Saviour was the actuating principle of all his labours. The following letter, written to a pious lady of rank, at the time when persecution was at the hottest, will furnish the best proof of the ardour of Renwick's piety at such a juncture. It is addressed to the *Right Honourable Lady E. B.*, and dated May 13th, 1686. Some of the forms of expression are peculiar to the time in which it was written, but even these are so significant, and the simplicity and fervour which they exhibit are so characteristic, that we have deemed it better to give them without alteration—

“Dearly Beloved in the Lord, my insufficiency, being in part known to me, doth make me stand in some awe to write to you; but if I had the tongue of the learned, and the pen of a ready writer, I would employ them both in speaking well of the name of Christ, and commending his way. O, ‘His name is as ointment poured forth,’ and who so gets a smell thereof, cannot but love him; and his way is so lovely, that a poor soul, that once gets his foot upon it, and the eye looking forward, cannot but choose to tread in these paths; though rubs and crosses from enemies, both from within and without, should be never so multiplied. And no wonder, for when the children of God begin by grace to turn their back upon their old lovers, and to shake off their weights, they get in hand the hundred-fold ten thousand times told, and are made to say, as Psalm iv. 7, ‘Thou hast put gladness in my heart, more,’ &c. Many a time I think they can have no pleasant life, who have not the Christian's life. Whatever the world think, yet the believer gets that in time, which may sufficiently engage him to go through (if it were possible) a thousand deaths in obedience to the Lord. O then, since the imperfect and inconstant enjoyment of Christ is such a thing, what must the full and eternal enjoyment of him be! Of this it may be said, ‘eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.’ The believers cannot but have a happy life, when they have four things which the Scripture calls precious, to wit, the precious redemption of the soul, a precious faith, a precious Christ, and precious promises; and the redemption of the soul, which is precious, is by a precious faith, laying hold on a precious Christ, held forth in precious promises. But when their happiness shall be completed, then faith shall vanish into sight, by the entire fulfilling of the promises, and the soul be drowned in the bottomless ocean of the love of precious Christ; and bursting up with love, continually flaming toward him again. O what a life must that life of love be! and what inconceivable joy will it yield. Christ will rejoice over his own spouse, when he hath taken her home to his own house, made with his own hand, and clothes her with robes of his own making, and entertaining her with a banquet of his own dressing; and the invitation-word of the Giver of that banquet will be this, Song v. 1, ‘Eat, O friends; drink, yea drink abundantly, O beloved.’ And that table will never be drawn, and the dainties will never wear tasteless; for, as our Lord saith, Mat. xxvi. 29, the wine



there is *new*, and it never groweth old, and his spouse her stomach will never suffocate, nor her appetite be satisfied : so, in heaven, there is a continual eating and drinking, a continual resting, and yet never resting. Then shall the spouse rejoice in her husband, all her love shall be bended towardshim, and her joy shall arise from her enjoying of him; her love shall be full and constant, not admitting of intermissions or variable-ness; her joy full and perpetual, not admitting of defect or changeableness. And that which is now a great part of the Christian's exercise, to wit, their doubting of Christ's love, and their complaining of coldrifeness of love to him again, shall then be wholly removed; and instead of grief, at least mixtures of sorrow with their joy, they shall then have inconceivable joy. And is not Christ, fully enjoyed, a match to love, and a prize to rejoice in? Now, long for this, and seek after the abiding assurance of Christ's love, and more and more lovely communications thereof unto your heart, until ye arrive at this; and separate yourself more and more from every unclean thing, that cannot enter the gates of the city, where all this is to be enjoyed. And seeing such rich up-making is to be had in Christ, especially seeing he is so worthy, regard not what ye may be called to undergo, or forego in your owning of him. I hope you have studied to let yourself, your name, your enjoyments, and your all, lie at his feet; so as ye can say of these, they are not your own; and the more that you do prove that they are his, by his calling for them, and making use of them, the more of his love he evidenceth towards you, and the more honour he putteth upon you. And I think men and women are for no use, but so far as they are for Christ. And whatever errands he calls you to run, fear not skaith nor hazard, for it is he that rideth these ways toward you, and so ye shall not stumble; for he hath promised, Psalm cxxi. 3, 'He shall not suffer thy feet to be moved.' Let the low case of the Church of Scotland, and the dangerous case of the Church in other lands, lie near your heart; for, ah! we may say at this day, the house of David is waxing weaker and weaker, and the house of Saul waxing stronger and stronger. I fear a sad and general stroke before it be better with the Churches, for few are *valiant for the truth upon the earth*; and nothing brings a Church more low, and readier destruction upon a land, than regardlessness of Christ's matters, and silly and shameful slipping from them; and this is that which hath occasioned our breaches, and bred all our divisions in this Church; and because some of our worthies in our day, who have gone before us, have been honoured and helped to hold, what our worthy fathers did conquer with their blood, and bind over upon us by holy covenants, and we are endeavouring to do the same; they and we have been reproached as followers of new ways; but *Wisdom shall be justified of her children*; and seeing our way-marks in the Scriptures, and our never-to-be-forgotten reformation, and the Cloud of Witnesses walking in the same paths, we are not to regard much what Man say. But it were good for our reproachers to be sober, for a little time will silence their boasting, and make many change their thoughts when they shall not get space to amend them. Now, dear and worthy lady, I cannot express my sense that I even have of the many obligations which we all stand under to you, for your bowels have not been shut up nor your hands shortened towards us; for your benefits towards us in this land, and these of us, who are amongst you, have been large indeed. But we are not so refreshed with what we enjoy thereby, as that these things are demonstrations of your love to God, and respect to his work. And what further shall I say, but go on in the ways and in the strength of the Lord; be watchful, diligent, and spiritual; grow in grace, and persevere therein unto the end! The God of all grace and peace be with you.—I am, right honorable Lady, your assured friend and obedient servant in the Lord,

JAMES RENWICK."

The imminent danger to which Mr. Renwick was exposed in the district to which his labours were at his entrance into the ministry confined, induced him to repair to Ayrshire, where many persecuted Presbyterians were hungering for the bread of life. The following traditionary account of his reception at the house of *John Brown, of Priesthill*,\* in the district of Kyle, will not be uninteresting to our readers.

"The second year after his marriage, one night in the beginning of winter, John Brown had gone to a neighbor's house; the family at home were preparing the wool of their flocks. A stranger entered. He was young in years, of a little stature, and fine fair countenance; but he was pale with fatigue and sickness. His shoes were worn out; a shepherd's plaid hung around him, seemingly for disguise, for by his dress and speech he seemed of a superior rank. While the servants gazed on him, the gudewife did not know whether she should welcome him as a sufferer, or consider him as a spy; so she left Janet to perform the kind offices the stranger required, while she lulled her boy to sleep, by singing a verse of a psalm. "While the gudewife sang, the stranger's face brightened up, and he now cheerfully accepted the child's endearing attentions, who placed him in the warmest corner, helped him off with his dreeping plaid, imitating all the kind offices she had seen her mother perform to her father, to the no small amusement of the rest of the family. On the stranger it had a different effect. He burst into tears, and cried, 'May the blessing of him that is ready to perish rest upon you, my dear bairn! Surely God has heard my cry, and provided me a place to rest my head for a night. O that I had in the wilderness a lodging place of wayfaring men, that I might leave my people and go from them; for they be an assembly of treacherous men.'

"Just as he had finished, John Brown entered. He gazed at him, and with great deference bade him welcome to his house. 'Do you know me?' said the stranger. 'I think I do,' said John Brown. 'It was in this house that the Societies met that contributed to send you to Holland, and now I fear they have not received you as they ought.' 'Their reproach has not broken my heart,' said Mr. Renwick, (for it was he, though he was not named before by the family,) 'but the excessive travelling, night wanderings, unseasonable sleep, frequent preaching in all weathers, especially in the night, have so

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\* This eminent Christian and faithful Covenanter, was afterwards murdered in cold blood by the infamous Claverhouse.

debilitated me, that I am often unfit for my work. The reproach of those who called me to the ministry, I look upon as a device of the enemy to stop the Lord's work; but blessed be his grace that has kept me from mixing anger or scorn of them with my sorrow. Some have declared that I will never be honoured of the Lord to do his poor remnant good.—But one thing I know, and may say, that the Lord has done me good. Oh! let none fear a suffering lot. Enemies think themselves satisfied that we are put to wander in mosses, and upon mountains; but even amidst the storms of these two last nights, I cannot express what sweet times I have had, when I had no covering but the dark curtains of night. Yea, in the silent watch, my mind was led out to admire the deep and inexpressible ocean of joy, wherein the whole family of heaven swim. Each star led me to wonder what he must be who is the Star of Jacob, of whom all stars borrow their shining. Indeed if I may so term it, I am much obliged to enemies, they have covered me many a table in the wilderness, and have made me friends when I never expected them."

"When he ceased speaking, every one of the family strove to do him kindness. In those days, hospitality was with many, in reality what it ought to be, purely exercised for God's glory, and without display of grandeur. The motives were like silver tried; it was at the risk of all, even life. Hence, the joy of such pure intercourse was sweet beyond description. As iron sharpeneth iron, so doth the face of a man his friend. Renwick and Priesthill talked of the sufferings of the Church, her testimony, her covenanted cause, and her ultimate triumph. Yes, they had more comfort in the faith that Christ would be acknowledged Head over all things, King of kings, and Lord of lords, than the wicked have when corn and wine do most abound.

"They comforted themselves in these hopes, and with the assurance that the Lord would one day return to Scotland, and that the place of his feet would be glorious. Mr. Renwick remained another night with them, and was greatly bettered in his health. It was a time of refreshing to the family, from on high. Soon after he left Priesthill, his followers and he published their *Apologetic Declaration*. In this paper, which made its appearance under the most trying circumstances—circumstances that might well justify the boldest and most decided language, there may be seen a spirit that dared to be free from tyranny—a spirit that would one day

speak terrible things in righteousness.”\* But although this effort of freedom was like the child threshing the mountain, and its consequence apparently the same, save that the Church on its account suffered much, the Court made it a pretence for sending more soldiers on the country, particularly about Larnark; and the better to execute this, gave them the liberty to shoot all they thought suspicious, so that it was not long till there was scarce a moss or mountain in the West of Scotland but was flowered with martyrs.†

To be continued.

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ESSAY ON PURGATORY. NO. 3.

In preceding essays we have shewn that the doctrine of Purgatory is derived from the philosophy of the Pagan schools: and that, so far from atonement, in the least degree, being required from the sinner by suffering endured in his own person—here or hereafter—the satisfaction rendered by Christ is all sufficient for the justification, sanctification and glorification of every one for whom he became surety. In this we shew, that the saints are immediately at death “received up into glory.” This point established, it will be obvious to all whose faith is governed by the scriptures, that there is no place found for a purgatory.

The scriptures evince that the souls of all men, just and unjust return to God at death. Ec. xii. 7. “Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was; and the spirit to God that gave it.” This passage closes the wise man’s pathetic description of human frailty. When “the silver cord is loosed,” the invisible band of union between the soul and body is dissolved; the frail tabernacle crumbles to its native dust and the immortal tenant ascends to the tribunal on high, there to be judged. Let it now be inquired what becomes of the spirits of the just, this term being used to comprehend the whole company of the redeemed. They are received of God to the enjoyment of himself, immediately on their return to him. The case of the proto-martyr Stephen is proof sufficient. “And they stoned Stephen calling upon God and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.” Acts viii. 59. Was his spirit not received? The papist replies, We admit the martyrs

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\* See Scots Worthies, with Notes by M’Gavin, vol. i. p. 448.

† Renwick’s Letters to Sir Robert Hamilton.

escape purgatory, but others, who have not purified themselves as they, are sent to purgatory to suffer and be purged. I ask the proof this distinction between the souls of martyrs and other believers. The scriptures nowhere admit it. The great multitude of the redeemed are before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms of victory in their hands. Rev. vii. 9. And every believer may say with David, who was not a martyr, "Into thine hands I commit my spirit; thou hast redeemed me, O Lord, God of truth." Ps. xxxi. 5. Paul says "I desire to depart and be with Christ which is far better." Phil. 1. 23. This apostle every where exhibits himself as an example for the encouragement of the very chief of sinners believing in Christ. He had no more personal merit in the sight of God, securing exemption from purgatory than any other believer. He styles himself "the chief of sinners." In his lively hope of being with Christ immediately on his departure, he is a pattern to all that believe. "Christ is entered into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us." Heb. ix. 24. Into that glorious place—the holiest of all, therefore, the souls of his redeemed ones are admitted immediately at death. They may cheer their hearts amidst all the sorrows of the present life, with this blessed assurance. "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, let us draw near with a true heart in the full assurance of faith." Heb. x. 19, 22. Equally explicit is Christ's declaration to the thief on the cross. "Verily, I say unto thee, *to-day* shalt thou be with me in paradise." Luke xxiii. 43. Paradise is heaven. "I knew a man caught up to the *third heaven*—and I knew such a man, how that he was caught up *into paradise*." 2. Cor. xii. 2. 4. Even "the thief" was taken immediately at death to heaven. So is every believer, through the infinite merit of the Saviour's blood.

Again, Paul says, "For we know if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." 2. Cor. v. 1. This dissolution of the earthly house is the work of death. Although the spirit abandons the ruined dwelling, it is not "found naked" in the world of spirits; but is "clothed upon with its house which is from heaven." What that house is we cannot fully conceive; but we are sure it is a glorious tabernacle far transcending the "earthly house," in which death was daily working—loosening its pins and weakening its pillars. It is no purgatorial prison-house with which the ransomed spirit is "clothed upon:" but "a building of God—

eternal in the heavens." This is common to all that believe. Hence the Apostle says *WE* and *US* and *OUR*, by the use of which he assures all believers that they have like encouragement and consolation with himself.

The connection that exists between the saints on earth and those in heaven establishes the point for which we plead. "Ye are come unto Mount Zion—to the general assembly and church of the first born, which are written in heaven—to the spirits of just men made perfect." Heb. xii. 22, 3. Zion is the gospel church, which is free in opposition to Mount Sinai which tendeth to bondage. Gal. iv. 24. In coming to Mount Zion, we come to the church universal. By faith in the same glorious Head, we have, through the same blessed spirit, communion with the general assembly of the first born—the saints of former times—the first born of grace. As involved therefore in this intimate fellowship with the whole church, believers have union with the spirits of just men *made perfect*; and a title to the same inheritance, of which those on earth are heirs, those in heaven possessors. Shall this fellowship be cut off at death, and believers, who have been taught by the word of God to indulge the anticipation of beholding at death the saints in heaven, face to face, be cast into purgatorial flames, there to endure excruciating torture, until relieved by *money paid to a priest*? Is the felicity of the redeemed suspended on such condition as this? Stripped of all the coverings which an interested priesthood have thrown around it, purgatory is part of a system invented for the merchandize of souls. They profess to have power to minister relief, but they minister it only as they are paid. Praise be to him who hath redeemed us unto God by his own blood, believers shall not be disappointed in their hope of joining at death the spirits of the just made perfect. United to Christ, he guides them unto death and through death—conducts them by the path of life up the sides of the glorious mount, until, upon its summit, their feet stand within the New Jerusalem. "Yea though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me, thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." Ps. xxiii. 4.

The souls of believers are at death carried to Abraham's bosom. Luke xvi. 22, 3. "The beggar died and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom; the rich man also died and was buried; and in hell he lifted up his eyes being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off and Lazarus in his bosom." In all this instructive parable there is no allusion to any "third or middle state." There are but two places and

two states mentioned in the scriptures as appertaining to the future world—*Heaven and Hell*—A state of happiness and a state of misery. The wicked, like Dives, are turned into hell; the righteous, like Lazarus, are taken to heaven to enjoy the felicity denoted by “Abraham’s bosom.” “Being Christ’s they are Abraham’s seed and heirs according to the promise.” They may and do have “their evil things” here; but they leave them all behind. No such things await them when they depart. “So then they which be of faith, are blessed with faithful Abraham.” Gal. iii. 9.

Papists say “the souls in purgatory love God indeed; they love him most ardently; their whole being is an holocaust of love.”\* What an idea does this representation in connection with their account of purgatory, give of the Deity! Beings that love God so ardently that language labors to express its intensity, are repulsed, forbidden the enjoyment of him and made to “endure anguish far exceeding all the energies of sublunary fire”!! Is Juggernaut more cruel? Oh! how differently do the Scriptures represent the manner in which God regards the love and other graces of his people. “Thou hast ravished my heart, my sister, my spouse, thou hast ravished my heart with one of thine eyes, with one chain of thy neck. How fair is thy love, my sister, my spouse, how much better is thy love than wine and the smell of thine ointments than all spices.” Song iv. 9, 10. This is the language of Christ to his church and every member thereof. Will he repulse and cast into excruciating fire any one on whose neck is the burnished chain, with one link of which his heart is ravished? No, no. He says to every believer, “Come with me from the lions’ dens and the mountains of the leopards.” verse 8. And this invitation is given because his heart is ravished with love. On this point let the reader carry out the following suggestions and he will be satisfied, upon the papist’s own admission, that purgatory is not only a pagan fable, but a horrid blasphemy. 1. The believer’s love to God has its source in God’s everlasting love to him. “We love him because he first loved us.” 1 John iv. 19. Will God repulse and cast into tormenting flames the soul into which he has infused his love, and that when the soul is exercising those intense desires after the enjoyment of him, which his love hath begotten? Nay he will draw that soul to himself with loving kindness. 2. Such is its nature that he who possess-

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\*See the quotation in Essay No. 1, from the manual entitled “True Piety.”

es the love of God in his heart is said to dwell in God. "And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him." v. 16. The victim of purgatorial fire is represented by the Papist as in his "whole being a holocaust, or whole burnt offering of love." A soul exercising such love must dwell in God, yet horrid blasphemy! That being *so dwelling*, is in *Purgatory*! Again in that soul *thus loving—God dwelleth*. Does God therefore dwell in \_\_\_\_\_? Oh dreadful impiety! Yet this must be the inference, if the papal doctrine were true! That which leadeth to such odious and impious conclusions cannot be true.

3. Love gives no torment. "There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear, because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love." 1 John iv. 18. But the Papist manual quoted asserts—"That very love in Purgatory must augment the afflictions of those that are detained there." It is true they affirm that this is because they are separated from the object of love. Yet who does not see that fear reigns in that place. *Fear that hath torment, and torment increasing fear*. There is torment *in their very love*, irrespective of fear. The use I make of this is simply, those to whom God gives his love, he does not place in a condition where it will, in its most ardent exercise, be a *torment*, and *cannot cast out fear*. "Whom having not seen, we love, in whom, though now we see him not, yet believing we rejoice, with joy unspeakable and full of glory." 1 Pet. i. 8.

4. The love of God enjoyed on earth is an earnest of heavenly blessedness to all who believe. Rom. v. 1, 5. "Being justified by faith—we rejoice in hope of the glory of God—and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Spirit which is given unto us." Now in this life the believer rejoices in hope of the glory of God—of heaven. This hope will not make him ashamed. Why? because of the love of God in his soul. Is this consistent with Purgatory. Is not hope *there* made ashamed—and love, as it were *hopeless*, and no guarantee of the enjoyment of the object of hope—the glory of the Lord; and in its most ardent exercise but augmenting torment, because itself disappointed of its object? Odious doctrine! Utterly inconsistent with the nature of divine love in the soul of the redeemed. The admission of the Papist upon the principles of the word of God, confutes their notion of a Purgatory. Show me a soul in which is *the love of God*, and I will assure that soul it will never feel the fire of Purgatory.



Every believer has the love of God in his heart. His faith worketh by love purifying the heart. These facts demonstrate that every believer shall escape the fabled Purgatory—shall dwell forever in God in glory—shall, immediately at death, be encircled by the everlasting arms of that God, who is love.

Christ is gone to prepare a place for all his people, and to that he takes them at death. “In my Father’s house are many mansions, I go to prepare a place for you.” Joh. xiv. 2. This place is prepared for them in his Father’s house. His Father’s house is certainly not *Purgatory*, a place of *torment*, of *expiation*. It is *heaven*. Hither he takes all his children—to his Father’s and his own house. “And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again (evidently at death) and receive you unto myself, *that where I am ye may be also.*” v. 3. “Father, I will that they also, *whom thy hast given me*, be with me *where I am*; that they may *behold my glory.*” John xvii. 24. There must be wrath in the sufferings of Purgatory—and *wrath to come*. Papists’ own language demonstrate this. “Its design is to atone adequately to the *rigour* of infinite justice”—“where there shall be neither *mercy* nor merit,” of course *wrath*. Its pains are called an “*extreme excruciation*”—infliction of *wrath*. “Purgatory differs *only in duration* from the *fire of hell.*” This is emphatically the place of *wrath*. The saints—the believers—not one believer—nor for one moment shall ever go to purgatory, nor feel its flames. For they having “turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God—wait for his Son from Heaven—even Jesus which *delivered us from the wrath to come.*” 1 Thess. i. 10. They wait their appointed times respectively—the Son comes to them in death—takes them to heaven, and they escape the *wrath to come*—of either *purgatory* (were there such a place) or hell.

Finally. The redeemed are described as all before the throne praising God and the Lamb, without any mention of their having passed through any other purgation than that effected by the blood of the Lamb. Rev. vii. 8, 10. “After this I beheld, and lo, a great multitude which no man could number, of all nations and kindreds, and people and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, and palms in their hands, and cried with a loud voice saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne and to the Lamb.” v. 14. They are said to “*have washed* their robes, and made them white (not in purgatory) *in the blood of the Lamb.*” “Unto him that washed us from our sins in his

own blood." This is the "fountain opened for sin and uncleanness, to the inhabitants of Jerusalem—to all the members of the church. In this fountain they are washed in this life, and thus "made meet" at death "for the inheritance of the saints in light." Space will not admit a further illustration. O Reader, go to this fountain, *wash and be clean*. Dread not the papal Purgatory. It is "a cunningly devised fable" of men who "lie in wait to deceive," that they may make merchandise of souls, for with them "*gain is godliness.*" Go to "the blood of the Lamb" "which cleanses from all sin," and being therein *washed* "ye shall stand *before the throne of God,*" where ye "shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more, neither shall the sun light on you nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed you, and shall lead you unto fountains of living waters, and God shall wipe away all tears from your eyes." W. L. R.

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 REVIEW.

*Sabelis on Declension.*

Thoughts on the declension in the Church of God from the pure doctrines of the gospel: by B. Sabelis, M. D. "The joy of our heart is ceased; our dance is turned into mourning. The crown has fallen from our head: woe unto us that we have sinned. For our heart is faint, for these things our eyes are dim, because of the mountain of Zion which is desolate: the foxes walk upon it." Lam. v. 15, 18. Johnstown, N. Y. 1836.

Ever since the great religious excitement which commenced in Western Virginia in 1802, and continued to spread over Kentucky and Western Pennsylvania for some years, in the Presbyterian church, and which produced results so disastrous to the cause of truth and the interests of pure and undefiled religion, there has been a large body of sober-minded christians, who have deprecated these transient excitements of the animal feelings. Still they have since prevailed in greater or less degree in various sections of the Presbyterian and New England churches and have appeared occasionally in some congregations of the Reformed Dutch church, under the name "revivals of religion." The spread of the Hopkinsian and other errors has kept pace with these fervid ebullitions of feeling until they have produced, chiefly, the late rupture in the General Assembly. Those who refused to countenance these spurious revivals, have usually been

stigmatized as opposing the work of the Holy Spirit and as behind the spirit of the age. The General Assembly, at its late sessions at Philadelphia, have *come back*, thirty-six years, to those who refused to run with them and others in the career of excitement and error. Under the name of "*New Measures*," what were formerly lauded as glorious revivals, have been denounced as irregular and mischievous to the best interests of truth, good order and piety. An attempt, indeed, is still made to distinguish between modern disorders and former *awakenings*; but all the new measures of a Finney or a Burchard, and their coadjutors, fail to come up to the wild extravagance which appeared in some parts of the West, about the beginning of the present century.

Dr. Sabelis, a medical gentleman, a member of the Reformed Dutch church, and lately from Holland, publishes in the little work whose title we have placed at the head of this article, the views which an intelligent and orthodox foreigner entertains of such religious excitements in christian congregations. He plainly perceives their connexion with prevalent errors, which are disturbing the harmony of professors and rending the church; while he clearly and faithfully exposes their unwarrantableness and dangerous tendency. Some may be ready to censure this as unwarrantable interference on the part of a foreigner with ecclesiastical affairs in this country. Our opinion is far different. As a member of the church, his right to "shew his opinion" is as perfect as that of any man. We are glad to know under what aspect these doings in the churches appear to a sensible, orthodox, reflecting professor of religion from abroad.

This small volume abounds with good sense, sound doctrine and fervent piety. Though the author is evidently not a practised writer, yet his style generally is neat and perspicuous—sometimes forcible. His view of Calvinism is accurate, and his tests of personal piety judicious and scriptural.

Does he mean the elders of the church with which he is connected, in the following plain and pointed address. "O ye Elders of the church—have ye not suffered swearers, drunkards, sabbath breakers and others to approach the Lord's table and profane that holy ordinance?" p. 113.

We regret exceedingly to find the author speak as he does of the sentence passed on Christ by Pilate. He says "The Roman Emperor himself was the minister, or servant of God, and hence the official judgment of Pilate was the judgment of God." p. 60. This is a most revolting sentiment. For a refutation of it and in proof of its extreme absurdity

and blasphemy we refer the reader to our exposition of Rom. xiii. 1-7, given in No's. 3 and 4 of the Reformed Presbyterian. It would be well for those that plead for the legitimacy of Cesar's authority to reflect on the error into which so sensible a writer on many points, as Dr. Sabelis has been led by these unholy claims set forth on behalf of the ungodly rulers of the kingdoms of the earth. Pilate's sentence was the most impious one ever passed by an unjust judge. It was not, could not be, the sentence of a holy God.

With the above exception, we cordially recommend this work to the attentive perusal of the christian reader. He will be interested and cannot fail to be profited by a careful reading thereof.

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THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT ANTI-CHRISTIAN.

The Covenanters in Britain have always maintained since the accession of William and Mary at what is called the Revolution settlement, that the Government of Great Britain is anti-christian. It was on account of this tenet, that the Seceders, who separated from the established church of Scotland, did not join with the Reformed Presbyterian church, a body in existence long before the Secession. Hence arose a controversy between Covenanters and Seceders, in which many books on both sides were published, and which is technically called the Secession controversy.

The popish religion was established in Lower Canada, Prelacy in England and Ireland, and a corrupted form of Presbyterianism in Scotland. These establishments, of popery which is not christianity but gross idolatry, and of corrupt churches, form integral parts of the constitution of the British empire. Had Covenanters recognized that constitution and sworn to support it, their oath, they justly plead, would have bound them, provided a sinful oath could bind, to support Popery, Prelacy, and the corruptions of the Scottish establishment. They would have incorporated themselves with the whole system and thus become partakers in all its iniquities. Since the conquest of what is now called British India, embracing a population of about one hundred millions, in the true spirit of the Revolution settlement, Brahmanism, the most grossly impure pagan idolatry, has become an established religion of the British empire; making no less than four different forms under which religion, or what is called so, is established by that government. The rejection of a constitution which makes provision for, and sanctions these corrupt establishments is denominated in a late Secession Magazine "the *heresy* of Nairn," a minister who in Scotland forsook the Secession church and joined the Reformed Presbyterians. Let the christian reader attentively peruse the following extract from a speech delivered at the anniversary of the London Mis-

sionary Society on the 11th May last, by the Rev. Mr. Crisp, missionary from India. Let him reflect on what the British Government does in maintaining the worship of Juggernaut, and then let him decide whether it is *heresy*—an error inconsistent with salvation—to dissent from such a government. The speech of Mr. Crisp states the humbling fact that the strong arm of British power sustains some of the most iniquitous and abominable superstitions of pagan India. The official action of the government descends even to minute details. The abandoned women in the temples of the Hindoo gods receive, each of them, their appointments from British functionaries. The appointment of rice boiler to a senseless idol is made by governmental authority and his commission must receive the official seal and signature of a British magistrate. British wealth repairs the pagan temples, clothes with costly attire pagan idols and pays musicians to play before the gods which though “they have ears, hear not.” Nearly \$20,000 were expended but a few years since on a single pagoda. In various other ways the action of government gives official sanction and support to the abominations of Hindoo superstition and idolatry. Can such a government be the ordinance of God, instituted and approved by him? Shall he who refuses to recognize such authority as legitimate—as derived from the God of heaven—“receive to himself condemnation”? Such a power does exist in the *providence* of God, but He must as soon deny himself as acknowledge it to be of his appointment, or according to his preceptive will. Without farther remark however we give the extract.

“Mr. Crisp spoke on the question, “What is the precise nature of the connexion between the British Government and idolatry in India?” That is a point on which, if I fully enter, will appear at once to be most humiliating. All the temple services, the appointment of those who shall minister in the temple, the removal of them if they neglect their idolatrous duties, and in many instances the punishment of those who are thought to be wanting in the duty which they owe, may be pointed out for your consideration. What is the kind of superintendence which is exercised? Is it merely a general toleration of the evil? No, it descends to the minutest details. You are aware, for you have often heard, that there are persons connected with the temples who are called the wives of the gods—but who are, in fact, unchaste females. The distinct appointment of every one of these emanates from the British functionary. A memorial which was lately presented to the governor of Madras, by a large number of truly excellent persons there, and which is an official document, will show that it is not merely a general superintendence, but that there is in it all that is revolting, and all that is contrary to the Gospel of Christ. If one woman is to be removed and another is to be appointed in her stead—this, and a number of

other things, must all pass under the seal and signature of the British functionary. The pilgrim tax is that to which attention has often been directed, and many persons, perhaps, imagine that because the Government of this country, has given positive directions for its being abandoned, therefore it is given up. But such is not the case. A respected brother told me, that on one occasion, as he was preaching in a town, he heard the loud sound of native music and other sounds, indicating that something peculiar was taking place. As he approached towards the public office there was a long train of carts coming from the country, defended by British seapoys and government pugs, and attended with national music, and every thing which could wear an air of triumph and joy. And what was it which this train of carts was conveying? The idolatrous offerings from a pagoda to the public treasury.—What must the natives think when they see such things as these—when they see, not merely the money received, but received with so many marks of distinction, and a strong disposition to encourage it, rather than otherwise? Again, returning to the pagodas, we find that all those engaged in the daily services are under the eye of the magistrate, and are amenable to him. In this same memorial occurs a request that a person might be appointed as a rice-boiler to the idol; and strange and monstrous as it may seem, the order must actually be issued that persons may be employed to boil rice for a senseless idol; and this is one of those orders which must proceed under official seal and signature! If a musician is wanted—what is called a *piper*—he must come to play for the gods; but his appointment must receive the same high sanction. A number of cloths had been given to adorn the idols at a particular temple: these were worn out. A petition, stating that fact was presented to the British functionary and soliciting for new ones: and these were issued, and paid for from the public treasury. When we approach the pagodas, when we observe their architecture, and all the circumstances by which they are surrounded, it is always humiliating. When we see that the walls are built anew, and that thus the edifices of idolatry are maintained, it is a spectacle which the Christian missionary never can look upon but with deep regret. But if we know that these walls are built by British power, and the wall of the Seringham pagoda was rebuilt at an expense of 40,000 rupees—by British authority only a few years ago—how much deeper is the feeling of humiliation, and how much greater must be the regret. One instance occurred in Tinnevely, in which the repair of the

pagoda was requisite, and it was necessary that an idol should be removed from its place. After the repairs had been completed, the Brahmins said, that, in order to the idol being restored to the spot which it previously occupied, various offerings must be presented, the cost of which must amount to 10,000 rupees; and they were paid, in order that the idol might be induced to return. But one of the most painful circumstances connected with this system—and I enter into particulars because I believe they are not generally known—it is not from a desire to make simple exposure, but because our friends must be informed as to how the matter really stands—is the great car feasts. By whom is the car prepared?—Is it by the spontaneous contributions of the natives? Is the power vested entirely in their hands of making all the arrangements which are intended to give an imposing effect to idolatry? No; when a feast is anticipated, a public document is sent into the presence, as it is called, that is, to the chief magistrate, stating that on such a day, and at such an hour, a particular feast is to be celebrated, and requesting that the money necessary may be granted, that bamboo-canes and cocoa-nut trees, and other things required for the car, may, by compulsion, be supplied, and these are brought in by compulsion from various districts. When so brought in, the person engaged in preparing the car for the feast is the local representative of the British Government—and he it is who directs the workmen what to do. The whole concern is regarded by the natives in good faith as really a Government work. When the car has been thus prepared, by whom, up to the present time, have the poor creatures been brought together to draw it? You would imagine, and many do suppose, that such is the zeal of the Hindoos for their idolatry, that when they come together to their great festivals they are all anxious to draw this car. But it is no such thing. These cars have all been drawn by persons driven in by the whip. I testify to what I have seen. I have seen them pass by hundreds the gate of my residence. And what for? That they might be compelled to draw the idol car. And after they have laid hold of the cables, who have been the persons to urge them onward? The Government pugs, with long canes, which they applied to those who seemed dilatory. It does, indeed, appear from the memorial, that in consequence of a lamentable disaster which occurred at the last Conjeveram feast, the compulsory attendance of natives is no longer to be insisted upon; and if this be adhered to, most heartily shall we rejoice. But the system, up to the present time, has been that just de-

scribed to you. The natives have often been detained in the open streets day after day, till the car was brought to the part of a quadrangle from which it started. But one point further must be mentioned, and it is this : not only has the idolatry of the people been regulated and superintended by those in authority, but on a great many occasions, offerings are presented to the idol in the name and on the behalf of the British Government. In the neighborhood of Trichinopoly is the island of Seringham ; and it has been a custom after the idol has been lifted from the car, and brought out amid the acclamations of the multitude, for the head servant, a European, to come in front and present a golden cloth with which it may be adorned. This memorial states that the same practice prevails at a town within 40 miles of Madras ; and in Madras, within a few months of my leaving, when a particular idol was taken round the town, offerings were presented to it on behalf of the government. Whatever may be the views taken as to the prejudices of the people, this is surely a species of sanction which no Christian principle can possibly justify. You know how dependent India is upon rain, and on several occasions when the usual heavy rains have failed, orders have been issued from the head-quarters of the district that the Brahmins should be employed and paid to procure rain, with a proviso that, when the rain falls, it should be reported to those in authority. In one instance a young man, receiving those orders from his superior, felt that he could not comply with them, and I believe that he did not carry them into effect. A very short time only elapsed before he was removed from his situation, and it was generally believed that it was because he would not in this instance yield compliance to one whom he ought to have obeyed. But this still goes on, and it is said to prevail over a vast extent of territory. The feasts are in this manner directed and absolutely enforced by British authority, and it is of this that the gentlemen complain, whose names are affixed to the memorial in question. Let it not be said that this is a petty unworthy faction ; no, here are the names of judges, of a large number of gentlemen employed in connexion with the revenue, a number of the Company's own chaplains, and the Bishop of Madras at their head. Let it not be said that these statements are brought forward from factious or unworthy motives.—Here is the fact ; and all I can wish is, that this pamphlet were printed and circulated through the length and breadth of the land. I will not enter into farther detail. Let there be a full and candid enquiry. Let the truth come out. I will only



advert, in conclusion, to the effects of this system ; and the first I will notice is, the most unhappy influence which it has on the minds of our young countrymen in making them infidels—I mean those who are engaged in the administration of all these concerns and in superintending them. Young men come out to India whose religious principles are very unsettled ; they go into provinces where they are not only surrounded by idolatry, but are called to take a part in superintending the service. What must be the effect upon their minds ? We see it. They soon begin to think that all religions are alike, and that none is best of all ; and the consequence is, that they become alienated in their minds from that measure of christianity which they had before received. I am not alone in the apprehension that this has done a great deal in demoralizing those who hold these stations in British India. The longer the system continues, the more clearly will it be seen that this is its tendency. Another effect of this system is, that it always keeps idolatry at a fixed standard. We should soon have fluctuations in these things if the covetousness of the priests and the caprice of the people had full play. But when every thing is laid down by law, and when he who has the power to enforce every thing is on the spot to see that nothing is wanting in the honors done to the idol, what must be the result ? Although the people may have gained some light, and may have become partly ashamed of the observances of their forefathers, yet while the system is thus maintained at a fixed standard by those who have the power to enforce it, it seems morally impossible that we should produce any great impression. At least so far as means are concerned, whatever impressions are produced by the declaration of the gospel, they are counteracted by this system. Another effect is the degree of celebrity it gives to their idolatry : all the gorgeous show and the splendor with which it is connected is derived from this source. Were this system abolished, it would be seen in a very short time that the natives would not be so persevering in the adorning of their cars, and in the carrying them out to their feasts. But while British power and British integrity are pledged to the maintaining of these things, there is no room for their retrograding. There are many other respects in which this system operates on the minds of the natives, but I only notice one more—they themselves constantly refer to the fact. When we point out to them that idolatry is not the worship of God, that it is even contrary to his commandments, and his word, they ask, “How can you say so ? Who keeps our pagodas in

repair? Who prepares the car, and brings the people to it to draw it? Do you not do it yourselves—and identify us with the British power generally? If you do these things, where is the reasonableness and the propriety of saying idolatry is sinful?" I am not forming an argument, I am merely reciting words which have often been cast in our teeth. And what are we to say to the people? We may say that it is only done to keep them in peace, only because they are so apt to be jealous. But this will not do. We may endeavor to meet their reasoning, but they have too high an idea of the British power to suppose that we should aid and abet them in wrong. When they see us thus proceed, this is the construction they unavoidably put upon it. What is to be done? There is a movement in the public mind in India and in England, but there must be a greater movement. Let us go forward in a spirit of humble dependence on Him whose we are and whom we serve, looking up to him, that every valley may be exalted, and every rough place made smooth, till the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together."

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CITY OF JERUSALEM.

Few places on earth are connected with so many important events, or furnish so many interesting associations as the city of Jerusalem. According to Josephus it was founded by Melchizedek in the year 2023 from the creation, and was anciently known by different names. Its site occupied mounts Moriah and Acra. Its environs and territory were watered by the springs of Gihon and Siloam and by the brook Kidron. David built a new city on mount Zion, and enlarged the former one after he had taken it from the Jebusites. Solomon, by the erection of the Temple and otherwise, rendered Jerusalem one of the most beautiful and noted cities of the East. The Temple stood on mount Moriah, over against the North East of Zion. Besides the changes to which Jerusalem was subjected as recorded in the history of the Old Testament, which are we trust, too familiar to the reader to require repetition here, it has experienced various ones since the commencement of the Christian era. In A. D. 70, it was taken by Titus and reduced to a heap of ruins. During the siege, according to Josephus 97,000 prisoners fell into the hands of the conqueror, 11,000 perished with hunger, and the whole

number destroyed and taken prisoners, before the city was finally reduced is estimated at 1,460,000. About A. D. 360, Julian the apostate emperor, to falsify the prediction of Christ, undertook to rebuild the city and temple, but was prevented by such remarkable interpositions of Divine providence as evinced that the Lord held him and his impious attempts in derision. In 614, it was taken by the Persians and 90,000 of the Christian inhabitants sacrificed to the malice of the Jews; but it was shortly after retaken by the Romans and the Jews' malice returned upon their own guilty heads. In 1099 it was taken by the European Crusaders, who kept possession till 1187, when Saladin, the Sultan of Egypt wrested it from them. In 1517, the Turks obtained possession which they still retain. A late traveller says:

“The modern city is chiefly on mount Moriah and is one mile in length and half a mile in width. The best view of it is from the Mount of Olives. The mosque of Omar occupies the place where stood the “holy of holies,” surrounded by a garden. But it is forbidden ground, and Jew or Christian entering within its precinct must, if discovered, either renounce his religion, or forfeit his life. A few days since a Greek christian, servant to a Turk, entered the mosque. Refusing to change his religion, he was immediately murdered by the mob. His body remained exposed in the street and a passing Mussulman, kicking up the head said—“That is the way I would serve all christians.” Without the walls is the Turkish burial ground. In the *Acelandama* is a building into which are thrown the bones of strangers dying there. The burial place of Jews is over the brook Kidron, which yields a considerable revenue to the governor. The inhabitants derive their principle support from the visits of pilgrims who, it is said, leave annually £60,000.”

In the history of Jerusalem, let the wicked cities, states and nations of the earth read their fate, if they impenitently go on to fill the cup of iniquity.

The Western Subordinate Synod is to meet at Brush Creek, Ohio, on the 1st Tuesday of October, at 10 o'clock A. M.

The Southern Presbytery of the E. S. Synod is to meet in Philadelphia on the 3d Tuesday of October, at 7 o'clock P. M.

Recent intelligence from the Rev. R. Gibson represents his health as considerably improved.

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THE HOLDING OF HUMAN BEINGS IN A STATE OF SLAVERY  
SINFUL.

In every case of morality the final appeal must be made to the law and testimony of God. On the question of slavery these are remarkably precise and definite. Though the abettors of slavery sometimes venture an appeal to scripture their proof is never direct, but consists generally of wire-drawn conclusions from incorrectly assumed facts, and is in most instances a taking for granted the point in question. Never was greater violence done to the sacred oracles than when they have been pressed into the service of tyrants and taskmasters to aid them in exercising cruelty and oppression. Slavery is shewn to be sinful by direct scripture testimony and by conclusions justly derived from the great principles of christian equity laid down in the sacred volume. "He that stealeth a man, and selleth him, or if he be found in his hand shall surely be put to death." Ex. xxi. 16. This statute forms part of the code of laws which God has given for the purpose of securing the personal freedom and rights of men from aggression. The same precept is afterwards reiterated by Moses, and the transgressor denounced as a thief. "Then that *thief* shall die, and ye shall put away evil from among you." If theft is a violation of the divine law, then stealing a man, or selling him, or holding him in bondage violates a moral precept universally binding in all ages and under all circumstances. The Apostle says, "the law was made for MEN STEALERS." 1 Tim. i. 10. In this he evidently refers to the law given by Moses, who says, "he that smiteth his father or his mother, and he that stealeth a man, shall surely be put to death." Paul says, "the law was made for murderers

of fathers and murderers of mothers, for men stealers." Moses specifies the penalty; Paul leaves us to ascertain the amount of punishment deserved, from the fact that he ranks man-stealing with the foulest and blackest deeds on the calendar of crime. That which was immoral in the days of Moses and of Paul is equally so now. No diversity of time placè or circumstances can change the character, or invalidate the obligation of the moral law—like its author, it is immutable. This law views as equally criminal the stealing, the selling, the holding in bondage human beings. In each case the penalty is the same. The crime of selling or of holding, ranks with that of stealing and is not less a violation of the law of God, and a usurpation of the rights of man. By no chicanery of purchase or transference can a right to hold unoffending men in a state of involuntary servitude be acquired. The purchaser or inheritor can have no right to *possession*, where the seller or testator had no right of *disposal*. We therefore maintain that slave-holding is sinful, and cannot be vindicated under any modification of circumstances.

Slavery consists in holding a human being in a state of involuntary personal servitude, reducing him to the condition of property, depriving him of self-government, and making him dependant on the will of another, who holds him in bondage by force or by the sanction of human laws. This is sinful: 1. Because it is an infringement of the natural and inalienable rights of man. God, the Creator, has given to man certain rights of which he cannot be lawfully deprived, except as a punishment for crime. Among these is personal liberty. As it respects natural rights, all men are created equal. The Creator has not bestowed on one class the chartered privilege of lordship over another, nor vested in any the right of taking from another unoffending, rights natural to him. This is the dictate of reason; it is the voice of heaven. "God has made of one blood all men to dwell upon the earth." Slavery is then an usurpation of the natural rights of the slave: nor is it the less sinful because perpetrated under the cover and sanction of human law. No conventional agreement among rulers or legislators, although sanctioned by a majority of a nation, can make wrong to be right, or lawfully wrest from man his liberty. Till God himself revoke the gift of freedom man may not assail it. Enslaving a man robs him of liberty, despoils him of happiness, and heartlessly denies to him the means of securing or enjoying either. The power of self-government too is taken from him. This deprivation is an encroachment on the moral agency of the slave. Man is a

moral agent, and is therefore responsible for his actions. Slavery steps in between the man and the duties he owes to God; it places the will of the master between the duty and conscience of the slave; and though it cannot destroy his obligation, it does destroy, to a fearful extent, his opportunities of giving obedience to the divine will. The natural and indefeasible rights of personal liberty, and of the pursuit of happiness by all righteous means, with the sacred rights of conscience and self-government, are wickedly seized upon by the practice of enslaving men, and trampled in the dust by its iron heel. Indeed, slavery presumes that the slave has no rights, nay, that *man* has no rights, except such as he obtains from conventional arrangements of society—that the many may oppress the few, and the powerful the weak. In one word that physical power gives moral right. All this, unsophisticated reason unequivocally condemns; but distinct as is the voice of her condemnation, it is often hushed amidst the din of prejudice and selfishness; and slavery is supported by freedom's professed friends—yea, what is infinitely worse, by the professed disciples of Him, who “came to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound.”

No general views of the criminality of this evil can give an adequate idea of its deep infamy and awful guilt. We are in danger of losing sight of the hideous deformity of the practice by its immense magnitude and extent. The sufferings of millions are too much for us to grasp at once; we must single out the individual sufferer from the vast multitude of the wretched, and endeavor by sympathy to make his case our own, before we can feel and act as we ought in relation to the sin of slavery. Think of a being endowed with understanding, will and affections, hurled from the high eminence of freedom, pursuit of happiness and the exercise of self-government—reduced to the condition of being the property of another, whose will he must obey, and whose happiness he is made to promote, irrespective of his own. Bringing this case home, and seeing in it the untold horrors of slavery, must not our reason, our hearts, our consciences, unfettered by prejudice and unbought by interest, respond unhesitatingly to the benevolent precepts of the Creator: “Also thou shalt not oppress a stranger; for ye know the heart of a stranger, seeing ye were strangers in the land of Egypt.” “Open thy mouth for the dumb in the cause of all such as are appointed to destruction.”

2. Slavery encroaches upon the Divine prerogative, as it assumes a right of property in man.

God has delegated to man lordship over the inferior creatures. The birds of the air, the beasts of the field, the fish of the sea are given to him, and he may use them for his support or his service. But man, He hath not subjected to man. The right of property in him, He hath reserved exclusively to Himself:—it is a part of the “glory which he will not give to another.” The exalted nature of man, created in the image of God, and his equally exalted destiny to an immortal existence, forbid that he should be the property of any creature. God has indeed established the relations of rule and subordination in society. Children owe obedience to their parents, and parents have the right of rule over their children during their minority. Magistrates have the right of civil rule, and subjects owe obedience to them and subjection to righteous laws; but the extent of these relations is defined by the Creator—it is not arbitrary—it extends not to a right of property in the parties subordinated. This, as we have shewn, robs man of his natural rights; it is also a robbing God of the high prerogative of being *sole Lord* of man. “Behold all souls are mine, as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine.” The attempted assumption of the right of property in man by the slaveholder, is an outrage on Divine as well as human rights.

3. Slavery violates the sixth commandment.

The Saviour, in his sermon on the mount, has shewn us that this precept may be violated, though human life is not destroyed, namely by the indulgence of anger towards a brother; and the Apostle John, applying the doctrine of his Master, says “Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer.” Tried by this unquestionable principle of interpretation, the whole system of slavery must be held as murderous in the extreme. The state of mind in which slavery originates and is continued, is a direct violation of the spirit of the sixth commandment. There is not, there cannot be the smallest portion of love or benevolence in the mind of the man-stealer towards the victim of his cruel avarice and injustice. The prevailing state of his mind is wholly the reverse. The system is at war with every claim of humanity—life and happiness are sacrificed on the bloody altar of slavery, while its suffering victims writhe in the agonies of immolation. In the exceedingly destructive wars waged for captivating slaves, in the horrors of “the middle passage” and the mortality inseparable from it, are included an amount of suffering, a

waste of human life and an effusion of blood, that far transcend our means of calculation. To these add the premature deaths occasioned by "seasoning" and the tearing asunder the dearest ties of nature, and say is not slavery begun in blood?—the blood of man—our fellow man, whose sympathies are as warm, whose feelings are as susceptible and whose lives are as dear as our own! It is a moderate estimate, that for every slave obtained from Africa, the lives of *four* human beings have been sacrificed, while the fifth is rendered miserable by a cruel servitude.

Does any one ask, why refer to the slave-trade to prove the sinfulness of holding men in bondage? The answer is at hand. But for slavery the trade would instantly cease.—This and this alone sustains the inhuman traffic, which forms a part and parcel of the iniquitous system. On the other hand every slave in these United States was made so in consequence of the trade, and the guilt of that bloody traffic rests on the whole system of slavery in our country. On no principle of christian morality can we separate the sin of slaveholding from the slave-trade. If it was wrong to steal the man in Africa, and to bring him to the United States, it is equally wrong to keep him and his children in bondage after he has been brought. Again, we have sufficient reasons to believe, that a large importation of slaves is made to this country from Africa every year. It is notorious that a number of American vessels are employed in the trade, and that these not unfrequently come even to New-York and other Northern ports to obtain their outfits. There need not be a doubt that the Southern market, where the selling and buying of human beings is as common as that of cattle, is furnished in part from these slavers. Add to this, the internal slave-trade, carried on to such a fearful extent to the South, falls but little short of the murderous cruelty of the foreign traffic.—“The slave trade, as it exists and is carried on here, is marked by instances of injustice and cruelty scarcely exceeded on the coast of Africa. It is a mistake to suppose that it is a mere purchase and sale of acknowledged slaves.”\*

The practice, begun in prodigal waste of human life and happiness, is still maintained at the same expense. The system of American slavery is upheld and cemented by the tears and sufferings and blood of two and a half millions of our fellow creatures, retained in personal bondage and

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\* Speech of Mr. Miner in Congress relative to the slave trade in the District of Columbia.



counted as cattle. In a practical point of view, slaves are nearly without the protection of law. To say nothing of the minor indignities and cruelties to which they are exposed, they are oppressed by unremitting toil and subjected to murderous correction, for which they have no redress and against which they dare offer no resistance. The following quotation from the laws of South Carolina furnishes a specimen.—“If any slave, who shall be out of the house or plantation, where such slaves shall live or shall be usually employed or without some white person in company, shall *refuse to submit* to undergo the examination of *any* white person, it shall be lawful for *any* white person to pursue, apprehend and moderately *correct* such slave; and if such slave shall assault and strike such white person, such slave may be *lawfully killed*.” The hopes of the enslaved mother respecting her offspring are extinguished by the dismal forebodings of maternal despair; she knows that their lot, like her own, is that of toil and scourgings. Children are dragged from their parents, and parents are separated from their children forever, to gratify the avarice of the slaveholder. Thus parental and filial affections are violently torn asunder. Husbands and wives are parted, and the dearest of earthly affections and comforts are ruthlessly blighted. Murderous toil, bloody stripes, broken hearts are the inheritance of the slave. Hopeless and desponding, his life is one continued scene of suffering and oppression. The practice of slavery is, from beginning to end, a violation not only of the spirit but often of the very letter of the sixth commandment. Its history and laws are written in blood, and the spirit by which it is directed is murderous in its nature and tendency.

#### 4. Slavery violates the eighth commandment.

It originates in violent robbery. The person, the liberty, the happiness of the slave are stolen by the kidnapper or slavedealer, who has no claim, nor the shadow of right to take possession of his hapless victims. The seizure of the man, holding him in bondage, or making merchandize of him is explicitly reprobated in scripture as theft. “He that stealeth a man and selleth him, or if he be found in his hand, shall surely be put to death.” This theft is committed in every instance where the unoffending negro is seized by “men stealers,” or when his devoted offspring are appropriated at their birth by the Southern planter as part of his farm-stock or household chattels. Every rational human being holds a charter from the God of heaven for the right of self-possession and ownership; and this right can never be forfeited, much less taken

away, except as the punishment of crime, and that according to the principles of eternal rectitude. What crime has the unhappy son of Africa committed, and by what righteous law and tribunal has he been doomed to endless bondage? Who gave the slave-owner a right of property in the children and children's children of his slaves? It is arrant robbery of the most flagitious kind. If to take by force our neighbor's money is robbery, *to steal himself* must be robbery of the basest and most aggravated character. It can never be admitted as a vindication of the slave-holder, nor even as an apology for him, that he has bought his slaves. Justice pronounces the dealing in humanity a contraband trade. It is an outrage on nature, reason, and civilization—it is treason against the sacred cause of freedom, and the majesty of the Divine law.—The receiver and purchaser of stolen goods, knowing them to be such, are equally liable to punishment with the thief. The principle, in its fullest sense, is applicable to the receiver and buyer of stolen men. The plea, sometimes available in the case of goods, that the receiving or buying was done in the simplicity of honest dealing, can never be put in on behalf of the slave-owner, because *the whole business is illicit, unlawful*. The planter knows that no man has a right to sell another, and yet he buys a *man*. He knows the property to be stolen, and yet he purchases—purchases stolen MAN, created in the image of God, endowed with all the dignity of rational nature, and destined of his Maker to exist throughout eternal ages. Talk of an equivalent given for such a being! And that equivalent sordid gold!! And to whom is the equivalent given? To a lawful owner? No; but to the thief—the man whose hands are filled with the robbery and crimsoned with the blood of God's own image. The deepest shame should cover the apologist who says “the slaves are bought, their price has been paid, they are inherited.” Were we however to admit the plea, still what price has the planter paid—and to whom—for the offspring of his slaves? Did he buy the *unborn* children through successive generations, when he bought the mother? The only claim which he can have on the offspring is that which is founded on a prior act of aggression committed on the parent. Reason and revelation coincide in branding the practice of holding men in bondage as robbery the foulest and most infamous ever practised by guilty man. Every part of the system is characterized by dishonesty. The man has been stolen from himself—from his friends—from all he holds dear; he is robbed of his offspring, who are torn from his embrace, and consigned to

hopeless servitude like himself; he is robbed of his daily earnings; he sweats, he toils, but he reaps no reward; the fruits of his industry are appropriated to another. His labors are unpaid and his toils unrequited. Himself and all he earns are his owner's. All this iniquity is decreed in our own country by law. "The master may sell him, (the slave) dispose of his person, his industry, his labor; he can do nothing, possess nothing, nor acquire any thing but which *must belong* to his master." \* "Slaves shall be deemed, taken, reputed and adjudged to be chattels personal in the hands of their masters and possessors, *to all intents and purposes whatsoever,*" † "All their issue and offspring, born and to be born, shall be, and they are hereby declared to be and remain *forever* hereafter, *absolute* slaves, and shall follow the condition of the mother." ‡ The lordly aristocracy of the south, the soft and luxurious ease of Southern pampered pride, are maintained and enjoyed by the continued transgression of the eighth commandment. The danger, as well as the guilt, of slavery in this respect is strongly expressed in the following scriptures. "Rob not the poor because he is poor, neither oppress the afflicted in the gate. For the Lord will plead their cause, and spoil the soul of those who spoiled them."—Prov. xxii. 22, 3. "Behold the hire of the laborers, who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud crieth, and the cries of them that have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth." James v. 4. "Woe unto him that buildeth his house by unrighteousness, and his chambers by wrong; that useth his neighbor's service without wages and giveth him not for his work." Jer. xxii. 13. The charge of dishonesty is thus brought home upon the practice of slavery. It has the curse of God resting on it because of robbery and oppression. "I will be a swift witness against those that oppress the hireling in his wages, the widow and the fatherless, and that turn aside the stranger from his right, and fear not me saith the Lord of Hosts." Mal. iii. 5.

(To be continued.)

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\* Laws of Louisiana.

† Laws of South Carolina.

‡ Laws of South Carolina.

## LIFE OF THE REV. JAMES RENWICK.

*The last of the Martyrs.*

(Concluded from page 203.)

Irritated at his perseverance in instructing the people, many of the indulged ministers turned informers, and gave notice to his persecutors where these proscribed meetings were to be held; while, on the other hand, the council and prelates, filled with rage at his contempt of their impious mandates, and his undaunted constancy in the defence of Presbyterian principles, left no means untried to effect not only his destruction, but the destruction of every Covenanter throughout the kingdom. They accordingly filled the country with dragons, the meanest of whom was authorized to put to death without distinction every Covenanter on whom he could lay his murderous hands. Nor did these unfeeling ruffians either pity or spare. The groans of the sufferers, whom they often tortured before putting them to death, were exulted over with more than fiendish satisfaction. Still, however, Mr. Renwick, who was accounted the chief and the leader of these obnoxious nonconformists, escaped their hands. To bring him in therefore, "dead or alive," was the unwearied effort of every minion employed by a cruel and an iniquitous government. The hairbreadth escapes of Mr. Renwick were consequently as numerous as they were remarkable. But in order to give the reader a more correct idea of the vigilance of his enemies, and of the signal interpositions of Divine Providence in his behalf, we shall here insert a few extracts from his own letters.

In one of these letters, addressed to Mr. Hamilton, and dated July 9, 1684, he says, "Your letter which I received was wonderfully sweet and refreshing to me, and was made a means in some measure to prepare me for what I was to meet with; for immediately thereafter I was involved in such troubles as before I had not been trysted with, but all indeed to manifest, in a wonderful manner, the Lord's love and power to and for his people. On the Sabbath after your letter came to my hand, we met for public worship near the whin bog in the Monkland; but that country being generally apostatised into an open hostility against the Lord, some went quickly away to Glasgow, and gave notice unto the enemies' forces; howbeit we heard thereof ere forenoon sermon was

ended, yet continued till that part of the work was gone about; and thereafter thought it fit to depart from that bounds and that the armed men should keep together for their better defence and safety; which, through God's goodness, was a mean to keep the enemy from noticing and pursuing strangers. Notwithstanding, they kept up a pursuit and search, which proved very obstructive to our general meeting, which was upon the Thursday thereafter. For upon that very day, they came with horse and foot to search those moors where we were, and came near upon us ere we got any thing concluded. We in all haste set forward through the moss, having no outward strength to fly unto but by crossing the way of the adversary; whereupon we expected an encounter; yet committing ourselves unto the Lord's hand, we went on until we came unto another certain moss, where we staid until night, and got much of our business done. On the Saturday night thereafter there was a competent number of us met in a barn for worship, and had not well begun until we heard both the drums and trumpets of the enemies; but we thought it most expedient to set watches without, and continue at our work till we saw further. Nevertheless, in all these tumults and dangers, the Lord's goodness was so manifested to his people, that he not only hid them under his wings and preserved them, but also he kept their spirits from the least fear, confusion, or commotion; yea the very sight of some of them would have made resolute soldiers amongst us. So after this hazard was over, some of us thought it convenient to stay where we were, (it being a woody place,) until the Sabbath day was past. But ere the middle of the day we got an alarm that the enemy was within two miles or thereabout, coming toward that airth; whereupon we went over Clyde; but so soon as that was, we, being in number about six or seven, had almost rencountered with a party of the enemy's horse, who at the crossing of our way had inevitably met with us, if that the Lord had not so ordered it, that a friend of ours had seen them ere they saw us, who came running toward us with a white napkin flourishing in his hand; whereupon we halted, and when he came to us, we lurked among some bushes until the enemy past by. And thereafter we setting forward by two and two upon our journey, which was intended to be but short, some two of us met with one of the adversary's number upon horseback, who presently fled with all his might towards Larnark, we being within three short miles thereof; which forced us to take a desperate course, in running through that plenished country into Darmead moss, still expecting to

foregather with that hostile town of Lanark, both horse and foot; but the Lord's power and goodness were such towards us, that we escaped all their hands."

And in another letter, dated August 23, he says—"On the 30th July, when I was going with other three to the general meeting, we espied two dragoons meeting us, and not expecting any more to be following, we went forward, not dreading them; but when we came within word and shot, we saw a party of about twenty more very near upon us, whereupon seeing there was no probability of resisting them, we turned up a hill called Dungavel. But my three neighbors being on foot, and I on horseback, they compassed about the foot of the hill, but I took up to the height, being hotly pursued by many of the party; some whereof were at my right hand to keep me from the mosses, and others behind, who always as they came within shot, discharged upon me. So being near unto the top of the hill, and finding myself beset round about and seeing no visible door to escape, I thought fit to quit the horse which I had, and to wait till I saw what God did in it. Thus I went up to the top of the hill on foot, and seeing myself so encompassed that I could not run from thence, and that I was in no ways able to fight with them, I judged it best to clap upon the ground; so I went unto a cairn, which by situation was about six or seven paces of ground out of their view thinking to lie down upon it, all the hill being green, and bare in that place, knowing that God could carry their sight over it; so coming to the top of it, I espied in it a pit, and I lay down in it, winning by God's goodness to a cheerful submission to death, torture, or whatever his will might be. But I was in no small measure confident that no evil at that time would happen unto me, the Lord giving that scripture, Psalm vi. 8, 'Depart from me all ye workers of iniquity,' which was so powerful, that I was made, I think, a hundred times to repeat it over, ere I could get myself stayed; together with that other, Psalm xcí. 11, "For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep in all thy ways;" which was such unto me, that I lifted up my head to see these angels, but considering my folly in that particular, I was made to laugh at my own witlessness. So I lay still until the sun set, sometimes praying, and sometimes praising God; though, ah! I can do neither to purpose. But all the joy that the Lord's works of wonder for me did afford, was swallowed up in sorrow, because of what befel my dear brethren, who (all that were with me,) fell into the enemies' hands, one of them receiving eleven wounds. Then, after all, when I thought of drawing

off the hill, not knowing the way to one friend's house in the whole country, I besought the Lord, that as he had hid me, so he would lead and guide me. Thus I set my face towards Clyde, and after I had travelled about four miles, I met with Windhill, with whom I staid about two days, and kept a meeting upon the second night, even while the militia were searching that side of the country; and twice that night I very narrowly escaped, as it had been even out of their very paws. O, time would fail me to relate the Lord's works of wonder for poor unworthy me; for even since, I have in one day escaped three or four signal hazards."

In 1684, the second year of his ministry, Renwick, and the faithful Covenanters who adhered to the Covenanted cause, were subjected to severe trials in displaying a banner for truth. The publication of the "*Apologetic Declaration and Admonitory Vindication*," which they emitted in self defence, and as a warning to the persecutors, excited against them the redoubled rage of their enemies, and became itself a ground of their sufferings. We cannot afford space for any account of this spirited paper. Suffice it to say, that it was called for on a principle allowed in the laws of all countries, and it served to deter not a few of the informers from exposing the haunts of the persecuted Presbyterians. It is refreshing to contemplate the steadfast devotedness and firm confidence in God which characterized the youthful martyr, amid the manifold confusions of the times, and the fury of the persecutors. Thus Renwick writes in one of his letters:—

"Though the world may think my case most miserable, yet I think, it is so happy that I know not a man this day upon the face of the earth with whom I would exchange my lot. O, it is more sweet and pleasant to be swimming in the swellings of Jordan for Christ and with Christ, than to be wallowing in the pleasures of sin and delights of the flesh; yea, though Christians had not a heaven hereafter, I cannot but judge their case, even here, happy beyond all others, as the Psalmist saith, "Thou hast put gladness in my heart, more than in the time when their corn and their wine increased." And when the world frowns most, I know it is the time wherein the Lord smiles most upon his own. O, therefore, let none of them fear a suffering lot. Enemies may feel satisfied that we are put to wander in dark stormy nights through mosses and mountains; but if they knew how we were feasted, when others are sleeping, they would gnash their teeth for anger; nay, while they are pining away in dusk envy and pale fear, I am feeding in peace and joy. Let enemies there-

fore never think that they can make the case of God's people miserable, while He lives and reigns; and I know well he hath that to give, and will give it, which will sweeten all the sufferings of his followers. And I may say this to his praise, that I have found so much of his kindness and supply in setting about his work in such hard circumstances, that though the prevailing of a body of death sometimes, and desire to be with himself, makes me long for a dissolution; yet, I think I could be content to dwell, if it were a thousand years, in this infirm and weakened body of clay, with continual toil and hazard, to carry his name to his people. O, poor fools, what can they do? The greatest wrong they can do is to be instrumental in bringing a chariot to carry us to that higher house, and should we not think this the greater favour? The Lord is still increasing his people in number and spiritual strength; and many a sacrifice he is taking off their hands; for there are not many days wherein his truths are not sealed with blood, and that in all places, so that I think within a little there shall not be moss or mountain in the west of Scotland which shall not be flowered with martyrs."

The accession of the Papist James to the throne of Britain, in 1685, increased the sufferings of the faithful Covenanters. The professed aim of this weak-minded bigot and cruel persecutor was to exterminate Presbyterianism. To accomplish this design, he employed the abettors of prelacy and arbitrary power to persecute to the death those who resolutely contended for their country's liberties, and the true reformed religion, while he granted, from a prerogative which he wickedly claimed, *Indulgences* to the most yielding Presbyterian ministers. The faithful Covenanters were the objects of his implacable hatred, and no means were left untried to banish entirely their testimony, and to extirpate them from the land. The spirit of the faithful Renwick and his followers remained unshaken by the sanguinary deeds of the tyrant and his counsellors. Against the accession of James to the throne, the United Societies protested, in the *Sanguhar Declaration*, which was published May 28; and Renwick preached against the *Indulgences*, and prepared a *Protestation* against James' Toleration, to be presented to a meeting of the indulged ministers, which had been appointed to be held in Edinburgh. This paper was afterwards published under the title of a "*Protestation against Toleration*." In this admirable document, the writer first, in a Scriptural and judicious manner, exhibits the evil of toleration, and then, with characteristic force and fidelity, testifies against that which was accepted by the indulged



ministers, on the following grounds:—1. “In respect of the granter, both as to morals and religion. 2. In reference to its obvious design. 3. In relation to its fountain. 4. In respect to its conveyance. 5. With relation to the nature and extent of it. 6. With regard to its conditions, limitations and restrictions; and, 7. In respect to the manifest and manifold scandal of it.” When testifying in the same paper, against the accepters of the indulgence, Mr. Renwick gives evidence of possessing true Scriptural charity toward such as had made defection from the truth, or had been taken in the tyrant’s snare. Towards the close he thus speaks:—

“We abhor that principle that we are invidiously calumniated with, of casting off the ministry, or disowning all the ministers of the Church of Scotland. We hope all are not and shall not be so far left in this hour of temptation, so to abandon the Lord’s patience as thus to forget and forego the hitherto continued testimony for the covenanted reformation, by embracing a toleration so plainly and palpably eversive thereof; and doubt not but there are some of our dear and reverend brethren who dare not concur in this conspiracy, who both mourn in secret, and are willing to witness their dislike at the sins and scandal of this course, as they find occasion, whom only misinformation, by the industry of our traducers does demur from concurring in this testimony. But as for our declining brethren involved in the guilt of this defection, though we respect and reverence them in the Lord as our beloved brethren, yet out of love to them, and to the souls of the people whom they and we must answer for, we cannot but witness against them, and obtest them, in the bowels of Christ, to relinquish this course, or otherwise we must warn all that would be free of the sin of it, and escape the judgments werewith it is like to be pursued, to discountenance them while they continue in it.”

The remarks on the conduct of those who adhered to this testimony and rejected the Indulgence, by M’Gavin, who, in some respects, was far from entertaining correct views on the subject of toleration, seem perfectly just; and form a suitable vindication of the suffering Covenanters—

“The fact that King James’ toleration, with its conditions, was accepted by Presbyterian ministers generally, tended, of course, to increase the severity of the prosecution against the faithful few who refused it, and they were so few that it was hoped by their enemies that they would soon be extirpated altogether; and, but for the revolution that soon followed, this would probably have been the case, as the in-

quisition in Spain and Italy effectually suppressed the Protestant religion in these countries. I have no hesitation in calling them the *faithful few*, though it has been fashionable, from that day to this, to treat them and their memory with all manner of contempt. They were faithful to the word of God,—faithful to their own consciences and their solemn engagements. They adhered honestly and faithfully to what they conscientiously believed to be the truth, which many of them sealed with their blood, while the great body of their brethren gladly submitted to accept the boon, which the king intended not for them, but for the Papists, by means of whom he hoped soon to crush them all.\*

Shortly after preparing the Protestation against Toleration, Renwick passed over to Fife, and on the 28th of January, preached his last sermon at Burrowstonness, from Isaiah liii. 1.—“Who hath believed our report, and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?”

“In this interesting and affecting discourse, Mr. Renwick particularly insisted on the different doctrines, founded on the Word of God, which ministers had long declared to the people of Scotland; such as ‘the sinfulness and misery of their natural state; their own inability to deliver themselves; the provision of a Saviour and Redeemer in the person of the Son of God; their necessity of closing with Christ in all his offices; the necessity of holiness of heart and conversation; the danger of complying with the abominations of the times in which they lived;’ and concerning each of these he asks the important question, ‘Have you believed this report?’ He concludes his discourse in the words following, which may be considered the last words which he uttered in public as a minister of the gospel of Christ.—‘It is a sure token of sad wrath and desolation approaching when preaching hath little or no other effect than to make the hearts of people more fat, their ears heavy, and to shut their eyes that they neither see, hear, nor understand, for then may we look for dreadful desolations, as it is Isaiah vi. 9—12. O, this is the great sin of Scotland, that the report of the Gospel hath not been believed by the generality of the people; that that which the faithful ministers of Christ have had in commission from him to tell them, hath not been credited as it should. And what doth this say, but that desolation and wrath are approaching? Happy are they who are preparing for the same.’\* ”

Having returned to Edinburgh a few days after, he was taken in a private lodging, committed to prison, arraigned for treason before the council, and, on the 14th of February, after a mock trial, was condemned to be executed in the Grass-

\* *Life of Renwick*, p. 114.

market on the Friday following. The same heroic fortitude exalted piety, and holy zeal for the Covenanted cause which had all along characterized him, shone most conspicuously at his death. Various attempts were made by individuals to have his sentence commuted; but Renwick himself resolutely refused to do any thing that might give the least colour to owning the authority of the wicked rulers who then governed the nation, or to countenance the ungenerous surmise that he had receded from his declared principles. He even rejoiced in the prospect of dissolution, and longed for the martyr's crown. Thus he concludes his dying testimony—

“ I am now longing for the joyful hour of my dissolution, and there is nothing in the world that I am sorry to leave but you : but I go to better company, and so I must take my leave of you all. Farewell, beloved sufferers and followers of the Lamb ; farewell, Christian intimates ; farewell, Christian and comfortable mother and sisters ; farewell, sweet societies, and desirable general meetings ; farewell, night wanderings in cold and weariness for Christ ; farewell, sweet Bible and preaching of the Gospel ; farewell, sun, moon, and stars, and all sub-lunary things ; farewell, conflicts with a body of sin and death : Welcome, scaffold, for precious Christ, welcome, heavenly Jerusalem ; welcome, innumerable company of angels, and general assembly and church of the first-born ; welcome, crown of glory, white robes, and songs of Moses and the Lamb ; and, above all, welcome, O thou blessed Trinity, and one God ! O, Eternal One ! I commit my soul into thy eternal rest.”

On the morning of the day of his execution, (17th Feb.) he said, when returning thanks, after partaking of the refreshment provided—

“ O Lord, thou hast brought me within two hours of eternity, and this is no matter of terror to me more than if I were to lie down on a bed of roses ; nay, through grace, to thy praise, I may say, I never had the fear of death since I came to this prison ; but from the place where I was taken, I could have gone very composedly to the scaffold. O, how can I contain this, to be within two hours of the crown of glory !” He then exhorted every one of them to prepare for death. ‘ for it is,’ said he, ‘ the king of terrors, though not to me now, as it was sometimes in my hidings : But now, let us be glad and rejoice, for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. Would ever I have thought that the fear of suffering and of death could be so taken from me ? But what shall I say of it ? It is the doing of the Lord, and marvellous in our eyes. I have many times counted the cost of following Christ, but never thought it would be so easy. And now, who knows the honour and happiness of that, ‘ He that confesseth me before men, him will I confess before my Father.’” He several times said, ‘ Now I am near the end of time, I desire to bless the Lord ; it is an inexpressibly sweet and satisfying peace to me, that he hath kept me from in the least complying with enemies.’ Perceiv-

ing his mother weeping, he gently cautioned her against giving way to undue sorrow, reminding her, that they who love any thing better than Christ, were declared to be unworthy of him, and adding, 'If ye love me, rejoice that I am going to my Father, to obtain the enjoyment of what eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor heart conceived.' He then kneeled down and prayed, mingling praises with all his supplications. In particular he pleaded much in behalf of the suffering remnant, that the Lord would raise up witnesses that might transmit the testimony to succeeding generations; and that Scotland might not be given up for the iniquities of the inhabitants thereof."

When the drum beat for his execution, in an ecstatic frame of spirit he exclaimed—"Let us be glad and rejoice; the bridegroom is coming, and I can in some measure say, I am ready."

"On the scaffold he sang part of the 103d psalm, and read the 19th chapter of Revelation; after which he prayed, commending, like Stephen, his spirit into the hands of his Redeemer, and the cause for which he suffered, to be vindicated, in the time and manner appointed by the Most High. He once and again blessed the Lord, that he had honoured him with the crown of martyrdom, 'an honour,' he said, 'which the angels themselves are not privileged to enjoy, being incapable of laying down their lives for their Princely Master.' He at one time complained of being annoyed in worshipping God; but immediately added, 'I shall soon be above these clouds, then shall I enjoy Thee, and glorify Thee, without interruption, for ever.'"

After prayer, he said to his attending friends, while the napkin was tying over his face—

"Farewell! be diligent in duty; make your peace with God through Christ; there is a great trial coming. As for the remnant I leave, I have committed them to God. Tell them from me not to weary, nor be discouraged in maintaining the testimony; let them not quit nor forego one of those despised truths. Keep your ground, and the Lord will provide you teachers and ministers; and when he comes he will make these despised truths glorious in the earth.' He was then turned over the ladder with these words in his mouth, 'Lord into thy hands I commit my spirit, for thou hast redeemed me, Lord God of truth.'"

Thus died the amiable and pious James Renwick, one of the most upright and consistent of the Covenanters, as well as one of the most distinguished patriots and Christians in that or in any succeeding age. He was but *twenty-six* years of age when he fell a victim to popish, prelati- cal, and tyrannical cruelty. Even from his enemies this illustrious martyr extorted a testimony, of which every professed witness of the truth should be ambitious. The Viscount of Tarbet, one of

the privy council, when speaking of him afterwards one day in company, remarked, "That he was one of the stiffest maintainers of his principles that ever came before them. Others, he added, we used to cause one time or other to waver, but him we could never move. Where we left him, there we found him. We could never make him yield or vary in the least. He was the man we have seen most plainly and pertinaciously adhering to the old way of Presbyterian government, who, if he had lived in Knox's days, *would not have died by any laws then in being.*"

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#### DIVISIONS IN THE CHURCHES.

The church has long been rent by divisions produced by false doctrines, immoral practices, and evil passions. Perhaps no schism has ever occurred, where all these causes did not exist together and unite their respective forces, in its accomplishment. Error in doctrine has always been the prominent as well as the most efficient cause. Within the present century, the work of division in the Protestant denominations has made rapid progress, and from the present aspect of the ecclesiastical horizon, there can be little doubt that for some time it will continue to advance. In tracing briefly these events and other causes, we commence with the

#### ASSOCIATE REFORMED CHURCH.

This body originated in a union between some ministers of the Associate church and of the Reformed Presbyterian church soon after the termination of the Revolutionary war. At the formation of the Union, those parts of the Westminster Confession of Faith, which treat of the doctrine of civil government, and others were left open for discussion. It was not many years after the consummation of the Union, that a project was introduced and carried in synod for altering the Confession of Faith, by expunging those parts of it which refer to the power of the civil magistrate *circa sacra*. On the adoption of the new Confession, as the mutilated document has been called, the Rev. Alexander Mc Coy and the Rev. Robert Warwick, seceded from the Associate Reformed Synod, in which they were joined by their congregations, several ruling elders, and parts of other congregations. They constituted a judicatory under the name of the Reformed

Dissenting Presbytery, which still exists. Thus there were four denominations instead of two. The Reformed Presbyterian church still existed, as did the Associate church, and to these were added the Associate Reformed, and the Reformed Dissenters. The largest of these was the Associate Reformed. The growth of this body was greatly promoted by the introduction of Watts' psalms into the worship of God by the General Assembly. The Associate Reformed ministers were every where zealous, about the beginning of the present century, in the defence of inspired psalmody. None other was used, or tolerated by their ministers or people.

Before the secession of the Reformed Dissenters, the peace of the Associate Reformed Church had been interrupted by the abandonment of fast days preparatory to the sacrament of the Lord's supper. Business-men in the congregation of the Rev. Dr. Mason, in the city of New York, thought that devoting three week days to religious services connected with the Lord's supper, made too great encroachment on their gains. The fast day was omitted, an introductory sermon on Friday evening, and a discourse on Monday evening were all that remained of the three days devotion, which had always been observed in the Secession church from the time of the Erskines to that of Dr. Mason. To justify this curtailment, Dr. Mason published a pamphlet in which he maintains that the sacrament of the Lord's supper is a part of the ordinary sanctification of the Sabbath, that it ought to be celebrated every Lord's day—that it is no more solemn than any other religious duty, and that the observance of a day of fasting to prepare for it, is a remnant of Popish superstition. Many ministers who remained in that body after the adoption of the new Confession, still observed the sacramental fast days, and ascribed very justly the neglect of them in the New-York and in some other congregations to a worldly spirit, and a preference of worldly gains to spiritual improvement. To this was added another source of discontent from the same quarter, and in relation to the same ordinance. Owing to a difference of opinion between Dr. Mason and a majority of his congregation on the subject of erecting a new church, he resigned the charge of his congregation. A new congregation was organized by his friends who adhered to him, and was accommodated with the use of a Presbyterian church, a part of each Lord's day. At the dispensation of the sacrament of the Lord's supper, Dr. Mason's congregation, and that of the Presbyterian Church in which they worshipped, partook of it together. This was called catholic com-

munion. Such an innovation on the order of the church gave great offence to many ministers in the south and west. It became a subject of vehement and frequent controversy in their general synod. There was not sufficient firmness to censure Dr. Mason for this violation of church order. The younger ministers who had been educated in the Theological seminary of which he was professor, generally adopted his views, both in relation to the sacramental fast and catholic communion. To justify his doings in this matter, Dr. Mason published a volume entitled "a Plea for Catholic Communion."

In this book he maintains that all those who are regenerated have a right to participate in the sacrament of the supper, and that no denomination of professors has a right to withhold the privilege of the communion table from any one who shall be adjudged in charity, a disciple of Christ. His own practice and that of those who adopted his views was to invite to the Lord's table all who were in regular standing with any branch of the church. According to their doctrines respecting the visible church, this invitation included Presbyterians, Congregationalists, the Reformed Dutch, Episcopalians, Methodists, Moravians, Lutherans, German Calvinists, and Baptists. All these, as opportunity offered, were allowed to participate in their communion. Such principles and practices effectually set aside the confession of the Associate Reformed church, which became, in all such cases, a dead letter. Such an extension of the communion of the church, bore a strong resemblance to the views of Ammonius Saccas, who, in the early ages of christianity formed a plan of bringing together into one visible society, all who professed to believe what he called the fundamental doctrines of the plan of salvation—all holding their respective peculiarities. The popularity of Dr. Mason as a preacher, the eloquence of his pen, and the indulgence of almost every error, procured for this scheme pretty extensive acceptance. It was agreeable to the lax spirit of the age, and was hailed by many leading divines in the churches, as charitable, liberal and catholic, and as calculated to soften the acrimony and allay the spirit of party strife. Those who opposed it were stigmatized as behind the spirit of the age, as contracted, bigoted, illiberal and uncharitable. But it was still resisted and very vehemently opposed, by many of the Associate Reformed. What was regarded by many as a happy device for ending all strife, became the occasion of the keenest contention, even where it is the most unpleasant, in the judicatories and among the members of the same

body. The general synod of the Associate Reformed church was from year to year a scene of most earnest and violent controversy. Added to other causes of dissention in that body was a change which Dr. Mason and his friends had introduced on the subject of Psalmody. The congregation of which he was pastor had been chiefly formed of those who were dissatisfied with the introduction of Watts' Psalms, in the Presbyterian congregation of Dr. Rogers. The father of Dr. Mason, who had been his predecessor in the Secession congregation, and the Dr. himself, for many years had opposed in their public ministrations the use of any other than inspired psalms in the worship of God. Though he and all the liberal party who were attached to him, still retained for some time the Psalms of David in their congregations, yet when officiating in Presbyterian pulpits they did not hesitate to use human compositions, contrary to the law and usage of their own church. To transgress one act was no great stride, after having set aside the Confession of Faith as a term of communion. The next step was the introduction of Watts' Psalms into Dr. Mason's congregation. Though this was done while he was absent in Europe, yet he continued their use after his return. All these departures from the usages of the church were promoted by a correspondence which had been opened with the General Assembly. But while the favor of those not of their own church was courted, and in some measure gained, mutual confidence and harmony were lost at home. Supplies for the support of the theological seminary, in which Dr. Mason was professor, were withdrawn by the presbyteries to the south and west. Every thing now indicated the approach of the dissolution of the Associate Reformed Synod. The presbyteries of the south and the synod of the west had leave to retire from the body; and thus a voluntary division took place. But even all this did not ensure peace among those that remained; as many were desirous, seeing their church was crippled, and all real distinction between it and the Reformed Dutch church was removed, that a union with that body should be sought. Delegates from both Synods were appointed and met, but, through the influence of Dr. Livingston, the aged and venerable professor of the Dutch Theological seminary, the union of the bodies was defeated. The Dutch church would not consent to any compromise—the Associate Reformed must either become merged in it or remain separate. The latter was preferred. As the leaders had resolved to break up their distinct organization and fall into some larger body, it was determined to unite with the



General Assembly, of which little more was asked than mere admission. It would, indeed, so far as terms of communion were concerned, have been difficult to assign any good reason for the preservation of an organization separate from that large body. The covenants of their forefathers had been abandoned, and the Psalms and Confessions of Faith of both were substantially the same. There were some, however, who dreaded the progress of the Hopkinsian errors in the General Assembly, and there were a few who were conscientiously opposed to the use of uninspired Psalms in the worship of God. And though a great majority of the ministers cordially approved of the measure, yet there were in many of their congregations, not a few people of influence and property, who were altogether opposed to a junction with the General Assembly. For these reasons the plan was warmly contested. The measure was sent down by the Synod to their presbyteries, in which Dr. Mason and his friends contended there was a majority, which was denied by the opposition. When the Synod came to act on the subject finally, it was carried by a large majority to dissolve the Associate Reformed Synod, and join the General Assembly. It was dissolved accordingly, and about eleven or twelve ministers and their congregations connected themselves with the Presbyterian church, reserving to their Presbyteries the right of either retaining their distinct organization, or connecting themselves with those Presbyteries of the General Assembly in whose bounds they were.

The weakening of the attachment of professors of religion to certain truths of the gospel, and forms of order appointed by Christ, and which they have long been taught to consider important, tends to diminish their faith in the whole christian system, and to relax the hold which the bonds of moral obligation have on the conscience. Hence, those who decline from a more pure to a more corrupt form of profession, deteriorate in christian morality. This maxim, of which almost every age of the church furnishes examples, was painfully illustrated in this instance. Three of the ministers who went into the general Assembly were suspended for the sin of intemperance, and one for adultery. One was refused admission into a presbytery of the General Assembly, with which he attempted to connect himself, on account of his reviling all creeds and confessions, and another who had been admitted into a presbytery was suspended for the same error. Another, who ought perhaps to have been mentioned first, was soon after this junction with the Assembly,

separated from his congregation, and his labours in the ministry ceased. The ministers, who were thus shipwrecked, had been the prominent and leading men in these transactions. The dishonour which the General Assembly incurred by the immoralities of these men, furnishes a warning to large bodies, not to countenance those who depart from purer forms of worship, in seeking a place and a name among them. To record such mournful facts is painful, but they are the doings of God's providence, and should be put on record, that all who read may be admonished to beware of making shipwreck on the same rocks.

In Philadelphia, Baltimore and New-York, there did not remain the name or the appearance of even a fragment of the Associate Reformed Church. But the ministers of the interior of the State of New-York continued to hold their separate Presbyteries, and met in Synod; in which it was resolved not to accede to the General Assembly. So that the fruits of Catholic communion and liberality are the division of the Associate Reformed Church into three separate fragments. Seeking favor abroad, by compromising truth, led, as it always does, to distraction and division at home.

Several ineffectual attempts have been made to re-unite these dissevered limbs into one body. The western and southern ministers continue to observe fast days preparatory to the Lord's Supper; and Saturday before, and Monday after, the dispensation of the Sacrament are set apart by them as days of devotion. In New-York state the only week day service connected with this ordinance is the introductory sermon, as it is called in the congregational churches from which it is borrowed. None of the western or southern ministers sing Watts' Psalms, when officiating either in their own or in other congregations; those in New-York with very few exceptions, sing human compositions, wherever the people prefer them. In the south and west none but Associate Reformed people are admitted to the communion table; in New-York state people of other denominations are admitted, according to Dr. Mason's doctrine of catholic communion. These distinctions have heretofore kept them in a state of separation from each other. All these evils, besides long and troublesome lawsuits respecting ecclesiastical property, might have been prevented by a timely and faithful exercise of the discipline of the Lord's house on those who, in violation of their vows, trampled under foot its order.

## THE DUTCH REFORMED CHURCH.

This church, soon after the division of the Associate Reformed, experienced the distracting influence of what are called liberal and catholic views and measures. This denomination of Christians is chiefly confined to the states of New-York and New Jersey. The Confession of the Synod of Dort is their principle subordinate standard. Its doctrines even on the subject of civil government are substantially the same with those of the Westminster Confession of Faith. But the Dutch church in America have received it with explanations accomodating it in its doctrines respecting civil society, to the irreligious political institutions of the United States. All the ministers of this church are bound by a law of Synod to explain, in a regular course of lectures, one every Sabbath, the doctrines of the Heigdelburgh catechism, to their congregations. This is an excellent and well digested manual of gospel truth, and its constant exposition, in ministerial labour, was a means of preserving, for several generations, in this country, the clergy of the Dutch church from the corrupting influence of the Arminian tenets, and from other prevalent errors. But in the early part of the present century, the spurious liberality of the age, began to make inroads on their ancient and orthodox habits of thought and action. People of other denominations, among whom there were many corruptions, were allowed admission to their communion tables, particularly congregationalists and Presbyterians, and the ministers of these denominations were admitted to preach in their pulpits, and obtain settlements in their congregations. They had also a correspondence, by mutual delegation, with the general Assembly and some other ecclesiastical bodies. Their ministers and many of their people became connected with New England and other missionary societies. In adopting an English psalmody, they chose an uninspired collection, instead of the inspired Psalms, a literal version of which, in the Dutch language, they had always before employed in their songs of praise.

In the classis of Montgomery one of their ministers, Mr. Ten Eyk, for teaching Hopkinsian errors was censured by his classis, or as we call it presbytery. He appealed to the particular synod and the matter was carried up to general synod. It appeared in the progress of the discussion, to which this case of discipline gave rise, that the New school doctrines which Mr. Ten Eyk had embraced, were not confined to one minister. Some defended the views of Mr. T.

while others, like the late peace-men, in the General Assembly, did not think these new doctrines so dangerous as deservedly to incur the censures of the church. The Rev. Mr. Eltynge of the classis of Paramus, in New Jersey, published a sermon replete with the Hopkinsian errors. Other ministers who did not publish, preached the same erroneous doctrines. Attempts to arrest the progress of these corruptions by interposing the arm of discipline, produced much angry contention; but in this they ended. A fast day was appointed by the general synod, as a means of staying the progress of those errors, which the synod had not faithfulness to censure.

Against these temporizing measures the Rev. Dr. Freligh, an aged and venerable minister of New Jersey under whose care many of the clergy of the Dutch church had been educated for the ministry, raised his warning voice. In this he was joined by many others. The faithfulness of that orthodox and godly servant of Christ, excited the displeasure of the friends of error, and brought down upon him their vengeance. A departure from a minute point of order, furnished the occasion for the commencement of hostilities against him. A member of a congregation, in the neighborhood of Dr. Freligh, preferring on account of his faithfulness, his ministry, to that of his own pastor, made application and was received by the consistory into his congregation without a certificate of dismission from the congregation to which he had belonged. For this informality on the part of his consistory, or as we say session, a libel was preferred against Dr. Freligh, the Moderator, and he was found guilty by the decision of a majority of the classis. Dr. F. plead that he ought not to be made responsible for a deed of the court in which he presided, and appealed to the particular synod of New-York. There too, though his cause was zealously and ably plead by some zealous and faithful friends, his guilt was affirmed. All this hard measure was meted out to a venerable and faithful man, while errors such as those of Eltynge sapping the foundations of the christian system, were permitted to pass unrebuked. Dr. F. entered an appeal to general synod, but disheartened from the favour shewn to error, and by the progress of corruptions which he thought he saw, and which did exist, instead of prosecuting his appeal, he formally declined the authority of the synod, and withdrew from their communion. In this secession, he was joined by eleven or twelve ministers, some candidates for the ministry and about fifteen congregations. They constituted

a synod under the title of the True Dutch Reformed Church, which has now existed about fifteen years, and is increasing. The general synod of the Dutch Church, so tardy in censuring errorists, proceeded to pass a sentence of suspension on all the seceding ministers, and others who associated with them. Thus a large body of the most orthodox and pious of the church were driven out of their communion. Thus another denomination was produced by the divisive spirit of modern catholicism. The secession of the True Reformed Dutch, together with their many and faithful publications, in defence of the truth and of their measures, has given a salutary rebuke to the New School Dutchmen. There are many of them in that body, but they dare hardly avow it openly. Some, it is hoped have retraced their steps. It certainly is not very becoming in the judicatories of the Associate Reformed and Dutch churches, after all the vehement commotions by which they have been very lately agitated, to congratulate themselves boastingly on their present tranquility as contrasted with the existing troubles in the General Assembly. All these troubles and divisions among the professors of religion are painful, but the errors, disorders, corruptions and worldly carnal spirit which cause them, are incomparably more to be deprecated. "*What hast thou to do with peace so long as thou sufferest that woman Jezebel?*" Where there is peace in a corrupt body, it is the peace of the grave.

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PROCEEDINGS AND ADDRESS, &c.

*Greensburgh, August 1, 1837.*

The Financial Committee of the Theological Seminary of the Reformed Presbyterian Church met at Greensburgh at the call of three of the members, Messrs Brown, Crozier, and Walkinshaw. The Chairman being absent, Mr. Brown was called to the chair, *pro. tem.*

The meeting was opened by prayer. Members present, R. Brown, Wm. Adams, H. Walkinshaw, and P. Mowry. Absent, Messrs Chrystie, Crozier and Beattie.

H. Walkinshaw was appointed Clerk. The object of the meeting was stated by the chairman, to be, to devise means of raising funds for the support of the Theological Seminary located at New Alexandria; after due deliberation the committee adopted the following preamble and resolutions.

Whereas the Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian church did at its last meeting resolve to resuscitate the Theological Seminary, locating it in the bounds of the New Alexandria congregation; and whereas the time appointed by Synod for the commencement of the operation of the seminary is near; and whereas the crying wants of the church for ministerial labor demand, that the Seminary go into operation at the time appointed; and whereas it is essential to its efficiency and permanency that it be promptly and liberally supported by our people, Therefore,

1. *Resolved*, That funds be raised as speedily as possible throughout the different congregations of our church, for the support of said seminary.

2. *Resolved*, That those who possess the means, be requested to engage to contribute as liberally as possible for the establishment of a permanent fund for said seminary, leaving it optional with them when and in what sums, they shall liquidate their engagements, but paying semi-annually the interest of the unpaid principal, until all be paid.

3. *Resolved*, That those who do not possess the means, or are not disposed to engage to contribute for the establishment of a permanent fund, be requested to contribute monthly according to their ability, for the current expenses of the seminary; and it is confidently hoped that no member will contribute less than six cents per month.

4. *Resolved*, That ministers with other church officers be requested (and we hope will be enjoined by the church courts) to put into operation the foregoing plan, not only in settled charges, but also in the vacant congregations and societies of our church; showing the people the importance of the seminary; the necessity of its receiving their efficient support; and appointing such agents and treasurers as may be necessary to carry out the plan successfully.

5. *Resolved*, That those who receive monies transmit the same semi-annually to \_\_\_\_\_, treasurer of the seminary.

6. *Resolved*, That the general agent appointed by synod, be requested to commence his agency as soon as practicable.

7. *Resolved*, That the clerk be enjoined to inform the chairman of the Board of Superintendents of the Theological Seminary, that the committee on finance is prepared to carry into effect the resolutions of Synod in relation to the pecuniary affairs of the seminary.

8. *Resolved*, That a copy of the proceedings of this meeting be transmitted to the different ministers of our church, and also to the Editor of the Reformed Presbyterian for publication, signed by the chairman and clerk.

9. *Resolved*, That when the committee adjourn, it adjourn to meet at the time and place of meeting of the Board of Superintendents of the Theological Seminary.

Adjourned by prayer.

## ADDRESS.

*To the churches under the care of the Reformed Presbyterian Synod in the United States.*

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN.

Appointed a committee by the Supreme Judicatory of our church to promote the financial interests of the Theological Seminary, we feel it our duty to address you, on this matter of vital importance to the Reformation cause. In these days when public attention is becoming aroused to the importance of the principles, for which we, as a church, have been long contending, it requires no uncommon acuteness of intellectual vision to see, in the whitening fields, the prospect of an abundant harvest. In such a time it is our duty not only to pray the Lord of the harvest to send forth laborers into his harvest, but also to exert ourselves in our respective spheres to promote an object so desirable. "Many are running to and fro;" some it is to be feared, unsent; and in proportion to the increase of unsanctified knowledge, is the increase of infidelity, error and sin. The principles of divine truth are, we are persuaded, dear to your hearts. In maintaining them you have endured, in the late trials of the church, not only the severing of tender ties, but also opposition and reproach.—To float with the current of public opinion, is easy to those who love this present world. But there are still some "who esteem the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt." To them the honor of Christ and the interests of his kingdom are of great price.

Shall we then, dear brethren, be satisfied with an attachment to the sacred principles of divine truth, and not endeavour to promote their extension? This would be most inconsistent. Truth sanctifies the heart; and wherever its power is felt, there must be a desire to promote the sanctification of others. "Charity rejoiceth in the truth." God in his providence is now calling upon you to aid by your substance in supporting the Seminary of learning resuscitated by Synod at its last meeting. Of the importance of this institution you cannot for a moment doubt. The necessity of funds to support it is equally obvious. Nor should it be said that our people do not possess the means: this would be to speak ungratefully of the divine goodness. God has blessed our land with prosperity of which we have been proportionable sharers. The exertions of the husbandman, mechanic and merchant have been amply rewarded. A few years of care and

industry have been sufficient to place every family in comfortable circumstances. God has bestowed these blessings on us, and he is now calling on us to render to him the things that are his. Let us attend to the dictates of gratitude and duty. "Is it time for you, O ye, to dwell in your ceiled houses, and this house lie waste? Now therefore, thus saith the Lord of hosts, consider your ways."

From the plan of finance adopted by the committee, you will see that an opportunity is furnished to all to assist in this good work. Here the rich of their abundance can cast in unto the offerings of God; while the two mites of the poor widow will manifest her zeal for the reformation cause in thus bestowing all her living. Could a permanent fund be established, the annual interest of which would meet the current expenses of the seminary an important object would be gained. And that this could be easily effected, we are fully certain, were we under the influence of a proper spirit. Let those of our brethren on whom God has bestowed wealth, appropriate a portion of it in this way. Let all others give as God has given them, and we are sure that our highest anticipations will be realized.

To you then, dear brethren, we say, "arise for the work belongeth to you." The decree of synod—the location of the seminary—the choice of a professor—the plans of the committee—the arrangements of the Board of Superintendents, will avail little, unless you come up to the work. We have endeavoured to do our duty. We now ask you to sustain us in this great enterprise. Think of the importance of the cause. Is it a small matter whether the house of Immanuel be sustained and the interests of his kingdom promoted? And think you this can be done without an able and faithful ministry? Let the school of the prophets be sustained by the prayers and contributions of our people, and we will soon see the walls of Jerusalem covered with watchmen who will never hold their peace day nor night.—God has promised to clothe his priests with health, and that his saints shall shout aloud for joy. The mountain of the Lord's house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and exalted above the hills. The kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdom of our Lord, and of his Christ.—For such an event who would not pray and labour, spend and be spent?

ROBERT BROWN, Chairman *Pro. Tem.*  
HUGH WALKINSHAW, Clerk.



## REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN SYNOD IN IRELAND.

We have received no official account of the proceedings of this court at its last meeting. Knowing however, the anxiety of many of our readers to hear from this judicatory, we have prepared a statement from extracts of proceedings published in the *Ulster Times* and from *private letters* received. The Synod met on the 2d. Tuesday of July and was opened with a sermon by the Moderator, Rev. W. J. Stavelly from Ps. cxxii. 6. "They shall prosper that love thee." The discourse is spoken of as faithful, able, and appropriate. The Court being constituted, Rev. S. Carlile was chosen Moderator. Rev. Robert Gibson, of New York, was introduced to the court and unanimously invited to a seat which he accepted. On Wednesday, reports of Presbyteries were presented among which was the report of the Presbytery of New-Brunswick and Nova Scotia, which gave an interesting detail of the progress of the gospel, within its bounds; and pointed out the difficulties and prejudices with which they have to contend. The annual report of the Missionary Society was read and most of the day was occupied in considering it and in making provision for future Missionary operations. The Report abounds with interesting and encouraging details respecting the progress of the truth at various home stations, and in the foreign fields of labor. The congregations of *Ballyclare, Grange and Coronery* were reported to be in a flourishing state. Considerable accession of members had been made, during the year; to the Society in *Dublin* and to the congregation in *Liverpool*. The Society in *Manchester* is in a prosperous condition and affords hope of being soon organized into a congregation. The mission to *New Brunswick and Nova Scotia* has been successful and calls for additional laborers. In *St. Johns* a house of worship has been erected and the people there are anxious to obtain a stated pastor. Various other interesting matters were presented in the Report, the reading of which is represented as exciting a general and deep interest throughout the house.

Two letters from America being read, one from the R. P. Synod, the other from the Newlight Synod, it was moved by Rev. T. Houston and seconded by Rev. J. Smith, that the Rev. R. Gibson be requested to address the Court on the state of the Church in America. Dr. Paul and others who act with him manœvered considerably to prevent Mr. Gibson from touching the real state of the Church in this country or the causes that led to it, and especially from exposing the

false statements and misrepresentations contained in the letter from the Newlight Synod. They alleged that he could give only an *ex parte* statement and expressed their full confidence that his prudence and good sense would keep him from any such attempt. Messrs Dick, Stavely, and others maintained that Mr. Gibson ought not to have marked out for him the course he should pursue, nor ought Dr. Paul or any other prescribe to him what he should say. The motion being carried, Mr. Gibson addressed the Synod. The accounts we have of this address represent it as a lucid, faithful and powerful statement of the stand taken by the church in this country against the moral evils existing in the civil institutions of the land; and also of the maintenance of that stand during the time of the late defection. A mere outline presents among others the following points.

We are not two bands co-operating in the maintenance of the testimony, kept apart only by misunderstanding. We are divided in sentiment; we differ in principle. The main question causing division had been whether the American government ought to be recognized as the moral ordinance of God. Diversity of sentiment had caused the separation and would, he feared, keep us separated. Those who had gone out from us maintained, in their pastoral address and otherwise, that the American government had a fairer claim to be called the moral ordinance of God than any other since the introduction of christianity. Covenanters in America from the first till now, had testified against the evils of the government and refused its recognition. They knew that the U. S. Constitution did not recognize God as the fountain of all authority, nor Jesus Christ as the Prince of kings of the earth, nor the scriptures as the only and infallible rule of human conduct—that slavery with all its cruelty was sanctioned, and that the civil administration had always been grossly immoral. In a beautiful allusion to the early ministers of the church and their operations, he shewed how they had taught the necessity of dissent from the civil institutions, and enjoined the people on pain of censure not to say a confederacy. For acts homologating the government, church members had been invariably censured, until defection began to work. The last act of ecclesiastical discipline, in which Dr. Black was engaged before visiting Europe as our delegate, was the censuring of two members for voting. A Testimony so formed as to apply to the evils in the civil institutions of the U. S. had been examined and approved by the church in Ireland and Scotland. On that basis we and they have held communion for 30 years. This

letter (from the Newlight Synod) says the acts respecting serving on Juries, voting, &c. had been expunged. They never were. They were left out of the Historical Sketch to be inserted in a Statute Book. The foot note declares this. This letter strikes deep at our work of Reformation, by its method of separating *principle* from *application*. (He powerfully exposed this wonted mode of procedure by the Newlights). In speaking of the discipline exercised, Mr. G. remarked, if members of this court, contrary to all law and authority, should rise and leave you and afterwards refuse to submit, how would you act?—Do you ever admonish and tamper with men in a state of rebellion?—Process of trial, *regular throughout*, was attended to, and simple suspension was inflicted, for all the departure from doctrine and usages, the slander of ministers, and violation of order. Less could not be done.—We love union if we could obtain it consistently with truth; but we will never give up for the sake of union, that a nation is bound to acknowledge God, his law and the Headship of our Redeemer.—We are not disposed to be trifled with because one state in the American Confederacy is better than another. It is with the broad principle of immorality in the U. S's constitution we contend.—I say therefore in all love you owe it to us, you owe it to yourselves, you owe it to the cause which you and we are united in maintaining to recognize us.—You have done it *virtually* and I know when you do it *formally*, you will do it with integrity, candor and honesty.

After some farther discussion, the papers were laid on the table and subsequently the whole matter was deferred till next meeting of Synod.

A petition from Mr. Alexander's congregation, praying for an alteration in the 4th Term of communion touching the renovation of Covenants at Auchinsnaugh, and in the formula of questions put to ministers at ordination, and asking how the 23d and part of the 31st Chapters of the Confession are to be understood was read; and also a counter petition from the congregation of Knockbracken. A long and animated discussion took place on these papers, after which their farther consideration was deferred for the present. Nine young men, candidates for the ministry were examined. The examination exhibited them as of great promise. Mr. Gibson presented for the consideration of synod and of the young men, the want of laborers in the bounds of the American synod and shewed the prospects of any who might be inclined to come over to our help.

We have not been furnished with farther particulars, except that the next meeting of Synod was appointed to be held at Baltymena, on the 2d Tuesday of July, 1838 and an extra Session to be held in the present month (October.)

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The Board of Superintendents of the Theological Seminary is hereby called to meet in Alleghany town on the 1st Thursday of November next at 10 o'clock A. M. to attend to whatever business may come before them in relation to said Seminary.

August 28th 1837.

JAMES BLACKWOOD, Chairman.

The Western Subordinate Synod is to meet at Brush Creek, Ohio, on the 1st Tuesday of October, at 10 o'clock A. M.

The Southern Presbytery of the E. S. Synod is to meet in Philadelphia on the 3d Tuesday of October, at 7 o'clock P. M.

THE

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### WRESTLING WITH GOD.

The life of the patriarch Jacob was prominently one of affliction. When near the end of his earthly course, he could in truth tell Praroah, "Few and evil have the days of the years of my life been." Early in life he was obliged to secure safety from the sanguinary resentment of his brother, by going to a distant and unknown country. There he experienced new trials from the covetousness of his uncle and father-in-law; and when, by the command of God, he left Padanaram, to return to the land of Canaan, he seemed to be beset on every side with relentless enemies and insurmountable difficulties. Laban, so soon as he ascertained Jacob's departure, pursued him, with unfriendly designs against both his person and property. And when, by the immediate interposition of God, this difference was amicably adjusted, he had new trials to encounter from his brother Esau. Aware of Esau's former animosity, and apprehensive that it would be revived by his return, after an absence of twenty years, he, with a view to conciliate him, sent a most respectful message, connected with a short and friendly account of his past adventures, and his present situation. When the messengers returned, he was alarmed at the intelligence that Esau was coming to meet him with four hundred men. Whether he brought this retinue with hostile intention, or merely to shew his greatness and confer honor upon his brother, Jacob viewed them as collected and armed for the purpose of his destruction, in revenge for the loss of the birth-right, and was accordingly much alarmed for the safety of his defenceless company. "Then Jacob was greatly afraid and distressed." Gen. xxxii. 7. Having made the best disposition of his family and

flocks, which time and circumstances would permit, he, as if reposing little confidence in the success and safety of this expedient, betook himself in earnest prayer to that God who had in times past delivered him, and who alone could extricate him from his present difficulties. Still his importunate supplication and trust in God did not, in his view, supersede the necessity and duty of using means for safety. Accordingly he forwarded a substantial present to Esau, and sent his wives, children and servants over the brook Jabbok. When he was left alone, suddenly, and without any previous warning, or reason assigned, "there wrestled a man with him." What Jacob's first impression of this strange combatant, and of the manner in which he had closed with him, was, we are not informed. Probably he considered him an adversary who designed to prevent his passage of the ford, and accordingly he exerted himself to the utmost to gain a victory. But he soon became convinced, both from appearances and the supernatural dislocation of his thigh, that he was striving with no mere man—that the Angel of the covenant was the one with whom he had to do. Accordingly he accompanied his bodily wrestling, we are told by the Prophet Hosea, xii. 4, "with weeping and supplication." From this most striking case of importunity and holy violence in prayer, the fervent prayers of God's people have been denominated, **WRESTLING WITH GOD**. As there are few christians who have not experienced obstacles in their approach to the throne of grace—whose faith has not had to struggle with unbelief, it may conduce to edification and profit to exhibit the importunity of Jacob as an example for imitation. "And the Angel said, Let me go, for the day breaketh. And he said, *I will not let thee go, except thou bless me.*" Gen. xxxii. 26.

The words of the Angel look, at first sight, like a refusal to grant any blessing, or at least a determination not to confer any then. The result proved, however, that this was not his real object; and that He meant by the request to be "let go," to quicken Jacob's earnestness in soliciting his stay—that he only meant to confirm his resolution, *not to let him go*. Still the language of unbelief, under the circumstances, would have been, "It is presumption to persevere, it is vain to plead, give over," &c. Christian reader, you may remember the time when such reasoning occupied your mind; when such unbelief was cherished in your heart; when you interpreted these words of the Angel, or others of like import, wrong; when they spoke to your apprehension a rejection of your supplication. This is the case with the believer,

1. When he feels no freedom nor engagedness in prayer.

A sense of guilt sometimes overwhelms the soul, and this very thing, which ought to be made the strongest argument for the necessity of prayer, is found at times to hinder its performance. When the stings of conscience are keenly felt; when our transgressions appear before us in all their variety and aggravations, Satan strives to produce a dread of entering into the presence of God—to lead us to despair of obtaining his mercy, and we are ready to adopt the language of the Psalmist, “Mine iniquities have taken hold on me, so that I am not able to look up; they are more than the hairs of my head, therefore my heart faileth me.” Ps. xl. 12. The same difficulty is experienced when unbelieving thoughts are cherished. Sometimes the believer may be in perplexity about the *meaning*, or even entertain doubts of the *certainty* of God’s word. Sometimes he may be led to doubt his interest in the promises, his title to their blessings—to view them as a rich and abundant table, encompassed with a flaming sword, forbidding his approach. Sometimes he may be driven to the very brink of the precipice and made to call in question the being of God, or to doubt the reality of all religion. Such things, if they do not weaken the conviction of the necessity and use of prayer, may, and often do, cool its fervor and diminish its comfort. A similar difficulty is felt when the heart and its affections are cold, and dead, and slothful—when the “soul cleaveth unto the dust.” Then it is found difficult to maintain a devout and attentive frame of spirit, even in essaying to speak to the great and eternal God. The sense of gratitude is weak and languid, under the greatest obligations to the Divine goodness; and a cold indifference, in asking blessings the most inestimable and necessary, pervades the soul. In such cases, every thing seems dark and confused; and God appears to say, “Let me go”—wrestle no more. The language of unbelief in the heart is, “The child is dead, trouble not the master.”\* Or, as in the case of the Psalmist, “I looked on my right hand, and beheld, but there was no man that would know me; refuge failed me; no man cared for my soul.”†

2. The believer may sometimes be ready to conclude that God has not heard his prayers, when the answer is deferred.

Petitions may be offered up in faith, and for things agreeable to the Divine will and yet not be granted in the manner, measure and season, which the petitioner contemplated or desired.

\* Luke viii. 49.

| † Ps. cxlii. 4.

The answer is reserved for the time which Infinite Wisdom sees best; and is given in the manner which best promotes his own glory and the good of the supplicant. The interval, however, often proves a season of suspense; and in many cases not only abates the fervor but witnesses despair of success. Believers may look out for the morning, but, behold, the shadows of night still rest upon them; and it is like a sword in their bones when it is said to them, "Where is thy God?" Where is the answer to prayer? Where is the fulfilment of the promise which you have so often plead? Such was Jacob's trial. He wrestled until dawn of day and yet the darkness of night rested on his soul. Such is the case with many christians; they pray, and yet seem to obtain no return to their prayers; and are therefore led to conclude that the delay is evidence of their rejection.

3. The language "Let me go," seems to be spoken to the believer, when he is denied fellowship with God in his ordinances. Not finding God in prayer, he waits on other institutions of grace. If then the Divine visits are only like those of a way-faring man; if the Spirit of grace comes, and goes before it can be realized that he has been present; if the worshipper feels little life in the duty, less access to God by it, and no consolation derived from the promises, he is ready to think God has forgotten him. Unbelief suggests—"This evil is from the Lord: He abhors his ordinances for thy sake." This is indeed a severe trial to one who cannot be satisfied without finding God in duty. But it affords a fit opportunity for holy fervor and importunity in prayer—for wrestling with God like Jacob, hoping and trusting to prevail like Israel. For indeed this language of the Angel, while it has the *appearance* of denial, presents a strong incentive to continue the wrestling. It, as it were, yields the victory and is like the language of the vanquished asking permission to quit the field. How amazing the condescension of God to his worm Jacob! He who could disjoint his thigh by a single touch, could most easily have disengaged himself from the grasp of a mortal. But he wished to be detained; he came to command the blessing; he increased the importunity. Accordingly, through the influences of Divine grace, Jacob becomes more bold and resolute, at the intimation of being separated from the only source of his help. "I will not let thee go, except thou bless me." There is implied in this resolution much that is worthy the imitation of christians under such circumstances as have been described; As,

1. The expectation of blessing only through the Angel of the covenant. It needs no labored proof to shew that the person with whom Jacob wrestled, was Jesus Christ, the Mediator. He had indeed the appearance of a man in token of his future incarnation; but he was also God, as is manifest from v. 28, "as a prince thou hast power *with God*." And Jacob was assuredly sensible that he was a Divine person; for he says v. 30, "I have seen God face to face." The Lord Jesus is the only one through whom the blessing can be obtained. He endured the curse that he might procure and dispense all needed blessings. He "received gifts for men." The blessings which, as surety of the covenant, he purchased with his blood, he bestows upon his people as the administrator of that covenant. Hence the prediction concerning him, "Men shall be blessed in him, and all nations shall call him blessed." The resolution of the Patriarch attests the truth of this. He needed the blessing; and accordingly, while wrestling with the Angel, he addresses him and says, "except THOU bless me."

2. Wrestling with God implies earnestness and importunity, not to be checked by opposing difficulties.

Many things seemed unfavorable in the case of Jacob's wrestling. His conflict happened during the darkness of night, when he could not see how to exert himself to the best advantage, and when the surrounding gloom was calculated to increase his terror and heighten his despair. His trial too was severe, as it lasted, probably for hours, until dawn of day. His difficulties were increased by the omnipotence of his opposer, and by the disabling of one of his limbs. But amidst surrounding darkness, a protracted struggle, opposing force, and personal weakness, grace was given him to persevere. "I will not let thee go." Here was no cold heart—no mere labor of the lip—no frigid formality. The whole soul was engaged—and all that was within him was stirred up to obtain the heavenly benediction.

3. This wrestling implies the vigorous exercise of faith.

Under Jacob's circumstances, *unbelief* would have charged him to desist, as engaged in a presumptuous, hopeless contest. It would have drowned the voice of God's word, "wait on the Lord," with the cry—darkness, delay, disappointment, weakness, defeat. Jacob's perseverance therefore discovers his firm persuasion that his covenant God could not mean to say, "seek my face in vain." Much less, "cease to seek me." While he found the Angel put forth no more strength than he was enabled to meet, his faith rightly concluded that the oppo-



sition, *seemingly* made, was intended only to call out the exercise of the strength with which he was constantly supplied. This is the only way of accounting for his persevering in the contest. Every moment he persevered added fresh lustre to the strength of his faith in the promises of God. It was acting like Job—"Though he slay me, yet will I *trust* in him."

4. The resolution of Jacob implies a determination to make the most of present opportunities.

God was now near; the day had dawned; the necessities were urgent; and none but God could supply them. He knew how much depended upon the issue of his struggle—how much was suspended on that hour; and no discouragement could induce him to relinquish the conflict. He was more than ever convinced that he to whom he clung, not only with the arms of his body, but with the arms of his faith, was able to bless him. He knew that he had every thing to expect from the grace manifested in that interview, and resolved that it should not be broken off until he obtained the blessing desired. He improved the *present* opportunity.

And now, Christian reader, do you imitate the example of the *wrestling* Patriarch? Have you adopted, and do you act upon, his resolution? You have *many Esaus* to meet—many subtle and powerful enemies to encounter. As you would disconcert their plans, paralyze their power and obtain deliverance: as you would gain the victory and glorify Him in whose strength you are to achieve it, wrestle, Jacob like, with God. Not only put on the whole armor of God, but pray always, with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit. Are you tempted by Satan to cease your importunity, because you have in times past experienced, or may be now experiencing, delay? still persevere. Though the vision tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry. Do a death-like coldness and indifference pervade your heart and your affections? Do you feel a sense of weakness and unworthiness, in consequence of sin? Recollect the weakness and unworthiness of Jacob, and at the same time recollect *he wrestled still*. Let not discouragements prevail; let not your hands hang down, but cling with the arms of faith to the Angel of the covenant. Say not, that your difficulties are greater than those of others. This is a common suggestion of unbelief; and even if it were true, it affords you a peculiar opportunity of glorifying God; of acknowledging his faithfulness; of cleaving to Christ in your earnest and importunate wrestlings. Consider, for your encouragement, that these pressing exercises are so far from being esteemed the boldness of presump-

tion, that they are peculiarly pleasing to God. He delights to be held by the holy violence of the importunate wrestler. "I held him fast, and would not let him go," says the Spouse. Consider also the inestimable value of the blessing for which you wrestle, and the peculiar necessity of your case in reference to it. It is the *blessing* of Him who endured the *curse*; the blessing which removes the guilt, the power, the defilement of sin, which secures all the benefits of the covenant of grace. These blessings you need; without them you perish. Can you then endure the thought of letting the Angel go, except he bless you? Let no mere lip service satisfy you at a throne of grace. Let the heart overflow with fervent desires, and manifest some of the ardor which glowed in the breast of the Psalmist, when he said, "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God." Ps. xlii. 1, 2. Consider, for your farther encouragement, the success with which Jacob met when he wrestled. *He prevailed.* "And the Angel said unto him, what is thy name? and he said Jacob," which signifies *supplanter*; and was calculated to remind him of the dishonest mode in which he obtained the birthright. But God had forgiven his sin, and therefore the Angel said, "thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel." By this change of name he published his act of forgiveness and oblivion for past offences—destroyed the association of his name with artful and fraudulent management—and ever after connected it with an event honorable to God, and a *blessing* to himself, for ISRAEL signifies "a princely prevailer with God." Imitate *Jacob's* example, and you shall realize *Israel's* success. The Angel blessed him, and, if you manifest the same importunity, He will bless you. *Wrestle with God Jacob-like, and you shall prevail with God Israel-like.* "I said not unto the seed of Jacob, seek ye me in vain." Isa. xlv. 19.

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THE HOLDING OF HUMAN BEINGS IN A STATE OF SLAVERY  
SINFUL.

(Continued from page 232.)

In a former number we demonstrated the sin of holding human beings in a state of slavery, from its being an infringement on the natural and inalienable rights of man—an encroachment on the prerogative of God, as it assumes a right

of property in man—a violation of the sixth commandment—and also of the eighth. Proceeding with the demonstration we remark,

5. Slavery unfits and prevents the slave from obeying the law of God.

The first table of the decalogue embraces our duty to God—the second, our duty to our neighbor. Whatever prevents, or has the tendency to prevent, the performance of these duties, must be sinful, inasmuch as it thwarts the purpose and design of the Divine law, and interferes with the authority by which it has been enacted. Slavery, as we have already shewn, is a violation of the sixth commandment, as it is, to an awful extent, destructive of human life, and cruel in its practical operations:—of the eighth commandment also, as it robs the slave of self ownership, of his children, of the fruit of his labor, &c; but it violates the moral law in another way, as it unfits and disqualifies the slave for the performance of the duties which the law enjoins upon him, and which he owes to it—the duties required to be performed to God and man. This constitutes a distinct feature in the sinfulness of slave-holding; one which is strongly marked and fearfully comprehensive. God has a sovereign claim upon all his creatures; and those that are rational owe him universal subjection and homage. His law is the only rule of their obedience. It inculcates the obligations which rest upon men in every station and relation of life. The sum of the first table is love to God, “thou shalt love the Lord thy God.” The means which he has appointed for implanting and strengthening this love in the hearts of men, are the ordinances of the Gospel. “It is the power of God unto salvation, to every one that believeth.” Access to the gospel is denied to slaves generally; they are carefully excluded from the means of instruction. In most of the slave-holding states, severe and cruel laws have been enacted, and are rigidly enforced, to prevent their being taught even the elements of knowledge; and as it respects religious instruction, the laws are heathenish and sanguinary. By penal enactments, a merciless restriction is imposed upon the developement of mind: it is held in a state of vassalage even more degrading and injurious than that to which their bodies are subjected; it is the vassalage of involuntary ignorance; ignorance of God and the obligations of religion. The guilt of this is justly chargeable on the system of slavery, and is indeed admitted by the laws of some slave-holding states. “Teaching slaves to read and write tends to excite dissatisfaction in their minds, and to produce insurrec-

tion.”\* “In North Carolina, to teach a slave to read or write, or to sell him any book (the Bible not excepted) or pamphlet, is punishable with thirty nine lashes or imprisonment, if the offender be a free negro; but if a white, then with a fine of \$200. In Louisiana, the penalty for teaching slaves to read or write is one year’s imprisonment. In Georgia, any justice of the peace may, at his discretion, break up any religious assembly of slaves, and may order each slave present to be corrected, *without trial*, by receiving on the bare back, twenty-five stripes with a whip or cowskin!”† These are merely specimens of the laws by which the instruction of slaves is prohibited in slave-holding states. Hear the following testimony from witnesses, who are intimately acquainted with the system, who see its workings daily and understand the laws by which its operations are directed. “Our system, as *established by law*, arms the master with power to prevent his slave from worshipping God according to the dictates of his own conscience. The owner of human beings among us may *legally* restrain them from assembling to hear the instruction of divine truth, or even from ever uniting their hearts and voices in social prayer and praise to him who created them.”‡ Again; “Who would credit it, in these years of revivals and benevolent efforts, in this christian Republic, there are over *two millions* of human beings in the condition of *heathen*, and in some respects in a *worse condition*. From long continued and close observation, we believe that their moral and religious condition is such that they may justly be considered the heathen of this christian country, and will bear comparison with heathen in any country in the world. The Negroes are destitute of the Gospel, and *ever will be under the present state of things*. In the vast field, extending from an entire state beyond the Potomac, to the Sabine river, and from the Atlantic to the Ohio, there are, to the best of our knowledge, not twelve men exclusively devoted to the religious instruction of the Negroes.”|| In the present state of feeling in the South, and under the system of iniquitous law that there obtains, a ministry of the slave’s own color could neither be obtained nor tolerated. But do not the Negroes have access to the Gospel and its ordinances through the stated ministry of the whites? Hear the answer of another eye witness. “The poor black has never had the word of his God and Saviour

\*Laws of North Carolina.

†Jay’s Inquiry. See also Stroud’s collection of slave laws.

‡An address by a Committee of

the Synod of Kentucky.

||Report of a Committee of the Synod of South Carolina & Georgia.

even read to him. If he belongs to a christian family, nay even to the family of a christian minister, his religious opportunities are no better than if he lived in the family of an infidel. \* \* \* The black population is an isolated mass of ignorance, through whose dark body a ray of light hardly ever penetrates, and if perchance a fortuitous beam now and then enters, it is lost in the midst of surrounding darkness."\* Such are the indisputable, yea natural effects of slavery—effects which rob God of the honor and glory due unto him, as the Supreme Lawgiver and Saviour. The first table of the moral code enjoins, summarily, love to God. But slaves are prevented from knowing their duty as far as the wicked system of slave-laws can prevent them; and the ignorance and moral degradation, consequent upon slavery, shew how successful these iniquitous enactments have been, and are, of thereby robbing God of the love and service of more than two millions of his rational creatures in this land of Bibles, and churches, and boasted religious privileges.

The second table of the law relates to duties between man and man. Here too, slavery interferes with and prevents the discharge of duties incumbent. For example, consider how it disqualifies the slave for the performance of all the obligations arising from the fifth commandment. Children are denied the means of honoring and obeying their parents, yea often prohibited from either duty: parents are denied the means of educating and training up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, yea by law prohibited. The reciprocal moral obligations of this precept are, so to speak, rendered useless to the slave population. Indeed the system assumes that there are no moral relations among slaves. That children are not bound to obey their parents, nor parents to do for their children, and claim their reverence and obedience. In either case the will of the master interferes and prevents the discharge of those duties which grow out of this holy moral relation. The same is true as it respects the institution of marriage. God has established this relation also, for holy, wise and important ends. "Marriage is honorable in all; but whoremongers and adulterers, God will judge." The direct tendency of slavery is to set aside the obligation to chastity; in other words, to violate the seventh commandment. The laws of slave-holding states do not recognize the relation of marriage between slaves:—the maintenance of slavery requires this iniquitous *consistency* in the inhu-

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\*Western Luminary, Kentucky.

man laws that regulate it. Hence it is the cause of almost universal licentiousness among the slaves. "It may be said emphatically, that chastity is no virtue among them; that its violation neither injures female character in their own estimation, nor that of their master or mistress."\* "Chastity in either sex is an exceedingly rare virtue. Such is the universality and greatness of the vice of lewdness, that to those acquainted with *slave countries* not a word need be said."† Our readers need hardly be told, that this propensity is not a peculiarity of the Negro race: for the chastity and conjugal fidelity of Africans in their native country are abundantly testified by travellers, who have visited that continent. In these respects they will bear comparison with any uncivilized nation on earth. No; "the universality and greatness of the vice of lewdness" is caused by slavery. Hence the Synod of Georgia speak of "*slave countries*," where the barrier between chastity and licentiousness is broken down, by taking away the law of marriage; where the lawful intercourse of the sexes in this holy relation is discountenanced and disregarded and where the depths of degradation, to which slaves are borne down, render them in a great measure insensible to the claims of virtue and moral purity.

There is another aspect under which this feature of the sinfulness of slavery must be viewed. Debased as slaves are, by the grossly immoral system under which they are reared, there is still, in many instances, as much of natural conscience remaining among them—as much of the advantages of the conjugal relation known, as teach them that it is "not good for man to be alone." Hence, notwithstanding the arbitrary will of slave-holders refuses to acknowledge the marriage relation among their slaves; yet, in many cases, reason prevails over the brutal restriction and the relation is entered into. But though entered into in the sight and with the approbation of God their Creator—under the influence of pure intentions and mutual love, the slave code nullifies the relation at the pleasure of the avaricious, self constituted owner. The wife is torn from her husband, and the husband from his wife, at the bidding of the cold-blooded, selfish, or capricious tyrant, who dares, without hesitancy, to force asunder those whom God united. Beside the cruelty of thus separating husbands and wives, bound to each other by the strong ties of affection, as well as by obliga-

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\* Western Luminary, Kentucky.

† Report of the Synod of Georgia.

tions acknowledged before high heaven, slavery is chargeable with the guilt of unfulfilled marriage covenants. The heartless holder may sneer at the suggestion of this relation among slaves, and scoff at its obligations; but it is acknowledged of God and recorded in the register of heaven; and the guilt of its unfulfilled engagements and duties rests with awful weight upon the system of slavery, to be visited with vengeance upon the guilty. Let the candid reader in view of all he knows respecting the moral and religious condition of slaves in our land, ask himself, which of the commands of God does not that condition disqualify them for fulfilling? What one are they not, by their situation, prevented from obeying? He may take any one of the precepts of the Decalogue—he may take them all; and an impartial inquiry must lead him to the conclusion, that the ignorance and heathenism, inseparably connected with the system, unfit its victims for discharging the obligations of the Divine law, whether those of the first, or of the second table. If, in some instances, slaves occupy a higher place as to moral and religious condition, it is because christian principle, in those instances, prevails *in spite* of the *demoralizing power* of slavery.

6. Holding men in a state of slavery is opposed to the benevolent character and requirements of the Gospel.

The whole system of true religion, whether presented in the Old or New Testament, is characterized by the purest benevolence, and enforces upon men the purest precepts. It is a system of love—the exemplification of the love of God to man. It teaches, that as God has loved us, we ought to love one another. “This is the message that ye heard from the beginning, that we should love one another.” 1 Joh. iii. 11. “He that loveth not his brother abideth in death.” v. 14. “If God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.” Chap. iv. 11. “If any man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar; for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen.” v. 20. “The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings to the meek: he hath sent me to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound.” Isa. lxi. 1. Such is the benevolent character of the Gospel. The influence which its grace has upon the heart, is to cultivate, increase and perfect every benevolent affection, and suppress all malevolence, extirpating the principles of sinful selfishness from the soul, and producing a spirit of meekness, compassion and love. Slavery is the

very opposite. It is malevolent, cruel, sanguinary. In the entire system, no place is found for cherishing and exercising that love which the Gospel enjoins, or that spirit which the Gospel breathes. O, how discordant with that holy emanation from heaven, which brings "glory to God in the highest, peace on earth, and *good will towards man.*"

Slavery is also opposed to the direct requirements of the Gospel. No man can be a slave-holder, and at the same time give obedience to what it requires. This may seem to some to be a harsh, heavy charge. Try it, christian reader, by the following truly Evangelical tests. "Is not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke." Isa. lviii. 6. Does the slave holder do this? "Open thy mouth for the dumb, in the cause of all such as are appointed to destruction. Open thy mouth, judge righteously, and plead the cause of the poor and needy." Prov. xxxi. 8, 9. Do slaveholders thus judge? so plead? "What doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God? Mic. vi. 8. Are these requisitions obeyed by the man who robs his fellow man of all that is dear to him, who exercises the cruelty of which the lash and chain are significant emblems, and who lords it over God's creatures? "*Owe no man any thing*, but to love one another. Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." Rom. xiii. 8, 9. Need we repeat the question, in application to the man who "keeps back by fraud the hire of those that reap down the harvests," or till the cotton fields! Once more. "Therefore all things, whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them." Mat. vii. 12. Tried by this rule, is the slave-holder found to obey what the Gospel enjoins? Does he, acting as a master or owner of human beings, comply with this injunction? Would he be willing to take the same kind of usage from others that he gives to his slaves? to have meted out to him according to the measure by which he deals with them? Is he ready to acquiesce in the justice of having done to him "all things whatsoever" which he does to ONE, or ONE THOUSAND of those whom God has made of the same flesh and blood with himself, and who are endowed with immortal spirits as well as he? This is a very easy way of testing the morality of slavery, and the obedience which slave-holders give to the requirements of the Gospel. It admits of no plea of ignorance, The least gifted and the most unlearned may apply the principle of "doing to others as they would others should do un-



to them." If the slave-holder is not willing to have the test applied and abide by the result, he condemns himself, as the character, requirements and spirit of the Gospel have condemned him already. Say, christian reader, will he, when weighed in the balance, be found wanting?

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TRIBUTE TO THE MEMORY OF THE SCOTTISH REFORMERS.

The following beautiful extract is taken from a work entitled, "Effect of the Reformation, upon Civil Society," by William Mackray. While the Author was pursuing his studies in the University of Aberdeen, the Trustees of Mrs. Blackwall proposed for her Biennial Prize the question, "What has been the effect of the Reformation in Religion, on the state of Civil Society in Europe?" Mr. Mackray wrote an Essay on the subject, for which the Prize was awarded him, he proving the successful candidate. This Essay was afterwards published at the request of many who approved its sentiments, admired its style, and believed its publication would much promote the cause of truth. In the testimony which the author bears to the importance of the principles, to the worth and influence of the Covenanters, he must be regarded as an impartial witness, inasmuch as he was not ecclesiastically united with them, but associated with another denomination of Christians, both when the Essay was written and in after life. We may hereafter give a Review of the work, but in the mean time, earnestly recommend it to the attentive perusal of all our readers. EDITOR.

"The Reformation, by restoring to the world genuine religion, has done unspeakable good to man, viewed as an immortal being; but by breaking the fetters of despotism which bound him, and introducing him to light and liberty, it has also been a source of felicity to man, viewed as the inhabitant of this world;—and, thus, although it is the peculiar glory of the Reformation to have attracted towards it the esteem, and gratitude, and prayers of the pious, it has at the same time, in the mighty sweep of its energy, proved the parent of benefits, which should commend it even to worldly men, and should secure for it the respect and gratitude of those whose feelings and views are associated only with secular concerns.

"The chief agent in Scotland's Reformation\* is endeared to us as the restorer of our spiritual freedom; but he is also eminently endeared to us as the firm, unbending patriot, to whom under God, we are mainly indebted for our political liberty. Scotland, at the momentous crisis when he appear-

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\* John Knox.

ed, stood in need of some dauntless and intrepid spirit to sway the minds of her people—some individual of sound intelligence and genuine patriotism, who would at once proclaim the dangers of anarchy, and rear a determined front against oppression in its every form;—she needed, in short, some bold asserter of her long lost rights, in whom the spirit of WALLACE might revisit the land that he delivered, and to frown, indignant, on those who dared to pollute the scene of his deathless triumphs. Such a character she found in the person of her Reformer, and, great as were the exploits of her celebrated warrior, triumphs of a higher order were achieved, and benefits of a more dignified character conferred on his countrymen, and the applauses of remotest ages still more justly merited, by her Reformer—by that man who, under God, was the instrument at once of redeeming from degradation the political liberties of his native land, and of lifting up the minds of her people to the love and the pursuit of a freedom—

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“unsung  
By poets, and by Senators unpraised,  
Which monarchs cannot grant, nor all the powers  
Of earth and hell, confederate, take away :  
A liberty, which persecution, fraud,  
Oppression, prisons, have no power to bind,—  
A liberty of heart derived from heaven,  
Which whoso tastes can be enslaved no more.”

“We have read in our youth—exclaimed an eloquent preacher, while the name to which we are alluding was yet unmonumented—of patriot men, the avengers of a country’s wrongs; and, after witnessing, in severe experience, the meanness and the selfishness of mankind, we turn again to the page of history with eagerness, increased a thousand fold; and we trace with a thrilling emotion the sacred steps of Leonidas, of Wallace, or of the archer Tell; and a nation’s gratitude bids the monument arise to perpetuate the memory of their deeds—of fetters broken, and forever cast away—of tyranny overthrown—of justice recalled from the heavens, and fixing her abode once more upon the earth. And shall no eye turn with eagerness to the page which tells of the *mind* emancipated? Shall no heart throb with emotion, shall no breath breathe irregular, as we read of those who burst the bands of spiritual slavery, who restored reason to its freedom, and taught the man, intellectual and at large, judging for himself, and aware of his responsibility, to claim the place which belongs to him among the works of his Creator?—I would bind the laurel on the patriot’s brow—I would

join with you, in adding a stone to the heap which covers his remains; but while the name of Wallace is to be preserved by an additional security, foul scorn do I hold it, to be under the necessity of reminding you, that no column has been raised to the memory of Knox, and that no public edifice, throughout the land which he delivered, has been inscribed with his name."

"After all that has been said, however, respecting our Scottish Reformer, and the stigma which his unrequited exertions have cast upon many generations of his countrymen, the name of Knox found its best memorial in the esteem and the veneration of those by whom the blessings he conferred on his native land have been valued and improved. What though no "wreath of gratitude" had ever been hung upon his tomb? What though "no pilgrim fraught with pious lore" had ever visited the scene of his labors? What though his deeds had never been recorded on the marbled pillar, or his ashes gathered into the storied urn?" His name, bright with venerable associations, and identified with his country's purest glories, would never have been forgotten:—in the grateful and veneration hearts of the patriotic and the pious among his countrymen, his services would have found their best requital, and his virtues their noblest shrine. "This is the reward of the patriot and the saint. The monuments of fame, like the beings whose names they perpetuate, will soon pass away, and the lonely heap of their ruins, in some future age, may awaken the regret of the pensive traveller, as he silently acknowledges the might of time, in mouldering the glories of the past, and darkening with the clouds of forgetfulness the records of perishing greatness. But those impressions of awe and love which are made on the heart by the virtues of great and noble minds, are more enduring—they never perish: and, in the decay and wreck of all human empire, will shed a beautiful splendor on the spirits of the just, and sooth and delight them through the silent lapse of innumerable years." It will be thus with the patriot and saint of whom we are speaking. The men of true patriotism in this land will ever venerate his name, and will trace their national privileges; and their national renown, to the great revolution which his life was spent in seeking to establish, nor ever, in Scottish history, will the period arrive, when the parent shall cease to tell his children, or the children cease, with their infant tongues, to lisp out the name of Knox; and thus will there be found, in the grateful remembrance of posterity, the noblest monument, the most imperishable memorial, of him who brought us out of barbarism, and made us free.

But it is not only in the history of the illustrious individual of whom we have just spoken, of KNOX, that it is eminently true, while religion was the primary object of his benevolent and persevering exertions, the secular welfare of his country was an object which, in connection with the other, he zealously and steadfastly pursued. But this also is true of those men who were the coadjutors of Knox in his momentous labors, and it is especially true of the actors in those struggles, which down to the time of the Revolution in 1688, were carried on for the advancement of the Scottish Reformation. These are they, who, from the solemn and important deeds into which they entered on behalf of their country, were named Covenanters, and who, in the style of modern ridicule, have been contemptuously termed "the brethren of the Covenant." Their projects and their doings bear at once on the political and on the spiritual felicity of their land; and what they said, and did, and endured, for the advancement of her noblest interests, merits to be had in grateful remembrance to the latest age. In the midst of the fiery furnace of persecution, they appeared assuming the high character of witnesses for God, and maintaining it in the face of danger and death. Though few in number, like the gleanings of grapes after the vintage, and a few berries on the top of the outermost bough, they lifted up the fallen standard of religious liberty, and generously devoted themselves. Against the revolt and outbreaks of this generation, we are called to stand in the gap, and leave our bodies there, that the generations to come, who shall hear that the spouse of Christ once dwelt in Scotland, with all her beautiful ornaments, may, at least, behold her memorial in the torn veil, and trace her footsteps in the land, by a track of blood. They would swear no oaths, subscribe no bonds, take no test, nor yield to any imposition on conscience. They would not pray for the king, because that might be construed as owning a title which, in their judgment he had forfeited; and they resolved, whatever it might cost, to be ingenuous and open, decisive and unembarrassed, both in word and in deed. They testified against all the arbitrary, persecuting acts of Charles, and published acts of their own, disowning the King, excluding the Duke of York, and declaring war in defence of their religion and their lives. The avowal of disaffection was the signal of death, and, by means of mercenary spies and traitors, many of them were seized and executed. They denounced vengeance on the spies, admonishing both the bloody Doegs and flattering Ziphites to remember, "All that is in peril is not lost, and all

that is delayed is not forgiven." The coward race were appalled by a threatening that came from men without falsehood and without fear. Their bold example attracted congenial spirits, and, like the Israelites in Egypt, the more they were afflicted, the more they grew. They formed into societies, and settled the ground and nature of their testimony. A love of liberty they considered as the national character, which it was their duty to maintain and transmit. A defensive war against tyranny they justified by the laws of nature, and by the precepts and doctrines of the Bible. It is God's command to his people. "Deliver thyself, O Zion, that dwellest with the daughters of Babylon." "If thou forbear to deliver them that are drawn unto death, and them that are ready to be slain; if thou sayest, Behold, we know it not, shall not he that pondereth the heart consider it?" Our brethren are drawn unto death, and we are ready to be slain: in such circumstances, to forbear is to partake of the sin of murderers. Sympathy and self-defence are the armor of God, a shield and buckler which must not be vilely thrown away. The powers that be, are of God, but he ordains them to be ministers to men for good. They rejected James at his accession to the crown, because he had not taken the coronation vow, and was in no condition to fulfil it. They disdained his toleration, and would not accept as a favor what belonged to them as a right, nor acknowledge a power to give, which implied a power to take away. Spurning his restriction of worship to houses, they vindicated their liberty in the fields, preaching in mountains, and in the wilderness, as Christ and his forerunner preached. To those who objected that their testimony was unexampled, they answered, the tyranny of the times is also without example; former examples arose from the state of things which produced them; the present singular state of things demands a new example to after ages. Tyrants formerly used force, but they now demand an explicit owning of arbitrary power;—the limitation of kingly power is a question which they compel us to decide, and our example may instruct and animate posterity. Their standard on the mountains of Scotland indicated to the vigilant eye of William, that the nation was ripening for a change. They expressed what others thought, uttering the indignation and the groans of a spirited and oppressed people. They investigated and taught under the guidance of feeling, the reciprocal obligations of kings and subjects, the duty of self-defence and of resisting tyrants, the generous principle of assisting the oppressed, or, in their language, *helping the Lord against the mighty*. These subjects, which

have since been investigated by philosophers in the closet, and adorned with eloquence in the senate, were then illustrated by men of feeling in the field. While Russel and Sidney, and other enlightened patriots in England, were plotting against Charles, from a conviction that his right was forfeited, the Cameronians in Scotland, under the same conviction had the courage to declare war against him. Both the plotters and the warriors fell; but their blood watered the plant of renown, and succeeding ages have eaten the pleasant fruit.

Such is the record of the character and doings of the Covenanters; and we appeal to every heart that is not utterly estranged from proper feeling, whether they are not eminently entitled to our gratitude and esteem? Religious Reformers they undoubtedly were; but they were at the same time the friends and the advocates of civil liberty. They sought to break and to cast away from their country, for ever, the fetters of spiritual thralldom, with which her enemies strove to bind her; but they likewise sought her deliverance from political oppression. Indeed, although it had been the case that their efforts were solely directed to the vindication of their own religious principles, they would have really been, and would have merited to be esteemed, the advocates of their country's civil rights. For the ecclesiastical systems, against which their opposition was directed, were uniformly combined in the land, with arbitrary power; and therefore, in opposing and lifting up their testimony against them, they appeared, not merely in support of certain principles of religious belief, and in adherence to a peculiar system of ecclesiastical polity, but on behalf of the rights and liberties of their whole nation, in opposition to the tyrannical encroachments of arbitrary power.

But they also stood forth directly, and avowedly on behalf of the civil liberties of their native land: in fact, they were the only persons of their times who made a firm and consistent appearance in their defence. The Covenants from which they derived their name, and against which, in succeeding ages, so much ignorant abuse has been poured forth, were deeds in which they bound themselves to defend and promote the civil liberties of the kingdom, as well as the purity of its religious professions. The writings which they published, the learning and profound judgment they displayed, were noble, and very influential testimonies for the genuine principles of political freedom. And, as the preceding extract has made manifest, their whole conduct, from the time when they stood forth in a public character, down to the Rev-

olution in 1688, was a continued struggle for the best privileges of their earthly kingdom, as well as for the nobler immunities of the kingdom of heaven. Patriots, therefore, the Scottish Covenanters surely were, in the best and highest sense of the term, for religion, liberty, conscience, and the public good—all that is precious to man as a rational and immortal being, entered into the matter of their contendings. Their love of country was of the sublimest cast. The spots on which they contended, and on which many of them fell, were scenes of purer and more substantial glory than that which was gained of old on the plains of Marathon, or at the straits of Thermopyle. The historian of *our* land, when he tells us of the heroism with which these patriot men, in the times “when monarchs owned no sceptre but the sword,” “foiled a tyrant’s and a bigot’s bloody rage,” and of the firm perseverance with which, in spite of all that was around them calculated to break their resolution, they clung to the cause in which they had embarked, displaying on their native mountains the banner of freedom, and standing out to the view of mankind in the high character of advocates at once for the prerogatives of their God, and for the liberties of their country—is pointing our attention to transactions of loftier character, and of far deeper interest : nor do we hesitate to declare, that, we should blush to claim kindred with the man who could survey the portion of our country’s history in which these transactions are recorded, without feeling both gratitude and admiration. “The cool-blooded infidel” casts a look of ineffable disdain on the cause and doings of the Covenanters, because he regards them as merely the paltry conflictings of some insignificant religious sect. The servile advocate of arbitrary power turns away from them with disgust, because he is jealous of every thing that has the air of a struggle for freedom. The bigoted adherent of Popery dislikes them, because the Covenanters thought not altogether as *he* thinks, but made their appeal from the dogmas of erring man, to the unerring oracles of the living God. While, last of all, and unhappily, in the most numerous class of all, the worldly man, immersed in secularity, and alive only to the things of this present world, deems the Covenanters’ contest beneath his regard, because it was connected with religion. There were religious matters involved in that contest, and it is this circumstance, we conceive, which constitutes its highest glory ;—nevertheless, it is this very circumstance which, in the view of worldly men, deprives it of all its interest, and entitles it to be set down as the mere ebullition of fanaticism ! Alas, for

such men! Their mode of thinking and of judging affords a melancholy display of the hostility which exists in the corrupted human heart against God, and against the things of God! So long as the benevolent exertions of the friends of their race remain unconnected with spiritual and religious concerns, so long as they maintain a character purely secular, they will receive the tribute of high approbation;—but let this boundary be once touched—let benevolence extend the sphere of its exertion beyond its precincts of secularity, and, although it becomes thereby just the more worthy of esteem and of applause, it has entered a scene whither the world will not follow it, and in which contempt and scorn will be its sure reward.

“ Patriots have toiled, and, in their country’s cause,  
Bled nobly, and their deeds, as they deserve,  
Receive proud recompense—————  
But fairer wreaths are due, though never paid,  
To those who, posted at the shrine of Truth,  
Have fallen in her defence—————  
————— with their names  
No bard embalms and sanctifies his song;  
And history, so warm on meaner themes,  
Is cold on this.”

The patriot is an honorable character, but he who is both a patriot and a martyr is much more honorable. Such were the Scottish Covenanters. If ever there were interests worth contending for, they are those for which they struggled. If ever there was a contest which bore the character of genuine magnificence, it is the contest in which they were engaged. If ever there were men who merited the esteem and the applause of succeeding generations, they are the men of whose doings we have been discoursing. For all that is estimable in our political and moral condition, we are indebted to them.—They completed the deliverance which Knox and his coadjutors had commenced. They concluded the destruction, throughout this realm, of ecclesiastical domination and arbitrary political power. These are the Scottish Covenanters! Long time has passed since they were numbered among Scotland’s living men; and the tempests of many a winter have swept over the places where their ashes repose; but they are not, they cannot, be forgotten. The record of their lives may perish, and the rude lettered tablet that marks the hallowed spot of their glorious slumber may moulder to dust; but their fame is deathless in the heart of every lover of Scotland’s liberty and Scotland’s Reformation. Their worth has



a monument more imperishable than marble or brass—a monument which will survive the trophies of conquerors and kings, and which the lapse of time will never be able to destroy.

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MEMOIR OF REV. THOMAS BRADBURY, A DISSENTING MINISTER  
IN LONDON.

[From the Edinburgh Christian Magazine.]

This excellent divine was born in 1677, of pious parents. In his works he speaks with peculiar pleasure of the *God of his father*: and in his Sermons on Baptism he says, “I don’t remember any thing that struck me sooner with religious thoughts in my youth, than my father’s telling me how greatly his soul was enlarged when he gave me up to God in baptism: and if ever I have tasted the Lord is gracious, I hope it is in consequence of that surrender.” He spent part of his youth in the family of the Rev. Thomas Whitaker of Leeds, and was long happy in his friendship. This, Mr. Bradbury handsomely acknowledges in a dedication to him of the first volume of sermons he published. Having entered on the ministry at an early period, the eighteenth year of his age, he spent the first years of it in Newcastle upon Tyne, as assistant to some aged minister. Here he was both loved and respected in his youth; and his ministrations were attended with considerable success. About 1703, he removed to a congregation in Wapping, London. He also labored long as a pastor to a church which met in New-Court, Carey Street, in the service of whose souls he died. He was employed in several of the most celebrated lectures among the Dissenters in London, as in Pinners Hall, Salters Hall, Sabbath-evening lecture; one at Eastcheap on singing, praying, reading, and hearing the word: and at the Limestreet one, in opposition to the Arminian doctrine, and in defence of the doctrine of grace.

He was eminent for *piety*, which was lively and constant. Through the whole of his works this appears, but it may be especially seen in the following extracts. In his preface to his sermons on the joy of the Christian in finishing his course he says, “I have some reason to hope that the study of these plain and obvious things has been of use to myself. I find my soul the easier, under any disappointments and confusions by employing it in the care of dying well; and I trust it

shall always be a rule with me to let every thing have the value now that it will have on a sickbed. With this view would I aim at an even temper under all the extremes of life. Knowing how little any applause can add to these final comforts, or any reproach abate them, finishing my course with joy, is a blessing independent on the world. Unconcerned in what people say, may it ever then be a small thing with me to be judged of men's judgments." In another sermon he has these expressions : " For my part, in dying I would commend my spirit to Jesus, in two characters, which he will then fill up to the uttermost, as a faithful Creator, who hath made me, and a God of truth, who hath redeemed me. Again, as to those who preach as the heathen live, without Christ, and strangers to the covenant of promise, they will be all in a hurry, when their hope is like the giving up of the ghost, and brushed away as a spider's web ; but I trust the same doctrines, by which any have fulfilled their ministry with care, will help them to finish their course with joy. What we preached in the pulpit, God will give us the application of on a deathbed. At present, we would be able to say, that as we have believed we have spoken ; and in that hour may we be able to say, that as we have spoken we believe. And this confidence have we towards God, that I wish for no other comfort in death than to feel the virtue of what I have preached in life. May my soul then have a fellowship in those sufferings that I have always represented as your righteousness, and know the power of that resurrection which comes in among the arguments of Christ's deity." In another sermon he says, " You and I pore upon the disease till we forget the Physician ; and hence arise complaints to this purpose, O what a vile heap of thoughts and affections are within me, profane, impure thoughts, revengeful, covetous, and unbelieving. Now, if looking within be so dreadful a work, let us try what looking unto Jesus will do : Behold, O Lord, I am vile ; but here is the more guilt for thee to pardon ; here is the more disorder for thee to cure.— Experience tells me I can do nothing, but faith tells me *thou* canst do all. The best that can be said of my righteousness is, that the principle is imperfect, and the actions are confused ; but thine is all right, and fair, and full : and therefore as mine is not worth speaking of, I will make mention of thine, and thine only." Again, elsewhere, " The main cry of the Papists is, that we lay aside works, and do our utmost to trample down practical religion. I hope that we may appeal both to what you hear from the pulpit, and what you see in our lives.

Let our conversations answer for us, and take your notions of what we think from what we do. We have not behaved ourselves disorderly among you. We wronged no man; we have corrupted no man; we have defrauded no man."

In 1718, he was called to appear in behalf of the most glorious truths of revealed religion, viz. of the Trinity, and the Divinity of our glorious Redeemer. Several ministers and others, in the west of England and in London, denied these glorious truths, or sinfully concealed them. This called the zeal of Mr. Bradbury to action. We give an account of this important matter in his own words. "The doctrine of the ever blessed Trinity was never known (till lately) to be matter of controversy among Protestant Dissenters. Our fathers universally owned it with reverence and godly fear; and the generation who have risen up to deny it appear to act from a *new spirit*, as well as upon a *new scheme*, as if that which had always the chief place among articles of faith was now to be lifted up in scorn, and pursued with banter instead of argument. It need not be forgotten what ungenerous oppositions have been made to the cause of truth, by exclamations about charity, reviling confessions, and making a subscription to the faith, (which has been the constant practice of ministers ever since the Reformation,) to be a brand of infamy. It was found a short way to amuse the world, and divert them from the only question they had before them, viz. Whether the doctrine, *as we have owned it*, be revealed in the Bible or not? It is a great deal easier to load an opinion with the hard names of persecution, creed-making, and imposition, than to prove that it is an error. We have endeavored that our faith may spread abroad, to be seen and read of all men, in a well known catechism, viz. the Shorter, in the answers to these two questions, Are there more Gods than one? and, How many persons are there in the Godhead?" These glorious truths, as deduced from the Scriptures, Mr. Bradbury, with others of his brethren, Tory, Robinson, Wilcox, Calamy, Cummin, &c. defended. This they did, in a pamphlet, entitled, "The judgment of some London Ministers about the Holy Trinity, and also in various conferences." At one of these, in Salters Hall, March 3, 1718-19, Mr. Bradbury, with the concurrence of some of his brethren, proposed the following clause to be inserted in a paper of agreement between the different parties in this controversy: "That we may not suffer by misrepresentations, as if our endeavors for peace and charity proceeded from an indifference to the truth, we declare our continuance in the things which we have heard and been assured of,

viz. that there is but one only, the living and the true God; and that there are three persons in the Godhead, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; and that these three are one God, the same in substance, equal in power and glory." Upon this they divided; and those who were open confessors, as well as believers, of the above doctrine, *subscribed* their declaration. Of this Mr. Bradbury speaks in his sermon *on the nature of faith*: "Those persons, who, in a late day of rebuke and blasphemy, were not ashamed to own Christ for their God, may have returns made them in a proper way, that he will not be ashamed to be called their God." Mr. Bradbury was particularly happy that his brethren, the lecturers at Pinner's Hall, and he, had the same views on these momentous points. These gentlemen were the following: John Nisbet, Matthew Clark, Robert Bragge, Thomas Ridgley, and John Hoxon. In a dedication to some sermons, on contending for revealed religion, directed to these ministers, he says, "You know the trial of cruel mockings, and how shamefully we have been entreated, with what contention we have kept the faith of Jesus, and not denied his name. I must own it, as the honor of every preacher of your lecture, that they have not been ashamed of Christ and his word, notwithstanding the furious measures that were used to hinder your *subscribing with the hand to the Lord God of Israel*; and I can look back on all this scandal that has followed this word of our testimony with a satisfaction, that though it is not much I can do for the cause, yet it is no little matter that you and I have suffered."

Mr. Bradbury thought it his duty, in this important controversy, particularly to defend the divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ; and this he did to good purpose, in various sermons he published, especially in his great work, *The Mystery of Godliness*. The following hints about this work, in Mr. Bradbury's own words, discover the experience and spirit of this great man. "In proving the truth, that *Christ*, equally with the Father and the Holy Ghost, is the Supreme God, I have honestly given a reason of the hope that is in me, by searching the Scriptures daily, whether these things are so. The opinions of fathers, councils, divines of all sorts, and indeed the whole body of the faithful, from Egypt even until now, have been well collected by others; but you know I have used none of these arguments, though I always read with pleasure with what a great cloud of witnesses we are encompassed. Nor can I think it very modest, that they who have obtained so good a report through faith should be treated with contempt

by such as are far from being superior to them in learning or holiness. However, you are my witnesses, and so may the whole world be now, that I have pleaded no authority but that of Scripture. As I read I believe, as I believe so I speak." "I hope, as the providence of God led me into this subject, so his good Spirit has carried me through it. The sermons have been of service to myself, and to many of you that heard them; so that while I was imparting to you this spiritual gift, I have been established, together with you, by the mutual faith both of you and me."—Through the divine goodness, I can make this reflection on that ministry that I have received, that though innumerable follies have beset me, for which I desire to be humbled, yet for the space of twenty years of my service in this Evening Lecture, (*viz.* at Salters-Hall,) I have never denied a truth that appeared evident to me, nor shunned one that I thought useful to you." Afterwards he says, "The text I have now been upon is what my thoughts were turned to above twenty years ago, and I cannot but regard that hand of Providence that orders all our steps, that I have been so long kept off from engaging in that which gave me many pleasing views at a distance. He that fixes the bounds of our habitation, settles also the times before appointed, and he makes every thing beautiful in his season. It is by his overruling counsel, that these designs should never be brought into life till they were most needful. I must further observe, that we were actually engaged on this text for eleven months before our contentions broke out, that are now become like the bars of a castle. I little thought at my entrance on the Mystery of Godliness, that I should be driven into a field of battle or that a zeal for these doctrines would make me the abhorrence of friends and the contempt of strangers; but a wise and gracious God had thus appointed to try whether, in the service and defence of the truth, we could live upon the honor that comes from God only. I had no more in view than about ten or twelve discourses; but I have found myself refreshed and enlarged in these studies, beyond what I have been conscious to myself in any other studies; and therefore, though I could not be untouched with the defaming of many, yet the doctrine was so much the joy of my soul, that the ill usage of men is what I could both neglect in the closet and despise from the pulpit; and I am sure this doctrine is of God, and so persuaded it is fundamental to all our hopes, that I think my work and my life can never be closed with any thing of more importance."

The following anecdotes, among others, are related of Mr. Bradbury. In the progress of the Arian controversy, he was

challenged to a public dispute in London. When they met, the gentlemen of the Arian sentiments desired him to open the debate, by producing an argument in favor of Christ's divinity. Upon this he read Isa. 6th chapter from the 1st to the 5th verse inclusive; this, said he, I compare with John, 12th chapter, 37th to the 41st verse. "These things said Isaiah, when he saw *his glory*, and spake of *him*." Now, gentlemen, says Mr. Bradbury, I wait for your answer. The above application of Scripture so confounded the Arians, that they went out one by one, and left the good man with his friends.

About the same time, as he was preaching the lecture in Salters-Hall, and was led by his subject to prove our Lord's divinity, he was hissed at by several who were present. Mr. Bradbury's friends were much affected with this insolent abuse, and expressed their grief on account of it; to which, with his usual vivacity and ingenuity, he replied, You need not be concerned about this, it is quite natural. You know we have been bruising the head of the old Serpent, and no wonder you heard the hisses of the generation of vipers.

When he saw criminals going to execution, he would have said, there would have been Thomas Bradbury, had it not been for the grace of God.

As he was employed in family-prayer, some thieves broke into his house: however, by means of what one of them heard as he was employed in this nefarious deed, he was, it is hoped made truly pious, and afterward joined Mr. Bradbury's congregation.

This good man continued in the labors of the gospel, with little interruption by sickness, from the eighteenth to the eighty second year of his age; and from the beginning to the last period of his ministry, his life was justly esteemed a great blessing, upon various accounts, to many churches and saints both in city and country. His popularity in preaching was uncommon; besides, his ministry, not only in his own congregation, but in several of the most public lectures in the city, was in various instances crowned with remarkable success. Nor was his usefulness confined to the pulpit, but he frequently employed the press to the best of purposes; and his good understanding in the mysteries of the gospel, his faithfulness and zeal in contending for the faith once delivered to the saints, his capacity and valor in defending the cause of liberty and religion, were manifestly discovered to the world, in the useful pieces which he published. He wrote on a great variety of religious subjects, and his works (says an excellent judge) will be in high reputation, as long as

evangelical truth, solid learning, godly sincerity, comprehensive thought, clearness of argument, and a lively animated style, are of any esteem in the world.

The last sermon he preached was on August 12, 1759, a day much to be remembered by every honest-hearted Briton, and especially by Protestant dissenters, as it was the anniversary of the day of our *deliverance* from the chains of Popery and slavery, by the accession of King George I. His subject was Micah, v. 5. "This man shall be the peace, when the Assyrian shall come into our land." A few days after he thus appeared for God and his country, he was taken ill, so as to be prevented from attending public worship for three Lord's days; but during his illness he gave a happy evidence he was waiting for his change with a fixed confidence that the end of his faith would be the salvation of his soul. This appeared by the frequent humble and thankful declarations he made, that his God was with him, and that he was kept nigh unto him; that none but our Lord Jesus Christ was the foundation of his trust, and therefore he had an assured hope that at his dissolution, his garments being made white in the blood of the Lamb, he should be received into the heavenly mansions, to dwell in the immediate presence of God, where there is fulness of joy, and at whose right hand, (as he often solemnly declared,) he firmly believed there were pleasures for ever more, and for him in particular. Hence arose his fervent and daily breathings, "Come, Lord Jesus, come," and when he had strength, he would add, "come quickly;" but near his death, through his bodily weakness, his speech so faltered that he was not able to finish the sentence so as to be heard. His exit was joyous and triumphant. He died September 9, 1759.

*Mr. Bradbury published the following Works.*—The Quality and Work of a glorified Redeemer, in seventeen sermons, printed 1703. The Joy of the Christian in finishing his course, 1705. The Justification of a Sinner, in eight sermons, 1716. Twenty-eight sermons, concerning offences, revilings, and confession of the faith, 1723. The Power of Christ over plagues and health, and his name as the God of Israel, in several sermons, 1724. Thirteen sermons on the Duty and Doctrine of Baptism, 1749. Three sermons against profane swearing. Two on contending for revealed religion. Six on Hebrew vi. 12. "Be followers of them who through faith and patience," &c. Four in the Lime-street Lectures, on the Sufferings of Christ. Two on Acts xx. 32. "I commend you to God; and the word of his grace." Two on the death of Mr. Bragge. Three vols. 8vo. chiefly of his

public sermons, were collected and published after his death, by his colleague Mr. Winter, to the amount of fifty.

What took up most of his time, and gave him the greatest pleasure, (as he says himself,) was the Mystery of Godliness, in sixty-one sermons.

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CAUSES OF FASTING AND THANKSGIVING, BY THE WESTERN  
SUBORDINATE SYNOD.

The following causes of fasting and thanksgiving were prepared by the Western Subordinate Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church at its late meeting at Brush Creek, and ordered to be sent to the Editor of the Reformed Presbyterian for publication in that periodical.

THOS. SPROULL, Clerk W. S. Synod.

CAUSES OF FASTING.

There is much in the present aspect of public affairs which is calculated to excite the attention, rouse the moral sensibility, awaken the fears and call forth the sympathy of the people of God.

1. Mankind seem resolved now, as much as at any former period, to adhere to anti-scriptural constitutions of government, in some of which religion is made an engine of state policy, and in others, entirely trodden under foot. Nations, in their constituted capacity, say of the Son of God, "we will not have this man to reign over us."

2. Ungodly men are generally preferred to places of power and trust, under whose baleful influence wickedness "springs up like hemlock in the furrows of the field." "The wicked walk on every side when the vilest men are exalted."

3. Slavery, with all its hateful train of cruelties and abominations, continues to pollute and disgrace our highly favored land. And generally in proportion as the wickedness of the system is exposed, its votaries cling to it with the greater pertinacity.

4. The Sabbath continues to be desecrated by legal enactments, and the natural enmity of the human heart against God and his law makes a great part of the community take strength to themselves from this wickedness.

5. Gross immorality of every kind awfully abounds. Swearing, drunkenness, gambling of every description, lasciviousness and other vices, are practiced by many of all ranks.

6. Infidelity, popery, and every absurdity to which the corrupt mind of man gives birth, prevail to such a degree, as to threaten the utter subversion of liberty and religion.



7. God has of late years visited our land with pestilence, fire, and in some places scarcity of bread; and more recently with great pecuniary embarrassments, to let us know that the silver and the gold are his; yet "the people turn not to him that smiteth them, neither do they seek the Lord of hosts." The different political parties mutually criminate and re-criminate each other; not seeing the hand of the Lord in all this.

8. Among professors generally, and among ourselves in particular, great lukewarmness and unfruitfulness under the means of grace prevail. There is too little love among brethren, and a spirit of insubordination to the courts of Christ's house; and a readiness to impute the faithful exercise of discipline to personal enmity, are alarmingly prevalent.

For all which, and much more of a similar nature, we call on the people under our inspection to join with us in humbling ourselves before the Lord our God, to confess our numerous and aggravated offences, and to pray that his fierce anger may turn away from us.

For this purpose we appoint the first Thursday of March, 1838, to be observed as a day of public fasting.

#### CAUSES OF THANKSGIVING.

1. The nation is favored with peace. We are at amity with foreign powers.

2. The Lord has been pleased, in this season, to crown the year with his blessing. "He has called for the corn and increased it, and laid no famine upon us."

3. Above all, we still enjoy gospel ordinances. Our people hold fast their profession. Our brethren in Europe continue to contend for the faith which was once delivered to the saints. There are many raised up to plead the cause of the oppressed, and, in various quarters, there is manifested a laudable desire in church judicatories to return to the good old way in which their fathers walked. Let us then thank God and take courage.

For these, and similar causes, we appoint the last Thursday of November next, to be observed by the people under our inspection as a day of public thanksgiving.

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#### ECCLESIASTICAL PROCEEDINGS.

The Southern Presbytery of the E. S. Synod, of the Reformed Presbyterian Church met in the city of Philadelphia

on the 17th ult. and was opened with a sermon by the Moderator, Rev. James M. Willson, from 1st Tim. iv. 11. "These things command and teach." After sermon the court was constituted by the Moderator with prayer. The sessions of Presbytery were continued by adjournment from Tuesday till Thursday inclusive. We give the following sketch of proceedings.

In the absence of the Clerk, Rev. M. Roney, the Rev. W. L. Roberts was appointed Clerk *pro. tem.* Dr. Willson apologized for the absence of Rev. M. Roney, stating that his only child had died and was to be buried on the day of the meeting of Presbytery; and that under these circumstances it was impossible he could be present, except at the close of the sessions. It was unanimously resolved that the reason be sustained as sufficient. After the reading and approval of the minutes of last meeting, and enquiry as to the fulfilment of appointments—to which satisfactory answers were given: Papers were presented. Of these, one was a Call on the Rev. W. L. Roberts by the congregation of Sterling, N. Y.; one an Appeal from the session of the Newburgh congregation, and the remainder were Petitions for supplies of gospel ordinances. The Call from Sterling had been sustained by the Western Presbytery, in whose bounds the congregation is. Being presented, it was accepted. The Appeal from a decision of the Newburgh session was referred to the Committee on Discipline, and the Petitions for supplies, to the Committee on supplies. A letter from Mr. James M. Beattie, Student, stating his reasons for absence was received and his excuse sustained. M. Roney and Dr. Willson, ministers, with W. Thompson and A. Gillespie, Ruling Elders, were appointed a Committee to hear a piece of trial from Mr. Stevenson, Student, and to attend to the examination of young men, who may wish to be taken under care of Presbytery before next meeting. The Moderator assigned subjects for pieces of trial to Messrs. Acheson, Beattie, and Stevenson, to be delivered at next meeting. The committees appointed on the "Overtures" published by Gen. Synod were continued. The Committee on Discipline reported as follows:

"That they have considered the only case referred to them, viz. the appeal from a decision of the session of Newburgh. The appellant, it appears, was adjudged to receive a *Sessional admonition*, for an offence against the good order of the church in not being "called before marriage" in the congregation of which he was a member. From this decision he appealed, and gives as reasons, among others, the following, which we consider the chief. Ignorance of the Church's or-

der, Omission of the order in some other congregations, and The officiating of the pastor of the Coldenham congregation in the marriage, the pastor of the Newburgh congregation being present. Upon an examination of these and the other reasons, your Committee deem them entirely insufficient to warrant this court to sustain the appeal. The plea of ignorance is not pleadable in bar of the action of a court in support of the order of the house of God. It is the duty of the members of the church to inform themselves—and they have access, equally with members of the court, to the Confession, containing the rule which is explicit upon the subject, declaring that “the purpose of marriage shall be published three several sabbath days in the congregation, at the *place* or *places* of their most usual and constant abode, *respectively*; and of this publication the minister who is to join them in marriage shall have sufficient testimony before he proceed to solemnize the marriage.”

Upon this rule the Session of Newburgh appear to have acted, and by it, in the judgment of your committee, their decision is fully sustained. It, moreover, there has been neglect, in any part of the church, of the rule, which is the long established law of the church, it is no argument that it should be in *all places*, and always neglected. On the contrary, that session, or other court, is entitled to commendation, which shall be faithful in the exercise of discipline. It is equally an invalid plea, that ministers officiated in, or were present at, the marriage. Courts are not to be trammelled in the performance of duty according to law, by the sentiments or actings of individuals. These may be grounds of censure of the agents, but are not to impede the legal exercise of discipline.

Your committee therefore recommend the adoption of the following resolution.

Resolved, That that the appeal of \* \* \* be *not sustained*.”

The above report and RESOLUTION were adopted. Dr. Willson laid on the table, to be called up at next meeting, the following Preamble and resolution; “*Whereas*, it is important that a uniform practice in the matter of the proclamation of “bans of marriage,” be maintained in all our congregations; and *Whereas*, misapprehensions have existed and do still exist, to a considerable extent, as to the law of the church on that subject; and *Whereas*, there has never been any modification of the long established and excellent regulation contained in the Directory for Public Worship—though it was, years ago, tampered with: Therefore, Resolved that this court consider the law, respecting the proclamation of the purpose of marriage, in the Directory for Worship, still binding, and enjoin its careful observance on all the congregations under our care.

After attending to the above and other items of business, which we have not room to notice, Presbytery adjourned to meet at Newburgh on the 2d Tuesday of May, 1838.

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ACTIVITY IN THE CHRISTIAN LIFE.

The cultivation of personal religion, in an increase of vital godliness, claims the constant and best attention of christian professors. It is at once their incumbent duty and highest interest to maintain habitual intercourse with God, and to aim at living in a manner worthy "the high vocation wherewith they are called." They should never rest satisfied with their present attainments, however great; but, keeping constantly in view the high standard of perfection exhibited in the Scriptures, they should, with increasing eagerness and perseverance, "press towards the mark, for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." But though it is the obvious duty and interest of christians to cultivate personal piety with constancy and ardor, it is to be feared, that many are not sufficiently alive to the importance of the subject: and we may be allowed to affirm, without any breach of that charity which thinketh no evil, that, at the present day, the piety of many who claim to be the Lord's people, is extremely weak and inoperative. And we apprehend their languishing condition is partly the result of prevailing misconceptions formed respecting the nature of the christian life. Many seem to think that little more is necessary than to make a profession, by joining some church, to attend to the external observances of the sanctuary and live free from the commission of the grosser sins which bring scandal upon the life. They forget, or they never knew, as they should, that God requires the heart, and that all their thoughts and words and conduct should be brought into a state of conformity to the Divine law. Some are disposed, from misunderstanding or misapplying certain truths contained in the Scriptures, to consider,

that there is no necessity, on their part, "to give all diligence to make their calling and election sure." They cherish a baneful indolence in matters of religion and often attempt to find an apology in the inability of man to do any good, which is asserted in Scripture. They read the words of Christ, "Without me ye can do nothing," and conclude from this declaration, that it would be the grossest legalism for them to attempt to "work out their own salvation with fear and trembling," as if this exhortation were not inseparably conjoined with "it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do." If they are urged to the performance of duty, if their consciences reprove them for neglect, they are ready to reply, "We can do nothing;" and thus they excuse their indolence, and contentedly live in a state of spiritual sloth. We are constrained to believe, that this Antinomian spirit is increasing in the present day, and that Satan is endeavouring to draw into this snare many, whom he cannot catch in the net of Pelagian, Semi-Pelagian, Arminian, and Hopkinsian heresies, by which the minds of thousands are withdrawn from a dependence on the grace of God.

While, however, we maintain that the christian should be "always abounding in the work of the Lord," let not our meaning be mistaken. The conversion of a sinner is the work of the Holy Spirit: and the only ground of our acceptance with God, is the righteousness of Christ received by faith. "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." 1. Cor. iii. 11. It would be impious folly to think that our goodness, arising from any active obedience to the law of God, could, in any degree, secure the pardon of our sins, or the justification of our persons. The Redeemer, in his peculiar work, has no co-adjutors. Salvation is entirely of grace, and not of works, lest any man should boast. Though salvation be entirely "by grace," the christian life must still be considered as active; for the faith by which we are united to the Lord Jesus Christ, and made partakers of salvation, is an active principle. So is every other grace of the Holy Spirit. "Faith *worketh* by love." Gal. v. 6. "I will shew thee my faith by my works." James ii. 18. The scriptures and the nature of the christian life, clearly evince, that habitual activity is the duty of all who believe in Christ for salvation—that they should diligently "work out their own salvation."

1. Activity is expressly enjoined in the Scriptures. "Labour not," says the Saviour, "for the meat that perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life,"

John vi. 27. "Strive," says the same high authority, "to enter in at the straight gate," Luke xiii. 24. "Work out," says Paul, "your own salvation with fear and trembling," Phil. ii. 12. "But be doers of the word," says James, "and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves." James i. 22. Listen also to Peter; 2 Pet. i. 5—7. "And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith, virtue; and to virtue, knowledge," &c. In the Epistle to the Hebrews, chap. iv. 11. we read, "Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest." These are but a very few of the passages with which the Scriptures abound, in reference to the subject under consideration; and the texts are so plain, that it would be offering an insult to the understandings of persons capable of reading the Bible, to attempt to show, by laboured proof, that they fully prove the position, in support of which they are adduced. To labour, and strive, and work, and do, and diligently to add one grace to another, surely intimate, very plainly, that the life of the christian is not one of sloth and inglorious ease—of idleness and cold indifference. Up, then, christians, and in obedience to the command of your Lord, "Labour to enter into the rest that remaineth to the people of God." If, in times past, you have indulged in drowsiness and sloth, awake now to laborious diligence. Your Lord is urging you to activity; and he assures you that your labour shall not be in vain.

2. If we attend to the descriptions given of the christian life in the Scriptures, we must conclude that it is one of activity.

The christian is described as a *soldier*. Hence he is exhorted to "put on the whole armour of God." A soldier's life is one of watchfulness and toil, when he must reside on the tented-field to oppose the enemies of his country. He may, at times indeed, enjoy ease, when the fierceness of war gives way to desirable peace: but in the season of warfare, he is exposed to danger on the battle-field; and he is harassed with fatigue when pursuing the fear-stricken or routed enemy, or when retreating before victorious adversaries. But the christian is a soldier of Jesus Christ; and his warfare is not accomplished till the moment of dissolution, when he comes off more than a conqueror through Christ who loved him. He must, while he lives, be in the field of conflict: for the enemies with which he has to contend never make peace. They sometimes make their assaults openly, but more frequently they employ guile: for Satan goes about seeking to devour not only as a roaring lion; but he also as-

sumes the character of an angel of light, and then his attacks are most to be dreaded. The christian, therefore, must ever keep on his armour, that he may be able to stand in the evil day. He must watch, and pray, and wield the sword of the Spirit, lest his enemies become more than a match for him. Keeping his face to the enemy, he should offer a manful resistance, and aspire to the palm of victory and the crown of fidelity: and knowing that victory is promised him, he should resolve, in the strength of divine grace, never to yield till all the attempts of his foes have been completely foiled. And that he may be inspired with courage, let him ponder the import of the exhortation addressed to the whole band of christian warriors, "Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong." His constant aim should be to fight the good fight of faith, that through Jesus Christ, the Captain of salvation, he may come off more than a conqueror.

The christian is described as *a person running a race*. Running was one of the exercises at the games celebrated on the plains of Olympus, when a vast concourse of people assembled, to witness the feats of agility and strength of the competitors for the proposed prizes. To carry off the reward, every runner exerted himself to the utmost, and endeavoured to reach the goal before those who started along with him. There are frequent allusions in the Scriptures, to this ancient game. 1. Cor. ix. 24—26. "Know ye not that they which run in a race, run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run that ye may obtain. And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown, but we an incorruptible. I therefore so run, not as uncertainly." &c. Phil. ii. 16. "That I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain." Phil. iii. 13, 14. "This one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark, for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." Heb. xii. 1. "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us." But while the runners at these games, received but an earthly and a fading crown as their reward; the christian, having successfully reached the termination of his course, shall obtain an unfading and everlasting crown of glory. And if there were multitudes of spectators to witness the contests of the racers on the plains of Olympus, who, by

their plaudits, stimulated them in their course ; believers have a far greater and a more noble "cloud of witnesses," who are looking eagerly on, and watching them in all their exertions to arrive with honour at the mark, when they shall obtain the approbation of their Lord. It should be the aim of every disciple of Christ, to make great and rapid progress in the way to heaven. Time is uncertain ; and there is neither work nor knowledge in the grave. It is only in this present life, that meetness for dwelling in the presence of God can be acquired ; and, like persons running a race, therefore, the christian should "leave the things that are behind, and press towards those things which are before." How quickly and perseveringly do persons run in a race, for the honour that cometh from men ? How earnestly and steadily do worldly men run the career of wealth ? And shall not the believer put forth all his energies in the race, at the conclusion of which he shall obtain a kingdom and a crown, and be admitted into the highest society in the universe.

The christian is described *as a wrestler*. Wrestling was another of the Olympic exercises ; and when it is spoken of in the New Testament, it is generally in reference to the Grecian games. It is an exercise that requires strength, skill, and perseverance, and is one of great activity : and hence we learn, that the christian should not indulge in slothful ease. But with whom, or with what, has the believer to wrestle ? Let Paul declare. Eph. vi. 12. "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." When the apostle excepts flesh and blood in this passage, he is to be understood as intimating, that the contest of the christian is not of the same description, as that of the Olympic prize-contesters. Theirs was with flesh and blood ; but the believer must contend with spiritual opponents—with Satan and his wicked angelic associates. The believer has also to wrestle with himself ; or more properly speaking, against unsubdued depravity within him. He is not free from sinning ; and the sin that doth more easily beset him, is ever ready, when suitable temptations are offered, to become urgent and powerful. He must, therefore, strive against all the motions of sin. If he yield, he wounds his conscience, deprives himself of peace, and retards his progress in holiness. He may, indeed, frequently find, that it is no easy task to wrestle successfully against the lusts of the flesh, and of the mind ; but let him remember that heaven is to be gained, and that too,



at the expense of self-denial, and by mortifying his members that are upon the earth. The believer must also wrestle *with* God. Jacob did so with the angel, and obtained the blessing. The more earnestly God is importuned, the more successfully will the christian wrestle *against* principalities and powers, and the more strength will he have, for resisting the allurements to sin, with which he is surrounded in the world.

The christian is described *as a traveller* bound for a far distant country. Hence the term "walk" is frequently employed in the scriptures to point out the active progressive nature of the christian life. As the traveller who sets out to visit foreign countries, must improve his time, and go progressively forward to the places which he intends to visit, so the christian traveller must keep the heavenly country, and the city of God, continually in view. There are innumerable objects to divert his attention from the proper road; and he must, therefore, be ever on his guard, lest he be seduced from the way. The pleasures and pursuits of this life may induce him to halt, and forget his high destination. But he must not allow the temporal trifles that strike the senses, to hide unseen and eternal things from the eye of faith, to stop him in his course, and to divert him from the straight and narrow way, along which he must travel to the city of endless happiness. Steadily should he move onwards; and having surmounted all difficulties, and vanquished all enemies, and overcome all temptations, he shall appear with acceptance before God, in the Zion above.

Reader! do these descriptions of the followers of Jesus, not distinctly point out the exceedingly active nature of the christian life? It becomes you, then, to fight, and run, and wrestle, and go forward in the way to everlasting life. You will be wanting to yourself, as well as disobedient to your Master, the Lord Jesus, if you remain in a state of cold indifference, when there is so much reason for unwearied application on your part, in preparing for a future state of happiness.

3. The activity of the christian life appears, also, from considering what is to be done on the part of believers. Knowledge must be acquired. No duty can be performed aright, without competent information. Little religious comfort can be enjoyed, unless the mind be stored with the doctrines and promises of the gospel. And it is by means of the truth that God sanctifies his people. But knowledge cannot be acquired without active application. The Bible

must be read frequently, carefully, and with earnest prayer, for the illumination of the Spirit, that its contents may be known, and that the power of the truth may be felt. Recourse must also be had to serious meditation, while helps to the understanding of the Scriptures, must be carefully sought after, and diligently improved. And the preaching of the word, with meetings for christian conference and other means of grace must be waited on with faith, love, prayer, and self-application. We ask professing christians, if they are seeking for knowledge as for hid treasure? Why is there so much deadness among the professed disciples of Christ? The reason is, they are not sufficiently alive to the importance of scriptural knowledge; and giving way to indolence, they content themselves with but a small portion of that information in divine things, which diligence in the improvement of time would enable them to acquire. Can enemies be successfully resisted without an extensive acquaintance with the word of God? Can steady progress in holiness be made by those who are ignorant of sanctifying truth? And can christians, as in duty bound, contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints, if they have but a partial knowledge of that faith? Christians, then, should conscientiously study the word of God; and assuredly they will be amply rewarded, by a constant, careful, and devout attention to the scriptures of truth.

Habits of devotion must be cultivated. The more seldom religious exercises are engaged in, the less relish have sinful men for divine and spiritual things; and when devotional duties are neglected, can spiritual life be vigorous? It is of the greatest importance, therefore, to engage in prayer frequently, and to have the mind trained to habitual meditation on spiritual subjects. But such a state of mind as is requisite for prayer and meditation, cannot be attained without active exertion on the part of the believer. The most conscientious and spiritual christians have, at times, much reluctant backwardness to overcome; and they often find, that all their firmness of purpose scarcely enables them to perform regularly and seasonably their duties. Let christians then be persuaded to persevere in the acquisition of devotional habits; and assuredly they will find that it is good for them to draw near to God. "O how love I thy law? it is my meditation all the day." "Pray without ceasing."

The mortification of sin is another duty to which the christian ought to pay particular attention. "Let not sin reign in your mortal body," is the exhortation of Paul; and in ac-

cordance with this injunction did he himself act. 1 Cor. ix. 26, 27. Unweariedly must the believer strive against sin: for, if he remain at ease, he cannot reasonably expect, that the lusts of the flesh and of the mind will be subdued. Has he not reason to fear, that, if he is not constantly putting off the old man, which is corrupt, according to the evil lusts, sin will acquire more power, and usurp still greater dominion over him? Holiness must be acquired; for without holiness shall no man see the Lord: but if corrupt dispositions are not carefully curbed and subdued, no man can be holy. Hence the address to believers, "Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth."

Christians must also continually strive to do all the will of God. It is not enough, that some attention be paid to the worship of God; but it ought to be the aim of every professed disciple of Christ to yield universal obedience to the divine law. The law of God embraces all the relations of life, and enjoins whatever is proper and beneficial to be observed in the different stations and relations occupied by men in the world. The Saviour told his disciples, "Ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you." And we are assured, that "he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever." It is therefore the imperative duty of christians to do all the will of God, and obey all the commands of Christ; and this plainly shews that indolence is incompatible with genuine christianity.

If the christian, then, must acquire knowledge, cultivate habits of devotion, mortify sin, and yield universal obedience to the law of God, the conclusion, that the christian life is one of active exertion, cannot be disputed. Christian! be not deceived; indolence is inconsistent with the faith to which you lay claim. Bestir yourself, then, forasmuch as ye know that your labour shall not be in vain in the Lord.

Let it be remarked, that christian activity has reference to sanctification, and that those alone who are justified by faith in Christ possess the ability to work out the salvation of their souls. Holiness is absolutely necessary to our seeing God: and a process of purification is progressively carried on in the souls of believers from the time of their conversion till the hour of death, when they are made perfect in holiness. But this progressive work,—the work of "the God of peace,"—is accomplished by means adapted to the active rational nature of man; and no reasonable expectation of its completion can be entertained, unless the appointed means be diligently improved. As the husbandman must cultivate his

fields, and sow his precious seed, in order to reap a crop in harvest, so must the christian cultivate the ground of his heart, and diligently sow to the Spirit, that of the Spirit he may reap everlasting life. And be it remembered, that the believer is not required to advance in his career of purity in reliance on his own wisdom and strength: but, according to his need, he is supplied with grace out of the fulness of Christ, by which he cultivates holiness and prepares for heaven.

“The hand of the diligent maketh rich.” It is true, that some persons acquire riches by legacy; and so does the christian, when, upon his believing, God imputes to him the righteousness of Christ, and bestows on him a sure title to the inheritance that never fades away. But when a legacy is received, a person may still have to learn how to enjoy his wealth, and how to conduct himself in the society in which his wealth requires him to move. And so it is with the believer. He must become meet for the inheritance of the saints in light. He is not perfect so long as he is in this world; but it should be his constant endeavour to perfect holiness in the fear of the Lord. Does he expect to see Christ, and to enjoy God in Christ in heaven? “Every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself even as he is pure.” Does he desire to die in peace, to “attain to the resurrection of the dead, and to enjoy an honourable acquittal at the last day, and a blessed immortality?” “Wherefore, beloved, seeing you look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless.”

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#### DIVISIONS IN THE CHURCHES.

(Continued from page 250.)

#### THE REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

This church was many years apparently unaffected by the lax spirit of popular catholicism, which was in operation, relaxing the frame work of the other bodies around her. None were admitted to the enjoyment of the privileges of ecclesiastical fellowship, except members of the body, and to membership those only were introduced who pledged themselves to the whole doctrine of the Westminster Confession of Faith, the Catechisms, larger and shorter, the substance of the form

of Church Government, and the Directory for Worship, agreed upon by the Westminster Divines, to the National Covenant of Scotland, and the Solemn League and Covenant of Scotland, England and Ireland, and to the testimony of the Reformed Presbyterian Church in North America. Means were carefully employed to ascertain that applicants for admission had read and approved those documents before they were permitted to bind themselves by vow, that they would adhere to them as founded on the Scriptures. This body had never entered into ecclesiastical connection with other denominations by sending delegates to sit in their judicatories, or by admitting delegates from others to sit in theirs. They did not mix up their religion with the politics of the country. As neither the doctrines nor the precepts of the Bible are recognized in the civil constitutions of the land, as there is no National profession of subjection to Messiah, the "Prince of the Kings of the earth"—no allegiance acknowledged to Jehovah, and as millions of unoffending men are held in unrighteous bondage, under constitutional provisions. Reformed Presbyterians refused to participate in these sins against God and man, by swearing to support constitutions in which these moral evils are fully incorporated.

In the maintenance of this great and holy system of gospel truth and heavenly statutes, they had continued harmonious for a long succession of years. There were no jarring and discordant elements to interrupt the harmony of their fellowship in the devotions of the sanctuary, or the courts of judicature. Their numbers greatly increased, especially within the present century; congregations were organized, and grew in strength, from Vermont to South Carolina, and from New York to the Mississippi. But the spirit of catholic latitudinarianism began to exert its influence among them, and to produce the same effects which it had caused among others, wherever it had prevailed. In the sessions of Synod 1825, held in the City of New York, a plan of correspondence with the General Assembly of the Presbyterian church was introduced, the professed object of which was to remove existing divisions, and bring all together on a scriptural basis. This measure had originated with the General Assembly, and delegates had been appointed to meet with a Reformed Presbyterian delegation, for the purpose of agreeing on a plan of correspondence, should they decide on the appointment of delegates. They were appointed. The commissioners on the part of the two bodies met and framed a treaty of correspondence by mutual delegation, which was

ratified at the succeeding session of the General Assembly, and under it, delegates were appointed to sit in the Reformed Presbyterian Synod, at its next meeting, if the door should be opened to them. But when the Synod met, the treaty, after much discussion, was rejected. The doctrines of the treaty became an apple of discord, and had the General Assembly intended to disturb the peace and distract the counsels of this church, it could not have devised a more effectual measure than this plan of correspondence. The meeting of Synod at which the scheme was first suggested, was any thing but pleasant and peaceful; and never afterwards did that body enjoy its former and delightful harmony until a rupture was produced in the body, and the abettors of catholicism, having displayed the hostile banner against the distinctive doctrines, laws and authority of the church, were ejected from her communion.

The laws by which the human mind acts, whether for good or evil, are as fixed as those by which the movements of the physical universe are kept in operation. By the term laws here we mean not the moral statutes revealed by the light of nature, or recorded in the Holy Scriptures, but that constitution of mind, in its faculties and principles, by which, when put into certain circumstances, and under the influence of certain motives, it will act according to that constitution and those principles. This observation is illustrated by the effect of what are called catholic principles, wherever they have become predominant in the church. The essence of this scheme of catholicism is to bury, in entire oblivion, all those doctrines and practices by which the various denominations are distinguished from each other, and bring all together into one body, on the ground of those principles in which they agree. Those ministers and members of the Reformed Presbyterian church, who were imbued with the spirit of the treaty of correspondence, soon began to regard the points of difference between the two bodies as of very trivial import, and of course as deserving of little or no attention—and to consider that they ought not to be made a bar to communion in the church. One article in the treaty was, that the judicatories of the two churches might review the judicial decisions of each other in matters of discipline, on all points, distinctive of these bodies. In these points all disciplinary decisions would have been reduced to matters of mere form. One denomination would have inflicted censure on its members for some departure from its doctrine or order, and while this would have been done with all solemnity in the name of the

church's Head, a right was conceded and guaranteed to the other, to set it aside as altogether null and void. It could not be right both to inflict the censure, and pronounce it void, the circumstances continuing the same. There could be no plausible interpretation of this provision of the treaty, but that the infliction of censure for any violation of the laws of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, that would not incur the same censure in the Presbyterian Church; was in itself wrong, and that therefore, any Presbyterian judicatory was justifiable in reversing it. All this is grounded on the admission, that the Reformed Presbyterian church has been in error in making any opinion or practice censurable, which has not been made so in the Presbyterian church, in one word, that there never should have been a Reformed Presbyterian church, and that it ought to be merged in the Presbyterian body. It may be plead that the argument might as well be applied against the Presbyterian church as against the Reformed Presbyterian, as the right of review was a mutual guarantee. But this is not so; for the Reformed Presbyterian holds all the truth, maintained in the other body and much more—it enforces all the christian duties of the other and many more. In actual practice, the reversing of decrees of censure would have been all on one side, and none on the other. Those members, then, of the Reformed Presbyterian church, who understood and approved that provision of the treaty, must have held all points of difference between the two bodies to be matters of indifference, or at least, as matters so trivial that they should not be embodied in terms of communion. On those principles which actuate the minds of men, when any one who has been zealous in the maintenance of any doctrine as important, is brought to regard it as a small matter, or indifferent, if there be not strongly counteracting causes, he will soon go over to the opposite side, and even become ardent in his zeal for the contrary doctrine. His mind has begun to move in a direction opposite to the truth, and the impulses which first put it in motion will hurry it on with accelerated velocity.

One of the most prominent matters on which there is a doctrinal and practical distinction between the Presbyterian and the Reformed Presbyterian churches, is in relation to the civil government of the United States. The former incorporates with it fully—the latter dissents from it; the former approves of it altogether—the latter testifies against many things in it, as dishonoring to God and adverse to the rights of man. Covenanters have always been zealous in the main

tenance of the doctrine, that all nations, where the bible is known, are bound imperatively to recognize it as the supreme standard of national law and profess allegiance to Jesus Christ as Lord of all, and that all men, of whatever nation or colour, have equal rights to liberty. Those who began to maintain these opinions *feebly*, and to regard them as things indifferent, very naturally for them, considered the testimony of the church in their support, and "against the contrary evils" in the civil institutions, as severe and unwarrantable, and to regard with favour what they had formerly condemned as an aggravated sin. In one word, they went over to the General Assembly and avowed their approbation of the civil constitutions of the nation. But the treaty before us was, in one view, *a cause*, and in another *an effect*. Many of the families of the Covenanters had rapidly accumulated property, by their honest industry and by their sober and economical habits. Their increase in worldly goods brought them into intimate intercourse with the gay and the wealthy among their neighbors, to whom their intelligence and moral habits recommended them. It requires much grace to resist the temptations of worldly, wealthy, fashionable and irreligious society. Without this grace, the dress, the equipage, the manners, the opinions and the practices of carnal associates are imitated. The mind of the professor of religion becomes secularized and filled with the vanities of life. This process is much more rapid in the case of those whose associations have been with the plain and poor disciples of Christ. Many Reformed Presbyterians resisted or avoided all these temptations, others were led away by them. They became ensnared by fashionable folly; the duties of family worship and prayer meetings were made to yield to gay family parties of pleasure. Strictness of holy walking with God in all religious duties was thought to savour of illiberality and to impose restraints on innocent amusements. The more lax morality of many Presbyterian professors was thought good enough for Covenanters. All this led to some mingle in the political strifes of the day and to pant after political influence and distinction. Some began to esteem it more desirable to become swaggering politicians at the ballot boxes, than punctual and devout worshippers in praying societies. With all such, the treaty of correspondence met a favorable reception, and not a little aggravated the evils in which it originated. A paper in this spirit, and embodying a eulogium on the rapid progress of improvement in all that is excellent by society at large, and high commendations on the American govern-



ment as the best that had ever existed since the commencement of the christian era, and at the same time denouncing as fanatics those who maintained the church's ancient testimony, was drawn up by the chairman of a committee appointed to draft a pastoral letter, and read in the Eastern Subordinate Synod, at its sessions of 1832, in New-York. The offensive parts of this document were expunged by Synod. The author of the paper immediately after the adjournment of the court, called a meeting of his catholic minority, in which it was resolved, in defiance of Synod, to publish the whole document with notes still more offensive, fiercely attacking the Synod and its members. Soon after this publication was issued, signed by the ministers and elders of the minority; a *pro re nata* meeting of synod was called and libels were framed and served on the authors of the fierce, erroneous and divisive document. At the next annual meeting of Synod, the libelled ministers left the court in haste and tumult. Two other citations were served on them, and they were then solemnly suspended from the office of the ministry and from the privileges of the church. They constituted a new and separate body, which they called the Eastern Subordinate Synod. At the sessions of General Synod in August following, the deeds of the subordinate Synod in the exercise of discipline on the offenders were approved.

The suspended ministers, with some others who had imbibed their latitudinarian spirit, constituted what they denominated the General Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church. Thus the same causes which had divided the Reformed Dutch church into *two* parties, and the Associate Reformed into *four*, drew away from the Reformed Presbyterians, a body of sectaries, which still exists.

Since the excision of the catholic sectarians, the church has gone on harmoniously as formerly, in the maintenance of the doctrines, testimony, and order which she has embraced for many generations. Her congregations have increased, and the number of her members in the United States is now greater than in any former period of her history.

The New Light body untaught by all their experience, are pursuing, in the same way, their hopeless schemes of union, and have invited a convention of Protestant churches to meet and accomplish a reunion of all, if possible. What the basis of this union shall be, they have not, as a body, even hinted. It is impossible, however, that they can expect two or three delegates from each of several bodies, as the Reformed Dutch, the Presbyterian, and the four or five Seces-

sion churches, will be able to bring *all* to harmonize in doctrine, worship and order. Their object, if it extend beyond a desire to discover which of all these denominations will admit them into its communion, on the most favorable terms, must be to prevail on them to leave out of their terms of communion all distinctive points, and unite on the basis of that about which they all agree. If we are to expound their views, by an article in a late number of their small *Missionary Magazine*, published in the congregation adhering to the leader in their divisive courses, their plan of union will embrace, not only all Protestants, but even all Papists. The doctrine of that article is, that in the organization of churches among the heathen by Missionaries, there should be no Confession of Faith but the Bible, used as a test of soundness in the faith. The writer, indeed goes on to say, not very consistently with his general proposition of the Bible, being the only Confession, that no more should be required of heathen converts who acknowledge the Bible, than to renounce Pagan idolatry, profess their faith in Christ and promise to obey him. All this, not only those who deny the whole doctrine of a trinity of persons in the Godhead, the divinity of Christ and his atoning sacrifice, but also every Popish priest, and every Papist, would assent to without a moment's controversy. If no more than this is to be required of a Pagan convert, who can prove that more should be asked of a converted infidel or other profane man in Christendom? There is the same reason for preserving the purity of the church in Hindoostan or China, as in America or Britain. We do not deem it uncharitable to believe, that some of the leaders in this schismatical body admit all this, and would abolish every creed and confession except the new and wonderfully brief one—"You renounce Paganism, believe and obey Christ." It would be indiscreet however to avow this in a synodical document or even to go farther in a *Magazine* than to provoke the question—what do they mean? A plain avowal would not only alarm, but drive away from them many people who still adhere to them, and probably three or four of their ministers. Nay more—a proposition to unite the Reformed Dutch, Presbyterians and Seceders on this scheme of communion, devised for Pagan converts, would not be listened to for a moment by any of these denominations.

God in his holy providence, exercised especially over the church, has marked distinctly with his disapprobation every scheme of union, based on the abandonment of any truth embodied in the church's creed—the great depository of her at-

tainments. They have all proved not merely abortive—they have produced effects directly opposite to the intention of those who have contrived them. They will continue to rend more and more the church, until they are utterly abandoned. “What hast thou to do with peace, so long as thou sufferest that woman Jezebel?”

(To be Continued.)

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#### EDUCATION IN SCOTLAND.

We ask the serious attention of our readers to the facts stated, and judicious remarks contained in the following communication. It is from Dr. Humphrey, and forms one of an interesting series of letters from that gentleman, publishing in the New-York Observer.

The parochial schools of Scotland have been the admiration of enlightened men in all countries, for two hundred and fifty years. Like civil and religious liberty and all the noble institutions of that country, they are the offspring of the Reformation. Before John Knox rolled back the thunders of the Vatican upon the Pope and his Cardinals, and blew that mighty blast which shook down the walls of spiritual Babylon in North Britain, the people were as deeply sunk in ignorance, as they were in the superstition and idolatry of the great anti-christain apostacy. Very few, except the nobility, could read, and almost none could write. But as soon as Scotland had thrown off the Romish yoke, or rather, while she was struggling for life with ‘the man of sin,’ and the faggots were scarcely quenched in the grass market of Edinburgh, the Reformers were busily employed in maturing a plan for the universal diffusion of letters throughout the country. They rightly judged, that to eradicate the errors of Popery, and instil the faith of the gospel into the hearts of the rising generation, the establishment of schools under *pious* teachers was essential. How anxious they were to see a school-house planted by the side of every kirk, and to make sound learning the hand-maid of pure religion, is strikingly manifest in the following extracts from the ‘First Book of Discipline,’ drawn up by Knox and his immortal compeers, and presented to the nobility in 1560—almost three centuries ago.

‘Seeing that God has determined that his kirk here on earth shall be taught, not by angels but by men; and seeing that men are born ignorant of God and of godliness; and seeing, also, that he ceaseth to illuminate men miraculously, of necessity it is, that your honors be most

careful for the virtuous education and godly up-bringing of the youth of this realm. For as they must succeed to us, so we ought to be careful that they have knowledge and erudition to profit and comfort that which ought to be most dear to us, to wit, the kirk and spouse of our Lord Jesus Christ. Of necessity, therefore, we judge it, that every kirk have one schoolmaster appointed; such an one at least, as is able to teach grammar and the Latin tongue, if the town be of any reputation. And further, we think it expedient, that in every notable town there should be erected a *college*, in which the arts, at least of rhetoric and logic, together with the tongues, be read, by sufficient masters, for whom honest stipends must be appointed; as also, that provision be made for them that are poor, and not able by themselves or their friends, to be sustained at letters. The rich and potent may not be permitted to suffer their children to spend their youth in a vain idleness, as heretofore they have done; but they must be exhorted, and by the censure of the kirk compelled, to dedicate their sons by good exercises to the profit of the kirk and commonwealth; and this they must do because they are able. The children of the poor must be supported and sustained on the charge of the kirk, trial being taken whether the spirit of docility be in them found, or not. If they be found apt to learning and letters, then may they not be permitted to reject learning but must be charged to continue their study, so that the commonwealth may have some comfort by them; and for this purpose, must discreet, grave and learned men be appointed to visit schools, for the trial of their exercise, profit and continuance; to wit, the ministers and elders, with the best learned men in every town. A certain time must be appointed to reading and learning the catechism, and a certain time to grammar and to the Latin tongue, and a certain time to the arts of philosophy and the other tongues, and a certain time to that study in which they intend chiefly to travel for the profit of the commonwealth; which time being expired, the children should either proceed to farther knowledge, or else they must be set to some handicraft, or to some other profitable exercise.'

This is a very remarkable document. I very much question whether the whole history of human improvement can furnish the outline of an educational system, at once so comprehensive, so simple, and so much in advance of the age in which it was drawn up; and certainly, there is nothing which more strikingly shows what a heaven-wide difference there is between the genius of Protestantism and Popery. That men, who had themselves been taught to consider 'ignorance as the mother of devotion,' should all at once have such enlargement of views, in regard to education, as soon as the light of reformation dawned upon their minds, and that they should find time to mature so wise a plan, while they were obliged to dispute every inch of ground with the enemy, and while, as yet, the conflict between light and darkness hung in such awful suspense,—is truly wonderful. It would almost seem as if there must have been something supernatural in the illumina-

tion which guided them; for they could have derived but little assistance from the most enlightened nations, whether ancient or modern; and to this very day, no material improvement has been made upon their system. If we did not know that our Puritan forefathers brought it along with them to New-England, the similarity is so striking, that no one could doubt the Scottish origin, and the Prussian system of popular education, the most perfect and efficient, probably, which the world ever saw, is manifestly indebted to the same source for all its essential elements.

It is not to be wondered at, perhaps, that a plan of religious and literary education, so novel as that which I have quoted above, and so much in advance of every thing else, gained its way slowly to the governmental patronage, which was thought essential to give it a fair trial. The views of Knox and his associates, thus promulgated in 1560, seem to have been for a long time regarded by the nobility (to use their own phrase) as 'a devout imagination;' and it was not till 1616, that James VI., in hopes thereby to give popularity to Episcopacy, which he was striving to set up in the room of the Kirk of Scotland, sought to give effect to the system of the Reformers, by an act of Privy Council. Seventeen years after, in the reign of Charles I. it was still more formally recognized by act of parliament.

But the church of Scotland did not wait these tardy and sinister moves of the government. Those good men, who saw so early and clearly what was necessary to lay the foundations of Protestantism broad and deep throughout the country, determined to do what they could for the establishment of parochial schools, however neglectful the civil rulers might be of their duty. While they expostulated with the nobility for their supineness, they exerted themselves as if all the hopes of Scotland depended on their efforts; in so much that, in the Lowlands especially, popular education had made great progress before the state came to their aid. It is stated in a document still extant, that only twenty years after the reformation, 'so great had been the progress of religious instruction in a country where, forty years before, the Bible was not suffered to be read, that almost every house possessed a copy, and that it was read in it!'

In Dr. McCrie's *Life of Melville*, there is a report of the visitation of parishes, in the diocese of St. Andrews, in 1611 and 1613, to this effect—'That the parishes which had schools, were more than double in number to those that wanted them. Where they were wanting, the visitors ordered them to be set

up; and where the provision for the master was inadequate, they made arrangements for remedying the evil.' 'This was the principle on which Scotland long acted; and by the moral machinery of pastors, schoolmasters, elders, deacons and catechists, this country, which, in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, was the most barbarous and bigoted of European nations, and the devoted slave of the Papacy, and whose priesthood held two-thirds of the landed property of the kingdom, became, in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the most thoroughly reformed and best educated in Europe.'

In 1646, when the Presbyterians had fully regained the ascendancy, the Scottish Parliament passed an act, requiring every parish to have a schoolmaster, and ordaining, that if in any case, *heritors* or land-holders neglected raising means for his support, the Presbytery should nominate twelve men, to make the assessment upon their property. Indeed, strange as it may appear, the period between 1638 and 1660, seems almost entitled to be called the *golden age* of popular education in Scotland. In the universal diffusion of *religious* instruction, it was decidedly so. 'For,' says *Kirkton*, a very respectable Church historian of the times, 'every parish had a minister, every village a school, every family almost had a Bible—yea, in most of the country, all the children of age could read, and were provided with Bibles either by their parents, or ministers. I have lived many years in a parish, where I never heard an oath—and you would not, for a great part of the country, have lodged in a family, where the Lord was not worshipped by reading, singing, and prayer. Nobody,' he quaintly adds, 'complained more of our church government, than our *taverners*, whose ordinary lament was, that their trade was hopeless—people were become so sober.' It was thus, by planting the school by the side of the kirk, that the Reformed clergy raised the people of Scotland, both from feudal bondage and spiritual thralldom; and most grateful was the return which they every where received. During that period, school teaching was a *regular profession*—as much so as that of the ministry, and men were *educated* for it. *Piety* no less than learning and aptness to teach, was regarded as an essential qualification in a school-master. The parish school was the nursery of the kirk, and the master was expected to co-operate with the minister, in all his plans and efforts for the spiritual good of the rising generation. To command the best talents and to place the teacher on the highest vantage ground, in the discharge of his duties, a house was provided for his family, and he received a liberal and permanent sup-

port. In the sacredness of his office, the pastor was above him; but in talents and scholarship, it was thought that the school-master stood upon nearly the same level.

It is this primitive and most desirable system of education which has secured for Scotland, and justly too, the highest meed of praise; and judging from my own impressions, before I visited that country, it will scarcely be believed, by those who have not particularly examined the subject, that during the greater part of the two last centuries, popular education has been on the decline, while her population has nearly trebled, and her wealth has increased a hundred fold. That this is actually the case, however, no one I think can doubt, who will look at the statistics collected and prepared with great pains by the editor of the *Scottish Guardian*, and published three years ago, under the superintendence of the Glasgow Education Association.

The first great shock which was given to the system of parochial schools in Scotland, was at the restoration of Charles II., when one-third of the clergy were driven into exile, and the school-masters and catechist followed them because they would not serve under the new Episcopal Establishment: and although the Revolution in 1688 restored both pastors and teachers, to the great advantage of the country, the schools never fully recovered. The union with England, so auspicious in most respects, seems to have been an injury, rather than an advantage, to the cause of religion and learning in Scotland; for during more than a century, from 1696 to 1803, while her population and wealth were rapidly on the increase, no addition was made to the number of her schools and churches; and the value of the school-master's stipend was greatly diminished. In 1803, there was still but one school to a parish, however large or populous; and it may well be said, that the profession of teaching had become synonymous with poverty, when it is added, that the maximum salary was £11 2s. 3d.! The maximum, however, was soon after raised to £22 4s. 5d. and the minimum to £16 13s. with a house and garden containing about a *quarter* of an acre. 'As might have been expected, so pitiful an improvement did not answer the end. The school-master was poor and despised, receiving less for his services than the common artisans of the country, and eking out his miserable subsistence as he could. Of course, the care of his school became, in many cases, but a secondary matter. The wealthier classes withdrew their children from the parish schools, and for higher wages employed masters of better qualifications to teach them.'

As a natural consequence of this lamentable decline, it was found by a Parliamentary Board of Commissioners in 1816, that out of 416,000 inhabitants in the Scottish Highlands and Islands, there were 100,000 adults, who could neither read nor write. There were 171 parish schools containing only 8,550 scholars. Two hundred seventy-four private schools were found, however, which, with the former, afforded the means of education to one *sixteenth* of the inhabitants. In all Scotland, there were 942 parish schools, and 2,222 private schools; but the whole attendance did not exceed 176,000, that is, not more than a *twelfth* of the entire population was at school. Add to this, that from the smallness of the income in both classes of schools, the *style* of education was found to be very low, and the office of a school-master to be any thing but inviting to men of competent education and talents. Some good probably resulted from the commission; for in 1828, the maximum salary was raised by an act of Parliament to £35 and the minimum to £27. Still nothing was done to extend the parochial system. After a hundred and twenty years, the schools remained at the same sacred number of one to each parish.

I should be glad to quote the eloquent requiem (shall I call it?) of the writer before me entire; but I must content myself with extracting a few sentences.

“Much and proudly do we talk of our parish schools; and often do we eulogize the men who founded them in a barbarous age, and cherished them amidst difficulties and prejudices, which we can now but little appreciate; but what have we done to imitate their patriotism, or give effect to their benevolent designs? It is said, the Romans never talked so much about Brutus and liberty, as when they crouched most submissively to the will of the imperial tyrants; and surely never did any age talk more than the present about education and the *school-master*; yet no civilized and Protestant nation in Europe is at present doing less to diffuse its blessings, and raise the qualifications of the teachers of youth. We are vain of our past fame, as an educated nation; talk of the prospective wisdom of men like Knox and Melville; but we are the degenerate descendants of a noble ancestry, who little imagined that the designs which they conceived, and which with indomitable perseverance they pursued, should be left well nigh to perish, in an age, boasting of its superior refinement—gathering wealth without measure—whose merchants live in luxury unknown to the ancient princes of Scotland; but who apply the accumulating *wealth* and *resources* of their country, to every possible purpose under heaven, saving that of rendering the educational institutions which they founded, adequate to the *wants* of their country.”



## REVIEW OF JENKYN ON THE ATONEMENT.

This book furnishes another proof, in addition to many previous ones, that we live in an age of new things. I agree with the Editors of the Repertory, that "it is a very trifling affair." Among men of mind and correct religious information, it can do no harm; but among the great mass of society, especially those whose minds are imbued with the principles of New school divinity, or who are exposed to their influence, it is a pernicious book. For the sake of such, that they may be warned, and put upon their guard against the cunning craftiness of those who lie in wait to deceive, some notice should be taken of it, as means have been employed to give it, like many other modern heretical works, a wide circulation. It has been introduced to the notice of the public, by a very fulsome preface, written by a Mr. Carroll, lately pastor of a Presbyterian congregation in Brooklyn, N. Y.; in which he denies some of the most important doctrines always maintained by the Presbyterian church. Both *book* and *preface* are a direct attack upon the great doctrine of Atonement by the righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ, with which all the other doctrines of the Gospel are inseparably connected. Mislead the sinner by false views of the Atonement, and his ruin is secured. If he be ignorant of the way in which a man is justified with God, though, like Nichodemus, a Doctor in Israel, he knows not the first principles of the oracles of God.

Mr. Jenkyn seems to be sensible of what every sound metaphysician has taught—the necessity of justly and clearly defining the subject on which an author writes; for he says p. 14. "A distinct and well defined conception of the nature of an atonement, is indispensably necessary to a successful inquiry into the design and extent of the atonement." The most "distinct conception" I can form of his meaning, in his several attempts to define, is, that an atonement is an expedient substituted in place of a penalty to preserve the honor of government. The atonement of Christ made by "suffering for sin in the abstract," he considers to be "a *medium* of salvation" to men indefinitely. His own words are, p. 103, "We fearlessly say, that the final results of the atonement will only be realized by those who receive Christ, and to whom it has been given to believe; but the act of making that atonement and the offer of the benefits of the atonement are designed and purposed to be a medium of salvation to all men without

excluding one individual." In this quotation, in which the author evidently writes on both sides of the question, and, like most authors who contradict the scriptures, contradicts himself, we have his conception of the atonement. The act of making it is a medium of salvation—a channel through which salvation flows to sinners. Neither here nor elsewhere in the volume, is the satisfaction of Christ viewed and exhibited as the meritorious cause of the sinner's salvation. Now if the satisfaction of Christ be only a medium of conveyance, the blessing conveyed must have been procured in some other way. But in what way, whether by the sinner's own good works, penance, purgatory, or the Universalist's scheme of the final restoration of all things, we are not informed. By the manner in which the author writes on this point and respecting Christ's "suffering for sin in the abstract" without any reference to particular persons, he evinces, in my judgment, a profound ignorance of the great subject on which he "darkens counsel by words without knowledge."

The word "atonement," as every school boy may know, signifies the setting *at one* again persons previously at variance. Through the atonement of our Lord Jesus Christ, God who had been offended and the sinner who had given the offence, are reconciled and restored to friendship. Daniel tell us that the Messiah should be cut off, but not for himself, that he should "finish transgression, make an end of sins and make reconciliation for iniquity." God says by Ezekiel "I am pacified toward thee for all that thou hast done to me." Paul says, "He made reconciliation for the sins of the people." This reconciliation is not a mere medium of conveyance, a measure of government, but peace restored between an offended God and offending sinners. If, as inspired writers tell us, the atonement made by Christ effects the reconciliation of the parties, what can again alienate them? Shall the atonement fail in its effects? "It is God that justifieth, who is he that condemneth?" On this part of the subject our author labors much, rather than give up his view of indefinite atonement—"a medium of salvation to all men without excluding one individual." The length to which he is driven is awful and should be a warning to every man in the wild career of error. He maintains that the atonement has failed! Yes, in p. 103, he assures his readers that "it is supposed by our Saviour himself, that the result of the atonement will not be commensurate with the gracious design of God." In p. 105, he farther declares, "that it should not be evaded nor blinked, that the divine plans are susceptible of failure."

That is, God had determined from eternity to save sinners through the atonement of his only begotten Son: but he is disappointed! Some unforeseen incident hath unbinged his purpose!!—his own declaration to the contrary notwithstanding, “My counsel shall stand and I will do all my pleasure.” “The counsel of the Lord standeth forever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations.” Who, after such barefaced contradiction of the word of God—after this specimen of theological attainments and acumen, will question Mr. Carroll’s eulogy of this book, when he says “it contains the seeds of things,” and tells us “it will be another star in the East to guide the wise men to an incarnate Redeemer.”

In attempting to evade the vicarious nature of Christ’s satisfaction, this *unassuming* divine tells us, that “the fallacy of the limited view of the atonement arises from the various meanings of the word redemption.” And yet he does not condescend to refer the reader to a single passage illustrative of his declaration. We have his assertion, that it sometimes means, the price of redemption, or the act of paying down the price, or, by metonymy, the effect of such a payment. From this he goes on to inform his readers of the vast difference between the final results of the atonement and the *design* of Christ in paying the ransom price, separating at every risk, what God has inseparably joined together. The very terms redemption and price imply a contract or covenant, restricting the price paid to certain objects. Hence the Apostle says “Ye are not your own, ye are bought with a price;” and again “Ye are redeemed, not with corruptible things as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ.” By all this he clearly means the *complete* redemption of all who are bought. They are bought, the inestimable price is paid, they are accepted in the Beloved; and yet, according to our author, they fail in attaining the end *designed* by Christ. No, no, the redemption consists, not only in paying the price, but also in delivering the captive out of the prison house and carrying forward the good work begun in the day of regeneration till the day of complete redemption,—until those who were bought, acquire a meetness for that glory which Christ had with his Father, before the world was. All those, whom the Father has given Him—for whom he laid down his life—redeemed by his blood, shall come to him—they shall never perish—not one of them shall be lost, but in due time they shall be introduced into the temple above, to go no more out.

CAUSES OF FASTING AND THANKSGIVING BY THE EASTERN  
SUBORDINATE SYNOD.

## CAUSES OF FASTING.

The Eastern Subordinate Synod, having taken into consideration the aspect of the times, find painful and abundant grounds for calling upon themselves and the people under their care to engage in the duties of fasting, humiliation and prayer.

1. The prevalence among us of a carnal and worldly spirit, seeking with great eagerness after the accumulation of property for the purpose of gratifying the "lusts of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life." This is altogether adverse to that holy and spiritual frame of mind which "seeks first the kingdom of God and his righteousness." The ministers of religion, and the members of the Church throughout, will be more or less affected by the temper of the age, and the character and pursuits of society around them, and led away by the great prevalence of any abounding evil however frequently, faithfully and earnestly warned to be vigilant and keep their garments "unspotted from the world." Humble and self denying godliness, meekness and intimacy of walking with God cannot subsist with the indulgence of an inordinate appetite for the enjoyment of the emoluments, honours and pleasures of this world, "the fashion of which passeth away."

2. Formality in devotional duties, without seeking and experiencing the holy influence and sanctifying power of those heavenly ordinances for the advancement of growth in grace. While we have no reason to doubt that the outward forms of religious worship are generally attended to, we must acknowledge that that deep engagedness of spirit in divine things, without which they will be in a great measure, inefficacious, is too often wanting. By mere attention to forms without the spirit, God is greatly dishonoured, the holiness of his majesty mocked, unbelief nurtured, and all the graces of the Spirit exposed to blighting and mildew. The effects of all this, are unfruitfulness in works of righteousness.

3. Want of zeal for the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus, a native result of worldly mindedness and formality in the services of religion. "Where the treasure is there the heart will be also." Through the love of the world, the love of many for God, his truth, and his church waxes cold.

Having lately succeeded in preventing attempts made among ourselves to break down the carved work of the Sanctuary, having seen a great majority of our Congregations and Rulers continue steadfast in their purpose to walk by the same rule and mind the same things, whereunto we had attained; peace also having been restored in our borders, our numbers increasing, our Brethren encouraging all to continue in the whole truth, and discountenancing all defection—we have been ready to say all is accomplished, and no more zealous effort is required at our hands. Thus by allowing the fervour of zeal to abate, we fall into a dangerous security, and render not again according to the benefits we have received.

4. Accommodation and conformity to the world in its maxims, habits and doings, in all ages the bane of the church. By leading professors away after the world, and inducing them to dread its frowns and court its smiles, the adversary has cast down many mighty men, to rise no more, and has thinned by desertion the armies of the living God. "Demas hath forsaken me having loved this present world." The Head of the Church is moved with fervent jealousy when he sees the affections of his people drawn away from himself, by the fascinating allurements of his enemies.

5. The most baleful errors are still abounding and multiplying the number of their victims, in most denominations of professors around us. Infidelity and even Atheism lift their heads and proclaim their blasphemies, opening their mouths against the heavens. Arianism, Socinianism, Hopkinsianism and Arminianism continue to multiply the number of their disciples—the pulpit resounds and the press groans in diffusing abroad these destructive heresies—the learning, the wealth and influence of the nation are enlisted in their propagation: and there are wanting "men who turn the battle to the gate."

6. Popish idolatry with its attendant corruptions is spreading over the land. The errors to which we have referred above prepare the way for the emissaries of the man of sin to prosecute successfully their unholy work "in all deceivableness of unrighteousness." They organize congregations, build chapels, found seminaries, and circulate books over the whole extent of the land, manifestly with the design, inherent in popery, of subjugating the commonwealth to the dominion of Antichrist. In all this, they and the errorists who are their pioneers, are not only tolerated by the constitutions and laws of the land, but greatly countenanced by those who occupy high places, while honest and faithful efforts to stay this tor-

rent of Popish corruption are but feebly supported by those who profess to be enlightened Protestants.

7. The civil constitutions of the country remain infidel in their complexion, and Infidels, in many instances, men of immoral character, Papists and Heretics are elevated by the suffrages of a corrupt people to the occupancy of high places in the government. Millions of men are still held in hopeless bondage under the Constitution and laws of the United States, and of many of the states of the Union. The loud call made on oppressors to break every yoke has not only been disregarded, but met with the boldest banter and fiercest opposition. Ministers and Judicatories professing to act in the name of Christ, have either observed a criminal neutrality, or become the apologists of slavery, perverting the word of God to sanction the holding of two millions of our race, in iniquitous and degrading bondage and ignorance.

8. The immoralities of the land are on the increase. The Sabbath is grossly violated by the transportation of the U. S. Mail, and the business of the Post-office—by an enormous amount of travelling and traffic, the facilities and motives to which are every where accumulating; by excursions for pleasure, and by vain and wicked reading and conversation.—“Making haste to be rich,” wanton extravagance, and luxurious living, riotous excesses, profane swearing, harlotry, drunkenness, gambling, fraud, murder, suicide, are filling up the lamentable measure of iniquity. God is impiously dishonoured by the violation of all his precepts.

9. For all these sins God has visited the nation with judgments. The pestilence at the South—frightful shipwrecks on our coast—conflagrations in our cities—provisions at a price oppressive to the poor—mercantile distress involving the opulent in poverty and throwing the labouring classes out of employment and depriving them of support—and amidst these judgments a criminal insensibility. Few “cry and sigh for the abominations done in the land,” and few “hear the rod and him who hath appointed it.”

The Synod therefore appoint the last Thursday of February 1838, to be observed among all the Congregations and Societies under their care, as a day of fasting, humiliation and prayer.

#### CAUSES OF THANKSGIVING.

The Eastern Subordinate Synod call upon themselves and the people under their care to render thanks to God, and ap-

point the third Thursday of December, 1837, to be observed throughout the congregations and societies in its bounds as a day of thanksgiving to God.

God's mercies are still exercised towards a sinful people, and furnish abundant grounds for thanksgiving.

1. Among ourselves, the congregations under our care are growing in numbers, and furnish goodly proof that they are growing in knowledge, and we trust in holiness. The administration of gospel ordinances is well attended, and christian duties are observed in public and in families with a commendable degree of punctuality and constancy. In our judicatories and among our people there are peace and co-operation in maintaining the testimony of Jesus. Our brethren beyond the Atlantic, in the isles of the ocean, encourage and countenance us in holding fast the truth and walking by the same rule whereunto we have attained.

2. The Ecclesiastical bodies of the Associate Church and the General Assembly have made important movements in promoting the truth and law of God's word, the former by abolishing slavery among themselves, and the latter by important measures to defend many valuable doctrines of the Gospel. Such movements are auspicious to the cause of truth and righteousness, and in communities respectable and influential as these, encouraging to the friends of Zion.

3. A general spirit of reformation is abroad. Active associations are formed and increasing in numbers and influence, in opposition to Anti-christian delusion and despotism, to destroy intemperance and the licentious use of all intoxicating liquors, to liberate the captive and unhappy slave from the oppressive bondage under which he groans, to distribute the Holy Scriptures, and to carry the word of God to the benighted nations of the earth. These associations, benevolent in their character, and moral and religious in their aim, although in some particulars they are not in form nor in perfection of aim what God's word requires, yet appear evidently overruled for good, in giving energy and success to the efforts of oppressed humanity to escape from the intellectual, moral and physical thralldom under which it struggles, and in calling the attention of the nations to objects long overlooked, and entering essentially into the reformation which God by His word will yet effect.

4. In the midst of many sins, and of much public distress, the Most High has yet manifested his forbearance and bounty. Although the plague has borne its awful commission in the south, its extent has been limited, and the land generally has

enjoyed a great measure of health. The season has not only been temperate and healthful throughout a great part of the land, but the fruits of the earth have been more commensurate to the necessities of the people than was anticipated, and God has in this respect done far more than our fears or deserts could have allowed us as a nation to expect.

For all these benefits let us give thanks to God in such acknowledgements as are due to Him the author of all our good.

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NOTICE OF A SERMON BY THE REV. THOMAS HOUSTON.

The faithful Minister's walk with God, Removal by death, and Future glory; a Discourse by the Rev. Thomas Houston, Knockbracken, pp. 66, 8vo.

This is the title of a sermon preached on Sabbath the 14th May, 1837, at Rathfriland, on the occasion of the death of the Rev. JOHN STEWART, late pastor of the Reformed Presbyterian congregation in that place. Like the other productions of the author, which we have seen, it is able, faithful, lucid and highly evangelical. We hesitate not to say it contains more Gospel truth than many modern *volumes* professedly religious in their aim and complexion. The text taken as the foundation of the Discourse is, Gen. v. 24. "*And Enoch walked with God; and he was not; for God took him.*" Mr. Houston, following the good old way of sermonizing, divides his subject into general topics of discussion, under each of which he specifies several particulars. Of the former he states *four*. "1. The faithful minister's walk with God; 2. Some special privileges which result to him from walking with God; 3. His removal from this world; 4. His glorious reward." Each of these is illustrated at length and in a manner equalling any—surpassing most of the discourses we have lately seen. There is a variety, a richness, a *savour* abounding throughout the sermon, which cannot fail to instruct, interest and delight the pious mind employed in its perusal. The arrangement is good, the reasoning manly and cogent, the illustrations apt and striking, and the spirit breathed throughout is that of the faithful, ardent minister of Christ witnessing for the truth. We earnestly recommend a careful perusal of the Discourse to all who can obtain it, even by borrowing; and advise all who can, to put themselves in possession of it.

The following extracts furnish what we have for some time desired,—a brief memoir of the venerable and lamented



father, whose death furnished the sad occasion for preaching the Discourse of which we have been speaking.

“The Reverend JOHN STEWART was born in 1771, in *Castlemellon*, Parish of Donagheady, County Tyrone, and was the second of six children, two of whom survive him. His parents were members of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, well esteemed for their piety and steadfastness; as a proof of which, it may be mentioned, that his father was nominated to the eldership, an office, which, however, he declined to accept, and that he was frequently appointed to attend Presbyteries, as a Commissioner,—a service which, in the scattered state of the Church at that period, required him occasionally to undertake long and difficult journies. We have not been furnished with the particulars of the early life of our venerated father, previously to his entering college; but there can be no doubt that the prayers of godly parents, and faithful brethren throughout the Church, who, at that time, took a deep interest in the spiritual welfare of the young, were fulfilled in the purpose which he early formed of dedicating himself to the ministry. That he possessed superior natural abilities, and made gratifying proficiency in learning while a boy, is evident from the fact, that he entered college at a period of life considerably earlier than the Irish students were then accustomed to resort to the Scottish universities.

His intimate and accurate acquaintance with the English language, and with the Latin and Greek Classics, also showed that he must have attentively studied the subjects of an elementary education. He studied at the University of Glasgow. During his first session at college he was deprived, by death, of his father, a circumstance with which, in consideration of his youth, he was not made acquainted, till after his return. Some time before, the family had removed from *Castlemellon* to *Craigs*, a district in County Antrim, where his father seems to have been induced to settle, from acquaintance which he formed, in his journies to attend Church courts, with several worthy families of Covenanters resident in that place. Having finished his collegiate course with approbation, and studied Divinity under the direction of the Reformed Presbytery, he was licensed to preach the gospel, in 1797. He was regarded as an able preacher, throughout the Church, but the political troubles of that period operated to prevent congregations from obtaining the settlement of stated pastors. On the 28th of April, 1807, he was ordained, by the Reformed Presbytery, to the pastoral care of the small congregation at *Grange* in County Tyrone. Here he contin-

ued for a period of four or five years, ministering with much acceptance to the people; but the number of the members of his charge being small, and their circumstances such as to render them unable to afford an adequate support, he was disannexed, and came with his family to Ballymena. Soon after, he received a call to the congregation of *Rathfriland*, which he accepted, and was installed in 1812. Here he labored faithfully till his death, a space of *twenty five* years. During this period, although his congregation suffered at times considerably from emigration, there was a gratifying increase of members, and, owing chiefly to his exertions, a distant branch of it, at *Dromore*, obtained a comfortable house of worship, and was so increased as to afford the prospect of shortly becoming a distinct congregation, capable of affording a suitable maintenance to a fixed pastor. The last years of his ministry were years of increasing and extended usefulness. Besides the pastoral duties of his own widely scattered flock, he occasionally preached in various places in the Counties of Down, Antrim, Armagh, Monaghan and Cavan, assisted at Communion, and attended meetings with brethren in the ministry, in ecclesiastical courts, and for consultation about the advancement of the interests of truth. His presence in such cases was much valued. Wherever he went preaching the Word, and dispensing religious ordinances, he truly came in the fulness of the Gospel of peace: the seed which he scattered, there is reason to believe, spread far beyond the pale of the Covenanting Church,—and his sound judgment, piety, and fidelity, discovered in the management of ecclesiastical affairs, caused him to be regarded, throughout the Church, with much esteem and veneration. A widow and four children,—two sons and two daughters, survive him.

We now present a brief sketch of the *character* of this venerable servant of Christ. That there were infirmities in his spirit and conduct we hesitate not to admit. A faultless character we propose not to delineate, for there is none such on earth. "There is none righteous, no not one." Ministers are men of like passions with others; and, in his case, there were infirmities which some unduly magnified, who knew not to appreciate the general excellencies of his character. Through constitutional temperament, he was liable to a certain haste of spirit, and his warmth of temper occasionally betrayed him into words and actions for which, on future reflection, he himself was grieved. In opposing defection in principle and profession, or inconsistency in practice, he man-

ifested, betimes, a sternness that bordered on asperity ; and, in society, his manner towards those whom he suspected of unworthy aims, or whose walk did not correspond to their profession, was somewhat abrupt and repulsive. His faithful reproofs were tendered in a tone of pointed severity, that sometimes stirred up against him embittered feelings. But, in him, these feelings were modified and restrained by grace. Like Phineas, his spirit rose against whatever appeared to be opposed to the Divine glory, or injurious to the souls of men. He knew to be angry and sin not, for his indignation was directed against sin. He loved the persons, while he reproved their defection or immorality with an unsparing hand. If any who had spurned at his reproof, or acted towards him an unworthy part, were won back to the path of duty, he received them as if they had never offended,—rejoiced over them with his whole heart, and ever after regarded them with special interest and affection. There were prominent features in his character, which showed him to be one that truly walked with God. A few of these we notice, that we may exalt the grace of God that was given him,—and display him as an example of those who, through faith and patience, inherit the promises.”

(To be Continued.)

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#### ITEMS.

The following preamble and resolution were unanimously adopted by the Southern Presbytery at its last meeting.

“Whereas information has been given to this court, that William S. Young, of Philadelphia, intends publishing an Edition of the Westminster Confession of Faith, Therefore, Resolved that this Presbytery recommend the enterprise of Mr. Young to the support of the people under its care ; provided said Edition be published with the scripture proofs in full and without mutilation by the omission of any part or parts of said document.

According to a late letter from Dr. Humphrey, “The Dissenters from the Established Church of Scotland are : 1. The Reformed Presbyterian Synod, consisting of 3 Presbyteries and 28 churches. 2. The United Associate Synod—19 Synods and 333 churches. 3 The Associate Synod—3 presbyteries and 19 churches. 4 Original Burgher Synod—5 presbyteries and 50 churches. 5 Original Anti-Burghers—16 churches. 6 Relief Synod—7 presbyteries and 84 churches. 7 Scottish Episcopalians—65 churches. 8 Independants—77 churches.”

THE

# REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN.

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CRITICISM ON 2 PET. III. 9.

“The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.”

The Apostle Peter concludes this epistle with a solemn call to diligence in cultivating personal purity, blamelessness, and piety. This call is enforced by bringing to remembrance the final account, which all must render, at that day when the heavens and the earth that now are shall be destroyed. Ver. 10, 11, “The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also, and the works that are therein, shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness.” Ungodly infidels, of whom the Apostle prophesies in the 3rd verse of this chapter, mock at all this, and by their scoffing denials of the coming of that awful day, endeavor to weaken the influence of such considerations in restraining licentiousness. They flatter themselves with impunity in the commission of sin, and ask in derision “Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.” Neither they, nor their fathers, have ever seen such an event, therefore they infer in their folly that it never will happen. Christ has not yet come to judgment, and therefore, say they, the promise is false; there is no account to render, and we may delight ourselves in iniquity without fear of the future. This is the *language* of open and shameless infidelity, it is the *thought* and *wish* of all careless and impenitent sinners. Their

argument is as weak as their unbelief is impious. It is true the order of natural events is uniform and rarely disturbed. For ages the sun has shone in the heavens with unchanged brilliancy and beauty; the planets have moved with undeviating regularity in their orbits for many generations; the stars, immoveably set in their places, have, since the creation, adorned the firmament with their lustre; the seasons have observed an appointed law, "summer and winter, seed-time and harvest, cold and heat" have never ceased. The pious mind finds, in the unvaried and constant succession of events, most striking evidence of the unceasing and powerful control of a wise and beneficent Providence. Such contemplations excite, in the enlightened understanding, admiration and awe; and stir up the soul to the duties of devotion. The heart of the unbelieving and impure perverts even these magnificent proofs of the watchful care of God, and drags them into the service of its unholy lusts.

But let us listen to the refutation of their folly. "Where is the promise of his coming?" Go to the pages of history, says the inspired Apostle, and they will teach thee. There you will find the sad record of the sins of a former world of sinners such as you, and of the deluge which awfully avenged them. Verse 6, "The world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished." And more. The same Almighty One, by the word of whose power the heavens and the earth were originally brought into being out of nothing, "who spake and it was done; who commanded and it stood fast," can, by the same word command them into nothing again, or remodel them at his pleasure. Verse 5.

But, says the scoffer, is not God "slack concerning his promise?" No, says the Apostle, with the Divine Being there is no such measurement of times as that which suits our brief earthly existence and paltry concerns, verse 8, "One day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day." And again, that which, to a superficial observer, seems to be slackness, is God's long-suffering. "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." The Spirit of God in this passage furnishes a direct, explicit, and satisfactory answer to the question, whether proposed in sincerity or in mockery, why is this world spared, with its soil cursed, and with sinful inhabitants? Let us, by a careful examination, endeavor to ascertain the mind of the Spirit in this declaration. We will find in it much that is instructive and consolatory.

We must first turn our attention to the word "*emas*," (us,) and fix definitely to what it relates. This determined, our path will be smooth and in the clear light as we advance in our investigation. It cannot, with even the appearance of truth, be affirmed that we must interpret this word so as to embrace the whole human family. Millions of them were, long before this declaration was made, no longer, in any sense, objects of the Divine long-suffering. Their condition was unalterably fixed. That of the redeemed and glorified saints as objects of the Divine complacency and delight in heaven; that of the impenitent and lost as objects of the Divine wrath in hell.

A reason equally conclusive forbids our extending the application of the word under consideration even to all who were then on the earth, or should afterwards exist upon it. The context evidently excludes the ungodly men, for whom it is plainly implied in verse 7, that judgment and perdition are prepared. Those, denoted by the word under consideration, are brought into striking contrast with these ungodly. A day of judgment awaits the latter, when they shall receive a just recompense of reward for the deeds which they ungodly have committed; while the others are destined to repentance and salvation.

A brief reference to the tenor of the preceding portions of these epistles, will enable us to show who are *not* referred to in this passage; but to pronounce confidently to whom it must be applied. These letters were written to Christian strangers scattered abroad throughout the Northwestern and Central provinces of Asia Minor. The faithful preaching of gospel doctrine by the early Christian ministers in its plainness, simplicity and power, without accommodating its principles to the tenets of the schools of philosophy, awakened the indignation of the learned; their opposition to tyranny alarmed the civil authorities; their hostility to idolatry and superstition excited the wrath of the pagan priesthood; the inculcation of pure and self-denying morality, with the exemplification of its precepts in the holy and blameless conversation of the followers of Christ, roused the fury of the baser sort. All united to put a stop to the free discussion of doctrines so calculated to disorganize the system of iniquity by which they made their gain. To escape the vexation, and perhaps the persecution to which they were continually exposed, many faithful witnesses forsook all, and took refuge in the inland and mountainous regions of Galatia, Phrygia, &c. To them the Spirit sends these instructive and consolatory epistles. We might,

therefore, anticipate what we will at once discover on examination, a marked distinction made between those suffering saints and the proud, wicked enemies of true religion. The inscription of the 1st Ep. shews that *the church* is addressed—the *true church*. “Peter, to the strangers—elect through sanctification—unto obedience.” The 2d is sent “to them who have obtained like precious faith with us.”\* This style of address is similar to that of the Apostle Paul in his letters.—They are written to professors of religion—church members; and, in the judgment of charity, true christians, having given credible testimony of the possession of true faith, by its profession—and by that profession consistently maintained. The distinction thus made at the outset, is carefully kept up in the body of the epistles. Sound principles of interpretation will not justify a disregard to this characteristic feature of these writings in an exposition of the passage under consideration. We therefore conclude that the writer does not intend the word *emas* to relate to any but those who answer the description in other passages. That it relates, not to the whole of mankind, but to the church of God—chosen from eternity—represented in the covenant of grace by its surety—Redeemed—purchased by the precious blood of Christ—sanctified by the Spirit, and finally presented to the Redeemer in the realms of immortal glory, blessedness and felicity, “without spot or wrinkle or any such thing.”

The words “*tinas*” (any) and “*pantas*” (all) will now present no difficulty of any moment. They are evidently governed, as to the extent of their signification, or the nouns with which they agree, by the word “*us*.” The clauses in which they occur are elliptical. Supplying the elipsis, they will read “not willing that any *of us* should perish; but that all *of us* should come to repentance.” If any proof be necessary to substantiate this, which seems almost self-evident, we have only to examine the nature of the argument, and the connexion of its part. “God is long-suffering” to the church. Why? Because he “wills that none of the elect shall perish,” &c. It would make nonsense of the passage to suppose the latter clauses to embrace mankind at large. “God is long-suffering” to the church. Why? Because he has “willed that none of all mankind shall perish,” &c. This is what logicians call a “non sequitur”—something that does not follow. If “*any*” and “*all*” relate to the whole of our race, the Apostle’s argument should have run after this manner: “God has willed to

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\* Believers in Christ.

save all mankind," &c., therefore he is "long-suffering," not to the church only, but "to all men."\* If we admit the Arminian exposition of the word "*willing*" to be correct, the force of these observations will not be at all diminished. For if the Almighty "*desires*" the salvation of all men—"who can withstand him?" But this admission cannot be made consistently with truth. The original word here translated "*willing*" signifies "*determining*." This we now proceed to verify.

The Apostle Peter, in his sermon recorded Acts iv. employs the word from which this is derived, to signify the divine decree respecting the death of Christ at the hands of the wicked Jews and Romans. We have it translated with its qualifying adjective, "*determinate counsel*." The verb used in the passage before us *seems* to be employed in a few instances in the sense of *desiring*. A careful examination of the texts in which it occurs, will satisfy any impartial inquirer, that, even in these places, the idea of *counsel, resolution, determination*, is meant to be expressed. For example, we find it Acts xxv. 22, when Agrippa states to Festus, not his *desire* alone, but his *will, his determination*—to hear Paul. We have it translated "I would also hear the man myself." In 1 Tim. vi. 9, it denotes the fixed resolution of the covetous, "they that will be rich." Indeed, after a careful analysis of a large number of passages where this word occurs, the writer has no hesitation in saying that, in every instance it conveys the idea of *counsel* or *resolution*; sometimes expressing at the same time that desire to attain a given end which precedes and accompanies the determination to do so. So much might be inferred from the radical meaning of the word, which is to *deliberate*. As men *desire* to effect that, respecting which they deliberate, it very naturally came to signify this desire. But in its correct use it is seldom, if ever, employed to denote the *desire*, separate from the determination of the mind to obtain the object desired.

Whatever may be the proper sense of the word, and its derivatives, we have the strongest evidence that, in this passage, the true signification of it is that which has been given above. It is remarked by lexicographers that when this verb is followed by another verb in the infinitive mood, it always signifies to *decree, determine, resolve*. In such connexion we find it in the text under review.†

\*It is not to be inferred from these remarks, that God is not forbearing towards the wicked in ANY sense. The matter in hand is, who are said IN THIS PASSAGE to be the objects of the divine long-suffering.

†The literal rendering of the passage would be, "Not determining that any should perish." The critical reader will at once recognize a



This rendering, and it is without doubt correct, confirms our view of the meaning of the word "*emas*," (us,) and the proper limitation of "*tinas*" (any) and "*pantas*" (all); and prepares the way for the consideration of the only word which now calls for any critical observations.

"*Metanoian*" (repentance.) On this a few general remarks will suffice. The import of the term is "change of mind." We find it mostly used in a good sense to signify a "change of mind for the better." Sometimes it signifies the grace of repentance, more frequently a complete change of views, inclinations and volitions, together with that change of outward deportment, which follows as a result from the mental change. In this passage it is employed in this sense, including faith, its accompanying graces, and a corresponding life.

In conclusion, let us deduce the doctrines of the text for our instruction and comfort.

1. The doctrine chiefly taught in this passage and context is most important. That, God spares the world for the sake of his elect.

2. God has chosen some only of mankind to salvation.

3. God's chosen people shall all in due time be brought to glory.

4. As a preparation for heaven, they shall be fully sanctified.

very common Hebrew idiom, often used in the New Testament, and once before in this Epistle. Chap. i. 20, which we have correctly translated, "no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation." Literally, "that all prophecy of the Scripture is not of private interpretation." Examples abound of this peculiar phraseology in the Old Testament.

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#### DIVISIONS IN THE CHURCHES.

(Concluded from page 304.)

We pass over the divisions in the Baptist, Methodist and Quaker bodies, which have been rent into fragments by violent controversial convulsions within the last twenty years. It were easy to demonstrate that their distracted condition has arisen from admitting or retaining in their ranks members and leaders entertaining doctrinal views so diverse as to render it impossible for them to maintain peace, or continue together. While they were harmonious in their adherence to their respective dogmas, they were diverse from one another on nearly all other subjects.

We pass on to the most opulent and, until of late, one of the most influential ecclesiastical associations in the United States:—

#### THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

The element of division, which we intend to illustrate in these details, entered into the constitution of this body, when ministers and members were permitted to dissent from some of the doctrines of the Westminster Confession of Faith, which was adopted in a loose way as a subordinate standard of orthodoxy. To open the door for the admission of a still greater variety of opinion, progressive alterations were made in their terms of communion. The doctrine of the Westminster Confession, on the subserviency of civil government to the kingdom and church of Christ, was expunged from the twenty-third and thirty-first chapters. The testimony borne against Negro slavery, in a marginal note of the first edition of their mutilated Confession, was next expunged, to admit not only slave holders, but even those who openly maintain that to enslave unoffending men is no sin against God or man. These relaxations in their terms of communion, relative to the doctrines of the Bible on civil government, were naturally followed by assailing the government of the house of God. In the year 1801, an act was passed by the General Assembly, admitting into their communion, those who reject the doctrine of Presbyterian church government, and adopt Independency or Congregationalism. Ecclesiastical bodies organized on the Congregational plan, were admitted to send delegates to the General Assembly. Congregations, not Presbyterian, were introduced to the fellowship of the Presbyterian Church, and Congregational ministers to all the rights of membership in their Synod and Presbyteries. It could not have been reasonably expected that such ministers and congregations, admitted under this act, would receive the Confession of Faith of the Presbyterian Church. Though the Westminster Confession had been adopted as the doctrinal basis of the Hampshire association in the western part of Massachusetts, more than a hundred years before, yet even there, probably the only instance in New England of its adoption, it had long been almost unknown. The Saybrook Platform had been received in Connecticut, and the Savoy Confession in Massachusetts. They too had in practice for a long period been neglected. Each congregation framed its own Confession, in what they call their church covenants, and these covenants

were, in many congregations, framed anew as often as they changed their ministers. To bring in, by one sweeping act, such congregations, was a virtual abolition of the Confession of Faith, as a term of communion in the General Assembly. Thousands of members were admitted into the communion of that church who had never read, or even seen, the Confession of Faith, and who, if they had read it, would not have assented to its Calvinistic doctrines. It is probable that a majority of their members have never read the book to which they professed their adherence on admission. One cannot think, but with pain, on this trifling with the most solemn engagements.

Beyond the Alleghany mountains, about eighteen months after the passage of the act of 1801, by the General Assembly, their people and ministers gave very substantial evidence that they thought themselves released from all obligation to adhere to the Confession of Faith as a bond of union. In the autumn of 1802, a very great excitement commenced among the Methodists of Western Virginia, in the valley of Green Briar river. Two Presbyterian ministers were delegated from western Pennsylvania to "bring up" the revival into the Presbyterian congregations. When among the Methodists, the delegates held communion with them, and "*returned with the revival!*" An evening meeting was held by the delegates soon after their return, in the hall of Jefferson College, in Canonsburgh, at which an account of the revival in Virginia was given, and one of the delegates, at the conclusion of his narrative and exhortation, "*fell down,*" and seemed to be affected with violent spasms. His example was soon followed by others, who on that evening became "subjects of the *work,*" as it was called. Meetings were held on many successive evenings with similar effects. "*The falling down work,*" as it was familiarly and commonly named, extended with the rapidity of a conflagration into most of the Presbyterian congregations, in that part of Pennsylvania, through Western Virginia and Kentucky. It was every where accompanied by the same symptoms—falling down, apparent faintings, spasms, loud screams, &c. Large camp meetings were held in the woods in the summer of 1803, for several days and nights successively, at which many thousands of people, not a few from distant parts, assembled. The noise and confusion were indescribable. Methodists, Baptists and Presbyterians united in the "*work,*" which was called a glorious revival. They partook of the sacrament together, and it was proclaimed that all divisions in the church would soon disappear, under this

“blessed and wonderful Pentecostal effusion of the Spirit,” as it was impiously called. Great multitudes were hastily introduced into the fellowship of the Presbyterian congregations, without any mention, or thought of the subordinate standards of the church. To have “*fallen down*” in terror and risen up in hope were deemed sufficient qualifications for initiation into the church.

But no form of religion can be practised; nor any rites observed without some doctrine true or false. A departure from the Confession of Faith, in Kentucky and West Tennessee, as a test of orthodoxy, soon led to the relinquishment of many of its doctrines. Some ministers not only adopted all the Pelagian tenets of the Methodists, but they went on to the denial of the divinity of Christ, and the whole doctrine of a trinity of persons in the Godhead. From having seen what they called the success of the illiterate Methodist ministers, with whom they were in intimate fellowship, they insisted that the ordination of unlearned men, if they were “gifted brethren,” was both expedient and a duty. The more sober of the Presbyterians became alarmed at these errors. A vehement controversy succeeded the violent excitement, and both the pulpit and the press were employed in the conflict of the disputants. Those ministers who had fallen into error were put on trial and condemned. They refused to recant or submit—seceded from the Presbyterian church, and, like some in later times, formed a new organization, and claimed to be Presbyterians still. In this manner originated the body since known by the name of Cumberland Presbyterians, which is said to number one hundred ministers, and more congregations. These were some of the first fruits of “the act of union,” passed in 1801.

In the eastern section of the Presbyterian body, its progress in maturing the fruit of division has been more slow, but the crop is more abundant and the fruit more bitter. Hardly had the west settled into a calm, after the violent tempest, when the east began to be agitated. A licenciate from Connecticut received a call from a Presbyterian congregation, in the city of New York. He informed the presbytery that he could not take the ordination vow, if he were not allowed to make a statement of his views on several points, in which his principles might be thought to be in opposition to the Confession of Faith. He then succinctly exhibited his Hopkinsian tenets, and was ordained by the presbytery with the understanding that he should be permitted to hold and teach them. This was carrying out the spirit of the act of 1801.

Others were admitted to ordination, known to be Hopkinsians, and soon it came to be the understanding that entrants on the ministry might, without impropriety, bind themselves by vow, to the Presbyterian constitution, who were opposed to many of its doctrines, and to its Presbyterian form of church government.

But this catholicism did not introduce New England Congregationalism and Hopkinsianism into the Presbyterian church in the city and state of New York, without awaking those commotions, and exciting those angry passions, which every where mark its progress. There were many ministers and people, who believed and contended that the constitution of the church ought not to be trampled under foot, for the purpose of swelling the ranks and increasing the splendor of their denomination. Religious excitements, under the name of revivals, were *got up*, and in the ferment the mass of the people were leavened with New School doctrines. This being observed by the orthodox, excited their fears and quickened their zeal, in defence of their ancient landmarks. A vehement and protracted warfare, in the bosom of the church ensued. Had congregational churches been organized, separate from the Presbyterian Church, their progress would have been comparatively peaceful; but the march of New England errors, would have been much more tardy. In the western part of the state, in the north of Pennsylvania, and in the states North West of the Ohio river, congregations were formed under the act of 1801, by emigrants from the North East, and New School ministers, from the same quarter, became their pastors. Emigrants from the orthodox congregations, in the old counties of New York, from New Jersey, and from East Pennsylvania, fell into these heterodox congregations, greatly increasing their numbers. Many New School ministers, furnished with every facility, by the intimate connection between Congregationalists and Presbyterians, were settled in the pastoral charge of old congregations. By the operation of these two causes, the favor which Arminianism, in all its shades, receives from the native corruption of the human heart, and the very feeble resistance made to New England errors, the diffusion of Congregationalism and Hopkinsianism among Presbyterians was so rapid as to astonish, alarm and arouse the Orthodox.

In the city of Philadelphia, a young lawyer and a young Quaker were "*converted*," and as they had a smattering of literature, they entered on the study of theology, under Presbyterian ministers in that city. As their *conversion* was *Hop-*

*kinsian*, so were their doctrines. They immediately commenced haranguing meetings, wherever they could gain admission. One minister employed them to aid in *getting up* a revival in his congregation, and soon all the Presbyterian congregations in the city became more or less agitated. The New School doctrines taught by the leaders in this excitement alarmed the orthodox, who took measures to check the progress both of the *revival* and the New School tenets of which it was made the vehicle. One of the young apostles of Hopkinsianism was refused license by the presbytery for his heterodox doctrines which he boldly avowed. The other, more artful and evasive, was licensed and soon afterwards ordained as the colleague of one of the city pastors. From that period the leading orthodox ministers of the synod of Philadelphia became open and uncompromising opponents to the New school party. At its sessions in the autumn of 1815, it published a Pastoral letter, warning all its people against the Hopkinsian errors, which it classed with Socinianism, Arminianism and other heterodox opinions. At the sessions of the General Assembly, in May 1816, the committee appointed to examine the records of the Synod of Philadelphia, reported a resolution condemning that part of the Letter which denounced the Hopkinsian errors, as calculated to disturb the peace of the church, and as disrespectful to many ministers of reputable standing among them. The defence of the document, by the delegates from the Philadelphia synod was able, eloquent and faithful, yet the condemnatory resolution passed with only one dissenting vote. It must not be inferred from this decision that the majority of the assembly had embraced the New School divinity. Except the delegates from the state of New York, there were very few members of that body who did not at that time profess to embrace all the doctrines of their Confession of Faith. The condemnatory resolution passed on the ground that the errors of the New School men should be no bar to ecclesiastical fellowship, and that it was therefore, uncharitable for any judicatory under the care of the Assembly to warn their people against them.

That decision, taken in connection with subsequent events, furnishes one of the strongest matter-of-fact commentaries on the text:—"How can two walk together unless they are agreed?" The Hopkinsians, emboldened by the silence imposed on the orthodox, by the highest authority in the church, preached and published, in all such places as they deemed expedient, their whole scheme. They taught that the guilt

of Adam's sin is not imputed to his posterity—that the righteousness of Christ is not imputed to the sinner for his justification—that Christ by his death made atonement for all the sins of every individual of the human family—that the understanding is not darkened, or in any degree harmed, by the fall—that every man has power of himself to make to himself a new heart, and perform all the other duties required of him in the divine law—and that, in regeneration, there are no new principles, no new spiritual life imparted to the soul; These and many other errors they maintained and publicly defended. Many of them attacked the Presbyterian Confession of Faith on these points. They made many proselytes among the young, the ignorant and the unwary. Almost every revival, and the great promoters of these excitements were New School men, swelled the list of their adherents. Those who refused to subscribe their dogmas, were denounced as behind the spirit and improvement of the age. Numerous books and pamphlets were published to revolutionize the system of doctrine in the Presbyterian church; while very few were issued by the orthodox. Indeed the compromise in church government, co-operating with the lax spirit of the age, had produced a criminal indifference and unconcern, as to the importance of doctrine. Errorists, while they cherished this apathy, and represented all the difference of opinion as relating to *circumstantials* or *non essentials* only, were stimulated by a zeal worthy of a better cause, in the propagation of their tenets.

Attempts were made by several orthodox presbyteries, to employ the discipline of the church for its purification. But they were all unavailing, as when appeals from the decisions of those faithful judicatories were carried up to the Assembly, it uniformly reversed the decisions of the inferior courts. The fixed determination of the majority seemed to be, that they would walk together, however widely they disagreed: But while they did continue in fellowship, it was not in the peace and harmony and brotherly love, which should characterize the meek followers of Christ Jesus. Every man's hand was against his brother; parties were formed and consolidated and an acrimonious spirit of strife awakened, which increased in virulence from year to year. All the efforts of the neutralists, or "*peace men*," as they are called, could not quench the growing controversy, nor prevent the friends of truth from girding on the armour of light for its defence. The admixture of heterogeneous elements, by laws as unalterable as those of attraction and repulsion in physi-

cal compounds, produced an effervescence which could not be controlled. The sequel is known. When the compression had been carried to the lowest possible point, as in the case of Barnes and other matters too well known to require their repetition here, the reaction was tremendous. Four Synods, five hundred ministers, and as many congregations were severed in a day from the body. The sessions of the assembly, last May, at which all this was accomplished, will long be memorable in the annals of the Presbyterian church.

Men are slow to learn. Though on the part of the orthodox generally, and especially the most influential, there was a deliberate and firm purpose to preserve peace with the opposite party, and though Hopkinsians were earnestly desirous to continue in the bosom of the church, yet all was unavailing. Division came rushing with the resistless impetuosity of the tornado. Yet after all this most impressive lesson, many of those who are still in the General Assembly and nearly all who have been cast out, are eagerly pursuing the same phantom—harmony without unanimity of sentiment, and vigorously pursuing measures to bring together and unite again the scattered fragments. So far from there being any probability of success in these efforts, it is evident that the unwise policy of attempting to amalgamate into a quiescent compound adverse elements, has not yet developed all its evils. At least one half of the two synods of the state of New York, yet connected with the Assembly, are New School men. The Synod of Michigan and many presbyteries in the Western states, have all their sympathies on the side of the New School. In the greater part of all the remaining presbyteries, there are New School partizans active and indefatigable. Large masses of the people, in the congregations called orthodox, are partly Arminian in sentiment, and of course in the interest of the New Light party. Add to all this, the exciting subject of slavery creates division in both the Old and New School ranks, and hastens on a subdivision into separate bodies. The anti-slavery men maintain, teach and prove that the holding of unoffending men in bondage as goods and chattels, like beasts of burden, is theft and robbery; while many distinguished pro-slavery men teach, that it is a natural relation, and sanctioned by the gospel of Christ. They farther assert that the doctrine of immediate emancipation is fanatical, incendiary, and seditious; and acting on their principles, they encourage mobs to prevent by violence the discussion of the right of the slave to freedom. We should like to know *certainly* the ecclesiastical standing of the man



that lately murdered the Rev. Mr. Lovejoy, at Alton, Illinois, for his *attempt* to plead the cause of the trampled down slave. We do know that a clerical brother of the martyr to the cause of liberty, encouraged the mob that committed the murder; and we know that an elder of the Presbyterian body was in the mob that committed violence on the person of Amos Dresser. Now, how is it possible for men to continue long together in the same communion, when their sentiments are so adverse as that what one party holds to be theft and robbery, the other strenuously maintains to be righteous, and practices accordingly? How can *they* long continue to meet at the same communion table, whose adverse doctrines and practices have already issued in deeds of violence and blood?

The plans of catholic comprehension adopted by the Presbyterian church, embracing congregationalism and Hopkinsianism on the north, and slavery on the south, have loosened the whole frame work of the body. Were all Hopkinsian and Arminian errors, all negro slavery in doctrine and practice, and all Sabbath violation purged out of the Presbyterian church, and those ministers, elders, and members only retained who know and believe the doctrines and order of their constitution, and who stately attend to the duty of family worship every morning and evening, it would be reduced to a small body indeed. Yet small as that number is, they are the strength of the denomination; and considered as a church, the whole spirit of life, with which it is instinct, is in the orthodox and godly. Take away these from any church and the body becomes a lifeless carcass, to which the eagles will soon gather together.

The temple of the Lord is holy, into which the unclean are forbidden to enter. Little do many professors remember that it is instituted of God to be the outer court of heaven—that he has ordained that those who shall be gathered into it are they “who have been redeemed from their vain conversation,” and that it is designed by its holy and glorious Head to prepare the sons of God for that heavenly city, into which nothing that defileth or maketh a lie shall ever enter. O that God would arise and “purge the sanctuary, and heal the breach of the daughter of his people.”

THE HOLDING OF HUMAN BEINGS IN A STATE OF SLAVERY SINFUL.

(Continued from page 270.)

In former articles the sinfulness of slavery has been shown, as it directly violates the precepts of the decalogue; and is opposed to the benevolent character and precepts of the gospel. We now try it by its practical tendency and effects. The moral character of a man is manifested by his works,—a tree is known by its fruit,—and a system by its tendency. This test we now proceed to apply to the system of American Slavery.

1. The effects of slavery on domestic relations.

The system of American Slavery confers upon slaveholders an absolute right of property in their slaves. This sets aside the husband's interest in his wife, and the wife's interest in her husband. Although slave-laws do not recognize the relation of marriage between slaves, it is recognized of God—and in his sight the slave is equally entitled with his master to enter into the relation,—and has the same right of protection in its enjoyment. But slavery, in its practical working, steps in between the slave and the enjoyment of his right. This evil is not merely an abuse of the system; it necessarily flows from it. The right of property claimed by the master, and secured by law, gives him the power of disposing of the slave in any way, and at any time, that may suit his inclination or his interest; a power which is so commonly used as to approximate very nearly to universality. The husband is torn from his wife; and the wife from her husband. We refer not to the anguish of heart caused by such involuntary separations; nor to the inability thus induced to perform mutually the obligations belonging to the relation. These have already been presented as direct arguments against slavery. At present we refer only to the violation of right which unavoidably follows the system. To secure the right of the slave would affect the master's claim, therefore his right, however sacred, is cancelled to gratify the avarice of the slaveholder, and to maintain the system of iniquity. By the law of God, as well as of reason, the husband is bound to protect and support his wife, but slavery denies him the right of doing either, farther than may suit the inclination of his master. His wife may, without crime, or the charge of crime, be flogged most cruelly before his eyes, and slavery does not even permit him to complain; the most wanton outrages may

be committed on her person, and he dare not lift his hand to rescue her; nor even open his lips to remonstrate. The law provides no remedy; it does not even admit his right to seek redress; one thing, and only one, the law contemplates:—The absolute right of the master, to the entire exclusion of all right on the part of the slave. Slavery thus, in its practical working, violates rights, which are admitted by reason and guaranteed by the authority of God.

The evil of slavery is equally seen in its effects on the parental and filial relations. The immunities and privileges of these relations are set aside by the slave-holder, that his master may be better secured in his claim of property. The slave has no power over his children; nor can they claim any protection from him. Slavery assumes, and acts on the assumption, that there is no other relation existing between the slave and his child than that which exists among brute animals—a mere natural relation, which confers no moral claims or privileges. There is a part of the practical working of the system which materially affects these relations; and which, from extreme delicacy, we can only allude to; and we do so in the language of an able female writer: “The negro woman is unprotected either by law or public opinion. She is the property of her master, and her daughters are his property. They are allowed to have no conscientious scruples, no sense of shame, no regard for the feelings of husband or parent; they must be entirely subservient to the will of the owner, on pain of being whipped as near unto death as will comport with his interest, or quite to death if it suit his pleasure. Those who know human nature would be able to conjecture the unavoidable result, even if it were not betrayed by the amount of mixed population.”\*

Can any man, uncorrupted by the vicious and degrading system under review, soberly contemplate its practical bearing and tendency on the domestic relations without pronouncing it sinful? Can a system which, when carried out in practice, leads necessarily to such results, and causes such effects, be any thing but sinful? If a man’s character is known by his works, or a tree by its fruits, just so is slavery known to be sinful by its tendencies and effects.

2. Extreme ignorance necessarily accompanies the system of slavery.

This evil consequence arises from the desire of giving all possible security to slave-holders, in their property. For it

\*Mrs. Childs.

is a striking feature of the whole system that the slave is considered as property! That for the good of the slave it, neither in law nor practice, makes any provision. The slight exceptions to this statement found in the slave code ought to have no weight in forming our judgments relative to the character of slavery. They relate to the mere animal wants of the slave,—they have evidently been inserted only to preserve appearances; because they have been rendered useless by other parts of the slave-code. Above all they are made valueless to the slave by the natural tendency of the system, and the universal expression of public opinion throughout the slave holding states.

The most deplorable ignorance prevails among the slave population,—ignorance of the truths of religion,—and incapacity arising from the want of the first elements of education to overcome that ignorance. “I proclaim it to the christian world that heathenism is as real in the slave states as it is in the South Sea Islands.”\* “It is a well known fact that to meet with a black person who can read and understand the Bible is considered a phenomenon that excites wonder and astonishment.”† Such is the testimony of writers in a State where slavery wears its mildest aspects. And if such things exist in the State of Kentucky, what must be the condition of slaves in most of the slave States?

This ignorance is not incidental to the condition of American slavery—the result of mere carelessness or indifference to the slave’s necessities: it is the effect of the system, the maintenance of which requires that the restriction of knowledge be extended to the free as well as to the enslaved part of the colored race. To teach a slave to read or write is made punishable by fine, imprisonment or whipping. A parent, though capable of the task, is forbidden upon the pain of being flogged to teach his own children! These are facts which not only condemn the whole system as sinful, but they are its legitimate effects without which slave holding legislators find they cannot carry it on with success. The ignorance of the slave population then is not to be charged to the abuse of slavery. No. It is essential to its maintenance! It is part of the poisonous fruit which grows upon this Upas tree. The laws prohibiting the instruction of colored people have been introduced just as slave holders learned by experience the danger of the growth of knowledge among their slaves. Men-

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\* A writer in the *Western Luminary*, published in Lexington, Ky.

† *Western Luminary*.

tal culture in its simplest forms, and the holy influence of Bible truth, are too much for slavery: it withers under their soul inspiring power. Animated by the first elements of knowledge the slave learns that he has rights which cannot justly be taken from him. His knowledge becomes power which, if not checked, must ultimately work out his freedom in one way or other. That the effect of education on the minds of slaves is most unfavorable to the continuance of slavery:—that, as education extends throughout a slave population, the means of retaining it in servitude becomes proportionably weakened:—that the general diffusion of education would be the death warrant of the system, are all distinctly understood by slave holding legislators; and hence the iniquitous restrictions which they have imposed upon knowledge and education in every form, whether general or religious; whether imparted by oral instruction or by books. The object, is to keep the mind of the slave in a state of ignorance approaching as nearly the condition of a brute animal as is consistent with the master's interest,—to shut out every ray of light that might in the most remote way affect the stability of slavery. As the influence of education on the system became the subject of attention, legislative restriction, supported and carried out by public opinion, has been increasing till it has attained the point of entire and absolute prohibition.

Some of these prohibitory laws were enacted previous to the revolution; all of them before the present anti-slavery efforts were commenced, so that the restrictions cannot, as has been sometimes unjustly alledged, be referred to the "impertinent interference of abolitionists." Some of the latest of them were passed at a time when there was less excitement on the subject of slavery than during any former period in the United States; such as that of Virginia in 1831, prohibiting free colored persons to communicate religious instructions upon the penalty of being whipped. And that of North Carolina in the same year, by which teaching a slave to read or write, or selling him any book or pamphlet is forbidden upon the penalty of imprisonment, if done by a white person; if by a colored person, (bond or free) of whipping. The preamble to this last act furnishes direct evidence of the hostility of slavery to education. It reads thus, "Whereas teaching slaves to read and write has a tendency to excite dissatisfaction in their minds, and to produce insurrection and rebellion." It is thus conceded that the perpetuation of slavery requires that slaves be kept in mental darkness, doom-

ed to the cruel despotism of involuntary ignorance ! If such is the natural tendency of the system, what estimate are we to form of it on the principles of sober reason ? What judgment should be formed of its moral character when measured by the word of God—that book which says “it is not good for a soul to be without knowledge,” which commands that “with all our getting we should get understanding,” and declares that “where no vision is there the people perish” ? Weighed in the balance of reason and Divine truth it is condemned, denounced, and marked with the brand of infamy “deep burnt in.” “God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all.” The system therefore which requires the suppression of light is not of God but of the Prince of darkness.

3. The maintenance of slavery requires palpable injustice. Though the slave be brutally treated by his master, the law gives him no protection ; though injured by another, he cannot sue for damages ; though his wife or daughter should be seduced, he has no redress. In these and other respects the law considers him incapable of being injured, as he is his *master's* property, and therefore provides for *him* no reparation. In every such case he is refused, what every white man in the empire claims as an inalienable right—the right of legal protection. The slave however virtuous is not admitted to give testimony against a white man. The law presumes that he has neither conscience nor understanding ; and that is only a collateral branch of the system which is declared by the public opinion of slave States and obtrusively thrust upon the national legislature by the concurring voice of pro-slavery men—that a slave has not the right of petition. If he cannot petition, it is because the law presumes he *cannot be wronged !* However abhorrent these things may be to our sense of justice, their iniquity is surpassed by the inequality of punishment apportioned by law to the colored man's crimes. If it makes no provision for him when he is injured ; if it looks upon him then merely as property, it falls upon him with unequal distribution and dreadful vengeance when he commits, or is supposed to commit, crime. While in equity, his degraded and ignorant condition should be pled as a ground of mitigation of punishment, the slave code reverses the decision of equity and dooms him to a severe retribution.\* Death is inflicted on the negro as the punishment of a number of crimes, which are punished in the white man only by confinement and labor in the penitentiary.

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\* See the sketch of slave laws by Judge Stroud.

In a number of instances the slave is doomed to severe punishment for acts which are not deemed offences when done by white men,—things deserving no moral blame. For example, if a slave is found beyond the limits of the town in which he usually resides without a written permission from his owner, any white person may punish him by inflicting upon him twenty lashes, and this he may not resist, but at the risk of his life. A number of things, equally innocent, subject him to similar punishment.

The slave is denied the privilege of a trial by jury even when accused of crime that may affect his life. This barrier, thrown around the white man as a protecting bulwark, is most unjustly withheld from the unfriended slave. Such are slave laws; laws which, however iniquitous, are the legitimate product of the slave system. Necessity is made the plea for these unjust and unequal enactments. We may admit that the necessity flows from the system of slavery; but we refuse to admit the legitimacy of the plea. Instead of admitting that flagrant partiality and injustice are excusable because necessary to the support of slavery, we denounce it as evil, and only evil because such means are necessary to its preservation. The word of God does not teach that the end justifies the means to be used in attaining it; but it does teach that whatever requires unholy means for its attainment must itself be unholy. The application of this principle is evident. The support of slavery requires a departure from the principles of justice; and it is thus convicted of being a sinful system.

4. Slavery exerts a most pernicious influence on the christianity of the South.

Love is a great distinguishing characteristic of the religion of the Lord Jesus Christ. "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye love one another." "Love is the fulfilling of the law." Any system that has the tendency to weaken this principle is not of God. The very suggestion that a slave-holder loves his slave as himself is a solemn mockery of truth; he despises and must necessarily despise him before he can treat him as a slave is treated. The transition of the feeling from the slave, to others, is easy and almost certain, until the effect must be, not only to blunt the delicacy of christian sensibility; but to go far to eradicate the principle of christian affection. This we are persuaded is the case generally in slave holding States. The kindness, gentleness, and meekness so essential to the christian character, are not realized in the practice of Southern professors.

We speak of the general effects of slavery,—its tendency to annihilate the principle of love from the mind,—and to encourage passion and revenge. Mr. Jefferson says, “There must doubtless, be an unhappy influence on the manners of the people, produced by the existence of slavery amongst us. The whole commerce between master and slave is a perpetual exercise of the most boisterous passions; the most unremitting despotism on the one part, and degrading submission on the other. Our children see this, and learn to imitate it; for man is an imitative animal. The parent storms; the child looks on, catches the lineaments of wrath, puts on the same airs in a circle of small slaves, gives loose reins to the worst of passions; and thus nursed, educated, and daily exercised in tyranny, cannot but be stamped by it with odious peculiarities.” This is the deliberate judgment of one who from having personal experience possessed the best opportunities of knowing the practical working of slavery,—one who lived and died in a slave holding State, and was himself a slaveholder. Nor can we imagine that his judgment could have been prejudiced by religious notions; because judging from his expressed views on christianity he cannot be supposed to have been overly delicate as it respects the law of love. If with all his inadequate and sceptical views on christian truth, Mr. Jefferson could perceive and express so clearly the unlovely tendency of slavery, how ought it to be estimated by the disciples of Jesus, the essence of whose religion is *love*. Haughtiness and intolerance of disposition are as inseparable from the system of slavery as heat is from fire. The slaveholder’s continued intercourse with slaves whom he hates and despises, fixes these feelings deeply in his mind, so that they become permanent and prevailing features of character. “The consciousness of superior destiny takes possession of his mind at its earliest dawning, and love of power and rule grows with his growth and strengthens with his strength. When in the sublime lessons of christianity he is taught to ‘do unto others as he would have others do unto him;’ he never dreams that the degraded negro is within the pale of that holy canon. Unless enabled to rise above the operation of powerful causes, he enters the world with miserable notions of self importance, and under the government of an unbridled temper.”\*

The incapacity of Southern men, calmly and deliberately to discuss the question of slavery as an important point of

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\* Mr. Summers in the Virginia Legislature.



christian morals, furnishes no weak proof of its evil tendency. Threatening and abuse are their ordinary arguments on this subject; and with these, the facts which frequently transpire in the South are in perfect correspondence. Civil authority is set at defiance, mob violence and *Lynch law* prevail; and the most tragic scenes are enacted,—scenes, the governing and directing principle of which is ‘enmity to God’ and man. And, by whom are all these things done? By the ignorant and the profligate? No: but by the most respectable of Southern Society—magistrates and other public officers; professors of religion and church officers. And, what is particularly to the point, they are supported in their violent courses by the professedly religious part of the community—grave deacons, and elders, with members of repute in the church, leading on mobs and acting as members of Lynch committees; setting at naught the authority of law and dipping their hands in the blood of innocent and unoffending men on the assumed charge of being abolitionists. And what if possible makes such conduct more glaringly at variance with christianity is, that the persons abused are in many instances known to be professors of religion and sometimes members of the same church with themselves, whom in a particular manner they are bound to love.

Add to this the fact, that ministers of religion—preachers of the gospel of peace, are the advisers of these brutal doings. The following advice of a Southern minister, will give some idea of the *kind of christianity* which abounds in slave holding States. “Now dear christian brethren, I humbly express it as my earnest wish, that you quit yourselves like men. If there be any stray goat of a minister among us, tainted with the blood-hound principles of abolitionism, let him be ferreted out, silenced, excommunicated, and left to the public to dispose of him in other respects.”\* In a letter addressed to the clergy of Virginia we find the following statements. “In one region of country where I am acquainted, of rather more than thirty Presbyterian ministers including missionaries, *twenty* are farmers (namely planters and slaveholders) on a pretty extensive scale, \* \* \* They oversee their negroes, attend to their stock, make purchases, and visit the markets to make sale of their crops.”† This is not the accusation of an abolitionist, it is the statement of a southern man, lamenting the low state of religion induced by the world-

\* Address of the Rev. Robert Anderson to the Sessions of the Presbyterian congregations within the bounds of West Hanover Presbytery.

† Religious Telegraph, Oct. 31, 1835.

liness of ministers; and the most striking feature of this worldly-mindedness is slavery! The following is from the speech of a ruling Elder in the General Assembly; made without contradiction in the hearing of the Southern members. "In this church, a man may take a free born child, force it from its parents, to whom God gave it in charge saying, 'bring it up for me,' and sell it as a beast, or hold it in perpetual bondage; and not only escape punishment, but really be esteemed an excellent christian. Nay, even ministers of the gospel, and Doctors of Divinity may engage in this unholy traffic, and yet sustain their high and holy calling. No language can paint the injustice and abominations of slavery. But in these United States, this vast amount of moral turpitude is (as I believe) justly chargeable to the church. I do not mean to say, those church members who actually engage in this diabolical practice, but I mean to say the *church*. Yes, Sir, all the infidelity that is the result of this unjust conduct of the professed followers of Christ; all the unholy amalgamation; all the tears and groans; all the eyes that have been literally plucked from their sockets; all the pains and violent deaths from the lash, and the various engines of torture, and all the souls that are, or will be eternally damned, as a consequence of slavery in these United States, *are all justly chargeable to the church. And how much falls to the share of this particular church you can estimate as well as I.*"\* "There is not" says a committee of the Synod of Kentucky, "a village or road that does not behold the sad procession of manacled outcasts whose chains and mournful countenances tell they are exiled by force from all that their hearts hold dear. Our church, years ago, raised its voice of solemn warning against this flagrant violation of every principle of mercy, justice and humanity. Yet we blush to announce to you and to the world, that this warning has often been disregarded even by those who hold to our communion. Cases have occurred in our own denomination, where professors of the religion of mercy have torn the mother from her children and sent her into a merciless and returnless exile. Yet acts of discipline have rarely followed such conduct."† Such is the testimony of those, who, living in the midst of slavery (though not in its worst forms) spoke of what they knew and cannot be supposed to have said the worst that might have been said of its effects. Surely slavery exerts a pernicious influence on the religion of the South. It is

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\* Mr. Stewart in the Assembly met in Pittsburgh, May, 1836.

† Address to the Presbyterians of Kentucky by a Committee of Synod.

morally impossible that it should be otherwise. If there were not a sufficiency of the power of christianity to destroy slavery; it is only what might have been fairly anticipated, that the dark spirit of slavery, where it prevailed, would destroy christianity. Such is the fact. "Years ago" there was energy enough in the church to warn against the evil; but that warning has been "disregarded" and disregarded because there was not sufficient virtue to apply the discipline of the church for the removal of the evil. In connexion with this, we state the remarkable fact, that the *Note* which the General Assembly, in 1794, appended to the 142d question of the Larger catechism was struck out by the Assembly in 1816. We give an extract from this note. "Stealers of men are all those who bring off slaves or freemen, and *keep, sell, or buy* them. To steal a freeman says Grotius, is the highest kind of theft. In other instances we only steal human property, but when we steal or *retain* men in slavery, we seize those who, in common with ourselves, are constituted by the original grant, lords of the earth." The note of which this quotation is part, illustrates the correct views of christian morals entertained by the Presbyterian Church in 1794, and is a severe denunciation of American slavery; but it was permitted to remain only twenty-two years, upon record when the pernicious influence of slavery became sufficiently great to blot this appended exposition of the sins forbidden by the eighth commandment from their confession of faith! This demonstrates the pernicious influence of slavery upon christian morality.

But, the evil is not peculiar to the Presbyterian body; other religious denominations have felt the influence of slavery, in perhaps a stronger degree. The Methodist and Baptist connexions in the South have by its corrupting influence become rotten to the core. So entire is the prostration of christianity in the South, that no man dare preach the whole truth, nor even the truth *at all* on this point. "*Our religion*" says the writer of a letter from North Carolina "does not permit the preacher to touch the subject of Slavery. It is not the whole gospel. I have not yet seen the man who would venture to take for his text, 'Masters give to your servants that which is just and equal.'"

The influence of slavery on the mass of Southern Society is rapidly throwing it back into a state of barbarism, which in some respects is not *much superior to that of the dark ages!* What cause can be assigned for the common practice of carrying deadly weapons; and the almost equally common prac-

tice of using them on the slightest provocation. For the personal and bloody rencontres, so frequent as to be almost daily occurrences in the South? From what spring the dislike to manual labor and industry; and the discredit associated with what are esteemed servile employments; such as cultivating the soil, and domestic services, thus fostering a spirit of profligacy and idleness? The answer may be given in one word—*slavery*. This barbarous system has well nigh uprooted the christianity of the South: the name is spared; but the power is gone. And the remains of evangelical principle which still linger are but a feeble offset, to the alarming declension from the power of Godliness, which characterizes slave-holding States.

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MARTYRDOM OF THE MARQUIS OF ARGYLE.

(From the Covenanter.)

The restoration of Charles II. was too true a fulfilment of the prophetic declaration of the eminently pious Livingstone, who warned his associates, who accompanied the King on his return, that in bringing him back without a direct recognition of the Covenants, "they brought *God's curse* along with them to the nation." Charles was a sensualist, a perfidious man, and a despotic tyrant. In Scotland, he had once and again taken the Covenant, and even at the period of the restoration, he avowed it his glory to be a Covenanted King, and to be called to rule over a Covenanted People. During his exile on the Continent, he had secretly conformed to the rites of the Romish Church. After his Restoration he had the baseness to stipulate for, and receive an *annual pension* from the Court of France, for the purpose of introducing, when a fit opportunity presented, the abominations of Popery; and under this influence, his subsequent measures, in oppressing Presbyterians, and in advancing to favor the most violent abettors of Prelacy, aimed at the establishment of absolute power, and the utter subversion of the liberties of his subjects. The struggles of the persecuted Covenanters, under his reign and that of his bigotted and ferocious brother, may be justly regarded as a noble contest for the dearest rights of their country; and there can now be no doubt that the People of the British Empire owe these devoted men a debt of gratitude which they never can repay, as to their ex-

ertions they are indebted for all the civil and religious freedom which they at present enjoy.

Bent on the pursuit of the most criminal pleasures, and on the establishment of arbitrary power, Charles was regardless of the most solemn oaths and treaties. In despite of his Covenant engagement, he marked out Presbyterian Covenanters, the men who had suffered much for adhering to the fortunes of his family, and through whose instrumentality he was restored to the British throne, as the victims of his cruelty. The first and most illustrious object of his vengeance was the Marquis of Argyle. This nobleman had uniformly evinced ardent zeal for the best interests of his country; and amid the troubles that distressed the nation, during the civil war and under the Protectorate, he had maintained a conscience void of offence towards God and man, and had besides hazarded and suffered much for his known attachment to the House of Stuart. After the death of the First Charles, he had placed the crown of Scotland on the head of his son, and taken an active part in the Restoration. He was a Covenanter, and in all his public measures he sought to promote the Covenanted liberties of his country. This was enough, in the estimation of the despots and hirelings of that time, to mark him as a fit object of oppression. Tyrants and libertines are destitute of gratitude. Charles would have sacrificed his dearest friend, if he had stood in the way of the gratification of his brutal passions, or had he appeared to oppose an obstacle to the enslaving of his subjects. Seldom have tyrants in any age wanted men obsequious to their will. The Parliament of Scotland was composed of men of infamous character: instead of protecting their most valuable citizen, they readily gave him up to the rage of the despot; and, throughout the whole of the persecuting period, they exhibited their servility and degradation, by carrying promptly into execution every oppressive measure which the Court contrived against the Reformers.

The Marquis of Argyle had embraced an early opportunity of testifying his affection and loyalty to his Sovereign, by repairing, soon after his Restoration, to London, for the purpose of paying his regards to him in person. With the most detestable ingratitude, he was there siezed, by the King's orders, and committed a prisoner to the Tower, whence he was conveyed to Edinburgh, and imprisoned in the Castle, on the 20th of December, 1660. On the 13th of February following, he was placed at the bar of the Parliament, and arraigned by the King's Advocate on a charge of high treason, for crimes

alleged to have been committed by him previously to the Restoration. The indictment which contained fourteen charges, insisted chiefly on his having sworn the Solemn League and Covenant; raised an army, and levied subsidies in defence of the Covenants; and asserted that, in some cases, kings may be deposed by their subjects. The other charges advanced against him, such as having a part in the death of Charles I. and in supporting Cromwell, were either clearly shewn to be scandalously false, or the cases alleged were included in the indemnity that had been recently granted. Indeed the whole trial was a piece of as gross, legalized oppression, as was ever perhaps exhibited in the face of any nation. Only a few weeks were allowed the Marquis to prepare his defence against charges that concerned the greater part of the history of his public life, and that, if proven, involved the crime of treason. Every application from him to have the usual forms of procedure in criminal cases observed, or for leave to supplicate the king, was disregarded; and even it was with extreme difficulty conceded to his lawyers, that "what should escape them in pleading for the life, honor, and estate of their client might not afterwards be charged against them as treasonable!" On several occasions, when brought before them he spoke with great firmness and self-possession, and with much force of argument, exposed the illegality of their proceedings, and vindicated his own public conduct. All his reasonings, however, and the conspicuous proofs of his innocence which were advanced, were of no avail. He was in the hands of monsters thirsting for his blood, and they were determined to show him no mercy. Frequently, during the course of the trial, were insult and reproach added to cruelty. On one occasion, the king's Advocate called him "an impudent villain." The Marquis replied, with dignity and composure, that "he had learned in his afflictions to bear reproaches, and if the Parliament saw no cause to condemn him, he was less concerned at the railing of the king's Advocate." When first brought before his Judges, he reminded them that "this trial nearly concerned him, and was a preparative to the whole nation, themselves and posterity, and he wished them to take heed what they did; for," said he, "you judge not for men, but the Lord, who is present to observe your conduct in judgment." And at a subsequent period of his trial he concluded an able and moving speech with the following heroic declaration—"For his own part, he desired nothing but the truth to take place. They might do with his person as they pleased, for, by the course of nature, he could not ex-

pect a long time to live, and he should not think his life ill bestowed to be sacrificed for all that had been done in these nations, if that were all."

On Saturday, the 25th of May, he was brought to the bar to receive his sentence, which declared him to be found guilty of high treason, and condemned him to be beheaded at the Cross of Edinburgh, on Monday, the 27th inst. Having reminded his persecutors that the Emperor Theodosius had enacted that Sentence of death should not be executed till thirty days after it was passed, he requested only ten, that he might have time to acquaint the king of his condition. This being refused, he attempted to speak, but was prevented by the trumpets, which were ordered to be sounded. When they had ceased, with a fortitude seldom surpassed, and with christian magnanimity, he said—"I had the honor to set the crown on the king's head, and now he hastens me to a better crown than his own:" and, turning himself to the Commissioner and Parliament, he added, "You have the indemnity of an earthly king among your hands, and have denied me a share in it; but you cannot hinder me from the indemnity of the King of kings, and shortly you must appear before his tribunal. I pray he may not mete out such measure to you as you have done to me, when you are called to account for all your actings, and this among the rest."

After receiving his sentence, he was sent back to the Tolbooth, where he was received by the Marchioness, his wife, who had been waiting with intense anxiety the result of the trial. The meeting was tender and affecting. On seeing her, he said, "My dear, they have given me till Monday to be with you: then we must part; let us prepare for the event." All present were affected to tears. The Marquis himself was perfectly composed, and gave utterance to such expressions as exhibited the unmoved serenity of his mind, and as were calculated to solace his friends. "Forbear, forbear," said he; "truly, I pity them (his persecutors); they know not what they are doing; they may shut me where they please, but they cannot shut out God from me. For my part, I am as content to be here as in the Castle, and as content in the Castle as in the Tower of London, and as content there as when at liberty; and I hope to be as content on the scaffold as any of them all." He added, that he remembered a passage of Scripture, cited to him lately by an honest minister in the Castle, and endeavored to put it in practice—"When Zilgag was taken and burnt, and the people spoke of stoning David, *he encouraged himself in the Lord.*"

His whole conduct and conversation, indeed, on this trying occasion, evinced the meek disciple of Jesus, the magnanimous witness for Christ, and the heroic martyr for the truth of the Gospel. During his life, the Marquis was reckoned rather timorous than bold to excess; and in prison he said he was naturally inclined to fear in his temper, but he desired those about him to observe, as he himself could not but do, that the Lord had heard his prayers, and removed all fears from him. The period after receiving his sentence till his execution was one of undisturbed tranquility; the light of God's countenance gladdened his soul; and the work of his friends who ministered to him was rather to restrain his fervent longings after dissolution, than to support him under the near views of it. At his desire, on Sabbath evening, the Marchioness, his lady, took an affecting and final leave of him, that he might, from that till the time of his execution, attend, without discomposure, to prayer, meditation, and christian conversation. Two ministers preached to him in prison on the Lord's day, and, with them and other Christian friends, he enjoyed much enlargement in mutual prayer, and was refreshed by spiritual conversation. On Monday, as the hour of his death drew nigh, he seemed filled with joy unspeakable, and full of glory. About 7 o'clock in the morning, after being busily engaged in subscribing some papers relative to the settlement of his outward affairs, on a sudden, when in the midst of company, he was overpowered with the sensible effusion of the Holy Spirit, and he exclaimed in a rapture—"I thought to have concealed the Lord's goodness, but it will not do; I am now ordering my affairs, and God is sealing my charter to a better inheritance, and just now saying to me, 'Son, be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee.'" At twelve o'clock, he dined with his friends, and manifested his accustomed composure and cheerfulness. Soon after, he retired, to be alone for a short time. When he returned, Mr. Hutcheson, one the ministers who attended him in prison, asked, "What cheer my lord?" He answered, "Good cheer, sir; the Lord hath again confirmed, and said unto me from heaven, 'Son, be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee:.'" and on saying this, he shed abundance of tears of joy, so that he withdrew to the window and wept there. Thence he came to the fire, and made as if he would stir it a little, to cover his concern—but all would not do; the tears flowed copiously: and coming to Mr. Hutcheson, he said, in accents of perfect rapture—"I think his goodness overcomes me; but God is good to me, that he lets not out too much of it here, for he knows I could



not bear it; get me my cloak, and let us go." Then they told him the clock had been kept back till the bailies should come. He answered, they are far in the wrong; and kneeling down, he prayed before all present, with much fervour and earnestness. When he had ended prayer, an officer came to inform him that the hour for ascending the scaffold had arrived. On this, he said with the utmost cheerfulness, "Now let us go, and God be with us." Taking leave of such as were not to accompany him to the scaffold, he said—"I could die like a Roman, but I choose rather to die as a Christian. Come away, Gentlemen; he that goes first, goes cleanliest." On the stairs, he met the Rev. James Guthrie, who suffered a few days after, for the same cause. The venerable minister addressed the Marquis in these words—"My lord, God has been with you, is with you, and will be with you; and such is my respect for your lordship, that were I not under the sentence of death myself, I could cheerfully die for your lordship." The Marquis was accompanied to the scaffold by many noblemen and gentlemen, all dressed in black, and by several pious and faithful ministers. His mien was dignified and composed, and his countenance serene and placid. Burnet, who was no friend to the cause for which he suffered, says—"He came to the scaffold in a very solemn, but undaunted manner, accompanied by many of the nobility and some ministers. He spoke for half an hour, with a great appearance of serenity. Cunningham, his physician, told me he touched his pulse, and it did then beat at the usual rate, calm and strong."\* On the scaffold, he prayed once and again with the ministers who attended him; and delivered a very pathetic, seasonable and affecting speech. In this he declared his firm adherence to the doctrines of the Reformation, to the National Covenant of Scotland, and the Solemn League and Covenant; asserted that sons unborn were bound by them, and that no power under heaven could absolve the people of these lands from those oaths of allegiance to Messiah, Prince of the kings of the earth. "Those," said he, "are the best subjects that are the best Christians. We must either sin or suffer; those who seek the better part will prefer to suffer, and even those who choose to sin cannot expect to escape suffering." After this address he prayed, then took leave of his friends, and presented the executioner with some money and a handkerchief. He again composedly knelt down, prayed a little, laid his head on the block,

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\* Burnet's *Hist. of Own Times*, vol. 1. p. 170.

and by lifting up his hand gave the signal, and at one stroke his head was severed from his body. Thus died the Noble Marquis of Argyle, being "beheaded for the testimony of Jesus." He may be considered the proto-martyr of the Covenanted Reformation of the British Isles; and one of the most illustrious sufferers of the persecuted Presbyterians in the 17th century. He sealed by his blood those covenants which by his counsels, his eloquence, and his sword, he had defended. Many followed him in the maintenance of the same glorious cause, and, animated by a similar spirit, they "resisted unto blood," not loving their lives unto the death.

Now are they among the "souls under the altar," being "slain for the Word of God and the testimony which they held." Day and night they supplicate vengeance on them that dwell on the earth. Ere long, their prayer shall be heard. The evil systems which they opposed, and by which they were oppressed, are tottering to their fall; soon shall they be overturned, and the truth and testimony of the servants of Jesus shall triumph.

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EXTRACTS FROM DR. HUMPHREY'S LETTERS.

It is due to the honor of the Church of Scotland, to say, that she never gave in to this papistical usurpation, (Church patronage.) On the contrary, she struggled and protested against it with an earnestness and perseverance, which, however recreant *some* of her sons may have been, entitles her to high commendation. Thus, in her first Book of Discipline, drawn up by John Knox and four other distinguished reformers, she says, "It appertaineth to the people and to every several congregation, to elect their minister; and it is altogether to be avoided, that any man be violently intruded, or thrust in upon any congregation; but this liberty, with all care, must be reserved for every several church, to have their votes and suffrages in election of their ministers."

The second Book of Discipline, agreed upon by the General Assembly in 1578, and sworn to in the National Covenant, renewed and ratified by the Assembly in 1638, maintains the same free Protestant doctrine, "that no person be thrust into any offices of the kirk, contrary to the will of the congregation to whom they are appointed, or without the voice of the eldership." Had the Reformed Church of Scotland been left to the free exercise of her own enlightened judgment, lay

patronage would probably never have been heard of in that country. It came in, when the first attempt was made by king James to thrust out Presbyterianism, and establish Episcopacy. As soon as Presbytery was restored, the Scottish church renewed her struggles against the grievance of patronage. Though she did not succeed in ridding herself of this Popish relic at once, nevertheless, by dint of perseverance and remonstrance, she obtained a mitigation of the evil from Charles I. and finally its entire removal, from the Parliament of 1649. "After the infamous Act Recissory of Charles II. annulling the measures of this great reforming period, Episcopacy again stalked over the land with the demon of absolute patronage behind it." But so determined were the Presbyterians, not to submit to it, that king William, though averse to its removal, found he could not easily resist the will of the nation, and it was accordingly abolished by act of Parliament, in 1690, two years after he ascended the throne. But the liberties of the people in choosing their spiritual guides and teachers were again overthrown by the Act of 1711, generally known by the name of *Queen Anne's Act*. This was a direct and shameless violation of the *Act of Union* on that head, and as such, drew forth the remonstrances of the General Assembly, and indeed of the whole Presbyterian Church, but without success. The yoke of bondage was at last fixed upon the necks of the people, and they have never since been able to throw it off. I speak here, and all along, of the Established church. The Dissenters elect whom they please to be set over them in the Lord.

In Scotland all denominations make much more of infant baptism, of catechising children, and of their covenant relation to the church, than we do. In these respects, there has, within my own memory, been a sad declension in the Congregational churches of New England; and may not the same be said of our Presbyterian brethren? The Assembly's Shorter Catechism, which our ministers and our mothers used so diligently to teach, has, by a kind of common consent, been banished from our families and schools. Multitudes of our church members seem hardly to know, why they should offer their children in baptism at all; and the churches, I greatly fear, are fast losing sight of the duties which they owe to the baptised. There is probably no country, in which the great body of the people are so strictly Calvinistic, as in Scotland. And I know not where the external observance of the Sabbath is so strictly enforced. Travelling for business and pleasure is not only forbidden by law, but the law is *enforced*.

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EXPOSITION OF MARK IX. 47—50.

And if thine eye offend thee pluck it out: it is better for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into hell-fire; where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. For every one shall be salted with fire, and every sacrifice shall be salted with salt. Salt is good; but if the salt have lost its saltness, wherewith will ye season it? Have salt in yourselves and have peace one with another.

God tells us, by the prophet Hosea, that "he has used similitudes." The relations of social life, and the analogies of the material world, are very frequently employed in Scripture, to instruct us in the knowledge of saving truth. Very much of Divine revelation is presented to our consideration in language strikingly metaphorical—highly figurative. Of this, the passage before us furnishes a striking exemplification. In its exposition, it is necessary to ascertain the meaning of its terms.

The word "*offence*" has acquired a signification quite different from that in which it was used by our translators of the Scriptures. In its modern signification it expresses that which displeases. But in Scriptural style, it denotes any thing which, being in our way, causes us to stumble or fall. The word is both used and explained by the prophet Isaiah, when, speaking concerning the Messiah, he says, "He shall be for a stone of stumbling, and a rock of *offence*, to both the houses of Israel; and many among them shall stumble, and fall, and be broken." This is its true meaning, however different the subjects to which it may be applied. Believers are "*offended*" by whatever impedes their spiritual progress, or proves a stumbling-block in the way of duty. Thus Paul

enjoins to eat or drink nothing whereby our "brother stumble, or is *offended*, or is made *weak*." A false professor is "offended" by any thing which causes him to relinquish his profession. "When tribulation or persecution cometh," says the Scripture, speaking of such, "by and by he is offended." Those who never were even *professors* of religion, are said to be "offended" by that which prevents them from entering the paths of wisdom. Thus the cross of Christ was an *offence* to both Jews and Greeks. In all these different applications of the word, there prevails that generic idea which we have mentioned.

"Kingdom of God" or "Kingdom of Heaven," is a phrase which, in the New Testament, commonly signifies the church under the Gospel dispensation. But the phrase is not confined to this meaning, as many things are predicted concerning that kingdom, which do not, and cannot, receive their ultimate fulfilment in the present world: and therefore the expression must be understood as extending to the heavenly state. Nor is it without the greatest reason that it may be said to include both; for the Gospel dispensation is a *partial* introduction of the joys and privileges which belong to heaven. In the passage under consideration, the heavenly state appears to be primarily intended, as "the kingdom of God" intends the same thing with "life" in preceding verses, and is opposed to the future condition of the lost.

The description of their terrible state is given in the words, "fire of hell, where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched." The allusion, in the use of this strong language, is to the "valley of Hinnom," from which words in the Hebrew, is derived the Greek word, that we have translated HELL. This valley lay near Jerusalem, was once remarkable for its fertility and pleasantness, and was converted by several of the Jewish kings into a place of idolatrous worship. It was rendered particularly infamous by the setting up of the image of Moloch, and making children to pass through the fire to that heathen god. Josiah afterwards destroyed the image, "defiled Topheth," which was in this valley, and to render the place everlastingly and utterly detestable, converted it into a receptacle for all the filth of various kinds which was carried from Jerusalem. Carcasses of men and beasts, and every thing hurtful and offensive, were deposited there, and either consumed by fire, or left a prey to the worms. So great was the quantity of vile materials, that the fire might always be found burning in one part, and the worms rioting

in another.\* From such a spectacle is the punishment of hell set before us, the Saviour quoting, as is generally thought, from Isa. lxvi. 24, where God, speaking by the prophet, says, "They shall look upon the carcasses of the men that have transgressed against me: for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh." Without entering into an investigation of the different opinions respecting the nature of eternal fire, and as to what this "worm" is, the representation warrants at least the following conclusions:—1. That the damned shall be given up to the uncontrolled dominion of corruption. Even here we often see the loathsome wretchedness of men who are enslaved to their carnal lusts. But in hell, when they shall be separated from the righteous, depravity will be allowed to take its course. One reason why the corruptions of the wicked are now restrained is, that they would otherwise render the world completely uninhabitable by righteous men. But when those who are the salt of the earth shall be removed, and the ungodly "cast into hell," nothing will remain to counteract their wickedness, which will produce and spread around it every thing horrible and detestable, from which the wicked themselves will desire to flee. 2. God will add to their misery by inflicting upon them the severity of his wrath. The breath of the Lord, like a stream of brimstone, kindleth the pile of Topheth. He will not only give them up to their vile corruptions, but will make a vessel of every faculty of their souls and every member of their bodies, into which he will pour the stream of vengeance which his righteousness hath kindled. 3. Their torments shall be unceasing. It is impossible to get, from limited duration, an emblem which shall rightly represent eternity. But in the picture before us, there is enough to justify our conclusion. The fire burned and the worm lived in Hinnom while there was any thing to consume or corrupt. And if there be any analogy at all in the representation, wrath shall be endured in hell while sinners exist to feel it, and that shall be forever. The one hand of Omnipotence will inflict their punishment, and the other will uphold them in existence. But how obdurate is sin! Many, with this awful picture before them, dare to go on in the indulgence of their corrupt propensities, and even to scoff at the requirement of plucking out the right eye, cutting off the right hand, &c. deeming such sacrifices altogether too great to be enjoined or submitted to. The scoff proceeds from a

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\*Wells' Scripture Geography.

wicked heart, and the objection from a mistake as to the nature of those sacrifices which we are required to make, and from a total misconstruction of the passage.

These phrases about the hand, the foot and the eye, are *proverbial*. This is evident from the manner in which they are applied to different subjects of exhortation. Thus they are used to dissuade from the sin of unchaste thoughts. Mat. v. 29. Again to shew the danger of giving offence, or placing a stumbling block in the way of brethren. Chap. xviii. 7—9. And in the passage under consideration, to enforce the necessity of self-denial. A peculiar excellence of a proverb is, that it suggests to the mind more than it brings to the ear. Under a form of words referring to some familiar object, it conveys a general truth adapted to a variety of cases. The general truth contained in the proverb here used evidently is:—That every thing which we esteem valuable on earth, though as dear to us as a right eye, must be parted with, if it endanger the salvation of our souls, or impede our progress in sanctification. Every thing which, from its own nature, tends to evil, it is our duty to destroy or abandon utterly. Thus the indulgence of corrupt lusts, the harboring of idols in our hearts, association with wicked company, may not be cherished for a moment. Likewise, things in themselves lawful, if they come to be an “occasion to the flesh,” lead us into sin, or take us off from our duty, must be avoided, and, if necessary, given up entirely. All that we do or can enjoy on earth, should be subordinate to our preparation for, and hopes of heaven. Our very lives, should God require us to sacrifice them, are not to be held dear. Nor let any one imagine that to “pluck out the right eye,” in any or all of these ways, is an unreasonable demand. Raise a balance. Place in one scale the loss of all things earthly: add to it all the pain we can suffer in having the body mutilated in its members, or in having the soul separated from it; place in the other scale the punishment of hell: and can we hesitate a moment as to which should preponderate? Every martyr, who “loved not his life unto the death,” has written the answer in his blood; and his noble example looks back to rebuke our cowardice, if we refuse to imbibe his spirit, and to follow in his footsteps. The believer’s life should be one of rigid self-denial,—a *mortifying* of the flesh with its affections and lusts,—a *crucifying* of the old man with his deeds. For Christ adds, “Every one shall be salted with fire, and every sacrifice shall be salted with salt.”

Concerning these words there has been considerable diversity of opinion. It is evident they are highly figurative and refer to the ceremony of salting the sacrifices under the Old Testament dispensation—a ceremony invariably required in all the sacrifices presented on the altar. “With all thine offerings thou shalt offer salt.” Lev. ii. 13. Those who understand the salt as an emblem of purity, interpret the phrases under consideration in agreeableness with that understanding, and make them denote the necessity of purity in every one that presents himself a “living sacrifice to God, holy and acceptable.” “*Salted with fire*” they make to express the *perfectness* of purity, grace pervading every faculty of the soul and member of the body, searching out and, as it were, consuming every principle and vestige of corruption. The necessity of such purity in the believer is often inculcated in scripture, and forms an important article of the christian’s faith; still we think this is not the mind of the Spirit in the language before us. It is connected with the preceding verse by the particle “*for*,” as furnishing an illustration and proof of what is there asserted. “Their worm dieth not, and the *fire* is not quenched.” In accordance with this, therefore, it is to be explained. The salt accompanying the offerings and the ceremony of salting the sacrifices represented, among other things, the keen and endless severity of the punishment due to sin and which the worshipper, in offering his victim with the salt required, acknowledged himself to be deserving of on account of that guilt which he had contracted, just as there was an acknowledgment in the slaying of the victim, that the offerer deserved to die. In this view the words express the awfully severe and unceasing nature of the punishment of every one who, refusing to pluck out the right eye when it offends, shall be cast into hell. Torments of the keenest character shall be endured, which shall even “eat, as it were fire” and the wicked shall live amidst their torments, for the fire, instead of consuming, shall, by the power of God, preserve them as flesh is preserved by the salt that seasons it. How important—how essential to our present and eternal interests, happiness and well-being to have grace, by which alone any can be saved from being salted with fire and from the gnawings of the “worm that never dieth.” To this the Saviour exhorts. “Have salt in yourselves.”

In this phrase, as in other places of scripture, “salt” denotes divine grace wrought in the heart by the Holy Ghost and strengthened from time to time by his blessed influence. In this sense the term is evidently used in Col. iv. 6. “Let



your speech be always with *grace*, seasoned with *salt*." We are required to present ourselves living sacrifices to God, and in order to our acceptableness, we must be salted with grace, that so our corruption may be subdued and we have in our souls the sweet smelling savor which grace only can produce. Though this salt is imparted by the Spirit of grace, yet we are required to have it in ourselves, diligently using all the means through which it is communicated, and giving evidence to ourselves and others that we are in possession of it. We have it in ourselves, when we have a saving sense of its enjoyment. Likewise, we should always and constantly retain the savor and relish of it. "If the salt have lost its saltness wherewith will ye season it." Grace merely *in habit* will not render us or our services acceptable sacrifices to God. It must be in *exercise*. Much more will a bare outward profession prove useless. It is not the *form* of godliness, but the *power* thereof that avails any thing. Should the light that is in us be darkness, how great must be that darkness! If we would be accepted of God and profited in his service, we must prize and watch over the grace that is in us, not quenching the Spirit, but cherishing his gracious and benign influences; never being satisfied unless we feel and know that we are becoming more and more "seasoned" under the pervading and preserving power of this "salt" divine.

Against the conclusion drawn by errorists of the Arminian school, from this verse, that grace may be lost, after it is communicated, since salt is supposed sometimes to lose its saltness, we are perfectly safe. From a mere supposition we cannot infer that the thing supposed shall take place. Paul writes to the Galatians, "Though I, or an angel from heaven preach any other gospel to you than that ye have received, let him be accursed." Does Paul mean, that it was possible for an angel from heaven to preach, or desire to preach another gospel to the Galatian converts? Or to take the passage according to its literal meaning. Suppose that salt loses its saltness; are we warranted in drawing the conclusion, by analogy from this fact, that divine, saving grace may be lost after it is given? Christ does not speak of the salt being lost, but of its losing its saltness. If therefore the analogy must be pressed, the only legitimate conclusion is, not that grace may be lost, but that it may be so really and essentially changed, as to be converted into corruption—a conclusion, which none but the impious blasphemer would dare openly avow. The Arminian argument from this passage, by proving too much, proves nothing. It destroys itself. If we choose

to sever one part of the scriptures from another, and do not judge of their doctrines as a whole, examining their connection and comparing their different aspects in different passages, we may build upon the word of God a system of Atheism. But when we interpret them by themselves, comparing scripture with scripture, we find them all true, consistent, comfortable, divine. If grace is the gift of God—all whose gifts are without calling and repentance—if it is “the seed that remaineth and abideth,” if it is “a well of living water springing up unto eternal life,” if it is the divine salt, which never can be converted into corruption, but which seasons and preserves every one salted therewith; the believer is secure in its continuance: its triumph is as certain as the purpose of the Eternal. How strong the inducements to “have salt in ourselves,” to know that we possess it, and constantly to retain its divine savor and relish. Believers evidence their grace and shew its exercise, as in other ways, so in “having peace one with another.”

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#### MINISTERIAL SUPPORT.

The policy of Satan the grand adversary from the days of Constantine until the rise of Antichrist, and to the present time in the Episcopal church of England, has been to pamper the clergy, and by that means to corrupt the church. At present, and especially in this country, his device is to reduce them to poverty, and so discourage youth from dedicating themselves, and parents from dedicating their sons, to the ministry, and to distract the minds of ministers by the anxieties of penury. An intelligent christian people should be careful to counteract the devices of the enemy of souls, in both these respects. Perhaps as good a rule as could be adopted, would be, that a pastor of a congregation, should be as well provided for in temporal things as the middle class among the people. The means of amassing property equal to the most opulent should neither be sought for, nor furnished. “Thou therefore endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier.” 2 Tim. ii. 3, 4. Those whose wish it is earnestly to exhort men that they renounce the world and choose the better part which shall never be taken from them, ought not to be, nor in any respect *appear to be,*

grasping after filthy lucre. Perhaps it is an invariable rule, that great worldly opulence corrupts a minister of the gospel. When a clergyman by the contributions of the people is placed in such a condition of temporal comfort that he can provide for himself and his household things honest in the sight of all men, and owe no man any thing but love, there is no apology for his engaging in any secular employment.

The provision made for the temporal support of the priests in Israel, placed them beyond the reach of temptation and rendered it almost impossible for them to embark in secular pursuits. "And the Lord spake unto Aaron, Thou shalt have no inheritance in their land, neither shalt thou have any part among them : I am thy part and thine inheritance among the children of Israel." Num. xviii. 20. This was a blessed and glorious inheritance, and should comfort the ministers of Christ, amidst all their toils, privation, earthly poverty and reproach. Were it not for this heavenly and most blessed consolation, the faithful ministers of Christ, who generally suffer most in the distribution of earthly sorrows, would many a time fail and be discouraged. "If in this life only we have hope, we are of all men most miserable."

But at the same time, the priests under the law were amply provided for in earthly good things, by the laws of the God of Israel whom they served. Unless the throne and the people became so corrupt as utterly to disregard the statutes of the Lord, it was quite impossible, that they, or their widowed wives, or orphan children could be reduced to want, while the people of Israel enjoyed a competency. "Command the children of Israel, that they give unto the Levites of the inheritance of their possession cities to dwell in; and ye shall give unto the Levites, suburbs for their cities round about them. And the cities they shall have to dwell in, and the suburbs of them shall be for their cattle, and for their goods and for all their beasts. And the suburbs of the cities, which ye shall give unto the Levites, shall reach from the wall of the city and outward a thousand cubits and round about. And ye shall measure from without the city, on the east side two thousand cubits, and on the south side two thousand cubits, and on the west side two thousand cubits, and on the north side two thousand cubits, and the city shall be in the midst : this shall be to them the suburbs of the city. So all the cities which ye shall give to the Levites, shall be forty-eight cities : them shall ye give with their suburbs." Num. xxxv. 2—7. Reckoning by the sacred cubit which was probably used, for these cities were especially holy, the whole of these lands, ly-

ing without the city, was seventeen hundred and fifty yards, or nearly one mile. If the city was a mile square, the suburbs embraced a territory of eight square miles. As there were forty-eight cities the church-lands amounted to three hundred and eighty-four square miles, or two hundred and forty-five thousand seven hundred and sixty acres. The number of all the males in the tribe of Levi, a short time before they passed Jordan, was twenty-two thousand. Num. iii. 39.—Doubling these to include the females, all the souls of the Levitical tribe were forty-four thousand. Were all the land in Holland equally apportioned among the families, each family would not possess half the amount possessed by each Levitical family, exclusive of their lots in their cities. A similar distribution of the land in Great Britain would make the landed property of each family about equal to that of each family of the Levites. One thousand cubits, or about one third of a mile of the suburbs, in width, is supposed to have been occupied as stalls and yards for cattle, and for gardens, while the remaining two thousand cubits are thought to have been pasture lands. Some such arrangement appears to have been intended by the division of the suburbs into two portions.

Beside these glebe lands, or parsonage fields, each family owned a house and lot in the city. Attention to their lands and city property, would afford the priests an opportunity to exercise themselves in as much manual labour, as might conduce to recreation and health, while there was little to cherish worldly mindedness, or tempt to the love of filthy lucre.

Beside all this, their clothing was furnished, and their tables supplied by the tithes, or a levy of one tenth on the products of the soil, and on the proceeds of the flocks. They were thus amply supplied with every necessary comfort, freed from worldly cares, and placed beyond the reach of temptation to seek for worldly opulence. It was impossible that they should become possessed of great earthly riches. Their families too were secured in a competency. In view of death, no priest had any more occasion to perplex himself with anxiety respecting the sustenance of his wife and children after his death, than while he was alive and with them. His house, after his decease, was occupied by his widow and children. When any priest's daughter married into another tribe, she lost, during her marriage state, the right to eat of the sacred things, i. e. to be supported by the tithes; but if she was divorced, or became a widow, provided she had no children to raise up a family in another tribe, she had the right to return

to her father's house, there to live of the ecclesiastical revenues. Lev. xx. 13. The sons and daughters of the priest all eat, as well as his wife, of the sacred things, and they were not deprived of them by the death of the head of the family. The sons were priests from their infancy. In the account of the census which was taken of the tribe of Levi, all the males from a month old and upward; and of the family of the Kohathites, it is written:—"In the number of all the males from a month old and upward, were eight thousand and six hundred, *keeping the charge of the sanctuary.*" Num. iii. 28. The males from a month old were priests "keeping the charge of the sanctuary." If a widow who had married out of the tribe of Levi, might return to her father's house and live of the sacred things, much more might the widowed mother of a priest, though he were but a month old, and his orphan sisters, claim their support from the revenues of the priesthood. If a priest died childless, his widow, of course, was supported. for she might return to her father's house. If at his death, he left daughters only, they were entitled to support from the church, for they might be married and become the mothers of priests. What a wise, beneficent and even bountiful provision was made by these statutes for the temporal support of the priests of the Lord. It ought to command the admiration of all ages. Why not? It proceeded from infinite wisdom and infinite goodness.

It is true that the Levitical priesthood is abolished, and with it the sacerdotal cities, their suburbs, and the whole tythe system. But is there no lesson of instruction taught by it to the New Testament church? Undoubtedly God clearly declared his will not only that "they who serve at the altar should live by the altar," and "that the ox that treadeth out the corn should not be muzzled;" but also that their support should be in plenty, but not in opulence. Can any good reason be assigned why God should will his ministers to be supplied less amply in temporal comforts, under the new dispensation, than under the old? In Israel the expense of the sacrifices, the time occupied in attending their three annual festivals, the support of their armies and other numerous incidental expenditures imposed onerous burdens on the worshippers. A very small proportion of what they contributed to the support of their ecclesiastical establishment, would now place the ministers of the sanctuary in a situation where they would have all and abound.

Before any one can enter well prepared on the ministry, either by his own efforts, or out of his patrimony, there must

be expended on his education as much as would have been sufficient to commence any ordinary branch of secular business with a prospect of success. That he should labor through a whole life of toil in the service of the sanctuary, all the time in straightened circumstances, be compelled to practice the most rigid economy, in order to owe no man any thing, and after all, leave his widow, and orphan sons and daughters in a state of entire destitution, is not according to the spirit of the divine legislation in this matter. There are many expenditures which a minister must make that are not necessary for others. "A bishop must be given to hospitality." Being necessarily much abroad, and much resort, both of friends and strangers, to his house, his raiment costs him more than that of others. While all expect, and while he is bound in all humility and duty, to avoid costly apparel, it would be generally disgusting should he appear in a sordid dress. It would be ascribed to a want of decency and taste, or to an avaricious spirit. His correspondence with his brethren, and others, subjects him, very commonly, to a heavy and unavoidable tax, if he would be generally useful, or if he takes an interest in the welfare of the church at large. Attention to intellectual cultivation requires books; to know the movements of God's providence—what are the signs of the times, and the progress of public sentiment, access to the reading of periodical literature is indispensable. Of all this he must have some knowledge, "to acquit himself as a workman that needeth not to be ashamed." To deprive him of the means of such enlargement of his intellectual treasures, is most inauspicious to the interests of a congregation. All this he ought to have, and be able, with judicious economy, to leave his widow and children at his death a moderate and decent competency. That it is the duty of the church to provide for all this, is inscribed, as in the light of a sunbeam, on the whole code of laws enacted to make provision for the support of the ministry, and on the reasonings of Paul on the same subject, in his epistles to the church at Corinth.

Even in relation to temporal prosperity, the labors of the faithful minister of the gospel are productive of more worldly advantage to the people of his charge, than all they contribute to his support. The diffusion of intelligence, the cultivation of sobriety, of industry, of temperance, of integrity in dealing, and of economy, tend, as a system of divinely appointed means, to the verification of the Bible maxim:—"The hand of the diligent maketh rich." There seems to be some allusion to this in the reasonings of the apostle Paul on this subject:

“Who goeth a warfare at any time at his own charges? who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof? or who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock? Say I these things as a man? or saith not the law the same also? For it is written in the law of Moses, ‘Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn. Doth God take care for oxen? Or saith he it for our sakes? For our sakes, no doubt, this is written: that he that ploweth should plow in hope; and he that thresheth in hope should be partaker of his hope. If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things? Do ye not know, that they which minister about holy things live of the things of the temple? and they which wait at the altar are partakers with the altar? Even so hath the Lord ordained, that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel.” I Cor. ix, 7—14. While in some parts of this argument of the apostle on the subject of ministerial support, there appears to be an allusion to the improvement in the temporal estate of christians, by the collateral effects of gospel ordinances, this is not that, on which the main stress is laid. Through them spiritual good things, incomparably more important than all carnal goods, are imparted in the ministrations of the sanctuary; and therefore on every principle of equity, those who labor in imparting, as ministers of Christ, these far better blessings, are entitled to a competent supply of temporal comforts. After having established the equity of the claim, he ratifies it by the ordination of the Lord.

God’s blessing attends upon liberality in this matter. “Consider now from this day and upward—I will bless you.” Hag. ii. 18, 19. From the day that they began to contribute liberally toward the building of the temple of the Lord, instead of blasting, mildew and hail by which they had suffered for “withholding more than was meet,” God promises that they should be blessed and prospered in their labours. All this is as applicable now, as in the days of the prophet Haggai. “There is that scattereth and yet increaseth.” The liberal soul shall not want. “The liberal deviseth liberal things, and by liberal things shall he stand.”

If all such texts apply to contributions for the support of the poor, especially poor saints, where the claims are founded on charity, how much more emphatic, their application to ministerial support, in which the claims are founded both in charity and equity, though they are not at present enforced by human laws?

We have reason to bless God that notwithstanding many temporal discouragements, he puts it into the hearts of so many to imitate the most illustrious example of the great and holy apostle of the Gentiles, to dedicate themselves to the Lord for the work of the holy ministry and to look for their reward from the best and most bountiful of masters in a better country, even a heavenly. This too is the more praiseworthy as the difficulties which they have to encounter ordinarily commence long before they enter on their ministry. For while parents who have the means generally educate their sons for the learned professions of the law and medicine, it is commonly thought enough, that those who are destined for the ministry, be furnished with a *collegiate* education, and then left to their own efforts, or to the liberality of the church, for the attainment of a theological education, qualifying them for the pulpit.

After all, the ministers of the gospel, by owing no man any thing, by purchasing no article until they can pay for it, by making the first appropriation out of their salary for the payment of rents, and by a strict economy, can "provide things honest in the sight of all men." Life, and consequently their toils and privations, are short, and "having turned many unto righteousness, they shall shine as the brightness of the firmament and as the stars for ever and ever."

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THE MATTER OF PRAYER.

(From the Covenanter.)

JOHN xvi. 33—"Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you."

This precious declaration, addressed to the true disciples of Christ in every age, implies—1. That believers have many errands to God in prayer. 2. That through Christ they are welcome to come with them all. Not only does the Father wait to hear their petitions and "to be gracious," but when his people "know not what to pray for as they ought," he sends his Spirit to instruct them and to help their infirmities. Be their suits ever so many, so various, or so frequent, if they conduce to the divine glory and their real good, they are welcome to bring them to God. His ear is ever open to their cry; even when they err in asking, he will not chide continually, nor always keep his anger. They are laid under a blessed



necessity of drawing nigh to God, and of continuing near his mercy-seat, and are encouraged in this way to expect all good things at his hand. 3. That they have indeed a large field to go upon, notwithstanding every apparent discouragement, in pouring out their hearts to God in prayer. Difficulties the believer may expect to beset his path in attending to this great duty. The unbelief, hardness, and carnality of his own heart, and doubts and fears respecting his state, combined with the suggestions and temptations of the great Adversary—all these seek to bring him again into bondage, unfit him betimes for prayer, and cause his wheels to move heavily in the duty. Over against these discouragements is set this glorious assurance, amply sufficient, in the hands of the Spirit, to counterbalance them all. The general term "*whatsoever*," wherewith it opens, wonderfully enlarges the field of the believer's petitions. It is in effect saying, that difficulties, instead of repressing the ardor of his spirit, should fan the fire of his desires, and cause them to flame forth the more. It is as the assurance from the Elder Brother, Him who is faithful and true, that whatsoever the soul needs, the body wants, the condition requires, will be granted. Abundantly is there similar encouragement held forth in other passages of Scripture. Phil. iv. 6, "Be careful for nothing: but in every thing by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God." Mark xi. 24, "Therefore I say unto you, what things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them." 1 Kings viii. 38, 39, "What prayer and supplication soever be made by any man, or by all thy people Israel, which shall know every man the plague of his own heart, and spread forth his hands towards this house, then hear thou in heaven thy dwelling place."

To this extended liberty in prayer, there are, indeed, limitations; but they are such as arise from God's glorious and unchangeable nature, and as are declared in his revealed will, and such as comport with the tender and intimate relations which he sustains to the objects of his love. God cannot deny himself, his people are dear to him; and with ceaseless and jealous concern, he is perpetually consulting for their good. As a Sovereign and a Father, he allows them to ask him in prayer, and in answering their requests, he "dealeth with them as with sons." He may see the things which they desire not to be really good for them, or to be inconsistent with his designs of love towards them to bestow, and therefore are they withheld—but let them rest assured, in such a case, not only that God's ways are ordered in "perfect wisdom," but

that "like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him," Ps. ciii. 13.

Believers may not pray for

1. Any thing sinful, prohibited, or that is not according to God's revealed will. "The righteous Lord can do no iniquity," nor can he encourage it in others. His gifts resemble himself—he bestows only "what is good." We *ask amiss* when we ask aught to consume upon lust, James iv. 3. Thus did the Israelites of old tempt God by asking meat for their lusts, Ps. lxxviii. 18. If God gives what is importunately asked in this way, it is sent in wrath. The rule of gracious bestowal is clearly declared, 1 John v. 14, 15, "And this is the confidence we have in him, that if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us. And if we know that he hear us whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him."

2. Nor for aught that is not promised.

All things "pertaining to life and godliness" are included in the promises. These, exceedingly great and precious as they are, are the foundation of all believing supplication. Prayer, whether general or particular, should be *an echo of God's promises*:—resting on and pleading them, we should weigh the matter, fill the mouth with arguments, and "ask in faith nothing wavering."

3. Nor for any thing unreasonable or unsuitable.

God consults the condition of his people in conferring benefits. He knows their frame. He acts uniformly as a Physician to their bodies—a faithful and compassionate Shepherd and Bishop to their souls. While he brings them healing, affords protection, and provides for them nourishment, he does all this at the best time, and in the most suitable manner. The promises which he fulfils, by bestowing blessings in answer to prayer, are the expressions of a wisdom, the depths of which we in vain attempt to fathom. To give the things sought otherwise than as Sovereign wisdom dictates, would do harm instead of good; therefore are they sometimes withheld, or their enjoyment reserved for a future period, when they will come as timely supplies to pressing necessities, and the impress of unfathomable wisdom and infinite love will appear visibly upon them. With these limitations, which yet serve rather to enhance than to lessen the privilege held forth in the text, we are prepared to consider more particularly—What is the meaning of this term *whatsoever*, or what are the things *in general* which we are directed to ask in the name of Christ, and to expect from the Father through him.

Thus excellently observes a valuable writer\* on this subject—"Our prayers should run parallel to God's promises; we should ask nothing of God but what we have an intimation he will do for us. Our needs and necessities would not be sufficient arguments; but the principle argument is the word of God. Finding a promise in the word, faith fixes there, and presseth God from it; and a believer so praying cannot be denied, unless God deny himself. The word of God is himself; it is his will; so the soul may go with a holy boldness unto God; for the thing that is promised is half done. God may keep us in suspense awhile; but he expects we should live upon the word, and hang on it till the time of the promise comes. All that faith labors for, is to work the soul to an assurance that God will deal with us according to his word. And if I can make it out that such a promise belongs to me, I have enough to live on."

The things which God has promised, and which are included in the *whatsoever* by which he encourages his people's approach to him, are—

1. Things however great.

*Whatsoever* encourages large requests. It is related that a certain prince of old, when conferring a munificent gift on a favorite, who alleged it was too much for him to expect, said, "It may be too much for *thee* to expect, but it is not too much for *me* to bestow." Thus acts God in communicating blessings to his people. He gives according to his nature, and for his "*name's sake*." Not the deserts of his people but his own glory, he consults in the bestowment of his favors. Hence, he that is the God of salvation "daily loadeth us with benefits," and doeth for his redeemed "exceeding abundantly above all that they are able to ask or think." They need not therefore hesitate to ask great things of God, if only they be such as are allowed. Their petitions will be granted not "to the half of his kingdom" merely, but to the whole of it. Luke xii. 32. Like as the king of Israel was blamed by the prophet because he smote *thrice*, when he should have smitten *six times*, and a victory over his enemies, repeated proportionably, would have been granted him, so are believers warranted to enlarge their requests, encouraged by the hope that "according to their faith" it shall be done unto them. As Jacob, when he vowed to God in Bethel, they may not only ask God to be *with them*, but they may ask God to be *their God*. This is an extent of their range of supplications, of which no created in-

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\* Cole.

tellect can take in the conception. Yet the weakest suppliant believer has reason to expect its fulfilment. "God is not ashamed to be called their God; for he hath prepared for them a city." Heb. xi. 16. What can be more? If he thus gives himself, and in very deed constitutes believers "heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ," will he withhold from them other blessings however great, if they are only accordant with his revealed will to bestow, and included in his wondrous plan of redemption?

## 2. Things seemingly little.

Some there are who restrain prayer before God, because they would not trouble him with little matters. Ahaz, the wicked king of Judah, on this pretence, refused to ask a sign from God, covering over his hypocrisy with a deceitful veneration for God—"Is it a small thing for you to weary men, but will ye weary my God also?" Isa. vii. 13. Great numbers still know nothing of praying "without ceasing," of cultivating continually the frame and habit of prayer. They overlook the providence of God in their ordinary concerns, and neglect in them to seek the Divine guidance and blessing. It may be quite true that we are less than the least of God's mercies, and frequently may we be constrained to exclaim, as we contrast our nothingness with Jehovah's majesty—"What is man that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man that thou visitest him?" Yet the most insignificant of his creatures is not unnoticed by Him who regulates the movements of providence. He feeds the ravens and the young lions when they cry to him for food; he cares for the lilies; and not a sparrow falls to the ground without his direction. Especially are all the concerns of his redeemed ones, even the most minute, ever present to the mind of him that sits upon the throne. The hairs of their head are all numbered. They are therefore warranted to lodge all their requests in the bosom of their Father in heaven. *Whatsoever* refers to the wants of the body as well as those of the spirit—to the circumstances of their outward lot in life, as well as to the interests of their eternal salvation. On the footing of this gracious promise, the believer is encouraged to be very particular in pleading with God;—to the breath which he breathes, the bit of bread that satisfies his hunger, the cup of cold water that allays his thirst, or the meanest thing that his present condition calls for, he should present his supplication before him. Were he thus to come with boldness to the mercy-seat, he would esteem all things that befall him blessings from a father's hand; he would feed, as it were, continually on the fruits of Immanuel's land; and would know by experience

what it is, whether in eating or drinking or whatever else he does, to "do all to the glory of God."

### 3. Things improbable or even apparently impossible.

Nothing is too hard for God. The believing suppliant must walk by faith and not by sight. In this, faith finds a chief employment—in pleading with God for blessings that appear not easily attainable, persevering in prayer amidst difficulties, and waiting with patience and hope till the mercy desired is bestowed. Thus Abraham "judged Him faithful who had promised," and when all outward was dark and forbidding, "against hope he believed in hope." Once and again the Prophet interceded for the recovery of the Church from her distressed and forsaken condition, and when all hope of deliverance seemed to be taken away, he asked, "*By whom shall Jacob arise for he is small?*" The plea was not presented in vain; the wrathful dispensation was removed, and a gracious assurance of returning favor given—"The Lord repented for this; this also shall not be, saith the Lord God." Amos vii. 5. Dispensations that appear contrary to the promised or supplicated mercy, should in no case stop our prayers, but should put an edge on our desires, and lead us to *cry mightily* to God.

4. Though the suits be many, and require to be frequently renewed.

Not only are the wants of believers innumerable, but often are they pressed with a sense of the same necessities. Hence they need frequently to come for a supply to Him that is able to relieve. Pardon, peace, and many other spiritual blessings, they require daily; besides, at special times, necessity is laid upon them to seek the particular strength, direction, or comfort which they may have formerly experienced, and which their present state and circumstances yet require. They need not fear that their frequent applications will exhaust the bounty of their Father in heaven, or render him less ready to help than before. "The everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary." Isa. xl. 28. Nay, he even requires his people to come often, bidding them, to "pray without ceasing," and saying, with inexpressible condescension—"Let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice; for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely." Song. ii. 14.

Lastly, Though the supplications be for others, as well as ourselves.

The general term *whatsoever*, which the Saviour employs, is not to be restricted to those things which we need for ourselves, whether they respect the body or soul, the present life

or that which is to come. The believer is a member of the great human family, and a citizen of the commonwealth, as well as one of the "household of faith." Every descendant of Adam is his neighbor, whom he ought to love as himself; therefore he cannot but acknowledge his obligation to offer up frequent "prayers and supplications for all men." Between him and all the members of Christ's mystical body, there is a holy and intimate connexion, forming the bond of a spiritual brotherhood, so that he cannot but "weep with them that weep, and rejoice with them that rejoice," and he is constrained to bear their cases much on his spirit at a throne of grace. The saints in their diversified conditions, the interests of the Church of Christ, and the concerns of the Mediator's glory throughout the earth—these must enlist the believer's prayers, and furnish him with frequent errands to the Hearer of prayer. This will be his fixed resolution—"*For Zion's sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth.*"

The *whatsoever* with which encouragement to prayer is held forth, exhibits the largeness as well as the frequency of such supplications. The brethren, enemies, all sorts of persons living or that shall live hereafter—the whole Church of Christ on earth, ministers, magistrates, &c. are to be included in the prayers which the saints, who are a royal priesthood appointed to offer up spiritual sacrifices, deliver daily into the hand of the Advocate in heaven. (See James v. 16; Matth. v. 44; 1 Tim. ii. 1, 2; John xvii. 20; Eph. vi. 18; Col. iv. 3.) The dead, and such as have sinned the "sin unto death," (2 Sam. xii. 21; 1 John v. 16,) alone are excepted; all else on earth are proper objects of prayer. While pleading earnestly as an intercessor for others, the believer is encouraged not only to hope that his petitions will avail to procure for them benefits from the hand of God, but that, in the exercise, he himself will receive a rich increase of spiritual blessings. It is the Faithful and True Witness who has said—"*Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you.*"

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#### PERSECUTION AND BANISHMENT OF TYROLESE PROTESTANTS.

The following letter from a correspondent of the New-York Observer, gives a brief, but clear and satisfactory account of a large number of poor people, lately resident in one of the valleys of the Alps, who, a few years since, renounced the errors of Popery and cast off the authority of

the "man of sin." Ever since the time of their conversion to the Protestant faith and worship, they have been made to experience the bitterest persecution from the popish priests and other emissaries of "that wicked one," who works with all deceivableness and lying wonders, and whose "tender mercies are cruel." After all means failed to influence the converted Tyrolese to give up the reading of the Scriptures, abandon the faith which they had embraced and return to the bosom of "*Holy Mother Church*," the government of Austria, one of the main pillars of Antichrist in Europe, pronounced sentence of banishment against them, requiring every one who persisted in maintaining or practising the "protestant heresy" to leave his country before the 11th of September last, giving a period of only six months from the issuing of the cruel and unrighteous decree till the time of its final execution. Truly the spirit of Popery is one and unchangeable, find it where we may. Its very nature leads to persecution. Its principles are bloody; its practices wantonly cruel and murderous. Let American protestants, who are so prone to look upon popery as harmless, or to consider its spirit, nature and tendency as greatly changed for the better, awake to a sense of their danger before it be too late. Let them cease to cherish and strengthen the Antichristian system, by elevating papists to places of power and trust, by countenancing and supporting popish institutions, placing their children under the care and control of priests and nuns, contributing to the erection of cathedrals and other temples of idolatry, and in various other ways fostering a power which has never been possessed without being abused.

We are glad to find that the events referred to in the following letter have produced a general and deep sensation in Germany; and to learn by later intelligence, that the persecuted Tyrolese have found a friend in the king of Prussia, through whose benevolent interposition, these exiles have obtained an asylum from popish oppression. Having addressed themselves to him, requesting permission to settle, with their families, in the mountains of Upper Silesia, the king sent Dr. Strauss, one of his chaplains, to Vienna to endeavor to arrange the business with the Austrian Government. The embassy proved successful. Permission was given for the protestant families of Ziller to emigrate without molestation, and the king of Prussia has assigned them for their new residence the village of Erdmansdorf, in Upper Silesia, selecting himself, it is said, this location as the place of their future abode, because the character of this part of the Silesian mountains resembles much the country they were compelled to leave. The Prussian government also agreed to defray the expense of their journey, give them land, furnish the necessary implements of labor and afford them subsistence till their fields yield the first crop. Thus they that trust in the Lord shall not fail to be provided for.—[Ed.]

BOLBEC, (Lower Seine,) July 21, 1837.

The country called the *Tyrol* is situated between Germany and Italy. It is bounded by Bavaria, Austria, Illyria, the kingdom of Venetian Lombardy, and Switzerland. It is almost entirely covered with mountains, which are a prolongation of the Alps. Several of these mountains are perpetually bristled with ice and snow to their summits. The inhabitants contend with toilsome perseverance against this inhospitable nature, and succeed in procuring among the rocks a little earth, in which they cultivate such plants as are most necessary to support life. They also carry on some manufactures,

particularly of silk, and many of them every year make excursions into various countries of Europe, and gain their subsistence as pedlars and musicians. The Tyrolese are, in general, sober, industrious, honest, and strongly attached to their country; they return to their homes, so soon as they have acquired a small competence.

The Tyrol has several times changed masters. In 1805 it belonged to Bavaria; in 1810 it was annexed almost entirely to the kingdom of Italy; in 1814 it fell into the hands of the emperor of Austria. The religion of the Tyrol is Roman Catholicism; and as the inhabitants are mostly unenlightened, they preserve with deep veneration the superstitions invented in the dark ages. But a Tyrolese, who had traversed Bavaria and been conversant with Protestants, brought back into the valley of Zill or Ziller (in German *Zillertal*) some pious books written by members of the Reformed church. These books were read with the liveliest interest by the poor mountaineers, and soon some of them became convinced that they had been deceived by the priests. They availed themselves of their intercourse with Protestants to purchase copies of the Bible, and began to read the Word of God. Then the scales fell from their eyes; they discovered the impostures of popery, and embraced the pure and simple truth as it is in Christ. The influence spread from house to house, and at the end of two or three years, nearly five hundred Tyrolese had openly abandoned the Romish church, saying that they did not find in the Bible the doctrine of the Pope's infallibility, or purgatory, or the sacrifice of the mass, or transubstantiation, or the worship of the Virgin Mary, &c. They declared, besides, that they would join the Reformed communion, and place themselves under the care of a pastor.

It is easy to imagine how angry the Romish priests were, on viewing this revolt against a denomination which they regard as indisputable and inviolable. They tried all possible means, promises, threats, entreaties, to bring back these unruly sheep. They even worked false miracles, and denounced the most terrible vengeance of heaven against those who would not return into the pale of the Catholic church. But the Tyrolese, who had obtained grace to know the gospel, were neither to be frightened nor cajoled by the priests. They refused to listen to their promises, despised their threats, and laughed at their miracles. They were ready to suffer all things, like the martyrs of the first ages, like the Protestants of the time of the Reformation, rather than remain in a communion which taught things contrary to the Word of God!



Then began a frightful persecution, which calls to mind the saddest days of the dark ages. The converted Tyrolese were treated, not only as rebels against the laws of the church, but as subjects in revolt against the laws of the state. In vain the new Protestants sent a committee to Vienna, and tried to bring their complaint to the throne of the Emperor of Austria. All their efforts were useless. The cabinet of Vienna, directed by prince Metternich, aims above all things to preserve the *Statu quo*; it cares little about what is true or false in matters of religion; the eternal salvation of souls is of no value with the Austrian Secretaries of state; they require that every body remain quiet and slavishly submissive to old traditions. The Tyrolese committee were sent back to their mountains, without obtaining what they asked, and were ordered to return to Cotholicism, (Popery,) under penalty of incurring the high displeasure of the Emperor and of being put in prison. The priests, finding themselves thus supported by the civil authority, redoubled their cruelty and oppression against the new converts. One priest formed a remarkable exception, and indulged feelings of tolerance and mildness. He advised to treat the dissenters with favor, and set the example himself. But mark! this tolerant priest was deposed by his superior ecclesiastics from the pastoral office, for following the example of Christ, who was *meeek and lowly in heart*; and he left his parish with tears in his eyes, saying that the greatest calamities would fall upon this valley of the Tyrol!

How shall I describe to you the various kinds of oppression employed against these poor Tyrolese? There exists in Austria a law, according to which every Catholic who wishes absolutely to become a Protestant, is obliged to receive for six weeks the private instructions of the Romish priests. This law is evidently made to secure the object above mentioned, namely, to retain all persons in the chains of the church in which they are born; for few men would have the courage and perseverance to undergo such a trial. And yet the priests of the Tyrol found means to increase the rigor of this law. On the one hand, they say to the new converts: You have no right to embrace Protestantism, before receiving our private instructions for six weeks. But, on the other hand, they refuse, under different pretexs, to give these instructions, so that the Tyrolese find themselves in this singular dilemma: under the necessity of being taught personally by a priest before becoming Protestants, and yet refused instruction by the priest! The clergy of the Tyrol appeal to the law and violate it at

the same time! Were ever the principles of reason and conscience mocked to such a degree?

Further. Parents were constrained to send their children to popish schools, popish catechetical instructions, popish worship; and if they refused, were put in prison, or robbed of part of their property. We need hardly say that the priests taught the children to despise the commands of their parents, and tried to create divisions in families. Thus, by an unheard-of abuse of physical force, parents were robbed of their rightful authority over the education of their children, and obliged to suffer the seeds of hatred against themselves to be sown in the hearts of their children! This is not all. New converts were forbidden to purchase goods or houses, or to travel in foreign countries. This was a device of the priests, who hoped to bring back the Tyrolese to popery, by injuring them in their dearest interests. The young converts of the two sexes were forbidden to marry! All these attempts against the most sacred rights of humanity were still exceeded, if possible, by the manner in which those were interred who died without asking for the sacraments of the Romish church. In 1832 died a venerable old man, of 98 years, the patriarch of the valley. He had professed the doctrines of the Reformed church, and had not called for a priest in his last moments. Can you conceive how he was buried? The hangman, accompanied by a dog, took away at night the mortal remains of this old man, and threw them like a filthy carcass into a ditch in the middle of a field! Since then, the same ignominy has been inflicted on fifteen or sixteen Tyrolese Protestants whom God has called from this world. And such scenes pass in Europe, in the nineteenth century, among a people who boast of being civilized! And the Romish priests are not ashamed to enjoin these infamous acts, these acts from which pagans themselves would recoil! And we hear popish orators and writers boasting of their tolerant spirit, and charging Protestants with having secret designs of oppression and tyranny! Yes, they are tolerant; but only where they are the feeblest party. They are in favor of liberty of worship: but only in countries where they are not strong enough to overthrow it.

The Tyrolese persecutors, it is consoling to be able to say, were disappointed. The new converts remained firm and unshaken in the cause of truth. The more they were called to suffer for the cause of Christ, the more deeply rooted was their repugnance against popery and their fidelity to the instructions of the gospel. Their oppressors believed, that at

least these cruel measures, if they did not bring the Tyrolese Christians under the yoke of Rome, would provoke them in despair to commit acts of violence against public order. But, no ! this attempt also failed ; the new converts bore all without revolting against the civil laws ; they conducted themselves as good and faithful citizens, though treated like outcasts, and no charge could be brought against them, of contempt of the Emperor's authority. What followed ? When the priests of the Tyrol saw that they could not overcome the evangelical christians of their parishes, they asked and obtained of the Cabinet of Vienna orders to drive them from the country. The head of the district of Ziller collected, at the close of last April, the five hundred inhabitants who had abandoned the Roman Catholic church, and communicated to them the Emperor's decree, ordering them to leave their country, if they were determined to adhere to the evangelical communion. This is the first example, in a hundred years, in Germany, of such a banishment for such a cause. The archbishop of Firmain banished in this manner 30,000 persons who had adopted the confession of faith of Augsburgh ; but we were far from thinking that the Austrian government would imitate, a century afterwards, the intolerance of a Romish bishop.

At first, the Protestants of Ziller were surprised and alarmed ; but on recollecting the horrible persecutions which had been experienced for nearly ten years, they soon gave thanks to the Lord for opening this door to worship him agreeably to their own consciences, and availed themselves of the permission to establish themselves in another country. Doubtless, it is painful to leave one's country, the place where rest the bones of our ancestors, the abode where we were born ; doubtless, banishment is a bitter thing to the heart of man ; but it is more grievous to be oppressed in the exhibition of our religious sentiments ; and it is much better to lose our earthly house, which lasts but a day, than our house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. The new converts hesitated not to choose the good part ; and as the time allotted them is very short, for they must all leave the Tyrol before the 11th of September next, they immediately sent one of their number, *John Fleidl*, with authority to seek an asylum for them in Germany.

The last information I received is, that Fleidl is now in Berlin, and that he is favorably received by the principal officers of the government. The king himself has shown much interest for these exiles, and it is hoped that he will offer them a place of refuge in his states.

## MEMOIR OF THE REV. JOHN STEWART.

(Concluded from page 320.)

The last illness of our beloved father was short, and somewhat severe. But he had been previously led to realize death and eternity : for some years, there is evidence that he was specially employed in numbering his days, and applying his heart to wisdom. He had learned to die daily.

In a letter to his eldest son, written after a communion season, in which it was the privilege of the author of this discourse to take part with him, he spoke of the refreshment of spirit he enjoyed, and added,—“I was sustained in mind and body beyond expectation. Oh! what Divine goodness and mercy have ever followed me,—what support in trouble, and deliverance out of it to one so unworthy! Yet a little while, and I hope to be actually redeemed from all evil.” The Lord frequently leads his people in a way that they know not, and prepares them for scenes of trial and for death, by directing them to such exercises as are seen afterwards to be most suitable to the events that befall them. So was it with our beloved father. In a season of prevailing disease and mortality, he was tried with the affliction of many of his people, and with the removal by death of a considerable number to whom he was tenderly attached. He was thus called to administer the consolations of religion to many in the prospect of death,—and as he accompanied some to the banks of the Jordan, his mind was led to solemn reflections on his dismissal from the body,—the eye of his faith and hope was directed to look away from the wilderness to the heavenly inheritance,—and his desires were raised towards the eternal weight of glory, reserved for the righteous. He was called, too, to improve the breaches made by death among his people, in his public discourses : and it was remarked, that for eight or nine Sabbaths in succession, previously to his own removal, death, the judgment, and eternity, formed the principal subjects of his discourses from the pulpit. During the winter and spring preceding, he was much engaged in visiting his widely-scattered congregation : with much exertion and bodily fatigue he preached to them from house to house, as if anticipating that his day of work and opportunity was soon to terminate,—and as if eagerly desirous that he might be prepared to render his account with joy. To his children, most of whom were residing at a distance, he im-

parted the most solemn and affectionate advices, and his prayers with them and for them were peculiarly weighty and affecting. The approaches of the last enemy found him thus, with his loins girded and his lights burning,—in the active discharge of duty. Although he did not at first apprehend danger, and refused, for a considerable time, to admit medical assistance, his mind was lifted above the earth, and he seemed, even from the commencement of the attack, to be setting his house in order, by holy, thoughtful meditation and prayer. Through life, his was a tried, proved character. In the last scene, the blessed truths that he had preached sustained his spirit. He died as he had lived, resting upon the everlasting and well-ordered Covenant, and cleaving fast to an almighty Redeemer. Owing to the nature of the disease, his powers of utterance were much impaired; he spoke with difficulty and pain: and hence his conversation was less free or full with those who gathered around his dying bed, than in other circumstances might have been expected. Even when the hand of death pressed upon him, he spent a considerable part of two days in preparing for the work of the sanctuary on the Sabbath preceding that on which he died. The fatal malady had, however, so much increased in power, that when the Sabbath came, he was unable to appear in the pulpit, or to leave his chamber. Instead of the delightful work of preaching the Gospel, he was called to travel through the waters of trouble, not without evidence that the gracious Master whom he served was present to sustain and comfort him. When several passages of the Divine Word were read to him, at his request, he spoke in terms of assured confidence of the plan of redeeming mercy, and of his own hope in Christ. The profession of Job's faith being presented to him, he said, with much solemnity,—“Yes, I know that Jesus Christ is an Almighty Redeemer,—and all that the Father hath given him shall come to him. I trust I can say he is my Redeemer,—and with these eyes I shall see God,—I shall behold him for myself, and not another.” The last day of his earthly pilgrimage was the Sabbath, which he had ever regarded as a day of special privilege and enjoyment. Although much weakened, and subjected betimes to severe suffering, his mind was calm and collected. He viewed his departure as at hand, and as his enfeebled strength permitted, he spoke gracious words concerning redeeming love, and the believer's hope. Although he possessed not rapturous emotions, he seemed to have no clouds or darkness, and with patience he waited for God's salvation. During the day, he

was considerably freed from bodily anguish, so much, that his family at one time entertained hopes of his recovery. In the evening, he had a severe paroxysm of lengthened continuance, and when it passed away, his remaining strength was so far prostrated, that it was evident he was in the arms of dissolution. Fully sensible of his condition, he said, with much firmness and composure, "*Into thine hand I commit my spirit; thou hast redeemed me, O Lord God of truth.*"\* These were nearly the last words that he uttered, and soon after, about half-past ten o'clock, on Sabbath night, he fell asleep in Jesus. He was not, for God took him. Thus died this venerable servant of God, bearing testimony to the Saviour's faithfulness, as he had done in life, and expressing joyful confidence in him as his Lord and Redeemer. In view of such a scene, who would not say,—“Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his,”

\* Ps. xxxi. 5.

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#### OBITUARY OF THE REV. ROBERT GIBSON.

Mr. Gibson was born at Balymena, Ireland, on the 1st of October, 1793. In 1797 he emigrated with his father, the Rev. Wm. Gibson,\* and family to the United States. In 1799, upon his father's settlement as pastor of the Reformed Presbyterian congregation of Ryegate, Vt. he removed with the family to that place. Emigrating to this country so early in life, his education and habits were American. At an early age he commenced the study of the learned languages, under the care of his father, whose education in Glasgow College well qualified him for imparting instructions to his son. Having finished his literary course, he entered on the study of theology, in the Reformed Presbyterian Theological Seminary, at Philadelphia, under the care of the Rev. Dr. Wylie. Having completed his theological studies, received licence to preach the gospel, and supplied with great acceptance many vacant congregations, he was ordained to the pastoral charge of the congregation of Beaver, Pa. in 1818. The congregation flourished under his ministry. He travelled much, preached in many vacant congregations, and aided frequently in the dispensation of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. Large audiences assembled to hear him wherever it was announced he was to preach, and listened with great interest and edification to his lucid expositions of the way of salvation, his faithful, affectionate, and searching applications of gospel doctrines, and to his bold, manly, and able defence of the truths of God's cove-

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\* This servant of Christ is still living, and in his 85th year supplies with great acceptance the congregation left vacant by the late decease of his son.

nanted reformation. The mouths of many gainsayers were stopped, many were convinced, ceased their opposition, and acceded to the Reformed Presbyterian church. He was peculiarly zealous and successful in the maintenance of the Calvinistic system against the Arminian errors and Hopkinsian subtleties and oppositions of science, falsely so called. He refuted ably the erroneous tenets of the Secession churches respecting the Headship of Christ over the nations, and the channel through which temporal mercies flow to believers—proving that “Christ is Lord of all to the glory of God the Father,” and that he has purchased for believers all their temporal blessings. Sinners were converted from the error of their ways, saints were edified, and the friends of truth encouraged and strengthened by his ministry.

In 1830 he was removed to the charge of the second R. P. congregation in the city of New-York. Here a new and extensive field was opened, which he cultivated with great success. It was his practice to preach three times every Sabbath, and to lecture one evening in each week. He attended punctually the prayer meetings, and was diligent and laborious in family visitation and catechising. These labors were not in vain. The church was crowded with hearers, and the congregation increased in numbers, in knowledge, and in practical godliness. Between him and his congregation there was cherished a mutual and ardent affection, which increased in strength until his death.

He was a member of the association of Protestants formed in New-York to oppose the Popish heresies and idolatries, by exposing the gross corruptions of that great apostacy, and in the public discussions on that subject he distinguished himself as an able advocate of the Protestant reformation. For some time he, together with the Rev. Mr. Irving, an Associate minister of New-York, conducted a weekly paper in opposition to Popery. The American Protestant Vindicator, edited by the Rev. Dr. Brownlee, now occupies the same field.

In the troubles of the Reformed Presbyterian church, during the New Light controversy, the church was much indebted to Mr. Gibson as an instrument in the vindication of the truth, and the preservation of her system of order. His arguments in the judicatories were eloquent and powerful. He published three ably written pamphlets vindicating the proceedings of the judicatories in condemning the New Light innovations and errors, and in inflicting the censures of the church on the disorderly and seceding brethren. These were times when the cause of God imperatively required every man to be at his post, and Mr. Gibson did not desert his. He was one of the chief instruments in God's hand of preserving two flourishing congregations in the city of New-York. Indeed, it is evident he was brought from the west by the church's Head, to be set, at such a crisis, for the defence of the testimony of Jesus, in the metropolis of this nation. Herein God greatly honored him, and on this account his name and memory will long be savory and dear to all true Covenanters. His congregation in New York, from being few in number, increased to about 250 members in the six years of his ministry. Exposure and fatigue in travelling, with much preaching, frequently to congregations in the open air, as was usual at sacraments in the West, were the causes of weakness in the lungs and hemoptysis. Before his translation to New-York it was hoped that the

disease had been altogether removed, though his physical energy was somewhat impaired. But through great labor his health again began to decline in the early part of the summer of 1836, which induced him to make a visit to Vermont, and spend some weeks there among the former parishioners of his father. As there were four churches there, and as the friends of his youth were all very desirous to hear him preach often, he was prevailed on to labor more than he had intended. His preaching was in a high degree acceptable to very large audiences that assembled to hear him. But owing to these efforts his health was rather impaired than improved by his visit. During the following autumn and winter he scarcely remitted any of his accustomed ministerial labors. In the spring of 1837 his increasing debility gave serious alarm to his friends, and it was thought advisable that he should make a voyage to the land of his nativity. The Reformed Presbyterian brethren in Ireland received him gladly. He preached occasionally in their pulpits, and aided at their sacramental solemnities. He attended the meeting of their synod, was invited to a seat as a corresponding member, and, at the request of the court, gave a lucid account of the state of the church in the United States. In this address he ably defended the proceedings of the American judicatories in their excision of those who had abandoned the testimony of the church. In these efforts for the cause of truth, and by intimate private social intercourse with the transatlantic brethren, he was made an instrument of strengthening the bonds of friendship which bind together the witnesses for a covenanted reformation, on both sides of the Atlantic.

The Rev. Mr. Dick, pastor of the Reformed Presbyterian congregation of Ballymena, writes respecting him in a letter dated Aug. 16th, 1837. "I am sorry to say Mr. Gibson's health is much the same as when he left New-York, and his friends here are deeply concerned to think that there is little prospect of his recovery. Our all wise and gracious Redeemer knows what is best and will do it, for him, for his family, his flock and the church at large; and it becomes us to say the will of the Lord be done. We cannot love the church as He who gave himself for it does; and He will not suffer its interest to be compromised in any event. He will carry on his own great work even in the removal from us of good and faithful servants. Mr. Gibson has been every thing among us that we could desire, except his bodily weakness, and I firmly believe, that he has commanded the respect even of those who cannot love the community which he represents——. His address (in Synod) was published in the Belfast Times, and in the Covenanter, and will be inserted, I presume, in the Scottish Presbyterian." The Rev. Mr. Houston, pastor of the R. P. congregation of Knockbracken, and editor of the Covenanter, writes under date Sept. 4, 1837:—"Mr. Gibson's presence among us has been interesting and refreshing in no ordinary degree. We all sympathize most deeply in his continued bodily weakness. Our congregations in various places have been much edified and comforted by the public services which he has conducted; and his manly, faithful and christian deportment, in his intercourse with the ministers and people, has tended to give a very favorable opinion of himself and of his brethren in America, with whom he is identified. We part with him with much regret, and he carries



with him the affectionate wishes and fervent prayers of many of the Lord's people in this land. May his life be spared, and if in the sovereign disposal of the Lord of Zion, he be shortly taken away, which we fear, may this afflicting dispensation be blessed to himself, his family and flock, and the whole church here and in America.

About the time of the date of this letter, he sailed from Ireland for New-York, where he arrived after, on the whole, a comfortable voyage. He, however, became gradually more feeble. Medical prescriptions afforded no relief. He conducted once the forenoon service in his own church, after his return. At the dispensation of the Lord's supper to his congregation, Nov. 12th, he served one table, the last public ministerial service he ever performed. His emaciated form, subdued tone of voice, and peculiarly grave and solemn manner and weighty matter, altogether were like one standing at the gate of death and uttering a voice from the portals of heaven.

In conversation he expressed entire resignation to the will of God, and spoke of his approaching dissolution without alarm. He said, were it the Lord's will, he would be content to continue long to labor in the work of the ministry for the edification of the body of Christ. Not a murmur at God's dispensations escaped his lips. He was cheerful, tho' grave and solemn. He took the liveliest interest in conversing on the state of the church both in Great Britain and America. With respect to his family,\* he said, "I have not one uneasy or anxious thought respecting their support, when I am taken from them. I have committed them to the care of the great and good Shepherd of the sheep. I know he will take care of them, though I have no worldly patrimony to leave them." He regretted that he had not employed more of the time allotted to preaching, in close and searching application of the doctrine to the consciences of the hearers. He spoke in warm expressions of gratitude for the care which had been taken of his early education in the doctrines of the gospel, and in the distinctive principles of the Reformed Presbyterian church, to all of which he professed his zealous adherence. He said "he had sometimes speculated on some of them, but that he had endeavoured to keep his speculations out of the pulpit, and that it would have been far better if he had never speculated at all." He approved of them fully, and hoped to die in them. He said "the Lord Jesus whom he had preached was exceeding lovely and precious, and that he found him so to his own soul." On the subject of his own personal interest in the Head of the covenant, he remarked that "he would not speak boastingly, that he had nothing whereof to boast; but that he could rely with full confidence on the promises, and this confidence he was fully persuaded was well founded, as for the last six months especially, he had carefully examined his title to the blessings which they convey." In one word, the prospect before him appeared to be bright and consolatory.

When he might be said to be in the agonies of death, and after he was unable to speak, his father read to him the second chapter of the Song of Solomon, and requested him, if he understood it, and could appropriate it to himself, to give him a token by the holding up of his

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\* A wife and four children.

hand. He, though in the agonies of the last conflict, nodded significantly with a smile, and held up his hand. What a blessed voice of mercy to be heard in the valley and shadow of death, "Arise my love, my fair one, and come away, for lo! the winter is past," &c. This happened early on the morning of the 22d of December. "Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord."

Mr. Gibson was an eloquent, popular, and very impressive preacher. He did not shun to declare the whole counsel of God. He was bold, faithful and magnanimous in declaring the truth and in rebuking all error and vice. Opposition did but increase his ardor, and add fresh vigor to his enlightened and holy zeal. His mind was inquisitive, ardent, acute and vigorous. His powers of persuasion in the pulpit were peculiar and effective. In his personal friendship he was exceedingly affectionate, kind hearted and overflowing in generous emotions. No sacrifice but that of duty was too great for him to make when it was required by a friend. To the interests of the church, to the edification and comfort of the Lord's people, and to the advancement of the cause of pure truth, he devoted himself with a zeal that continued to burn and shine even when he went down to the dark valley of the shadow of death. His labors were greatly blessed. In his death he was highly honored and abundantly comforted. "They that turn many unto righteousness shall shine as the brightness of the firmament and as the stars forever and ever."

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**GUIDE TO PRIVATE SOCIAL WORSHIP.**—The duty of stated and select Private Christian Fellowship, briefly inculcated and directed. First American, from the second Glasgow Edition. Pittsburgh; published by Luke Loomis, 1837. pp. 60, 12mo.

We had intended a notice of this excellent little work much earlier, but being at the time of its preparation crowded out, it has since been neglected. The work is designed to be a manual or directory in conducting fellowship meetings. The *Obligations* to the duty are clearly and forcibly exhibited, as dictated by reason and confirmed by the universal practice of mankind in every department of pursuit—as implied in the character and relations of the saints—as necessary for the discharge of the duties which christians owe to one another—as sanctioned by holy example—and as commanded, approved and encouraged of God. The *Advantages* of private christian fellowship are next presented,—as it unites the gifts of the members for mutual good—preserves, increases, and diffuses religious knowledge—cherishes a spirit of piety and devotion—affords opportunity of mutual faithful admonition—yields comfort in times of trial—has a happy influence upon the other duties and ordinances of religion—unites the church and diffuses a public spirit among her members. **TWENTY-FOUR** comprehensive *Rules* are given for the management of Societies, which should be carefully studied by every member. Then follow *General Directions and Cautions*, which are truly excellent, with a *Conclusion* that does honor to the head and heart that prepared it. We regard this little Manual as furnishing what has been, for years, much needed, and

happily calculated to answer the end had in view in its publication. The arrangement is good, the style simple and plain, the Rules, Directions, and Cautions judicious; while a savory spirit of piety is breathed throughout the whole. We earnestly recommend it to all our readers.

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REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN SYNOD IN IRELAND.

This Synod held an adjourned meeting at Cullybackey, commencing on the 10th October last, and continuing its sessions by adjournment four days. The attendance of members was full. The first day was spent chiefly in discussing the petition presented, at the stated meeting, from Mr. Alexander's congregation. (See our 8th No.) It was finally, on motion of Mr. Dick, resolved to refer the Formula of questions, put to Ministers and Elders at ordination, to a Committee to revise the *phraseology* and report to Synod; but with this special understanding, that the matter and substance should remain as before. The parts of the petition, asking for an alteration of the 4th Term of communion and touching the 23d and 31st chapters of the Confession, received no countenance in Synod, except from part of the members of the Eastern Presbytery. Wednesday, Thursday and a part of Friday were spent on a paper entitled "Declaration of the Church's Testimony on Magistracy." This paper was the report of a committee, of which Mr. Dick was chairman, and which had been appointed on the subject last year. It is described as "a very full document, exhibiting the grand principles of our Testimony on the subject of civil government, with their legitimate applications, and teaching fully the Magistrate's punitive power in matters of religion." On the propriety of considering this document with a view to its adoption in "overture," Drs. Paul and Henry, with Messrs. Alexander and C. Houston, differed in opinion from the members of Synod, first contending that it should be sent down to sessions and congregations without any consideration by Synod; and then, that it should be deferred. A motion for consideration was carried, only the 4 ministers above mentioned, with their Elders, voting in the negative. Dr. Henry intimated "that as he and his brethren disapproved of this whole proceeding, they would take no part in the discussion, with this special understanding, that they were not committed to any sentiment contained in the Declaration." The consideration was entered upon and carried through with much harmony, by the other members of Synod; and the document was adopted in "overture" and ordered to be transmitted as such to the sessions and to the sister Synods in Scotland and America. The consideration of the Memorials which had laid over from the stated meeting was deferred till next stated meeting for want of time to give them the necessary attention. Mr. Smyth gave notice, that he would, at next meeting, introduce a motion "for the full and formal recognition of the *faithful* brethren in America.

Fast day by E. S. Synod is last Thursday of February, for causes see No. X.

Fast day by W. S. Synod is first Thursday of March, for causes see No. IX.