

THE
REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN.

EDITED BY

REV. M. RONEY, A. M.

PASTOR OF THE REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN CONGREGATION,

NEWBURGH.

VOL. III.

“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.]

NEWBURGH, N. Y.

PRINTED BY J. D. SPALDING.

INDEX

TO

VOLUME III.

ANALYSIS and Defence of the Westminster Confession of Faith,	103
Auchensaugh, Sermon of Rev. Mr. Carmichael at	156
Argument on the Jury Law,	193
Anecdote, Interesting	220
Associate Reformed Synod, Early Testimony against	325, 259
Africans, the Captured	256, 384
CONVENTION of Reformed Churches,	23
Civil Institutions of U. S., Testimony against the Moral Evils of	40, 65
Clarke's, Dr. Letter on Psalmody,	50, 78
Characteristics of the Present Age,	84
Civil and Religious Liberty,	89
Covenanters, Origin of Name of	121
Counsels of the Aged to the Young,	145
Carmichael, Rev. Mr., Sermon of at Auchensaugh	156
Civil Government subjected to Christ as Mediator,	176
Character and Instruction of the People in Scotland,	183
Counsels for the Converted,	242
Catholic Communion, Letter on	334
Causes of Fasting,	313, 341
DONALDSON, Mary C., Obituary of	31
Dominion of Sin,	135, 161
Dance, a Time to	140
ECCLESIASTICAL Proceedings,—Irish Synod,	113, 303
“ “ Pittsburgh Presbytery,	124, 224
“ “ Southern Presbytery,	125, 286
“ “ E. S. Synod,	250
“ “ W. S. Synod,	313
Entrekin, the Pass of	218
Early Testimony against the Constitution of the A. R. Synod,	325, 359
FLAVEL'S Navigation Spiritualized, Extract from	20
Family Worship,	201
Fasting, Causes of	313, 341
Fairley, Rev. John, Obituary of	349
GIBSON, Rev. William, Obituary of	27
General Assembly Law-suit,	96, 126
General Ass. of Ch. of Scotland, Important Decision of	222
God the Object of Supreme Love,	225
Gillespie, Rev. George, Anecdote of	378
HUMPHREY, Dr., Extracts from Tour of	253
IRELAND, Reformed Presbyterian Synod in	113, 303
Intelligence, Items of	159, 192, 256, 287, 320
JURY-LAW, Argument on the	193
KNOWLEDGE, its Desire and Attainment,	245
Knox's Disputation with the Papists,	379

INDEX.

LIBERTY, Civil and Religious	89
Lukewarmness in Secret Prayer, Means of preventing	215
Love Supreme, God the Object of	225
Love, Rev. James, Ordination of	224
Liberality without Principle,	368
McKINNEY, Moses, Obituary of	64
Moral Law, Properties of the	129
McKail, Hugh, Trial and Martyrdom of	150
Mediator, Civil Government subjected to Christ as	176
Means of preventing Lukewarmness in Secret Prayer,	215
McFetridge, James, Obituary of	223
ORIGIN of the name "Covenanters,"	121
Occasional Hearing,	257
Ordinations,	224, 319
Oath, Profanation of the	347
PSALMODY, Dr. Clarke's Letter on	50, 78
Present Age, Characteristics of the	84
Profanation of the Sabbath,	97
Properties of the Moral Law,	129
Palestine, Reminiscences of	158
Presbyterian Church Government, Divine Right of	209, 238
Popery in Spain,	221
Practical Opposition of the U. S.'s Govt. to God's Law,	344
Parental Instruction,	353
REVIEW of Proceedings of Convention of Reformed Churches,	23
Religious Controversy,	62
Rules for understanding aright the Ten Commandments,	167
Reid, Rev. James, Obituary of	187
Revival of Religion,	233, 262, 289, 321
Repentance, Remarks on	262, 295
Reflections for the New Year,	375
SABBATH, the, its change from 7th to 1st day,	1
" " Nature and Sanctification of	33
" " National Violation of	59
" " Profanation of	97
" " in New Orleans,	127
Sloat, Ellen S., Obituary of	63
Sin, the Dominion of	135, 161
Spain, Popery in	221
Scottish Martyrs, Recent Tribute of Respect to Memory of	251
Solemn League and Covenant, the Signing of	276
Seminary, Theological	256, 286
Stevenson, Rev. Andrew, Ordination of	319
TWO WITNESSES, the	8
Testimony against the Moral Evils in the Civil Institutions of the United States,	40, 65
Trial and Martyrdom of Hugh McKail,	150
Theological Seminary,	256, 286
Turkish Empire,	317
UNION of Ulster and Secession Synods in Ireland,	381
WITNESSES, the Two	8
Westminster Con. of Faith, Analysis and Defence of Doctrines of	103
Waldensian Confession of Faith, Early	249
Western Sub-Synod, Causes of Fasting and Thanksgiving by	313, 316

THE
REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN.

VOL. III.

MARCH, 1839.

No. I.

THE SABBATH.

Its change from the Seventh to the First Day of the Week.

The view which we have given of the Sabbath,* explains why comparatively little is said of it, in the New Testament. Being moral, it is of permanent obligation: addressed, as it was originally, to the whole human race, it could not be effected by any change in the external administration of religion, or by the abrogation of any thing that was peculiar to one people or age. Therefore, we have no express command respecting the Sabbath in the New Testament, for there was no new institution; an institution moral in its nature, and of course permanent in its obligation, was in existence. The principle of this already existing and obligatory institution, is the employment of one day in seven in the worship of God. The command is to work six days and rest the seventh; but a change of the time of resting, from one day to another, would not be an abrogation of the Sabbath, inasmuch as the Sabbath is to be distinguished from the particular day on which it may be kept. The fourth commandment determines that a seventh part of our time is to be employed as a Sabbath, or day of holy resting, but does not determine on what particular day of the seven the Sabbath is to be held. The precept being moral is unchangeable and permanently binding, while the particular day on which it is kept, may be changed by Divine authority.

The Sabbath in its original institution was designed to commemorate the work of creation; and when re-published,

* See Nos. 9 and 10 of Vol. II.

along with the other precepts of the moral law, the same reason is still assigned: "For, in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day." But, another consideration was superadded: "Remember that thou was a servant in the land of Egypt, and that the Lord thy God brought thee out thence." Deut. v. 15. This new consideration was added to, but did not supersede the original reason for the sanctification of the Sabbath.

The Sabbath is now kept in honour of the resurrection of Christ, the time being changed from the seventh to the first day of the week. The glory of God was more illustriously displayed by the redemption of sinners, than by the work of creation; therefore, to this, the most glorious of the works of God, is the honor of the Sabbath conceded. Christ rose from the dead on the first day of the week, and thus rested from the work of redemption by finishing it. For, he "was delivered for our offences and raised again for our justification." And to commemorate this great work, the Sabbath is transferred to the day on which Christ arose from the dead. Not, however, to the exclusion of its original design. The glory of God as appearing in creation is not overlooked, but the first consideration is given to the more glorious work of redemption; and this is shown by the change from the last to the first day of the week. "If the birth of the world was an event in which all mankind were interested; such too was the resurrection of its Saviour. If the primitive Sabbath commemorated, not the origin of one city or nation, but the origin of mankind; the christian Sabbath, in addition, commemorates an event, whose blessed consequences reach to all ages and nations, and throughout eternity. If the morning stars sang together, and the sons of God shouted for joy, when they saw the earth come in its primeval beauty from the hands of its Creator; the angelic messengers who announced the advent of the Saviour, were heard singing "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace and good-will towards men." So far from the work of the primitive Sabbath being excluded by this slight change, the work of redemption has only opened our blinded eyes to behold anew the traces everywhere of his creative and provident wisdom, and the harmony of all his Divine attributes in the last and greatest of his works, the work of salvation."*

* Presbyterian Review, for January, 1832.

We proceed to show that the change was by Divine authority, though there be not an express precept for it in the New Testament: The absence of a direct command on this point will not appear surprising when it is remembered, that the change did not affect the law of the Sabbath, nor the obligation following from the law.

1. Old Testament prophecy anticipated this change:—
 “The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner. This is the Lord’s doing—it is marvelous in our eyes. This is the day which the Lord hath made, we will rejoice and be glad in it.” Ps. cxviii. 22—24. This psalm is applied by the Apostle Peter to Christ, and is a number of times, quoted in the New Testament, in application to gospel times. “The stone which the builders disallowed is Christ the Savior. He was refused by the builders, (the chief priests and rulers,) when he was delivered up, by them, and was put to death at their request. But, he was emphatically made “the head-stone of the corner,” when he was raised from the dead. This resurrection proved that though disallowed of men, he was honored of God. Of this, the Psalmist says, “This is the Lord’s doing.” And the time on which this took place, is said to be “the day which the Lord hath made.” That the christian Sabbath is spoken of here, the best expositors agree:—“Here is the doctrine of the christian Sabbath; it is the day which the Lord has made.”* “The day of thanksgiving also, which David and Israel celebrated, was but a shadow of that blessed day which saw the Redeemer risen from the dead:” that was indeed “the day which the Lord had made.”† This psalm then contains a prophetic intimation, that the day of the Savior’s resurrection would be peculiarly honored. “The day God made;” How? By setting it apart as the day of spiritual rest and gladness. For, says the Psalmist, “We will rejoice and be glad in it.”

Again, “And when these days are expired, it shall be on the *eighth* day, and so forward, the priests shall make your burnt-offerings upon the altar, and your peace-offerings, and I will accept you, saith the Lord God.” Ezek. xliii. 27. This prophecy refers to New Testament times. It announces the fact, that during these times, “burnt-offerings and peace-offerings” should be presented on the *eighth* day. This *eighth* day is an intimation of the *christian* Sabbath: it is the *eighth*

* Henry on the place.

† Scott on the place.

when counted in connection with the week or seven days preceding. According to the style of the Old Testament, christian worship and ordinances are called "burnt-offerings and peace-offerings." The conclusion is, that during the gospel, the eighth day should be appropriated to the purpose of public worship in the sanctification of the Sabbath; and this, counted in connection with the seven days of purification, is the same with the first day of the week.

2. The appearance of Christ to his disciples after his resurrection.

It is a remarkable fact in the history of Christ, that particular notice is taken of his appearing to his disciples on the same day of the week, on which he arose from the dead. "Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut, where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst; and saith unto them—peace be unto you." John xx. 19. "And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them; then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said—peace be unto you," verse 26. Although the Saviour appeared several times during that first day of the week on which he arose—a whole week is suffered to pass before he is seen of them again; or, if he was seen of them during the interval, it was not deemed worthy of record; while his appearing to them on the next first day of the week is carefully recorded. Thus, the first day of the week was particularly honored by him, and appears to have been distinguished from other days.

3. The dispensation of the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost.

This was the day following the Jewish Sabbath. The disciples were commanded to tarry in Jerusalem till this time; and when it was come, "the disciples were gathered together with one accord in one place." The promise of the Spirit was then fulfilled, "and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost." Thus, again a peculiar honor is conferred on that day of the week on which Christ arose from the dead. And taken in connexion with other circumstances, it shews that the first day of the week was designed by the Redeemer to have the honor conferred upon it of being thenceforth the day of weekly rest.

4. The practice of the Apostles.

This is of equal authority with a direct precept. They

were extraordinary officers in the church appointed by Christ, and by him instructed to settle whatever pertained to her order and worship. The practice of the church, as authorized by the Apostles, and the example of the Apostles themselves, are the highest authority which we can have in the case. The disciples met on the first day of the week for religious services; and on that day the Apostles preached and administered the Lord's Supper. "And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them—ready to depart on the morrow, and continued his speech until midnight." Acts xx. 7. We have here, in the first place, the fact that the disciples were assembled, and that Paul preached and administered to them the Lord's Supper on the first day of the week. Secondly, It appears that the Apostle was in great haste—"ready to depart on the morrow." The cause of Paul's haste was his determination to be at Jerusalem by the day of Pentecost, "if it were possible for him." To enable him to accomplish this object he must lose no time unnecessarily on the journey. But, it appears from the sixth verse, that he abode no less than seven days in Troas; six of these preceded the first day of the week on which he preached and administered the Lord's Supper. Considering that Paul was in such haste, that he departed without retiring to rest after an extraordinarily protracted service, there must have been some very strong reason why he delayed his departing till the close of seven days. Set aside the fact that the first day of the week was the Sabbath or day appropriated for weekly public worship, and no satisfactory reason can be assigned for his remaining so long at Troas. But let this be admitted, and we have a most satisfactory reason for his remaining over the first day of the week.

"Now, concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the Churches of Galatia, even so do ye; upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store." 1 Cor. xvi. 1, 2. Thus we learn that the Churches of Galatia and Corinth, though at a great distance from one another, were in the habit of meeting together on the first day of the week. This furnishes another proof that the weekly Sabbath was held on that day by the Apostles and the Apostolic Churches.

"I was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day," said the venerable Apostle John. Rev. i. 10. There can be no misappre-

hension as to what is meant by the Lord's Day ; it is the day of the week on which our Redeemer arose from the dead. First, John speaks of " the Lord's Day," in such a way as evidently presupposes that the churches of Asia to whom he was writing were familiar with the expression. Secondly, It appears that he was employed in religious services on that day—" I was in the Spirit." The noticing of the particular day, and the state of mind in which the Apostle was, show evidently that there was something peculiar to that day. Why mention the day, if it were nothing different from other days?

5. The practice of the Church in the first ages of Christianity.

By the aid of ecclesiastical history we learn the important fact, that the first day of the week has been kept by the Church as the Sabbath ever since the days of the Apostles ; the practice which in Scripture is authorized by their example, is followed by the Primitive Church. This we hold to be unquestionable evidence that the change from the last to the first day of the week, as the day on which the Sabbath was kept, was founded on the authority and example of the Apostles themselves. " There are," says Mosheim, " certain laws, whose authority and obligation were universal and indispensable among all Christians, and of these we shall here give a brief account. All Christians were unanimous in setting apart the *first* day of the week on which the triumphant Savior arose from the dead, for the solemn celebration of public worship. This pious custom, which was derived from the example of the Church of Jerusalem, was founded upon the express appointment of the Apostles, who consecrated that day to the same sacred purpose, and was observed universally throughout all the Christian Churches, as appears from the united testimony of the most credible writers."* Ignatius and Justin Martyr, the earliest christian fathers, whose writings have survived the wreck of ages, distinctly speak of the " Lord's Day," as that on which our Savior arose from the dead ; and as kept by all his disciples, as the Sabbath, in their public assemblies. The former of these fathers is understood to have been the disciple and friend of the Apostle John ; he suffered martyrdom about ten years after John had written the Book of Revelation. The early period of the Church in which Ignatius lived, the opportunity which he had,

* Mosheim's History of the Church, century 1st.

as the personal friend of at least one Apostle, gives his testimony the highest value. In one of his epistles, reasoning against the observances of the Jewish Sabbath, (as some of the Jewish converts were thus disposed,) he says, "Let us no longer Sabbatize, but observe the Lord's Day, on which our Life arose." Justin Martyr suffered about sixty years later than Ignatius, but his testimony is equally explicit as to the observance of the first day of the week.

Besides the above conclusive evidence, we submit the following considerations on a passage which appears to us to be direct authority. Heb. iv. 9. "There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God." Commentators generally apply this passage to the heavenly rest. This interpretation is so agreeable to the faith and the hope of believers, that it has obtained a pre-occupancy in their minds that may not be easily shaken. The application of the passage to the Christian Sabbath does not in the least affect the sureness of the heavenly rest, but confirms it. The point to be proved is the proposition contained in the third verse. "For we which have believed do enter into rest." Having proved this, the Apostle draws a conclusion from it, which is contained in the ninth verse. In the preceding context he speaks of three rests: one, that of God when he had finished the work of creation; a second, that promised to the children of Israel in the land of promise; the third is that of heaven. To prove this, is the point to which the Apostle's argument is directed, and the proof is summary and complete. He had stated the proposition in the commencement of the argument, "For we which have believed do enter into rest." This could not be the creation rest; nor could it be the rest in the land of Canaan, as he shews in the 7th and 8th verses. The subject of the ninth verse is not then the point which the Apostle had undertaken to prove, but it is a conclusion which he obtains from that point, after it has been proved. The conclusion is this:—As the first and second rests had each of them a day by which they were weekly commemorated, so the third rest into which all the people of God do enter, has also its day of commemoration. The work of God in creation being finished, it is commemorated by the weekly Sabbath; the work of bringing the children of Israel into Canaan being finished, is also commemorated by the weekly Sabbath; this being given to the Jews as an additional reason why the Sabbath should be sanctified. The work of Christ being finished; he having

obtained for God's people the heavenly rest—this finished work too, is to have a Sabbath day's rest as a commemoration of it. And this is what the Apostle asserts in the ninth verse, "There remaineth therefore a rest (a Sabbath) to the people." The work of redemption is honored, not by being added as an additional reason for keeping the *seventh* day rest, but by changing the day from the seventh to the first day of the week.

Unless the Apostle had designed to intimate a day of rest during the gospel dispensation, as well as a real spiritual rest by believing, no reason can be given for his referring to the works of God—his rest, and the appointment of the original Sabbath. Besides, he does not use the same word to express the idea of rest in the ninth verse, which he uses in every other instance in the context. In the context it is a word which signifies rest in general; but in the ninth verse, the word used signifies the rest of the Sabbath—a Sabbatism.* This shows plainly that he does not speak in the ninth verse, of the same rest, concerning which he argues in the context. But, of a Sabbath rest which remains to the people of God—the *first day of the week*—the day on which Christ arose from the dead. This view is further corroborated by the comparison stated in the 10th verse, between the ceasing from the work of creation on the part of God, and the ceasing from the work of salvation on the part of Christ. "For he (Christ) that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his." And as a token of the resting of God from the work of creation, the primeval Sabbath was appointed; so the Sabbath was changed from the last to the first day of the week, as a pledge and a token to the Church that Christ had ceased from the work of salvation by finishing it.

* See Dr. Owen on the place.

THE TWO WITNESSES.

(From the Covenanter.)

In the Book of Revelation, there is an observable difference in the method in which the judgments of the first six trumpets and those of the seventh are recorded. The seven **E-**

pistles to the Asiatic Churches and the seven seals follow each other in regular succession; in like manner, the first six trumpets and the seven vials take place without interruption, while the seventh trumpet is separated from the preceding by other important matter contained in the tenth and part of the eleventh chapters. The reason is to be found in the fact that, while the judgments poured out upon the Roman Empire are in progress, the *Antichristian System*, emblematically exhibited by the image of a Beast with *seven heads and ten horns*, appeared in the West, and gradually rose to unlimited power. Against this oppressive and tyrannical system, a number of faithful and devoted servants of Christ carry on, by their testimonies, an unremitting warfare; and the final judgments of the Almighty are poured out upon the Roman earth, that they may accomplish its entire subversion. These events, all important to the Redeemer's Church, demanded distinct specification, and, accordingly, the venerable exile of Patmos, directed by the Spirit of inspiration, spoke of them in the vision of the *Little Book* and of the *Two Witnesses*.

The little book in the Angel's hand describes the contest between the witnesses of Christ and Antichristianism in Church and State, and declares the ultimate result. During the period in which the warfare goes forward, the Apostle informs us Rev. xi. 1. that there was given him, by the Angel of the Covenant, a *reed* to measure the temple, the altar, and the worshippers, while he was ordered not to measure the court without the temple; and it is predicted, that the "Holy city" should be left to be "trodden down of the Gentiles forty-two months." By the *temple* is clearly intended the Church of God; the *altar*, the place where offerings were presented, symbolizes Divine worship; and the worshippers designate those who are within the pale of the Church, and who attend upon instituted ordinances. The duty of faithful ministers, especially in times of defection, is to apply the measuring reed of the Divine Word to Christian communities, to their modes of worship, and to the character of those who are held admissible to ecclesiastical privileges. Such as stand this admeasurement are reckoned acceptable interior worshippers, while a large number of professed Christians, represented by the worshippers in the outer court and the dwellers in the holy city, are formal, superstitious, and idolatrous worshippers. The "*holy city*" being given

to the Gentiles to be trodden down forty-two months, implies that, during the "time, times and a half," or the 1260 years of Antichristian usurpation, the largest portions of the Christian Church would be apostate; its most eminent places filled with idolaters, infidels, and hypocrites; and true Christians would be grievously oppressed. Throughout the whole of this gloomy period, there exists a small, select company of distinguished and faithful men, who bear witness against the prevailing apostacy, and in favour of every article of the Saviour's truth. These are characteristically described by their employment, station, power, and the tragical conclusion of their testimony. We shall be prepared to determine with precision the special design of the prophecy when we have briefly considered these topics.

The account of the Witnesses is introduced by the Mediatorial Angel declaring, v. 3—"And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth." It appears evident, from the connexion of the passage, that the witnesses are the same as the worshippers in the temple and at the altar, referred to in the first verse. They worship God in spirit and truth, while the nations are worshipping the Beast: they are the true Church, and surround the sacred altar; they have access to God on a throne of grace, and approach through Christ, who is their Great High Priest, their altar and sacrifice. But the chief distinguishing peculiarity is, that they are Christ's appointed chosen Witnesses, against every principle that is opposed to his truth, and against all persons who submit not to his authority. The representation is striking and expressive. A cause is pending between Christ and Antichrist. While many false witnesses appear for the latter, the former calls and maintains a handful of faithful men, who lift up a uniform and uncompromising testimony for the honour of their master, and stand prepared at all times to appear publickly for his cause, and to seal their testimony with their blood, should such a sacrifice be required at their hands. They are emphatically styled by the Angel of the Covenant—"my two Witnesses." Christ's they are, as the cause to which they testify is his, as their qualifications and support proceed from him, and as their character is dear and honourable in his sight. Such witnesses the Saviour has had in every age. In addressing the Old Testament Church, Is. xliii. 10, he said, "Ye are my wit-

nesses;" and to show that successors would continue till the consummation of all things, when he had arisen from the dead, and was about to ascend to the throne of his glory, he said to his disciples, Acts i. 8. "Ye shall be witnesses unto me, both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." The *testimony* of Christ's witnesses embraces every article of revealed truth; for nothing but what is contained in the Word must they bear witness; and for every truth that they discern in it must they give their testimony. The Church's Scriptural attainments supply a subordinate rule by which the witnesses should regulate their testimony*—"Whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing." Phil. iii. 16. As the witnesses are engaged in unceasing warfare with systems of error and their abettors, their testimony, in consequence, will be accommodated to check the apostacy of the times, and to repel the attacks of the enemy. "When the enemy comes in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord will lift up a standard against him." The matter of the testimony of Christ's faithful witnesses is the same in every age; but it varies in the mode of application, according to the circumstances of the Church, and the attempts of her enemies.

The number of the witnesses is said to be *two*, in allusion to their fewness, this being the smallest number that, according to the Mosaic ritual, could be admitted in law to confirm a testimony, Deut. xvii. 6. They may also be represented as two, in reference to various celebrated characters that are mentioned as witnesses in Sacred Scripture, and who appeared *two and two*, such as Moses and Aaron, Joshua and Zerubbabel, Elijah and Elisha; † and perhaps there may be likewise an allusion to the two great ordinances of the magistracy and ministry, to which they bear testimony. The Antichristian system has corrupted both civil and ecclesiastical society. Acting on the grand doctrine which they profess, that men should regulate all their social concerns by the principles and precepts of revealed religion, the witnesses encounter opposition both from civil and ecclesiastical rulers, while they would rescue the two great ordinances of heaven, the ministry and civil government, from corruption and a-

* See Mason's Discourses on the Fall of Babylon the Great, p. 57.

† Durham on the Revelation, p. 496.

buse. They are not to be regarded as two individuals, however eminent, for they exist during the whole period of the Antichristian apostacy; and just as the wicked system against which they testify maintains its moral identity unchanged, during 1260 years, so the witnesses live in the persons who successively oppose the inroads of the man of sin, in various countries, and in different ages.

The *character* of the witnesses is strikingly depicted, when it is declared—"These are the two olive trees and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth." Verse 4. It is probable that the reference here is to the vision recorded in the 4th chapter of Zechariah. By this emblem of a golden candlestick, with seven lamps and pipes, and a bowl on the top of it, and two olive trees on its right side, were exhibited the two great ordinances of magistracy and ministry, actively engaged in promoting the interests of the church. Joshua and Zerubbabel were renowned types of the two witnesses, under Antichrist, who resist impious usurpation, and assert, at all hazards, the prerogative of their exalted Lord to exercise the headship over his body, the Church, and his right, as Mediator, to rule the nations. They are comparable to *two candlesticks*, or lamp bearers, because they are themselves spiritually enlightened, and they hold forth the light of divine truth to the world. They are likened to *two olive trees*, as they are eminently endued with gifts and grace, the exercise of which is blessed for the communication of the unction of the Holy Spirit to others. Clothed in sackcloth, the emblem of their poverty, privations, and mourning for prevailing evils, they prophesy, while they stand before the God of the earth. In faithfulness they preach the sincere word of the gospel, and denounce divine judgments against Antichristian idolatry and wickedness. Advanced to a state of nearness and intimacy with the Moral Governor of the universe, they stand as in his immediate presence, to deliver their testimony. The concerns of his glory are entrusted to them—his eye of observation and complacency is ever upon them, and they look continually to him for direction and support, and in expectation of a glorious reward.

Diverse as have been the opinions of expositors respecting the witnesses, we think it abundantly manifest that they intend—a *company of faithful men, who, during the reign of Antichrist, maintain, in their purity, the doctrines and ordinances of Christianity, lead holy lives, insist upon the application of Scrip-*

tural principles to the whole order of society, civil and ecclesiastical, and testify against all persons and communities who refuse unreserved submission to Messiah the Prince. All true believers are, in a certain sense, witnesses, as the divine image has been instamped upon them in regeneration; and by their evangelical views of the scheme of salvation, the holiness of their lives, and their attendance on ordinances, they exhibit a testimony for Christ, and witness against those who corrupt his gospel, violate his law, and neglect the institutions of religion. The different churches of the reformation likewise are witnesses, in as far as they oppose the errors and idolatries of Popery, and cleave to divine truths and ordinances. But the two Apocalyptic Witnesses, "the two anointed ones," possess a higher character than pertains to the generality even of real believers, or of the churches of the reformation. As in judicial trials among men, there are persons who are accounted *principal witnesses*, by whose testimony the cause is chiefly decided, so is it in relation to the testimony of Christ. While attestations to his truth are furnished by all believers, and from every church that in any measure stands apart from the abominations of Antichrist, the determined, devoted followers of the Lamb alone, whose testimony contains the most perfect system of divine truth, and the most particular opposition to all Antichristian corruptions, and who appear openly for Christ's cause, are esteemed worthy to be designated Christ's *Two Witnesses*. They are distinguished by the eminent qualities of devotedness, moral courage, and steadfastness, from the great body of professing Christians, and even of real believers. In the days of Elijah there was but one faithful witness, while, at the same time, there were 7000 in Israel, who had not bowed the knee to Baal. During the time of Antichrist, 144,000 sealed ones stand upon Mount Zion with the Lamb, and preserve in secret their garments clean, while the two witnesses openly and decidedly testify against Antichristian corruptions. The witnesses are Christians; they belong to the true visible church; but they are distinguished above their fellows by their fidelity in bearing testimony, their undaunted courage, and their heroic fortitude in suffering.

A succession of such characters, dispersed throughout different countries, has existed from the rise of Antichrist till the present times. The *Paulicians*, at the commencement of the Papacy, held the great doctrines of salvation through the mediation and merits of Christ, and protested against the abuses

of Popery. In spite of the wrath of the Man of Sin, these continued scattered through various parts of Europe. The Waldenses likewise, from an early period, exhibited a faithful testimony against Popish delusions; and, in the 11th, 12th, and following centuries, were scattered, by persecution, through various countries which owned subjection to the Beast, and were frequently called to seal their testimony with their blood. The *Culdees* in Scotland and Ireland, and the *Lollards* and *Wickliffites* in England, were agreed with them in their leading doctrines; and, distinguished as they were by holy living, they deserve to be ranked among the anointed ones who stand before the God of the earth, and prophesy in sack-cloth. The *Bohemian Brethren*, among whom arose John Huss and Jerome of Prague, who were burnt by the Council of Constance, in the 15th century, appeared likewise in opposition to the corruptions and oppressions of Rome. The age of the reformation exhibited many valiant and faithful witnesses for the truth—men who laboured for the establishment of true religion in Church and State. The Reformers in Germany, the *Hugonots* in France, the Reformed Cantons in Switzerland, and the Protestants of the Low Countries, are particularly distinguished as leading forth the vanguard of the Reformation. In Britain, bands of witnesses stood forth at that memorable era, both among the Reformers in Scotland and the Puritans of England, who refused to wear the mark of the Beast, and who loved not their lives to the death. At the time of the Westminster Assembly, the *Covenanted Reformers* in Britain displayed the most comprehensive testimony for truth that had yet been exhibited since the first days of Christianity. Their exertions to purify the sanctuary and the throne are unparalleled in the history of the witnesses that went before them; and the sufferings of the martyrs in Scotland, under the Stuarts, attest the fidelity and devotedness of the witnesses of the Covenanted cause. By their *Federal Deeds*, they became one body of witnesses, bound together by the most solemn vows to seek the destruction of Antichristianism, both in Church and State. However few and persecuted and despised they may be, witnesses of this character will continue to denounce Divine judgments against the Antichristian system, and to contend for those principles which are destined ultimately to purify and elevate both civil and ecclesiastical society, and to bless the world.

The witnesses of the Lamb have power given them to ena-

ble them to deliver a faithful testimony, and to sustain them against the attacks of their enemies. Their light, strength, courage and patience are communicated from on high; and in proportion to the difficulties which they have to surmount, the troubles they have to endure, and the duties they have to perform, are renewed communications granted them. Moral and spiritual authority they possess, which they exercise according to the unalterable rule of the Divine Word, and in dependence on the mediation of Christ for acceptance, and on the influences of the Divine Spirit for help and success in their work. They who are with the Lamb, while he makes war with the kings of the earth, are "*called and chosen and faithful.*" The Divine glory is the grand and ultimate end which they labour to advance. Compared with this, their reputation, ease, life, and even the success of their testimony among men are, in their estimation, nothing. They regard themselves as "bought with a price," and, therefore, bound to "glorify God with their bodies and spirits, which are his." They have likewise power over their enemies; for it is said—"*If any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies.*" And, again,—"*These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy, and have power over waters, to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues as often as they will.*" v. 5, 6. The Lord pleads and avenges their cause, and resents all the injuries done to them, as done against himself. Their instructions and warnings tend to the condemnation of those that oppose them—their denunciations of Divine vengeance are, in the end, fully accomplished, and their prayers are answered by fearful judgments, poured out upon the Antichristian earth. They are honoured servants of God, like Moses and Elijah; and, judgments similar to those sent upon Egypt and Israel, attend upon the utterance of their testimony, to vindicate their character, and avenge their wrongs. The diversified ways in which the witnesses exercise the power wherewith they are endowed, and conduct their testimony-bearing, might afford matter for a lengthened dissertation. Suffice it, in this brief sketch, to say, that they are required, in virtue of their station and calling, to give all diligence to the attainment of their own personal salvation, to display a clear and pointed testimony for all Divine truths, and against all those errors by which they have been corrupted and opposed—to make a public, solemn, and united profession of allegiance to Christ,

and of joint and open hostility to Antichristian abominations—to maintain a constant regard to all the ordinances of Divine worship, and the institutions of the sanctuary, and to cultivate a holy and blameless conversation in the world. Such, and such only, as act in this way, have any proper claim to be considered the faithful witnesses, whom the Saviour styles, in a peculiar sense, his, to whom he gives power, and who shall ultimately overcome the enemy by the “blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony.”

The *death of the witnesses* is described in the following terms:—“*And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them. And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified. And they of the people, and kindreds, and tongues, and nations, shall see their dead bodies three days and an half, and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves. And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another, because these two prophets tormented them that dwell on the earth.*” v. 7, 10. Expositors have been greatly divided in opinion with relation to the painful event to which this part of the prediction refers; some regarding the slaying of witnesses as past, while they differ from each other with respect to the events by which their death was effected; others again holding it to be future. The evidence by which it has been attempted to show that the death of the witnesses is already past, appears to us very defective; and though this opinion was maintained by so eminent and excellent an expositor of prophecy as the late *Dr. Mason, of Wishawtown*,* we have no hesitation in declaring, that the evidence for regarding the slaying of the witnesses as yet future, greatly preponderates. They still prophesy in sackcloth; while, throughout the Churches and nations, vile men are high in place. The time of their work, the 1260 prophetic days, is not yet expired; and consequently, the period of their testimony is not finished. Their death is posterior to this. Besides, we have reason to regard the slaying of the witnesses as the last grand attempt of Antichrist against the cause of Christ and his saints, and as the immediate precursor of the downfall of the

* See *Discourses on the Fall of Babylon the Great by the agency of Christ, and through the instrumentality of his witnesses*, p. 103.

Antichristian system. Such an attempt has not yet been made, though there are evident signs in the political horizon that things are in a train of preparation for it. The death of the witnesses, we are informed, will be effected by the beast that "ascendeth out of the bottomless pit." v. 7. This is the Antichristian power. The witnesses of Christ boldly oppose his tyranny and oppression in the state, and his corruption of the doctrines and institutions of Christianity. They can have no fellowship with thrones of wickedness: they dare not be silent; therefore they are hated, persecuted, and at last put to death. The slaying of the witnesses by the Antichristian power does not necessarily intend that all who maintain the character will be exposed to violent deaths. It is highly probable, indeed, that the subversion of Antichrist's reign will not take place without the slaughter of a large number of the devoted followers of the Lamb. The souls under the altar rest, and their blood is not avenged upon them that dwell on the earth, till "their fellow-servants also, and their brethren, that shall be killed as they were, shall be fulfilled." Rev. vi. 11. But the death of the witnesses is opposed to their life. "It was their *life*, as witnesses, to bear testimony against Antichrist; it is as witnesses they are put to *death*, when such testimony is violently and effectually silenced. There *will be* Christians, there *will be* Churches, as there always have been: but for three years and a half there *will not be* found, within the bounds of the Latin Roman Empire, any witnesses to bear a public testimony against the man of sin, at the close of his reign."* Recent appearances would seem to say, that by defection and apostacy, and through the prevalence of infidelity, the interests of Antichrist will be effectually promoted, and a public testimony for the truth silenced. It is not unlikely that the Protestant Churches will depart farther than they have yet done from their former avowed principles; and amid the bustle of political changes, and the increasing liberalism of the age, the great doctrines of the witnesses, respecting both civil and ecclesiastical things, will be borne down. The few devoted individuals who oppose innovation in the Church, and who faithfully oppose the iniquity of evil measures in the state, there is little doubt, will be persecuted to the death, while liberty of remonstrance and freedom of worship will be denied. The

* McLeod's Lectures on the Revelation, p 264.

ground of the slaying of the witnesses may be their honest and uncompromising testimony to the doctrine of *Christ's exclusive headship over the nations*. Other articles of their testimony have been contended for even unto blood before; but this, though most unpalatable to unscriptural civil rulers, and to time-serving churchmen, has never yet formed a ground of suffering. Even the prevalence of what are termed *liberal* maxims of government affords no prospect that the claim of the witnesses, that *true religion should influence every department of civil polity*, will be generally admitted. On the contrary, at such a period, the rancorous hostility of infidel statesmen becomes daily more apparent, and it is not improbable, that when the duty of nations, as such, to submit to the Messiah, is more openly declared, and the number and power of the witnesses are so increased as to excite notice, the beast will slay them, and their public testimony will be suppressed. In a street of the great city, mystical Babylon—perhaps in that kingdom where the witnesses exist in greatest numbers—they will lie unburied for the space of three years and a half, a day being reckoned for a year. Their enemies will pour indignity upon them and their cause, reviling and deriding all who before had professed and preached the truth, and rejoicing that they have extirpated a race of men who alarmed and disquieted their minds, and prevented them from accomplishing fully their schemes of corruption and oppression. The very reproach of enemies, however, will preserve from oblivion the character and cause of the witnesses; and among the friends of religion the principles of their testimony will continue to take root, and to spread unobserved, till they reappear in renewed vigour, when the time of the degradation of the witnesses has passed away. The triumph of the wicked is short. At the termination of the three years and a half, the dead bodies of the witnesses will be revived. They will arise in those who embrace and profess their principles and imbibe their spirit, and possess a power and influence vastly greater than they formerly enjoyed. They ascend to heaven in a cloud in the sight of their enemies, when they are raised to chief places of honour and authority in the Church, and the civil commonwealth; and the prediction of Daniel is accomplished—“*The kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High.*” Dan. vii. 27. Great and salutary events tending to advance the prosperity of Zion, shall

follow each other in rapid succession. Immediately subsequent to the resurrection of the witnesses there shall be a *great earthquake*; the tenth part of the city shall fall. There shall be slain of men 7000, and the remnant shall be affrighted, and give glory to the God of heaven. The day alone can fully disclose the meaning of these symbolical declarations. An *earthquake*, in prophetic language, denotes a political convulsion: by the *tenth part of the city* seems clearly intended one of the kingdoms of modern Europe, forming one of the horns of the beast: it *falls* when it withdraws entirely from all connexion with Antichrist; and the original terms oblige us to regard the *slaying of the men* that takes place, rather as the prostration of their *titles*, than as the destruction of their persons. When the testimony and spirit of the witnesses are revived, some one kingdom which formed a horn of the beast—perhaps that in which the testimony of the witnesses was best known—will make a complete secession from the interests of Antichrist, and afford the first example of a nation openly and fully modelled on the principles of the Divine law. Then Antichristian titles and offices will be abolished; the escutcheons of impious rulers will be torn in pieces. Mount Zion will appear most beautiful, the joy of the whole land, and the nations will bring their glory thither.

Anticipating this joyful consummation, let us set a high value on the cause of Christ's witnesses, and seek to be animated by their spirit; assured that, however reproached and despised they now are, the truths of their testimony are destined in the purpose of the Eternal, to shed a benign influence over all the nations of the earth. It should never be a consideration to influence our conduct whether the truths which we maintain are *popular* with the age or not, but the grand concern should be, whether they are a part of *the faith once delivered to the saints*. If they are, we are bound, as Christ's witnesses, at all hazards, to hold them fast, and on all fit occasions to make a public display of them, that error may be exposed, and those who sit in darkness brought to the light. Throughout the whole period of Antichrist's reign, the witnesses must testify to the grand doctrines of Messiah's universal Headship, to the purity of religious ordinances, and to the leading principle, that civil and ecclesiastical society are equally under the highest obligation to acknowledge the supreme authority of the Mediator, and to submit to his laws. Let us, as standing in the immediate presence of the God of

the earth, offer a full and pointed testimony in favour of these glorious truths. A time-serving generation may disrelish them, and may hate those who maintain them; the witnesses must prophesy in sackcloth, and be finally slain; but the confidence is well-founded, and cannot fail, that, when the purposes of God, in the downfall of Antichrist, are fulfilled, the memories of the witnesses who have entered into their rest will be abundantly honoured, their prayers and faithful efforts will come into remembrance, and the principles for which they contended will obtain a complete triumph over all opposition.

EXTRACT FROM FLAVEL'S "NAVIGATION SPIRITUALIZED."

The sea hath its alternate course and motion, its ebbings and flowings: no sooner is it high-water, but it begins to ebb again, and leave the shore naked and dry, which but a little before it covered and overflowed. And as its tides, so also its waves are the emblem of inconstancy, still rolling and tumbling this way and that, never fixed and quiet. *As fickle as a wave*, is common to a proverb. See James i. 6. *He that wavereth is like a wave of the sea, driven with winds, and tossed.* So Isaiah lvii. 20. *It cannot rest.*

Thus mutable and inconstant are all outward things, there is no depending on them: nothing of any substance, or any solid consistence in them, 1. Cor. vii. 31. *The fashion of this world passeth away.* It is a high point of folly to depend upon such vanities, Prov. xxiii. 5. *Why wilt thou set (or as it is in the Hebrew) cause thine eyes to fly upon that which is not? For riches certainly make themselves wings and fly away, as an eagle towards heaven.* In flying to us (saith Augustine) they have scarce a sparrow's wings; but in flying from us, wings as an eagle. And those wings they are said to make to themselves, i. e. the cause of its transitoriness is in itself; the creature is subjected to vanity by sin: They are sweet flowers, but withered presently, James i. 10. *As the flower of the grass, so shall the rich man fade away.* The man is like the stalk of the grass; his riches are the flower of the grass; his glory and outward beauty, the stalk is soon withered, but the flower much sooner. This is either withered upon, or blown off from it, while the stalk abides. Many a man outlives his estate and honor, and

stands in the world as a bare dry stalk in the field, whose flower, beauty, and bravery is gone; one puff of wind blows it away, one churlish easterly blast shrivels it up, 1. Pet. iv. 24.

How mad a thing is it then, for any man to be lifted up in pride, upon such a vanity as this; to build so lofty and over-jetting roof upon such a feeble tottering foundation? We have seen meadows full of such curious flowers, mown down and withered, men of great estates impoverished suddenly: and when, like a meadow that is mown, they have begun to recover themselves again, (as the phrase is,) the Lord hath sent *Grasshoppers in the beginning of the shooting up of the latter growth*, Amos vii. 1. Just as the grasshoppers and other creatures devour the second tender herbage, as soon as the field begins to recover its verdure. So men, after they have been denuded and blasted by Providence, they begin after a while to flourish again, but then comes some new affliction, and blasts all. None have more frequent experience of this, than you that are merchants and seamen, whose estates are floating: and yet such as have had the highest security in the eye of reason, have notwithstanding experienced the vanity of these things. Henry the Fourth, a potent prince, was reduced to such a low ebb, that he petitioned for a Prebend's place in the church of Spire. Gallimer, king of the Vandals, was brought so low, that he sent to his friend for a sponge, a loaf of bread and a harp: a sponge to dry up his tears, a loaf of bread to maintain his life, and a harp to solace himself in his misery. The story of Bellisarius is very affecting: He was a man famous in his time, general of an army, yet having his eyes put out, and stripped of all earthly comforts, was led about crying, Give one penny to poor Bellisarius. Instances in history of this kind are infinite. Men of the greatest estates and honors, have nevertheless become the very scorn of fortune.

Yea, and not only wicked men, that have gotten their estates by rapine and oppression, have lived to see them thus scattered by providence: but sometimes godly men have had their estates, how justly soever acquired, thus scattered by providence also. Who ever had an estate better gotten, better bottomed, or better managed, than Job? yet all was overthrown and swept away in a moment: though in mercy to him, as the issue demonstrated.

Oh then! what a vanity is it to set the heart and let out the affections on them! You can never depend too much upon

God, nor too little upon the creature, 1. Tim. vi. 17. "Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded and trust in uncertain riches."

REFLECTION.

Are all earthly things thus transitory and vain? Then what a reproach and shame is it to me, that the men of this world should be more industrious and eager in the prosecution of such vanities, than I am to enrich my soul with solid and everlasting treasure? O that ever a sensual lust should be more operative in them than the love of God in me! O my soul, thou dost not lay out thy strength and earnestness for heaven, with any proportion to what they do for the world. I have indeed higher motives, and a surer reward than they: But as I have an advantage above them herein, so they have an advantage above me in the strength and entireness of the principle by which they are actuated. What they do for the world, they do it with all their might; they have no contrary principle to oppose them; their thoughts, strength and affections are entirely carried in one channel; But I find *a law in my members warring against the law of my mind*; I must strive through a thousand difficulties and contradictions to the discharge of a duty. O my God! Shall not my heart be more enlarged in zeal, love, and delight in thee, than theirs are after their lusts? O let me once find it so.

Again, is the creature so vain and unstable, then why are my affections so hot and eager after it? And why am I so apt to dote upon its beauty, especially when God is staining all its pride and glory! Jer. xlv. 5, 6. Surely it is unbecoming the spirit of a Christian at any time; but at such a time we may say of it, as Hushai of Ahithophel's counsel, *It is not good at this time.*

O that my spirit were raised above them, and my conversation more in heaven! O that like that angel, Rev. x. 1, 2. which came down from heaven and set one foot upon the sea, and another upon the earth, having a crown upon his head, so I might set one foot upon all the cares, fears, and terrors of the world, and another upon all the tempting splendor and glory of the world, treading both under foot in the dust, and crowning myself with nothing but spiritual excellencies and glory.

Judge in thyself, (O Christian,) is it meet
To set thy heart on what beasts set their feet?

'Tis no *hyperbole*, if you be told,
 You dig for dross with mattocks made of gold.
 Affections are too costly to bestow
 Upon the fair-faced nothings here below.
 The eagle scorns to fall down from on high
 (The proverb saith) to catch the silly fly.
 And can a christian leave the face of God,
 To embrace the earth, or dote upon a clod?
 Can earthly things thy heart so strangely move,
 To tempt it down from the delights above;
 And now to court the world at such a time,
 When God is laying judgment to the line?
 It's just like him that doth his cabin sweep
 And trim, when all is sinking in the deep;
 Or like the silly bird, that to her nest
 Doth carry straws, and never is at rest,
 Till it be feathered well, but doth not see
 The axe beneath that's hewing down the tree.
 If on a thorn thy heart itself repose
 With such delight, what if it were a rose?
 Admire, O saint, the wisdom of thy God,
 Who of the self same tree doth make a rod,
 Lest thou shouldst surfeit on forbidden fruit,
 And live not like a saint, but like a brute.

 REVIEW.

“*Proceedings of the Convention of Reformed Churches at its sessions in the city of Pittsburgh, Oct. 17th, 1838.*” *

This is the title of a pamphlet of 15 pages which was lately put into my hands. Having heard something of the Convention, I was anxious to know what they had done, and as others may be curious also, I propose to gratify them by a brief review. The Convention, we are told at the outset, was composed “of delegates from such of the Reformed churches as had previously concurred in the measure.” From this statement, in connection with the imposing title, it might be inferred that there was a general representation from the churches bearing the name Reformed. This however was not the case. Three Synods were represented, and two of these, the Ass. Ref. Synods of the West and of New-York, being of the same ecclesiastical connexion, form but one church. The third is called the General Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian church. This is a misnomer. They are a faction, who, in 1833, broke off from the Reformed Presbyterian church, and having abandoned her Testimony, have ever since been without either distinctive name, or distinctive principles. The title should have been, “Proceedings of a Convention of the Ass. Ref. Synods of the West and New-York, in which also was represented a small ecclesias-

*This review was written before our notice of the Pittsburgh Convention appeared, but did not come to hand in time for insertion in our last No.

tical association, which has recently withdrawn from the communion of the Ref. Pres. church." But perhaps this would not have given sufficient importance to these last, as they were the originators of the measure. The proposal began with them; let them have the honor of it. After all, it is awkward enough for men whose hands were yet defiled with the sin of schism, to propose to call a convention "for the purpose of devising measures for the promotion of the unity of the church of God upon scriptural principles." The answer of Jehu to the messengers of Joram might have been appropriate.— "What hast thou to do with peace?" This Convention of Reformed churches was then composed of nine members, six from two synods belonging to the same ecclesiastical body, and three from another, which has given pretty plain indications of a willingness to distinctive organization and distinctive principles go together, so that they may be received with some show of consistency into some larger and more popular communion. This being the case, it is not strange that the "meeting was exceedingly fraternal and kind." The A. R. Synods would not likely differ between themselves, and it would have been highly impolitic for those who were wishing to accede to them to show themselves refractory. The days of courtship are not usually the days of quarreling.

But to proceed. From a "Convention of Reformed churches" it would be reasonable to expect a detail of important proceedings. Officers were chosen—committees were appointed—preliminaries settled. "Matters appropriate for their solemn consideration, and the mode of procedure for the accomplishment of their objects," were laid before the Convention, in a report in which the object of the meeting is stated—the unity of the church asserted—her distracted condition deplored, and the duty of every one to seek to restore evangelical unity maintained. Encouragement is taken from the approximation of the Reformed churches there represented, to hope "that a candid comparison of their respective systems, and a review of the terms of fellowship in the church of God,—may issue in a communion more close, or even in an entire union." The object then is UNION, and the means of accomplishing it a comparison of their respective systems, and a *review* of their terms of fellowship. To bring all systems of doctrines, and all terms of fellowship to the standard of the Law and the Testimony is not, according to this plan, the way to "keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." The apostle speaks of "comparing spiritual things with spiritual." But this convention compares respective systems of faith. Are they of that number "who measure themselves by themselves, and compare themselves among themselves?" If they are, they "*are not wise.*"

The 1st and 2d articles of their mutual covenant and declaration are unexceptionable. Let the churches of the Reformation engage that "there shall be no abandonment of any principle sanctioned by the word of God, and recognized in the scriptural attainments of the Reformation," and "that no principle shall be maintained, that is not plainly founded on the word of God;" and unless it is intended to play on the

word "*plainly*," an important step would be taken toward a permanent union on the basis of divine truth. But how such solemn declarations consist with a proposal to "inquire into the precise principles which are at once indispensable and sufficient as the basis upon which the whole church of God ought to maintain original visible Unity," is not easily seen. The inquiry supposes that there are some principles, which are "dispensable," and not necessary to the sufficiency of the basis of ecclesiastical union. The union then is to be effected by the mutual concession or giving up of these "dispensable" principles, whatever they may be, and yet there is a solemn engagement to abandon none of them !

But the most remarkable part of the proceedings, is the Report* on "the nearer approximation of the churches represented in the Convention." This is indeed a singular document, whether we view its ultimate object, or the language in which that object and the means of accomplishing it are expressed. The object is *entire union*. By this we are certainly to understand ecclesiastical identity, warranting and requiring ecclesiastical communion. To accomplish this, it is proposed to take a step towards nearer approximation. Already these bodies are, according to their own showing, so near to each other as to hold fellowship in all the parts of the worship of God. "Reading hearing, praying and praising God" are expressly named, and a very expressive "&c.," includes the rest, which, had it been expressed, might have done what the Convention seemed very solicitous to avoid—"furnish valid reasons for an increase of schisms and factions." Doubtless some of the people would have been alarmed had the partaking of the Lord's supper been mentioned in the above enumeration : and yet it is plain, that it belongs to the same catalogue, and is comprehended in the "&c." It was wisest to suppress the mention of it, lest this might furnish "valid reasons for schisms." The candor and honesty of this course are not so evident as its policy.

The next step of approximation is to hold ministerial communion. This communion, we are told, is not *organical*. We cannot see that by this step any thing is gained, for already communion in "hearing, &c." is allowed. Hearing supposes preaching ; for "how shall they hear without a preacher ?" What then is gained by a resolution, that their ministers may interchange pulpits, especially when they have been doing so heretofore ; and "hearing," which supposes preaching, was included in the approximation already made ? The truth seems to be, that the originators of this Convention, felt themselves prepared to enter the communion of the Associate Reformed Church, without the tardy process of advancing step by step, had not motives of policy induced them to preserve, for a time, a district organization, that when it suited, they might make their accession in the form of a treaty.—Though there is not much in a name, yet the consequences of a formal abandonment of one may have a powerful influence, especially on

* See Reformed Presbyterian Vol. ii, p. 352.

those whose ecclesiastical course is directed more by mere policy, than by the law and the testimony.

We freely concede, that the bodies represented in this convention may, with perfect consistency, hold all the communion involved in preaching, hearing, and partaking of the Lord's supper. Where there is no testimony against other churches for the errors they hold, there can be no inconsistency in holding communion with them. There may be sin, but not inconsistency. The Associate Reformed church have a Constitution, but they have no testimony. The New Lights are really without both. They have abandoned the distinctive principles of the Confession and Testimony of the Reformed Presbyterian church; and as yet they have adopted no others in their stead. It is quite different with those churches that have published their testimonies against the errors of others. To receive the ordinances of preaching and the Lord's supper from those against whom we have testified is not only inconsistent, but really a practical contradiction of our testimony. And it would be easy to shew, that the church should *judicially* "condemn all errors, and testify against those who maintain them." The Associate and Reformed Presbyterian Churches have done so, and they cannot hold that communion with each other or with the churches around them, which is included in hearing and partaking of the Lord's supper. Nor can they hold ministerial communion by receiving seats in other's courts; for as the church has her most perfect organization in her courts, to be members there must involve organic communion, if any thing does.

By a resolution, the invitation to send delegates to the Convention is confined, *for the present*, to those churches which "are agreed in the use of a scriptural Psalmody." This is the strangest of all. There were three delegates in the Convention from the Associate Reformed Synod of New-York. That Synod at its last meeting, held a few weeks before the Convention, adopted a report and resolutions,* which declare it to be *Constitutional* for their ministers and people to use *human* psalmody every where, except in their own churches or congregations. Was it the design of this Convention to determine at the outset, that to maintain the exclusive use of scriptural Psalmody is one of those "precise principles, which are at once indispensable and sufficient, as the basis of organical visible unity? We think this was not their design. Certainly we may say, the delegates of the A. R. Synod of New-York at least, meant something else. Indeed the qualifying phrase, "*at the present*," plainly leaves the way open for a farther extension of the invitation: but it would not have been politic to go too far at once, lest there might be furnished "valid reasons for the increase of schisms." We suppose this is an instance of the disposition of the Convention "to feel every step of its way." We confess we have some confidence in the Associate Reformed Synod of the West, on the subject of Psalmody, but none at all in the others.

* See Reformed Presbyterian, Vol. II. p. 347.

And is the course pursued by this Convention the way in which the visible unity of the church is to be restored? There are many reasons for saying it is not. It should be no longer a matter of experiment, whether peace and unity can be obtained by conceding any part of revealed truth. An attempt of that kind, by some members of the Associate and Reformed Presbyterian churches, gave existence to the Associate Reformed Church—a new denomination. The “Plea” and plans of Dr. Mason, for catholic communion, instead of diminishing, have greatly increased ecclesiastical strife. With these facts before their eyes, it seems strange, that the Associate Reformed Church would seriously try another similar experiment. There is one, and only one way, to bring about a perfect union of the church. That is to profess, maintain and practise every part of revealed truth and duty. In place of yielding attainments already made, let us “hold fast” that we have, and “go on to perfection.” It is delusion to suppose the Millennium church will be less strict in matters of faith than any denomination now existing. Nay it will be more strict. Instead therefore of conceding truth and compromising in matters of doctrine and christian practice, we should aim at the advances to be made by all, in both doctrinal and practical reformation, before the watchmen shall see eye to eye, lift up the voice and sing together, when the Lord shall bring again Zion. Isa. LII. 8.

T. S.

OBITUARY OF THE REV. WILLIAM GIBSON.

Mr. Gibson was born in the year 1753, near Knockbracken, in the county Down, Ireland. His parents were members of the Presbyterian church, under the care of the Synod of Ulster. By them he was dedicated to God in baptism, and from them he received a religious education. He was early taught the Latin and Greek languages in his native place. When a young man he heard some ministers of the Reformed Presbyterian church preach, by which his attention was drawn to that body, and he was led to an examination of their distinctive tenets. The result was an enlightened conviction that they were the true Witnesses for the whole of God's covenanted Reformation, and that the body in which he was born and educated, had in many things made defection from the attainments of the reformation, especially in their abandonment of the National covenant of Scotland, and the Solemn League and Covenant of the three kingdoms, Scotland, England and Ireland; and in their recognition of the apostate British government as the ordinance of God. He discovered too, that the church was not “kept pure and entire;” as many parents whose lives were unbecoming the gospel, and whose doctrines were erroneous, had the privilege of presenting their children for baptism, and were themselves admitted to the Lord's table. He therefore thought it his duty to connect himself with the Reformed Presbyterian

church. He finished his literary course in the college of Glasgow, where in his elementary studies, he made very commendable proficiency in literary and scientific pursuits. All these he dedicated to God for the work of the holy ministry, for the edification of the body of Christ, and the maintenance of the testimony of Jesus.

He was licenced to preach the gospel by the Reformed Presbytery of Ireland, when he was about 28 years of age, and not long after was ordained to the pastoral charge of the united congregations of Kells-Water and Kallybacky. These congregations increased much under his ministry. The number of people that waited on his ministrations was large, and he was plain, direct and faithful in the testimony which bore against the corruptions of the body that he had left, against the unfaithfulness of the Secession churches, Burgher and Antiburgher, in upholding the apostate, and very corrupt government of the British empire, and against the corruptions of the government in its constitution and administration. By this fidelity to the truth and the Church's Head, many were offended, and he was subjected to the suffering of much reproach, by a time serving generation. But his labour was not in vain in the Lord; for many were convinced and joyfully acceded to the testimony. His faithfulness rendered him obnoxious to a tyrannical government, that has long and severely oppressed the people of Ireland. The times too were peculiarly portentous. Mr. Gibson had not been long in the ministry, until the whole community of civilized nations began to be shaken by the French revolution.

The population of Ireland became exceedingly excited, a determination was formed, and an extensive organization entered into, to cast off the British yoke, and after the example of the American colonies, to become independent. The Roman Catholics took the lead in this revolutionary movement. They hoped to derive aid from the Covenanters, as the long and well known advocates of human liberty, and uncompromising opponents of despotism. But Covenanters had little to expect from a revolution, planned and executed by Papists. However, not a few of them were hurried on farther than was meet, in this popular movement. Without doing any more than Convenanters had formerly done in bearing faithful testimony against the evils of the government, there was much to render Mr. Gibson, obnoxious to the minions of a tyrannical power. But he unfortunately went farther, he encouraged the private associations of United Irishmen, in the hope that much would be gained in the cause of liberty, by Ireland's becoming independent. Considering the circumstances, this was not at all probable. But Mr. Gibson was exceedingly ardent in his attachment to the cause of liberty, and could not resist an impulse that seemed to be favourable to the rights of man. Like other imperfectly digested and feebly executed plans, the whole scheme proved speedily a total failure. For the countenance which it received from him, his life would probably have been the forfeit, had he not, like thousands of others, found an asylum by emigrating to America.— He arrived in Philadelphia in 1797, in company with two Reformed

Obituary of Rev. William Gibson.

Presbyterian students of theology who had been educated in Glasgow college.

There were at that time in Philadelphia and in New York, societies of Reformed Presbyterians, that had been formed and cultivated by the Rev. James McKimney. These Mr. Gibson organized into congregations, by the ordination of ruling elders. Until his arrival in America, ecclesiastical business had been transacted by a committee subject to a British judicatory. Mr. Gibson, and Mr. McKimney with ruling elders, constituted the Reformed Presbytery in North America, in the spring of 1798, in the city of Philadelphia. In June 1799 at Coldenham, the Presbytery licensed to preach the gospel Alexander McLeod, Samuel B. Wylie, Thomas Donnelly, and John Blair. Mr. Gibson preached frequently in the vacancies at Philadelphia, New York, Coldenham, and in Vermont, and the edification of the disciples of Christ, the growth of the congregations, and the promotion of the testimony of Jesus, gave evidence of the divine blessing on his labors.

In Ryegate, Vermont, a society of Reformed Presbyterians had long been in existence for some years. Before the American revolution, Rev. Dr. Witherspoon, as an agent, had negotiated in behalf of a number of Scottish families, the purchase of a large district in Ryegate. So the basis of the population of that and the adjoining town of Bakersfield was Scotch. A few Covenanters' families after the revolution, settled in Ryegate. Being visited by Mr. Gibson, their numbers increased and they were organized into a congregation. Soon after they received a call on him, and he was installed their pastor, in 1799, about two years and a half after his arrival in America. In Ryegate his faithful labors were greatly blessed, and the congregation grew. He was often visited, preached and dispensed the Lord's supper in the vacancies. He always greatly delighted in seeing Zion lengthen her cords, strengthen her stakes, and stretch out the curtains of her habitation. For the purpose of attending the meetings of the Presbytery and to dispense gospel ordinances, he travelled as far west as Edinburgh.

When the synod was constituted in Philadelphia in May 1809, eleven years after the constitution of the Presbytery, Mr. Gibson, as the senior minister, was called to preside. His Prayer on that occasion was remarkable for its fervour and unction.

He continued in the pastoral charge of the Ryegate congregation until 1817, when he received a call from that of Canonsburgh. The call he accepted, although there were several places of preaching, these considerably distant from each other. He was installed the same year, and entered on his pastoral duties, in that extensive and fruitful field of labour. That congregation, had been considerably diminished, and some of its families drawn off from the church for a time by the defection of the Rev. David Graham. By the blessing of God on Mr. Gibson's labours, the greater part of those who had wandered were brought back to the fold. Mr. Gibson laboured nearly thirty years in the cultivation of that part of God's husbandry, until the infir-

ities of age disqualified him for the regular performance of ministerial duty in so extensive a charge. His pastoral connection with the Cannonsburgh congregation, was dissolved and he returned to the east, and preached as a stated supply, more than two years to a vacant congregation at Patterson, New Jersey.

When the troubles arose in the church from the New-Light defectionists, Mr. Gibson, on account of long personal attachment to some of the leaders in that defection, seemed, for some time, to think favorably of them. But so soon as he discovered that their object was to break down and destroy what he and they had been so many years building up, he abandoned all defence of them. As Moderator of the Eastern Subordinate Synod, he called a *pro re nata* meeting of that court to take measures for applying to them the discipline of the Lord's house. In that meeting he presided, where a libel was sustained against them, and they cited to appear at the bar of the next stated meeting, for trial. He presided at the stated meeting, May, 1833, when they were found guilty, and suspended from their office and from the privileges of the church. The sessions of that judicatory were long and laborious, and yet Mr. Gibson, though above 80 years of age, generally kept the chair of the Moderator. His prayers, in the constitution and adjournment of the court, were peculiarly fervent, solemn, and tender. He was very remarkably sustained by the aid of his master in these very important, but, in many respects, painful duties. In old age when others fade, he brought forth fruit.

From the sessions of Subordinate Synod, in May, 1833, until about a year before the death of his son, the late Rev. Robert Gibson, he usually resided in Philadelphia. When his son became disqualified by the bodily disease, that eventuated in his death, from ministering steadily to his congregation, his father supplied his pulpit. This he did for more than a year, usually preaching twice every Sabbath. In the spring of 1838, he presided at the dispensation of the Lord's supper in the same congregation. His exhortations at the table service were, as they had usually been during his whole ministry, peculiarly edifying, and interesting. He spoke of it as probably the last time he would be employed in so solemn a service. He was then in his 85th year.

From that time his health fast declined, still he continued to preach every sabbath, till about mid summer, when, his strength fast decaying, he ceased to minister publicly, and was very soon after confined to his bed. On his death bed he spent his time chiefly in reading the Bible and in prayer, in which he often said he found great delight. He saw that the time of his departure was at hand, and expressed his desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better. He said that "while, he could serve God in the ministry, and be useful in the edification of his people, he had desired to live, but when that could not be, he longed to enter into rest." Though near the last, he suffered much bodily pain, yet he complained not, possessing his soul in patience and hope. The sessions of the General Synod were held in New York while he was on his death bed. Twice a delegation from Synod, waited on

him, to express the respect of Synod, and their sympathy in his afflictions. Though very feeble both in body and mind, he expressed his joy at seeing them, and the interest which he felt in the prosperity of the church, and his unabated attachment to the reformation cause.—The report given by each committee after its interview with him is characterized in the minutes as satisfactory and consolatory.

In the comfortable hope of a blessed immortality, in a good old age like a shock of corn fully ripe, this venerable father in the church and faithful servant of Christ, was gathered to his people. He died on the 15th October, 1838, in the 86th year of his age; "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord; yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them."

OBITUARY.

Of Mary C. Donaldson, (daughter of James Donaldson, of New-York city,) who died in Seneca Co., May 3, 1838, in the 19th year of her age.

The subject of this passing notice had enjoyed from infancy the advantage of parental, christian instruction; but gave no evidence of being decidedly religious, till seized with the disease which terminated her life, after a lingering and painful illness. This, though like all afflictions of the kind, distressing in itself and unwelcome to flesh and blood, was made, in the goodness of God, to work in her the peaceable fruits of righteousness. The exercises of her mind, from the time she became seriously ill, till that of her death, furnish a striking illustration of the sanctifying effects of affliction: and that this was sent in the lingering form in which it was inflicted in mercy, as the means of leading to the Saviour,—in "repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ." Her mind underwent a gracious change; the affliction was blessed to her soul, so that she could say like the Psalmist "It is good for me that I have been afflicted." This change became apparent in the sense which she expressed of her own unworthiness; and of her dependence on the mercy of God. The good work which had been begun gradually increased in her progressive sanctification till heavenly and spiritual things assumed the ascendancy in her thoughts. "The course of time" had been read by her with great pleasure; and she spoke of portions of it, as having been blessed as the means of doing her good. But, it was from the Bible that she derived all her comfort; and which she valued most; it was now her constant companion. She loved its doctrines and precepts, and delighted to contemplate the way of salvation which it contained by the atoneing righteousness of Christ. To assist her in these holy exercises she began a regular course of reading the Scriptures with the aid of Scott's Commentary. The gracious influence of religion was

manifested during the course of her protracted sufferings by her resignation to the Divine will. Till within six weeks of her decease, some hopes were entertained of her recovery: at this period these hopes were doomed to disappointment. When the opinion of the physician was made known to her,—that she could not live much longer, she replied “I know that the Lord does not design me to be long here,—I have enjoyed too much of his presence for a few days past, to remain in this world.” Her concern seemed now to be for her parents, lest they should be over much grieved with her loss, and in reference to this remarked: “If you both can give me up cheerfully, I think I am willing and ready to go, when the Lord pleases to call me.” From this time, it was her desire that none might see her, but a few christian friends. Her remaining strength was employed in ascribing all the glory of her salvation to God; rejoicing in his merciful dealings towards her in the pardon of her sins; indeed her mouth was filled with praise. When no longer able to read herself, she rejoiced in having the Bible read to her; particularly the 12th chapter of Hebrews and the latter part of the 34th Psalm. Death was to her now, rather a matter of joyous anticipation than of fear: though sometimes Satan was permitted to trouble her, yet she was enabled to resist his temptations; and to rest more securely in the Saviour’s love. She seemed to have learned the worth of his admonition “watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation.” In view of this she said, “what a trifling thing will make us forget Christ who is so good, and so kind to us.” Her mind was so much under the influence of a sense of the Divine goodness, that a few hours before her death she said, “I desire, if it is the Lord’s will to enable me to leave satisfying evidence that I am a child of God.” Being assured by her parents and friends that they were abundantly satisfied and were resigned to part with her; raising her eyes she said “Into thy hands, O my Saviour, I commit myself; I cannot tell when thou wilt remove me—thou knowest,—thy will be done!” In a few minutes she repeated the 23d Psalm, in a manner that brought tears of joy from the eyes of those present. “I shall soon be in heaven” and as if lost in the awfulness of the consideration she exclaimed “O what a thought!” she had expressed a desire that she might have strength to speak to her friends before her death concerning their spiritual interests. Accordingly she addressed all present; exhorting them to live near to God. To her parents she said, “I have one request to make, and that is, that you will not mourn for me; you know it is wrong, it will be but a little while, and we shall meet in heaven.” To her sister she said, “I love you, and request that you be a good child. Remember your prayers night and morning; the Saviour hears the prayers of little children; and may He bless you.” Having taken farewell of her parents and relations present, she expressed great solicitude for some whom she feared had not an interest in the Redeemer. “O tell them to give themselves to God; and to do it immediately, or it may be too late.” And soon after fell asleep in Jesus.

THE

REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN.

VOL. III.

APRIL, 1839.

No. II.

THE SABBATH.—ITS NATURE AND SANCTIFICATION.

1. *The Sabbath is designed as a day of rest.*

This is a primary element in the sabbatical institution. It is a cessation from ordinary employment. The language of the command is, "Six days shalt thou labor and do all thy work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God, in it thou shalt not do any work." The command not only forbids us to labor, but it enjoins the duty of resting.—Labor is commanded during six days; and rest on the seventh. And they are equally obligatory by the Divine precept. The rest of the Sabbath is an entire abstinence from all secular employments of every kind; except such as may be included in the "works of necessity and mercy." Besides cessation from overt acts of secular employment, it includes also the duty of abstaining from thinking and speaking about such employment. To speak or think of such things as the command enjoins us to rest from, is as truly a violation of the Divine law, as to do those things with our hands.—Every householder is bound by the law of the Sabbath to see that the rest of the Sabbath is kept by every one under his roof, or under his authority; not even excepting the stranger who may have turned aside to tarry with him for the night; and in the fourth commandment God gives him authority to enforce upon all under his paternal power or guardianship cessation from secular business. On the other hand, the rest of the Sabbath is extended as a privileged right to all the members of a family; the fourth commandment is their charter to this privilege. The head of a family interferes with Divine authority, and robs those who are under his control of

a sacred privilege which God has given them, if he exact labor from them on the Sabbath, which necessity or mercy does not require. Nay, the privilege of rest on the Sabbath extends to even the inferior animals, which are subjected to the power of man. To them also the Creator has given an inalienable right to enjoy rest from their toils on the Sabbath. He has thus, in goodness, reserved for them a respite from incessant toil, while He subjected them to the lordship of man.

The rest of the Sabbath embraces the period of an entire day; it is the seventh part of our time: and this is required not only by the spirit but by the letter of the law. "Six days shalt thou labor, but the seventh is the Sabbath." To abstain from secular business for a few hours of the day merely, is not keeping the Sabbath as a *day* of rest: it is practically setting it aside, and substituting in its room an arrangement of our own. An unsuccessful attempt was made in France, during the infidel revolutionary period, to transfer the Sabbath from the seventh to the tenth day. The design of this was unquestionably to abrogate the Christian Sabbath, and was therefore viewed with abhorrence by every Christian. But in a practical point of view, the man who abstains from labor only a *part* of the Sabbath—such part of it as may be devoted to public worship—is equally chargeable with violating the Sabbath, as were the French infidels. The principle in both cases is the same; it is taking more than the sixth part of time for our own employments, and allowing less than the seventh part to God. It is presuming to serve God with something of our own, while we refuse to serve him according to his own appointment.

2. *The Sabbath requires holy activity.*

It is a day of rest, or cessation from ordinary secular employments: but this is not all that is required to the keeping of the Sabbath. The institution requires that the time of cessation from worldly employments should be most actively employed in the duties of religion: it does not admit of idleness and sloth; indeed these are absolutely incompatible with the nature of the rest which the Sabbath requires. In the primitive institution, we are told that God rested from all the works which he had made. But we are told further that "God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it." This blessing of the Sabbath and sanctifying it on the part of God, is distinct from his resting "from all his works which he had

made." The rest of God on the first Sabbath was negative, or simply a cessation from working; but his blessing and sanctifying the day was something positive: there was in this activity, a holy delight in, and active contemplation of what he had wrought. What God did on the first Sabbath is both a precept and an example to us. We are, like him, to rest from the labor of the preceding six days; and like him we are to sanctify the day by a holy activity in religious employments. Religion should find a place in the business of every day; but it should constitute the *whole business* of the Sabbath. And that too, not merely as embracing outward religious acts; but also the entire employment of the mind. We may be employed with the most Pharaesic exactness in performing outward services of a religious kind, and the rest of the Sabbath nevertheless be violated by the employment of the mind in merely secular things. The body may be resting from these, while the mind may be wholly occupied and absorbed by them. There may be a pretence of honoring God in the sanctification of the Sabbath by our words and deeds, and yet our hearts may be far from him, and equally far from Sabbath sanctification. We cannot illustrate the meaning of this remark so well as in the words of Scripture.—“If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day, and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honorable, and shalt honor him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words: then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.” Isa. lviii. 13, 14.

3. *The Sabbath is a memorial.*

In its primitive appointment the Sabbath was designed to commemorate the work of creation, and of course the glory of God as manifested thereby—his power, his wisdom, and his benevolence. When he ceased from the work of creation, he looked with ineffable delight and satisfaction upon it, and declared it to be good. And he commanded man to imitate his example; so that in every returning seventh day there might be a memorial of the glory of the Creator. When the children of Israel came out of Egypt, the institution of the Sabbath was re-published, and the object of its appointment re-stated, “For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is.” Exod. xx. 11. But the good-

ness of God in bringing them out was added as an additional reason why they should keep the Sabbath. It was still continued as a memorial of creation; but God had now finished another great work—the redemption of Israel from bondage. “And remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and that the Lord thy God brought thee out thence, through a mighty hand, and by a stretched out arm; therefore the Lord thy God commanded thee to keep the Sabbath day.” Deut. v. 15. The Sabbath thus became a memorial of the deliverance of the Jews, as well as of the work of creation. The salvation of sinners was accomplished by the work of Christ in his obedience unto death: he rested from this work when he rose from the dead, on the first day of the week.—The magnitude and glory of this work entitled it to be commemorated by a weekly rest. But that the superior glory of the work of redemption might be manifested to the church, the day on which the weekly rest should be kept was changed from the seventh to the first day of the week—the day on which the Saviour rested from his work. The primitive object of the institution is not superseded; the Sabbath is still a memorial of creation: but redemption, as the more glorious work, has obtained the precedence, and this is held forth to us in the change of the day. “This is the day which the Lord hath made, we will rejoice and be glad in it. Psalm cxviii. 24.

4. *The Sabbath is a type of heaven.*

The work of Christ being finished, he entered into rest: after he had offered one sacrifice for sins, he forever sat down on the right hand of God. The Redeemer entered into this rest as the Great High Priest of our profession. He took possession of it in the name of all his people: for says the apostle, “which hope we have as an anchor of the soul both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil, whether the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.” Heb. vi. 19, 20. The weekly rest commemorates the finishing of the work of redemption: but while it is a memorial of this, it is a pledge, at the same time, to all believers, of their entering into that rest of which Christ has taken possession as their “forerunner.” The Sabbath is consecrated to the contemplation of the glories of redemption and creation; and the still greater glory of Him who is their author: and these shall be the subjects of the contemplation of redeemed men

throughout eternity. To him who, like the apostle John, "is in the spirit on the Lord's day," the Sabbath is a foretaste of heaven; and heaven shall be one uninterrupted Sabbath: it is a rest that remains to all the people of God; and in the weekly return of the Sabbath they have a lively representation and pledge of its felicities.

We next consider the *sanctification* of the Sabbath.

The state of mind in which the Sabbath is kept, should occupy a prominent place in our consideration of its sanctification. For however much its duties may be attended to outwardly, unless they are performed from right principles and in a proper state of mind, it is not sanctified in the meaning of the commandment. The example of one who keeps the Sabbath merely in the letter of the precept, may be of advantage to society: but to himself the Sabbath is of no spiritual advantage, because that which constitutes the essence of all obedience is wanting.

Early education may have a very considerable influence on the conduct of a man; and this may be strengthened by subsequent habits. The Sabbath is peculiarly liable to abuse from such causes. Education and habit may induce to suspend secular business on Sabbath; and yet there may be as entire a disregard to the Divine authority as if the duty rested not on the command of God, but on personal gratification or taste. We should endeavor to avoid the danger of resting satisfied with following the mere impulse of education without a direct regard to the Divine command.

The observance of the Sabbath may arise from regard to public opinion. Unless men have hardihood enough to avow infidelity, and cast off the salutary restraints of religion, the opinions and practices of professors must have a very considerable influence upon their outward deportment. This influence must reciprocate among mere nominal professors. Much of the duty performed by such, can claim no higher principle of action; and we presume that it is especially so in regard to the observance of the Sabbath; there is an outward keeping of it; and public opinion we fear is the chief motive for even so much of Sabbath sanctification as is found among us. Such persons may not allow themselves to say so, nor even to admit it in their own minds; and nevertheless it may be true. What but this, can account for the painful fact, that many professors of religion, who have been exemplary in respect of the Sabbath, whenever they remove geo-

graphically beyond the prevailing influence of Sabbath keeping, show as little regard to its observance as infidels?

Further, the Sabbath may be observed on the principle of self-righteousness. Every duty performed by a self-righteous man has this for its latent principle of action. The *external observance* of the Sabbath, and this is as far as such a man can go, is with him a work of merit by which he hopes to recommend himself to God. In such cases, Sabbath keeping is an effort to earn a right to the enjoyment of present and future felicity by works of righteousness.

These observations place the subject in such a light as to make it indisputably certain, that while a man may restrain himself on the Lord's day from all secular business, and *externally* perform the duties required of Christians, he may yet not sanctify the Sabbath. Its sanctification necessarily includes a distinct and scrupulous regard to the Divine command, "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy." To this principle of obedience, Sabbath sanctification requires us to add a proper frame of mind.

1. *It requires seriousness.*

Levity of thought or conversation, or manner of acting, is as really at variance with the sanctification of the Sabbath as the doing of any secular work; nor do we mean merely sinful levity in thinking, speaking or acting, but even such sportiveness of mind or manner as may be innocent in itself on other days. Because such levity is at variance with the sacred institution, which was designed of God as a means of breaking in upon the current of the world's *feelings*, as well as the world's *doings*; and to bring God, and the concerns of the eternal world distinctly before the mind at brief, and regularly returning periods.

2. *Spirituality.*

To seriousness, we must add active spiritual mindedness. The Sabbath is a pledge and foretaste of the heavenly state; the frame of mind in which it should be observed, ought therefore to be similar to that required for the enjoyment of heaven. "Without holiness no man shall see God." Such a frame of mind was enjoyed by John. "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day." In such a frame of mind we should always endeavor to sanctify the Sabbath. Spiritual things alone should occupy our minds during its continuance; and every thing else is to be dismissed. This opens to the pious soul a world of spiritual meditation and employment. Here is God

in all the glory of the Godhead—Here is Christ in all the glory and blessedness of a finished righteousness—Here is the evidence of his atonement being accepted, his resurrection from the dead—Here is the continued intercessory work of Christ in heaven, in behalf of the elect—Here is the love of God in the gift of his Son to be a Saviour—Here is the blessed influence of the Holy Spirit—Here is grace now, and the promise of glory hereafter—Here is all that shall be the theme of admiration and praise throughout eternity.

3. *Satisfaction and delight.*

The mind is in an unfit frame for sanctifying the Sabbath, if it feels no pleasure in spiritual exercises and employments—if it is felt as an interruption to enjoyment—if there is a longing that it may be over: saying as those did of whom Amos speaks, “When will the new moon be gone, that we may sell corn? and the Sabbath, that we may set forth wheat?” Chap. viii. 5. The heart must accompany the external acts of devotion; otherwise the Sabbath is not sanctified. It is not only to be called, but felt as “a delight, the holy of the Lord and honorable.” A delight that is expressed by the Psalmist when he exclaims, “How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of Hosts. Blessed are they that dwell in thy house: they will be still praising thee.” Ps. lxxxiv. 1—4.

The Sabbath is to be sanctified in the performance of personal, domestic, and public worship.

The former two constitute an important part of the everyday duties of the Christian; but though they are not peculiar to the Sabbath, they occupy a very prominent place in its sanctification: and should be directed in such a manner as to become preparatory to public worship, or, in the close of the day, the means of improving it. The Sabbath is the day set apart for public worship; and while the people of God may meet at other times for this purpose, they are bound by the law of the Sabbath to devote it to public worship. That law which gives them the privilege of laboring six days in their own employments, claims one for the worship of God.—Neglect of public worship is a violation of the Sabbath, however the individual may employ himself at home; unless he has necessity or mercy to plead as his excuse. It is surprising that men professing to submit to the obligations of Christianity, should neglect public worship when dispensed agreeably to the word of God within their reach. And the excuses offered in most cases are too contemptibly trifling to admit of

serious refutation. They are generally such as most men would not think sufficient to sustain them in the neglect of their secular business: yet they furnish to easy minded professors, a ready apology for neglecting one of the most important duties of the Christian life. If the consciences of these practical despisers of the Sabbath are not altogether seared, it might not be an unprofitable employment to test the validity of their excuses by a personal inquiry. Let such an one, at the close of the Lord's day, who instead of sanctifying it by attendance on public ordinances, has been loitering at home, or otherwise misspending its sacred hours, examine his conduct, and try it by an application of the Divine law: let him do this, as in the presence of the searcher of hearts, and in view of that account which he must give to the Judge of all, for the privileges which he has enjoyed. If the examination does not result in self-condemnation, we have no hesitation in saying that he is only a nominal christian; and that if he does not repent of his unsanctified Sabbaths, he may, nay, he *shall* be condemned at a bar more dreadful than that of conscience; a tribunal from whose judgment there is no appeal, and from whose decision there is no escape.

TESTIMONY AGAINST THE MORAL EVILS IN THE CIVIL INSTITUTIONS OF THE UNITED STATES.

(*Published in "Overture" by order of Synod.*)

God has instituted civil government for the advancement of his own glory and for the good of men. "The powers that be are ordained of God." "He is the minister of God to thee for good." Rom. xiii. 1, 4. It was instituted before the fall of man; and so originated in the law of nature, binding the moral subject of God's government to obey his Creator. Its author is a holy God, the law by which it is regulated is holy, and it is designed to promote the glory of God and the holiness and happiness of man. As every intelligent creature is under law to God in his individual capacity, so all associations of moral agents are under obligation to be subject to the law of their natures. Adam and Eve, in their social relations, were as much bound in all things to obey the laws of their Creator, as in the duties which they owed to him indi-

vidually. God instituted the marriage relation, and prescribed its mutual obligations. All the subjects of Jehovah's moral government, in their relations to each other, are bound to act according to the will of God. In the first four of the Ten Commandments, or in the first table of the law, God has ordained what duties men shall perform to himself; and in the other six, or second table, those which they shall perform to one another. The social, as well as the personal actings of men are equally to be regulated by the law of God. The rectitude or the sinfulness of every individual and of every social act, is determined by its conformity or disconformity to the will of the supreme lawgiver. "He that doeth righteousness is righteous." 1 John iii. 7. "Whosoever committeth sin, transgresseth also the law; for sin is the transgression of the law." 1 John iii. 4. The actions of civil rulers and of subjects are good, when they accord with the law of God, and evil, when they violate its provisions. This maxim is agreeable to the common conscience of men in all nations, that know and acknowledge the being of a God. Were it not so, conscience would impose no restraint on the evil propensities of magistrates or subjects; conscience could neither accuse nor excuse them as to their civil actions; for that faculty exercises the office of a judge in applying the law of God. Hence all legitimate civil rule is from God, as Creator, and in its constitution and administration must be conformed to the will of its Author. To maintain that it was instituted of God, and then left entirely to the will of the creature, is no better than the doctrine of Epicurus, that God having created the universe, at once and forever abandoned all care of it as to its sustentation or government. Indeed, many of the popular maxims of civil government are neither more nor less than a partial revival of that Epicurean tenet. "They say unto God, depart from us; for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways. What is the Almighty that we should serve him?" Job xxi. 14, 15. All such notions are essentially atheistical, offering the highest indignity to the Lawgiver, and doing violence to the natural conscience.

God has placed our world under an economy of mercy, and subjected it to the Lord Jesus Christ as Mediator, who has interposed for the salvation of sinners. All right to the enjoyment of any good in the material world and in the moral institutions of the Creator, was forfeited by man when he violated the covenant of works and fell in Adam. He had no

right, after his fall, to any of the blessings flowing from civil government. Having forfeited life, no title could remain to any of the enjoyments resulting from his social relations.—Had man not fallen, Adam would have been the patriarchal civil ruler of all his posterity as long as he continued on earth. God made him to have dominion over the works of his hands, and put all things under his feet: “all sheep and oxen, yea and the beasts of the field; the fowls of the air, and the fish of the sea, and *whatsoever* passeth through the paths of the seas.” Ps. viii. 6—8. This dominion man lost by the violation of the old covenant. Christ Jesus, the second man, the Lord from heaven, has committed to him the dominion which passed by sin from the hands of the first man. “We see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor.” Heb. ii. 9. “The government is laid on his shoulders; he sits on the throne of David to order and to establish it forever.” “He is the Prince of the kings of the earth.” “Thrones, principalities, powers and dominions are made subject to him.”—Princes and judges of the earth, and all nations are commanded to do homage to him. He has given by his Spirit the written Word to men, as the law of his government in this colony of his empire. “All kings of the earth shall praise thee, O Lord, when they hear the words of thy mouth.” Ps. cxxxviii. 4. He has commanded the nations to provide out of all the people, “able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness; and place such over them.” Ex. xviii. 21. By his high and holy authority, he has enjoined that all who are detained in unrighteous bondage shall be immediately emancipated. “Is not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bonds of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke?” Isa. lviii. 6.

All these injunctions of the God of heaven, have been disregarded by the people of the United States, in the organization and administration of their civil government.

I. In the United States Constitution there is no recognition of the Holy Scriptures, as extending their authority over the nation or over any individual citizen. The Preamble to that instrument is as follows:—“We the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defence, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings

of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this constitution, for the United States of America.”— Among the objects here enumerated, there is not mentioned the observation of the laws of God, either as they are revealed by the light of nature, or in the Holy Scriptures. There is no mention of any rule as paramount to the will of the people, who ordain this fundamental law of the commonwealth.— Examine the document through all its articles and sections, and there will not be found any reference to the law of God, either directly or by implication. Were any State in the Union to frame a constitution without referring to that of the United States, it would be deemed a rejection of the Federal government, and it would be so in fact. The United States is a colony in the Mediatorial dominion of the Lord Jesus Christ; for “every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” Phil. ii. 11. As there is no such confession, nor any allusion to his law in the Federal constitution, it is plainly a rejection of the written Word, as the rule by which they profess to be governed.— There are, indeed, societies of various character formed in every nation, without any formal recognition of the governing power, and yet they are not considered as chargeable with its rejection. But they are not governmental associations; the objects which they propose to attain are not those of civil government; or if they are in part, the means by which they are to be attained are different. God, the supreme Ruler, has enacted laws for the government of commonwealths, and commanded all to obey them. The nation that refuses to recognize them is chargeable with a formal disregard of God’s authority. It could not be the intention of the framers of the constitution, to acknowledge the Holy Scriptures as the supreme law of the land; otherwise deists would have been excluded from all those offices where an oath of office is required upon entering on its administration. That they are so excluded, has never been held by the most zealous advocates of the Christianity of the constitution. It is well known, also, that there were many infidels in the convention by whom it was formed, and who signed it without dissent from any of its provisions. They certainly understood it; and they would never have solemnly assented and pledged themselves to it, in the face of all those who knew their infidelity, had it embraced a recognition of the Christian religion. Farther, were the empires of Turkey and China to be revolutionized, and

adopt a republican form of government, they might, continuing in Mahometanism and Paganism, adopt the whole United States' constitution, except the name, without inconsistency. There is nothing, in the instrument, adverse to Mahometanism, or Brahmanism. A Mahometan, or a Hindoo Brahman, might be elected a member of Congress, or President of the United States, take the oath of office, and administer it, without renouncing any of his dogmas. But what is substantially the same thing, both Jews and Deists have sworn to support the constitution, without being deemed guilty of an act inconsistent with their rejection of the Bible, in whole or in part. How could they be so charged? What provision of the document could be plead against them? None.

In reply to all this, it has been urged that Sunday is mentioned in the constitution. True, it is so. But in what connection? "If any bill shall not be returned by the President within ten days (Sundays excepted) after it shall have been presented to him, the same shall be a law." [Art. I. Sec. vii. specification 2.] Is it a violation of the tenets of a Jew; Deist, Mahometan, or Hindoo, to retain a bill, in some cases, eleven or twelve days, instead of ten? Does he thereby acknowledge the Sabbath to be a divine institution? Were two merchants to enter into partnership, on condition that their store should not be opened on Sabbath, a deistical partner would not violate the contract by spending the whole of that day in some other secular employment—as many Presidents have done, their oath of office notwithstanding. The mention of the Sabbath, and by its pagan name too, is no more a recognition of that day as set apart by God in his word for devotion, than the naming of Thursday for any transaction by christians, is a recognition of the worship of the pagan idol Thor, to whom, among the heathen, that day was sacred.—Besides, it was not the intention of those who framed the constitution, to exclude christians from the office of President. They intended to put all on an equal footing. Had they not excepted the Sabbath, an advantage would have been given to an infidel President, over a christian, who might entertain conscientious scruples as to the examining of bills on the Lord's day. After all, were there, as there is not, a recognition of one precept of the law of God, would that be an acknowledgment of the whole law? It might as well be plead that the punishment of theft, by the government of China, is a recognition of the Christian religion, and proves that gov-

ernment to be Christian, because one commandment of the Bible is—"Thou shalt not steal." By this argument, all the governments of the world might be proved to recognize christianity, and to acknowledge Messiah as their prince! The advocates of the christianity of the United States' government must be hard pressed in the field of argument, when they are compelled to rear the superstructure of their advocacy on so narrow a basis.

II. Christ's Lordship over the United States is not acknowledged by the people in the constitution of their government. How could it be, when many of those who framed, and who have administered it, have held him to be an impostor, and his Bible a cunningly devised fable? All the arguments under the preceding article, go to establish this charge. In truth, so little has the word of God been read and studied in this land, that a great majority of the citizens remain to this day in wilful ignorance of the truth, that Christ as Mediator "is the prince of the kings of the earth:" Rev. i. 5. How could they acknowledge his lordship over them, while they are ignorant of his claims? A vast majority of the people make no profession of his religion in their own persons, as members of his church. Is it reasonable to suppose that this irreligious majority would recognize his claims to lordship over the commonwealth? Let any religious man survey his own neighborhood, and reflect on the character of all his acquaintances, and then ask himself, is it probable that such a people would frame a government to do homage to the Lord Jesus Christ, "as having all power given to him in heaven and earth?" Mat. xxviii. 18. Were the members of the convention better informed on these subjects, or more religious than the mass of the people? Far otherwise, indeed. The number of religious men, occupying the civil offices of the commonwealth, have been very few, in proportion to that of the christian professors in the several Protestant churches. It was so in the convention. There was even less probability that they would acknowledge Christ, than that a majority of the whole people would have done so, had they all been assembled in order to form a constitution. But we are not left to this *a priore* reasoning; we have the demonstration of fact. There is no allusion to the Author of the Christian religion; no hint that such a personage ever appeared in the world. There could not have been less had the constitution been framed in China, Turkey or Hindoostan. Would any

man, if he had no other means of information, suspect from the perusal of the constitution, that the Son of God had ever appeared in our world as the Saviour of sinners—that he died, rose again, and is set down at the right hand of the majesty on high? Never. And are we, after all this, to be told that he is acknowledged, his religion recognized, and his law honored, in an instrument from which even the being of such a person could not possibly be known? In a christian commonwealth, where there had been Bibles, churches, ministers of the gospel, and an extensive and stated ministration of gospel ordinances, from the first settlement of the colonies, without interruption, to the meeting of the convention, such a contemptuous neglect to do any honor to Jesus Christ, the Lord of the whole earth, is an act of rebellion against the authority of Jehovah, a national sin of deep aggravation, over which every good man is called to mourn. It is a sin which God will visit, “when he cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity.” *Isa. xxvi. 25.*

In reply to this it is argued, that until a nation recognizes the authority of Christ, it is no sin not to acknowledge him—as there is no breach of engagement, no violation of vow. We reply, that there can be no act of voluntary obedience approved of God, where there is no legitimate authority. If the authority is lawful, and the claim to obedience just, it is a sin to refuse to obey, whether it be promised or not. The claim of Christ to dominion is founded in the donation of the kingdom to him by God the Father. “I will make him my first born, higher than the kings of the earth.” *Ps. lxxxix. 27.* “Yea, all kings shall fall down before him: all nations shall serve him.” *Ps. lxxii. 11.* “Be wise now therefore, O ye kings, be instructed ye judges of the earth—kiss ye the Son, lest he be angry and ye perish from the way.” *Ps. ii. 10, 12.* His right to rule is absolute, and not suspended on the will of the nations. In the day of his wrath he will prostrate kings who refuse to do him homage, as well as those who have promised to obey him and have violated their oath of allegiance. If the objection be valid, then all the nations of the world, from the organization of the first commonwealth to the end of the world, might have refused to acknowledge the lordship of Christ, and yet no guilt have rested on them. How preposterous! God the Father bestows on his Son the right to reign, and commands all to obey; all refuse, or at least neglect to do him homage according to the decree of the

Father, and yet they commit no sin! They expressly reject the authority of him "who has a right to reign," and yet are guiltless! If this is the best plea for the disregard of Christ's authority, by the United States, that conscience which will be quieted by it, must be easily appeased.

III. There is not in the constitution any acknowledgment of God. The same remark applies as in the preceding topic—No one could know, by reading the constitution, that there is a God. There would be nothing absurd in an Atheist giving his affirmation for its support. What article, provision or sentiment might be plead against him? None. The constitution forbids any religious test. "No religious test shall ever be required as a qualification to any office." [Art. vi. Sec. 3.] Were the existence of God recognized, it would require a test, excluding atheists; as the oath of office would be a solemn declaration of belief in the being of God. Hence it was manifestly the intention neither to profess a national belief of the being of Jehovah, nor any subjection to him.—The will of the people, and not the law of God, was thought, by the framers of that document, to be the ultimate fountain of civil government. Were it true that in a christian nation, the civil authority might be the ordinance of God, without any recognition of the Mediatorial dominion, because it is founded in the law of nature, the refusal of the nation to acknowledge the God of nature, sets aside the claim of the United States' government to be his institution. It is a proclamation that the commonwealth holds itself to be independent of "all that is called God." Unless there is a God, there can be no law of nature. A profession of subjection to the law of nature is a recognition of the being of God, and of his authority. It cannot be inferred from any provision in the constitution, that there are any eternal and unalterable principles of national right or wrong, unless it be, that the majority of the nation can do no wrong. The United States, as a nation, have not acknowledged any God as their God. If any thing can constitute national atheism, this sin may, without overstraining, be charged on the United States, in framing their federal constitution. According to the Westminster Divines, (Larger Catechism, Question 105,)—"The sins forbidden in the first commandment are, atheism, in denying or not having a God—the not having and avouching him for God and our God," &c. "The fool hath said in his heart, there is no God." Ps. xiv. 5. Should any one ask a citizen of this

commonwealth, Has your nation any God? would it not be very natural to reply, Read the federal constitution; that is the only expression of our national faith? We as a nation, believe every thing which that document embraces, and we cannot be said to believe any principle which it does not contain. The inquirer reads the document, and does not find the name of God, nor any allusion to his being or government: will he not safely infer that this commonwealth has no God? The Westminster Divines say, that the not having a God is atheism. If any one still affirms that the nation claims to have a God, how will he prove it? Clearly, not by the constitution. The atheism, with which we charge that instrument, is, that in it the nation does not recognize the being of God, "nor avouch him to be their God." All this is so repugnant to the love and fear of God, that many attempts have been made to diminish the odium of such dishonor to Him; to apologise for this most unholy feature of the constitution, and to make it acceptable to the christian people.

1. It is said to be a great honor to God not to mention his name in the constitution, as it takes his being and authority for granted! If this is true, the church could not better fulfil her duty, than to omit all mention of the name of God in her creeds and confessions! The magistracy and the ministry are both ordinances of God; and if the former may be constituted without referring to his authority or name, and honor him by the omission, why not the latter?

2. It is plead that the name of God is not in the book of Esther, yet we admit it into the canon of divine revelation; and that therefore the government of the United States may be acknowledged to be the ordinance of God, though his name is not found in its constitution. Such attempts to defend a sinful nation in the dishonor which it does to God the Creator, would be unworthy of mention or refutation, were it not that they beguile unstable souls, and that those who are inclined to flatter the ungodly great, satisfy their consciences with the most transparent sophisms. This sophism we expose by the following remarks:

1. The name of God is in the Bible, of which the book of Esther forms a part; whereas his name is found in *no part* of the United States constitution.

2. The *name* of God is engraven on the whole of that portion of his word; for, as a historical document, it displays his wisdom, power, and goodness, exercised in the preserva-

tion of his people. Who can find the name of Jehovah, so impressed on the federal constitution?

3. The book of Esther was *designed* to make known the God of Israel. This will not be questioned by any one but an infidel. It reveals the Excellency of Jehovah, not only as the God of providence, but as the God of grace. "Now in Shushan the palace, there was a certain Jew, whose name was Mordecai, the son of Jair, the son of Kish, a Benjamite, which had been carried away with Jechoniah, king of Judah, whom Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon had carried away." Esth. ii. 5, 6. This specification is designed to show that Mordecai and Esther, and their people—the Jews, were the covenant people of God. It directs the mind of the devout reader to the church of God, as directly as if it had been named; and is the key to the whole narrative. The book of Esther contains a historical illustration of the truth, that the kingdom of providence is administered by the Prince of the kings of the earth, in subserviency to the interests of his church. Is the *name* of God not in all this? Now it may be asked of every candid man, whether he believes the *design* of the United States' constitution is to make known and honor God, either as the God of providence, or as the God of the church?

4. The name of Jehovah is in the book of Esther, however often the contrary has been ignorantly asserted. The name Judah signifies a praiser of Jehovah. The name translated Jews, signifies praisers of Jehovah. This name of God is put on his people. "And they shall put my name on the children of Israel." Num. vi. 27. God changed the name of Jacob to that of Israel, which signifies, prince of God; which name the whole church bears, to remind all her members of their relation to the God of Jacob, and to encourage them in prayer to him. This shows that the name Jews, or praisers of God, was not fortuitous. Jacob refers in the blessing of Judah, to the import of his name. "Judah, thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise." Gen. xlix. 8. While he praised Jehovah, his brethren should praise him. The name of Jehovah is put on his people; for under the New Testament dispensation, the saints are called Jews. "Thus saith the Lord of hosts; in those days, *it shall come to pass* that ten men shall take hold, out of all languages of the nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying we will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you."

Zec. viii. 23. "He is not a Jew, which is one outwardly—but he is a Jew which is one inwardly." Rom. ii. 28, 29. The name Jew is designed of God to signify, that he to whom it belongs in its true sense, is a worshipper of Jehovah, the God of Israel. The tracing of the ancestry of Mordecai to Benjamin, and the record of his having been a citizen of Jerusalem, at the time of the carrying away to Babylon, for the purpose of showing that he was a member of the church, is evidence that we do not lay too much stress on the name, "Praisers of God." In the forty-seven times that this name occurs in the book of Esther, it signifies in every instance, in the original, a praiser, or praisers of God; so that his name, named upon his people, is mentioned in the book of Esther forty-seven times. If the futile objection which we have refuted, does not merit all the argument bestowed on it, some profit may accrue in reminding all that the members of the church of Christ are bound to worship Jehovah, Israel's God; and not to do homage to his enemies, who refuse to obey him. They are encouraged not to fear the modern Hamans, though they bow not to them, for the God of the Jews will defend them.

(To be continued.)

DR. CLARKE'S LETTER ON PSALMODY.

The author of the following letter, DR. THOMAS CLARKE, was among the first Seceder ministers that emigrated to America. He was remarkable for his plain and pointed manner of preaching, and the letter is a faithful exhibition of truth against the use of human compositions in the praises of God. It is entitled—"Plain reasons why neither Dr. Watts' Imitations of the Psalms, nor his other poems, nor any other human compositions, ought to be used in the praises of the great God our Saviour—But that a metre version of the Book of Psalms—ought to be used." Though written many years ago, and in a style, in some respects, rather antiquated, it will be acceptable to our readers as a plain and faithful document, on an all-important subject.

ED.

Christian Reader,—If thou art really a christian by sweet experience, as Saul of Tarsus was made, then thou surely standest in awe of the divine law, revealed in the holy scriptures, the only rule of faith and practice, by which all men shall be finally judged. Thou hast been made like him in

all humility to bow before the Most High God, and to say as he said, Acts, ix. 6, "Lord what wilt thou have me to do?" i. e. in thy public praises. Wilt thou have me to praise thy blessed name with elegant words of human composition, by some esteemed far superior to the best version of the Book of Psalms? or, Wilt thou have me to praise thy holy majesty with the sacred words of unerring Revelation? If this is thy serious inquiry, then let me offer thee some *reasons* why it appears a moral duty for thee to avoid the use of human compositions of uninspired men in praising God, and to use the Psalms of God's own institution and appointment in worshipping him.

That we ought to avoid the use of human compositions in praising God, appears clear from the following reasons.

I. *It is unwarrantable.* You can find no commandment of God on divine record, requiring you to use any *Imitation*, or any human composure, instead of that Book of Psalms God hath given you. Nor can you learn that God ever inspired any of his own Apostles to alter or change the Psalms, or to make or use any imitations of them in divine worship, under pretence of their being more agreeable to New Testament Times. They must, in their own conceit, be very wise indeed, and have a very high opinion of their own abilities, who think they can contrive Hymns or imitations of Psalms, preferable to those that eternal, divine and unerring Wisdom hath given you. Would to God you and I had grace sufficient to sing the 150 sweet Psalms, Hymns and Spiritual Songs, which the all-gracious God hath in his love and pity bestowed upon us, without wandering through the world after the swarms of human compositions now extant. You know all the Hymns, all the Antiphones, Missals, Holidays, and Breviaries, brought into the Romish church, one century after another, were introduced by some new pretender to a higher pitch of zeal, for improving the worship of God. But if you or I come before God in solemn praise with any human invention or imitation, I am afraid we shall meet with those awful interrogatories, "Who hath required this imitation at your hands?" Isa. i. 12, and by what authority doest thou these things? and who gave you this authority? And what will you answer when thus questioned? May the Lord keep you and me from being wise above what is written for our rule in the holy Oracles.

II. *To use such an imitation in divine worship is entirely need-*

less, superfluous, and perhaps superstitious. There is no occasion, no necessity for it in the world; the Book of Psalms God gave you is abundantly sufficient as it stands, for all the sacred purposes of devotion and praise; it is without spot or wrinkle; it has the stamp of divine authority, and to lay it aside and bring in this imitation, is like offering strange fire on God's altar, as did Nadab and Abihu, Lev. xi. 2. And although temporal judgments are not now perhaps so abundantly poured out on those who dare to reject God's own Psalms and bring imitations in their room and stead; yet, I greatly fear, spiritual judgments are upon those that use them; for, as Zecharias was struck dumb for his unbelief of the divine message, so are they struck dumb in the house of God—their tongues cleave to the roofs of their mouths; they either cannot or will not sing even this imitation itself. No: with sorrow I have seen it, they are left to wander vainly in their own counsels, with their own imitations, and are dumb before the Lord, in many worshipping assemblies—all except a few concillators, or singing boys and girls in the gallery; when I hear them, I should surely think I had happened in a Mass-house in Dublin, did I not recollect that I was yet in a professed Protestant country. Had there been any real deficiency or imperfection in God's Book of Psalms, then such an imitation might have had some show or appearance of necessity; but that is very far from being the case, for God's Psalm Book is holy, just, spiritual and perfect. A little shifting and changing from God's Book to an imitation Book, may for a while please the carnal heart, but God has commanded you not to meddle with them that are given to such changes.

These Psalms which God in old time gave to his Church, were found sufficient for the use of the kings, priests, prophets and saints of God in Israel, some thousands of years; and in the use of them our forefathers, martyrs and reformers obtained much communion with God, and great pleasure and felicity—and what would you have more? We had abundance of Psalms bestowed on us by a gracious and good God; but alas! for our want of understanding of them, our great want of love for them, and our sad want of faith and zeal, to sing these songs of Zion with due propriety and perseverance.

III. *You may not use said imitation, because it tends to grieve and offend God's people, and destroy the amiable peace of the church.* The using it brings pious people into this sad dilem-

ma; either they must sit still, and see their own God's Book of Psalms neglected and rejected, and say nothing, which would be contrary to that solemn charge that God gave them, to hold fast the form of sound words, and contend earnestly for every article of faith; or else they must speak up against the superfluous use of the imitations, and expect to be railed upon for it. Must not this greatly grieve them? Can pious people avoid being grieved and offended to see such tumult, noise and wild disorder raised in the ivory palaces of the Prince of Peace; and all about an *imitation* of God's Book of Psalms, which we had no need of? Will you then use it, while in so doing you expose yourself to that dreadful curse? "Offences must needs come, but wo to that man through whom they come. It were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he cast into the sea, than offend one of these little ones." Mat. xviii. 6. No doubt, sometimes pious persons, through temptation and corruption, take offence when none is given nor intended to be given them.— But that is very far from being the case here; because, they see before their faces these treasures of wisdom and knowledge, the Book of Psalms, broken, torn, mutilated and massacred to please carnal men; and they see the havoc made on them in God's own house, upon his holy Sabbath day.— They see twelve of them condemned to perpetual silence, as unworthy even of imitation; their voice must never more be heard in God's tabernacle—that is, the 43, 52, 54, 59, 64, 70, 79, 88, 100, 137, and 140. These Psalms are the sincere milk of the word, and to see them torn from the mouths of the babes of grace, is a sight of great cruelty. No doubt they can get them to *read* in prose, but they cannot any more, in many worshipping assemblies, get them to sing as in the days of old; for now every one hath a doctrine and a psalm or a hymn: there's Wesley's Hymns, Whitefield's Hymns, Spalding's Hymns, Mason's Hymns, and Dr. Watts' Hymns, *imitations*, &c. Can they be blamed for being grieved and offended, while they see such wild *disorder* forced into the house of the God of *order* and peace, and all for the sake of a new thing, that we stood not in the least need of? To grieve them is to grieve the spirit of God that dwells in them. What impudence is it in any poor, conceited, uninspired man, to form a poem, and then stamp it with the sacred name of a *Hymn*!

IV. *Because using said imitation in God's worship, is a con-*

ving with, and becoming art and part guilty with such as reproach and blaspheme that part of God's holy word, called the *Book of Psalms*. Dr. Watts, in his preface to that edition of his *imitation* and Hymns, printed for Rivington, London, 1768, page 5th, says—"The dull indifference that sits on the faces of a whole assembly, while the Psalm is upon the lips, must tempt to suspect the minds of most of the worshippers are absent or unconcerned. I have been long convinced that one great occasion of this evil arises from the *matter* and *words* to which we confine all our songs." Did you ever read another author that had the daring impudence to charge the crime of sinners' *dull indifference* in worship upon the *matter* and *words* that God has put in his *Book of Psalms*? I suppose not. If the divine *matter* and sacred *words* of the Psalms have that dangerous influence upon worshippers he asserts, did not God do us a great hurt to put such a *dulling* book in our hands? was not this instead of a fish, to give his children a scorpion? And will Dr. Watts' *imitation* of such *dulling matter* and *words* remove the dreadful crime? Does not trial, made by twenty years' experience, loudly proclaim the contrary, to all the attentive world, who see so few sing God's praise, either in their families or churches? In old time, a pious king, who often complained of *dullness* and darkness, in God's worship, says, "I will never forget thy precepts, for with them thou hast quickened me." Ps. cxix. 93. Luther used to call the Psalms, *God's little Bible*, and summary of the Old Testament.

He further saith in his preface, "Some of them" (the Songs of Zion) "are almost *OPPOSITE* to the spirit of the Gospel," that is, the Spirit of God. How can any man imagine that any part of God's word can be either *almost* or altogether *opposite* to his Spirit. None but deists pretend to find any opposition between God's *word* and his *Spirit*, nor between one part of the word and another. The *seeming oppositions* in Scripture, have been long since clearly explained and reconciled.

Again, in said preface, he says, "When our souls are raised a little above the earth, in the beginning of a Psalm, we are checked on a sudden in our ascent toward heaven, by some expression—fit only to be sung in a worldly sanctuary."

Surely God's kind design in giving us these Psalms was, that they might be a happy means to promote our *ascent* towards heaven; and can God so far miss his gracious design,

that any of them will check us in our *ascent*? The most base songs that ever were composed by lewd ballad makers, could not be charged with a more barbarous spiritual murder, than this of driving a poor soul *back*, when it had happily got on its *ascent towards heaven*.

Another reproach expressed in said preface is—"When we are just entering into an evangelical frame, yet the very next line perhaps, which the clerk parcels out to us, hath something in it so extremely Jewish and cloudy, that it darkens the sight of God, the *Saviour*."

How base this reproach, while it is certain, that a great personage, in old times, looked through the Psalms, and through all the Jewish cloudiness in them, and by them got a sweet and clear sight of God the Saviour, so that being thereby raised up from his dejections, he with the voice of devout joy and gladness sings: Ps. cxix. 24.

My comfort and my heart's delight thy testimonies be,
And they, in all my doubts and fears, are counsellors to me.

One of the greatest heroes that ever commanded an army, who never lost a siege nor a battle, joyfully celebrates the commendations of all revealed truth, of which the Book of Psalms is a special part, saying, "Thy word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path." Ps. cxix, 105.

Another slander asserted in said preface is—"While we are kindling into divine love by meditation of the loving kindness of the Lord—within a few lines some dreadful curse against man, is proposed to our lips, *that God would add iniquity to their iniquity*—which is so contrary to the new commandment of loving our enemies—our hearts as it were forbid the pursuit of the song, and the worship grows dull of mere necessity."

The God of truth says, *all Scripture* (the excluded Psalms not excepted) *is given by inspiration of God and is profitable*; but if Dr. Watts' saying here be true, that part of it is *detestable*: For here again the *matter* and the *words* of the sweet Book of Psalms, are accused of *quenching divine love* kindling in the worshippers, being so dreadful and so contrary to the new commandment of loving our enemies. But you know they are ill, very ill, acquainted with the law, that see not a clear consistency between its curses and its precepts. Could any man be justly reckoned guilty of breaking the new command of love to his enemy, while he faithfully warned him, that if he went on robbing and murdering, an ignominious

death would be his portion? As little is it contrary to said new commandment, for God, in his Book of Psalms, to warn and tell us, that if we live a lewd life, adding sin to sin, and die unconverted, he then, as a righteous Judge, will number up our crimes, adding one after another in the numbering of them, as fully deserving eternal woe. Who knows not that this is the voice of pure and holy justice, expressed in the dreadful law curse, with a gracious design to alarm us as rational men to fly to Jesus for pardon and holiness. And though the words of the curse are translated in the form of a *prayer*, yet they could as well be expressed in the form of a *prophecy*, which they really are; telling a sinner before hand, that if he goes on in his trespasses, adding new iniquity to his old iniquity, the iniquity of this new year to the account of the iniquities he did in the old year, then God will add to his lot, all the torments mentioned in this book.

David was a prophet and a type of Jesus Christ. The God who inspired him to write these Psalms, is not to be presumptuously challenged why he inspired him to write such and such words. If David had been speaking even of his personal enemies, it would not be the voice of revenge. He fasted, mourned, prayed, and wore sackcloth for them that rewarded him ill for good. Ps. xxxv. 14. So did Paul travail as it were in birth, to have Christ formed in those who said, "his bodily presence was weak and contemptible;" and reproached him as "walking according to the flesh." 2 Cor. x. 2, 10. Yet under inspiration of God, he says, "if any bring, or preach any other gospel, let him be accursed." Gal. i. 8, 9. Now this was not the voice of revenge, but his calmly telling the truth, that if they deviated from the gospel, God would add that to the former great account of their iniquity.

If it dull the worship so much to mention any of the wraths that await sinners, then Dr. Watts' *imitation* or image of the Psalms will dull the worship too, and should be expelled; for in the 7th page of said edition, he sings:

On impious wretches he shall rain tempests of brimstone, fire and death;
Such as he kindled in the plain of Sodom, with his angry breath.

Although the sacred words and divine matter, be erroneously blamed for causing the "worship to grow dull of mere necessity," yet I aver, that the blame lies in the unbelief, carnality and enmity of depraved human nature, which is so high in command, that it not only makes the worshippers grow dull and weary of the song, but it actually arrests pea-

sants, merchants, soldiers, generals, governors, kings and queens, at home in their own apartments on the Sabbath day. For months, for years, they can have no inclination to public worship; they avoid the Kirk as a pest house: So great is the power, so extensive the command of these accursed corrupt dispositions of the human soul.

Depraved men of all ranks have been the willing slaves to the wide extended empire of *Enmity*, these five thousand years; yet they know it not, nor will they believe the mournful truth, though one rise from the grave and tell it. Are there not some persons on whom God has bestowed very large and affluent fortunes of wealth, who are yet under the bonds of so strange an aversion, that they have not been twice at public worship these seven years, nor have given one shilling of all that wealth, to support the worship of that great God on whose bounty they live, and in whose raiment they glitter like tinselled butterflies.

V. *Because while you use not the Book of Psalms itself, only an imitation of it, you expose yourself to all the curses that divine law and justice denounce against such as add to, or diminish from his word.* The other canonical books were given by God to be read, but the Book of Psalms was given us for a double use, to be both read and sung, in faith. Now, it is entirely expelled and abolished from being sung, and an image or imitation of it put in its room, in the house of the Lord. It is awfully dangerous for you to be one of that number who conspire to diminish twelve psalms from God's system of psalmody.—“Thou shalt not add to the word that I command thee, nor diminish ought from it.” Deut. iv. 2, “If any man shall take away from the words of this book, God shall take away his part out of the Book of Life.” Rev. xxii. 19. “Thou sawest a thief;” (that robbed the church of twelve psalms,) “and thou didst join with him”—“I will reprove thee.” Ps. l. 18, 21.

My dear reader, see how the diminishing or taking away, goes on in two instances among many. In Ps. iv. 4, 5, you have six precepts in the Assembly's version, which are as follows:

Fear and sin not, talk with your heart on bed, and silent be,
Off'rings present of righteousness, and in the Lord trust ye.

In the imitation it runs thus:

When our obedient hands have done a thousand works of righteousness,
We put our trust in God alone, and glory in his pard'ning grace.

Is not every one of the said six moral precepts here passed

over in silence, and the very sweet warrant for sinners' presenting the Redeemer's righteousness, as a sin offering to God, taken away, and a song left us about a thousand works of righteousness done by our own hands, though strictly speaking, all our righteousness is filthy rags.

Again, in the Assembly's version, it runs thus in Ps. li. 2, 3,

Me cleanse from sin, and thro'ly wash from mine iniquity :
For my transgressions I confess, my sin I ever see.

How widely different is the imitation of these verses :

Should'st thou condemn my soul to hell, and crush my flesh to dust,
Heaven would approve thy vengeance well, and earth must own it just.

Is not this a dangerous doctrine? How can a soul be condemned to hell after conversion? God says no such thing in the original. This imitation represents David speaking as an unpardoned soul, though God had sent Nathan to tell him he was actually pardoned. How unjust would it be after that pardon to *damn him to hell!* What Heaven is it, would approve such damnation?

No doubt the Dr. affirms, that he is far from reproaching the sacred Book of Psalms, for he says, page 8th, in said preface, "Far be it from my thoughts to lay aside the Book of Psalms, in public worship; few can pretend so great value for them as myself—but it must be acknowledged still, that there are a thousand lines in them which were not made for a church in our day to assume as its own."

But by means of his degrading and reproaching the Book of Psalms, it is now laid entirely aside, for above twenty years past; it is as effectually laid aside, as if he had warmly petitioned all the synods, councils, and associations, on this continent, and obtained their solemn vote for its exclusion; and as surely laid aside as if he had petitioned all the legislatures on the continent, and got them to pass acts that none of them should be printed or sung any more, from one end of the United States to the other. For he has in print publicly blamed the matter and words of God's Book of Psalms, as guilty of dulling the worshipping assemblies—he charges it with checking them in their ascent towards heaven—he degrades it as darkening their sight of God the Saviour—and condemns it as openly contradicting both the Spirit of God in the Gospel, and the new commandment. Was ever any book, written or printed on this continent, vilified and blasphemed in more opprobrious language, or charged with more pernicious injury to men's souls; and yet he pretends a great value for

it. After its reputation as a part of God's unerring word, is ruined and abolished, then a clear, large way is made for introducing his IMITATION in its place, under a great many fine characters—as being far more suitable to the various cases of the souls of Christians—far more agreeable to New Testament language and times, &c. &c. Thus as Joab did to Amasa, he kisses it with a pretence of great value for it, and in the mean time stabs it under the fifth rib, with an opprobrious reproach. And is it not dangerous, dreadfully dangerous, to connive with such reproach and blasphemy? And his diminishing not only twelve psalms from it as unworthy of imitation, but blaspheming the whole, as hindering men from ascending to Heaven, and darkening their sight of that blessed Saviour sent by God to bring lost sons to glory. How tremendous the danger to join in such daring diminishing from the number, the reputation, and the use of God's Book of Psalms! How awfully hazardous to join in adding and using a new imitation in room thereof, that is so unwarrantable, so superfluous, so destructive to the peace of the church, and offensive to the children of God! How aggravated the sin to commit all this in the face of God's curses, his four times repeated curses, that are more loud than ten thousand thunders.—“Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar.” Prov. xxx. 6. “All liars shall have their part in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone.” Rev. xxi. 9. “Cursed be he that confirmeth not all the words of this law, and all the people shall say, Amen.” Deut. xxvii. 26.

(To be Continued.) p. 78 →

NATIONAL VIOLATION OF THE SABBATH.

We are pained, but not surprised, at the fact, that both Houses of Congress sat during the greater part of the whole Sabbath immediately preceding the close of their late session. One House spent more than FIFTEEN hours of that day of sacred rest in the ordinary business of legislation; the other, a little less. Probably, under all the circumstances of the case, a more flagrant violation of the Divine commandment, “Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy,” has never been registered in heaven against any body of public men, favored with the light of Divine Revelation. The apology plead is NECESSITY, arising from the amount of business remaining unfinished. This apology is

as insufficient in God's sight, as the conduct for which it is offered is abominable. As well might the individual, who through carelessness, or disregard of the Sabbatical institution, allowed his business to accumulate through the week, and be found in an unfinished state on Saturday night, plead necessity as a justification of his conduct, when he doubled his diligence in doing up on the Lord's day what he should have finished during the six days on which God commanded him to "labor and do all his work." Congress had four months, from the commencement of the session, to remember that Sabbath which occurred on the 3d of March, and to prepare for its observance, by finishing their ordinary labor before its arrival. Why was this not done? If the ground be taken, that members cannot be induced to act during the session, with reference to the press of business at its close; then why did not the Houses sit fifteen hours on Thursday, Friday, or some other secular day of the last week of the constitutional term? Surely this would have been as easy, as to occupy fifteen hours of that day on which God has said, "Thou shalt do no work." But as this had not been done—as the Sabbath came and the business remained unfinished, why was not the adjournment till Monday? Because, it is said, the Constitution prohibited. The choice then was between violating the Constitution, and breaking the Divine Law. The latter was chosen. Fearful, wicked choice! Thereby, plainly and unequivocally, the Constitution was set up above the Law of God, and the sanction and authority of the people, establishing that instrument, declared to be paramount to the sanction and authority of the Lord Jehovah.

Startling as this statement may, and ought to appear, it presents the true spirit of the civil institutions of the United States. The people are regarded as the source of power, and their will as the supreme law in all things civil. The nation in its constitution, recognizes neither the authority of the Lord, nor his law, nor even the being of God who judges among the nations. It has made no provision prohibiting the violation of the Sabbath, or enforcing its observance. Hence the late public desecration of that sacred day does not at all surprize us. It is part of the legitimate working of the system, in framing and administering which, the people have set and continue to set at nought the statute book of Heaven. Besides, *this* act of Sabbath violation differs not materially from many *others* frequently committed by the civil functionaries of the land. It is well known that much of the business of Congressional Committees is matured and prepared on the Sabbath; that the same is true in relation to the business of the Executive departments; that the Mails are transported, assorted and distributed on the Lord's day, from one end of the land to the other, under Governmental sanction and by Governmental requirement; and that in many similar ways the Sabbath is profaned by men attending thereon to their ordinary official labors.

In all these cases, the spending of fifteen hours on the Sabbath in finishing the labors of the preceding four months not excepted, the sins of the rulers are chargeable upon the nation. They are *National*

sins. The people are guilty. This is undeniable from the consideration, that the act of the representative is the act of the represented.— Besides, as is stated above, the people have made no provision prohibiting the violation of the Sabbath by their rulers, or enforcing its observance upon them. In very many instances too, they deliberately, wilfully and knowingly give their suffrages to men who do not fear God, nor regard his authority, nor hesitate to trample on his law—men openly irreligious, immoral, infidel. And how many, even among professors of religion, will refuse again to vote for the very men of their party, who, by their impious conduct, made the 3d of March, 1839, one of the darkest days in the annals of this nation? Very few indeed, if that which has been in this respect, is that which will be. It should be remembered, that at the very time when the National legislature deliberately resolved to trample on the Sabbath, and when they were carrying out their resolution, the nation was threatened with all the horrors of war. God's hand was lifted up in solemn warning, as if to deter them from filling up the cup of the nation's guilt by such high-handed immorality; and yet the warning was disregarded. Verily, we have reason to fear that God will make bare that arm, and vindicate his honor in sore national judgments.

Great Britain, with all the evils of her government, and with all her idolatry in establishing Popery in Canada, and supporting Brahmanism in India, is less guilty in respect to the Sabbath than these United States. A recent attempt was made in London to open some of the public offices for business on the Lord's day,—the Post office among others. Remonstrances were sent up to the government, by members of the Stock Exchange, by lawyers, merchants and others of the most respectable classes, strongly protesting against the measure. One of the memorials contains the following language: "They deprecate even such an alteration as the transmitting of letters through London on that day, and they are convinced that if such a step were taken, the result would be, in the first instance, the receiving and delivering letters at the head offices, and ultimately the opening of the Post office on that day for every other purpose. That any such innovation, by throwing professional responsibility on your memorialists on that day, would be a means of rendering the due observance of the day by them, their clerks and dependents, most difficult, and of depriving them of the rest to which they are entitled on that day. Your memorialists therefore pray that the cessation from business, which has hitherto existed in the London post office on the Sabbath, may continue to be observed." The following communication in reply to the memorial from members of the Stock Exchange, shows the decision of the government. "GENTLEMEN, I have laid before the Lords Commissioners of her Majesty's Treasury, your memorial praying that the cessation from business which has hitherto been observed in the London post office on Sundays may be continued; and I have it in command from their lordships to acquaint you, that they have not and never had in contemplation any London delivery of letters on Sunday. Oꝛ

the contrary, their lordships have always felt strong objection to such a measure, and they are happy to find from your memorial, as well as other communications, that their opinion is entirely in concurrence with that of the great body of the mercantile community." How long, O how long, shall it be until such sentiments shall prevail and influence the conduct of rulers and citizens throughout this highly favored, but guilty land! It becomes the Witnesses of Christ to lift up their voice in opposition to every species of wickedness, and especially to testify against the Sabbath desecration, which, in many ways, is on the increase, and which causes the wrath of God to rest upon the nation. Especially let them keep their garments clean, obeying the direction, "Be ye separate, touch not the unclean thing."

RELIGIOUS CONTROVERSY.

On this subject Dr. Dick makes the following judicious remarks: "In the department of polemic theology, the controversies are considered which have been agitated in the church, with respect to the doctrines, and precepts, and institutions of religion. The term is derived from a Greek word, which signifies *warlike*. A polemic divine is a warrior; he goes forth into the field to encounter the adversaries of truth. The word has an odious sound, and seems to accord ill with the character of a teacher of religion, who ought to be a minister of peace. On this ground, polemic theology is often held up as the object of scorn and detestation, and it is loudly demanded, that the voice of controversy should be heard no more within the walls of the church, that the disciples of Christ should bury all disputes in oblivion, and, without minding differences of opinion, should dwell together as brethren in unity. There is much simplicity and want of discernment in this proposal, when sincerely made. It is the suggestion of inconsiderate zeal for one object, overlooking another of at least equal importance, accounting truth nothing, and peace every thing, and imagining that there may be solid peace, although it does not rest on the foundation of truth. Often, however, it is intended to conceal a sinister design, under the appearance of great liberality; a design to prevail upon one party to be quiet, while the other goes on to propagate its opinions without opposition. Every man who has observed from what quarter these cries for peace most frequently come, must have noticed that they are as insidious as the salutation of Joab to Amasa, whom he stabbed under the fifth rib when he took him by the beard and said,— "Art thou in health brother?" Nothing is more obvious, than that when the truth is attacked it ought to be defended: and as it would be base pusillanimity to yield it without a struggle to its adversary, so it would be disgraceful, as well as criminal, in one of its professed guardians, not to be qualified to sustain the dignity of his office, and to uphold the sacred interests of religion, by his arguments and his elo-

quence. He should be "able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and convince the gainsayers." If controversial theology be accounted an evil, it is a necessary one; and let the blame be imputed to the men who have labored, and are still laboring, to pervert the oracles of God, not to those whom a sense of duty has compelled to come forward, and defend them against the rude assaults of presumption and impiety."—*Lectures on Theology.*

Both the following Obituaries have been longer on hand than we could have wished; and have now to appear, for want of room, considerably abridged from the original communications. The exercises of mind presented in both cases, should induce *children* to remember their Creator in the days of their youth—stimulate *parents* to train up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord,—and warn *all* to give all diligence to make their calling and election sure. ED.

OBITUARY OF ELLEN SARAH SLOAT.

The late E. S. Sloat was born in Orange County, N. Y., Jan. 21st, 1812. She enjoyed from infancy the advantages of parental and pastoral instruction, which early appeared to be blessed and made the means of training her up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Nor was she wanting on her part in improving the opportunities afforded, giving diligent attention to reading the Scriptures, committing the catechisms, psalms of inspiration, &c. Opportunities of improvement in various branches of education were also improved by her, so that she made in them proficiency highly commendable. Still religious education was her chief delight, and claimed particularly her attention. Removing with her parents to Michigan, she was deprived for three years of an opportunity of attending on public ordinances, but enjoyed the privilege of social meetings for prayer and christian conference, with a few Covenanters whose lot was cast in the wilderness. To these the sacrament of the Lord's Supper was at length administered, at which time, being the first opportunity since her arrival at proper age, she made a public profession of her faith, sealing her covenant with God at a communion table. She was ardently attached to the principles of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, and read with avidity the history of the sufferings of the martyrs of Jesus; by which means, she was more and more instructed and confirmed in the principles of a Covenanted reformation.

But earth was not long to be her dwelling place. A disease which had been preying on her constitution, received fresh strength from a sudden cold, and in a few days "loosed the silver cord" of life. In her last illness she was patient and resigned, and gave comfortable evidence that she had chosen the part which should not be taken from her, being able to say "I know on whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he will keep that which I have committed to him." To the last she was enabled to unite in the morning and evening exercises

of the family and other religious exercises, still expressing the sweet consolation which they afforded her. Though Satan seemed to be permitted to assail her with his temptations, God's grace was clearly manifested as sufficient for her; for she was enabled to quench the fiery darts of the wicked one, so that her latter end was peace. In the full hope of a blessed immortality, she departed this life, January 3, 1838.

OBITUARY OF MOSES M'KINNEY.

The subject of this notice, son of James and Sally M'Kinney, died at Crawford on the 18th of December last, in the 14th year of his age, after a severe illness of thirty-one days' continuance. He bore his affliction with an uncommon share, for one so young, of christian fortitude and resignation. On the tenth day of his illness he "took death to himself," and said to his father, "I think I will die, and I have given myself up to God to be his." He requested that family worship might be performed in his room, and that he might have an interest in the prayers of his brothers and sisters. Often he spoke of death—seemed glad when any one conversed with him on the subject, and sent for his pastor, from whose instruction and encouragement he seemed to derive comfort. He selected Psalms, such as the 6, 48, 103, &c., to be sung in family worship, and often spoke of the advantage derived from having committed the Catechism, inspired Psalms, &c., to memory, lamenting the condition of children who had no attention paid by their parents to their religious education, and thanking God for parents who had instructed him, and restrained him from indulging in many evil habits in which others were indulged. To inquiries put by his father, he answered, I do not forget to pray in my pain and distress—I mourn over my original sin, committed in Adam, and over my many actual transgressions—I frequently repeat my dedication to God—I hear distinctly the prayers that are offered up. When near his last, he asked for his friends to come and bid him farewell—gave advice to younger children, and again committed himself to God in the words of Ps. xxxi. 5, "Into thy hands I commit my spirit, O thou Jehovah, God of truth, for thou hast redeemed me." Soon after, being asked if he could still rely on Christ for his salvation, he answered—I can; and said—I am dying, but am willing to die, going to the land where the wicked cease from troubling, and where the weary are at rest; adding, Now Lord receive me to thyself, even where thy dwellings be. Again commending his soul to God in the language of Ps. xxxi. 5, he soon after fell asleep.

The Southern Presbytery is to meet in Newburgh, on the second Tuesday of May, at 10 o'clock, A. M.

THE

REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN.

VOL. III.

MAY, 1839.

No. III.

TESTIMONY AGAINST THE MORAL EVILS IN THE CIVIL INSTI-
TUTIONS OF THE UNITED STATES.

(Published in "Overture" by order of Synod.)

(Continued from page 50.)

III. It is plead that all these charges against the U. States' Constitution are mere defects, that no human instrument is perfect, and though there may be much wanting, yet those who swear to support the constitution do not bind themselves to any thing positively evil. This plea for the United States' constitution, as it is older, so it is more plausible than either of the preceding. We trust however, we shall soon demonstrate that it has no more weight than those that we have refuted.

1. It will be admitted that there may be so great defects in a constitution of either a church or a state, as to vitiate the whole instrument. Try it in the church. Did any body of men associate for the purpose of worshipping God, without any acknowledgment of Christ, no christian will plead that any one could connect himself with such an association, and be guiltless. Yet he would bind himself to no positive evil, it might be plead, with as great plausibility. Were there, again; in a constitution of civil government no guarantee of any security in the enjoyment of personal right for the body of the citizens, and strong guards of the power and possessions of rulers, none would plead that there would be no sin in adopting such an instrument as our own by swearing to its support. Now are the rights of God and the claims of his

law, of less high and holy import than the rights of men?—The acknowledgment of God lies at the basis of every superstructure of civil or magisterial authority. If there can be any fundamental defect, it is the refusal to recognize the authority of the supreme Lawgiver.

2. It is a positive immorality to maintain, as is done in the United States' constitution, that the people are the ultimate source of all civil power. It is true, this is not directly asserted in express words; but it is not the less, on that account, the doctrine of the constitution. There is no hint of a derivation of power to rule from any other quarter, than the will of a majority of the people. That all law, all right, and all authority, proceed from God the Creator and moral governor of the world, is not admitted. This is, in the worst sense of the phrase, to forget God. "The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God." Ps. ix. 17. "The nation and kingdom that will not serve him shall perish; yea, those nations shall utterly perish." Isa. lx. 12. God does not cause to perish, utterly waste, and turn into hell, those who commit no sin. The forgetting of God—the neglect to serve him, are in these texts denounced as damning sins. God will not admit as an apology, that their not serving him was a mere negation, an omission only, and no positive evil.

3. It was not by a mere oversight, or want of thought, that God's authority was not acknowledged. The nation did acknowledge him in the old articles of Confederation, which were superseded by the present Constitution. [See last article.] The subject was debated in the Convention, and it was deliberately resolved that there should not be a recognition of the Christian religion or of God. Were any State in the United States to call a convention for the purpose of forming a constitution, and should that body debate the question, and resolve that they would not recognize the federal government, would the resolution be regarded as a mere sinless omission. The national government did not so treat the nullifiers of South Carolina, in their threatening not to obey the national law.

4. Sin consists in a want of conformity to the law of God. The fourth and fifth commandments are the only precepts of the decalogue in the positive form. He who neglects to sanctify the Sabbath, and to honor his father and mother, breaks these precepts directly; though he may plead that he is defec-

tive only. If the plea availed, it would set aside all the claims of these precepts. All the commandments are violated, and very grossly too, by sins of omission, which are as worthy of condemnation, as positive transgressions of the law.

5. If this plea avail for a nation, it will also for an individual. He who never received by faith the Saviour offered in the gospel, who never worships God, and who never makes any profession of obedience to him, may plead with equal plausibility, that all are imperfect, that these are mere defects, that he is guilty of no positive immorality, and that in approving of his whole character, there is no approbation of what is wrong. Would any one for a moment give place to such reasoning? What notions have they of the law of God, who fabricate such apologies for those nations who set it at nought and trample under foot its holy authority?

IV. It is contended that God is acknowledged, as "all executive and judicial officers, both of the United States and of the several States, shall be bound by an oath or affirmation, to support this constitution." (Art. vi. Sec. 3.) The reply to this is easy. 1. This clause proceeds on the principle, that as many citizens think the sanction of an oath important, and feel themselves bound by it, they therefore shall be bound by what they hold to be an obligation. Papists are sometimes sworn by the cross, when those who administer the oath do not approve of the cross as a proper object by which to swear; because an oath in that form lays hold on the superstitious conscience of the Roman Catholic.

2. The clause does not define who or what shall be invoked in the oath; whether Jupiter, Mahomet, Juggernaut, the cross, or God the Creator. No one could possibly divine from that clause, whether the article was framed by a christian, a Jew, a Mahometan, a Pagan, or an atheist who believes as many French infidels did, that the material universe is the only God.

3. Bands of pirates and robbers bind those who enter into their conspiracies against God and human society, by oaths in the most solemn forms. But who ever reasoned from this fact, that they intend to acknowledge God, and put their banditti under his authority? We do not introduce this illustration for the purpose of comparing the confederation of the States to these outlaws of society, but only to show that the bare use of the oath does not prove that they acknowledge God, as the moral governor of the land.

4. The obligation may be by an affirmation, in which there is no appeal to any God. Were all the officers of the general and state governments to affirm, and refer in the affirmation to no God, they would fulfil all the requisitions of the constitution. Now, when all that the constitution requires may be fulfilled without any recognition of God, he cannot be said to be acknowledged in that instrument.

5. It is immediately added—"But no religious test shall ever be required as a qualification to any office or public trust under the United States." Were it intended that the requisition of an affirmation, or an oath, should be a recognition of the being of God, it would be, to all intents and purposes, a religious test which would exclude atheists and pagans, who do not acknowledge the God of the christian. So cautious are they to guard against the misapprehension that they acknowledge the being or authority of God.

V. We are told that there are many provisions in the constitution agreeable to the law of God, and well calculated to secure in many respects the rights of men and the good order of society. All this is freely admitted. The principle, that the consent of the majority is essential to all lawful authority in the State, the doctrine of representative government, and many of its details, are wise, wholesome, and praiseworthy. But these principles and provisions are not introduced because they are stamped with the divine authority, but because they are the will of the people, and thought to be for the promotion of the public weal. Had they believed that there is no God, and no law enacted by him, these enactments would have been all that they are. Had contrary principles been supposed to be profitable, and according to the will of the people, however adverse to the law of God, they would have been embodied in the constitution. There is not a shadow of evidence that they would not. There never was a society of men, however nefarious, in which some of the internal regulations were not good. No association of men could exist for an hour without this. Let it be understood, that no member of a society shall speak truth, and that no faith can be had in the declaration or promise of any one, and the society would dissolve in a moment. The adoption of some of the laws of God does not imply subjection to his government. When the United States became a nation independent of Great Britain, the great body of English law was transferred to the jurisprudence of this commonwealth,

without owning any allegiance to the British crown. How can the mere fact that the same government has enacted many laws found in the Bible, be plead as an argument that it recognizes the authority of the divine Lawgiver, any more than that of adopting the British laws, to prove subjection to a foreign power? Infidels perform, as to the letter, numerous duties enjoined in the Holy Scriptures, without being thought, by so doing, to recognize the Word of God as their rule of duty.

VI. It is argued that the government is Christian, because Congress and the Supreme Court of the United States do not sit on the Sabbath. But why do they not? It is not because the constitution forbids them to transact business on that day. Besides, they often continue their sessions fur into the Sabbath morning,* which they would not do if they thought it unconstitutional. The late war with Great Britain was declared on the morning of the Sabbath; and Congress lately imposed a fine on some of its members, for absence from their seats on the Sabbath. And though they do not usually sit on the Sabbath, it is because some members are supposed to have conscientious scruples, as to the propriety of transacting congressional business on that day. For the same reason, the United States' courts adjourn over Sabbath, that the consciences of parties doing business in them, may have no violence done them. Even that, it is plain would be disregarded, were there much pecuniary advantage to be gained by Sabbath day sessions. The Sabbath mails, by public authority, desecrate the Lord's day more grossly, more extensively, and more offensively, than the courts would do, were they to continue in session. Thus, the government carries on a public and habitual warfare against one of the most prominent and important provisions of the law of God. Added to all this, the manner in which the members of Congress, the heads of executive departments, and the judges of the court, spend the Sabbath, demonstrates that a great majority of them do not decline to hold sessions or cabinets on that day out of any respect for its holiness. Many of them on the Sabbath, do deeds that would profane a week day.—Withal, we have reason of thankfulness that christianity imposes some degree of restraint on the ungodly, so that infidels

*At the close of their late session, they spent FIFTEEN HOURS of the Sabbath in legislation.—ED.

close their shops generally, and Congress their halls on the Lord's day; though it is no proof that either the infidel or the constitution recognizes its holiness.

VII. In justification of the disregard of the law of God, in the constitution, it is said to be a treaty of confederation, among independent state sovereignties, and not a national, magistral government. It is farther plead, that what may seem to be defective in its provisions, is supplied in the constitutions of the several States; and that several of these recognize the being of God, and some of them, the holy scriptures. This apology is of late invention, is more subtle, and more skilfully devised to mislead, than any of the other pleas that we have refuted above. But when it is analyzed, it is found equally defective.

1. While it is admitted that the national constitution is a federal compact, it claims to be a magistral power, and is so, in fact, however unholy. It provides for the organization of the three departments of government—the legislative, the judiciary, and the executive. The powers conferred on congress are called legislative, or law making. “The legislative powers herein granted shall be vested in a congress.” (Art. I. sec. 1.) They are such as belong to civil power only. The exposition and application of the laws are styled judicial, and the officers of this department are called judges.—“The judicial power of the United States—the judges of the supreme and inferior courts.” And their powers are co-extensive with the laws of the United States. “The judicial power shall extend to all cases in law and equity, arising under this constitution.” (Art. III. sec. 1, 2.) The judges are empowered to try crimes, and the punishment of death is inflicted by the decisions of the United States' courts. The President is invested with executive power. “He shall take care that the laws be faithfully executed.” (Art. II. sec. 3.) Legislation, judicial trials, and the execution of punishment, even to death, are functions of the United States' government, according to the constitution. The convention that framed it was called to form a national government, that might supersede the old Articles of Confederation. The President is by the consent of all, styled the chief magistrate, and it is called the government of the United States, by all except those who defend it with a zeal extending even to its annihilation. Either the United States is not a nation, or it is a nation without a government, if the federal constitution does

not erect a national magistracy. But if it were a mere treaty, why should there be no mention of God in a compact so solemn, involving the interests of numerous, young and flourishing commonwealths? Treaties between christian nations, in affairs of incomparably less interest, are usually ratified by a recognition of God's authority. So, after all, as it claims the powers of true and proper magistral authority, this apology will not avail to acquit it of the sin of dishonoring God. It is evident that a plea of this kind never would have been made, were it not so evidently preposterous to constitute an ordinance of God for the government of men, without any recognition of his authority.

2. It is admitted, that in a confederacy like that of the United States, some of the details of legislation may be left to the subordinate, local, or state authorities; while those more comprehensive and general, may be committed to the federal government. Indeed, from the nature of things, it must be so, in all such cases. This occurs in the several states, in which many minor details are committed to the incorporated cities, villages and townships. But how does that excuse the power which extends its jurisdiction over the whole people, from the acknowledgment of God and his law? Much local detail, in civil things, was vested in the heads of the houses of the fathers, in the several tribes of Israel; but the government extending over all the tribes did not, on that account, hold itself freed from obligation to act in professed obedience to the God of Israel.

3. It is true that God and his word are acknowledged in some of the state constitutions; and the federal constitution provides that "Full faith and credit shall be given, in each state, to the public acts, records, and judicial proceedings of every other state: and that the congress may, by penal laws, prescribe the manner in which such acts, records and proceedings shall be proved, and the effect thereof." (Art. iv. Sec. 1.) But does this bind him who swears to support the federal constitution, to believe in the being of God, and in the truth of the holy scriptures, because they are recognized in some states? Not at all. For that would be to introduce a religious test. All that he must believe is, that these are acts and proceedings of the states, embodied in their constitutions. If necessary, congress is bound to aid in carrying them into effect; not because they are true in themselves, but because they have been decreed by the majority of the people in some

state, in the institution of their state government. This is evident; for had the state constitution ordained the very reverse—that no God should be acknowledged, and that the Bible is a cunningly devised fable—he would be equally pledged by the constitution to give full faith and credit to these impious enactments. All this is based on the principle, that the will of the people is absolutely supreme, and that, as they can do no wrong, whatever they determine must be carried into effect. We shall see presently, that on this principle, congress and the federal government are pledged in fact to sustain acts and proceedings, directly contrary to each other. If there is any immorality in the constitution or constitutional laws of any state, “full faith and credit” must be given, and congress may aid in rendering them effectual.

Having demonstrated the futility of all the pleas set up in justification of the constitution on the ground of its not recognizing the being or authority of God, we proceed to specify another immoral feature in that instrument.

IV. It positively prohibits the government from showing any favor to the religion of the Lord Jesus Christ. “Congress shall make no law respecting the establishment of religion.” (Amendment I.) The promise of God to the church is—“Kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and their queens thy nursing mothers.” Isa. xlix. 23. “Because of thy temple at Jerusalem, shall kings bring presents unto thee.” Ps. lxxviii. 29. “And the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honor into it—and they shall bring the glory and the honor of the nations into it.” Rev. xxi. 24, 26. The article referred to above, forbids that any of all these things shall ever be done in the United States. If civil rulers act the part of nursing fathers to the church, if they bring presents to Christ for the temple at Jerusalem, if they bring their glory and honor into it, or if they bring the glory and honor of the nations into it, the effect will be to give greater stability to religion. God has promised it, and all that he promises is good. They in substance affirm, that what God has promised to his church, would not be for the interests of the United States, and that it shall never take effect here. The least degree of countenance given to the true religion by government, tends to its promotion and firmer establishment. Were the constitution to acknowledge the law of God contained in the holy scriptures, as binding on the nation, it would be a law respecting the establishment of religion. This article for ever for-

bids any national recognition of the worship of God. The government shall never make any law to honor God; for that law would respect the establishment of religion. And this absolute prohibition to promote the worship of the living God, is enacted in a Protestant and christian nation! To show the enormity of the wickedness of this unholy provision, we refer to the article published by Synod, on the magistrates' power *circa sacra*.

Under this head, we refer again to the article—"No religious test shall ever be required as a qualification to any office or public trust under the United States." The declaration of God is, "He that ruleth over men *must be just*, ruling in the fear of God." 2 Sam. xxiii. 3. "*It is an abomination to kings to commit wickedness: for the throne is established by righteousness.*" Prov. xvi. 12. The constitution says, there is no need that a ruler should be just. No atheist, deist, blasphemer, gross idolator, gambler, Sabbath-breaker, or whore-monger, can ever be excluded by law from any office or trust under the United States. To exclude him would be to apply a religious test. To commit any or all of this wickedness is abominable in a ruler, according to the law of God. But by the constitution, these sins are no disqualification for office. It is no abomination for officers to commit wickedness; they may delight and revel in it, without any impeachment, or disqualification for rule. And indeed the character of very many of the officers, even the chief functionaries of the federal government, furnishes an ample and deplorable commentary on this provision, shows that it is not a dead letter, and demonstrates that it is a delight and not an abomination to them to commit wickedness. The qualifications prescribed of God, for those who administer his ordinance of civil government are, they shall be "able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness." Exod. xix. 21.—The constitution declares that the qualifications of fearing God, and holding the truth, shall never be required. This provision is directly and positively opposed to God's ordination. God requires those who rule over men, in the administration of his ordinance, to be his friends: the constitution says his enemies shall not be excluded. This licentious provision is in full keeping with the whole spirit and complexion of the document. It is worthy of remark that the professors who undertake the advocacy of the government as a holy and heavenly institution, seem not to have invented any plea in

vindication of this clause. It would, indeed, be a most ungracious business, for a minister of the gospel, or other professor, to plead for the admission of the openly profane enemies of God to office. It would be even more gross, if possible, than to gravely argue, that the holy scriptures sanction the holding of millions of unoffending men in bondage, though it is confessed to be a most foul sin.

V. The United States' constitution sanctions negro slavery. It is truly painful to see how eager thousands are to free the government from this charge; while as many thousands lay out all their strength to justify the iniquity by the word of God. It is demonstrated that the national constitution is chargeable with this sin, by the following arguments.

1. Slavery existed in many of the states when that instrument was framed; and they were admitted into the union, without any power vested in Congress to emancipate the slaves, and with the understanding that it had no right to set them free. The theory of the federal government is, that all power not granted to it by the constitution, is residuary in the state sovereignties. The power to abolish slavery is confessedly not granted to congress; for had it been, the slaveholding states would not have entered into the confederacy. Government is instituted for the security of personal liberty and rights, and to protect the weak against the violence of the strong. In this one great and essential attribute of legitimate government, the constitution fails. No provision is made for securing to hundreds of thousands of the African race their liberty, or any personal right. They are deliberately and purposely left altogether at the mercy of their masters, who hold them as property, and claim a right to their persons, and all the proceeds of their labor. If a man harbors a thief, knowing him to be in possession of stolen property, the law holds him guilty of participation in the theft; much more if he makes the thief a member of his family, and derives profit from the use of the stolen property. All this and more, as we shall soon see, was done in the adoption of the federal constitution.

2. New states, not only holding slaves, but embodying slavery in their constitutions, as Missouri, and Arkansas, have been admitted into the Union, by congress, after protracted and earnest argument. The constitution makes provision for this. "New states may be admitted by congress." (Art. iv. Sec. 3.) It is not indeed, specified on what terms the ad-

mission shall take place. But it is fair to infer, that the terms shall not be different from those on which others were admitted. Others were at first introduced with all their slave institutions and practices. If congress accepted of new states as members of the Union, it certainly was not empowered to prescribe new terms.

3. Provision was made for the protection of the slave trade for more than twenty years, from the adoption of the constitution. "The migration or importation of such persons as any of the states now existing shall think proper to admit, shall not be prohibited by congress, prior to the year 1808." (Art. I. sec. 9.) The word slave was abhorrent to the ears of men who had, but a few years before, been emancipated from subjection to foreign dominion. No wonder the men who framed the constitution, blushed to use it; but still they gave their solemn and formal permission to continue the accursed traffic in slaves. It was certainly implied that the persons so imported, in slavery, should be guaranteed to the importer as their property, after they compelled them to migrate in bondage. All the slaves who have been imported under this license, and their descendants now in the United States, are held by a tenure derived from that grant.

4. Slavery is one of the pillars of the government. "Representation and direct taxes shall be apportioned—by adding to the whole number of free persons—three-fifths of all other persons." (Art. I. sec. 3.) By this provision, a slaveholder who possesses five slaves is entitled to what is equivalent to four votes. So the constitution rewards him for his sin of enslaving the innocent, with the right of three additional votes. The slaveholding states are rewarded with the privilege of sending about twenty-five more members to congress, than they would be entitled to, did they not commit the sin of enslaving more than two millions of unoffending men.

5. They pay taxes for their slaves. (See the article quoted above.) The constitution admits that the slaves are *persons*, and yet taxes them as *property*. No man can be taxed for property, in the possession of which he is not secured. Of course, the constitution secures the right of property in slaves.

6. The states are bound to deliver up fugitive slaves.—"No person held to labor or service in one state, under the laws thereof, escaping into another, shall, in consequence of any law or regulation therein, be discharged from such ser-

vice or labor ; but shall be delivered up on claim of the party to whom such labor or service may be due." (Art. iv. sec.ii. spec. 3.) The government of the United States, by the constitution, makes it imperative on the free states to deliver up all the slaves that escape from their masters, as soon as they are claimed. Every one who swears to the constitution, pledges himself to aid, if necessary, in such delivery.

7. Should the slaves rise to assert their right to liberty, the constitution pledges the power of the Union to suppress the attempt. "The United States shall—protect each of them [the states]—against domestic violence." (Art. iv. sec. iii.) This article has been acted upon by the federal government, employing its troops to suppress slave insurrection.—It is impossible to conceive a stronger sanction of slavery.

8. Congress has legislated on the subject of the delivery of fugitive slaves, and all the free states have acted on it in the execution of the laws. There are many other congressional acts of legislation on the subject of slavery, whose constitutionality has never been questioned.

9. Full faith and credit shall be given to all the constitutional doings of the states. Many of these embody slavery very specifically in their constitutions. By that of South Carolina, no one can be a member of the house of Assembly, unless he is possessed of ten slaves. In that of Arkansas, the legislature is restrained from freeing any slave without the consent of the holder. The constitution empowers congress to aid in giving effect to these provisions. Other states, as Pennsylvania and New-York, have emancipated their slaves. The constitution sanctions these contradictory acts. This illustrates the evil of taking the will of the people, irrespective of the Divine will, as the basis of all human law.—Were any state to enslave the one-half of its while inhabitants, full faith and credit must be given to it, and congress is empowered to aid in giving it effect. Were one state to establish the Christian religion, as was done in Scotland in 1580, and another state to abolish all religion, decree that every christian should be put to death, and that all the people should profess atheism, full faith and credit must be given to these deeds, and congress is empowered to aid in carrying them into effect.

10. There is a very extensive slave traffic carried on among the different states. The northern slaveholding states supply those to the south and south-west with many thousands

of slaves every year. The horrors of this nefarious traffic are nearly equal to that of the piratical African slave trade. Congress alone has power to regulate this internal commerce in human souls, sinews, flesh, and blood. "Congress shall have power to regulate commerce among the several states." (Art. I. sec. viii. spec. 3.) It may be asked, why, as congress has abolished the African slave trade, and declared it piracy, does it not put a stop to this inter-state traffic—the more odious, and infamous, as it is driven on in the very centre of a christian republic, and before the face of millions of christian professors, and under the eyes of a free people?—The answer is at hand. The federal constitution legitimates, taxes, and guarantees that kind of property in which this most execrable trade prosecutes its business.

11. There are from 6000 to 8000 slaves in the District of Columbia, over which congress exercises "exclusive legislation." (Art. III. sec. ii. spec. 17.) It is plead, indeed on good ground, that congress has power to abolish slavery in the District. But no one doubts, that the constitution vests them also with the power to continue its existence there. Who has ever doubted the constitutionality of the congressional slave laws enacted for the District of Columbia? If there is sin in perpetuating the slavery of the District, all those are partakers in this sin, who give, by oath or suffrage, their adhesion to the federal constitution by which it is authorized. It is perfectly impossible to evade the force of this argument.

12. The slaves in the territory of Florida, are held under laws emanating from congress, according to the constitution. God has been avenging himself on the nation, for their cruelty in the enslaving of the African race, by a most disastrous war waged for the professed object of expelling from that territory a few thousand miserable Indians, but in reality to cut off a place of refuge from fugitive slaves. This ruinous war of three and a half years' continuance, has cost the nation more than twenty millions of dollars, and Florida has been made the grave of about ten thousand Americans.

The corrupting influence of these pro-slavery provisions in the constitutions of the land, is seen in the debased state of morals at the seat of the general government, and in the slave states generally—in the mobs, riots, arsons and murders that have disturbed the repose of the nation, and alarmed of late all wise men—in the public pleadings of ministers of the gospel, on behalf of slavery, as if it were sanctioned by the word

of God—in the proceedings of ecclesiastical judicatories, and of Congress, in attempting to suppress all discussion of the rights of millions of men—in the supineness and total apathy of the great body of professors, in relation to the national dishonor done to God in the civil institutions of the country, and in relation to the sufferings of bleeding humanity,—and finally, in the alarming and rapidly increasing degeneracy of morals among men of all ranks. These are the bitter fruits of the seed sown by the nation in the formation of a constitution, by which the rights both of God and man have been trampled under foot.

It needs but little argument surely, with all intelligent christians, who love our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and are zealous for his honor and glory, to persuade them not to make themselves partakers in these sins. Enough has surely been urged, to convince all the friends of human liberty, that they ought not to plight their faith to the upholding of a system which arms with scourges the merciless oppressors of unoffending millions, and rivets the chains of bondage on the helpless victims of oppression. “Arise, O Lord, and plead thine own cause, for the tumult of them that hate thee groweth ever.” “Arise, O Lord, break the arm of the oppressor, and plead the cause of the poor and needy.” “Take the nations for thine inheritance, and deliver them for whom there is no helper.”

DR. CLARKE'S LETTER ON PSALMODY.

(Continued from page 59.)

That we ought to use God's own Book of Psalms, in praising his name, is clear from these reasons.

1. *Because God commands us to praise his name with the words of David and Asaph.* 2. Chron. xxix. 30. We have two instances of persons inspired to make and sing a song, on two special occasions, viz. Moses and Deborah, but after the eternal Spirit spoke all the words of the Book of Psalms, by his holy chosen penman, it appears that he did it for this special purpose, that we should serve him in solemn praises, with those most suitable words, devised by his unerring wisdom. In Psalm cii. 18, God declares that “This shall be written

for the generation to come, and the people who shall be created shall praise the Lord." God wrote out the Book of Psalms, that with them the generations to come into life, even in the New Testament times, should praise the Lord with these very words.

The pious and learned commentator, Henry, on Psalm cxlv. 1, thus explains it, "I will bless thee for ever and ever." "This intimates, says he, that the Psalms he [the Psalmist] penned, should be made use of in praising God by the church, to the end of time."

It is rational to suppose, that while we essay to pay unto God the tribute of praise and glory, which we owe to him, night and morn in our families, or in public assemblies, on the first day of the week, that we pay it to him in language which he himself devised. Must it not be the most agreeable to the Majesty of Heaven?

Other books of divine revelation are given to us to be read and to be meditated upon, but the Book of Psalms is given us that we may not only read it, and meditate on it, but sing it also with the spirit and understanding, with devout fervor and divine delight, in the assemblies of his saints, on his holy Sabbaths, as well as in private families.

Historians say, that the English Parliament, having convened about one hundred pious and learned divines, at Westminster, London, to compile a Confession of Faith, Catechisms, Larger and Shorter, Directory for Public and Family Worship, and Form of Presbyterian Church Government, about the year 1643, laid before them an imperfect draught of this version of the Book of Psalms, made by the pious Sir Francis Rouse, Baronet of Old England, recommending it to their serious examination: who, with laborious and pious care, altered, corrected, and approved it, unanimously, and returned it to Parliament, and both houses also did then approve and authorise it to be sung in families and churches, throughout that kingdom.

The pious and learned Samuel Rutherford, Professor of Divinity in the University of St. Andrews, and the other Scots members of said Westminster Assembly, then sent said authorised version north to the General Assembly of the national church of Scotland, at that time sitting at Edinburgh, whose committees had it under consideration several years, and having further corrected and amended it, the General Assembly did approve it and authorise it to be sung in fami-

lies and churches, as did the Scots Parliament also authorise it throughout that realm.

So after near seven years labor and critical care, spent on it by both Assemblies and Parliaments, it may be called the Assembly's metre version of the Book of Psalms; and they have brought it so very close to represent the same ideas of things, the same doctrines, precepts, &c. as the Hebrew Psalms, wrote also in Metre, that those who use it may with great propriety be said to praise the Lord with the words of David and Asaph, &c. according to the commandment before cited. 2 Chron. xxix. 30.

II. Another reason why we ought to use the Assembly's metre version is, *because in using it we follow the pious example of the flock of Christ, the saints in scripture, &c.* We are commanded to go forth by the footsteps of that happy flock. Cant. i. 8. This is and was their good old way to praise the Lord; we have the laudable example of the pious king Jehosaphat, 2 Chron. xx. 21. He appointed singers unto the Lord, who, with his army on their march to battle, sung the divine words of David, Ps. cxxxvi. 1, saying, "Praise ye the Lord, for his mercy endureth forever," &c. And when they returned so victorious, to render thanks to God, we have reason to suppose they used the same Psalm Book.

About two hundred years after, when penitent Israel returned from Babylonish captivity, and were laying the foundation of the temple, Ezra iii. 11: "They sung together by course in praising and giving thanks to the Lord," in the words of David, Ps. cxxxvi. 1, "For his mercy endureth for ever towards Israel." On both these new occasions they sung no new composures of their own, but the Book of Psalms being completed, they found in it a Psalm that suited them very well, and God accepted them in it, and hath made a record of it, in the volume of his Book, for our learning and instruction.

In New Testament times, John, the beloved disciple, in divine vision, Rev. xv. 4, saw and heard those who had escaped from the strong powers of Antichrist's delusion, praising the Lord with the words of David—Ps. lxxxvi. 9, "All nations whom thou madest shall come and worship before thee." This he saw and heard in the Heaven of the New Testament Church.

Likewise, at the final fall of Antichrist, the New Testament Church, on that new and glorious occasion, sings no new

imitation or composition of human device, but sings the words of God's old book of Psalms, Ps. cxxxiv. 1, "Praise our God all ye that fear him." Nor do we hear of any dullness appearing on their faces, while they confined their songs to the old matter and words of David and Asaph, or other parts of that book known by the common name of the Book of Psalms to the churches, ever since they were revealed. Luke xx. 42. Acts i. 20.

Historians say, that for the first three hundred years after Christ's incarnation, the christian churches sung the praises of God in the words of the Book of Psalms, each nation in its own language, till the fourth century, then they would no longer confine their songs to the matter and words of God's devising, in the old Book of Psalms, but new compositions were made, and new benches of Canonic Singers or Cancellators, were set up in their churches. Exorcists and other superstitions were also then invented. Tertullian says, that "after celebrating the Lord's Supper they sung a hymn, either out of the Bible or one of their own composing." It seems reckoning their own hymns as good to use as Bible ones.—Paulus Samosetanus set up some on Easter day, "to sing an hymn to his own praise in the church." Euseb. Lib 7, p. 281. Thus men, fond, very fond of their own new inventions, in religious worship, are still set on changes: God says, "Meddle not with them that are given to such changes." The Bible and the histories of past ages hold up to us many sad spectacles of men's most egregious and criminal folly, in setting up new modes of worship, which they addressed to God under various pictures, both in his praises and other parts of his worship, perhaps—during eleven hundred and sixty years of gross idolatry, for which they were smitten with many terrible judgments, until the Reformation, 1560.

Then our reformers, spirited by God, returned to use a metre version of the Book of Psalms, in the praising of God, made by some of the ministers, I suppose, but used no imitations, that I know of, there, from Anno 1560, until November 14th, 1645, that the Assembly's Version was authorised in England, by both Houses of Parliament, as a part of that uniformity in worship then practised by our pious ancestors; nor could all the powers of hell, nor bloody tyranny of Charles II. and his brother, for twenty-eight years, compel them to recede from the use of this version of the Psalms; or any other part of that happy system of reformation in religion

to which they had attained, and to which they had laudably sworn an adherence by solemn league and covenant. It is said about sixty thousand of them suffered the loss of eleven millions, by fines; many were banished to Holland and America, after wandering long on the mountains; numbers suffered in jails and dungeons and in fields; and on scaffolds eighteen thousand suffered. Yet these pious martyrs sung this version through all these dangers, and on the verge of dissolution, with their dying breath and devout joy, and were accepted of God.

The first noble and devout settlers in New England, whose true piety will be dearly esteemed by the religious, to the end of time, sung this version in their families and churches with heavenly fervor and divine delight. How forbidding then is it for us to neglect or reject this version, wherewith our pious ancestors praised the Lord, and found acceptance through the merits of Emanuel. "Thus saith the Lord, stand ye in the ways, and see and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein and ye shall find rest for your souls; but they said we will not walk therein." Jer. vi. 16.

III. We ought to use the Assembly's version of the Book of Psalms, *because it best suits the various cases of Christian souls in our times, and is most for edification.* Christian reader, commune with thine own heart awhile, and ask what case it is in, then search this Book of Psalms, and see if thou canst find a sentence in it that suits thy case. Dost thou find by recollection that thy sins are more than thou canst number, and heinous in their nature: That thou art therefore in the utmost danger of eternal fire, and greatly afraid night and day, then read, Ps. xxxviii. 4, Ps. xl. 12, Ps. cxix. 20. The Lord sent unto thee a word of salvation. Ps. l. 8; lxviii. 18.

I, for thy sacrifices few, reprove thee never will,
Nor for burnt offerings to have been before me offer'd still.
Thou hast received gifts for men, for such as did rebel;
Yea, even for them, that God the Lord in midst of them might dwell.

Do thy sinful inclinations still grievously prevail against all thy prayers and resolutions and vows; see Ps. lxxv. 3.

Iniquities, I must confess, prevail against me do;
But as for our transgressions, them purge away shalt thou.

Is thy spiritual willingness and strength for reading, praying, hearing, and keeping the Sabbath, greatly decayed and gone: Is this thy case and grief, so it was with David. Ps. cx. 4, lxxxix. 21.

**A willing people in thy day of power shall come to thee :
In holy beauties from morn's womb, thy youth like dew shall be.
With him mine hand shall 'stablish'd be, mine arm shall make him strong.**

Art thou almost overcome with spiritual deadness in any religious duty, which is a great trouble to thee ; see Psalm cxxxviii. 7.

Though I in midst of trouble walk, I life from thee shall have.

Art thou laid sick on a bed of languishing, and got exceeding weak, see, so far as it tends to the interests of true religion in thy soul, he will perform this promise that suits thy case. Ps. xli. 3.

God will give strength when he on bed of languishing doth mourn,
And in his sickness sore, O Lord, thou all his bed wilt turn.

Hast thou long prayed for a certain mercy thou standest in need of, to thyself or to thy friend, and yet there appears no sign of a gracious answer, so that thou fearest greatly God will never regard nor answer thy languid prayers, for that mercy ; then read, Ps. xxii. 2, cii. 17.

All day, my God, to thee I cry, yet am not heard by thee ;
And in the seasons of the night, I cannot silent be.
Their prayer will he not despise, by him it shall be heard.

Art thou strongly solicited by Satan, or by some person, to do what is called a little sin, or a secret sin, or to neglect some particular duty, to the great dishonor of God, and hurt of thy soul ; see the promise of Christ to the sinner that looks to him. Ps. lxxxix. 21.

On him the foe shall not exact, nor son of mischief wrong.

Is thy soul much grieved because thou seest little or no signs of true piety in any of thy relations, and it often grieves thee ; see Ps. xxii. 27.

All ends of the earth remember shall, and turn the Lord unto,
All kindreds of the nations to him shall homage do.

Although thy frugality and industry have been constant, and thy prayers frequent for thy daily bread, yet still thou remainest oppressed in deep poverty ; see Ps. lxxii. 12.

The poor man and the indigent in mercy he shall spare :
He shall preserve alive the souls of those that needy are.
For he the needy shall preserve when he to him doth call ;
The poor also, and him that hath no help of man at all.

Does thy wonted familiar friend in whom thou trustedst, and who did eat of thy bread, now lift up his voice against thee unprovoked, his tongue stabs thy good name as an envenomed dart, behind thy back, perhaps, laying grievous

things to thy charge, which thou knowest not; then see Ps. xxxviii. 11, xli. 8, 9.

Thy way to God commit, him trust, it bring to pass shall he,
And like unto the light he shall thy righteousness display.
And he thy judgments shall bring forth like noon-tide of the day.

The Book of Psalms is well suited to many other cases, and as Gerhard, an eminent divine, says—They are a glass of divine grace, representing to us the sweet smiling countenance of God in Christ, a most accurate anatomy of a christian soul, delineating all its afflictions, motions, temptations, and plunges, with their proper remedies.”

The learned Ainsworth, in his preface to it, says—“David, by manifold Psalms, Hymns and Spiritual Songs, sets forth the Praises of God—and these Psalms have ever since, by the Church of Israel, by Christ and his Apostles, and by the saints in all ages, been received and honored as the oracles of God—sung in the public assemblies, as in God’s Tabernacle and Temple, where they sung praise unto the Lord, with the words of David and Asaph, the Seer.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PRESENT AGE.

“There is nothing new under the sun.” This declaration is not a denial that the face of human society is continually changing, by its advancement or retrogression in intellectual and moral condition. It merely asserts a general similarity in the moral character and conduct of men of every age and country. The heart, in all, is deceitful and desperately wicked; and from this corrupt fountain flow, every where, the putrid streams of moral pollution. Still the history of the world abounds with variety of condition and character; and while there is a general uniformity, every age has something peculiar to itself.

God, to whom all things are known from the beginning, has given to his church a prospective history, extending to the termination of her militant state, by which the Witnesses may know how to bear a seasonable and efficient testimony. It also furnishes them with ground of encouragement in prosecuting their spiritual warfare, by giving infallible security both of ultimate victory and glorious triumph. “Whatever things were written aforetime, were written for our learning;

that we, through patience and comfort of the Scriptures, might have hope." As the skilful navigator determines by observations and calculations, his progress on his voyage, as well as his proximity to rocks and quicksands, so the spiritual mariner, tossed on a stormy sea, must make his daily observations, and compare them with his infallible chart, in order accurately to ascertain the position of his richly-laden vessel, on his heaven-bound voyage. A little attention to what is going on in the world, will satisfy any one that our lot is fallen in an eventful age. The human mind seems to have received a mighty impulse, and in the progress of its movements, new principles of action are developed, and modes of operation devised, which, while they excite the strenuous opposition of many wicked men, fail, because of radical defects, to secure the confidence and co-operation of many of the godly. To point out some of these characteristics of the present age, may be profitable. We begin with

INVENTION. Novelty is the rage of the day. Veneration for the past is fast losing its charm; and antiquity, so far from being a recommendation, seems to be, with very many, almost the only thing necessary to secure the condemnation of the best human performance. It is not denied that in the present age, many important discoveries have been made. Mighty physical agents, which have heretofore lain inactive, have been called by man's invention into exercise, and enlisted in the all-absorbing enterprise of ministering to his ambition, avarice, &c. Success serves but to stimulate to farther exertion. The past is shaded by the anticipations of the future; and thus our age is distinguished by the active exercise of the powers of invention. Nor is this confined to man's temporal state: it extends to his moral and spiritual condition; and he must be blind indeed, who does not see imperative need of improvement in both. But alas! men do not always wait to inquire into the extent of the limits here allowed for the legitimate exercise of their inventive powers. Instead of confining themselves to means of God's appointment, they seem to act as if the right to choose the means to be employed in improving man's moral and spiritual condition was given to them. Moved by their sympathies, and guided too often by worldly wisdom or policy, they set about the work of reformation, and prosecute it in ways of their own device. In all such cases they must inevitably fail. God will no more give his glory to another in *means* employed, than in any thing else.

One great agent of reform, which our inventive age has set in operation, is public opinion. Against some of the prevailing sins of this land its strength has been directed. On the strong holds of intemperance, slavery, and other gross sins, its artillery has been playing, and certainly not without some effect. Wherever the influence of this mighty agent is moved by a desire to promote the glory of God, and is under the direction of his holy law, it will prove a powerful auxiliary to morals and religion. "A threefold cord is not easily broken." But wherever public opinion does not rise, in the motive which influences it, to the glory of God, or is not controlled and directed in its influence by his precepts, there is great danger, to say no more, of its becoming an engine of destruction, especially in an age so carnal and irreligious as the present. Satan will not be divided against himself; and however his servants may seem to co-operate with the people of God, in accomplishing any scheme of reformation, their master has always an eye to some ulterior movement, by which he expects to gain in reality more than he seemingly loses, and thereby augment the strength of his kingdom.—Painful as is the thought, we are not without serious apprehension that much of the machinery put in operation by benevolent minds and beneficent hands, to move public opinion in ameliorating the moral and religious condition of man, may, at some future point in its slow and toilsome progress, stand still. When it comes to this, but a slight impulse will be necessary to move it in an opposite direction; and then, in its rapid and accelerated progress, the true friends of morals and religion may be the first to be crushed beneath its weight.—Certain it is, the christian leaves his vantage ground whenever he chooses public opinion as the arena on which to conflict with the votaries of vice. Nor is it a redeeming circumstance, that there he may receive the aid of much intellectual and moral strength. Such strength, when not directed by the law of God, is but weakness, and may on any occasion—perhaps at the very crisis, fail, leaving those that trusted in it the victims of disappointment. God has appointed the means which he will bless for dislodging Satan from the hearts of men; and when this is done, and not sooner, will his dominion in the world at large have an end. Without this, no reformation will be permanent. "The dog will return to his vomit, and the sow that is washed, to her wallowing in the mire." The unclean spirit may, for a time, go

out of a man, but if the Holy Spirit has not entered, the former occupant will return with seven spirits more wicked than himself, and the last state of the subject of such a reformation will be worse than the first.

Principles which, for ages, seemed to be settled, are in our day undergoing a close examination. Practices strengthened into habits, and sanctioned by law, are subjected to the severest scrutiny. Many truths sanctioned by the word of God are shamefully abandoned, while error and heresy in almost every form are substituted in their room. Hallowed practices are growing into disuse, through the influence of innovations. Still, as credit should be given wherever it is due, we remark, with pleasure, that evils which had long escaped the attention of mankind generally, are by the spirit of investigation more and more brought to the light; and principles, which for many years have been in a great measure cast into the shade, are again coming into view. Intemperence, slavery, and other prevailing sins, are exposed in the discussions of the day. Some of the holy principles for which the martyrs of the 17th century died, and which have been and still are maintained in the testimony of their descendants—the true witnesses, are beginning to be advocated by men who formerly recognised neither their truth nor importance. That by any such men, the divine law should be maintained as the only charter of human rights, is pleasing—especially in a land where the impious principle that “*all power is in the people,*” is generally avowed and openly defended. It is also pleasing to know, that the right of man to exercise authority, without a delegation of that right from God, the source of all power, is denied by some; a few of whom, in consistency with this principle, refuse of late to incorporate themselves with the government of the United States. The conviction that there is something radically wrong in the existing social order of things, seems to be forcing itself on the understanding of men. Hence invention is pressed to the extent of its power, to furnish remedies for the ills discovered. If one experiment fails, another is made; and every new discovery is trumpeted abroad as the moral panacea which is to heal the nations.—But alas! these inventions are all defective in the grand, essential point—the recognition of the authority of God and the supremacy of his law. If the rights of the Lord Jehovah were acknowledged, and his law obeyed, the welfare of men would be, as a necessary consequence, promoted. This

principle is generally overlooked, or disregarded, by the mass of modern reformers. They employ all their exertions to purify the streams, without extending their influence to the polluted fountains from which they emanate. Much permanent good cannot be expected to result from the efforts made, until men, convinced of their own ignorance, and of the insufficiency of human reason with all its inventive powers, are brought to sit down at the feet of the great Prophet of the church, and learn from him the will of God. The scriptures teach us, that "Jesus christ is Prince of the kings of the earth,"—that "*by Him* kings reign, and princes decree justice." All laws, to bind the conscience, or promote the welfare of men, must have the sanction of his high authority. All means of reformation, to be effectual, must be sanctioned by his appointment. Were men to study the Bible more, as the infallible rule of duty, take its directions as the rule of their conduct, and reduce to practice its holy precepts, they would find their efforts crowned with success, instead of being doomed to disappointment, as they must always be when made only according to the wisdom of their own inventions.

If invention fails when employed about things civil and moral in their character, more signally still must it fail when interfering with man's spiritual concerns. Here it travels the farthest from its proper sphere. Yet here its movements are frequent and rapid. True indeed, in this respect its operations have not had their commencement in the present age. Long since, the traditions of the Jewish elders, and the superstitions of the Popish priests, evinced its unhallowed exercise. But the present time even outstrips the past, in the schemes which invention has devised in the great matter of man's spiritual condition. The excitements of enthusiastic revivalists, the endless variety of "new measures" invented for the purpose of alarming sinners, and of inducing them to "*get religion!*" attest the truth of this remark. The prevalence of sin, and the carelessness of sinners, are indeed great; but he knows little of the spiritual condition of man, as "dead in trespasses and in sins," who imagines he can awake him from that state by "new measures," or *any* measures of human device. He may excite his animal feelings, but it will be like the effects of galvanism on a lifeless body, a mere mechanical movement. No spiritual animation will be produced, no functions of spiritual life performed. There are many inventors and practisers of such measures, and their

success is loudly and widely proclaimed. Many who do not profess to be "new measure men," plead that much good is done in making men, at least, more moral. That, in some instances, this effect has been produced for a time, or even for life, is true; but sure we are, that more has been lost to the cause of the religion of Christ, by their pernicious errors, than has been gained for the cause of morality by all their enthusiastic zeal. A man may be even a *rigid* moralist, and yet be far from the kingdom of God. "In vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." S.

From the Covenanter.

CIVIL AND RELIGIOUS LIBERTY.

"While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption." 2 Peter ii. 19.

"Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

"If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." John viii. 32, 36.

There are few more hallowed phrases than that which we have prefixed to this paper, and few have been more grievously perverted. Instead of being used now in its legitimate application, as expressive of men's dearest rights, founded on the charter of eternal truth, and embracing the freedom of the immortal mind, disenthralled from sin, in connexion with genuine practical religion, it has come, in the gross abuse of language, to be applied to systems opposed to truth and order; and those are loudest in their trumpet shout of civil and religious liberty, whose conduct unequivocally declares that they are either ignorant of the proper foundation of liberty, or that they impiously employ the sacred name as a covert to effect the vilest purposes. In our day of boasted illumination, in which men largely incur the woe denounced against them that call evil good, and good evil, it has become the watch-word of faction, the war-whoop of those who are ever aiming their poisoned shafts against all who presume to differ from them on subjects civil or religious. The phrase is perpetually on the lips of men who despise and reject the authority of God speaking in his word. who live in the open neglect of religious duties, or who are the advocates of systems of gross error; and is in fact so abused and perverted as to render the best friends of liberty almost ashamed to use it.

Yet as the thing itself is among the best gifts of heaven,—like an epitome of numberless precious blessings to our race, and the phrase is fitted to convey a proper enough idea, it may serve some important

purposes to attempt to rescue it from misapplication, to exhibit the true foundation and character of civil and religious freedom, and withal to unmask some of the artifices by which designing men endeavor, under a good epithet misapplied, and by lofty pretensions, to impose upon the simple, in order to effect their mischievous purposes.

An able and judicious American Divine thus properly exhibits the character of true liberty as contrasted with its counterfeits :*—

“ Christian liberty is equally opposed to slavery and licentiousness. It is opposed to restraint and violence, but not to subordination and cheerful obedience. When I can freely direct my own conduct, under equitable laws, I enjoy a state of liberty. When I must make the will of another, in opposition to my own, the rule of my conduct, I am in a state of servitude; and when I wilfully violate law and right, I enter the regions of licentiousness. This is but another name for slavery. It is bondage to my own passions and lusts. I am then become a slave to those who ought to be my servants. This is both more shameful and more dangerous than servitude to foreign force. But this is the state of those who consider it liberty to be irreligious. ‘ Presumptuous, self-willed,—they speak great swelling words of vanity—they allure others;—and while they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption.’ ”

And again,—“ Christianity is the only perfect law of liberty. Its influence upon the heart is the only protection from bondage to human inventions. Those who are industrious to invalidate the authority of Scripture are themselves in bondage, and are endeavoring to reduce others to a similar condition; and the slavery of mind to error, or to passion, is more dangerous than any other.”

“ Of the same species is that which is commonly called *liberality*, and which, under pretence of opposing bigotry, is offered as a substitute for zeal in contending earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints. This is no more than total indifference to the appointed order of the house of God, and this indifference seems itself to have become a strong passion, which hurries its possessors into bondage. Strange as this assertion may appear, this passion participates of malevolence; for the bigot to liberality despises and hates me if I am not as liberal as he. But wherever Christianity prevails, in reality, as well as in name, there, in spite of opposition, shall true liberality prevail. ‘ Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.’ ”†

The sentiment expressed in the last quotation, is not more striking than just. Had the venerable author joined with “ total indifference,” *rancorous and unmitigable hostility* to the appointed order of the house of God, his description would have been still more closely applicable to many in our day, who monopolise all liberality, and who, while they are ever declaiming about civil and religious liberty, are themselves the best specimen that could possibly be selected of bigotry and intolerance. Persons of this class resemble such writers as Rousseau and

*McLeod's Sermons on True Godliness,—p. 123. †Ibid.—p. 133. 134.

Sterne, who could talk sentimentally and eloquently about virtue, while they themselves were callous to every generous emotion, and the degraded slaves of vice : or, like cunning impostors, they well knew how, by plausible pretences and fair speeches, to deceive the unwary. The object of their fond devotion is neither more nor less, than civil and religious despotism establishing themselves by imposture,—the former, the irreconcilable foe of all just rights and privileges, and incompatible with an upright, vigorous government ; and the latter equally opposed to the claims of the Church of Christ, and the true interests of civil society. Men, it has been said, discover their principles, and the spirit by which they are actuated, by their predilections and companions. If this rule of judging be just, then it is easy to estimate the value of the principles of some of the fiercest declaimers for civil and religious liberty. Their sympathies are all enlisted in behalf of the unprincipled and the profligate, while they cherish no favor towards good order or the orderly part of the community. For the former they indite plausible apologies, and represent their worst actions, if only they are aimed against the established institutions of society, as praiseworthy, or at most but gentle aberrations. Towards the friends of true religion and social order, the liberals of the day manifest no such sympathy or affection. No gentle names are employed to designate their character or conduct ; no charity is entertained for them, that might cover the multitude of their sins. The worst construction is put upon their motives. They, of all others, get no credit for conscience, honesty, or proper principle. It matters not that they are just, humane, and philanthropic, their religion must be hypocrisy, their humanity and generosity are only selfishness ; there is not one redeeming quality in their character or writings ; they are deemed proper objects to be reproached and hunted out of society ;—and all because they presume to differ in sentiment from the boasting advocates of liberality, or to offer a dissent from their headlong measures. We might complain of this as somewhat hard, and, withal, as savoring of illiberality ; but we deem it sufficient at present merely to refer to their obvious affinities and antipathies, as affording a precious sample of the justice and liberality of the so-called friends of civil and religious liberty of the present day.

The instances are not few in which the profession of attachment to Civil and Religious Liberty is connected with principles and conduct that are subversive of all right and order. At the period of the *French Revolution*, the most hateful principles were propagated, and crimes of the most fearful character were perpetrated, under the names of liberty, equal rights, &c. For a considerable time before that event, the disciples of infidelity, the authors of the *Encyclopedie*, and of other kindred publications,—men whose design was to root out all religion from the earth, and whose lives were debased with gross immorality, labored assiduously to accomplish their object, by declaiming against abuses, carrying on a perpetual warfare against established institutions, by insisting perpetually in favor of popular rights, and reiterating the unmeaning shout of civil and religious liberty,—unmeaning, we say, in

the lips of such men, for their liberty was the wildest licentiousness, and the most grinding despotism, and the rights for which they pleaded, were the right to trample with impunity on all that was sacred, and honorable, and decent, and the right to erect themselves, and men of their own way, into the most hateful oligarchy that ever oppressed the earth. The celebrated *Condorcet*, who acted his part in this unholy crusade, thus speaks of the attempts of the philosophers, popular writers, and liberal politicians of his own age:—

“ There was a *class of men* in Europe, whose chief object was to attack prejudices in the very asylums, where the *clergy*, the *schools*, the *governments*, and the *ancient corporations*, had received and protected them.—In England, Collins and Bolingbroke; in France, Boyle, Fontenelle, Voltaire, and Montesquieu, and the *schools formed by these men*. Assuming every tone, taking every shape, from the ludicrous to the pathetic, from the most learned and extensive compilation to the novel or petty pamphlet—adopting the words *reason*, *toleration* and *humanity*, as their signal and call to arms.”

Such a writer was the coarse, infidel PAINÉ. His “*Rights of Man*” will remain a specimen of the manner in which certain writers talk of human rights, while they entirely overlook the proper foundation of liberty, and taken in connexion with his other writings, it discovers the deceitful and insidious pretences by which persons of this school have labored to rob God of his rights, extinguish the light of revelation, and deliver over all human affairs to hopeless anarchy and confusion. Other writers less known might be referred to; but regarding the scenes developed on the stage of Revolutionary France, as the legitimate exposition of the principles that had been previously propounded, we see here, in indelible living characters, the tremendous evil of forsaking God, and, under the pretence of superior illumination and liberty, casting off the restraints of his law. During all the changes of the French Revolution, even at the infamous period of the *Reign of Terror* under Robespierre and his associates, when unnumbered murders were daily committed under the forms of judicial proceeding, and oceans of human blood were shed, the watch-words for almost every deed of violence were still Liberty, Toleration, Freedom, &c. The lesson taught the nations of the earth by the French Revolution will not speedily be forgotten; and history will record it to the latest posterity, that, under these fair names, among a people famed for literature and refinement, the most hateful principles were propounded, and the worst crimes were perpetrated that have ever stained the annals of any country.

In *America*, too, the mania for civil and religious liberty has wrought effects destructive of good order, and disastrous to the cause of true religion and genuine morality. In connexion with the eternal boast of independence, toleration, freedom, the will of the mob has become law, set at defiance all the restraints of justice, and rioted in the destruction of life and property. Witness the murder of Lovejoy, the martyr of

freedom,—the burning of the Pennsylvania Hall,—the scenes lately transacted at Harrisburg, and others of a similar character. The authority of God, and the claims of the Messiah, are set at nought; and with the unfurled banner of Liberty, the sacred rights of God are wantonly outraged. Thus in the Legislature of the State of New-York, a few years ago, Chaplains were dispensed with, and prayer in the sittings of the Assembly was discontinued, because, forsooth, the practice was disagreeable to the sovereign consciences of some persons of avowed infidel sentiments. For a similar reason, all the attempts of Christian men throughout the Union to prevent the habitual desecration of the Lord's day, by the travelling of mails, by post-offices, &c., have not only proved abortive, but have been treated by the Senate with scorn. Thus, too, upwards of *two millions* of the sons of Africa are held in debasing slavery in the Southern States, and the efforts of humane men to abolish slavery, subject them to ridicule, reproach, personal violence, and every species of mal-treatment. Even the right to be heard by petition against this monstrous evil is denied, and all this in a land boasted of throughout the world for liberty, equality, and free institutions! As a part of the same system, all special favor is denied to the cause of true religion, while the Popish priest is called to officiate as chaplain to the Congress, as well as the minister of Jesus Christ. The consequence is, that error and irreligion increase beyond precedent; the growth of Popery and Infidelity far outstrips the spread of the truth; and the elements of the most unreasonable and cruel despotism are easily recognized in the principles and practices of those who advocate these measures, under the pretence of equality of rights, liberty of conscience, &c.

We might readily find numerous recent illustrations of this topic nearer home. The public events of the last six or seven years have furnished many examples of the injustice, intolerance, and despotic spirit of those who would have the public believe that they are the sole devoted friends, and, if need were, that they would be the martyrs of civil and religious liberty. Listen to their professions, and nothing can be more seemly, kind, or inviting. Examine their conduct, and all is proved to be lying, hypocritical and deceptive. One would be led, by comparing the two, to explain their principles and practice by the rule of contraries. Under the assumed mask of liberality, to the truth of the Scriptures they are indifferent, or determinedly opposed, and towards its friends they discover malevolence and hatred. With abundant professions of toleration, they tolerate any system of error, and even much immorality, while to truth and purity in religion they are most intolerant. And if persons take a different side from them in political questions, they are branded with every abusive epithet, and held up as fit subjects for total extermination. And all this, *mirabile dictu*, from the monopolists of liberty, civil and religious! That the boasting champions of civil and religious liberty should thus treat those who differ from them, who surely may have some conscience and some honest intentions, although they may not be cast in the patent-

mould of their liberality, is passing strange, and only to be accounted for on the ground that some men's conduct sadly belies their avowed principles, or that their principles are of that class that can produce only evil fruit.

A discourse, published some years ago by a Unitarian divine, who has gained some notoriety in these countries, and designed to advance the doctrinal creed of his sect, commences with assuring a Scottish audience, to which it was addressed, that they are met to honor the very principles for which the martyrs of Scotland shed their blood! A serious notice of so extravagant an allegation need not be attempted; but if the author designed, as his party are sometimes fond of doing, to identify himself or his cause with the persecuted Covenanters, because they claimed the right of private judgment, and struggled against oppression, then we have only to say, that a grosser calumny on the memory or principles of these much injured men was never uttered. Of Scriptural liberty they were the unbending advocates. The rights of conscience and private judgment, as founded on the Divine law, they powerfully and fearlessly pleaded; but confraternity with Papists, Infidels, or the deniers of the Saviour's Divinity, they would have rejected with utter abhorrence. With these self-styled friends of liberty they had not one article of their religious or political creed in common; and to use their honored names to label sentiments against which their whole lives were a pointed testimony, is dishonest in the extreme.

The pretence of Civil and Religious Liberty on which we are animadverting, may be judged of by the *principles* which its advocates hold,—by the *spirit* which they manifest,—and by the *fruits* which their system produces. It were incompatible with our design and limits to give any lengthened enumeration of these principles, or to discuss their merits. Stripped of the veil which they studiously throw over them, they are such as these:—There is no standard of right or wrong beyond any man's conscience or private judgment,—Men are not accountable for their belief,—The distinction between truth and error, in matters of religion, is no concern of human government or legislation,—Civil rulers should do nothing, in their official capacity, to promote true religion, or to foster the church of Christ, because they are in danger of mistaking error for truth, and their interference would trench upon the sacred rights of conscience. These and similar deceitful maxims, about the illumination of the nineteenth century, natural rights, &c., may be considered as forming the creed of the most distinguished declaimers about Civil and Religious Liberty in our day. Refutation of such principles is unnecessary. Suffice it to say, that they are diametrically opposed to the Scriptures of truth, and that the establishment of such maxims as fundamental principles, would go far to root out truth from the earth, to give unbounded prevalence to error, to raise man's blinded, perverted judgment and conscience to the throne of the universe, and to subvert the moral government of Jehovah. What is the Civil and Religious Liberty that comports with such doctrines? It is liberty without a standard and without restraint. It is combination

without any proper bond of union. It is the liberty or license of a few, or even of an individual, to trample under foot the rights of the community, and in the name of freedom and religion to subvert the altar and the throne, and to perpetrate deeds of the foulest enormity. What is the Civil and Religious Liberty of Papists, Unitarians, Deists, and liberal Dissenters? What but the stalking-horse by which each party hopes to advance its own destructive system,—to set aside the paramount authority of God, speaking in his word, and to restore the happy days when “there was no king in Israel, and every man did that which was right in his own eyes?” And the reason why all these heterogeneous parties agree to denounce as slaves, or tyrants, or persecutors, the friends of true religion and social order, who are opposed to them, is just because their principles and conduct present an effectual barrier to the accomplishment of their headlong measures.

The *spirit* of the declaimers about civil and religious liberty too, to say the least, resembles any thing but the mind of Him who was meek and lowly in spirit, and who, “when he was reviled, reviled not again.” It is, in fact, the opposite of this holy example. The God of truth himself has said,—“Where the spirit of the Lord is there is liberty.” There is none enjoyed, none worth contending for elsewhere. This Spirit is the Spirit of truth, love, peace, and humility. How contrary to it, in every feature, the spirit and temper of the abettors of civil and religious liberty in our day! Theirs is proud boasting, ever vaunting itself. It is cruel, vindictive, exterminating. Promising others liberty, a promise which they never fulfil, they are themselves the servants of corruption, led by their own impetuous passions, and, under a fair vizard, often concealing bitter, rancorous hatred, of which their conduct at times gives unequivocal evidence. Theirs is the spirit of opposition to the authority of God, and it never can be that of peace and good-will to men. The charity of the Gospel comprehends both the love of God and man. The two are inseparable. If God be robbed of his rights, if his truth is despised, and the affections of the heart are alienated from his service, man’s rights will only rest on a foundation of sand. The foe of God cannot be the friend of man; and notwithstanding all its thick disguise and studied concealment, the heart of every unrenewed man still cherishes unsubdued enmity against the seed of the righteous.

The *fruits* of this falsely-so called liberality are just such as might be anticipated. They are all fair and glittering in promise, but, like the apples of Sodom and clusters of Gomorrah, they disappoint expectation, and are either unsubstantial and deceitful, or are poisonous and destructive. What has such civil and religious liberty, as we are exposing, produced in those cases where the experiment has been tried under the most favorable circumstances? What were its fruits in France? Anarchy, licentiousness, confusion and blood. What are its achievements in our own country in recent days? Reform, without religion or morality; education, without a Scriptural foundation; the advancement of error, and the promotion of its abettors to the high places of power; a growing spirit of insubordination; and among the veterans of liberty, as in the South and West of Ireland, and in some

parts of England, the most reckless destruction of property and life. If these are the fruits, is there not reason to fear, that instead of the tree under which we are invited to repose being the tree of liberty, it more nearly resembles the Upas tree of the East, which blights all that comes under its shadow, and diffuses a poisonous influence all around ?

GENERAL ASSEMBLY LAW-SUIT.

Our readers are aware that the General Assembly was divided, in May last, into two bodies, the Old and New Schools. Each claims to be the General Assembly, and each appointed Trustees to manage the funds of said Assembly. Those appointed by the New School instituted a civil suit against those appointed by the Old, the object of which was to secure to themselves the management of said funds, and of course secure them to the New School. The trial of the suit commenced on the 4th March last, and occupied three weeks. Judge Rogers, who presided in the case, pronounced, in his charge to the jury, certain acts of the Assembly of 1837 utterly unconstitutional and void, and justified the course pursued by the New School in 1838 in the manner of their organization and in their subsequent proceedings. That is, he decided that the New School party is the true General Assembly. In accordance with this charge, the jury returned a unanimous verdict for the plaintiffs.

We regard the positions assumed by Judge Rogers—understood to be an Episcopalian, and the decision which he gave, as utterly at variance with the scriptural and established order of the Presbyterian form of Church Government. And if he has given the true interpretation of the *civil* law of the land, touching such matters, it is high time that Presbyterians of all denominations should know the fact. According to the ground taken in this case, we can see no security which any christian denomination has in acting upon its own ecclesiastical rules and system of government and order. The General Assembly, in 1837, one year before the division, abrogated an act of their own passed in 1801, and passed various other acts in agreeableness with the act of abrogation. All this a Judge, in his civil official character, decides to be contrary to the constitution of the General Assembly. Truly if the Civil power may in this manner, and to this extent, interfere with Ecclesiastical proceedings, and nullify at pleasure the judicial acts of the courts of Christ, then have we in this land CHURCH AND STATE with a witness. When the Assembly of 1837 passed judicial acts, when a minority, according to their own showing,* and because they were a *minority*, withdrew in 1838, and when a civil tribunal decides that the said judicial acts are null and void, and that the minority so withdrawing are the General Assembly, have we not good reason for saying it is high time the church should understand what security she has in this land, in the exercise of her inalienable rights and of her religious liberty?

*According to the testimony, the New school after receiving all whose certificates had been rejected, were still inferior in numbers to the Old.

THE

REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN.

VOL. III.

JUNE, 1839.

No. IV.

THE SABBATH—ITS PROFANATION.

We profane the sabbath when we “do our own ways”—seek our “own pleasures,”—or speak our “own words.”

1. Men do their “own ways” when they pursue their ordinary employments on the Lord’s day, either wholly or in part. With such the sabbath is a kind of *holyday* which they employ as they choose. To the general practices around them they ordinarily conform; but in most cases this is not a matter of choice; nor are they entitled to credit for conceding what they cannot enforce. But, whenever the opportunity presents itself of employing the day, or a part of it in secular business conveniently, a regard to the sabbath has no weight in restraining them. This may be illustrated in a few instances. Some, employed in the service of others, receiving a daily or weekly reward for their labors, and unwilling to lessen their pecuniary income, take the sabbath for making domestic arrangements and improvements. Some too, who have the control of their time in their own hand, lest their money-making employments of the six days should be interfered with, leave domestic secular business to be done on sabbath. The farmer travels to, or from market with his produce. The merchant forwards his goods, or receives or delivers them on the Lord’s day. It is quite common to travel on sabbath for business purposes; and that too by men making a profession of religion; and this is an evil that is alarmingly on the increase. There is one feature of the case that deserves particular notice, not because it is more flagrant, but because it is less apparent and therefore more likely to delude. We refer to the practice of travelling by

public conveyances which start late on Saturday evening and arrive at their destination on sabbath morning. This is an infringement on the sanctification of the sabbath; and, in many cases, will prove a prelude to still greater desecration of the day. The example which it furnishes to ungodly men is of the most pernicious kind; if professed christians do so much, it will be no difficult thing for the wicked or the thoughtless, to persuade themselves that there is nothing wrong in travelling on sabbath. Again, there are some who make a point of preparing to travel on sabbath. They have a kind of regard to the day derived from habit, which keeps them from actually travelling, but they have no scruples in profaning the day by making preparations for it. Similar to this, but more general, is the practice of some who, while they suspend their business on sabbath, profane the day by writing business letters, adjusting their accounts, laying plans for approaching operations—in one word it is a busy day in making up the lee-way of the preceding week, or making preparation for the week following. And we may add here, that the sabbath is profaned when men give themselves up to the indulgence of idleness; refraining indeed from labor, but spending the day in slothful neglect of the active duties of religion by attending to which with all our hearts the sabbath is to be sanctified.

2. Men profane the sabbath by seeking their own pleasures. The sabbath is, to such, a day of recreation and amusement. Business is suspended indeed, but it is only to make way for the lighter employments of pleasure. The pleasures sought for are as various as the tastes and inclinations of those who so profane the sabbath. Some seek their own pleasure in light and frivolous reading, such as newspapers and novels; nor is the sabbath sanctified by those who may devote the day, or part of it to more solid and useful reading, if it is not of that kind that may tend to personal sanctification and religious improvement. Some seek their own pleasure by unnecessary walking in the streets, highways, fields or elsewhere. Others by visiting; and perhaps there is no way in which the sabbath is more commonly profaned than this by such as make a profession of religion. Many who do not visit themselves, permit their children to do it: or admit visitors into their families on sabbath. This always leads to sabbath profanation; and heads of families ought to set themselves against it. When any one visits a religious neighbor

or friend on sabbath, were the latter to attend to the religious instruction of his family as if no visitor were present, or were he to employ the time in reading the scriptures, such visits would soon cease. Families would save themselves the pain of being intruded upon, and of having their sabbaths misspent, and in some cases, we would hope, the intruder might be cured of the sin of sabbath-breaking.

3. The sabbath is profaned by speaking our own words. Every kind of conversation which does not relate to the duties of the sabbath is included in speaking our own words. Such conversation is inconsistent with the precept "Remember the sabbath to keep it holy." It is a plain practical rule on this subject, that, what cannot be *done* without profaning the sabbath should not be the subject of conversation.

The sin of desecrating the sabbath is by no means confined to individuals; it is deeply chargeable on the community.

1. By suffering public vehicles to run, and permitting vessels to leave harbors or docks on sabbath. A mechanic might as well work in his shop, or a farmer on his farm, or a merchant carry on the every day business of buying and selling, as the proprietor of a public conveyance be permitted to send it out on the Lord's day. It is the prosecution of a secular business, and that too, in view of making gain. This kind of sabbath profanation is of the worst kind; it is public, and therefore the more offensive and scandalous. It offers a strong temptation to many to pursue their secular business or their pleasures, that otherwise might be better employed on the Lord's day.

2. By keeping public high-ways open on the sabbath; such as canals and rail roads. Thus, the wicked and unprincipled have an opportunity of trampling on the sabbath, under the cover of public authority. And men of better principles are often compelled to abandon employments connected with these; or do what is incomparably worse,—sacrifice the sabbath to retain a lucrative employment.

3. By the post office and mail departments. The business connected with the post office and mail is purely secular; and the nation is just as much bound by the law of the sabbath to avoid secular business as any individual. Nor can any reason be given for such public desecration of the Lord's day, that would not be equally valid for a private individual while profaning the sabbath by following his own everyday

business. The profanation of the sabbath is a sin because:

1. It is a direct violation of the Divine law.—“Remember the sabbath and keep it holy.”

2. It is exceedingly ungrateful. The relations in which we stand to God, demand of us expressions of thankfulness and gratitude for his unnumbered mercies. He is our Creator, Preserver and Redeemer. The sabbath is a continued communication of God's excellency and goodness, as they are manifested in creation and redemption. It is the burden of the sabbath's business to remember these with unfeigned gratitude; on the other hand to profane the sabbath is to refuse the homage of honor and gratitude to God, which the relations in which we stand to Him most imperatively claim.

3. It is a disregard of Divine ordinances. It is evident that Divine worship necessarily includes the appropriation of time, returning at brief and regular periods. Without this the worship of God would soon cease among us. What *might* be done at any time, *would* not be done at all, by the greater part of mankind; and by no part with any degree of regularity. God has instituted ordinances of religion; and in these he calls upon us to worship him: they have God's promise as the means by which our sanctification is to be promoted. Among these the sabbath and the duties peculiar to it, occupy the most prominent place. In so far as the sabbath is profaned, the ordinances of religion are disregarded and despised. The man who profanes the sabbath, forsakes his own mercies,—he commits not only a sin against God by breaking the Divine law; but he sins also against his own soul by thrusting from him all the means of grace. The sabbath and all its appropriate duties are the means by which we are to grow in knowledge and understanding. If we turn our back upon the house of God on sabbath, forsaking the assembly of the saints; or otherwise profane the sabbath, we put away from us the light of truth and knowledge of God.

Before we conclude the consideration of this subject, we shall direct the attention of our readers to some of the causes which produce sabbath profanation; this we do however, not as a matter of curiosity, but as a means of applying a cure to the evil. In any disease it is of the last importance to ascertain its nature and the predisposing causes in the constitution of the patient; thus a cure may be more easily applied. So, in the case of profaning the sabbath, it is immensely important to know what things tend to produce it.

1. Absence of religious principle. Where religious principle is deeply implanted in the mind, there will be a sacred regard to Divine institutions. The hold which religious principle takes of the mind may be fairly measured by the regard which an individual manifests to the acknowledged institutions of heaven. Practice is a fair test of principle, whatever professions may be made. This test may be safely applied to the case of the sabbath. If a man habitually profanes the sabbath, we have a right to conclude that he has no regard to the authority of God,—That he desecrates the sabbath, because in heart he is without religion.

2. The culpable neglect of parents and guardians. The minds of children may be early impressed with the obligations to duty, or they may be left to the rank luxuriance of their own depraved natures undirected and unguided. Or what is worse, the natural depravity of the heart may be encouraged and strengthened, not merely by the absence of suitable instruction; but, by the simple example of those around them, and especially of parents. To meet the necessity of the case, children require instruction relative to the duty of sabbath sanctification, and of the sin and danger of profaning the sabbath. Correct views on these points are not to be attained without instruction. Nor, is it enough merely to take a child to church, or cause it to read at home; thus, indeed habits of going to church and of reading may be formed which are themselves important; but as these habits would not be formed on principle, they would be in themselves of comparatively small value. Immediately connected with the promotion of the church-going habits, children should be taught the duty of respecting the sabbath,—should be taught that it is the will of God, that it be employed entirely in religious services,—“a delight, the holy of the Land and honorable.” Further, parents should support their instructions by a well regulated example. While they teach their children that the sabbath is a Divine and holy institution, they should lead them to the duty of sanctifying it by the most exemplary conduct. Nor, is either the instruction or the example to be limited to the public services of religion. There is perhaps less deficiency, at least among professors of religion, respecting these, than those of a domestic kind. Here the greatest care should be taken, that instruction and example religiously harmonize. For, if the hours of the sabbath, which should be devoted to private and domestic duties, be partly

spent in idleness, or in secular conversation by parents, their instructions cannot be productive of much good. To the negligent, and in many cases, very sinful conduct of parents, is the profanation of the sabbath to be traced in the future lives and practices of their children.

3. Evil example. We have already referred to this in the case of parents; but there is an influential example of a more general kind, that is exceedingly injurious.—That, of society around us. The wealth, the talents, or official standing of persons often exerts a great influence upon others. Such attract public notice and respect, and these give them influence. Now, it cannot be concealed that the example of the greater part of such is opposed to the sanctification of the sabbath. We may go farther; the weight of influence and example in society generally, is on the side of sabbath profanation. This state of things has a tremendous effect upon professors of religion: nor, is it altogether without influence upon real christians. This is a painful consideration; but it would be worse than folly to attempt concealment. The sabbath is profaned by the world generally, and professors of religion are insensibly assimilated to the world thus lying in sin.

4. The facilities for sinful enjoyment on the Lord's day, especially in the neighborhood of large cities. These sinful enjoyments are apologized for by the softened titles of innocent recreation and pleasure. Public gardens and other places of resort are kept open, particularly on sabbath evenings. And of course these are more attractive than places of worship to the gay and thoughtless. Stages, steam and packet boats are regularly run on the sabbath; and for the accommodation of such as choose a private excursion of pleasure, the owners of the weary beasts of burden are as ready to make a gain of them on sabbath as on any other day. These furnish an illustration of the facilities by which men may be tempted to profane the sabbath, if they have no relish to it and its holy employments. Such facilities give them an opportunity of spending the day in a manner more agreeable to their depraved tastes.

5. The absence of suitable preparation for the sabbath. It frequently happens that a much larger portion of business is reserved for the evening of Saturday than for any other of the week. Thus the sabbath is encroached upon; and persons doing so are unfitted for its duties; their physical powers are

exhausted, and their minds encumbered. And, as a natural consequence the sabbath instead of being a pleasure becomes a weariness. We notice in this connexion, an evil of very considerable magnitude; we refer to the common practice of employers paying their workmen on Saturday evening. This not only occupies a part of the evening, but it leads to the practice of Saturday evening or sabbath day marketing. Thus, the evening which should be preparatory to the Lord's day becomes by far the busiest of the week. And when the sabbath has arrived the mind is divided between its too recent, worldly cares, and its present spiritual employments. As we profess to value the Divine institution of the sabbath, we should endeavor to prepare for its weekly return, by adjusting our business so, that the preceding evening may be left free of all unnecessary embarrassment from worldly concerns — That the sabbath may neither be encroached upon; nor ourselves unfitted for its holy and active duties by more than usual exertion.

SIGMA.

ANALYSIS AND DEFENCE OF THE DOCTRINES OF THE WESTMINSTER CONFESSION OF FAITH.

{It is some five or six years since the subscriber issued a Prospectus for publishing a work under the above title; but failing to obtain a sufficient subscription to warrant the undertaking, the enterprise was, for the time suspended, though the object has not been abandoned. It is proposed to present in the "Reformed Presbyterian" a few pages of the intended publication, that the public may be furnished with a specimen of the design and plan of the author, who intends at some future period to commit the volume to the press.

C. B. M'KEE.

CHAP. I. *Of the Holy Scriptures.*

SEC. I. Although the light of nature and the works of creation and Providence, do so far manifest the goodness, wisdom, and power of God, as to leave men inexcusable; yet they are not sufficient to give that knowledge of God, and of his will, which is necessary unto salvation: therefore it pleased the Lord, at sundry times, and in diverse manners, to reveal himself, and to declare that his will unto his church; and afterwards, for the better preserving and propagating of the truth, and for the more sure establishment and comfort of the Church against the corruption of the flesh, and the malice

of Satan and of the world, to commit the same wholly unto writing ; which maketh the holy scripture to be most necessary ; those former ways of God's revealing his will unto his people being now ceased.

I. DOCTRINE AND PROOFS.

That though the light of nature, and the works of creation and Providence, leave men inexcusable, yet they are not sufficient to salvation.

For when the Gentiles which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, not having 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. Because that which may be known of God, is manifest in them, for God hath shewed it unto them. 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. i. 19, 20. The heavens declare the glory of God ; and the firmament sheweth his handy work. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard. Ps. xix. 1—3. Who, knowing the judgment of God, (that they which commit such things are worthy of death,) not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them. Rom. 1, 32. Therefore thou act inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest ; for wherein thou judgest another thou condemnest thyself ; for thou that judgest another doest the same thing. ii. 1.

ERROR AND REFUTATIONS.

ER. That men, living according to the light of nature and the dictates of reason, may be saved.

REF. 1. *None can be saved unless born of incorruptible seed, and that birth is effected by the word of God.* Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Joh. iii. 3. Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever. 1 Pet. i. 2, 3.

2. *This new birth presupposes a knowledge of Christ, and faith in him.* This is eternal life to know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. Joh. xvii. 3. Jesus saith, I am the way, the truth and the life ; no man cometh unto the Father but by me. xiv. 6. Neither is there salvation in any other ; for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved Acts iv. 12. Without faith it is impossible to please him. Heb. xi. 6. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed. And how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard ? Rom. x. 14.

3. *All who live and die ignorant of Christ will be punished eternally :* but without supernatural revelation man cannot know God savingly. The Lord Jesus will be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that *know not* God, and obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, 2 Thes. i. 7, 8. For after that in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom *knew not* God, it pleased God, by the foolishness of preaching, to save them that believe 1 Cor. i. 21. All things are delivered unto me of my Father ; and no man knoweth the Son but the Father ; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him. Mat. xi. 27.

4. *WITHOUT REVELATION* man cannot know himself, his corruption and misery, and the way of Salvation. Wherefore, remember, that ye being in times past gentiles in the flesh ;—at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the common wealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise : having no hope, and without God in the world. Ep. ii. 12. But if our Gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost. 2 Cor. v. 3.

CONCLUSION.

If none are saved but those who are born of incorruptible seed ; and if this new birth is effected alone by the word of God, which presupposes a knowledge of Christ and faith in him ; and if all who live and die ignorant of Christ must be punished eternally ; and if man cannot know himself, his corruption and misery, and the way of salvation, without revelation, as has been proved ; it plainly follows,—that the light of nature and the dictates of reason are not sufficient to salvation.

II. DOCTRINE AND PROOFS.

That God did make a revelation of his will to the Church at sundry times, and in divers manners.

For after that in the wisdom of God ; the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God, through the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. 1 Cor. i. 21. Which things we speak, not in the words which men's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth ; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God ; for they are foolishness unto him. neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned. ii. 13, 14. God, at sundry times, and in divers manners, spake in times past to the fathers by the prophets. Heb. i. 1. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man ; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. 1 Pet. i. 21. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness. 2 Tim. iii. 16.

ERROR AND REFUTATIONS.

ER. That it is unworthy the character of God to reveal his will externally to creatures so infinitely beneath him as man.

REF. 1. *When we view God as a being of infinite perfections, it cannot be denied but that he can reveal his will to man in an external or extraordinary way.* Infinite wisdom and power can do any thing that does not involve an absurdity, or contradiction. As God has made man, constituted him a rational and intelligent being, and has written his law upon his heart, so it cannot be denied but that he may reveal himself externally, and in an extraordinary way different from the discoveries which men are able to make of themselves in the natural and ordinary use of their own powers of reasoning and investigation.

2. *The infinite wisdom and goodness of God could not withhold from man any thing that would promote the end of his being.* God is a being of infinite knowledge and goodness; but man, though created in the image of God, is imperfect—limited in the extent of his knowledge, and the degree of his holiness. He was created *capable* of knowing and serving God, in which his supreme happiness consists. It is therefore consistent with the character of God, and agreeable to the condition of man, that God should directly and externally reveal his will to him, as the light of his path and the rule of his duty.

3. *But as man is capable of progressing in knowledge, and of communicating his thoughts and his knowledge to his fellow men, it cannot be inconsistent with the character of God to reveal himself externally to man in a manner adapted to his capacity, and suited to the communication, which it will be man's interest and felicity to make to his fellow man.* God has implanted no capacity in our constitution without furnishing materials for the employment of that capacity. But man is capable of receiving knowledge from external communications and of employing the fruits of that knowledge to the noblest purposes; therefore as man needs the guidance of infinite wisdom to conduct him along the path of duty to final glory, so it would be in perfect accordance with the divine character to reveal himself externally to man, suited to his capacity, condition, and destiny.

CONCLUSION.

Therefore, since God is a being of infinite perfection, and can do any thing that does not involve a contradiction; and since he could not withhold from man any thing that would promote the end of his being; since man is capable of acquiring knowledge from external communications, and as God has created no capacities without furnishing materials for its exercise, it follows, that God can, in consistency with his glorious character, reveal his will to man in an extraordinary way, and can make this revelation so as to enable the subject thereof to know that it is truly from God. This is evident. For

if men can communicate their will to men, so that it is certainly known who makes the communication, it must be much more easy for God to communicate his will to man with all the distinct evidences of divine revelation so impressed on his mind that it cannot be misunderstood. To admit the existence of God, and to deny this power would be absurd in the highest degree. It therefore plainly follows—that *God may in perfect accordance with his glorious and exalted character, and the infinite inferiority of man, reveal his will to man in an external and extraordinary way, so that man shall know it is from God.* And this because, to inform a creature that he has been made, who is his author and what is his will, and the creature's duty, is no more condescension than the act of creation itself.

III. DOCTRINE AND PROOFS.

That these Scriptures are most necessary for the preservation and propagation of truth, and for the establishment and comfort of the church against errors and corruptions.

That thy trust may be in the Lord, I have made known to thee this day, even to thee. Have not I written thee excellent things in counsels and knowledge; that I might make thee know the certainty of the words of truth, that thou mightest answer the words of truth to them that send unto thee. Prov. xxii. 19, 21. It seemed good to me also having had perfect knowledge of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus: that thou mightest know the certainty of those things wherein thou hast been instructed. Luke i. 3, 4. For whatsoever things were written aforetime, were written for our learning; that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures, might have hope. Rom. xv. 4. But he answered, and said, "it is written," thou shalt not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. Then saith Jesus unto him, get thee behind me Satan; "it is written," thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. Mat. iv. 4. 7. 10. And when they shall say unto you, seek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto wizards that peep, and that mutter: should not a people seek unto their God? For the living to the dead? To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them. Is. viii. 19, 20. And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus. 2 Tim. iii. 15. We have also a more sure word of prophecy, whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in your hearts. 2 Pet. i. 19.

ERROR AND REFUTATIONS.

ER. God conducts his people in the way of salvation by the secret operations of his Holy Spirit, without the scriptures.

Ref. 1. *The end for which the scriptures were given, completely refutes the error.* That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. 2 Tim. iii. 17.

2. *The reason for which the scriptures were committed to writing also refutes it.* But these are written "that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name." John, xx. 31.

3. The necessity of faith to salvation, which faith depends upon the written word. Without faith it is impossible to please him, (God.) Heb. xi. 6. But how shall they believe on him of whom they have not heard? Rom, x. 14.

4. The entire silence of scripture on the subject; they do not drop one hint, nor encourage a single hope that salvation can be obtained by any other means than by the gospel plan revealed in the scriptures, but rather intimate the contrary. Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they be of God. 1 John, iv. 1. And no marvel, for satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. 2. Cor. xi. 14. Where there is no vision the people perish; but he that keepeth the law, happy is he. Prov. xxix. 18.

5. The perfection of the Scriptures for all the purposes of salvation, not only precludes the necessity of the Spirit's secret operations, independently of the scriptures, but renders such operations superfluous. The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. Ps. xix. 7. Therefore we ought to give the more diligent heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. Heb. ii, 1.

CONCLUSION.

As faith is indispensably necessary to salvation; and as faith comes by the word of God, the scriptures having been written for this end. (John xx. 31;) and as we have no ground to expect salvation otherwise than by the plan that God has revealed in the scriptures, we are warranted to conclude that "the hope of salvation, by the secret operations of the spirit without the scriptures," is unreasonable, baseless—without scriptural foundation, and calculated to deceive with irremediable disappointment.

IV. DOCTRINE AND PROOFS.

That the former mode of God's revealing his will to man has long since ceased.

God, who at sundry times, and in divers manners spoke in times past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things,—by whom also he made the worlds. Heb. i. 1, 2.

ERROR AND REFUTATIONS.

Er. That the Lord continues to reveal his will to certain favored ones as of old.

REF. 1. The Apostle's antithesis evidently implies that God has ceased to reveal his will to man, as of old, before the canon of scripture was completed. God who at sundry times, and in divers manners spoke in *times past* unto the fathers by the prophets, *hath in these last days* spoken unto us. Heb. i. 1, 2. We have a more sure word of prophecy, whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place. 2 Pet. i. 19.

2. A continuance of revelation, as of old, would be superfluous, as the scriptures are given for a lamp and light to guide to glory." They word is a lamp to my feet, and a light to my path. Ps. cxix. 105. The commandment is a lamp, and the law is a light. Prov. vi. 23.

3: The Scriptures being thus given as a lamp, and also as a rule of life, neither warrant nor favor any such doctrine as a continuance of divine revelation; consequently such pretences must be without the sanction of scripture.

4. Those persons in scripture, who are acknowledged by all to have been divinely inspired, never despised but received and strictly adhered to the scriptures; whereas these who maintain a continued inspiration, thereby set aside the authority of scripture. My spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed forever. Isa. lxix. 21. We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place. 1 Pet. i. 19,

5. The spirit of God in closing the canon of revelation denounces all subsequent revelations as under the curse of God. If any man preach any other Gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed. Gal. i. 9. I testify unto every man, that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, if any man shall *add* unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book. Rev. xxii. 18, 19.

CONCLUSION.

As the Apostle declares that God *formerly* in sundry ways and in divers times revealed his will to man, but now in these last times has revealed his will to us by his Son; as the canon of scripture is now complete, needing no additional revelation to render it more clear; as the inspired penmen furnished ample evidence of inspiration; and as the scriptures, acknowledged to be the word of God, pronounce subsequent revelation as closed, it follows that "all pretences to modern inspiration are nothing less than gross and palpable impostures," calculated to flatter human pride and deceive the ignorant.

SEC. II. Under the name of Holy Scripture, or the word

of God written, are now contained all the books of the Old and New Testament, which are these: * * * * * All of which are given by inspiration of God, to be the rule of faith and life.

Doc. 1. That the books of the old and new Testament are the word of God.

They have Moses and the prophets, let them hear them. If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead. Luke xvi. 29, 31. And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone. Eph. ii. 20. For I testify unto every man, that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, if any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book. And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book. Rev. xxii. 18, 19.

ERROR AND REFUTATIONS.

ER. That the scriptures should not be called the word of God.

REF. 1. The predictions of the prophets are expressly called "*the word of God.*" Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that THE WORD OF THE LORD spoken by Jeremiah might be accomplished, the Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, &c. 2 Chron. xxxvi. 22.

2. The Lord Jesus designates the Scriptures by the appellation of THE WORD OF GOD. If he called them Gods unto whom THE WORD OF GOD CAME, and the scriptures cannot be broken. John x. 35.

3. Jesus terms the divine commands "*the word of God,*" by which he evidently meant the scriptures. And he said, full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition, making THE WORD OF GOD of none effect by your traditions. Mark vii. 9, 13.

4. THE APOSTLE CALLS THE SWORD OF THE SPIRIT; (by which he means the scriptures,) "*the word of God.*" Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God. Eph. vi. 17.

CONCLUSION.

It is evident that as the spirit of God denominates the prophetic writings; and as Jesus and the apostles expressly designate the scriptures by the appellation of *the word of God*, that we may with the greatest propriety apply the term to the sacred volume.

Doc. II. That the scriptures are given by the inspiration of God.

All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness. 2 Tim. iii. 16. The prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. 2 Pet. i. 21.

ERROR AND REFUTATIONS.

ER. That the scriptures are no more inspired than any well authenticated human composition.

REF. 1. THE SCRIPTURES contain predictions of future events, which could not possibly be known by either the prophets, or apostles, unless divinely directed. The things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. 1 Cor. i. 11. Secret things belong unto the Lord our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us, and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law. Deut. xxix. 29.

2. THE SCRIPTURES contain accounts of past events, which could not be known but by supernatural inspiration; for example; the creation, the origin of man, the fall of the angels, &c.

3. THE SCRIPTURES contain matter so sublime, and so infinitely surpassing the capacity of man that they could not have been the contrivances or invention of such plain men as the prophets and apostles were, without the aid of divine inspiration.

4. THE LORD JESUS promised to his apostles his Holy Spirit to direct them infallibly into all truth. Howbeit, when he, the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he will not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak, and he will shew you things to come. John xxi. 13.

5. THE APOSTLES expressly declare that they were influenced by the Holy Ghost to speak and to write. For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of man, but (as it is in truth,) the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe. 1 Thes. ii. 13. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ. 1 Cor. ii. 12, 13, 14, 16. If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord. 1 Cor. xiv. 37.

CONCLUSION.

Seeing the scriptures contain accounts of future, as well as of past events which human sagacity could not possibly discover; and seeing

they contain matter so sublime and stupendous as to be beyond the inventive powers of man; and seeing the Lord Jesus promised his Spirit to his apostles infallibly to direct them, and the same apostles affirm that they were so divinely influenced, we are constrained to conclude that the scriptures are divinely inspired by the unerring spirit of eternal truth.

Doc. III. That the scriptures are the only infallible rule of faith and practice.

To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them. Is. viii. 20. These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind; and searched the scriptures daily whether these things were so. Acts xvii. 11. As many as walk by this rule, peace be on them, and mercy and on the Israel of God. Gal. vi. 16. The law of the Lord is perfect converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple: the statutes of the Lord are right rejoicing the heart, the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes: the fear of the Lord is clear, enduring forever; the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether. Ps. xix. 7, 9. All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. 2 Tim. iii. 16, 17.

ERROR AND REFUTATIONS.

ER. That the internal manifestations of the spirit; and the dictates of natural light are a sufficient rule of life and manners.

1. THE SCRIPTURES are expressly called a rule. And as many as walk by this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God. Gal. vi. 16. To the law and to the testimony if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them. Is. viii. 20.

2. NOTHING IS AT any time, nor under any pretence to be added to, or taken from the Scriptures. Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish aught from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the Lord your God, which I command you. Deut. iv. 2. What thingsoever I command you, observe to do it: thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it. xii. 32. Every word of God is pure;—add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee and thou be found a liar. Prov. xxx. 5, 6.

3. We should rather follow, and it would be safer,—since the canon of Scripture is complete, to follow the scriptures than even an audible voice from heaven. We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well to take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in

your hearts. Knowing this first that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. 2 Pet. i. 19, 20.

4. The Scriptures were written expressly as a rule of faith and that the believer might be made perfect in every thing. But these were written, that ye might BELIEVE; and that believing ye may have life through his name. John xx. 31.—That the man of God might be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. 2 Tim. iii. 17.

5. Jesus Christ refers the great question, whether he were or were not the Son of God, to the decision of Scripture. Ye have not his word abiding in you: for whom he hath sent, him ye believe not. Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they which testify of me. John v. 38, 39.

6. The spirits can be known and tried alone by the scriptures. Beloved, believe not every spirit; but try the spirits whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world. 1 John iv. 1. And no marvel, for even Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. 2 Cor. xi. 14. And now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God. 1 Cor. ii. 12. We are of God. He that knoweth God heareth us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error. 1 John iv. 6. To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them. Is. viii. 20.

CONCLUSION.

Therefore, since the scriptures are given as a rule; and since they are a perfect rule, nothing being allowed to be added to, nor diminished from them; since it is wiser and safer to adhere to this rule than to any posthumous revelations; since the scriptures were written expressly as a rule of faith, for the perfection of believers; since Christ refers to these scriptures in defence of his own character and in opposition to human traditions, or revelations; and since false and deceiving spirits can alone be tested and detected by this unerring standard, we conclude, that the pretended internal manifestations of the Spirit, and the dictates of natural light, in our day, especially when they deviate from the word of God, are not to be treated as a rule of life and manners; but are to be viewed as among the crafty deceivings of Satan.

The following statement from the "Scottish Presbyterian," received lately, gives the first published account of the proceedings we have seen.—*Ed.*

REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN SYNOD IN IRELAND.

THE Synod convened in *Ballymena*, on Tuesday the 10th July, at 12 o'clock, noon. Rev. Samuel Carlile, of Clabber, near Coleraine, the Moderator, preached a suitable discourse from Mark xiii. 34, "For the Son of man is as a man taking a far journey, who left his home, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work." After an appropriate introduction, he proposed to consider,—I. A few

of those *Relations* which Christ is fitted to sustain to his Church, and which his servants ought to remember.—II. Some of those *Services* which they should render to him.—III. The *Qualifications* of faithful servants; and, IV. Their *Encouragements*.

After the discourse, the roll was called, and the Synod was constituted. The Rev. William Gamble was unanimously chosen Moderator; but he having declined, on account of his age, the Rev. John Stott was unanimously elected.

The Rev. William Anderson, of Loanhead, being present, as a delegate from the Reformed Presbyterian Synod in Scotland, was invited to a seat in the Court. He produced his commission, and accepted the invitation. It was moved and seconded, that the present Clerk of Synod be discontinued, and a successor appointed. A counter-motion was offered, that the present Clerk be continued, and thanks given him for his services. Discussion on this subject was continued till the hour of adjournment, at 5 o'clock. It was agreed that Presbyteries should meet in the evening, to prepare reports for Synod,—that Synod should meet, as a Committee of Bills, to-morrow morning, at 7 o'clock, and for public business at 10 o'clock,—and that a portion of the first public session each day should be spent in devotional exercises.

WEDNESDAY, July 11th.

Several other members of Synod were this morning in attendance. The Rev. T. Martin of Strathmiglo, was present, as another delegate from the sister Judicatory in Scotland. He requested, for himself and Mr. Anderson, that the whole extract of the Minute of Synod containing their appointment should be read, and inserted in the Minutes, especially as he had seen in the public press in this country mis-representations of the proceedings of the Synod in Scotland, with respect to subjects which were to come under consideration. This was agreed to, and Mr. Martin took his seat in Court. Rev. Wm. Anderson conducted the devotional exercises. Discussion was continued for some time on the motion respecting the Clerkship, when it was moved by Mr. Ewing, and seconded by Mr. Cameron, that the motion and counter-motion should be withdrawn. This was agreed to, and the Synod proceeded to other business.

The Minutes of the Adjourned Meeting of Synod were read by the Clerk; and the minute, in which it had been stated that the consideration of certain papers which had been previously presented to Synod, should have "the precedence of all other business," was taken up. The papers referred to were a memorial from the congregation of Knockbracken; and two others, one from the congregation of Newtownards, and one from that of Loughmourne—it was agreed to discuss these in order. The memorial from Knockbracken complained of the perverted accounts of the Synod's proceedings, contained in some portions of the public press, and prayed Synod to devise measures to remedy this grievance; and it sought the Synod's interference for the maintenance of the Fourth Term of Communion.

ion, and for the settlement of the American Question. Robert Robinson, Elder from Knockbracken, and the Rev. T. Houston spoke in support of the memorial. Mr. Alexander, Dr. Paul, Mr. Dick, Dr. Henry, and Mr. Toland delivered their sentiments at length on the subject.

THURSDAY, July 12th.

The Synod was occupied this morning, as a Committee of Bills, from seven till nine o'clock. Rev. Mr. Martin conducted the devotional exercises. According to a previous arrangement, Messrs. Anderson and Martin then addressed the Synod. The following is a brief outline of the excellent addresses which they presented:—

Mr. Anderson, after referring to the appointment of himself and his fellow-commissioner, and alledging their sense of the importance and difficulty of their mission, proceeded to make some statements concerning the Reformed Church in Scotland. He could say, with gratification, that in that land, where so many of our forefathers suffered, and were put to death for the Covenanted cause and testimony, there is no dissention amongst the members of Synod or of the Church. They are all of one mind, and cordially join together under the same banner, in endeavouring to maintain and diffuse the principles of the reformation. It is gratifying to state, that there is nothing like a regular partisanship amongst them. Occasionally there are disputes and differences of opinion, and there may be some degree of warmth displayed in discussions, but afterwards all join hands in friendship. It is our desire, (Mr. A. said,) in prosecuting the great work to which the Head of the Church has called us, to maintain the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace; and we are of opinion, that the peace of one is linked with the peace of all. By this means, the Church is not suffering under any intestine discord, and therefore, they felt the more anxious to exert themselves in behalf of the Church's testimony, and to preserve unity in other parts of the Church. Four highly respectable ministers had lately been removed by death: to their characters and usefulness, Mr. A. bore the most honorable testimony. They were encouraged, however, by an accession of labourers to supply, in some measure, their loss. Four young men had been licensed to preach the Gospel,—there were now seven Probationers, and twenty-six Ministers. An exhibition of the principles of the Reformed Presbyterian Church had lately been published, and received the sanction of Synod, and there is an overture, called the Historical part of the Church's testimony, that was expected soon to be likewise sanctioned. He (Mr. A.) said, the delegates did not appear here on the side of any party; it was the welfare of Zion they wished to maintain,—and should they at any time differ from the members, on one side or the other, he hoped it would not be laid to their charge as being party men; if they were, they would be lowering their character, and they would not be worthy of the honor conferred on them. The Covenanted Church, (Mr. A. said,) occupies a very exalted station. He was not ashamed of the principles of the Church, and would stand

before any assembly of men, and proclaim these principles. It is our duty to stand forth and maintain the truth of God, for God is on the side of truth, and though the witnesses be comparatively few, having truth on their side, they are called to hold it forth faithfully to all around, and leave the issue to God. It would be well if the members of this court would hold intercourse with each other, and not allow themselves to be divided in opinion by misunderstandings where a difference of minor importance had taken place, while they were agreed in many great principles. For example, they were all agreed as to the fallen state of man, and that there was redemption through the blood of the everlasting covenant, and on the principle of Messiah's headship. They were fully agreed, that nations, as such must bow down to the Redeemer, and that kings and queens must own submission to Him, as He is King of kings and Lord of lords. And we are fully agreed, that we should set up scripturally qualified men to make laws for the promotion of Christ's kingdom, and to carry those laws into execution. It was on these principles that our forefathers acted when they were freed from the iron grasp of Popery, and when they entered into covenant engagements to be for the Lord. Their covenants were founded on Scripture. Mr. A. then referred to the two witnesses in the Book of Revelation, and to a system of wickedness, compared to a beast with seven heads and ten horns. Against this combined system, the witnesses are prophesying. We cannot hold any fellowship with those who would take the crown from the Redeemer's head; nor can we make ourselves members of any national society, who would make a man the head of their Church. We must occupy the position of witnesses for God and the Covenanted testimony of Christ; and believing the word of God to be the standard, we cannot amalgamate with either one side or other, in the party questions of the present day. We are bound to take the same position, in ecclesiastical agitations, that do not propose God's glory as their chief design. We cannot say amen to those who are maintaining the principles of existing establishments, since they are giving their power to the beast; nor can we join with those who say civil rulers have nothing to do in Church affairs. They are glaringly wrong, for all nations must serve the Church, and those who will not do so, must be destroyed. Mr. A., in conclusion, renewed the expression of the hope, that the members of court would inquire into those points in which they agreed, and that angry feelings might cease, and that the pleasure of the Lord might prosper in their hands.

Mr. Martin said, in the remarks he would make, he intended merely to state some things which his brother, Mr. Anderson, had omitted. A number of Congregations in connexion with the Synod in Scotland had been erected, and they had also several Missionary Stations, of which Wick and Thurso were the chief. In order to show the good that may be done by small means, he might mention that not more than five years ago, our ministers had never preached beyond the Tay. Our principles were made known there, by means of a copy of our

Testimony falling into the hands of a man who was hostile to our principles, and it had the effect of convincing him and others of their errors; so that they formed themselves into a praying society,—and they frequently sent to us to furnish them supplies of preaching. Since our delegates were here from Scotland, a new Missionary has been sent to Lower Canada. At last meeting of Synod another was appointed for the same quarter. With regard to the constitution, political parties, and ecclesiastical matters, our court is agreed in sentiment. In the Scottish Established Church, much good has been done. Many who were formerly sleeping on their posts, are now in an active state. They are zealous, and their conduct is otherwise worthy of imitation. We have to rejoice that evangelical doctrines are more preached now than they were some time ago; and that the freezing spirit of mere morality in preaching is, in a good measure, done away. The Lord Jesus Christ occupies a more prominent place in their exhibitions. We have still to lament that in that Church, we do not find any actual removal of what we regard as the constitutional grievances, and there is too much fraternizing with the State. Voluntaryism is a system which maintains that the Civil Magistrate should take nothing to do with religion; nor do we take any thing to do with the other system, as they go too far, and on that account we stand neutral; and our neutrality places us in an honourable station. We trust that the members of this Court will bear with each other in any little differences, and will look to those things in which they are agreed,—and he was sure there were many points on which they held the same opinions. The report of your disagreements has crossed the Irish Channel, and we (the Scotch Synod) are grieved on account of them. We trust that it may be said of you, as was said of your forefathers,—“Behold, how they love one another.”

The evening was occupied as a Committee of Bills, and also the morning of Friday, till the hour of breakfast.

FRIDAY, July 13th.

After the devotional exercises, which were conducted by Mr. Staveley, the Rev. C. Houston, Clerk of Synod, made some observations respecting that part of the Memorial from Knockbracken, which complained of the misrepresentations of the Synod's proceedings in some newspapers; and in a tone reflecting on the congregation, and the editors of the *Covenanter*, moved that this part of the request of the Memorial should be dismissed, as the Court has not the inclination nor power to shackle the public press, and as Memorialists enjoy peculiar advantages of having such reports as please themselves. Messrs. Martin, Anderson, and Dick, opposed this motion. Mr. Martin then submitted a motion which was unanimously adopted, and that of Mr. C. Houston was withdrawn. It was as follows:—“That this Court cannot interfere with the reports of the public press, however much they may misrepresent or mistake the questions before the Synod, and the reasoning of individual members; and while the Court account correctness in all reports furnished most desirable, they are unable to make any authoritative provision in order to attain that end.”

The Synod was afterwards occupied till the hour of adjournment in setting the order of discussion on the Memorials from Newtownards and Loughmourne. The latter contained numerous references to the *Covenanter*, *Christian Magistrate*, and *Reviewer Reviewed*—charged upon these works various alleged errors concerning the Magistrate's power, *circa sacra*, in the restraint and punishment of gross heresy, and idolatry,—and sought from Synod a condemnation of these works, and a declaration of the Church's principles on the subjects in dispute. Dr. Paul was commissioner on the Loughmourne memorial, and Dr. Henry agreed that the paper from his congregation should be classed with that from Loughmourne, and proposed to support it. Various memorials from different congregations, bearing on the subject, in opposition to the Loughmourne memorial, and to the course that had been taken in obtruding it upon the public were read—these were from Kilraughts congregation—from Knockbracken congregation and Session—from the Session of the 2d Reformed Presbyterian Congregation Belfast—from Rathfriland congregation—and from the Sessions of Kellswater and Grange—a Memorial from Cullybackey congregation was read in favor of Dr. Paul's views. It was agreed that Commissioners should first be heard from those congregations that had sent forward memorials—that then Drs. Paul and Henry should be heard as complainants, and the Editors of the *Covenanter* in defence, and that afterwards these parties should enjoy their rights as members of Court, when the matter should come into discussion in Synod.

At 5 o'clock public business was resumed, and according to the order agreed upon, commissioners were first heard from various congregations. Dr. Paul afterwards proceeded in support of his memorial till the hour of adjournment. At his request, the Synod agreed to meet at 7 o'clock to-morrow morning for ordinary business; and that Dr. Paul should be allowed to proceed at 10 o'clock.

SATURDAY, July 14th.

The Session of Synod, before breakfast, was occupied with several minor matters. After the devotional exercises, when the Synod resumed business, the whole period till 3 o'clock, was occupied by Dr. Paul endeavouring to show alleged errors in the *Covenanter*, *Christian Magistrate*, and *Reviewer Reviewed*. He urged frequently the charge of persecution and intolerance on the editors of the *Covenanter*, and all who think with them.

MONDAY, July 16th.

The Synod entered on public business at 11 o'clock, A. M. After the devotional exercises, Dr. Henry succeeded Dr. Paul in supporting the Memorial from Newtownards. He wished the Synod to disclaim persecuting principles, in language so plain that none could misunderstand it.

Messrs. Dick and T. Houston, replied at great length, in opposition to the Loughmourne Memorial, and the charges brought against them in the speeches of Drs. Paul and Henry. Drs. Paul and Henry, were afterwards heard in explanation.

After Dr. Henry had concluded, various members spoke in a desultory way on the subject under discussion. Mr. Martin then addressed the Court at some length, as he said he was under the necessity of returning home, having to dispense the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper in his congregation on the ensuing Sabbath. He was well acquainted with the impressions made in Scotland, by the matters on this side of the channel, and he did declare that good and true Covenanters in Scotland, have doubted, and expressed their doubts, of the judiciousness and seasonableness, and in some instances of the correctness of some of the statements in the *Covenanter*—and on the other hand he must say, that from the Eastern Presbytery had proceeded writings which were regarded as being lamentably deficient in the exhibition of the truth, which seemed to betray a lurking want of affectionate adherence to the Covenanted Testimony. He expressed much satisfaction with the conduct of the Moderator, and the attention that had been shown to himself by the Court. He endeavoured to show that the differences between the parties in the present dispute, were not so great as they had been represented. He read a statement from the *New Scottish Testimony*, p. 99, and expressed his mind that both appeared to him to be nearly agreed on it. Should division take place, he would ascribe it more to feeling than a difference of principle. In affectionate terms, he exhorted the brethren to unity and peace, and then bade the Synod farewell.

WEDNESDAY, July 18th.

A lengthened discussion took place, respecting the matter in dispute, to which the Loughmourne memorial referred, and concerning the order of proceeding. Mr. Stavely, in speaking on the subject, proposed, by leave of the Court, to ask Mr. T. Houston a few questions. Observations were made by several members on the impropriety of introducing a precedent of this kind, and the necessity of addressing questions to the other party likewise—but Mr. Houston having expressed his willingness to afford all proper satisfaction to Mr. Stavely and the members of Court, Mr. S. proposed his inquiries; and Mr. H. said he had never taught that the Judicial Law, as a code, is binding under the Christian dispensation, but that only such parts of it as are moral are of perpetual obligation, according to the views of the Westminster Divines, and the Synod's "Declaration on Civil Government," in overture. He had never maintained that even those parts of it are to be administered in the same manner by Christian rulers as formerly, but had taught the reverse. He wholly denied that the Civil Magistrate should compel religious uniformity by pains and penalties, or that he should by the same means compel men to embrace the true religion—and he disowned as "horrid murder," the killing of any persons who differed from him in religious opinions.

In the evening session, Mr. Toland submitted a motion, which was seconded by Mr. Robert Porter, (Elder.)—It embodied, first, two statements of the *New Scottish Testimony*:—

1. That in a Reformed Covenanted land, "it is the duty of the

Christian Civil Ruler to see that the violation of the Moral Law, in open contempt of the being of God, in gross and public idolatry, in open blasphemy of the name of God, or in open profanation of the Sabbath; as well as by injustice, licentiousness, and violence, be duly restrained, as scandalizing to religion and the Church of God, as hurtful to the peace and good order of society, and as provoking the displeasure and rebukes of the Almighty against the nation."

2. "That it is an error to maintain that a Magistrate, as such, has no concern with religion, or the kingdom of Christ, and that the repression of gross outward public acts of idolatry, or blasphemy, is persecution; and recommended, for the sake of peace, that the papers under consideration be withdrawn, without judgment being pronounced upon them."

After some discussion on the motion, Mr. Stavely offered an amendment, which was seconded by Mr. Cameron; that a Committee be appointed to take the whole matter under consideration, and report to Synod during its present sessions. Dr. Paul opposed both the motion and amendment, and offered a *third motion*, embodying a number of alleged errors in the *Covenanter*, &c., which he sought the Synod to condemn,—this was seconded by Mr. C. Houston. Mr. Wylie (Elder from Grange,) proposed, as a *fourth motion*,—that the charges in the Loughmorne memorial, against the *Covenanter*, &c., had not been substantiated,—that the Court should express dissatisfaction with any of its members circulating the aspersion, that any of their brethren hold persecuting principles, and that the Synod should adopt a part of the Scottish Testimony, as a Declaration of their sentiments on the subject under discussion. All these motions were afterwards withdrawn, except that of Mr. Stavely, and a Committee was appointed, consisting of the Rev. Messrs. Gamble, Stavely, Anderson, Alexander, and Hawthorne, with Messrs. Torrens, Jackson, M'Neely, and Macklin, Ruling Elders,—Mr. Gamble, Convener. The Synod then adjourned.

THURSDAY, July 19th.

At One o'clock, the Committee that had been appointed to consider the matters referred to in the Loughmorne Memorial returned, and Mr. Anderson, the Clerk, read a number of Resolutions to which they had unanimously agreed: these affirmed the Resolutions of Synod in 1833,—expressed regret that controversies had arisen to violate this arrangement,—lamented the ground of dispute, while other great articles of the Church's testimony were overlooked, and her energies in spreading the truth are restrained,—condemned all persecuting principles, while they declared that the open enemies of religion ought not, in a Christian land, to be admitted to places of power and trust, but that nothing ought to be done affecting the life, property, common liberty, or peace of persons differing in opinion, who are otherwise inoffensive members of society,—expressed deep concern that any should attempt to fasten on Covenanters the odious charge that they are bound to *extirpate* persons, while erroneous systems and doctrines are ex-

pressly mentioned in the Covenant,—and enjoined all the members to avoid statements in public and in private calculated to disturb the peace of the Church.

Mr. Anderson stated farther, that the Committee were unanimous in recommending a private friendly conversation among the members of Synod, before the adoption of the Resolutions should be proposed.

The subject of the Committee's Resolutions was taken up; but Dr. Henry intimated for himself, and on behalf of his brethren of the Eastern Presbytery, that they wished a copy of the Resolutions, and also farther time for private conversation. After some discussion, it was agreed to proceed this evening with the ordinary business of Synod, to meet to-morrow morning at six o'clock for private conversation, and to take up the subject of the Resolutions at ten o'clock to-morrow morning.

FRIDAY, July 20th.

The Committee's resolutions were again read by Mr. Anderson, when Mr. T. Houston moved,—That they be adopted, with such alterations, not affecting their obvious sense and intention, as may appear to the Court proper. This motion was seconded by Mr. Robert Porter, Elder.

Dr. Paul spoke in opposition to the Resolutions, and proposed, as an amendment, some alterations,—one of which was, that the Synod should affirm the right of persons avowing and defending any kind of principles, without being subjected to civil restraints, &c,—a condemnation of alleged errors and untruths in the "Covenanter," "Reviewer Reviewed," &c,—a change in the Fourth Term of Communion, &c. This was seconded by Dr. Henry.

As a number of members had withdrawn, and the elders declared generally they would not remain longer, the question was put,—Vote on the Resolutions, or adjourn the further consideration of this subject till the next meeting of Synod; it was carried, "adjourn," by a considerable majority.—Dr. Paul and other members of the Eastern Presbytery dissenting.—*Abridged from the Covenanter.*

ORIGIN OF THE NAME "COVENANTERS."

(From the History of the Covenanters.)

It was now evident to all parties that affairs were hastening to a crisis. Charles had not only absolutely refused to redress the grievances of his Scottish subjects, but prohibited them from laying before him any farther supplications of a similar import. To be denied liberty to lay their complaints by humble petition at the foot of the throne, was depriving the Presbyterians of all remainder of liberty: and can any

true friend, either to his King or his country, after witnessing all this oppression and tyranny, condemn these men, for refusing again to put their necks under the yoke? or stigmatize them as rebels, for taking more decisive steps to rescue their nation from the iron grasp of monarchial and prelatical usurpation? Accordingly, finding that all their efforts to obtain deliverance from the evils of which they so justly complained were of no avail, the leaders of the Presbyterians resolved to take other measures, which they trusted would effectually unite all the friends of religion and liberty throughout the country. This was the renewing of the National Covenant, which had been sworn by King James and his household in the year 1580, and by persons of all ranks in 1581, 1590, and 1596, and ratified by several Acts of Parliament. It is quite unnecessary to give an outline of this Covenant here, seeing it is in the hands of every one who possesses a copy of the Confession of Faith. It may be noticed, however, that, in addition to the original Covenant, all the innovations which had been lately introduced were explicitly condemned in this new bond; and while its adherents bound themselves by oath to resist all these, or similar encroachments on their religious liberties, or to defend each other in maintaining the true religion, they also engaged to defend the King in the preservation of religion, liberty and law. But while we would refer the reader to the Covenant itself, as contained in the Westminster Confession of Faith, with which every Presbyterian ought to be acquainted, we cannot avoid transcribing the following nervous defence of this interesting bond, condemned indeed by too many, in gross ignorance, as given by Aikman. 'This bond,' says that impartial historian, 'was only reverting to the principles recognised at the Reformation, and restoring the constitution then established. When a King wantonly tramples upon all his subjects hold sacred, he himself breaks the bond of allegiance; and they have a right, if they have the power, to unite and reclaim what has been tyrannically torn from them. The legality, with regard to form, is all that can be urged against the National Covenant; and the best lawyers of the day, and even Hope, the King's advocate, pronounced the proceedings of the Covenanters legal. They had precedents, Acts of Parliament, and the repeated sanction of royalty, for such associations; and their obligations to obey the King and defend his person, are as explicitly stated as any other obli-

gation in the Covenant. It is true, this is linked with the preservation of religion, liberty and law, but what other obedience would any upright Prince require? Should they have pledged their support to the Monarch in opposition to all these? To this much vilified bond every Scottishman ought to look, as Englishmen do, to the Magna Charta. It was what saved the country from absolute despotism, and to it we may trace back the origin of all the successful efforts made by the inhabitants of Britain, in defence of their freedom, during the succeeding reigns of the Stuarts.'

The day appointed for swearing the Covenant in Edinburgh was the 1st of March, a day which was also set apart for solemn fasting and prayer. The people resorted, in vast numbers, to the Greyfriars' Church, where the Covenant being read, and earnest prayers offered up to God by Alexander Henderson, Minister of Leuchars, the nobles, gentry, Ministers, and Commons, with uplifted hands, and tears streaming from their eyes, vowed, in the presence of God, faithfully to observe all its stipulations, and then affixed to it their signatures with the utmost joy. The solemn dedication of themselves to the Lord, and to the promotion of his cause, by so many thousands of every rank and age, was truly affecting; and while it inspired the friends of the Covenant with renewed vigour, it completely destroyed all the remaining hopes of their Prelatical oppressors—'Now,' exclaimed the Archbishop of Glasgow in despair, 'all that we have been doing these thirty years past is at once thrown down.' The Tables, immediately afterwards, transmitted copies of the Covenant to every part of the country; and, by the end of April, nearly the whole of Scotland, excepting courtiers, papists, prelates, and a few of the non-conforming clergy, chiefly in Aberdeen, cheerfully attached to it their signatures. Such is the origin of the *Covenanters*.

Unintimidated by all the threatenings, and disregarding all the repulses which they had received, the petitioners (the Covenanters) still determined to oppose, in a legal manner, the late innovations. Their leaders were men of wisdom, integrity, and piety, whose sole object was the present and everlasting benefit of the people; and, while they never ceased to strive against oppression and tyranny, they were the means of checking immorality, and promoting genuine godliness throughout the country. We are aware that the majority of historians have censured, if not decidedly con-

demned, their rigid and uncompromising opposition to every thing which seemed to savour of disobedience to the law of God; and even those who are deemed the most impartial, consider the terms, *puritans, enthusiasts, fanatics, &c.*, as being their just and incontrovertible designation. But, until these authors can show that the Presbyterians of that age aimed at a greater degree of purity than the Word of God enjoins, or that they were more enthusiastic for the doctrines and laws of Christ than were the Apostles or the primitive believers, we must say, that these names—as nearly allied to infidelity as they are to scurrility—are as inapplicable to them as they would have been to him who enjoined all professors of Christianity to ‘look diligently lest any man should fail of the grace of God, and lest any root of bitterness should spring up to trouble them, and thereby many be defiled.’ Heb. xii. 15. Personal, family, and public humiliation with solemn fasting for sin, prayer for the Influences of the Holy Spirit, diligent study of the Scriptures, firm belief in the doctrines, and implicit obedience to the injunctions of Christ, were the themes on which the ministers uniformly dwelt; all which being exemplified in their own lives, produced the most salutary and beneficial effects among the people. Nor were they, amidst all their opposition to usurpation and tyranny, disloyal to their sovereign. The peculiar situation in which they were placed rendered it necessary that they should act a decided part; yet all their petitions and supplications were couched in language most becoming; and even when afterwards they were compelled to proceed to greater lengths, it was not without a struggle, while the blame rested not on them, but on their unreasonable and lawless oppressors.

ECCLESIASTICAL PROCEEDINGS.

PITTSBURGH PRESBYTERY.—This Presbytery at its late sessions licensed Messrs. Hugh Stevenson and—Hutchinson to preach the gospel as candidates for the ministry of reconciliation. A call from the congregation of Londonderry, Ohio, was presented to Mr. James Love, a licentiate under the care of the Presbytery, which he accepted. Arrangements were made for attending to his ordination on the 27th Inst. Mr. Samuel O. Wylie, was received under care of

Presbytery as a Theological Student. We regret that farther particulars of the proceedings of this Court have not reached us.

SOUTHERN PRESBYTERY.—This Presbytery met in Newburgh on the 14th Ult. and continued its sessions three days. Dr. Willson announced the death of Rev. William Gibson, since last meeting, in reference to which the following minute, prepared by a committee appointed for the purpose, was adopted. “The decease of this aged and venerable servant of Christ, is an event to be regarded with deep and solemn interest by the members of this court and by the Church generally. Mr. Gibson was the oldest minister of the church in this country, and connected with the whole history of the Witnesses, since the first constitution of a Presbytery in the latter part of the last century. His labours both in this country and in Ireland, were abundant, and profitable to the Church; while he experienced many privations, and endured much of the reproach of Christ, which he esteemed greater riches than the treasures of Egypt. In frequent conversations with the ministers of this church during his last illness, he expressed his confident hope of a blessed immortality, through faith in the Redeemer, whom in his long and faithful ministry, he had affectionately and earnestly recommended to sinners for their acceptance. For his extensive usefulness in the ministry, and the hope in his death, let us be grateful, and follow his example in all that was praiseworthy.”

Petitions were received from nine vacant congregations and societies for supplies of gospel ordinances: two of which congregations, Conococheague and 2nd congregation, New-York, requested also and obtained the moderation of calls. Mr. Chrystie submitted the following resolution which was unanimously adopted.

“Resolved, That the Southern Presbytery organize and collect a library for the use of the Theological Students within their bounds, and that the followings regulations be adopted for the formation, preservation and use of the same.

1. The books to constitute the Library, and monies contributed for the purpose, to be obtained by donation as the members of the Court may succeed in their collection.

2. A committee of three shall be annually elected, at the spring meetings of Presbytery, who shall have authority to invest all monies contributed, in such books as may be deemed suitable—to inspect as they may deem proper, but always once a

year, the condition of the Library and report thereon to Presbytery, as to the number of volumes, the monies received and how invested, at the spring meetings of the Court.

3. The books to be placed under the immediate care of the Professor, and used by the Students under his direction and superintendence.

4. The several members of this Court will endeavor by such means as they may severally judge suitable, to forward these efforts to furnish our Students with appropriate assistance in the prosecution of their studies; and may hand over the books or monies received to any one of the members of the above mentioned committee."

Dr. Willson, M. Roney, and J. M. Willson were elected the committee contemplated in the 2nd regulation. Mr. Andrew Stevenson was licensed to preach the gospel as a candidate for the ministry of reconciliation. A piece of trial was received from Mr. James Beattie, a student of the 3d year, Mr. J. W. Shaw was taken under care of presbytery, as a student pursuing literary studies with a view to the ministry.

The following appointments of supplies were made for vacant congregations and societies.—Mr. Stevenson, 4th sabbath May, 1st June, 4th July, 1st August, 5th Sept. 1st Oct. 2nd congregation New-York. 2nd July, Kortright. 3rd July, Bovina. 2nd August, 2nd, 3rd Sept. Baltimore. 3d, 4th August, 1st Sept. Conococheague—Dr. Willson 3rd June, Kortright, 4th June. Bovina. 3rd July, 2nd cong. New-York. 3rd August, Hudson. Rev. J. Chrystie, 2nd June, 3rd August, 2nd Sept. 2nd cong. New-York, and to moderate a call in said congregation when requested.—Rev. M. Roney, two sabbaths at White-Lake, and to dispense the Lord's supper in 2nd cong. New-York on 2nd sabbath June.—Rev. D. Scott, 1st July, Princetown, 2nd August, Conococheague, and to dispense the Lord's supper in the latter on 3rd sabbath of August.—Rev. J. M. Willson, 3rd June, 2nd cong. New-York, 3rd, 4th July Conococheague, and to moderate a call in latter congregation when requested.

The next meeting of Presbytery was appointed to be held at Coldenham on the 9th October next at 10 o'clock, A. M.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY LAWSUIT.

The decision of the Supreme court of Pennsylvania, on the motion for a new trial, made by the counsel of the Old

School was delivered on the 8th ult. It set aside entirely the grounds taken by Judge Rogers in the former trial, deciding that the "excising resolutions," as they are called, passed by the General Assembly of 1837, are constitutional and altogether within the legitimate exercise of the power belonging to that body; that they were not to be considered in the aspect of a *judicial sentence* but as a *legislative act*; that they did nothing more than dissolve the four Synods, which it was conceded the Assembly had a right to do; that the act being within the power of that body, its reasons for performing it could not be reviewed by a civil tribunal, and as the consequence of all this, that the persons claiming to be commissioners from presbyteries within the excised Synods, to the Assembly of 1838, had no color of right to seats in that body. Further, the Court decided that, while on these grounds the proceedings of the New School had been unjustifiable, they had been in themselves entirely irregular, even on the supposition that the excluded commissioners had been entitled to seats; that it was evident a separate organization was intended by the New School, and that the jury had given a verdict manifestly against the current of the evidence. Thus the New School Assembly of 1838, are declared not to be the legitimate "General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States." Judge Rogers dissented from the opinion, declaring his adherence to his original judgment.

THE SABBATH IN NEW ORLEANS.

We have heretofore adverted to the desecration of the Sabbath by the Congress of the United States. The following are specimens of the manner in which the sanctity of this holy day is habitually violated and disregarded in New Orleans. On sabbath the 24th of Feb. the service of the sanctuary was disturbed by the sound of martial music and the parade of the military, passing in review before the Governor of the State. Here we have the disgusting spectacle of the executive officer of one of the states trampling under his infidel feet the command of the eternal I AM, "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy;" and disturbing a Christian congregation who had peaceably assembled to unite in his service. The 24th of March (Sabbath) was announced by

the Picayune as being "as lovely a day as ever shone," but that lovely day shed its brightness to cheer the emissaries of Satan upon the race-course in their daring deeds of violence to the will of heaven. The same paper of the 29th ult., speaking of a theatrical performance, says:—"The excellent performances of *Sunday* evening last 'Speed the Plough,' and 'Tom Noddy's Secret,' are to be repeated to-night." Here we have it; in one of the cities of this land, theatrical exhibitions are presented on the Sabbath and attended, the race course crowded, and a Christian assembly, met to raise their grateful hearts to the Almighty, disturbed by a military parade, under the immediate sanction of the Executive of the State. Publish it not in Gath, tell it not in the streets of Askalon.—*Cumberland Presbyterian.*

DISTRESS IN MISSISSIPPI.

The Milledgeville (Georgia) Recorder of May 7th says: "Perhaps a stronger evidence of the deplorable state of things, in regard to pecuniary matters, of some of the States south and west of us, could not be presented, than one that passed before us the other day. A gang of some sixty or seventy negroes, passed through this place a few days ago, from Mississippi, seeking as we understood, a market. Such is the pecuniary embarrassments of that State, as well as others, that in order to lessen the sacrifice on the sales of negroes, which sales have to be made, they are brought back to the old and impoverished States for sale, from the very region of inexhaustible fertility. This is a strange and unnatural state of affairs, and speaks trumpet-tongued of the lamentable pecuniary situation of the States from which they come. We are informed that a great number of plantations of the greatest fertility, are lying uncultivated and uncared for, the laborers having been sent off, to Orleans and other places to find a market, to pay the debts of the owners.

DIED.—On the 2nd Ult., Mrs. Mary-Ann Gibson, widow of the late Rev. Robert Gibson, New-York.

THE

REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN.

VOL. III.

JULY, 1839.

No. V.

THE PROPERTIES OF THE MORAL LAW.

The peculiar and distinguishing qualities of the moral law, are these :

1. It is *universal*, or of *vast extent*. It extends to all men, in every age, place, and condition, and to all their inclinations, thoughts, words, and actions. "Now we know," says the apostle Paul, "that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them under the law ; that *every* mouth may be stopped, and *all* the world may become guilty before God. Therefore, by the deeds of the law, there shall *no flesh* be justified in his sight." Rom. iii. 19, 20. Whilst it binds all the human race, at all times, and in all places and conditions, it reaches to all the dispositions, thoughts, and purposes of the heart, as well as to all the words, and actions of the life. It extends to every motion and affection of the soul, and to every part and circumstance of human conduct. The Divine law is a rule for the heart, as well as for the life, of every descendant of Adam. "Thy commandment," says David, "is exceeding broad." Psal. cxix. 96. No finite understanding can reach the boundary of it, or find out how comprehensive it is. It extends to countless multitudes of things, in every moment, and in every possible circumstance. The moral law, indeed, is summed up in the ten commandments ; but it extends itself, notwithstanding, through the whole word of God. So extensive are those commandments, that every thing which he requires, may be reduced to one or other of them.

2. It is *perfect*. "The law of the Lord," says David, "is perfect, converting the soul." Psal. xix. 7. So perfect is it,

that it binds every one to full conformity in the whole man, unto the righteousness of it, and to entire obedience for ever; so as to require the utmost perfection of every duty, and to forbid the least degree of every sin." Larger Cat. Quest. 99. Matth. v. 21—48. James ii. 10. It requires all the duty which a man owes to God, to himself, and to his neighbour; and it demands perfection of obedience. No partial or defective obedience, can be sustained. The smallest degree of imperfection, renders a person obnoxious to the curse: so that, salvation by the law, is absolutely unattainable; because no man, since the fall, can perform the *perfect* obedience which it demands. The perfection of every grace, and of every act of obedience, is required in it. Nothing must be taken from it, or corrected in it, and nothing is to be added to it. Deut. iv. 2. The Lord Jesus explained the law, but he did not, in the smallest degree, either correct or enlarge it. He and his Apostles taught nothing, but what Moses and the Prophets had previously inculcated. Matth. vii. 12. Acts xxvi. 22. He said, indeed, to his disciples, "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another." John xiii. 34. This command, however, is not new as to the *substance* of it, for it is a summary of the second table of the law; and therefore it is called "an *old* commandment which we had from the beginning:" 1 John ii. 7. but it is styled *new*, because it is enforced by the new motive and example, of the immense love of Christ in dying for us. This is evident from these words of his, which immediately follow; "As I have loved you, that ye also love one another." Christ also commands us to deny ourselves, and to take up our cross and follow him; but these duties are comprised in that of loving God supremely. The prayer likewise, which our Lord taught his disciples, contains no petitions, but what the saints under the Old Testament, were taught to present to Jehovah. Isa. lxiii. 16. Psal. lvii. 11. and cxliii. 10—12. Prov. xxx. 8. Psal. xxv. 11. and xvi. 1. Indeed, such is the perfection of the Divine law, that it cannot require, or sustain, any thing short of obedience absolutely perfect. It requires not only that, there be no direct violation of any of its precepts, but that, there be no appearance of transgressing any of them; no consent of the heart; no inclination, nor affection, to the smallest violation of any; no secret delight in evil, nor desire that it were lawful; but, on the contrary, that there be a supreme delight in the purity and perfection of every one of its commands.—

This law is despised and dishonoured, if it be not acknowledged to be so perfect, that nothing can be accepted by it, but that which is in all respects perfect. It demands perfection, in the principles, in the parts, in the degrees, and in the perpetuity of obedience. In a word, such is the perfection of it, that it was sufficient to be the *rule*, even of the consummate righteousness of Jesus Christ himself.

3. This law is also *spiritual*. The Lawgiver is a spirit, the God of the spirits of all flesh; and he beholds all the inclinations and affections of the soul, as well as all the deeds of the body. His law therefore is spiritual, Rom. vii. 14. requiring internal as well as external obedience. It reaches the understanding, will, and affections, with all the other faculties of the soul, as well as all the gestures, words, and actions of the body. It extends, not only to external appearances, words, and works, but to the dispositions, thoughts, principles, motives, and designs of the heart; and requires the spiritual performance, both of internal and external obedience. Heb. iv. 12. Matth. xxii. 37—39. Lev. xix. 17. It requires that, every duty proceed from spiritual principles, such as, union with Christ, faith, love, and every right habit of the soul; that, it be performed in a spiritual manner, that is, according to a spiritual rule, and in the exercise of the graces of the Spirit; and that, it be directed to spiritual ends, the glory of God in Christ, and the eternal enjoyment of him. Every man is commanded by it, thus “to mind the things of the Spirit,” and so to “live and walk in the Spirit.” Rom. viii. 5. Gal. v. 16.

4. It is a *holy* law. “The law,” says the apostle Paul, “is holy, and the commandment holy.” Rom. vii. 12. The moral law is a fair transcript of the infinite holiness of God’s nature, and an authoritative declaration of his will; and it binds all the children of Adam to perfect holiness of heart and of life. It enjoins every thing that is holy, every thing, which is conformable to those moral attributes and actions of God, which are patterns for our imitation. Since it is intrinsically pure and holy, it gives no *just* occasion to the least motion of sin in the heart; but, on the contrary, it discovers, forbids and condemns every inordinate affection, every unholy desire. It is the immutable and eternal standard of all true holiness, whether of the heart, or of the life: and whilst it is both the rule, and the reason of holiness, its direct tendency is, to encourage and advance it, in every regenerate soul. All the

precepts of it are perfectly holy, every way becoming an infinitely holy God to publish, and rational creatures to obey. The Divine law is so holy, that it calls for spotless obedience, not only in the words and actions of the life, but in all the inclinations, thoughts, and motions of the heart. It reaches, not only to the streams of actual transgression, but to the fountain of original sin; and calls for perfect holiness of nature, as well as of life. Hence the apostle Paul, as soon as he discerned the holiness of it, considered the first motions of irregular desire, even before the will actually consented to them, as sinful, and bitterly bewailed them, as well as firmly resisted them. Rom. vii. 7.

5. Moreover, it is *perfectly just and equal*. Rom. vii. 12.— This righteous law, is exactly suited to our frame as reasonable creatures, and to our condition in this world. It requires nothing from us but what we owe to God, to ourselves, and to our neighbour, and what we, in the first Adam, had sufficient ability to perform. Accordingly the holy Psalmist says, “The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart.” Psal. xix. 8. “I will praise thee with uprightness of heart, when I shall have learned thy righteous judgments.” Psal. cxix. 7. The law of God is just and right. Its demands are infinitely equitable. And therefore, to fret against any command of it, or to wish, that it were in the smallest degree relaxed, is unjust, and is a breach of the whole law. Seeing it requires nothing, but what we already owe to God, and nothing, but what we are under infinite, and immutable obligations to pay to him; our obedience to it, supposing that obedience were perfect, could never merit the smallest blessing from him. Were we, indeed, to perform but a single act of obedience, more than we owed to God, we should thereby, merit some recompense from him. But this it is impossible for us ever to do. It is not the obedience even of a true believer, that merits the blessings of salvation for him; but only, the meritorious righteousness of Christ imputed to him.

6. The law is *good*, as well as holy and just. Rom. vii. 12. The commandments of it are so good, that they require nothing, but what is good in itself, and good for the observers of them. “In keeping of them there is great reward.” Psal. xix. 11. They enjoin nothing, but what is conducive to the happiness, both of the souls and the bodies of men. “Great peace,” says the Psalmist, “have they who love thy law; and

nothing shall offend them." Psal. cxix. 165. The apostle Paul also says, "Glory, honor, and peace, to every man that worketh good; to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile."—Rom. ii. 10. And again, "We know that the law is good, if a man use it lawfully." 1 Tim. i, 8. One chief ingredient, in the happiness of Adam, in innocence, was, his having this law inscribed on his heart. And no man, since the fall, begins to be either good or happy, till this promise begin to be fulfilled to him; "I will put my laws into their minds, and write them in their hearts." Heb. viii. 10. It is this, that makes a man, a good man, and *capable* of performing good works. As the law then is good, desirable, and excellent; it is most unreasonable, as well as sinful, not to love it, and not to delight in performing universal obedience to it.

7. Lastly, This law is of *perpetual obligation*. The precepts of it are indispensable and perpetual. Psal. cxix, 89. 144. They continue, to direct and oblige all men to perfect obedience, not only through all time, but through all eternity. "It is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail." Luke xvi. 17. "Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." Matth. v. 18. The law as a covenant of works, will continue not only through time, but through eternity, to bind all who live and die under that covenant; and the law as a rule of life, will continue binding on the spiritual seed of the second Adam, through time and eternity. It is an immutable and an eternal law. Every one of thy righteous judgments," says David, "endureth forever." Psal. cxix. 160.

Is the law of the Lord *perfect*, and does it require that our obedience be perfect in its principles, parts, degrees, and continuance? It is *impossible*, then, that *sincere* obedience, can entitle a sinner to eternal life. A man's faith may be sincere, but if it is not perfect, it cannot be a proper condition of life; it cannot procure for him, a right to eternal life. His repentance also may be deep and sincere; but if it is not absolutely perfect, it cannot afford him the smallest title, either to the progress, or the consummation of life eternal.* His

* This is not to be understood as implying, That the law, either as a covenant or as a rule, requires either perfect or imperfect faith and repentance, as the *proper* condition of eternal life; but only, That no instance of personal obedience how *sincere* soever that obedience may be, can ever entitle a sinner to life eternal.

obedience, in general, may be sincere ; yet if it is not absolutely perfect, it cannot give him the smallest degree of title to eternal salvation. These cannot entitle him, in the smallest degree, to life, either according to the law as a covenant of works, or as a rule of life. They are necessary as parts of salvation, and as means of attaining complete salvation ; but they cannot be the *grounds* of a man's title to salvation. Nothing can be the ground of a believer's title to salvation, but the perfect righteousness of Jesus Christ, received by faith, and imputed to him for justification.

Is the moral law of *perpetual obligation* ? Then it follows that, as a *covenant of works*, it retains, and will continue throughout eternity, to retain its whole authority and obligation, over every sinner of mankind who lives and dies under it. In its covenant form, it stands in full force, and can never be repealed. It will continue, and that through all eternity, to hold the finally impenitent, under both its commanding and its condemning power. They shall remain for ever, under an infinite *obligation*, both to yield perfect obedience to its righteous precepts, and to give infinite satisfaction for their disobedience of them. There is no possible way, in which a sinner can be freed from the perpetual obligation of the law as a covenant ; but by presenting, in the hand of faith, to it, the infinitely perfect, and meritorious righteousness of the second Adam, as a full answer to all its high demands. When this glorious righteousness, is received by faith, and graciously imputed to a man, the law in its covenant form, is fully satisfied with respect to *him* ; and, in *that form*, it has nothing more to demand from him. He now passes from the obligation of the covenant of works, and comes under the perpetual obligation of the law as a rule of duty, in the covenant of grace ; and he will remain under its infinite obligation through all eternity. Even the angels in heaven, are under a law, as their eternal rule of duty. Psal. ciii. 20. And if the holy angels are not without law to God, surely glorified saints, will be under the law to Christ, as the eternal rule of *their* obedience. And so ardent, will their love of this holy and righteous law be, that they will account it their highest honour, and their greatest happiness, to continue eternally, under the obligation of yielding perfect obedience to it. No man sincerely loves it, even in an imperfect degree, but the man, who *hopes* to be under the *eternal obligation* of it.

COLQUHOUN.

THE DOMINION OF SIN.

Of the deeply affecting views which the Scriptures give us of the character of sin, none is more practically interesting than that which exhibits it as a despot or tyrant, exerting a ruinous domination over its wretched and degraded victims. The current language of the scripture is, that *sin is a bondage, and the sinner a slave.* "For, of whom a man is overcome, of the same he is brought into bondage." The design of the gospel is to deliver sinners from this degraded and degrading state of vassallage. "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself, a peculiar people zealous of good works." While a man continues under the power of sin, he is not, and cannot, *be a christian*, though he may be a professor of christianity; he may possess the name; but, he wants the thing which the name only represents.—Such an one, is without God; yet, in the gall of bitterness and bond of iniquity. Entire freedom from sin however, it may be remarked, is not the attainment of any of the people of God while they are in this life; while in the body there is still a remainder of corruption against which the believer has to struggle; fighting the good fight of faith, in hope of life eternal. For "what will ye see in the Shulamite? as it were the company of two armies." "I delight in the law of God, after the inward man. But, I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind." In the christian, sin is the weaker, and holiness the stronger principle of action: the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus, makes him free from the law of sin and death. Entire freedom from sin is nevertheless the aim of the christian; while he looks not at the things which are behind; but, presses onward toward the prize and mark of his high calling. He lives in the faith, that the last enemy, *death*, shall be swallowed up in victory; and that, with the victory over death, sin shall cease to trouble him. Then, his nature shall be holy and sinless; then shall he be presented faultless in the presence of God; "not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing." But, amid the infirmities of this present evil world, holiness is the prevailing characteristic of the heart and conduct of a christian; on the other hand, sin is the prevailing characteristic of an unbe-

liever ; sin predominates, and reigns triumphant in his heart and life. It may not be un instructive therefore to our readers to attempt a brief illustration of the deceitful power of sin; that, as the beacon on a rocky shore warns the night-overtaken mariner to flee from danger, this may warn them of the danger arising from the deceit, and desperate wickedness of the human heart.

1. The dominion of sin may be considered as it affects the exercise of love to God.

In the language of scripture, love is said to be the fulfilling of the law. Love to God is the most exalted principle that can influence a rational being; and the relation of the creature to the Creator should excite in his mind this noble principle. When the creature contemplates himself, as brought into existence, and preserved by the Almighty; when he surveys the extensive bounds of creation and sees in the whole a never failing store of enjoyments, love should fill his heart. Such is the effect which the beneficence of God would naturally produce on the mind of man : but the power of sin in the heart biasses the affections from their natural Lord, and excites dislike and hatred to Him. The goodness of God, as exercised toward sinners in the gift of Christ to be a Saviour to save from sin, should awaken in the mind of the sinner the thrill of grateful affection. "We love him" says the apostle John, "because he first loved us." But sin excites the sinner to hate God notwithstanding the beneficence of his providence and the merciful revelations of his grace. The first and great commandment is to love the Lord our God with all our heart ; he, who is under the power of sin does not obey this commandment ; the faculties of his mind are employed not in loving God, but in hating Him. His affections are fixed on the pleasures of sin which are but for a season ; and God is not in all his thoughts. Nor, can it be otherwise : no man can serve two masters whose interests and commands are opposed to each other. No man then can love God while he continues the servant of sin : between these two there is an irreconcilable opposition. Sooner might light and darkness be identified ; the sun shining in his noon day glory with the rayless midnight, than find love to God in a heart which cherishes sin. The worldling loves his wealth and pursues with ardour every path that leads to new acquisitions. Wealth is his God, and engrosses the affections of his heart. He worships his idol, by his unjust gains and over-reaching specula-

tions ; by oppressing the poor, robbing the fatherless and the widow ; or it may be by holding in bondage and wretched slavery his fellow man ; Nor, ever heaves a sigh, or drops a tear of pity over the wretchedness of the victims of his avarice. Can there be love to God where there is no compassion towards man ? “He that saith that he loveth God, and hateth his brother is a liar and the love of God abideth not in him. For if he love not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen ?” With all the pretensions he may make of piety, and professions of love to God, (and these are sometimes of no ordinary character,) bring him to the test, and they will soon disappear. Put the world in one scale and religion in the other, and it will soon be decided which preponderates in his affections. Tell him that his conduct is inconsistent with his profession of religion; he makes a thousand evasions, but still clings to the world.— And if in the providence of God he is deprived of his idol ; in the bitterness of his heart he cries in the language of the Ephraimite, “ye have taken away my gods and what have I more ?” In like manner the ambitious man worships the world under the name of fame or glory. He is continually planing schemes of aggrandizement ; and his life is employed in bringing these into operation. He tramples on the lives and liberties of mankind ; wades through the ensanguined field to reach the goal of ambition ; sports with human misery in every form, and makes the woes of others the stepping-stones to his own grandeur. But, not one thought of God ; no love to him who loved not his own life, but gave himself up to the death that we through his death might have life. If in the moments of solitude, when no human eye is upon him, conscience awakened from its stupor should reproach him with the sin of forgetting God, he banishes the officious monitor as unbidden and unwelcome.

It is not, however, in the higher walks of life alone that this enmity to God makes its appearance ; it insinuates itself into the humblest and most abject. In these, if it does not assume the shape of worldly aggrandizement or ambition, it appears in the indulgence of the most degrading vices and beastly appetites. Descend from the throne of the usurper, and the lordly mansions of the great, to the lowly hut of the godless cottager ; and the operating principle of the heart is the same. Sin wherever it reigns produces the same effects ; it comes into view indeed under different aspects as different

circumstances direct; but, wherever it is found, it seduces the heart from the love of God. In ordinary life this hatred does not appear in the princely garb of licensed robbery, tyranny or oppression, but it is developed in the forms of drunkenness, deceit and other species of grovelling debauchery.

2. The dominion of sin may be considered as it affects the performance of duty.

It would be useless in illustrating this view of the subject to refer to the openly wicked; these having laid aside the fear of God, glory in their iniquity. But the remark receives ample illustration from the conduct of many professors of religion. To many such, the words of the prophet are fearfully full of meaning—they have “grey hairs here and there and they know it not.” They have professed obedience to the religion of Christ; and externally received its doctrines and precepts. And it may be, that their general conduct and demeanor before the church and the world are unblameable; but, they cherish sin in their souls; they are under the influence of a secret principle which unfits them for the performance of duty. Sin reigns in their hearts; and it is to this they give obedience, while frequently they imagine that they are yielding obedience to the authority of God. How apt are the professors of religion to think that they have done their duty from the principle of love to their Redeemer, when perhaps they are only acting in obedience to the dictates of early education or habit; or it may be only gratifying a natural uneasiness of conscience? Such lull themselves asleep, as they glide down the stream of time fondly dreaming that they have done their duty; when alas, their iniquities like the wind have taken them away!

The religion of such is merely speculative; it has never yet reached their hearts; while in performing the outward acts of duty they may be even exemplary. They may engage in them with apparent fervour and continue with apparently indefatigable zeal; and after all, there is no real religion. Obedience to the letter of the law, does not exculpate from the charge of being under the dominion of sin. The command reaches not only to the external act, but to the heart. “My son give me thine heart, and let thine eyes observe my ways.” “The law of God is exceeding broad,” and reaches to the heart. It is not enough then that a command or duty is performed; it must be done from the principle of obedience

to God's authority. If this be lacking, however imposing and specious the outward act may be, it is altogether abominable in the sight of God. "Who hath required this at your hands? Your new moons and appointed feasts my soul hateth; they are a trouble to me; I am weary to bear them." Consider who they were of whom these things are spoken.—It is of such as were regularly and assiduously performing the outward acts of religion; those very ordinances which God had instituted and strictly enjoined his people to observe. And the reason why they were displeasing to Him, is because they were not done from the principle of love to Him and obedience to his authority. Such, while they professed to honor God in acts of religious service, indulged and cherished sin in their hearts. Throughout these remarks the actual and outward doing of duties has been assumed: but more generally the dominion of sin prevents this; duty is left unperformed. This is the real cause of that inattention to christian duties, which so often dishonours the professors of religion. They have a name to live, and are dead. It is fair and charitable to reason from men's works to their principles. If professors live in the neglect of duty, it is because they are mere professors and nothing more. They are not the servants of Christ, but the slaves of sin! It is not conceivable that a man in whose heart grace reigns should live in the continued and oft repeated neglect of prescribed duties. Say, does it bear any resemblance to the christian character to abstain from public ordinances, and that too, habitually persisted in, for reasons that would not sustain a man in his own judgment in the neglect of his daily avocation? Does not a deceived heart lead that man astray whose health is sufficiently good to attend to his daily labours during the week, but whose seat in the place of public worship is frequently empty on the Lord's day under the pretence of sickness? Strength enough to drudge in the world's service till the last hour of Saturday is past; vigorous to renew his toil on the Monday; but during the Sabbath he *feels so unwell* that he cannot go to church, or if he goes, it is only part of the day; and while he is there, so listless and drowsy is he, that it is obvious his heart is elsewhere. Such coincidences are so remarkable, especially when occurring frequently, that nothing short of the blinding influence of corruption could hide from the man who does so, the real cause—the dominion of sin. This too, is the reason why family worship is either neglected or only

partially performed. A professor of religion toiling from "sunny morn, till dewy eve," for the bread that perisheth, and cannot find time for the worship of God in his family, morning and evening! Does such a man sincerely believe that salvation is the one thing needful? Is it not apparent that in his estimation, food to eat and raiment to put on, is of more importance than "the kingdom of God, and his righteousness?" But it is in the neglect of secret prayer that this point receives its strongest illustrations. There are very inferior motives that may influence a man to the performance of social acts of religion, but which do not stimulate in the least to secret devotion. And though we would not say that the practice of secret prayer is certain evidence in every instance of the power of religion in the heart, yet we may say without fear of contradiction, that wherever secret prayer is habitually neglected the power of religion is not known, and the neglect proceeds from the dominion of sin over the heart. "Prayer," (says Mathew Henry) "will keep a man from sinning; or sinning will put him from prayer." It is so in regard of every duty; if duty is regularly and conscientiously performed, it promotes the sanctification of the individual; the spirit of God blesses it for this purpose. The Spirit excites the desire of prayer in the soul, and stimulates to other duties; and these he makes the means of carrying on the work of grace. On the other hand, if the duties of religion are neglected, it is evidence sufficient that the individual has not the Spirit of God, but is under the power of sin. "Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin."

(To be continued.)

A TIME TO DANCE.

Among the fashionable, sinful amusements of the present age, PROMISCUOUS DANCING holds a prominent place. Formerly this foolish, injurious, wicked practice was confined chiefly to the worldly, the gay and the giddy. In Job's time the *children* of the *wicked* danced. Until about a quarter of a century ago, the practice was left pretty much to the same class of characters—to children, if not in years, certainly

in thoughtfulness, and sobriety of deportment—and to wicked children; for certainly in the time of our fathers, dancing was not reckoned among the duties or amusements of christians. But now it is not uncommon for ministers of the gospel, officers in the church and many church members to sanction and countenance the growing evil, by speaking of it as an accomplishment, by sending their children to dancing schools, or to seminaries of learning where dancing is a part of the system of education, by their presence at dancing assemblies in the social circle, &c. Yea, many professors of religion take part in the dance, both in the private, select parties, and in the public promiscuous balls of the-day. We may hereafter resume this subject and endeavor to shew the evils of promiscuous dancing in its nature and tendencies. In the meantime we recommend a serious and careful consideration of the Article subjoined. The occasion of writing it was this. A minister, who was charged with using his influence to prevent some of the young people under his charge from attending a ball given in his neighborhood, received the following anonymous note, to which he wrote the article as a reply.

“SIR,—Obey the voice of Holy Scripture. Take the following for your text, and contradict it. Shew in what consists the evil of that innocent amusement of dancing.—Eccles. iii. 4 : ‘A time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance.’ *A true Christian, but no Hypocrite.*”

MY DEAR SIR, (OR MADAM.)—Your request that I would preach from Eccles. iii. 4, I cannot comply with at present, since there are some Christian duties more important than dancing, which a part of my people seem disposed to neglect. Whenever I perceive, however, that the duty of dancing is too much neglected, I shall not fail to raise a warning voice against so dangerous an omission. In the mean time, there are certain difficulties in the text which you commend to my notice, the solution of which I should receive with gratitude from a “True Christian.”

My first difficulty respects the *time* for dancing; for, although the text declares that there is a time to dance, yet when that time is, it does not determine. Now this point I wish to ascertain exactly, before I preach upon the subject; for it would be as criminal, I conclude, to dance at the wrong time, as to neglect to dance at the right time. I have been able to satisfy myself, in some particulars, when it is not “a time to dance.” We shall agree, I presume, that on the Sabbath-

day, or at a funeral, or during the prevalence of a pestilence, or the rocking of an earthquake, or the roaring of a thunder-storm, it would be no time to dance. If we were condemned to die, and were waiting in prison the day of execution, this would be no time for dancing; and if our feet stood on a slippery place beside a precipice, we should not dare to dance.

But suppose the very day be ascertained; is the whole day, or only a part, to be devoted to this amusement? And if part of the day only, then which part is "the time to dance?" From the notoriously pernicious effects of "*night meetings*," in all ages, both upon morals and health, no one will pretend that the *evening* is the "time to dance;" and perhaps it may be immaterial which portion of the day-light is devoted to that innocent amusement. But allowing the *time* to be ascertained, there is still an obscurity in the text. Is it a *command* to dance, or only a *permission*? Or is it merely a declaration of the fact, that, as men are constituted, there is a time when all the events alluded to in the text do in the providence of God to come to pass? If the text be a command, is it of universal obligation; and must "old men and maidens, young men and children," dance obedience? If a permission, does it imply a permission also to refrain from dancing if any are so disposed? Or, if the text be merely a declaration that there is a time when men do dance, as there is a time when they die, then I might as well be requested to take the first eight verses of the chapter, and shew in what consists the evil of those innocent practices, of hating and making war, and killing men, for which, it seems, there is "a time," as well as for dancing.

There is still another difficulty in the text, which just now occurs to me. What *kind* of dancing does the text intend? for it is certainly a matter of no small consequence to a "true Christian," to dance in a scriptural manner, as well as at the scriptural time.

Now, to avoid mistakes on a point of such importance, I have consulted every passage in the Bible which speaks of dancing; the most important of which permit me to submit to your inspection.

Exod. xv. 20: "And Miriam the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, took a timbrel in her hand; and all the women went out after her, with timbrels and with dances." This was on account of the overthrow of the Egyptians in the Red Sea.

Judges xi. 34: The daughter of Jephtha "came out to meet

him with timbrels and with dances." This also was on account of a victory over the enemies of Israel.

Judges xxi. 21 : The yearly feast in Shiloh, was a feast unto the Lord, in which the daughters of Shiloh went forth in dances. This was done as an act of religious worship.

2 Sam. vi. 14, 20 : "And David danced before the Lord with all his might." But the irreligious Michal "came out to meet David, and said, How glorious was the king of Israel to-day, who uncovered himself to-day in the eyes of the handmaids of his servants, as one of the vain fellows shamelessly uncovereth himself!" Dancing, it seems, was a sacred rite, and was usually performed by women. At that day, it was perverted from its sacred use by none but "vain fellows," destitute of shame. David vindicates himself from her irony, by saying, "It was before the Lord;" admitting, that had this *not* been the case, her rebuke would have been merited.

1 Sam. xviii. 6. On account of the victory of Saul and David over the Philistines, "the women came out of all the cities of Israel singing and dancing."

Psal. cxlix. 3 : "Let them praise his name in the dance." —Psal. xxx. 11 : "Thou hast turned for me, ~~my~~ mourning into dancing." The deliverance here spoken of was a recovery from sickness, and the dancing an expression of religious gratitude and joy.

Exod. xxii. 19 : "As soon as he came nigh unto the camp, he saw the calf and the dancing." From this it appears that dancing was a part also of idol worship.

Jer. xxxi. 4 : "O virgin of Israel, thou shalt again be adorned with thy tabrets, and go forth in the dances of them that make merry." This passage predicts the return from captivity, and the restoration of the Divine favour, with the consequent expression of religious joy.

Mat. xi. 17 : "We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned unto you, and ye have not lamented." That is, neither the judgments nor the mercies of God produce any effect upon this incorrigible generation. They neither mourn when called to mourning by his providence; nor rejoice with the usual tokens of religious joy, when his mercies demand their gratitude.

Luke xv. 25 : "Now his elder son was in the field; and as he came, and drew nigh unto the house, he heard music and dancing." The return of the prodigal was a joyful event, for which the grateful father, according to the usages

of the Jewish church, and the exhortation of the Psalmist, "praised the Lord in the dance."

Eccles. iii. 4: "A time to mourn and a time to dance." Since the Jewish church knew nothing of dancing, except as a religious ceremony, or as an expression of gratitude and praise, the text is a declaration, that the providence of God sometimes demands mourning, and sometimes gladness and gratitude.

Mat. xiv. 6: "But when Herod's birth day was kept, the daughter of Herodias danced before them, and pleased Herod." In this case dancing was perverted from its original object, to purposes of vanity and ostentation.

Job xxi. 7: "Wherefore do the wicked live, become old, yea, are mighty in power?"—Verses 11: "They send forth their little ones, like a flock, and their children dance. They spend their days in wealth, and in a moment go down to the grave. Therefore they say unto God, Depart from us, for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways. What is the Almighty, that we should serve him; and what profit shall we have if we pray unto him?" Their wealth and dancing are assigned as the reason of their saying unto God, "Depart from us," and of their not desiring the knowledge of his ways or of serving him or praying to him.

From the preceding quotations, it will sufficiently appear—

1. That dancing was a religious act, both of the true and also of idol worship.
2. That it was practised exclusively on joyful occasions, such as national festivals or great victories.
3. That it was performed by maidens only.
4. That it was performed usually in the day-time, in the open air, in high-ways, fields, or groves.
5. That men who perverted dancing from a sacred use to purposes of amusement, were deemed infamous.
6. That no instances of dancing are found upon record in the Bible, in which the two sexes united in the exercise, either as an act of worship or amusement.
7. That there is no instance upon record, of social dancing for amusement, except that of the "vain fellows," devoid of shame; of the irreligious families described by Job, which produced increased impiety, and ended in destruction; and of Herodias, which terminated in the rash vow of Herod, and the murder of John the Baptist.

COUNSELS OF THE AGED TO THE YOUNG.

It is a matter of serious regret, that young persons are commonly so little disposed to listen to the advice of the aged.— This prejudice seems to have its origin in an apprehension, that austerity and rigor naturally belong to advanced years ; and that the loss of all susceptibility of pleasure from those scenes and objects which afford delight to the young produces something of an ill-natured or envious feeling towards them. Now, it cannot be denied, that some of the aged are chargeable with the fault of being too rigid in exacting from youth the same steady gravity, which is becoming in those who have lived long, and have had much experience in the world : not remembering, that the constitutional temperament of these two periods of human life is very different. But it is greatly to be desired, that the lessons of wisdom taught by the experience of one set of men should be made available to the instruction of those who come after them. We have, therefore, determined to address a few short hints of advice to the rising generation, on subjects of deep and acknowledged importance to all ; but previously to commencing, we would assure them, that it is no part of our object to interfere with their innocent enjoyments, or to deprive them of one pleasure which cannot be shown to be injurious to their best interests. We wish to approach you, dear youth, in the character of affectionate friends, rather than in that of dogmatical teachers or stern reprovers. We would, therefore, solicit your patient, candid, and impartial attention to the following counsels :

I. **RESOLVE** to form your lives upon some certain principles, and to regulate your actions by fixed rules. Man was made to be governed by reason, and not by mere accident or caprice. It is important, therefore, that you begin early to consider and inquire, what is the proper course of human conduct, and to form some plan for your future lives. The want of such consideration is manifest in the conduct of multitudes. They are governed by the impulse of the moment, reckless of consequences. They have fixed no steady aim, and have adopted no certain principles of action. Living thus at random, it would be a miracle if they went uniformly right. In order to your pursuing a right path, you must know what it is, and to acquire this knowledge, you must di-

vest yourselves of thoughtless giddiness, you must take time for serious reflection. It will not answer, to adopt without consideration the opinions of those who may be about you; for they may have some sinister desire in regard to you; or they may themselves be misled by error or prejudice.—Persons already involved in dissipation, or entangled in error, naturally desire to keep themselves in countenance by the number of followers whom they can seduce into the paths of vice. As reasonable creatures, therefore, judge for yourselves what course it is right and fitting that you should pursue. Exercise your own reason independently and impartially, and give not yourselves up to be governed by mere caprice and fashion, or by the opinions of others.

II. While you are young, avail yourselves of every opportunity of acquiring useful knowledge. Reason should guide us; but without correct knowledge, reason is useless; just as the most perfectly formed eye would be useless, without light. There is in every man a natural thirst for knowledge, which needs only to be cultivated and rightly directed. All have not equal opportunities of obtaining important knowledge: but all have more advantages for this object than they improve. The sources of information are innumerable; the principal, however, are books and living men. In regard to the former, no age of the world which has passed, was so favored, with a multiplicity of books, as our own. Indeed, the very number, and diversity of character and tendency of authors now create one of the most obvious difficulties to those who are destitute of wise advisers. It would be an unwise counsel, to tell you to read indiscriminately whatever comes to hand. The press gives circulation not only to useful knowledge, but to error dressed up plausibly in the garb of truth. Many books are useless, others are injurious, and some are impregnated with a deadly poison. Waste not your time in works of idle fiction. Touch not the book which exhibits vice in an alluring form. Seek the advice of judicious friends in the choice of books.

But you may also learn much from listening to the conversation of the wise and good. There is scarcely a person so ignorant, who has lived any time in the world, that cannot communicate some profitable hint to the young. Avail yourselves, then, of every opportunity of learning what you do not know; and let not pride prevent you from seeking instruction, lest by this means you should betray your ignor-

ance. Cherish the desire of knowledge and keep your mind constantly awake, and open to instruction, from every quarter.

But, especially, I would recommend to you the acquisition of self-knowledge. "KNOW THYSELF," was a precept held in such high esteem among the ancients, that the honor of inventing it was claimed for several of their wisest men; it was believed by many to have been uttered by the oracle of Apollo, at Delphos; at which place, as Pliny informs us, it was conspicuously written in letters of gold, over the door of the temple. This species of knowledge is also inculcated in the Scriptures, as most useful and necessary. "Examine yourselves," says Paul, "whether you be in the faith; prove your own selves; what, know ye not your own selves?" And in the Old Testament the value of this knowledge is also fully recognized, where we are exhorted, "to commune with our own hearts," and "to keep our hearts with all diligence."—And the possession of it is made an object of fervent prayer: "search me, O God, and know my heart, try me, and know my thoughts,"—"examine me, O Lord, and prove me, try my reins and my heart." As this knowledge is necessary to all, so it is placed within the reach of all. But it cannot be acquired without diligent self-examination. To this duty there exists, in human nature, a strong repugnance; partly from natural, and partly from moral causes; so that, by most, it is entirely neglected to their exceeding great detriment. But, when it is attempted, we are in great danger of being misled by self-love and prejudice. To acquire any true knowledge of ourselves, some good degree of honesty and impartiality is essentially requisite. But an honest desire to arrive at the truth is not the only prerequisite to self-knowledge. The mind must be enlightened in regard to the standard of rectitude, to which we ought to be conformed. "The entrance of thy word giveth light." The word of God should dwell richly in us, and by the rules and principles of the sacred volume, we should form all our sentiments respecting ourselves. This is the candle of the Lord which searcheth the inward parts of man; and without such a lamp it would be as impossible to obtain any considerable degree of self-knowledge, as to distinguish the objects in a dark room, without a light. Self-examination, accompanied with a careful perusal of the Holy Scriptures, will lead us daily to a more thorough knowledge of our own character.

Beware of the common illusion of forming your estimate of

yourselves, from the favorable opinions of those around you. They cannot know the secret principles from which you act; and flattery may have much influence in leading them to speak in your praise. Seize favorable opportunities of judging of the latent strength of your passions. The fact is, that until some new conjuncture or occasion elicits our feelings, we are as ignorant of what is within us, as other persons.— Study also your constitutional temperament, and consider attentively the power which particular objects and circumstances have over you. You may often learn even from your enemies and calumniators what are the weak points in your character. They are sagacious in detecting faults; and generally have some shadow of pretext, for what they allege against us. We may, therefore, derive more benefit from the sarcasms of our foes than from the flattery of our friends.— Learn, moreover, to form a correct estimate of your own abilities, as this is necessary to guide you in your undertakings.

III. Be careful to form good habits. Almost all permanent habits are contracted in youth; and these do in fact form the character of the man through life. It is Paley, I believe, who remarks, that we act from habit nine times, where we do once from deliberation. Little do young persons apprehend the momentous consequences of many of their most frequently repeated actions. Some habits are merely inconvenient, others affect the principles of our conduct; and become sources of evil to an incalculable degree. As to the former, they should be avoided, as detracting from our comfort and ultimately interfering with our usefulness; but the latter should be deprecated as laying the foundation of a wicked character, and as standing in the way of all mental or moral improvement.

IV. Be particular and select in the company which you keep, and the friendships which you form. "Tell me," says the proverb, "what company you keep, and I will tell you what you are." "Evil communications corrupt good manners." Vice is more easily and extensively diffused by improper companions than by all other means. As one infected sheep communicates disease to a whole flock; so one sinner often destroys much good, by corrupting all the youth who fall under his influence. When vicious men are possessed of wit and fascinating manners, their conversation is most dangerous to the young. We would entreat you, dear young friends, to form an intimacy with no one whose prin-

ciples are suspicious. The friendship of profligate men is exceedingly dangerous. Listen not to their fair speeches, and warm professions of attachment. Fly from contact with them, as from one infected with the plague. Form no close alliance with such. No more think of taking them to your bosom, than you would a viper. Gaze not on their beauty, nor suffer yourselves to be charmed with their fascination of manners. Under these specious appearances, a deleterious poison lurks. "Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers," is the exhortation of scripture. Be especially careful therefore, in forming alliances for life. Seek a connection with the wise and good and you will become wiser and better by converse with such.

V. Endeavor to acquire and maintain a good reputation. "A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches." A ruined fortune may be recovered, a lost reputation never.—Young men are often laying the foundation of an unenviable reputation, while they are thinking of no such thing. They never dream that the character which they attain at school, will probably be as lasting as life. The youth who is known to be addicted to falsehood, knavery, treachery, &c. when arrived at the age of man, will be viewed by those who know him with distrust. A stain on the character is not easily washed out; at a distant period, the faults and follies of youth may be revived to a man's confusion and injury. But especially is the female character exquisitely delicate. A small degree of imprudence will often fix a stigma on the gay young lady, which no subsequent sobriety can completely erase.

We do not mean that the young should cherish a false sense of honor, which would lead them to fight and contend for reputation. No man ever secured or increased a good name, by shedding the vital blood of a human being. The reputation which we recommend must arise from a life of consistent and uniform well-doing. Prize such a character, as of inestimable value to your own peace, and as a most powerful means of usefulness. The most potent human engine of utility is influence; and this depends entirely on reputation.

DR. ALEXANDER.

TRIAL AND MARTYRDOM OF HUGH M'KAIL.

The following account of one of the Scottish Martyrs, who suffered in 1666, is extracted from "Crookshank's History of the state and sufferings of the Church of Scotland, from the Reformation to the Revolution." It presents a fair specimen of the wanton cruelty and wickedness practised towards the faithful Covenanters in those "killing times," and shews that they who counted not their lives dear, were men indeed of whom the world was not worthy.—Ed.

MR. HUGH M'KAIL, having finished his studies at the University of Edinburgh, was licensed by the Presbytery of Edinburgh, 1661, being then 20 years of age. He was sometime chaplain to Sir James Stuart of Kirkfield. All his public performances met with universal acceptance. But on the first of September, 1662, he preached his last public sermon in the Great Church of Edinburgh, from Song i. 7, in which, speaking of the many and great persecutions that had befallen the Church, he said, among other things, that the Church and people of God had been persecuted, both by a Pharaoh upon the throne, a Haman in the state, and a Judas in the Church. And though he made no application, yet the cases of Haman and Judas appeared, in the conviction of his adversaries, to have such a resemblance to the condition of the rulers of the State and Church at that time, particularly Lauderdale and Sharp, that a few days after, a party of horse was sent to apprehend him; but he happily escaped, and retired to his father's house, and soon after went abroad, and accomplished himself in his studies for a few years.

When he came home, he was the more qualified to be the object of the prelates' spite and malice. On December 4th he was brought before the Council and examined. Being urged to confess, he solemnly declared, that he knew no more than he had already confessed; whereupon they ordered the executioner to put his leg in the *boot* and proceed to the torture. He received ten or eleven strokes with considerable intervals, to the extraordinary compression of both flesh, sinews and bones, all which he endured with a most christian patience. Before he got the last three strokes, he protested solemnly, in the sight of God, that he could say no more, though all the joints in his body were in as great torture as that poor leg.

On the 10th of December, he and other seven received their indictments of treason, and were summoned to appear

before the justices on the 12th. But his torture and close imprisonment having thrown him into a fever, he was not able to make his appearance, and therefore on December the 11th, he gave in a petition to the Lords of Council, begging a respite, since he was neither able to walk nor stand. Together with his petition there was presented an attestation under the hands of seven surgeons, declaring his weak and sickly condition. Whereupon the council ordered two physicians and two surgeons, to visit him, and return their attestation, upon soul and conscience to the justices, by 10 o'clock, next day. They were also to give in their attestation, concerning other three indicted with him.

But as their attestation did not bear soul and conscience and the physicians refusing to rectify it in these terms, though they declared they could confirm the truth of it by their oath, the justices postponed their proceedings against Mr. M'Kail and the other two, but appointed John Neilson, of Corsack, though also contained in the attestation, with other four, to be brought to the bar, when they were condemned to be hanged on the Friday following.

Mr. M'Kail was brought before the justices on the 18th, with the other three who were arraigned with him; and being permitted to speak after the indictment was read, he declared, among other things, that he was not ashamed to avow that he was one of that afflicted and persecuted party and persuasion called Presbyterian. Then he spoke of the ties and engagements that were upon the land to God; and having commended the institution, dignity, and blessing of Presbyterian government, he said, that the last words of the National Covenant had always great weight upon his spirit. Whereupon the king's advocate interrupted him, and desired he would forbear that discourse, since he was not called in question for his persuasion, but for the crime of rebellion, in rising in arms against his Majesty's authority. To this Mr. M'Kail replied, that he was moved to speak in the manner he had done, from that weighty and important saying of our Lord Jesus: 'Whosoever shall confess me before men, him shall the Son of Man confess before the angels of God: but he that denieth me and my words before men, shall be denied before the angels of God.' As for rebellion, he said his accession was only simple presence with a sword, and that occasional. The advocate replied, that not only presence, such as he was charged with, was treasonable, but all inter-

communings, or keeping company with rebels, though for half an hour only.

Though they could prove no more against him than what he had owned, yet the jury brought him in guilty ; and he was condemned to be hanged at the market-cross of Edinburgh, December the 22d, with several others. When he received his sentence, he cheerfully said, 'The Lord giveth life, and the Lord taketh, blessed be the name of the Lord.' And as he was carried back to the Tolbooth, he said to the lamenting people, 'Though men cut us off, God will receive us ; trust in God ; trust in God.'

Being returned to prison, he immediately spent some time in prayer, for himself and those condemned with him, with great fervency and enlargement. Being afterwards asked, how his leg was that had been tortured ? he answered, with cheerfulness, 'the fear of my neck now maketh me forget my leg.' After that, he said to another friend, 'O how good news to be within four days' journey, to enjoy the sight of Jesus Christ ;' and protested he was not so cumbered how to die, as he had been sometimes to preach a sermon. His father got liberty to see him ; and their first meeting was very moving and affecting.

The last night of his life being Friday, December the 21st, he proposed and answered some questions. As, *first*, 'How should he, going from the Tolbooth, through a multitude of gazing people and guards of soldiers, to a scaffold and gibbet, overcome the impression of all these ?' To which he answered : 1. 'By conceiving a deeper impression of a multitude of angels, who are also onlookers ; according to that, we are a gazing-stock to the world, angels and men ; for the angels, rejoicing at our good confession, are present to convey and carry our souls, as the soul of Lazarus, into Abraham's bosom ; not to receive them, for that is Jesus Christ's work alone, who will welcome them to heaven himself, with the songs of angels and blessed spirits. But the angels are ministering spirits, always ready to serve and strengthen all dying believers. 2. As Stephen saw the heavens opened, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God, who then said, 'Lord Jesus, receive my spirit,' so, said he, do I believe that Jesus Christ is also ready to receive his dying sufferers.'—*Second*. He inquired, 'what is the way for us to conceive of heaven, who are hastening to it, since the word says, 'eye hath not seen, nor ear heard,' &c. To this he answered,—

'the Scriptures help us these two ways: 1. By way of similitude, as Rev. xxi. when heaven is held forth by a representation of a glorious city there described; and in the same place it is also termed the bride; but O how unlike are these two, a bride and a city? which shows the insufficiency and vast disproportion of all such similitudes;' and therefore he added, 2. 'That the Scripture furnisheth yet a more excellent way to conceive of heaven, viz., by conceiving the love of Christ to us, even the breadth, and length, the depth, height, and immenseness of that love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, and which is also the highest and sweetest motive of praise, 'unto him that loved us,' &c. and by holding forth the love of the saints to Christ, and teaching us to love him in sincerity, which is the very joy and exultation of heaven, Rev. v. 12. 'Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.' And no other thing but the soul breathing forth love to Jesus Christ, can rightly apprehend the joys of heaven.'

He went to bed a little after eleven, and, rising about five in the morning, he called his companion, John Wodrow, and said pleasantly, 'Up, John, you are too long in bed, you and I look not like men going this day to be hanged, since we lie so long.' He spent his time most comfortably in prayer and edifying discourse. His father coming to him that morning, his last words, after prayer and a little talk, were, that 'his sufferings would do more hurt to the Prelates, and would be more edifying to God's people, than if he were to continue in the ministry for 20 years.' And then he desired his father to leave him, else he would trouble him; 'and,' said he, 'I desire it of you, as the best and last service, to go to your chamber, and pray earnestly to the Lord to be with me on that scaffold; for how to carry there is my care, even that I may be strengthened to endure to the end.'

About two o'clock, he and his five fellow-sufferers were carried to the scaffold; his countenance was most pleasant and serene. When at the foot of the ladder, he directed his speech northward to the multitude, who heard him with great attention. His speech is printed in Naphtali, in which, among other things, he said, 'Although I be judged and condemned as a rebel amongst men, yet I hope, even in order to this action, to be accepted as loyal before God. Nay, there can be no greater act of loyalty to the king, as the times now

go, than for every man to do his utmost for the extirpation of that abominable plant, prelacy, which is the bane of the throne and of the country, which if it be not done, the throne shall never be established in righteousness, until these wicked be removed from before it. Sure I am, these, who are now condemned as rebels against him, are such as have spent much time in prayer for him, and do more sincerely wish his standing, and have endeavoured it more by this late action, so much condemned, than the Prelates by condemning them to death.'

Having done speaking to the people, he sung a part of Psal. xxxi. and then prayed with such power and fervency, as drew tears from many. When taking hold of the ladder to go up, he said with a loud voice, 'I care no more to go up this ladder and over it, than if I were going home to my father's house.' And hearing a noise among the people as he was going up, he called down to his fellow-sufferers, saying,— 'friends and fellow-sufferers, every step of this ladder is a degree nearer heaven.' Then, having seated himself upon it, he said, 'I do partly believe that the nobles, counsellors, and rulers of the land, would have used some mitigation of this punishment, had they not been instigated by the Prelates; so our blood lies principally at the Prelates' door. But this is my comfort now, that I know my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth. And now I willingly lay down my life for the truth and cause of God, the Covenants and work of Reformation, which were once counted the glory of this nation; and it was for endeavoring to defend this, and to extirpate that bitter root of prelacy, that I embrace this rope.' (The executioner putting the rope about his neck.) Then hearing the people weep, he said,— 'your work is not to weep, but to pray that we may be honorably borne through, and blessed be the Lord that supports me.' 'And that you may know the ground of my encouragement in this work, and what my hope is, I will read the last chapter of the Bible;' which having done, he said, 'here you see the glory that is to be revealed upon me; a pure river of water of life, &c. where the throne of God is, and the Lamb is in it; where his servants serve him, see his face, and his name is in their foreheads, and the Lord God giveth them light, and they shall reign for ever and ever; and here you see my access to my glory and reward. 'Let him that is thirst come, and whosoever will, let him take of the water'

life freely.' And here you see also my welcome, 'the spirit and the bride say, come.' Then he said, 'I have one word more to say to my friends, (looking down to the scaffold,) where are you? You need neither lament me, nor be ashamed of me in this condition; for I may make use of that expression of Christ's, 'I go to your father and my father, to your God and my God, to your king and my king; to the blessed apostles and martyrs, and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and Church of the first born, and to God the judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant.' And so I bid you all farewell, for God will be more comfortable to you than I could be, and he will also now be more refreshing to me than you could be: farewell, farewell in the Lord.' Then the napkin being put over his face, he prayed a little within himself; after which he put up the cloth, saying, he had one word more to say, in order to shew them the comfort he had in his death. And he thus said, 'I hope you perceived no alteration or discouragement in my countenance and carriage; and as it may be your wonder, so I profess it is a wonder to myself; but I will tell you the reason of it.— Besides the justness of my cause, this is my comfort, which was said of Lazarus, when he died, that the angels did carry his soul into Abraham's bosom; so that as there is a solemnity here, of a confluence of people, a scaffold, gallows and people looking out at windows; so there is a greater and more solemn preparation of angels in heaven to carry my soul to Christ's bosom.' And after speaking a little to the same purpose, he concludes thus: 'And now I leave off to speak any more to creatures, and turn my speech to thee, O Lord! And now I begin my intercourse with God, which shall never be broken off. Farewell, father and mother, friends and relations; farewell the world and all delights; farewell meat and drink; farewell, sun, moon, and stars:— Welcome, God and father; welcome, sweet Jesus, the mediator of the new covenant; welcome, blessed Spirit of grace, and God of all consolation; welcome glory; welcome eternal life; welcome death.' Then he desired the executioner not to turn him over, till he should put his own shoulders over first, which, within a little he did, saying, 'O Lord, into thy hands I commit my spirit; for thou hast redeemed my soul, Lord God of truth.'

Thus died Mr. Hugh M'Kail, a youth of about 26 years of

age, singularly pious, and of no small share of learning. He had seen the world. Never was a death more lamented; for among all the spectators, there was scarcely an eye that did not run down with tears. It is said, that he used to fast one day in the week, and had frequently, before this, signified to his friends the impressions had of his dying in this manner. His share in the rising was known to be small. And when he spoke of his comfort and joy in death, heavy were the groans of those present.

SERMON BY THE REV. MR. CARMICHAEL AT AUCHENSAUGH.

(From the Dumfries and Galloway Courier, Scotland.)

There is no exercise of the mind in which we more fondly indulge, or which is in itself more delightful and salutary, than is to be found in reviewing the pious and patriotic efforts of those estimable men who have achieved our civil and religious liberties. In modern days a spurious liberality is disposed to underrate these distinguished attainments, and to ascribe them to a morbid and enthusiastic piety; but as long as there shall be found an attachment to Scriptural principles and rational liberty these will be duly appreciated, and the memory of those undaunted and praise-worthy men be embalmed in enduring remembrance. Among these ancient attainments, the National and Solemn League and Covenants did occupy a distinguished place—distinguished not only for their own intrinsic excellence, but for the bulwark they afforded to the whole inestimable acquisitions of our Scottish Reformation.—Comparatively few indeed recognise the descending obligation of these deeds; but there are still, however, an honourable remnant who would wish to be faithful to their God, and comply with the Apostolic injunction in Philippians, c. iii. v. 4—“Let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same things,” and in their humble capacity and sphere give occasionally a public expression of their adherence to them.

To awaken at least a local interest in the events to which allusion has just been made, the Rev. Mr. Carmichael, minister of the Reformed Presbyterian Congregation at Scarbridge, Penpont, was solicited to preach at Auchensaugh, near Douglas, on Sabbath, the — current.—The locality was exceedingly appropriate to the occasion, being the spot on which the venerable M'Millan, assisted by Mr. M'Neil renewed the covenants one hundred and twenty five-years ago.

Among the rest we ourselves found the way to the scene of the solemnity and participated in those touching emotions which this spot might well excite. In consequence of the inclemency of the previous evening, and the somewhat threatening aspect of the morning, not a few, it is believed, were prevented from being with us, who under more favor-

able circumstances, would have been present ; still the attendance was vast, amounting, we should suppose, to between two and three thousand. The appearance which the worshippers presented, as they were seen flocking in crowds in every single direction, and through every variety of path, streamlets, marshes, and bogs, was impressively romantic, and recalled vividly to our memories the days Scotland's oppression and Scotland's wrong—when the champions of the covenant were necessitated to assemble for the worship of their God in some lonely dale, or heath clad mountain. As we approached the ground, endeared by many ennobling associations, the kindling emotions to which we willingly yielded ourselves were not a little heightened by the eager throng who rapidly thickened around us. At length we found ourselves in the neighbourhood of the tent ; and a situation more favourable both for speaking and hearing could not well be conceived, being a green and a sloping sward, extending in a circumference of pleasing verdure to many hundred yards. About half-past 11 the speaker made his appearance in the tent, and commenced the services of the day by a brief and appropriate introduction which was felt by us, and we believe, by the whole assembly, to have had a touching and solemnizing effect. Afterwards was announced the hundred and fifth Psalm, and the verses, from the 6th to the 13th, were sung, the audience having been reminded that in the same strains of praise their pious ancestors had commenced the devotional exercises of that memorable day on which they had, in the same spot, lifted up their hands in covenant to God. The prayer, which was, as usual, peculiarly suitable and impressive, being finished, the reverend gentleman read for his text from Jeremiah, fifteenth chapter and fifth verse—"Come let us join ourselves to the Lord in a perpetual covenant not to be forgotten." From these words the speaker proposed to establish, first, the lawfulness and expediency of National Covenanting, with a special reference to the federal transactions of our own nation ; and adduced as proofs, that covenanting is a moral duty, and that nations, as such are subjects of Jehovah's moral government. That nations are bound to adopt every consistent means for defending their rights and advancing their interests—and that there are recorded in the past history, and predicted of the future career of the church approved examples of National Covenanting. The second department of doctrine was the duty of maintaining an unflinching attachment to these vows, and of occasionally giving a public expression of that attachment, however limited the number of adherents may be. In support of this position it was argued that moral duty is immutable in its obligation,—that the ends originally contemplated by our covenants remain unattained ; because the covenants were attainments embodying a striking display of Divine interposition and human intrepidity. And, lastly, that thus was afforded to the scattered disciples of Christ, the vantage of a rallying point. The argumentative department of the subject was not prosecuted farther,—and the speaker then carried his audience back to those interesting occurrences which had hallowed the site they now occupied, and pourtrayed with moving tenderness the reverend ac-

tors and affecting incidents of the eventful era they had that day met to commemorate. The subject was improved, as furnishing an occasion of deep lamentation and serious apprehension, and concluded by appealing in a strain of emphatic warning against the tide of onward degeneracy and defection, which threatened but too speedily to overspread our favoured land, and leave but one unvarying scene of moral and religious desolation. The closing Psalm was the 137th, and verses from 1st to 7th were sung with a fervent melody peculiarly captivating. Earnest and wrapt attention was conspicuous throughout.— There were some present from 30 to 40 miles distant, but certain we are, that none departed who did not feel compensated for his toils, by the honest sincerity, eloquence and zeal, with which the duties of the day were performed. We wish, and do trust, that much and abiding good may ensue from the laudable and faithful efforts now made to revive the still decaying interest in a cause which has too long been permitted to slumber in shameful obscurity.

REMINISCENCES OF PALESTINE.

(From the London Quarterly Review.)

Whatever concerns the Holy Land, is heard and read with lively interest; its scenery, its antiquities, its past history and future glories engage alike the traveller and the divine—hundreds of strangers now tread the sacred soil for one that visited it in former days; Jerusalem is once more a centre of attraction; the curious and devout flock annually thither from all parts of America and Europe.

It would indeed be surprising if the wide diffusion of knowledge among all classes of the civilized world did not create a wider diffusion of interest for the history and localities of Palestine. All that can delight the eye, and feed the imagination is lavished over its surface; the lovers of scenery can find there every form and variety of landscape; the snowy heights of Lebanon with its cedars, the valley of Jordan, the mountains of Carmel, Tabor, and Hermon and the waters of Galilee, are as beautiful as in the days when David sang their praise, and more interesting by the accumulation of reminiscences. The land, unbroken by the toils of the husbandman, yet 'enjoys her Sabbaths;' but Eshcol, Bashan, Sharon, and Gilead are still there, and await but the appointed hour (so we may gather from every narrative) to sustain their millions; to flow, as of old, with milk and honey; to become once more "a land of brooks of water, of fountains, and depths that spring out of valleys and hills, a land of wheat, and barley, and vines and fig-trees, and pomegranates, olive-oil, and honey;" and to resume their ancient and rightful titles, "the garden of the Lord," and "the glory of all lands." What numberless recollections are crowded upon every footstep of the sacred soil! Since the battle of the five kings against four, recorded in the 14th chapter of Genesis, nearly two thousand years before the

time of our Saviour, until the wars of Napoleon, eighteen hundred years after it, this narrow but wonderful region has never ceased to be the stage of remarkable events. If, for the sake of brevity, we omit the enumeration of spots signalized by the exploits of the children of Israel, to which, however, a traveller may be guided by Holy Writ with all the minuteness and accuracy of a guide book, we shall yet be engaged by the scenes of many brilliant and romantic achievements of the ancient and modern world. Take the plain of Esdraelon alone, the ancient valley of Jezreel, a scanty spot of twenty-five miles long, and varying from six to fourteen in breadth; yet more recollections are called up here than suffice for the annals of many nations. Here by the banks of that ancient river, the river Kishon, the "stars in their courses fought against Sisera," the object of the immortal song of Deborah and Barak; and here too is Megiddo, signalized by the death of the "good Josiah." Each year, in a long succession of time, brought fresh events; the armies of Antiochus and of Rome, Egyptians, Persians, Turks and Arabs, the fury of the Sacarens and the mistaken piety of the Crusaders, have found, in their turn the land, 'as the garden of Eden before them, and have left it a desolate wilderness.'—Nor did it escape the ferocious gripe of a revolutionary war; the arch-destroyer of mankind sent his armies thither under the command of General Kleber, and in 1799 gave the last memorial of blood to those devoted plains.

But how small and transitory are all such reminiscences to those which must rivet the attention and feelings of the pious believer! If Johnson could regard that man as little to be envied, who could stand unmoved on Iona, or Marathon, or any spot dignified by wisdom, bravery or virtue, what must we say of one who cared not to tread Mount Zion or Cavalry!

This interest is not confined to the Christians—it is shared and avowed by the body of the Jews, who no longer conceal their hope and belief that the time is not far distant when "the Lord shall set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people which shall be left, from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea; and shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and shall gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth."

ITEMS OF INTELLIGENCE.

EPHESUS.—Stephens in his *Incidents of Travel*, after a graphic description of the ruins of this ancient city, thus remarks: "To the Christian, the ruins of Ephesus carry with them a peculiar interest; for here upon the wreck of heathen temples, was established one of the earliest Christian Churches; but the Christian church has followed the heathen temple, and the worshippers of the true God, have followed the worshippers of the great goddess Diana; and in the city where Paul preached, and where, in the words of the Apostle 'much people were gathered unto the Lord,' now not a solitary Christian

dwells. Verily, in the prophetic language of inspiration, 'the candlestick is removed from its place,' a curse seems to have fallen on it, men shun it, not a human being is to be seen among its ruins; and Ephesus in faded glory and fallen grandeur, is given up to birds and beasts of prey, a monument and a warning to nations."

Deaths of Scottish Ministers.—In a No. of the Scottish Presbyterian lately received, the Editor says, We are not aware that in any past year of the history of the Reformed Presbyterian church, so many of the fathers were gathered home. We have been called to announce in succession, the departure of the Rev. Mr. Reid, the Rev. Mr. Fairley, the Rev. Mr. Armstrong, and the Rev. Mr. Brown.* What solemn calls are these to diligence and faithfulness, on the part of their survivors! How should the hearers of the Gospel be roused from their lethargy, that they may improve their privileges while they enjoy them! How much need for prayer, that the Head of the Church may make early and ample provision for the flocks that have been bereaved of their pastors, by raising up an adequate supply of able and zealous preachers to meet the exigencies of the church!

At their last sessions the following preamble and resolution was passed in the New School Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, by a vote of 80 to 42:

Whereas, certain memorials have been sent up to this Assembly from several Presbyteries, desiring some action on the subject of Slavery—and whereas these memorials have been read and freely discussed by this body—and whereas this Assembly is made up of members from different portions of our extended country, who honestly differ in opinion both in regard to the propriety, as well as the nature of the ecclesiastical action desired in the case: therefore, *Resolved*, that this Assembly does most solemnly refer to the lower judicatories the subject of Slavery, leaving it to them to take such action thereon, as in their judgment will be most judicious, and adapted to remove the evil.

The announcement of Gen. Macomb's treaty of peace with the Seminoles, has been received by the people of Florida with great indignation. The "General Order" was placed in the *obituary* columns of the last Floridian, published at Tallahassee, with the preface and conclusion of the simple words, "shame! shame!! shame!!!" Great excitement prevails in the territory. It has taken the war into its own hands we understand, says the *Milledgeville Geo. Rec. of June 11.*—Great numbers of volunteers are offering themselves for the service, to the Governor, who, it was said, would at once take the field in person; and withal the Territorial Government has offered a reward of \$200 for every Indian taken or killed.

*To these we add the Rev. Wm. McMurtrie, of Whithorn, who died not long after the above account was written; making the fifth Reformed Presbyterian minister in the bounds of the Scottish Synod, who, in about a single year, was called from the church militant.—Ed. Ref. Pres.

THE

REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN.

VOL. III.

AUGUST, 1839.

No. VI.

THE DOMINION OF SIN.

(Continued from page 140.)

In a preceding number we considered the dominion of sin, *First* as it affected the exercise of love to God : and *Second* as it unfitted for the performance of duty. The latter topic was illustrated by reference to certain positive duties, for the neglect of which the dominion of sin is the only assignable reason. It is not to be understood, however, by our readers, that we designed to give an enumeration of the duties of religion ; or that those mentioned are the only ones affected by the prevalence of sin in the heart. So far from this, the dominion of sin exerts an evil influence in relation to every duty, whether it be a positive institution of christianity ; or an every day moral obligation. Duties of every class are, through the power of sin, neglected altogether, or partially performed, or performed from improper principles, which are esteemed of God no obedience to his authority. For "if they do not flow from that charity which predominates in the renewed heart, they are the works of one still 'dead in trespasses and sins,' and are properly denominated 'dead works.' They want the living principle which alone can render them good in the eye of him who searches the heart ; and however excellent in the outward performance, are earthly and immoral in their motive and design. They are corrupted in their source ; and if the root be rottenness, the blossom can be but dust."* We proceed to consider,

3. The dominion of sin in relation to resolutions of refor-

* Dods on the incarnation of the Eternal Word.

mation. So great is the power of sin that it is impossible for finite intelligence to follow it in all its operations in the human heart. Like the most subtle poison it frequently precludes every human means of detection. Yet, corrupted as man is by sin, he has still in his mind some sense of right and wrong; and however much this may be blunted by the predominancy of sin, or even "seared," it can never be obliterated. Vice may obtain the ascendancy; and for a time silence conscience; but, it cannot destroy the principle. The monitor which the Almighty has set in the human breast may slumber; and the sinner may have peace for a time in his wickedness, but it will by and by break through every barrier and restraint, till it spreads an alarm through every avenue of the heart. It is during seasons of this kind; that the sinner is made to see sin as a dreadful calamity. He does not feel it as exceeding sinful in itself; but he has painful emotions arising from the sense of danger which it occasions. It is then, that the sinner, in the bitterness of anticipated wrath, will make resolutions of amendment. He has found that iniquity is hurtful; and that it will be finally ruinous; and he engages in the strength of his own resolutions to work a reformation in his character. But he is not aware of the power of sin; he knows not the deceitfulness of his own heart.— And therefore having made the resolution to reform, he thinks himself on the road to improvement; and never doubts that he will be successful. Sin within lends its voice to the bewitching thought and flatters him in his folly. Conscience has been quieted; he has peace for the present, and imagines that all is right; and that when temptations assail him he can easily overcome them. It is thus that the sinner is deceived; it is thus that his good resolutions pass as the morning cloud and as the early dew. They have no abiding influence, except that of leaving him, perhaps, in a worse state than they found him. "When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places seeking rest, and findeth none. Then he saith I will return to my house whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept and garnished. Then goeth he and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there and the last state of that man is worse than the first." This is frequently exemplified in society. The sinner who has been awakened to a sense of the danger of sin, forms with apparent sincerity his purposes of reforma-

tion ; but yields to the solicitations of the tempter as soon as they are presented ; abandons his purposed reformation ; returns again to his sinful indulgences ; and sinks deeper and deeper in the ruins of sin, returning like the dog to his vomit and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire ! Remonstrate with such, and they may perhaps admit the folly and inconsistency of their conduct ; and as readily as ever make new resolutions ; but these, like the preceding, end in vanity and disappointment. And the reason is, the power of sin is too strong for the individual ; but, he knows it not.— He imagines that his heart is not bad ; that he has really no love for sin ; that his *frailties*, as he is pleased to call his sins, are not properly his own, but arise from the peculiar circumstances in which he is placed ; and that, if he were fairly set to it, he could easily obtain the mastery. But he never suspects that the evil is within his own breast, that an enemy possesses the citadel of his heart ; and that, till this enemy be discovered and forced from his strong hold, every determination and resolution to reform will be vain. Retired from the bustle of public activity, and from the seductive influence of the world, the sinner has sometimes a partial view of his danger ; when by sober thought he has been brought to something like reflection. But, instead of being humbled because of his multiplied and heinous sins, because of his violated promises and resolutions to reform, he becomes more puffed up with the superiority of his imagined power of virtuous disposition, and fancies that a real reformation has been obtained. But, anon the power of sin bursts the petty restraints which he had set upon it, and sweeps away his good resolutions, and enslaves him to his lusts and passions ; these, like chains of adamant, bind him closer and closer to his iniquity, till he has not sufficiency of strength left to form one virtuous resolution. Sin is like the letting out of water, when once it obtains free course it is not easily resisted ; the restraining force being removed, it flows with rapidly increasing violence, carrying in its unresisted current every thing that comes in its course : no opposition can stem the torrent till Divine Grace is implanted in the soul ; and the weakness of the sinful creature, is made perfect in the strength of our Almighty Redeemer. The picture we have presented is more than realized in the daily character of thousands. Single out an example if you choose from the multitude of sensualists. In the calm moments of reflection you would not find it difficult

perhaps to convince him of the folly of his conduct. But when he comes in contact with his dissipated companions, and his vicious habits are awakened by the proximity of gratification ; try then to persuade him to resist the temptation, and you will find every effort vain ; reason is lost in brutality ; and in the face of the keenest remonstrances and of his own resolutions, he will rush headlong into the vortex of criminal indulgence, though upon his guilty conscience may be pictured the flames of hell, and the avenging sword of retributive justice.

It is however not the sensualist and the openly wicked only that are carried away by iniquity. Even professed christians have cause to lament with the Psalmist, "iniquities have prevailed against me." The most pious, as they are still in the body, have the remains of sin which often carry them away from duty. And though sin does not rule over them, and lead them captive in its enthralling yoke, yet remaining corruption often disconcerts their good resolutions and hurries them into sinful indulgence.—It causes spiritual indolence which frequently unfits the believer for the warfare of faith. How great must be the power of sin in the unsanctified, where it reigns uncontrolled by any gracious principle when even its subdued and broken remains gave so much anxiety and distress to an apostle as to make him exclaim—"O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death ?"

4. The dominion of sin may be considered in relation to our happiness.

Sin is destructive to peace of mind. It is the fixed and eternal law of heaven, that pain should result from vicious conduct. Though it were demonstrably certain that the soul ceased to exist when the body died, reason would throw its suffrage on the side of holiness, because this brings with it peace in the present world. And this is more than a reward for all the self-denial included in a life of holiness. Whereas vice on the other hand is a punishment in itself; and the certain forerunner of eternal misery to every impenitent sinner. The law of Heaven is, "There is no peace saith my God to the wicked. The wicked fleeth when no man pursueth ; but the righteous are bold as a lion." And of the wicked it is said, Because thou lovest evil more than good ; God shall destroy thee for ever ; he shall take thee away and pluck thee out of thy dwelling-place and root thee out of the land of the living. Lo this is the

man that made not God his strength." Contrast with this the happiness of a man of God at a time when his enemies, judging from external circumstances, thought that he was altogether without comfort. "I laid me down and slept; I waked, for the Lord sustained me. I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people, that have set themselves against me round about." The consciousness of innocence and the assurance of God's favor created within him a joy and a gladness which all the splendor of the world could not give; nor all the malice and persecution of the wicked take away. The power and prosperity of the wicked induce the world to call them happy. But, it is a great practical mistake to suppose that the wicked *can* be happy; they may assume the appearance, but can never taste the reality. To think so, is judging from partial evidence; before a fair estimate can be formed of a man's happiness, his feelings and mental experience must be known. Could we follow the wicked man, who appears with so much self complacency and apparent enjoyment in the busy haunts of pleasure or traffic, into retirement, we would have little cause of envying either his prosperity or his happiness. Wealth and power, and the admiration and flattery of a fawning world, which too often accompany these, irrespective of personal worth, may produce joy; but it is a joy as fleeting as its cause is base and uncertain. And when the wicked lose these and are left to their own resources, then are they deprived of happiness. They feel none of the pleasures arising from a sense of reconciliation to God: or from the exercise of holy dispositions; they have no inward principles to stay and support them, and therefore become a prey to languor; nay, to what is infinitely worse, the gnawings of a guilty conscience which is unceasingly upbraiding them with their sins.

We do not say the greatest, but we say the *only* happiness which a reasonable creature can enjoy must flow from a sense of Divine goodness and a consciousness of holiness. Any thing short of this is only a shadow. God himself is the only portion that can impart true felicity to immortal man. "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile." This alone is happiness; and that which flows from other sources is vain and delusory! A knowledge of the pardon of sin, through the righteousness of Jesus Christ giving a title to life eternal; and sanctification of nature fitting for the enjoyment of life,

are the only security for a real and permanent happiness.— Judge then, if the wicked can be happy, who have never obtained mercy in the power of sin ; nor have been assimilated to the nature of God, by the regenerating grace of the Divine Spirit. Sin reigning in the deep-corruption of their nature, furnishes them only with painful recollections of the past ; presents nothing but convictions of guilt knowing the soul with a sense of deserved punishment. It causes a sting within, which is but the beginning of the worm which shall never die ; and the kindling of that flame which shall never be quenched, if the wicked persevere in their evil ways. This being the case with the sinner who enjoys all the prosperity that the world can afford, how miserable must he be who is poor in the things of this world, and in the prospect of a future state of being ? He is doubly cursed, having “ cast up his interest in both worlds.” No sense of Divine favor thrills his soul with the “ joy unspeakable and full of glory,” that was the apostle’s experience. No consciousness of assimilation to the holiness of God, solaces him in the midst of his sorrows. But, the viciousness of his unholy nature adds a poignancy to his poverty and disables him for bearing with fortitude the ills of life. He mourns at the dispensations of providence ; he curses God in his heart, and runs more and more after iniquity while misery haunts him in all his goings. Sin and suffering are indissolubly united in the law of God’s moral administration ; and in the moral nature which he hath bestowed on man. Pain follows sin ; where the latter is indulged the former must be endured. “ The folly of the fool shall destroy him. And though hand join in hand the wicked shall not be unpunished.” The miseries which sin produces in this life to the slave of corruption, overbalance a thousand fold all its momentary pleasures. The pleasure is transitory, but the misery is permanent. For example, where the slaves of intemperance or sensuality,—the drunkard and the voluptuary have gratified their lusts ; their enjoyment such as it is,—bestly and carnal, is gone : but sin has procured its reward ; it has left a sting in their bosoms which destroys their peace of mind. “ The wicked are like a troubled sea whose waters cast up mire and dirt.” In such cases the soul is racked by a sense of guilt, and the sinner loathes himself for having submitted to so foul a passion. But, how is his peace of mind disturbed when the threatenings of God’s law are brought up by the

accusations of his own guilty conscience. Then he feels that he has bartered his peace and happiness for a momentary gratification which degrades him in the opinion of the good, among his fellow men; and banishes him from the enjoyment of his God.

RULES FOR UNDERSTANDING ARIGHT THE TEN COMMANDMENTS.

To understand aright, the perfection, spirituality, and great extent, of the Divine law, is necessary to qualify believers, for delighting in it after the inward man, and for performing acceptable obedience to all its precepts. The holy Psalmist, therefore prayed thus: "Give me understanding, and I shall keep thy law; yea, I shall observe it with my whole heart." Psal. cxix. 34. "I am a stranger in the earth; hide not thy commandments from me." Psal. cxix. 19.

Seeing the ten commandments contain very much in a few words, which cannot but render it the more difficult to apprehend their full meaning, the *rules*, to be carefully observed for understanding them aright, are chiefly the following:

1. Where a duty is required, the *contrary sin is forbidden*; Isa. lviii. 13, Prov. xxx. 17; and where a sin is forbidden, the *contrary duty is required*. Eph. iv. 28. Every commandment forbids the sin which is opposite to, or inconsistent with, the duty which it requires. The duties required in the law, cannot be performed, without abstaining from the sins forbidden in it; and the sins forbidden, cannot be avoided, unless the contrary duties be performed. We must not only cease to do what the commands forbid, but to do what they require; otherwise we do not obey them sincerely. A negative holiness is far from being acceptable to God. Every affirmative precept includes a negative one, and every negative command contains an affirmative. Every precept, whether affirmative or negative, has two parts; it requires obedience and forbids disobedience. The fourth commandment, for instance, whilst it requires us to "remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy," forbids us to profane that holy day. The Lord Jesus, accordingly, comprehends all the negative, as well as affirmative precepts, in these two great

affirmative commandments, To love God and our neighbour. It is also remarkable that, where a promise is annexed to a precept, the contrary threatening is included; Exod. xx. 12. and that, where a threatening is annexed to a prohibition, the contrary promise is implied. Jer. xviii. 7, 8. Psal. xxiv. 4. 5.

2. Where a duty is required, *every duty of the same kind*, is also required; and where a sin is forbidden, *every sin of the same sort*, is prohibited. Under one duty, all of the same kind are commanded; and under one sin, all of the same sort are forbidden. When the Lord commands us, to "have no other gods before him," he requires us, to know and acknowledge Him, to be the only true God, and our God, and to love, worship, and glorify him accordingly. When he commands us, to "remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy," he requires us, to engage in prayer, praise, hearing the word, receiving the Sacraments, and in all the other duties of that holy day. Where a duty is commanded, the *avowing* of that duty is required likewise. Believing in Christ, and profession of faith in him, are enjoined in the same commandment. Rom. x. 10. Where the duties of children to parents, are commanded, not only are all the duties of inferiors, to superiors in every other relation, required, but also all the duties of superiors to inferiors. On the other hand, when the Lord forbids us to kill, he forbids us also to strike, or wound our neighbour, or to harbour malice and revenge against him. Matth. v. 21, 22. When he forbids to commit adultery, he at the same time prohibits fornication, incest, and all impure imaginations, affections, and purposes. Matth. v. 27, 28. Where great sins are expressly forbidden, all the lesser sins of that sort are forbidden: and they are prohibited under the names of the grosser sins, in order to render them the more *detestable* and *horrible* in our view; as also to show us, how abominable, even the very least of them is, in the sight of an infinitely holy and righteous God.*

3. That which is forbidden, is *at no time* to be done; but that which is required, is to be done, only when the Lord affords opportunity. What God forbids, is sin, and is never

* Instead of attempting an explanation of each of the ten commandments, which would increase too much the size of this volume, I refer the devout reader to Boston's excellent Exposition of them, in his Sermons on our Shorter Catechism.

to be done: Rom. iii. what he requires, is always our duty; Deut. iv. 8, 9; and yet every particular duty is not to be performed *at all times*. Matth. xii. 7. That which is forbidden, is at all times sinful, and therefore ought never, on any pretence whatever, to be done. Gen. xxxix. 9. That which is required, as it is always our duty, so it is to be performed as often as opportunity is afforded, and as it does not interfere with the performance of our other duties. We are commanded for instance, to honour our parents; but unless they be alive, or present with us, we have not the opportunity of performing this duty. In the third commandment, we are required to use, in a holy and reverent manner, the names and ordinances of God, especially in all our acts of worship; but we cannot, and should not, be *every moment* employed in acts of immediate worship; for we are commanded to abound in the performance of other duties, equally necessary. Although the affirmative part of every precept, is of as high authority and binding force, as the negative part; yet, it does not bind us to the performance of *every* particular duty, at *all* times: it obliges us to be always in a suitable frame for our *present* duty, but not to be always in the actual performance of *every* duty. It binds us to the performance of a particular duty, every time that we are called to perform that duty; every time in which, the performance of it, can glorify God, and the omission of it, dishonour him. There is, however, *one* affirmative precept, which bind us to perform the duty required, at *all* times; namely, the commandment to "love the Lord our God, with all our heart, with all our soul, with all our strength, and with all our mind." Matth. xxii. 37—39. Lev. xix. 17. There is no state, nor time, nor place, in which, we can be exempted from the duty of loving God supremely.

4. Whatever we ourselves, are commanded to be, or to do, or to forbear; we are obliged to do all that it is possible for us to do, according to our places and stations in society, to make others around us, to be, or do, or forbear the same. We are strictly bound, according to our different stations, to endeavour that, every duty be performed, and every sin be forborne, by all to whom our influence can extend. Gen. xviii. 19. Deut. vi. 6, 7. Accordingly, in the fourth commandment, are these words; "The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it, thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, nor thy man-servant, nor

thy maid-servant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates." Exod. xx. 10. Here, the duty both of the servant, and of the stranger, is required of the master. Whatever sin is forbidden to ourselves, we are forbidden to partake with others in it, either by example, advice, connivance, or by giving them occasion to commit it. "Be not partaker of other men's sins: keep thyself pure." 1 Tim. v. 22. However free of personal transgressions, we may pretend to be; yet we are transgressors of the law, so far as, by connivance or otherwise, we are partakers of the sins of others. Ep. v. 11. What duty soever, others around us are commanded to perform, we are required, by advice, encouragement, prayer, and other helps, to assist them in performing it. 2 Cor. i. 24. How much iniquity, alas, do many even of the saints themselves commit, by not attending more than they usually do, to this rule!

5. The same duty is required, and the same sin is forbidden, in different respects, in *several*, and even in *all* the Divine commands. The transgression of one precept, is virtually a breach of all. They are so intimately connected together, that, if the divine authority be disregarded in any one of them, it is slighted in all. Col. iii. 5. 1 Tim. vi. 10. James ii. 10. 1 John iv. 20. The first commandment for example, is so closely connected with all the other precepts, that it is obeyed in all our obedience, or disobeyed in all our disobedience, to any one of them. Obedience or disobedience to it, is virtually, obedience or disobedience to the whole law.

6. Where a duty is required, the use of all the *means* of performing it aright, is required; and where a sin is forbidden, every *cause*, and even every *occasion* of it, are prohibited. When chastity in heart, speech, and behaviour, is required, temperance and diligence in our lawful employments, as means of preserving it, are, at the same time enjoined. On the other hand, when the Lord forbids the profanation of the Sabbath, he at the same time, forbids all the employments and recreations, by which men profane that holy day. When he forbids uncleanness, he at the same time, prohibits drunkenness, gluttony, idleness, or whatever else may be an incitement to that sin. Where he forbids murder, he also prohibits wrath, malice, and revenge, which prompt men to commit that crime. Matth. v. 21, 22. 1 John iii. 15. When children are commanded to honour their parents, parents are, in the same command, enjoined to regard their child-

ren with parental affection, and to bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Eph. vi. 4.

7. No sin is at any time to be committed, in order to *avoid or prevent a greater sin*. We must not "do evil, that good may come." Rom. iii. 8. The very least sin ought not, on any account whatever, to be committed. None of the dispensations of adorable Providence, lays a man under a *necessity* of sinning. "Let no man then say, when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man." James i. 13. As no man is allowed by the law, so none is necessitated by the providence, of an infinitely holy and righteous God, to commit one sin, in order to prevent another. We are commanded in the law, not only to abstain from all evil, but even "from all *appearance* of evil." 1 Thess. v. 22. But, while no sin must be committed, in order to prevent a greater sin; some duties required, should, as was observed above, give place to other duties.

8. The commandments of the second Table of the law, must *give place* to those of the first, when they *cannot both be observed together*. Our love of our neighbour, for instance, ought to be subjected to our love of God; and we are enjoined to hate, that is, to love in a *less degree*, father and mother, for Christ, when our love of them comes, at any time, in competition with our love of him. Luke xiv. 26. When our love of our nearest relations, and dearest friends, becomes inconsistent with our love of Christ, the former must yield to the latter. We must prefer Christ, and God in Christ, to all the other objects of our esteem and affection. Matth. x. 37. When the commands of our superiors among men, are at any time, contrary to the commandments of the Lord, then, "we are to obey God rather than men." Acts iv. 19. But although our natural duties to men, required in the second Table of the law, must give place to our natural duties to God, required in the first; Acts v. 29, yet, the *positive* duties enjoined in the first Table, must yield to the *natural* duties required in the second, when they cannot *both* be performed at the same time." Hos. vi. 6.

9. In our obedience, we should have a special, and constant respect to *the scope* and *final end*, at which the Lord aims, by all the commandments in general, or by any one of them in particular. The great end at which, God aims in general, in subordination to his own manifested glory, is

perfect holiness of heart and life in his people, even as he himself is holy. 2 Cor. vii. 1. Whatever obedience, therefore, he enjoins, he requires that it be absolutely perfect; and whatever obedience we perform, we are bound to aim at perfection in it; Philip. iii. 14; and to assure ourselves, that in proportion as we fall short of perfection, we sin, and come short of his glory. This rule, in the hand of the Spirit of truth, is of special use, to teach both sinners and saints, the true meaning of every Divine precept. The aim of God, in each of his commandments, is perfection of holiness or of conformity "to the image of his Son, that he may be the first-born among many brethren." Rom. viii. 29. And the perfection in obedience, which he requires, is, as has been hinted above, a perfection of *principle*, that our obedience proceed from "a pure heart, from a good conscience, and from faith unfeigned; 1 Tim. i. 5, a perfection of the *parts* of it, so that it be universal in respect of all the commands, or of all things written in the book of the law; a perfection of *degrees*, that every part of it, be raised to the very highest degree of conformity to the holy law; and a perfection in respect of *duration*, that from the beginning, to the end of our life, we continue "in all things, which are written in the book of the law, to do them."

10. Lastly, The beginning and the end, as well as the sum, of all the commandments, is *love*. "Love is the fulfilling of the law." Rom. xiii. 10. "The end of the commandment is love." 1 Tim. i. 5. As all the blessings of God to his people, flow from, and are comprised in, his love to them; so all the duties of man to God, are comprehended in love to Him. The love of God to man, is the sum of the gospel; the love of man to God, is the sum of the law. Love to God as our God, is the sum of what is required in the first Table of the law; and love to our neighbour, is the whole of what is enjoined in the second. The former is called, "The first and great commandment;" and the latter is "like unto it." These two commandments are so closely connected together, that obedience to the one, cannot be performed, without obedience to the other. We cannot love God supremely unless we love our neighbour as ourselves; nor can we love our neighbour, who was made in the image of God, as ourselves, except we love God who created him in his own image, with supreme affection. 1 John iv. 20. All the duties required in the first Table of the law, are but

the native expressions of supreme love to the Lord our God ; and all the duties enjoined in the second, are only the genuine expressions of sincere love to our neighbour.

Now, is it so, that our love of our neighbour, is to be subjected or subordinated to our love of God ? We may hence learn, *how* we ought to love God, and *how* to love our neighbour. We must love God, *more* than we love ourselves, and love our neighbour *as* ourselves. We are bound to love the Lord our God supremely, or with all the powers of our souls, and to love our neighbour co-ordinately, or as ourselves. To love the Lord our God, according to the commandment, with all our *heart*, is to love him with a perfect degree of sincerity. Rom. xii. 9. To love him with all our *soul*, is, to love him spiritually and affectionately, and that in a perfect degree ; and to express our ardent affection to him, by every instance of obedience in which, any faculty of our souls can be exercised. To love him with all our *strength*, is, to love no other amiable object, so much as Him, and none, but in him and for him, or in subordination to him. Luke xiv. 26. And to do it with all our *mind*, is, to regard him with an intelligent love, or a superlative esteem ; and to love him principally, for his own infinite amiableness, as manifested especially, in the person and work of our adorable Redeemer. Song i. 3, Philip. iii. 8. The highest degree of love, then, of which man, even in his state of innocence, was capable, is due to our God ; but a less degree of it, is due to ourselves and our neighbour. To love our neighbour *as* ourselves, is, to love him in the same *manner*, as we ought to do, ourselves. A lawful and regular love of ourselves, is here implied ; for it is made the pattern according to which, we ought to love others. This regular self-love is, an habitual desire and endeavour, always to aim at the happiness of our souls and bodies, in subordination to the glory of God. To love, then, our neighbour as ourselves, is, to love him as constantly, as sincerely, as tenderly, as ardently, as actively, and as inviolably, as we love ourselves. Eph. v. 29. This love of our neighbour should be expressed, by our doing to him, all that we would, from a well informed judgment, have him to do to us, in the same relations and circumstances. We are required to love all men, with a love of benevolence and beneficence ; but, the saints, not only with a love of benevolence, but with a love of complacency and delight. Psal. xvi. 3. This love

of God and of our neighbour, must flow "from a pure heart, from a good conscience, and from faith unfeigned." 1 Tim. i. 5. And when it proceeds from these principles, it is "the fulfilling of the law," the essence of true holiness, and "the bond of perfectness." Reader, trust in the Lord Jesus with all thy heart, for all his salvation to thyself in particular, and especially for purity of heart, and peace of conscience; and then, thy faith will work by love.

It is evident from what has been said, that we were all born into the world, *utterly destitute of conformity* to the holiness of God's law. We were "born in iniquity and conceived in sin." Psal. li. 5. We came into the world, entirely destitute of the moral image of God, and wholly under the dominion of natural depravity. Job xi. 12. The holy law commands us to love God supremely; but we by nature love ourselves supremely. It enjoins us to love our neighbour as ourselves; but we on the contrary hate our neighbour, especially, in relation to the momentous concerns of his immortal soul. The law requires us, to delight supremely in the Lord our God; but we, instead of this, delight only in sin, or at least, in that which is not God. We are commanded in the law, to "do all to the glory of God;" but we are naturally disposed, to do all to our own glory. These corrupt propensities are native, in the heart of every descendant of Adam, and are directly contrary to the holy nature and law of God. Psal. liii. 1. 3. So great is the contrariety, between the holy nature of God as expressed in his law, and the nature of a sinner; that God is said to hate sinners, Psal. v. 5, and sinners, to hate him. Rom. viii. 7. And no man has attained a true conviction of his sin, but he, whom the Holy Spirit has made to see and feel, that by nature he is a *hater* of God, and of the whole revealed character of God.

Hence it is manifest also, that the *very best actions* of unconverted persons, are *sinful* in the sight of God. Such persons, indeed, do many things that are materially good, but, nothing that is formally good: nothing from a good principle, in a good manner, and to a good end. All that they do, is done, either directly or indirectly, in opposition to the holy commandments of the Lord; and so, it is sinful and hateful to him. Prov. xv. 8. Rom. viii. 8. Heb. xi. 6: How then can such performances, atone for their past transgressions, and entitle them, to the favor of God, and eternal life?

Ah, how deep the infatuation, how great the folly, of relying on our own righteousness, for a title to eternal salvation!

From what has been said; it is evident, that it is a *righteous thing* with God, to require of unregenerate sinners, *what they cannot perform*. He commands them to love him with all their hearts, and so, to perform perfect and perpetual obedience to his righteous law; but, in their state of unregeneracy, they have no moral ability, to perform a single duty according to the commandment. Rom. v. 6. It is infinitely just however, that the Lord should require of sinners, what they are unwilling, and so, unable to perform; and, that he should condemn them to death, in all its latitude and extent, for not performing it. For, nothing can be more just and reasonable, than that they should yield *perfect* obedience to *his* righteous law. He gave them, in the first Adam, sufficient ability to perform perfect obedience and they chose to deprive themselves of it, by their transgression in him, as their federal representative. Eccles. vii. 29. Rom. v. 12. 19. Besides, they have no inability but what is *voluntary*. They *love* the depravity of their hearts, and *choose* to commit iniquity. Indeed, if the Lord could not justly require of sinners, what they cannot perform; it would inevitably follow, that they could have no need, either that the Son of God should fulfil all righteousness for them, or that, his Holy Spirit should implant holiness in them. To say then, that God cannot *justly* require sinners to perform that obedience to him, which, of themselves they are unable to perform, tends to undermine, at once, both the law and the gospel.

To conclude: We may hence see that, no influences of the Holy Spirit, but such as are *irresistible*, will suffice to convert a sinner to God, and to the love and practice of sincere obedience to his law. So strong and inveterate is the corruption, which is in the hearts of unregenerate sinners, that elect sinners do resist the saving operation of the Spirit, as much, and as long as they can; and were it not, that the adorable Spirit is *infinitely efficacious* in his operation, they would all so resist Him, as to hinder him from converting them. An infinitely powerful operation of the Holy Spirit, such as will be sufficient to conquer all the resistance made to it, by sinners; is necessary to change their natures, and to make them willing to believe in Jesus Christ, and return through him, to God as their God. Accordingly, the Holy:

Spirit, in converting sinners, is in Scripture represented, as "putting his laws into their minds, and writing them in their hearts," as "creating them in Christ Jesus unto good works," as quickening and raising them up from the dead, and as "opening their eyes," and "calling them out of darkness into his marvellous light." Hence, they are said to be born of the Spirit, to be new creatures, and to walk in newness of life. This great and wonderful change is indispensably necessary to true conversion. Happy, inexpressibly happy are you, reader, if you be a subject of it! No sooner do you begin to experience this happy change, than you begin, so to believe the gospel, as to have communion with the second Adam, in his righteousness and salvation, and so to obey the law, as to "walk worthy of the Lord to all pleasing."

Colquhoun.

CIVIL GOVERNMENT SUBJECTED TO CHRIST AS MEDIATOR.

(From the Written Law.)

Had it not been for the opposition of ungodly civil rulers, and those who sinfully seek their favour, there is no reason to believe that any professor of the christian religion would ever have called in question the doctrine of the Mediatorial dominion of Christ over the whole empire of God. As Herod and Pontius Pilate; rulers and their ungodly subjects have conspired together against the Lord and his anointed, to cast his cords from them; so time serving professors, have sought an apology for them, in the subterfuge that the kingly authority of Messiah is limited to the church. If any truth can be demonstrated from the Holy Scriptures, it is proved in the preceding particular, that Christ as Mediator rules over natural things. However extensive or however limited the power of civil rulers may be, in one point all are agreed, that it extends to earthly things, or to the rights of property. It issues charter rights, or deeds of title to the soil, from the cultivation of which men derive their subsistence. Now, if the earth belongs to the Lord Christ as has been fully proved, then in this thing, they must be subjected to him. They make dispositions of property that is his, and surely he has a right to dictate in what manner this shall be done. In Israel, the various tribes had their inheritances as-

signed them by lot, which was an appeal to Christ who promised that land to Abraham. It has been emphatically called the land of promise; and "in Christ Jesus all the promises are yea and amen." 2 Cor. i. 20. To deny consistently the doctrine of civil government being subjected to Christ, it must also be denied that temporal blessings are dispensed by him even to the saints; for their property, in common with all others, is subject to regulations. To this extreme, some have been driven, in their zeal to defend civil rulers in their refusal of allegiance to him "who is Lord of all." It is painful that even with professors of Christ's religion, a point such as this, requires to be reasoned. But so it is. That Adam by the violation of the covenant of works forfeited a title to life, is undeniable. "In the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die." The forfeiture of life includes that of all that sustains life. If Christ then does not give us a right to our daily bread, and as the title was lost in Adam, then we use what is not ours. But "the saints use the earth as heirs." They have a right to it by inheritance, through Christ. The civil ruler then, who has committed to him the guardianship of the rights of property, must be under subjection to Christ Jesus, as he is the Mediator of the New Covenant.

It will not avail to reply against this process of reasoning, to say, that civil government originates in the law of nature, and is not founded in the new covenant, as all gospel ordinances are. This is true. But it does not follow that it is not "given to him, among the "all things," to which his mediatorial lordship extends. Adam and Eve and all their posterity were, in the covenant of works, subject to the law of nature; and if all that was originally under the law in that form, must be excepted from the objects of Christ's authority, it would leave him without any person or thing over which to reign. Wherever it originated, the Father surely had a right to subject it to the dominion of his Son.

It is, however clearly asserted in the Holy Scriptures, that civil government is subjected to the Mediatory authority. "All power," says Christ, "is given to me—in earth." Matthew xxviii. 18. "If civil government be a "power on earth," it is given to Christ. Here, again the remark applies, that it could not be given to him as God, for as God it was his by nature, and therefore the donation must be given to him in

the Mediatorial character. Christ does not say it WILL BE GIVEN to me, when the powers on earth shall acknowledge me; he says "IT IS GIVEN TO ME," I HAVE IT NOW.

The purpose for which this power is granted to Christ, appears from its connection with the ministerial commission of his apostles:—"Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things, whatsoever I have commanded you." The imperial government of Rome claimed, at that time, dominion over the whole world. It was the fourth of those monarchies, that have been called universal, and claimed the subjection of the whole earth to its dominion. It had taken under its protection the idolatrous forms of religion, in all the nations subjugated by its arms. The usurpation of power, in which that government was founded, the despotic, and tyrannical administration of its usurped authority, the idolatry and profligacy of the persons who filled its offices of state, and all the false worship of the empire, were adverse to the pure and heavenly doctrines and precepts which Christ commanded his ministers to publish among the nations. The worship enjoined by the magistracy of the empire was in open hostility to that of the church of Christ. In that assemblage of nations subjugated to the Roman Cæsars, the apostles were to execute their commission, in teaching a religion adverse to the maxims, practices and commands of the imperial throne. All power in the Roman earth, says Christ, is given to me;—the whole machinery of the empire is put under my Mediatorial authority, my kingdom extends over his whole civil rule; so that as Mediator, I have a right by donation from my Father, to set up and establish my church, in opposition to that kingdom of darkness, over which Cæsar reigns. "Wherefore," because I reign as Mediator over the empire, "go ye and teach all things whatsoever I have commanded you." Had the kingly power of Christ been limited to the church, he could not as Mediator have sent his ministers to proclaim this gospel in Cæsar's dominions, where he had no disciples.

Into whatever nations the ambassadors of Christ have travelled from the day when Christ gave this commission to the present time, whether under the name of apostles, evangelists, ministers or missionaries, on their first entrance into them, they have found the Pagan civil powers as adverse to

the gospel of the kingdom, as those of Rome were at the beginning of the promulgation of the gospel. The same commission, with the same preface, has vested them with authority, and encouraged them, to go forward in "lengthening the cords and stretching out the curtains of Zion's habitation." "All power is given unto me on earth. Go ye, therefore, &c." The right to subdue all nations to the obedience of faith, in opposition to all Pagan, Mahometan and other governments adverse to the pure religion of the Bible, necessarily involves the extension of his kingly authority over the magisterial rule of the nations. His ministers make no intrusion into territories not belonging to their Master, when they commence and prosecute the work of teaching or discipling the nations inhabiting any part of the earth; for unto Christ is given "all power on earth." In order to engage in their ministerial labours, they have not been bound nor are they permitted, to ask a licence from any Cæsar, Monarch, Emperor, King or President, for they have their commission of Him, who is over them all—"Prince of the kings of the earth." Rev. i. 5. How few of the kings of the nations, had the Apostles or ministers of Jesus been under obligations to ask of them permission to preach the gospel in their dominions, would have accorded them the grant? How preposterous would it have been for the ambassadors of God's eternal Son, to have been required to ask liberty from the kings of the earth, to execute their commission!

The proof of Christ's lordship over the civil governments of the world does not rest alone on this declaration—"all power—on earth is given to me," It is inscribed on numerous pages of the book of God's revelation, so plainly "that he who runs may read." "Moses was king in Jeshurun." Deut. xxxiii. 5. He was appointed of God an extraordinary officer to organize the Israelitish church and commonwealth—to announce the institutions, proclaim the laws and constitute both the ecclesiastical and civil government of the Hebrews. That he exercised the power of a civil magistrate is undeniable. Did God, as an absolute sovereign, out of Christ, give him his civil commission, and Christ as Mediator his authority as exercised in the church? Is there any hint that this was so? None—not the least. On the contrary, it is manifest that the Mediator, as Mediator invested him with all his authority. All must admit it was Messiah who appeared to him in the burning bush, and gave him com-

mandment to go and conduct Israel from Egypt to the borders of Canaan. He who gave him his commission had authority not over Israel only, but over Pharaoh. I will send thee unto Pharaoh that thou mayest bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt." Ex. iii. 10. "And afterward Moses and Aaron, went in and told Pharaoh, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel let my people go." Ex. v. 1. This command to Pharaoh, was issued in the name of Israel's God, under authority given to Moses and Aaron, by the angel that appeared in the burning bush. If Christ had authority to command Pharaoh, so he had, over all the kings of the nations.

He who appeared in the burning bush, dwelt in the pillar of the cloud, and of him God says: "My name is in him." Ex. xxiii. 21. The *name* of God in this passage is expressive of the authority with which the Redeemer is vested, as well as of the glory of his Godhead. He is called, God's angel or messenger. "For mine angel shall go before thee." v. 23. All that is uttered—all the authority exercised by this angel, is the work of Christ as Mediator. He governed, by the instrumentality of Moses, all their civil polity, and was the commander in chief of their armies, when they went forth to battle. He gave them a body of civil laws, as a legislator; he applied these laws, in the exercise of judiciary power; and they were executed at his command.

Joshua made war on the thirty and two kings of the Canaanitish nations, demolished their thrones, and executed the divine judgment in slaughtering them, at the command of him, who met him on the banks of Jordan, as "the captain of the Lord's hosts." He was the Lord of hosts, Christ as Mediator.

The prophet Samuel was undoubtedly an officer in Israel, by authority from Christ, and he anointed both Saul and David. But why should examples be multiplied in what no Bible believer can possibly gainsay—that Christ as Mediator king exercised lordship over Israel in all civil things?

In this consisted the peculiar glory of the Hebrew commonwealth—this made their land, "the glory of all lands." The pious Israelites did not say as so many professors of religion do in our times:—"We will not have this man to reign over us," in any civil matter. Their songs of praise indited by the Holy Spirit, abound with ascriptions of praise to him as their king and as the ruler among all nations. "I have set my king upon my holy hill of Zion—Be wise now

therefore, O ye kings: be instructed ye judges of the earth—Kiss ye the Son." Psal. ii. 6, 10, 12. He is acknowledged as "reigning in Zion, and to the ends of the earth gloriously." "God is gone up with a shout, the Lord with the sound of a trumpet"—"God reigneth over the nations"—"The princes of the people are gathered together" (to do homage to him who is gone up with a shout)—"For the shields," civil governments, "of the earth belong unto the Lord." Psal. xlvii. 5, 7, 9. This Psalm was composed to be sung, at the grand procession that carried up the ark of the God of Israel, to the place that David had prepared for it in Zion. The ark was the symbol of Christ's presence, and its ascent to the city of David, a type of the ascension of our arisen Lord, from mount Olivet. It is the glory of the Lord Jesus, as Mediatory king, who with holy shouts of joy, is here celebrated by the church. To him is ascribed the holding of the reigns of government over the kings of the earth—"the shields of the earth." "Yea, all kings shall fall down before him; all nations shall serve him." Psal. lxxii. 11. They shall do homage to him who is the King's Son—Christ the eternal Son of God, as Mediator. "Rule thou in the midst of thine enemies.—The Lord at thy right hand shall strike through kings in his day of wrath." Psal. cx. 3, 5. This psalm, Heb. v. is applied by the Apostle Paul to the Lord Jesus Christ, who is "made a priest forever after the order of Melchizedec." v. 6. All pagan and most other kings have been in all ages, enemies of Messiah; but he reigns in the midst of them, as subjected to his righteous sceptre. And when they refuse to obey him, in the day of his indignation, he will break, their sceptres and cleave them together with their palaces and thrones, to the dust, for their rebellion against his authority.

It is Christ the eternal *logos*, word or wisdom, as set up from everlasting in the covenant of grace, that speaks in the eighth chapter of Proverbs, and asserts his claims to dominion over the civil governments of the world. "By me kings reign, and princes decree justice. By me princes rule, and nobles, *even* all the judges of the earth." v. 15, 16. But there were no end to proofs, did we proceed with these quotations. This doctrine of Christ's headship over nations gives a complexion to the whole book of God, and to the whole exposition which it contains of the providential government of the nations. Attempt to remove this doctrine from

the volume of inspiration, and you extinguish one of the great lights that illumine the firmament of gospel truth.

It has been embodied in the creeds of the church. The doctrine of the larger catechism is:—"That Christ executes the office of a king, by subduing us to himself, by ruling in us and reigning over us, and by restraining and conquering all his and our enemies." Herod and Pontius Pilate, were certainly his enemies and the enemies of his people. "Why did the heathen rage and imagine vain things?" "The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together, against the Lord and against his Christ. For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the gentiles and the people of Israel, were gathered together." Acts iv. 25, 27. These with all other hostile kings, the Redeemer in the execution of his mediatory kingly office "restrains and conquers." How can he restrain and conquer kings, if he have no authority over them, as he is the anointed of the Lord on his holy hill of Zion? We have the same doctrine in the larger catechism, Ques. 54. "Christ is exalted in his sitting at the right hand of God, in that as God man, he is advanced to the highest favour with God the Father, with all fulness of joy, glory, and power over all things in heaven and earth; and doth gather and defend his church, and subdue their enemies." All this power in heaven and earth, he possesses as "God man," or Mediator. The texts quoted by the Westminster divines illustrate what they intended to teach in relation to this doctrine. "And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be Head over all things to the church." Eph. i. 22. "Who is gone into heaven and is on the right hand of God, angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him." 1 Pet. iii. 22. All this is evidently not as God essentially, but as the Mediator of the new covenant. In the Westminster confession, chap. viii. sec. 8. Christ is affirmed to reign in "overcoming all their" (his people's) "enemies by his almighty power," and of course all the persecuting kings, over whom authority must be given to him, otherwise he would not have a right to overcome them.

In one word, God the Father, having exalted his Son as Mediator to be "Prince of the kings of the earth," commands all nations to whom he sends the Holy Scriptures—all who hear the joyful sound of the everlasting gospel, to "honour the Son even as they honour the Father."

CHARACTER AND INSTRUCTION OF THE PEOPLE IN SCOTLAND.

The following letter by Mr. James Buckham, was recently written for the Vermont Chronicle. It gives a clear statement of important facts, on subjects which should claim the attention of the American people to a much greater extent than they do. Most of our readers will understand how similar the method of preaching and of attending to catechetical instruction in the families and congregations in Scotland, is to that which has long been and now is practised in the Reformed Presbyterian Church. We hope the judicious remarks of the writer may stimulate to a close observance of these good old ways and furnish an antidote to the many temptations to depart therefrom in this age of innovation.—ED.

The preaching of English ministers of all denominations is, in general, less intellectual than that which is common in Scotland. In that country, some of the clergymen are methodical and exact to an extreme, in the composition and delivery of their sermons. Their discourses resemble lectures prepared for a body of learned men rather than addresses calculated to instruct and edify a mixed audience: they are, consequently, dry and unimpressive. Almost all the ministers in Scotland that preach without notes deliver their discourses from memory; and hence as a matter of course, their mode of preparing for the duties of the Sabbath is of the most laborious and exhausting kind. The intelligence of the great body of the Scotch people, and their extensive information on theological subjects, make them careful to secure, and able to appreciate, a learned and an orthodox ministry. "Whoever has resided for any length of time in the Lowlands of Scotland, must have been struck with the vast superiority of the middle and lower classes of that part of Britain, in respect to general information, to those in a similar condition of life in England. This fact presents itself as one of the most striking features of the Scottish character; and the reaction of this state of things is powerfully witnessed in the solid, and masculine, and intelligent tone which it gives to the productions of the pulpit, and to vital religion in general, wherever it exists. The gospel has here to work upon a well-informed and thinking population, and a corresponding aspect evidently pervades the community of decided believers in that enlightened country."

As I have touched on this point, I cannot refrain from mentioning what I conceive to be some of the causes of that

superiority by which the inhabitants of Scotland, as a body, are confessedly distinguished from their southern neighbors. How much influence the climate may have in producing a race of men who are characterized by great vigor of body and of mind, and how far the comparative barrenness and poverty of the country may have a tendency to secure the cultivation and development of the native energies of the people, I shall not pretend to determine. Perhaps these things have some effect in modifying the character and habits of the North Britons. There are other causes, however, to which their intellectual, and particularly their moral and religious superiority is more obviously to be attributed.

The common schools of Scotland have a powerful influence in moulding the character of the people. In the southern parts of the country, with which I am more particularly acquainted, a good education is placed within the reach of the whole of the rising generation, and there are but few children that do not acquire some knowledge of the ordinary branches of learning. The course of education in the common schools of Scotland is not very extensive, but the instruction given in the different branches which compose that course, is thorough and, by means of it, a foundation is laid on which may be erected a superstructure of almost any dimensions. Biblical instruction forms a part of the exercises of every school. The Bible, so far as I know, is always one of the Class-Books; and the Assembly's Catechism is regularly repeated by every scholar that is old enough to commit it to memory. Other compendiums of Christian doctrine and duty, in the shape of Catechisms, suited to the different capacities and attainments of the pupils, are used in most of the schools. At the seminary which I attended, we were required, every Monday, to repeat the texts of the sermons which we had heard the preceding day; and if any of us had not attended a place of worship, it was expected that we should give a satisfactory reason why we had not done so. I cannot say how common such rules were in other schools; but I know that we who were obliged to submit to them, never supposed that we were more strictly dealt with than others in our circumstances. Even in the Classical schools of Scotland, one day in the week is usually devoted to the reading of books on religious subjects:—so far, at least, as my knowledge enables me to speak on this point, such a practice is common. “Sacred Dialogues,” and “Buchanan's

Psalms" * are books which form part of the reading of the different classes that pass through the Grammar-schools of Scotland. It is unnecessary to say, that all this is well calculated to exert, upon the youthful mind, an influence which is favorable to religion and morality.

Instruction on religious subjects is given, at stated times, by most of the heads of families, to all the members of their respective households. The evening of the Sabbath is usually employed in reading the Scriptures, and in attending to catechetical, and other religious exercises. The Assembly's Catechism is made a text-book in every family, as well as in every school. Family worship is so common in Scotland, that it is attended to, in many instances, even by those who are not considered as pious persons. Drs. Reed and Matheson, in their account of the American churches, mention the case of a person who was in the habit of using profane language, but who, notwithstanding this practice, deemed it proper and necessary to set up family prayer, as soon as he commenced housekeeping. I have known various instances of this kind in Scotland. The picture of Scottish life which is drawn by Burns in his "Cotter's Saturday Night," is not a fancy piece, but a faithful representation of the principles and habits of the great body of the people. It is true, they have, like the descendants of the Puritan Fathers of New-England, become less noted for the strictness of their morality and religion, than they were in former times; and it must also be admitted, that there is among them much of "the form of godliness," where the "power" of it is not felt; but, at the same time, it is true, that there is, in that part of Britain of which I am speaking, a great amount of real, intelligent, active piety.

Expository preaching is common among all the different denominations in Scotland; and this, I doubt not, contributes largely to the intelligence of the people on religious subjects. I believe there are ministers in Scotland who have in their public discourses, expounded to their congregations the whole of the sacred Scriptures. It is interesting to see every person, young and old, come to meeting with his Bible, and follow the minister as he proceeds from verse to verse, and refer to the different passages, by means of which he illustrates and confirms the various positions advanced in his dis-

* A Latin translation of the *Scripture Psalms*.

course. In the south of Scotland, and, for any thing I know to the contrary, in other parts of the country also, it is so common for people to carry their Bibles with them to the house of God, or to keep a sufficient number for the use of their families in their pews, that any persons who might not have one, would appear singular; and it would be deemed a piece of politeness, to hand him one during the time of the meeting. Some of the English Congregational ministers have tried the plan of expounding the Scriptures to their people, after the manner of the Scotch preachers; but in only a very few instances have they long persevered in this plan. In Scotland, an expository discourse is usually called a "lecture;" and a discourse founded on a detached portion of Scripture is called a "sermon."

The Scotch ministers regularly examine their people on theological subjects. Once at least, and more commonly twice in the year, every minister goes around the whole of what would be called his "parish," and catechises all his hearers, old and young; male and female. On the Sabbath day, he appoints from the pulpit, the time and place for his "examinations" during the week; and it is expected that, at the appointed hour, all his hearers who reside in the neighborhood, shall assemble in the house which has been fixed upon for the meeting. The minister has a list of his people in the vicinity, which he calls over, each one answering to his name as called. The names of those who may be absent, are marked, and inquiries are made of such as are present, whether the reason of their absence is known. The Assembly's Catechism is always made the text-book on such occasions; and the man, or woman, or child, that could not answer the questions contained in that manual, would be sure to be noticed as peculiarly ignorant by all who were present.

Such, I think, are some of the most important of the means which, under God, have rendered the people of Scotland so distinguished among the rest of the nations of the earth, for their knowledge, their morality, and their religion. So far as these means have fallen into disuse in any part of the country, the people have become as ignorant and vicious as others; but so far as they have been vigorously employed, they have been instrumental in maintaining that high standard of sobriety and intelligence, for which the Scotch have been so noted. Some of these means could not, in the present state of things, be employed in England. In conse-

quence of the great diversity of sentiment which prevails in that country, and the tenacity with which the several denominations are disposed to hold their peculiar views, no such course of religious instruction as is common in the schools of Scotland, could be connected with a general system of education in England; nor do I suppose that the English could be easily induced to submit to those public "examinations," to which the Scotch are accustomed, and to which indeed, they are strongly attached. The other means which I have mentioned, however, might be brought into operation in England, and in this country also, by ministers and by the members of their respective churches, as easily and as effectually as in Scotland. I know not to what extent a regular system of family instruction, on religious subjects, is pursued by the members of Congregational churches, to whom God has committed the care of the souls of others: but certainly, so far as this means of usefulness may be neglected by any of them, their neglect must be exceedingly criminal. I am not able to say whether expository preaching is at all common in New-England, though my impressions is, that it is very rare. Perhaps it would not suit the taste of the people. But it may well be questioned, I think, whether the taste which does not relish this kind of preaching, is not wrong; and whether, consequently, instead of gratifying it, suitable means should not be employed for the purpose of correcting it. The testimony of all the ministers that have adopted this mode of preaching, and that have persevered in it for any considerable time, is, that they have found it to be more profitable to themselves, and to their people also, than the common method of discoursing from a detached passage of Scripture.

OBITUARY OF THE REV. JAMES REID.

(From the *Scottish Presbyterian.*)

The late Rev. James Reid, was born in the Parish of Shotts, 12th August, 1750. He was licensed at Foulyet, in the Parish of Bothwell, 27th April, 1780, being then in his 30th year, and was appointed to preach his first sermon at Edinburgh, on the 7th May following. He appears to have been deeply impressed with the sacred nature of the work to which he was called, and while desirous to be found zealous and faithful in the cause of his Master, he likewise felt the need of

heavenly direction and assistance, in order that his services might be profitable to men, and glorifying to the exalted Redeemer. In a note referring to this occasion, he writes, "I immediately went to the Lord to ask a text, and that portion of holy writ was directly presented to me, Isaiah ix. 6. 'For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given,' &c. I desired to begin my public preaching with *precious Christ*, who is the Alpha and Omega of all Gospel preaching, and so made choice of, or rather was directed to that very remarkable text, as full of precious Christ as any in the sacred record. I desired the Lord to instruct me in the knowledge of Christ, and him crucified. I wrote my sermon at length, and had considerable assistance in study, and sometimes sweet fellowship with my God in Christ." Such was the manner in which his labours in the public service of the Redeemer were commenced, and from this, we may gather an idea of his exercises and ministrations in the subsequent period of his life. Christ crucified was the grand theme of his preaching; the word of God the source whence doctrine, counsel, warning, and comfort were derived; and communion with his God and Father, through the one Mediator, the means by which heavenly enjoyment, light, strength, and steadfastness were obtained.

Having laboured as a preacher, for about the space of three years, he received a call from the members of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, in the Counties of Wigtown and Kirkcudbright; and was ordained at Lead Mines, in the Parish of Monigaff, on the 10th July, 1783. Concerning this important and memorable event in his life, he has left the following note:—"I thought that I felt much of the effusion of the Holy Spirit of God, especially a little before the performance of the solemn action; and I thought that I enjoyed sweet fellowship with God at this time." His first sermon after ordination was delivered at Lead Mines, from 2 Cor. iv. 5. "For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord." Concerning this occasion he writes, "I was considerably assisted on this day; and in the evening enjoyed sweet communion with God." To an individual unaccustomed to vigorous bodily exertion, the labour to which he was now called, and which for a long period he performed, may seem almost incredible.

But he was willing to spend and to be spent in the service of Christ, and he repined not at the labour which was laid upon him. When we reflect on the time which must necessarily have been occupied in his journeying from place to place, it appears astonishing that he should have been able to prosecute his studies, and to prepare his discourses for the pulpit. And in the case of one not habitually exercised to live by faith in Christ, to cherish a constant feeling of dependence on him for the supply of all necessities, and to maintain sweet intercourse with the Father of lights, it might reasonably be expected that his public ministrations would become unsatisfactory and common-place. But God sends none a warfare on his own charges: when He calls to more than ordinary labour, he likewise furnishes with more than ordinary strength. And such appears to have been the case with Mr.

Reid. Notwithstanding of his circumstances being apparently unfavourable for study, he was, from first to last, an acceptable and an edifying preacher; faithfully exhibiting the great truths of the gospel; furnishing comfort to the sorrowful, and encouragement to the weak; and not failing to raise the voice of warning against personal and public iniquities.

He was married to Helen, daughter of Mr. James Bland, farmer, Calside, parish of Anwoth, on the 26th December, 1786. Before this period, various congregations in connection with the Reformed Presbyterian Church, had been formed in America; and a Presbytery had been constituted, professing to hold the same principles and Testimony, which had been maintained by their brethren in Scotland and Ireland. Another party, in connection with the Associate Presbytery, had likewise obtained a considerable footing in the New World; and at length a union between the two parties was proposed. This was at last effected, though not without concessions on both sides, and a court was constituted under the name of the Associate Reformed Presbytery. But though the ministers consented to this union, many of the more steadfast of the Covenanters refused to follow their example; and though deprived of public ordinances by the defection of their ministers, they continued firm in their attachment to the whole of the Reformation principles. In this emergency they applied to their brethren in this country, to supply them with the means of grace. The scarcity of ministers and preachers at that time rendered it impossible to send out permanent labourers, yet the earnest request of the destitute Americans, was not altogether disregarded. After much serious deliberation, Mr. Reid left Scotland for America, in August, 1789, leaving his family and flock to the care of his heavenly master. In his notes referring to this period of his life, he says, "I had great difficulty in parting with my dear wife; but betaking myself to prayer, I found great relief, and my call to go seemed still more and more clear. My affection for her was very great; but the love of Christ seemed to constrain me to go to America at this time, with a view to return as soon as possible." Respecting his labours and journeyings in America, we are unable to furnish any particular details: His stay in that country was occupied in visiting the followers of the Covenanted Testimony, in preaching to them the word of life, and dispensing the sacraments; and by his opportune visit, he was the means of comforting the Covenanters under the trying circumstances in which they were placed, and of inducing them to continue steadfast in their profession. Though this was a portion of his life which he delighted to remember and to speak of, in his later years, yet if he ever had committed any thing to writing respecting it, no papers relating to it can at present be discovered. He was accustomed to speak frequently of the number of children whom he baptized; whole families having remained without baptism, from the time that the church was left without a faithful pastor. He returned to Scotland in July, 1790, having been absent about eleven months.

He resumed his labours among the people of his charge with all his former diligence and toil. The field of his exertions was, however, in the course of a few years somewhat lessened, by the members of the church in Stranraer and its vicinity being formed into a separate congregation. It was generally desired by this congregation that Mr. Reid should continue his pastoral labours among them, and leave the people of the other districts to provide for themselves another minister; and had he calculated upon following the dictates of personal ease, it might have been supposed that he would have acceded to their wishes. But the lessening of bodily toil seems to have been with him no ruling motive; and he preferred to continue the more laborious charge of the widely-scattered congregation of Newton-Stewart, Whithorn, and Castle Douglas. At a subsequent period, the congregation of Castle Douglas likewise obtained a distinct organization; and Mr. Reid again chose the more arduous field of labour, preferring to continue his charge of the congregation of Newton-Stewart, and Whithorn.

Nothing further remarkable in his history presents itself, till about the year 1825, when in consequence of a decision of the Reformed Presbyterian Synod, erasing the particular mention of the Auchensaugh renovation of the Covenants from the terms of communion, Mr. Reid judged it his duty to separate from the main body of the Church. The reasons by which the Synod were led to adopt the above mentioned resolution, were, not that they deemed the Auchensaugh renovation of the Covenants improper in its general design, or not obligatory on posterity, but that it was unnecessary to introduce into the brief formula of the terms of communion, a specific mention of particular instances of Covenant renovation; and that there was at least no reason for condescending on this single instance, to the exclusion of others which were equally seasonable and faithful; and moreover, that notwithstanding the general faithfulness for which the Auchensaugh renovation was distinguished, there are some things particularly in the engagement to duties, which require explanation, and which, in the obvious meaning of the terms employed, seemed to impose obligations that were uncalled for, and irreconcilable with the avowed and universal practice of the Church. But such was not the light in which the matter was viewed by Mr. Reid. He considered the decision of the Synod as a departure from steadfast adherence to former testimonies for the truth, and as having a tendency to pave the way for further defections. He felt that he could not conscientiously conform to the resolution adopted by his brethren; while at the same time, the idea of separation filled his mind with perplexity and distress. He betook himself to God for direction and comfort; and after a protracted and painful mental struggle, he at last formed the resolution of continuing steadfast to what he judged the truth, and of withdrawing from the communion of the Synod. He maintained his separate standing till his death, a few in various parts of the country followed his example.— Although we do not approve of Mr. Reid's separation, yet candour re-

quires us to state that he never regretted the course which he had judged it his duty to pursue ; on the contrary, he often reflected with gratitude that he had been enabled to be faithful ; and only a short while before he was called to leave the scene of his earthly toils, he solemnly declared, that had he not dissented from the decision of the Synod, he could not in peace have laid his head upon a dying pillow.

In the spring of 1828 he removed from Newton-Stewart to Glasgow, where he afterwards continued to reside with his daughter, Mrs. Stewart. The infirmities of age rendered him unable to sustain the fatigue of his usual pulpit labors, yet he continued for a considerable period to preach on a part of the Sabbath, to such as adhered to his views of the testimony of the Church. By degrees even this became too much for his weakened frame ; and with much reluctance he was forced to cease his public exertions in the cause of his Lord. This appeared to be the last thing which he could bring his mind calmly to resign ; and even when enjoying the most entire submission regarding every thing else in which he was himself concerned, he frequently expressed an anxiety to be again engaged in those services in which he had spent his life. But on this point also he was at length enabled to resign himself to his Master's will, to give up all anxiety respecting further employment in the church below, and to look forward with longing expectation and joyful hope, to the crown of glory in the heavens. During his residence in Glasgow, and even before he left Newton-Stewart, his eye-sight was so much impaired, that he could not read, yet he seemed fond of having his books beside him ; and might frequently have been seen with one in his hand, while he was listening to what was read to him, or was wrapt in his own meditations. It was his custom before retiring to rest, to cause a passage of scripture to be read to him, that he might be furnished with matter of meditation during the night ; and on the morrow he would frequently say to his friends, "Oh ! what a sweet feast I have had ;" or when the passage was read to him, he would exclaim, "What a rich feast this will be through the night." At other times a portion of Scripture having been presented to his mind, and having occupied his nightly meditations, he would relate in the morning what sweet enjoyment he had experienced, or desire that the passage might be sought out and read to him along with the opinions of commentators regarding it. He desired only a small portion of any book to be read to him at once, that he might have time to meditate upon it, and digest it in his own reflections.— The latter period of his life appeared to be spent in perfect contentment, and great spiritual enjoyment. Meditation and prayer, and praise were his employment ; and on one occasion, when his hearing was so affected that he could not derive any benefit from reading, and some expressions of sympathy with him under these circumstances were used, he replied, "I can meditate, and I can pray and praise, and these are incalculable blessings." The Psalms were his peculiar delight ; and toward the close of his life, those in the latter part of the book being usually sung in family worship, he sometimes exclaimed, "These

Psalms are all praise, they ravish my very soul." The state of the Church was the only thing which seemed to give him anxiety and uneasiness ; otherwise he was full of comfort and exultation, expressing his readiness to depart and to be with Christ, and looked forward with joyful anticipations, to "the judgment day, and *the glorious resurrection morn.*" On the morning of the day on which he was seized with his last illness, he appeared to be in his usual health, and conducted the devotional exercises of the family ; but immediately afterwards he was seized with a cold shivering over his whole body. Medical skill proved unavailing, and the disease continued to increase. One morning, his daughter, remarking to him how feeble he was become, he said, "Yes, I am frail and feeble, but my good Lord will send relief in his own time, and in his own way." These were almost the last words which he was heard to utter ; and after severe bodily suffering, he expired on the 4th November, 1837, in the 87th year of his age, and 54th of his ministry.

From his youth, Mr. Reid was distinguished for the gravity of his deportment ; and there was a politeness in his manners which is seldom equaled in the station of life which he occupied. He was universally beloved and respected, not only by the brethren and members of the church, but also by the respectable families in the district where he resided. One remarkable feature of his character was the regularity with which all his movements were conducted ; and this was particularly manifested respecting his family devotions. He was careful to have family worship performed at an early hour in the evening, accounting it the highest mockery to defer the worship of God, till body and mind were worn out with other cares and employments. He was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost, and of faith ; and much people was added to the Lord, through his instrumentality. The only works which he has left behind him, are, "The lives of the Westminster Divines," in 2 vols. ; and a Sermon on the Divinity of Christ, from Romans ix. 5, "Who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen."

THE JEWS.

It may be interesting to our readers to know that the whole number of this people scattered throughout the world, is estimated at 2,700,000. They are distributed by those who have of late enquired most particularly into their state and condition, as follows ; Europe, 1,674,000 ; Asia, 542,000 ; Africa, 480,000 ; America, 32,000 ; Polynesia 2,000. They belong to different sects, such as the Rabbinists, the Caraites, the Samaritans &c. and are found in almost every country on earth. The above estimate can be regarded only as an approximation to accuracy and is probably below their actual number. The European Jews, by the same kind of estimate are divided among the states as follow. Austrian Dominions, 470,000 ; Russia and Russian Poland, 450,000 ; Turkey in Europe, 312,000 ; Prussia and Prussian Poland, 153,000 ; Netherlands, 80,000 ; France, 60,000 ; Bavaria, 55,000 ; Great Britain, 25,000 ; Denmark and Sweden, 6,500 ; the smaller German States, 32,500 ; Italian States, 30,000. It is stated on the authority of the *New-York Star*, edited by a Jew, that there are upwards of 40,000 of this people now in Palestine, and emigration increasing.

THE
REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN.

VOL. III.

SEPTEMBER, 1839.

No. VII.

ARGUMENT ON THE JURY-LAW.

[Published in *Overture*, by order of Synod.]

The Reformed Presbyterian Church has always dissented from the immoral civil institutions of the nations. Soon after her first permanent organization in the United States, Presbytery, then the highest judicatory of the church, affirmed on the subject of her civil relations, that "there are moral evils essential to the Constitution of the United States which render it necessary to refuse allegiance to the whole system." This declaration was carried out in practice, by refusing to do any act that either directly or impliedly homologated the immoralities of the system. In the year 1806 an act was passed respecting serving on juries in courts of law. Presbytery affirmed this "act to be *absolutely prohibitory*."* By this law every member of the church is bound; every member binds himself to obey it, when he assents to the church's terms of communion in his admission to her membership and peculiar privileges. But it is not enough to know that such a law has been enacted; it is still the duty of every member of the church to be fully satisfied in his own mind, that the law is righteous; that it was enacted on grounds which bind it upon the conscience. To assist the sincere inquirer, and in defence of this part of our practical testimony, Synod offers the following vindication of "the jury-law."

Let the question be fairly understood. Synod does not now enter into an argument to prove that there are moral evils of such a character interwoven with the Constitution and laws

* Ref. Principles exhibited page 152, edition 1835.

of the United States and of the several states, as render dissent necessary. This has been done in another part of our argument.* The civil establishments of this land are there proved to be chargeable with infidelity, rebellion against God, contempt of Jesus Christ, gross oppression, &c. The present discussion is designed to shew, that sitting upon juries in courts of law recognizes the immoral institutions against which we lift our testimony, and is, therefore, in direct opposition to that testimony. This we establish by the following arguments.

1. *The juror is sworn to decide according to the law of the land.* In some cases the juror is sworn to "give a true verdict according to law and evidence;" in others "according to the evidence," without any express mention of the law. But in this case equally with the other, the juror is sworn to the law. Indeed, that the verdict ought always to be rendered according to law, is almost too plain to require argument. Grant the contrary, and the jury would supersede the legislature! The court would no longer be a court of law; it would have legislative as well as judiciary powers—power to make, alter, and suspend law, as well as to try offenders! Why do the advocates of the parties labor at points of law before the jury, if it matters not to them what the law is? Why does the judge, in delivering his charge to the jury, expound the law as well as sum up the evidence? Try it by an example.—The laws of some of the states make the advertising and selling of lottery tickets penal offences. What would be thought of a jury that in a case where a violation of the law was admitted, or clearly proved against the person charged, should render a verdict of "not guilty," and defend it by saying that, in their opinion, his conduct was morally right, and what was the law to them! Or, on the other hand, with what regard to the common sense of the community could a jury bring in an accused party guilty, who could not be proved to have violated any law of the land, upon the principle that, in their view, his conduct had been morally wrong?

To swearing such an oath to the laws of the land there are insuperable objections. It is an oath to act according to a system of law which excludes the Bible from the place of supreme law. So far from having made any provision for admitting the claims of the Scriptures, the Constitution declares

*See "Testimony against the Moral evils in the civil institutions of the United States."

that it is itself the supreme law. Art. vi. Sec. 2. "This Constitution and the laws of the United States which shall be made in pursuance thereof, and all treaties made, or which shall be made under the authority of the United States shall be the supreme law of the land; and the judges in every state shall be bound thereby, any thing in the Constitution or laws of any state to the contrary notwithstanding." This section of the Federal Constitution effectually overrules any provision, if such there were, in any state constitution reserving a place for God's law in the jurisprudence of the state. Over the head of the juror is this broad, and sweeping, and exclusive clause of the fundamental law of the land. The charge of immorality in the oath cannot be avoided by saying that unrighteous and unscriptural laws form a small part of that body of law which rests upon the constitutions of the land. It would be difficult to find any nation, ancient or modern, christian or pagan, with a code of laws, the majority of which are opposed to the principles of equity and justice. In the aspect under which we are now contemplating the subject, the sinfulness of the juror's oath lies in his swearing to abide by the laws of the land, when he may be called upon to judge under the operation of the immoral part of the system. For we should remember that he cannot know beforehand what law may have a bearing upon the adjudication of the case in question. For example. In a state where lotteries are legalized, upon a suit for debt it may appear in evidence that the whole or a part of it has been contracted for lottery tickets. This gambling transaction the juror would already have sworn to sanction in giving his verdict. Such a case, moreover, might occur even in a state which forbids lotteries. As for instance, when the accounts of two parties, which originated in one state are finally adjusted before the courts of another; for according to the U. S. Constitution, Art. iv. Sec. 1. "Full faith and credit shall be given in each state to the public acts, records and judicial proceedings of every other state." In deciding upon such accounts the juror would be bound to treat as law the enactments legalizing gambling in lottery tickets. Many cases of this nature may arise in which it cannot be ascertained, before the taking of the evidence, what law may bear upon the jury in their verdict.

Take an example of the immoral laws under which the juror may be sworn to decide. The United States' Constitution requires fugitive slaves to be surrendered to their pretended

owners, that they may drag them back to unjust and cruel bondage. Art. iv. Sec. 2. "No person held to service or labor in one state under the laws thereof, escaping into another, shall, in consequence of any law or regulation therein, be discharged from such service or labor; but shall be delivered up on claim of the party to whom such service or labor may be due." By the laws of the United States and of the several states made in pursuance of this section of the Constitution, the harbouring or assisting of the wretched fugitives, who are seeking in a more inhospitable climate, and strange land, the enjoyment of the sweets of liberty, is made a highly penal offence. In various ways suits may be instituted against persons charged with the violation of these laws requiring a jury trial for their adjudication. How must the juror decide?—The divine law approves, commands, nay, requires the very deeds that human laws make criminal. The juror is sworn, as we have already shown, to decide by the laws of the land. If he obey man, he will condemn; if he obey God, he will acquit. His oath is on one side; the will of Jehovah on the other. One of these he must violate. Is it right for any man to put himself in such a dilemma?

This argument may be presented in another point of view. From whom do the constitution and laws of the land profess to emanate? Not from God, nor from the will of God; but from the people and the will of the people. The juror swears to abide by the whole body of law, for he cannot beforehand know what law may have a bearing upon the case. The authority on which this system of law rests, is one which disregards the law of God. The juror must take the law as the law of the land, having its obligation professedly from the will of the people. Does he not take by oath the will of the people and not the Divine law for his rule of conduct? Can any Reformed Presbyterian do so consistently with his solemn covenant obligations? Can any man do it without sin?

II. *The juror is a judiciary officer.* He is an essential and indispensable part of a court, set up and authorized by the nation in its organic character to judge according to constitutional law. No case, in which trial by jury is required by law, can be tried without the judicial services of the juror. Without him the court is not legally constituted so as to be in readiness for the performance of its most important judicial functions. That the offices of the jury are not precisely the same with those of the bench does not affect the validity of

our argument ; it is enough if they are of a judicial nature. That the juror acts as judge in applying the law of the land in a court of the land sufficiently proves him to be a constituent part of the court, and in connection with the system by whose authority the court is constituted. Were there no other argument, the case might safely be rested upon the one here offered. Not even jesuitical cunning and sophistry, can contrive a way to separate the jury from the court. Any man who has ever witnessed a jury trial, knows that it is impossible to separate them. Not a decisive step is taken in the trial of the cause until the jury is sworn ; before them all the evidence is taken ; to them the pleadings are addressed ; by them the verdict is rendered. Every impartial mind sees at once they are a constituent part of the court and a very important part too. None will deny that the court is a branch of the government. The juror is a part of the court, and consequently, identified with the government as engaged in the administration of its laws. Can they who "refuse allegiance to the whole system," become so entirely involved with it as actually to form a part of its administration without a breach of their obligations ?

III. *Were Reformed Presbyterians to sit on juries, the public generally would consider them as thereby abandoning their testimony against the immoralities of the Constitution and Laws.* We are commanded to "abstain from all appearance of evil," 1 Thes. v. 22.—In summoning the juror, he is viewed by the constituted authorities as one of their voluntary subjects ; as approving the civil institutions of the land, and ready to carry them into effect in their true spirit. They have not the right, nor do they claim it, to summon aliens to sit upon juries in their courts of law. The mass of the community view the matter in the same light. Jurors are understood to be citizens in the restricted, technical sense of the word ; as forming a part of the nation in its organic character. Hence, he who sits on a jury acknowledges himself a citizen in the sense of the government—as giving his full approbation to the Constitution of the United States, and that of the state in which he acts as a juror. Native inhabitants who exercise many rights peculiar to citizens are not justly, nor generally, thought to be thereby involved in any approbation of the institutions of the nation. For example : in many of the states an alien cannot legally transfer real estate. One born in the country is not, therefore, bound to deny himself the exercise of that right, be-

cause there is not, nor is there understood to be, in the exercise of such natural rights, any homologation of the government and its iniquities. Not so the sitting upon juries; it is understood to be, as it is in truth, an homologation of the whole system of constitutional law. It becomes a witness for Christ so to act as to avoid "even the appearance of evil;" to yield not, even apparently, any of the claims of his Covenant Head and King. Most assuredly he would do all this by so connecting himself with the constituted order of society as the juror does when, in the box, he administers the laws of the land. Reformed Presbyterians should preserve a high and unblemished character as faithful witnesses in an age of sinful complacency and carnal accommodation.

Having offered so much of the direct argument in vindication of the law of the church, let us advert briefly to some objections which have been made against it. The objection that the juror swears to give in his verdict according to "the *evid ence* only" and not according to 'the law,' has already been met and sufficiently answered in the illustration of our first argument. We notice three others:

1. The juror, when called upon to act under the operation of an immoral law, may inform the court that he has prejudged the case, and is, therefore, incompetent to sit on the trial. This objection and the one just referred to, viz: that the juror swears to decide according to the evidence only though often urged together, are inconsistent with and refute each other. If the juror's oath does not bind him to have any respect to the law, it is altogether immaterial to him whether the law be immoral or not. How can he have prejudged a case which has not yet been even stated before him, if he be wholly independent of law. But the latter like the former is also inconsistent with truth. Although the juror is sworn to "the law," yet can he not prejudice a case in the sense of the objection. He may have prejudged the law to be unscriptural and tyrannical; but the *law* is not the *case*. Try it. A slave-holder claims, under the constitutional compact, and the laws made in pursuance thereof, his fugitive slave. What is the question before the jury? Simply is this man by law a slave, and must he be returned according to law, and consigned again to bondage. According to the laws of the land, the verdict of the jury must be rendered. The juror may believe that the laws sanctioning slavery are in open violation of the will of God, a gross outrage upon the

rights of man, wholly inconsistent with professions of liberty ; disgraceful to the nation ; and endangering its existence.— But this is not the point at issue. The juror is not called to sit in judgment upon the law ; his opinion as to its morality or immorality is not asked. All the claimant desires is that the juror according to his oath would give a legal decision— that provided he proves the man to be his slave according to the laws of the state from which he fled, the jury should decide accordingly, so that he may take him back as his property. Moreover, many cases occur in which the juror is already sworn to decide according to the law before he can possibly know under what law he may have to judge, as in the cases of litigated debts already referred to in a preceding part of this discussion.

II. The juror sometimes determines the law as well as the fact. But what is it respecting the law that the jury determine ? Not certainly whether it be moral or immoral ; right or wrong. Otherwise we would have again the gross absurdity already noticed, of legislative power exercised by the jury. For power to repeal, alter, or suspend a law, is a power which resides in the legislature only. The judge cannot do it ; judge and jury together cannot do it. Nor can they determine whether they will obey the law or not—they are all sworn to obedience. All that the jury can ever decide respecting the law, is merely whether this or that be law. In some instances the bench pronounces the law authoritatively, and the jury are bound to receive that as law which the bench pronounces, and to bring in their verdict accordingly. Their sole business is, in such cases, to take the evidence ; compare the conduct of the accused, or the claims of parties, with the law laid down by the bench, and decide the case. In other instances the bench merely expounds the law and leaves the jury to give what authority they please, not to the law, but to the judge's exposition of it. They determine, in such cases, what is law ; but in both they are equally bound to try the case by the law, which they do not *make* but *apply*.

III. Why, if you cannot consistently sit upon juries, do you enter into suits of law requiring a jury trial, and thus call upon others to do what you believe to be a sin ? This is a very plausible objection, and forms one of a class on which the adversaries have always drawn largely in the conflict between truth and error ; right and wrong. It is an attempt to show that the practice of Reformed Presbyterians in one

point contradicts their principles and practice in others. The objection is not, therefore, of any weight against the doctrines we have been enforcing, it is not directed against them, but against those who hold them. Let us see if it have any weight against our practice. That hasty and ill-advised suits at law for trifling causes, or bad causes, do expose those who engage in them to this kind of attack, we do not deny. But we are not prepared to condemn all appeals to the tribunals of the country for justice against its own voluntary subjects and supporters. We think that when they are made for reasons sufficiently weighty they are justifiable upon the same principle that would justify a traveller, who had unfortunately fallen among thieves who had stripped him of his property in appealing to the laws of the land for protection of his life, or restoration of the whole or part of his property. We may easily suppose even such a community to have in their code laws, the operation of which would be beneficial to one so situated. He might make his appeal to their tribunals, although, by so doing, he would become the occasion of twelve of their number swearing an oath to their iniquitous constitution. With the iniquity of their constitution he is not chargeable; he protests against it; he is unjustly spoiled; there is but the one way open for redress; no man would say he does wrong to avail himself of any just provisions in their laws for his redress. Reformed Presbyterians are not chargeable with framing the system under which the juror acts; they protest against it. In defence of life, liberty, reputation and property, they may, therefore, lawfully look for redress to even constituted tribunals; no more acknowledging their authority thereby, than the traveller in the case supposed would admit the righteousness of the authority of the band of robbers.

Synod would add another consideration which is of great weight in this question. The juror must often enter into sworn associations with unprincipled, immoral men; with infidels, Jews, Papists, slave-holders,* sabbath breakers, profane swearers, &c. With these he may have to associate for days or even weeks, and may be compelled not only to sit in jury on the Sabbath, but with such men. He must act with them, and under the solemnity of an oath. And in many cases he cannot know the principles and moral character of his fellow-jurors until these are discovered in their judicial in-

* There are many slave-holders even in Northern States.

tercourse. Thus he will be associated with men, with whom a Christian ought to have no voluntary connexion for moral purposes. Such an association will in practice be found hurtful to the feelings and experience of a Christian. A constant dropping wears a stone. An improper intercourse with men of the world will make insensibly an impression upon the principles and conduct of the Christian.

In conclusion, we repeat our solemn judgment that 'the jury-law' is a righteous enactment, approved in heaven ; and that the infringement of it by a Reformed Presbyterian would not only be a violation of his obligation as a Covenanter, but an offence against his Covenant Head, as involving an approbation, and sanction of an iniquitous system set up by men according to the imaginations of their own hearts, and not by the law of Him who claims the sceptre of universal dominion.

FAMILY WORSHIP.

Perhaps there is no better test of the state of vital godliness among any body of professing christians, than the purity and punctuality of household devotion. Where godliness is on the decline among any people, there the *form* of godliness in this respect, as in others, may be for a time retained, after the *power* is gone. But on the other hand, where family worship is either generally neglected, or attended to with no regularity, and in a negligent and hurried manner, there is not, cannot be, the life of practical piety. The form may exist without the power, but the power cannot without the form.

The people of Israel were one family, hence the phrases, "the family of Abraham," "the family of Jacob," "the family of Israel," "the house of Jacob," and "the house of Israel," are common in the scriptures. The institution of the morning and evening sacrifice, called also the daily sacrifice, was appointed for the whole church as one household. That remarkable ordinance taught the people, 1. That all approaches to God must be by and through the Lord Jesus Christ only, who was typified by the victim sacrificed every morning and evening. 2. That every family in Israel, should attend together to the duty of worshipping God at the time

when the priests in the temple were employed in offering the common family sacrifice. 3. That all the people, however widely dispersed in their several dwelling places, had fellowship with one another at the hour of family prayer. 4. That as God was the Father of all Israel whom he acknowledged as of the household faith; so he was also the God and Father of every family that called upon his name. 5. That as the whole church could not have expected God's blessing upon them had they neglected to offer up the daily sacrifice; so those private families that neglected to draw near to the family altar must expect a curse and not a blessing. "Pour out thy fury on the heathen and on the families that call not on thy name." This divine malediction is fraught with terror to many thousands of Protestant professors in this land. One of the most alarming symptoms of the declension of pure religion among professors, is the growing neglect of family worship.

While, however, the form is observed, as we have reason to hope it is, in all families of the Reformed Presbyterian church, and not a few others, let all see to it, that the life and power of the holy duty do not decay. Let all endeavour to profit by every part of the devotions. The order transmitted us by our Covenant fathers of many generations is beautiful, appropriate and most edifying when observed in the right spirit. 1. A very brief prayer for divine aid and blessing; in this all should unite fervently. 2. The singing of a portion of the inspired psalms, commencing at the first Psalm, and continuing in order progressively until the family sings through the whole of this divine manual of praise. All should of course have their thoughts occupied with the heavenly sentiments of devotion, which breathe their vital spirit through these "psalms, hymns and spiritual songs," indited by the Spirit of God. How inexcusable are the wanderings of the heart, while we take up into our lips the words of the Holy Ghost and speak in praise to Jehovah! 3. The devotional reading of the Holy Scriptures commencing at the beginning of the book of God and continuing onward in regular order through the whole Bible. Where the Psalms are not sung, nor the Bible read in order, there is reason to fear the duty is not punctually performed. When reading or hearing the words of inspiration, the attention should be unflinching, and faith in constant exercise, to hear and believe what God the Lord speaks. How blessed the fellowship that the members of a family may have with God, and with one another, in this part of their

duty! 4. Prayer, in which all hearts should be united as one, in confession of sin, in earnest supplication, and in thanksgiving for mercies. "Whatsoever two or three," a husband and wife, or these with one child, "agree to ask in my name, it shall be done for them." How great the encouragement here to ask together!

In this duty, now as of old, the families of the saints have fellowship with each other at the hour of prayer, while they meet together at the mercy seat. From this reflection all may derive mutual aid, encouragement and delight. When the prophet Elijah was about to make a most public and solemn appeal to Jehovah, the God of Israel, against Baal and his priests, he waited, after all things were ready, until the time of the evening sacrifice. From the declension of the ten tribes and the setting up of the calves by Jeroboam, in Dan and Bethel, there was no public daily sacrifice in Israel. There were, however, in this dreadful corruption of the people, even in the reign of Ahab, seven thousand in Israel who had not bowed the knee to Baal, nor kissed the calves. These worshipped God in their households. There was also a public daily sacrifice in Judah, and many thousands of that tribe and of Benjamin assembled morning and evening around their family altars. To show the aid which the Lord's people derive from each others prayers, and to honor the duty of family worship, the prophet waited until the hour of evening prayer, when he called on God, and gained a most signal and memorable triumph over the united priestly, and princely votaries of idolatry. Where was ever an ordinance of God more remarkably honoured than family worship in that miraculous interposition of Jehovah on behalf of his prophet. It was analogous to the honour done to prayer in fellowship meeting, by sending an angel to deliver Peter from prison.

As this duty is enjoined of God, has been blessed and greatly honored by him in all ages, and is a part of our covenant engagement in Baptism and the Lord's supper, all the officers of the Church should be especially vigilant that they allow no relaxation. In cities and villages and about factories, there are strong temptations in many cases to omit family worship, particularly in the morning. Any relaxation here is like the letting in of waters. In these times of general declension, when the love of so many waxeth cold, we need to *hold fast* that no man take our crown. On this important subject the following extracts from a pastoral letter of the Gener-

al Assembly of the Church of Scotland to the people under their charge, are in the right spirit, seasonable, and will be acceptable to our readers.

In compliance with the solicitations of many who watch for your souls and are jealous over you with godly jealousy, we have resolved to issue this brotherly exhortation on the sacred and indispensable duty of Family Worship,—not as if we had any recent ground for apprehending that it is likely to fall into more extensive neglect, but because we know too well that it is by no means universally practised, and because even the purest minds require to be stirred up, by way of remembrance that while they hold fast the profession of their own faith without wavering, they may consider one another to provoke and encourage, by good counsel and good example, to the love of truth and holiness, and to the habitual and serious observance of those offices of piety, whereby, as surely as the body is nourished and refreshed by its daily bread and its nightly rest, the soul of man, through the nurture and admonition of the Lord, is progressively matured in excellence and strength, till it is advanced to the perfection and glory of its immortal existence.

In calling your attention to this momentous topic, we think it superfluous to enlarge on the high obligations, by which the duty is enforced,—obligations which are involved in the very constitution of our frail and dependent being, and impressed on the understanding and the heart by the persuasive voice of Scriptural authority, opening the ears of men, and sealing the instruction, by which God speaketh, not once or twice, but at sundry times, and in divers manners, adding line upon line, precept upon precept, promise upon promise, and threatening upon threatening, so as to bring perpetually to remembrance both the blessings which are multiplied to them that fear the Lord, and the fury which is poured out on the families which call not on his name. The appointment of the reasonable service of bowing down at the domestic altar before the Lord our Maker, that, in waiting for the promised effusion of the Spirit of grace and supplication, we may be filled with the fruits of righteousness, has ever been regarded by all men of sound mind and Christian experience, not as the imposition of an irksome yoke, but as the conveyance of an inestimable privilege; for as often as we mark the tokens of God's power and presence in making the outgoings of the morning and evening to rejoice, must every enlightened and purified heart, lifting up its affections to the Father of spirits,

acknowledge, with triumphant satisfaction, that it is a good thing to show forth his loving-kindness in the morning, and his faithfulness every night.

To those only who have tasted and seen it, can we speak intelligibly of the tranquil delight which is awakened and sustained by such periodical acts of household worship, as are not a mere formal ceremony in which the members join with reluctance or cold compliance, but the fervent utterance of lips, which out of the abundance of the heart, in which the love of God is shed abroad, are by the influence of that unquenchable affection, most pleasingly constrained to celebrate the mercies which are new every morning, and to offer up the spiritual incense of prayer with as unceasing regularity, as from the sanctuary of Israel the smoke of the evening sacrifice arose, or as the early dew of Hermon descended on the mountains of Sion, when there the Lord commanded the blessing—even life for evermore.

Without all controversy, the benefits produced by this hallowed exercise are ineffably precious. It is not enough to say that thus are devout and grateful emotions awakened—thus is faith in the superintending providence and holy promises of God confirmed—thus are the graces of humility, resignation, and patience, nourished and increased, while with the contemplation of the infinite excellence, the unwearied beneficence, and the everlasting strength of the Lord Jehovah, we contrast the instability, deceitfulness, and desperate wickedness of the heart of man. By the infallible testimony of Heaven, we are authorised to affirm constantly that there is an efficacy in the prayer of faith, which, though inexplicable by our feeble understandings, must, through all ages, continue to avail as much as it did in the days of those patriarchs, prophets, and righteous men, who, as princes, had power with God, when receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, they have grace to serve him acceptably with reverence and godly fear. The Lord is ever nigh unto them that are of a broken heart, and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit, when taking with them the words which the inspired wisdom has taught them to utter, they lift up their desires at his footstool, not seeking great things for themselves, or panting after the dust of the earth, or sighing for the vain delights of the sons of men, but thirsting and longing for the blessedness of the man whose transgression is forgiven, and who, being justified by faith, has peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.

We have no encouragement to hope that, by taking thought for temporal satisfactions, we shall find grace in the sight of the Lord; but if we aspire after the best gifts which are the heritage of the faithful, seeking first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, we believe, and are sure that his Divine power will give us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him that hath called us to glory and virtue. Though our Father in heaven knoweth what things we have need of before we ask them, it is only to them who worship him in spirit and in truth, that he has promised to do exceeding abundantly above all that they ask or think; and we have no more solid ground to expect that we shall receive without asking, or that we shall find without seeking, than the husbandman has to look for an abundant harvest springing up in the fields which he has neither planted nor watered, or than the merchant has to calculate on receiving his own with usury, for the talent which has been tied up in a napkin, or buried in the earth.

It is not for us to unfold the laws of the spiritual world, so as to demonstrate why and how it is that the communications of heavenly influence and favor are in any degree suspended on the frequency and fervency of our supplications. But this we know, that, as in old time, the father of the faithful commanded his children, and his household after him to unite with him in the exercises of a holy life, that the Lord might bring upon Abraham that which he had spoken of him—even so, in all generations, may the willing and obedient hope, that while seeking unto God, and committing their cause to him who doeth great things and unsearchable, they place their confidence, not in their own importunity, or their own works, but in the exalted merit and prevalent intercession of the mediator of the New Covenant, they cannot fail to be made partakers of that abundant grace which ought to be the chief object of all our prayers, and which is never denied to the humble. We know assuredly that our heavenly Father giveth his holy Spirit to them who ask him; and if, for the sake of his beloved Son, he is pleased to bestow this unspeakable gift in answer to the prayer of the believing soul, why should we hesitate to admit, that it is of the Lord's mercies, that by the eternal ordination of Divine wisdom, prayer has been rendered one of the sure and sufficient means of transmitting to the faithful every other good and perfect gift which cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.

To the duties of social prayer and thanksgiving, accompanied with that instruction in righteousness which the reading of the Scriptures is calculated to impart, let the benefits thus conferred on your several domestic circles operate as a strong incitement. It is not, indeed, within the compass of human ability to infuse grace into the souls which are most tenderly beloved. But great will certainly be the influence of a pious example on those who confide in your affection, and have cause to revere your worth. If your children and dependents perceive, that, while you are not slothful in the business of time, you are also fervent in spirit serving the Lord and that, while you provide for your own the food and the raiment which are obtained by the blessing of God on the hand of the diligent, you ask for them that bread of heaven which strengtheneth the heart, may you not hope that they will be stirred up both to pray and to labor for the meat which endureth to life everlasting, and that they will learn to regard the favour of God as a better portion than the abundance of corn and wine? May you not hope, that while your own minds are elevated by contemplating the works of creation, providence, and redemption, and by reflecting on the dignified and endearing relation to which you have been raised in having "received the Spirit of adoption, whereby you cry Abba, Father," they who look up to God for guidance and protection will take pleasure in approaching to God; and, through the experience of the peace of walking with the wise will be taught to abhor the enticements of sinners, and to hold fast that which is good? And even in the case of those who, through perversity of heart, and the snares of an evil world have forsaken the paths of integrity and truth, may it not be hoped that the wise counsels which they have for a season forgotten, and the devotional habits which they have long failed to imitate, will, like the bread cast upon the waters, be found after many days? Small must have been your experience of the discipline of providence, if you have never known so much as one who had wandered so far from the way of peace as to disappoint the earnest expectations of his father, and to turn the joy of her who bare him into bitterness, but who, after his own wickedness had corrected him, and his backslidings reproved him, has been awakened to new obedience, by recalling to his agonized mind, with reverential awe, the solemn image of the parental guide, in whose quiet habitation the daily exercises of prayer and praise, hallowed every pursuit,

lightened every care, soothed every sorrow, and seasoned every enjoyment, so as to render the voice of rejoicing and salvation in the tabernacles of the righteous, a lively type of the blessed conversation of heaven, and a delicious foretaste of the fellowship of the saints in light.

If you know these things by your own experience, or by the incontrovertible testimony of them who have tasted that the Lord is gracious, happy are ye if ye do them. Nor can you have peace and safety if, knowing what is good, you leave it undone.

And while you present your supplications for yourselves and your families, forget not the eternal concerns of the families which call not on the name of God. If it be, as it ought to be, your heart's desire, that they may be brought to the obedience of the gospel, brethren, pray for us, and for all the ministers of the truth, that the word of the Lord may have free course and be glorified, even as it is with you. Such an intercession as this will assuredly be efficacious to the enlargement of the household faith if all of you, both small and great, not only in the congregations of the upright, who in heaviness of heart sigh for the abounding of iniquity and the failing of truth, but in your families apart, and in your unseen retirements, prostrate yourselves at the footstool of your Father in heaven, who seeth in secret, and pour out your desires before him in that effectual fervent importunity, which, like the long and patient waiting of the husbandman for the precious fruit of the earth, will, according to the sure word of promise, issue in plenteous showers of blessings, not confined to any favored spot, or any privileged community, but dropping down fertility far and wide, over fields co-extensive with the inhabited world, filled as it shall be in that evening time of light with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea; and thus the God of the whole earth, in remembrance of his holy covenant, and in fulfilment of the good pleasure of his goodness; will arise and have mercy not only on the mountain of holiness in which he had his dwelling in time past, but on all in every place who call on the name of Jesus Christ our Lord; so that, while he clothes his priests with salvation, and makes his people shout for joy, the ways of Zion, which have mourned because few came to the solemn feasts, shall be thronged with the multitudes who keep the holy day with thanksgiving in their hearts, and the high praises of God in their mouths—wisdom and knowledge shall be the stability

of those times of refreshing from the presence of Lord, when his work shall appear before the face of his servants, and his glory to his children ; and they that fear the Lord, being all replenished with the riches of grace, shall take that sweet counsel together which revives the inward part, and knits the brotherhood of Christians in the holy unity of the faith and the bond of perfectness. "Then shall the offerings of his people be pleasant unto the Lord as in the days of old, and as in former years." "And the Lord will create upon every dwelling-place of Mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night ; for, upon all the glory shall be a defence."

DIVINE RIGHT OF PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH GOVERNMENT.

(From the Covenanter.)

That the Church of the living God upon earth should have a divinely appointed order—that there should be found in her a government distinct from and independent of civil government—that her laws should be declared, and every part of her administration regulated by Divine prescription—are truths to which reason and common sense bear testimony, and which are capable of the fullest establishment by numerous arguments drawn from the Divine Word. "*Order is Heaven's first law.*" Human society cannot exist without law, authoritative power, and subordination. Can we believe, then, that the best and most glorious society upon earth—one which in its duration embraces the extremes of time, and which is destined to extend to the limits of the globe, should be left without authority sufficient to preserve its own internal order and peace, or to maintain a holy separation from other communities? There did exist of old a divinely appointed form of government in the Jewish Church ; and so far are the Sacred Oracles from containing any intimation that the Church under the New Economy should be deprived of a privilege formerly enjoyed, that the inspired Prophets frequently declare that, in the times of the Messiah, there shall be in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem an order so excellent as to be an example to all surrounding nations, Isaiah ii. 2, 3 ; Isaiah ix. 7. The Saviour loved his Church, and gave him-

self for her. The concerns of the universe, he manages in subordination to her interests. The Church is his Body—"the fulness of Him that filleth all in all." She is his *heritage, spouse, kingdom*—while He is her Head, Husband, and King. Thus nearly related to his Church, and deeply interested in her welfare, it cannot be supposed that He would leave her destitute of laws, officers, and government, to be managed according to the interest or caprice of men. What thus appears a matter of strongest probability, becomes absolutely certain from the actual declarations of the volume of Inspiration. The Church is everywhere described as a distinct organized community; the difference between rulers and ruled is again and again stated in the New Testament; officers are specified, with the nature of the authoritative power wherewith they are entrusted; and judicatory assemblies are matter of plain and frequent exhibition. Heb. xiii. 7; Tit. i. 5; Acts ii. xv.; 1 Cor. xii. 28.

The point is now indeed pretty generally conceded, that there ought to be some form of government in the Church.—It is, however, by no means generally admitted that there is one form of Divine right—one system that can claim a Divine original—that exclusively rests on the authority of the Great Head of the Church for its establishment and continuance, and that has appended to all its parts the seal of Divine approbation. In other systems, there may be found some points of coincidence, but as a whole, this alone is agreeable to God's institution; every thing else is the invention of men. The opinion seems now to be extensively prevalent, that Christ left the Church to be modeled according to circumstances. Even where Presbytery is adhered to, its claims are put forward too frequently on the ground of mere human expediency; and some of its celebrated advocates, to whom we could refer did occasion require, appear to have given up its Divine establishment, forgetting that this constitutes its chief, nay, we may say, its sole excellency. Against this view of the subject we enter our decided protest. If admitted, we think it unavoidably follows that Christ left in his Church no form of government, and that he exercises over her no care. As these pernicious consequences will not readily be granted by any who acknowledge the paramount authority of the Scriptures in matters of faith and practice, or who know any thing of the Redeemer's character, and the relation which he sustains to his Church, we are saved the necessity

of entering more at large into preliminary discussions, and may proceed more directly and immediately to the elucidation of the great principle which is embodied in the Third of the Terms of Ecclesiastical Fellowship of the Reformed Presbyterian Church—the “owning of the Divine right and original of Presbyterian Church Government.”

Two phrases in this declaration require to be defined or described—*Church Government* and *Divine Right*. As we wish to avoid prolixity, and design to present merely a brief summary of arguments and illustrations, we give, in the words of the *London Ministers*, a description of the former—“*Church Government* is a power or authority spiritual, revealed in the Holy Scriptures, derived from Jesus Christ our Mediator only to his own officers, and by them exercised in dispensing of the word, seals, censures, and all other ordinances of Christ for the edifying of the Church of Christ.* Farther, a thing is said to be of *Divine Right* which is “agreeable to sound reasonings from the true *light of nature* ; supported by approved *Scripture examples* ; sanctioned by *Divine approbation* ; established by *Divine acts*, and enjoyed by *Divine precepts.*”†

Passing over several systems that have prevailed among various classes of sectaries, it may be safely affirmed that the three great leading systems, *Independency*, *Episcopacy*, and *Presbyterianism*, divide the Christian community as far as discipline and government are concerned ; which of these can establish a just claim to a Divine right and original, will appear in the sequel. According to the published sentiments of its most celebrated advocates, *Independency* acknowledges no other visible Church of Christ but a single congregation meeting in one place to partake of ordinances : places the government of the Church in the hands of the members ; limits all censures and acts of government to single congregations, preventing the liberty of appeal in case of grievance to any superior ecclesiastical assembly ; and assigns to pastors and deacons only a consultative, not an authoritative power. Against this scheme, the following obvious, and, as appears to us, weighty objections, may be urged, which, if valid, manifestly disprove its claim to Divine institution :—1. It invades the distinction between *rulers* and *ruled*, which is every where

* *Divine Right of Presbyterian Church Government*, by Sundry Ministers of Christ in London, p. 57.

† *Divine Right of Pres. Ch. Gov.* p. 18 ; and *M'Leod's Eccl. Caf.* p. 23, Seventh American edition.

maintained in the Inspired records of the early Christian Church. 2. It breaks the unity of the visible Church, which is constantly represented in Scripture as ONE ; consisting of all throughout the earth who profess the faith of Christ, and maintain subjection to his laws, with their infant children. The spouse of Christ is one, "the only one of her mother." "There is one body," as there is "one Lord,"—"one faith, one baptism." Song vi. 9; Eph. iv. 4, 5. 3. The office of *deacon*, which in early times was appointed for the purpose of attending to the temporalities of the Church, is converted into a spiritual office, and is made in some measure to supplant that of *ruling elder*, with this difference, that the deacon in Independent congregations is not ordained, and possesses no spiritual authority ; for such a device there cannot be pleaded any Scriptural warrant.* 4. It sets aside *courts of appeal*, and thus under the mask of allowing greater liberty to the people, really tends to oppression. The xvth of the Acts of the Apostles, in addition to other passages, furnishes a Divine warrant for the exercise of office—power in the Church, the union of many congregations under one system of government and the due subordination of judicatory assemblies. From the inspired history of the Acts, it is evident that there were many thousands of Christians in Jerusalem at this time. It was not the whole community of the faithful resident there, but only the Apostles and Elders (verse 6) who came together to consider the case of reference from the Churches of Asia Minor. Commissioners from the Churches of Antioch and Iconium attended, and took their seat in the Synodical assembly. The Apostles claimed no apostolical authority over their brethren. The deed of synod was adopted after solemn deliberation ; and when addressed to the Churches, it was prefaced in words implying authority—"It seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us." Afterwards, the decrees of this council were delivered to Churches in other places to keep, (Acts xvi. 4) a circumstance this which had not been mentioned, if its jurisdiction had extended no farther than the body of professors in Jerusalem, or if the assembly had only possessed the right of consultation and advice, and not authoritative power. Lastly, Independency, having in itself no conservative principle, tends to anarchy and confusion ; and its

* In this particular, and several others, modern Independents have departed from the ways of their predecessors—Dr. Owen expressly maintains the Divine right of the ruling elder.

past and present history goes to prove, that it is fertile in producing schism and division in the Church.

The *second* form of ecclesiastical government, *Episcopacy*, as it exists in the Papacy and in Prelatical Churches, is destitute of Scriptural institution and authority, and many who have been in some measure connected with it, such as Usher, Scott, and Milner, acknowledge much of the system to be the invention of men. According to this system, there are various degrees of rank and station among the officers of the Church. Archbishops, Bishops, Deans, Rectors, with inferior clergy of different names, constitute the hierarchy of modern Episcopacy. Of these officers, the Bishop claims the sole power of ordination, and the lower orders of clergy are required to take to him the vow of canonical obedience. The exclusive government of the Church is in his hands, the inferior officers having no authority but such as is derived from him; and the people being deprived of the choice of their pastors, and of all concern in the management of ecclesiastical affairs. It is scarcely necessary to add, that in most Protestant countries, where Episcopacy has obtained, an ecclesiastical supremacy over the Church has been granted to the civil authorities. In Britain, the King is, by the Constitution, the fountain of ecclesiastical as well as civil honor, the Bishops receiving their appointment from him, and he having power to decree ceremonies, to summon or interdict the convocations of the clergy, and to model according to his pleasure the whole policy of the Church. That such a system receives no countenance or support from the Inspired Oracles, requires no lengthened or formal proof. That which places the church in subjection to a temporal Head, which robs her members of their inalienable rights, and which deprives pastors of their rightful authority, cannot be sanctioned in the Word, and can have no proper claim to Divine right. The word *Bishop*, it is freely admitted, occurs in the inspired records of the primitive Christian Church, but it is easy to show that this circumstance affords no argument in favor of modern Episcopacy. *Episcopos* simply signifies an *Overseer*, and as applied to a ruler in the Church, it is equivalent to *Presbuteros* a *presbyter* or elder. These terms are indeed repeatedly interchanged in the New Testament, (see Acts xx. 17, 28.) Paul sent and called the *elders* of the Church of Ephesus; afterwards he speaks of them (ver. 23) as having been made "overseers," (*Episcopous*;) Bishops; by the Holy Ghost, over the flock.—

Writing to the Church in Philippi, the Apostle of the Gentiles addresses the "Bishops and Deacons;" and even on the admission of Stillingfleet and Maurice, eminent Episcopalians, he could only mean the Presbyters or Elders, for the address implies that there were a number of Bishops in a single city, a circumstance altogether incongruous with modern Episcopacy. And the Apostle Peter (1 Epist. 1, 2) speaks of himself as an Elder (*Presbuteros*) exhorting the *Elders*; and he commands them to feed the flock of God, taking the *oversight* thereof (*Episcopontes*, i. e. exercising the office, or performing the duties of Bishops over them.) We may sum up the argument concerning the interchange of the titles Presbyter or Bishop in the words of Dr. Miller, in his "Letters on the Constitution and Order of the Christian Ministry:"—"In short, the title of *Bishop*, as applied to Ministers of the Gospel, occurs only *four* times in the New Testament: in *three* of these cases, there is complete proof that it is given to those who are styled *Presbyters*; and in the *fourth* case there is strong presumption that it is applied in the same manner. On the other hand, the Apostle Peter, as we have just seen, in addressing an authoritative exhortation to other ministers, calls himself a *Presbyter*. The same is done by the Apostle John, in the beginning of his second and third epistles—"The Elder (*Presbyter*) unto the well-beloved Gaius—The Elder unto the elect Lady, &c." Could more ample evidence be desired, that both these titles belonged equally, in the days of the Apostles, to the same office?

"But it is not necessary further to pursue the proof that these names are indiscriminately applied in Scripture to the same office. This is freely and unanimously acknowledged by the most respectable Episcopal writers. In proof of this acknowledgment, it were easy to multiply quotations. A single authority shall suffice. Dr. Whitby confesses that 'both the Greek and Latin Fathers do, with one consent, declare that *Bishops* were called *Presbyters*, and *Presbyters* *Bishops*, in Apostolic times, the names being then common.' *Notes on Phil. i. 1.*"

If more were requisite to disprove the claim of Episcopacy to Divine right, we might show that there cannot, in the nature of the case, be successors to the Apostles in the sense that the abettors of Episcopacy demand—that the power of ordination is not higher than the preaching of the Word,* as is manifest from 1 Cor. i. 17; and that the transmission of of-

*This means *authoritative* preaching.—*Ed. Ref. Pres.*

face power is ever represented in the New Testament as the act of the Presbytery, and not of a single person. See 1 Tim. iv. 14 ; Tit. i. 5. The whole system, indeed, can be considered only as a device of men, brought in to favor the ambition of Churchmen, and to corrupt and degrade the Church of Christ—being of this world, it must come to nought.

(To be continued.)

MEANS OF PREVENTING LUKEWARMNESS IN SECRET PRAYER.

Trifling indifferency in private prayer is very daunting, and has tempted many to neglect it to a lamentable degree. But surely negligence will by no means mend the matter. The best place for a person to judge of his real estate in religion is generally in secret, when the eye of God chiefly observes him. Now when a good man endeavors to consider his frame and circumstances in prayer, yet finds lukewarmness, deadness, and formality prevailing, so that he has little heart to engage in the important work, and has but few words and these very lifeless, he knows not what to do nor what course to take. To a person in this uncomfortable situation, I would humbly propose the following particulars, praying for the divine blessing.

I. Entering into his closet or any retired place, in the house or out, by night or by day, let him commune with his own heart to this purpose: "Now I am retiring, as it were, out of the world; I am going to kneel down before, and in the presence of the great Jehovah, in whose awful presence holy angels veil their faces; a God glorious in holiness; therefore with what reverence and godly fear should I approach his throne! a God full of grace ready to hear, pity and pardon through Jesus Christ; therefore with what confidence and humble boldness should I address him!" With his pure eye he beholds the hypocrite, and hates his prayer; but he hears the very groanings of the weak in faith; he knows all his wants and all his infirmities; he regards the prayer of the destitute, and grants the desire of the helpless; a contrite spirit he will not despise, but will be near to him that trembles at his word. Having weighed these things, he should,

II. Consider the chief spring of lukewarmness in prayer.

If love to sinful objects, or even to the perishing things of this world engages and carries away the whole heart and affections, so that divine promises or threatenings are seldom thought of, the heart very little impressed with a sense of divine love or fear of wrath; vital religion is neither delighted in nor relished. Alas! what a deplorable state the poor soul must then be in! what a stranger to true consolation! No wonder private prayer is dead and lifeless. The person should fall down before God, confess his sin, and bewail his ease. If a believer falls gradually into a wretched state of formality in prayer, then let him consider from whence, and how he has fallen; let him pray for repentance, and entreat that he may be revived. If a lifeless frame proceeds from ignorance and darkness, then we should carefully read and hear the word of God, and give the more earnest heed unto it. The Psalmist was often quickened by the word. We are great losers by an indolent temper and disposition.

III. Be sure to consider from whence life, light and warmth in prayer are to be expected. The Holy Ghost is the promised Spirit of grace and supplication. He helps the infirmities of poor saints. He brings to remembrance the fulness and suitableness of Christ; he explains and applies promises; he encourages the weak to be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus; he enables the person to see what a poor creature he is, what he wants, and what his errand to the throne of grace; so life, light and strength are communicated; then private prayer is delighted in, and not easily neglected. I do not think any one can be lively and savoury in his private addresses, but he must either experience the kind and sweet assistance of the Spirit of prayer; or else, feeling his want, he importunately entreats and craves the help and direction he longs for. I am persuaded no man prays aright, but he is excited to look unto the love, person, sufferings, righteousness, and faithfulness of a dear Redeemer; the blessed Intercessor, who has much incense to offer up with the weak breathings and imperfect prayers of all the saints. We must have faith in prayer, dealing with Christ, and pleading promises, else we shall be formal.

IV. Meditation is very conducive to liveliness in prayer. We should meditate on our present state, what our privileges, what our mercies, what our infirmities, temptations and trials, what the promises and threatenings, what and who our enemies, &c. When the mind runs, wanders and rambles from

morning to evening, upon the world, with the intoxicating lusts thereof; thinking little, or none at all of divine providence, the cause and glory of God, growth or declension in grace, our comfort here, and great salvation hereafter; we must, in such a case, be shamefully trifling and formal in prayer.— And if we be wounded for, and cured of this disease, we shall be apt to leave off prayer entirely in a little time.

V. Religious and experimental conversation will greatly help in private prayer. As iron sharpeneth iron, so does a believer the face and heart of his brother. When our conversation is worldly, carnal and void of religion, it is no wonder, if we be quite disconcerted for private converse with God, who heareth not sinners. Our devotion will of course be insipid, sleepy and loathsome; we may expect and fear that God will say, *I will spue thee and thy prayer out of my mouth.* We are commanded to exhort one another daily.

VI. It might be of great service to consider the loss sustained by lukewarmness in prayer, and the very desirable gain by warm and lively devotion; while we take a brief survey of the gain by the one, it is not very difficult to come at the loss by the other. When life and light are experienced in the closet, the soul draws nigh to God, his only and rich portion, his exceeding joy and great reward. There is freedom and boldness of access to the throne of grace. The soul is fed with sweet and heavenly consolation; there the love of God is shed abroad in the heart; the believer is sealed to the day of redemption. Moses was retired when he had his Pisgah view. Jacob was alone when he pleaded and wrestled, obtained strength and prevailed. Hannah's prayer was private, when she was comforted, and her countenance was no more sad. Daniel was in private prayer, when he was favoured with great revelations. In prayer (almost, if not quite, private) Jesus Christ was transfigured. In private prayer Cornelius was directed to send for Peter to preach the gospel, that the door of salvation might be opened to the gentiles. Peter also was at private prayer, when he was directed or persuaded to go with the messengers sent by the centurion, nothing doubting. Paul seems to have been wrestling with God in secret, when that good word came unto him, *My grace is sufficient for thee.* While the believer's soul is poured forth in prayer, his faith is strengthened, and he obtains fresh vigour to run his race honourably through the wilderness. In secret the lively Christian reveals his concerns to his Father, tells him what treatment

he meets with in the world ; he thanks him most heartily for all that he has done for him, for all that he has in hand, and much more in hope, and often says, Thus it pleaseth thee, O Father. The dead and lifeless in prayer, is a stranger to all or most of these things, and many more.

VII. Some will be ready to say, "Alas ! I am so pestered with vain and impertinent thoughts in prayer, I am ashamed and afraid to enter into my closet ; and when I come out I am rather loaded with guilt. I am often tempted to give over private prayer on that very account." True, such a frame is to be much lamented. If these thoughts flow naturally from a heart swallowed up and lost in the cares and pleasures of this world, then they be very sinful. The particulars already noted may, and ought to be seriously considered. But our thoughts in prayer may run upon those things our very souls hate, and things we seldom or ever think of at other times, and to cause us much grief. A great part of this may be caused by Satan, and proceed from the law yet in our members. This may be, and often is, where much life in prayer is experienced, though more still is longed for. These things should by no means hinder private prayer ; but should often remind us of that needful advice, *watch and pray.*

PIKE.

THE PASS OF ENTREKIN.

(From the "History of the Covenanters.")

In the end of July, (1634,) a numerous field meeting was held in Nithsdale, not far from Drumlanrig Castle, at which about sixty of the hearers appeared in arms. They had scarcely assembled, when an alarm was given that they were betrayed, and that two parties of dragoons were marching to attack them ; upon which the people immediately separated. When the military came forward they found the congregation dispersed ; but were opposed by three hundred Covenanters, who had chosen their ground, and were resolved to stand on their defence. Not daring to encounter that determined band, the dragoons pursued the stragglers, and having seized six or eight unarmed men, with the minister, they bound them, and proceeded with them on the road to Edinburgh. Their route lay through a steep and narrow pass on Entrekin hill, by which the military heedlessly conducted their prisoners. "This Entrekin," says the author of the *Memoirs of the Church of Scotland*,* "is a very steep and dangerous mountain ; and had not

* De Foe.

the dragoons been infatuated from heaven, they would never have entered such a pass, without well discovering the hill above them. The road, for about a mile, goes winding, with a moderate ascent, on the side of a very high and steep hill, till on the latter part, still ascending, and the height on the left above them being still vastly great, the depth on their right below them makes a prodigious precipice, descending steep and ghastly into a narrow, deep bottom, only broad enough for the current of water to run that descends upon hasty rain. The passage on the side of the first hill is narrow; so that two horsemen can ill pass in front, and if any disorder should happen to them, they are in danger of falling down the said precipice on their right, where there would be no stopping till they came to the bottom."

Through this pass the dragoons were slowly proceeding, when they were suddenly arrested by a voice calling to them from the hill above. It was misty, and nobody was at first seen; but the commanding officer halted, and inquired who called, and what was wanted. He had no sooner spoken than twelve of the countrymen made their appearance. The officer reiterated his inquiry, and commanded them to stand. But one of the countrymen, who seemed to be their leader, having ordered his men to "make ready," asked the officer, "Sir, will ye deliver our minister?" "No, Sir," was the reply, "an ye were to be damned." At which the leader of the countrymen fired, and shot him through the head, when both the rider and his horse fell over the precipice and were dashed in pieces. The rest of the twelve were preparing to fire, when the officer next in command requested a truce. The whole party were indeed in a situation so dreadful, that none of them durst stir a foot, or offer to fire a shot; and had the countrymen given a volley, they would all have been driven headlong down the side o' the mountain into the dreadful gulf below. To add to their consternation, some travellers, who appeared at the head of the pass, and seeing the military, stepped aside to allow the soldiers to march forward, were supposed to be another body of armed countrymen.

Having no choice, therefore, the officer again asked what were their demands. "Deliver our minister," was the reply. "Well," rejoined the officer, "ye's get your minister an ye will promise to forbear firing." "Indeed we'll forbear," said the countrymen, "we desire to hurt none of you; but ye must deliver all the prisoners." Compelled to accede to these demands, the officer ordered the prisoners to be unloosed, and suffered to depart. He first, however, addressed the minister, saying, "Sir, I let you go, and expect your promise to oblige your people to offer no hindrance to our march." The minister having promised to do so. "Then go, Sir," added the officer, "you owe your life to this damned mountain." "Rather Sir," rejoined the minister, "to that God who made this mountain." Having obtained the prisoners the countrymen were marching away in triumph, when the officer again called to their leader, and pointing to the travellers at the head of the pass, said, "I expect you'll be as good as your word, and call off those fellows you have posted at the head of the way." "They belong not to us," was the reply; "they are unarmed people, waiting till you

pass by." "Say you so," rejoined the officer, "had I known that, you had not gotten your men so cheap, or come off so free." "And are ye for battle, Sir," said the countrymen, "we are ready for you still ; if you think you are able for us ye may try your hands ; we'll quit the truce if ye like." "No," replied the officer, "I think ye be brave fellows, e'en gang your gate."

"The officer of the dragoons," De Foe tells us, "was threatened with a council of war for this affair ; and whether he was not broke for cowardice, I am not certain ; but this I am certain of, that had the best of them been upon the spot they must have done the same, or have resolved to have made a journey headlong down such a hill as would have chilled the blood of a man of good courage but to have thought of."

INTERESTING ANECDOTE.

It is both pleasing and encouraging to reflect on the interpositions of God in his Providence for the deliverance of his people. He not only makes the wrath of man to praise him, but takes the wicked in their own craftiness, and, by this means, opens a way of escape for such as are appointed to death, or cruel sufferings by the ungodly. Oftentimes he brings to pass great events, or averts great and imminent dangers, threatened by the enemies of his people, in ways least expected, and by circumstances in themselves unimportant. Such interpositions remarkably shew his Divine power, and evidence that he is a very present help, in time of trouble, to all them that put their trust in him.—The following well authenticated account of an occurrence, which took place near the end of the reign of Queen Mary, often called "the bloody Mary," illustrates these remarks, and bids the people of God not to fear what man can do, or desires to do, against them. The account, as taken from the papers of Richard, earl of Cork, is as follows :

"Queen Mary having dealt severely with the Protestants in England about the latter end of her reign signed a commission to take the same course with them in Ireland ; and to execute the same with greater force, she nominated Dr. Cole one of the commissioners. This Doctor coming with the commission to Chester on his journey, the Mayor of that city, hearing that her majesty was sending a messenger into Ireland, and he being a Churchman, waited on the Doctor, who in his discourse with the mayor, took out of a cloke bag, a leather box, saying unto him, "Here is a commission that shall lash the heretics of Ireland," (calling the Protestants by that title.) The good woman of the house, being well effected towards the Protestant religion, and also having a brother named John Elmonds, of the same, then a citizen in Dublin, was much troubled at the Doctor's words ; but watching her convenient time while the mayor took his leave, and the Doctor complimented him down stairs, she opened the box, took the commission

out, and placed in lieu thereof, a sheet of paper, with a pack of cards wrapped up therein, the knave of clubs being faced uppermost. The Doctor coming to his chamber, suspecting nothing of what had been done, put up the box as formerly. The next day going to the water side, wind and weather serving him, he sailed for Ireland, and landed on the 7th October, 1558, at Dublin. Then coming to the castle, the lord Fitz Walters, being lord-deputy, sent for him to come before him and the privy council; who coming in, after he had made a speech relating upon what account he came over, presented the box to the lord-deputy, who causing it to be opened, that the secretary might read the commission, there was nothing save a pack of cards with the knave of clubs uppermost; which not only startled the lord-deputy and council, but the Doctor, who assured them he had a commission, but knew not how it was gone. Then the lord-deputy made answer, "Let us have another commission, and we will shuffle the cards in the meanwhile." The Doctor being troubled in his mind, went away and returned to England; and coming to the court obtained another commission; but staying for a wind, on the water side, news came to him that the queen was dead; and thus God preserved the Protestants of Ireland."

Queen Elizabeth was so delighted with the account of this occurrence, which was related to her by lord Fitzwalters, on his return to England, that she sent for the woman who had removed the commission from the bag, and gave her a pension of 40 pounds during her life.—See Cox's History of Ireland, Vol. ii. p. 308.

POPERY IN SPAIN.

In 1837, the Rev. Mr. Rule, an English clergyman, established at Cadiz a branch of the Gibraltar mission for the benefit of British and American seamen, who visit that port, opened a Spanish School, and preached to a few persons who desired to attend Protestant worship. It will be seen from the following Royal Order, that the Popish authorities in Spain have expelled him from the country, and prohibited any Protestant instruction from being imparted in the kingdom. Popery is still the same intolerant persecuting system, that it was in former times, and its votaries only lack the power, not the will, to renew the scenes of bloody cruelty enacted in periods of the bitterest persecution. Yet many American Protestants talk of the change of Popery, apologize and even plead for the system of iniquity, send their children to Popish schools, and contribute to the erection of their temples of idolatry. Papists hold high offices in the Government, and are rapidly acquiring influence, though history furnishes not an instance in which they ever possessed power without abusing it.—Ed.

I have laid before her Majesty, the Queen Governess, your communication of the 23d inst., relative to the English Clergyman, Mr. Rule,

who with criminal tenacity, attempts to propagate in that capital (Cadiz,) his doctrines, availing himself both of preaching and teaching. Her Majesty, being fully informed, has deigned to approve of all the measures you have taken in this serious business, and in order to avoid the evils which might result to Spain from permitting the introduction of new seeds of discord, she has thought fit to command that Mr. Rule be forbidden to open establishments of any sort, whether a school of primary instruction, a college of humanities, or any other, in which directly by himself, or by persons under his influence, he might disseminate doctrines contrary to our religious unity. It is also the will of her Majesty that the said Rule be not permitted under any pretext to have meetings, conferences, or preachings, in his house, and that if, in spite of this prohibition, he should continue to hold such exercises, contrary both to our belief and to our laws, after the facts have been fully made out by written information, you cause him to leave the province. Finally, her Majesty desires that you *enjoin on the commissions of primary instruction, that they watch over all the schools of their district with the greatest care, in order to prevent the introduction into them of doctrines that this fanatical sectary endeavors with such perseverance to spread abroad.* By Royal Order,

HOMPANERA DE COS.

IMPORTANT DECISION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE
CHURCH OF SCOTLAND.

For a long period the right of appointing a minister to a vacant congregation in the established Church of Scotland has been claimed by certain persons, called patrons or heritors, the members of the congregation at large having to submit to the appointment made in the exercise of this *patronage*. This has been, from the period of her establishment, one of the corruptions of the Church of Scotland. Members of congregations, and they only, according to the word of God, and the order of Presbyterian Church government founded thereon, have the right to choose their own ministers, and the exercise of patronage deprives them of a right which the Church's head has given them and for which martyrs have contended even unto death. The intrusion of ministers upon congregations, without, or against the consent of the parishioners, has long been opposed by some in the church of Scotland and was one ground of the *Secession* by Erskine, and those who with him seceded from that church in the year 1733. The superior influence of a certain party in the church secured the uninterrupted exercise of patronage till the year 1834, when the anti-patronage party, under the lead of Dr. Chalmers, gained the ascendancy in the assembly and restored to the members of the church a voice in the election of ministers. By the act of Assembly, passed that year, the

nomination was allowed to remain with the patron but subject, in each case, to a *вето* of the majority of the parishioners in full communion with the church, if the presentee were not acceptable to them. This act, however, was resisted by lord Kinnoul and others and was set aside by Scottish judges in a civil court. The question was carried up to the house of lords, as the last appellate civil tribunal.

The particular case upon which the proceedings were founded was that of the parish of Auchterarder. The presentee had been rejected by the communicants, and was denied induction by the Presbytery; who were sustained by a majority of the General Assembly. The case was finally decided by the House of Lords in May last, in favor of the patron and against the Church.

In these untoward circumstances, the matter came before the General Assembly at its last meeting; whereupon this body adopted a resolution, moved by Dr. Chalmers, of which the purport is as follows: The Church concedes to the civil power the right to make such an enactment, and failing compliance with it, as in the case in hand, its right to rescue what it has given to the Church, namely, its temporalities. In the case of Auchterarder, therefore, she yields all claims upon the temporalities, which may accordingly be used by the person whom the patron has nominated; but the Church will not ordain the man in question, or any other to the spiritual superintendence of the people, in circumstances which she has determined, are, on the whole, inimical to the spiritual interests of the Church. Resigning the temporalities, therefore, the General Assembly will, no doubt give directions for the ordination of another clergyman acceptable to the people in the parish of Auchterarder, making provision for his maintenance in some other way.

Dr. Cooke, is the leader of the subservient or State party, in the Church. He and the Earl of Dalhousie expressed their intention not to act on a Committee to be appointed in the case. The Earl said, that he was conscientiously attached to the Church of Scotland, and hoped to die a member of it, but he should not consent again to sit in the judicatories of any Church, which, gloss it as you may, has resolved, doggedly, but virtually to set at defiance the law of the land. "The knell," said he, "is now rung of the Establishment of the church of Scotland."

OBITUARY OF MR. JAMES M'FETRIDGE.

Departed this life at his residence in Keene township, Coshocton County, Ohio, May 5th, Mr. James McFetridge. The deceased was a native of Ireland, born in the Parish of Macaskey, county Derry, January 30, 1780, he emigrated to America in the spring of 1803, was ordained an Elder in the Associate Reformed Church in the year 1820, but from close study and serious investigation he became deeply convinced of the truth and great importance of the peculiar

principles of the Reformed Presbyterian Church and in consequence embraced them with an ardour and devotion becoming their importance. The interests of Zion were very dear to him, he was truly grieved for the "afflictions of Joseph" and the "divisions of Reuben," and preferring the welfare of Jerusalem above his chief joy, was willing to "spend and be spent for the cause of his dear Master." Never did he seem better pleased than when he received information of the peace and prosperity of the church—never more depressed than when he heard of her troubles or knew of any thing to tarnish her beauty. As a Presbyter few elders were his equals, very few his superiors for sound judgment, depth of information, and meekness coupled with unflinching faithfulness. He endeavored in church courts to do the thinking for himself, believing that he had a mind of his own and must give account. In the social meeting he appeared to great advantage; his accurate knowledge of divine truth obtained, as it was, from the fountain of truth, (God's Holy word) delighted and often astonished those who are accustomed to drink at its streams. In order to obtain knowledge he followed the Divine commands, "Search the scriptures," "Take heed to the sure word of Prophecy," "Attend to my law; Meditate on my word," and the consequence was he had more understanding than many that are called teachers; for God's testimonies were his meditation. As a husband and father, he was kind and affectionate, and attentive to the relative duties. His last illness which was severe and protracted, being a species of dropsy, he bore with christian patience and fortitude. His hopes for future bliss were fixed on no sandy foundation, and as a consequence, he had hope in his death. Among his last words were Ps. ly. 6. "Oh that I had wings like a dove for then I would fly away and be at rest."

His widow and family, and many friends, and the Society at Keene over which he was Elder, sincerely feel and mourn his loss, but they mourn not as those who have no hope; true, they are deprived of his society, counsel and example, but their loss is his gain. "The righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance, but the name of the wicked shall rot."

Mr. James Love was ordained by the Pittsburgh Presbytery, and installed in the Pastoral charge of the Reformed Presbyterian congregation of Londonderry and Greenfield, on the 27th June last.

The E. S. Synod is to meet at Coldenham on the 8th October next, at 10 o'clock A. M.

The Southern Presbytery, same place, 9th October, at 10 o'clock, A. M.

THE

REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN.

VOL. III.

OCTOBER, 1839.

No. VIII.

GOD THE OBJECT OF SUPREME LOVE.

There are numberless suitors seeking possession of the heart of man. It becomes, therefore, an imperative duty to examine the claims upon which they solicit his attention. Are they characterized by justice and reason; or by usurpation and injustice? The world, with all its temptations and allurements of sensual gratifications, is, in endless variety, spread out before his view; while Satan, under the mask of pretended friendship, urges him to the enjoyment of these as the greatest good. Our readers, if they have attended to the working of their own minds, know well by what sort of arguments they have been solicited to bestow their hearts on the "devil, the world and the flesh." Calm reflection tells them that there has been nothing but the blinding turmoil of passion, or prejudice which, instead of conducting to happiness, leads to everlasting misery and perdition. If the claims of Satan and his emissaries are not supported by reason, it is hoped that this will induce our readers to give a patient hearing to the claims of the Eternal, when amid the bustle of this deceiving world, He speaks in the still small voice of the gospel, and says "My son give *me* thine heart."

The first claim which God has, as the object of our supreme love, arises from the fact that He is our Maker. The obligation springs from two things,—the act of creation itself; and the end for which we were created. The Almighty breathed into our nostrils the breath of life; and endowed us with rational and moral principles whereby we were made capable of knowing and serving him: this gives him an indisputable claim over our affections; and lawfully forbids us to bestow

them upon any other. The end for which we were created is His own glory. "This people have I formed for myself; they shall show forth my praise." We are therefore commanded to glorify him in all things that we do, whether we eat or drink. The very first thing implied in glorifying God is loving him in preference to every other being. For unless he has the supreme place in our affections we neither love nor obey him; we do not love him unless we love him with our whole heart; and we do not obey him unless we obey him from the heart! This claim is further enhanced by the consideration of the providential kindness of God. He has not only made us, and that too, superior to all other creatures in our world, but he continues, to preserve, support, and protect us; these considerations lay us under increased obligations to love him. From the beginning of our existence, we have been dependent on the never failing providence of God, for preservation, protection and support. If there is gratitude in our hearts, it will be manifested by loving Him "in whom we live and move and have our being." Let us reflect upon the goodness of God enjoyed during our past lives, in the bounty of his providence by which our daily returning wants have been supplied; in his gracious and ceaseless care by which we have been protected from the dangers to which we are exposed in this evil world. Who is it that has fed us with food convenient; that has clothed us;—that has been, as a wall of fire around, to protect us from the arrows of death that fly thick among the sons of mortality; that has sheltered us from the insidious attack of disease, which lies concealed in our mortal frame; that has raised us from the pining sickness of an apparent death-bed, solaced and comforted us, by his gracious presence, giving songs of joy in the night of affliction? Is it not God? That same God who says "My son give me thine heart?" Are there not the strongest reasons then, why we should love him? We doubt not, that our readers will assent to the reasonableness of the claim. But it is a practical question, the evidence of which is to be furnished by our daily conduct, in obeying the commandments of God. To this test the Redeemer brings the determination of the matter. "If ye love me, keep my commandments." Love, it is true, is an affection of the mind; but it is an active principle, and produces action corresponding to its nature. Holiness of life is distinct from love; but is at the same time inseparable from it. The for-

mer never exists but in connection with the latter ; and the latter always manifests itself by the former, except in such circumstances as do not furnish the opportunity to the corresponding action. Hence, the fairness of the test, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." While we urge this claim of God upon our readers ; we say to them also, obey his commandments,—live as become the children of so many mercies, in all practical godliness.

Again, the provision made for the salvation of sinners, is another reason why we should love God. The preceding observations are based on our moral relation to God, as our Creator and Preserver : this on our relation to him, as the objects of his grace and mercy. The former brings us under a natural obligation to love God ; the latter, under a gracious obligation. That we may perceive the force of this claim, let us consider the condition in which we are by nature, and from which the mercy of God delivers. It is a state of sin and misery. "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin ; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." "Therefore as by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation." Such is the condition of men by nature. They are sinners ; and of course obnoxious to all the consequences of sin. From both the guilt and dominion of sin, the people of God are redeemed by his mercy in Christ Jesus. "That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord," "who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we being dead to sin, should live unto righteousness : by whose stripes ye were healed. For ye were as sheep going astray ; but are now returned unto the shepherd and bishop of your souls." For the attainment of this great deliverance we are entirely indebted to the sovereign grace of God. "Not by works of righteousness which we have done but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost ; which he shed on us abundantly, through Jesus Christ our Saviour : that being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life." The offer of salvation is made to all without exception. "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." It is offered in the most free and unlimited manner, "without money and without price." God calls upon sinners in the most endearing language, "I, even I am He

that blotteth out your iniquities, for mine own sake. I will not remember your sins. Come now and let us reason together saith the Lord; though your sins be as scarlet they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson they shall be as wool." The view which these, and a multitude of other scriptures of the same import give of the mercy of God, illustrates strongly the obligation under which sinners are to love him. While we are bound by the law of nature to love him, as our Creator and Preserver, an additional claim is made upon us, because of his love to us, manifested by the gift of Jesus Christ to be a Saviour. "In this was manifested the love of God towards us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him." Love to God is not expressed by empty pretensions of respect, but, by a holy and humble walking before him: for it is "not every one that saith Lord, Lord, that shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father who is in heaven." The grace of God is not exercised toward sinners that they may live in sin with impunity; they have been made partakers of it, that they may love and obey him. "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid; how shall we that are dead to sin live any longer therein?" "According as he hath chosen us in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world that we should be holy and without blame before him in love."

This obligation to love God extends not only to all who have been made partakers of Divine grace, but embraces all those to whom this grace has been revealed and made known by the sacred scriptures. The former indeed only perceive the obligation and in some measure endeavor to fulfil the law of love; but the latter are bound to love God whether they recognize the obligation or not. The claim which God has upon the love of men because of his grace rests not entirely upon their being made actual partakers of it, but on the fact that he has revealed his salvation to them.—That he is in Christ reconciling the world unto himself not imputing their trespasses unto them. The guilt of rejecting the gospel rests upon the sinner's own head; but the offer of salvation which it makes to sinners without exception, and without limitation, brings all those to whom it is made, under a new obligation to love God. "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy and eat,

yea come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near. Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon." This discovery of the gracious character of God gives him a new claim upon the love of men, in addition to that which he has, as Creator and Preserver. "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." And therefore should we love him and serve him in return.

Again, the infinite excellency of the Divine nature gives God a claim to the highest place in our affections.

The excellence of God's character, independent of his goodness to us, binds us to love him, and that supremely.—It binds us to love him as the greatest and the best of beings, with all our heart, and with all our strength. His goodness in providence and grace, greatly enhances our obligation to love him; but is not the primary ground of the obligation. This arises from his own character; and is absolutely independent of any thing that he has done, or may do, towards us. He has a claim upon our love, because he is God, and therefore infinitely excellent. "He is a rock, his work is perfect; for all his ways are judgment; a God of truth, and without iniquity, just and right is he." This Divine excellence is the foundation and reason of all Divine worship. It is true, when we consider the works of God with respect to ourselves, as tending to promote our interest, we, on that account, love, esteem, and praise him. "But these are more properly motives to excite us, on our own account to praise him than the grounds of his title. Besides, whatever advantage we derive from any of his works, it consists wholly in the enjoyment of himself in proportion to the advantage we receive. We adore him for what he is in himself, and bless him for what he is to us."* The supreme excellence of God is the reason and foundation of the supreme love which we owe him. And his benevolence to us, manifested by his goodness in providence and redemption, increases our obligation and enhances his claim upon us to love and serve him. As a matter of both *right* and *gratitude*, God has the highest claim upon our

* Thompson's Sermons.

love; but there is another view in which the subject may be considered, and which though subordinate is entitled to some consideration. To love God supremely is most advantageous to ourselves. We thus fulfil a duty, and at the same time most successfully promote our own interest.

It is not in any respect inconsistent with the purity of that love which we owe to God; nor with its supreme influence over our hearts, that we have a regard to our own happiness and advantage. Man is so constituted as to be susceptible of high degrees of enjoyment. This capacity he has received from his Maker, accompanied with plain indications that it is his will that man should be happy. Nor is a regard to this denied in his relations to God: he is not allowed, indeed, to make it the chief principle of action in loving and serving God; because the happiness of the creature must always be subordinate to the glory of the Creator. But he is not forbidden to keep it in view, as a subordinate object. The Hopkinsian dogma of disinterested benevolence receives no countenance from either reason or revelation. "To be willing to be damned for the glory of God," is as destitute of support by scripture authority, as it is abhorrent to every unsophisticated feeling of the human heart. To pretend to bring the mind to acquiesce in this false assumption, is an attempt to quench an original principle which God has implanted in the mind more strongly than the love of life itself; we mean the love of happiness. In the exercise of love to God we are not refused a regard to this principle, which he has implanted in our minds. God has connected them together; for we most effectually promote our own happiness by unreservedly serving and loving God; and we thwart it by neglecting to give him the supreme place in our hearts. The union of these two things then are perfectly consistent—they fully harmonize; though the former must always be subordinate to the latter. "Man's chief end," says the form of sound words, "is to glorify God and enjoy him for ever."

The harmony of these two things is implied in many of the exhortations of scripture. "Turn ye, turn ye, why will ye die, I have no delight in the death of the wicked." "They that observe lying vanities forsake their own mercy." To this may be added the example of the saints, spoken of in scripture with approbation. Of Moses it is said, "he esteemed the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt; for he had respect unto the recompence of reward." In

this connexion, the example of *one greater* than Moses is set before us. Of the Author and Finisher of our faith it is said, "who, for the joy that was set before Him, endured the cross and despised the shame—and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."

Such being the case, may we not reason with sinners on the folly of preferring the world to God; and on the advantage of performing this high duty of loving God supremely. Suppose the world, with all its pleasures and gratifications, were within the grasp of a sinner, what could they add to the sum of his happiness? "What is a man profited if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" Take for example an ambitious man, whose soul is burning with a thirst of worldly glory and honor: suppose him to be as successful as the most vigorous imagination is capable of picturing, either of prowess in the field or of wisdom in the cabinet; and suppose further, that his success is uninterrupted. Set him on the pinnacle of human grandeur; while his fellow men bow at his nod, or are overawed by his wisdom. Could all this impart happiness to an immortal being? Or, suppose a worldly minded man, enjoying uninterrupted prosperity in his plans and speculations, till he has acquired a princely fortune. Were wealth capable of making a rational creature happy, such an one would unquestionably be so in a very high degree. The most limited acquaintance with society proves that such is not the case; by showing to us men encompassed with wealth and affluence, envying, in the bitterness of disappointed expectation, the happiness which is not unfrequently enjoyed by the humblest mechanic, or the poorest laborer, who earns by the sweat of his brow but a scanty subsistence. We blame no one for seeking to obtain, by lawful means, a competent portion of the good things of this life, or of increasing his pecuniary resources. But we reprobate the making the acquisition of wealth *the business* of life, and the looking to it as the *source* of happiness. The love of carnal and voluptuous pleasures, which so many pursue with eagerness, disappoints the hopes of its votaries. It is a bruised reed that pierces the hand of him who leans on it. Every attempt to secure happiness by the possession and enjoyment of the creature must prove abortive. The reason is obvious; it arises from the moral constitution of man; the things referred to are sensual, and can only gratify a sensual nature. They have no adaptation to the rational and immortal part of man;

and nothing can be advantageous to him which is not adapted to these properties of his nature. Nothing short of the enjoyment of God, as his portion, can afford the happiness of which a rational and immortal being is susceptible. By loving God supremely we take the only way of attaining felicity; because we take the way pointed out by the eternal order of things. Every other course will end in "vanity and vexation of spirit." Nor is this its certain attendant in the state of future retribution only; it frequently follows it even in this world. We do not refer to the avowedly wicked and profane who make a sport of sin; we allude to those who, under the cover of external decency and an outwardly fair moral character, are yet seeking happiness in the enjoyment of the creature instead of the Creator.

We tremble at the awful consideration of how many of our fellow creatures this involves in a state of alienation from God. And charity itself cannot hide from our view that this includes a great number of even the professed worshippers in Zion. We fear that the religion of many who meet on the first day of the week, professedly for the purpose of expressing their love and gratitude to God, and are members of the visible church, assemble either from habit, because it is customary, or perhaps because it enables them to spend a few hours which would otherwise hang heavy on their hands. It is evident that such do not love God supremely: they love the world. It will not be pretended that their enjoyments are superior to those of the people of God—nor even equal. If such are honest enough to speak out their experience, they will say that every hope of happiness from the creature has been baffled and disappointed; that those things, from the enjoyment of which they expected so much, were no sooner possessed than they lost their fascination. This we hold to be the case universally. How much more then shall their disappointment and their misery be aggravated in the state of future retribution, where wrath unalloyed, and despair unmingled with hope, will be their portion for ever? Compare with this the happiness of a child of God, who has yielded up his heart in the exercise of holy affection to his Father in heaven,—who, whatever may be his lot in life, has a happiness which no external circumstances can destroy; however poor and despised in the view of the world; however afflicted in his person or family, he has a peace arising from the exercise of love to God, which the world gives not, and cannot take away.

THE REVIVAL OF RELIGION.—ITS NATURE.

Surveying those revivals that take place, every year, in the several kingdoms of nature, we are all accustomed to experience considerable pleasure. One sentiment of deep, solid, and soothing satisfaction penetrates our minds; and from the breasts of not a few, an emotion of fervent gratitude rises up to Him, who “renews the face of the earth.” How delightful we all feel, to walk forth in the balmy air, and “wander o’er the dewy fields,” after the storms of winter have ceased, and the ravages they have occasioned have been repaired! How delightful to survey the innumerable forms of beauty rising up in every direction, to inhale the varied fragrance wafted in soft gales from a thousand fields, and to hear the melody of the feathered tribes rejoicing, in their sylvan retreats, under the care of the universal Parent! How delightful, in a word, to mark the silent progress of vegetation under a divine influence that never ceases, to contemplate rich crops spreading their luxuriance over regions, which, shortly before, were buried under snow, and to anticipate the appointed weeks of harvest, when the precious fruits of the soil shall have been collected into places of safety, with gratitude to a gracious Providence, and joy to the numerous families of a teeming population!

It is usual also to rejoice in those revivals which the various branches of national industry occasionally undergo. Who does not rejoice in the revival of *trade*, by which greater employment is given to the working classes, ampler means of subsistence and comfort are procured, and a stronger check is presented to the increase of crime and misery, that naturally spring from idleness and poverty? Who does not rejoice in the revival of *commerce*, by which the sources of national wealth are enlarged, the valuable products of distant countries are exchanged, and new channels opened up, through which christian nations may send, into those that remain unenlightened, the lights of divine revelation, and the blessing of human knowledge? Who does not rejoice in the revivals of agriculture, in which so many have a deep interest, from which they derive such important benefits, and to which they look for an addition to the comforts of the whole community? In one word, who does not rejoice in the revival of *learning*,—that learning which calls forth the latent faculties of the mind,

unlocks the treasures of knowledge that preceding ages have amassed, stimulates the intellect to further investigations into the vast regions of nature, providence, and grace, and affords facilities to the accurate translation and luminous exposition of those sacred Scriptures, which, while they make believers wise to salvation, contain the elements of many sciences?

If, then, we rejoice in the occasional revival of these *secular* interests, ought we not to rejoice still more in the revival of an interest so momentous as *religion*? Surely, if religion, cherished in our hearts and practised in our lives, be our chief excellence,—if it furnish us with our choicest blessings and our highest privileges,—if it supply the strongest dissuasives from all sin, and the strongest incentives to universal holiness,—if it introduce to the purest consolations under present trials, to the chief supports in the hour of death, and the most exalted pleasures through eternity, *a revival of it* must be an attainment among the most important, to which we can now direct our thoughts and our desires, our efforts and our prayers. Yes, it is an attainment more valuable far, to ourselves, our friends, and our country, than the greatest revival the natural world can ever undergo,—than the richest crops reared under the most propitious skies,—than even the largest treasures, accumulated by centuries of laborious exertion. “For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?” “For bodily exercise profiteth little; but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.”

All are aware, that the term *revive*, signifies “to bring again to life.” In no case does it denote the primary communication of the vital principle. It always implies that this had taken place at some former period: and that after a partial decay, produced by different causes in different departments, a partial restoration has been brought about. Such is properly speaking a revival in the general sense of this *much abused* word. Applied to vegetable productions for example, it denotes the restoration of life, that had formerly been imparted, but which had been checked under some injurious influence. Applied to the bodies of men, it denotes the restoration of the vital functions which had been previously established, but which had suffered a temporary suspension from some hostile cause; or, with a slight deviation from its original meaning, it represents the increase of physical health which had formerly been enjoyed, but which had met with a partial interruption from the operation of physical disease.

Hence it appears, that a revival of religion means, not the first implantation of religious principles in the mind, but either the restoration of these after they have suffered a partial decay, or the increase of them to a greater height than they had ever before reached. The proper subjects of a religious revival, therefore, are persons who have at some former period been "quickened together with Christ Jesus,"—persons in whose souls spiritual life has been implanted by the divine Spirit, but who, under the operation of adverse influences, have sunk into spiritual indifference and inactivity. No doubt when *they* are awakened to becoming concern about their souls, and to becoming earnestness in religious duties, under an unusual outpouring of the Holy Spirit, some of the *unconverted* around them are also brought under strong convictions of their guilt and painful apprehensions of their danger, and made subjects of saving grace. But to say that *these* have experienced a revival of religion is a gross perversion of terms from their legitimate meaning, on a subject, too, on which it is of the greatest importance to the spiritual interests of our fellow men, that we study accuracy of conception and precision of language.

In what, then, does the revival of religion, as thus explained and limited, consist? It consists, we conceive, in these three things, combined in various proportions,—*the increase of religious knowledge—the increase of religious principles—and the increase of religious practice.* Whoever have obtained an increase of these three things, under the gracious influence of the Holy Spirit, may be said to enjoy a religious revival, and to experience that state of spiritual prosperity, which ought to be the object of their habitual study.

At the foundation of a religious revival must be placed *an increase of scriptural knowledge.* We admit, this is not the prominent characteristic—the predominating attainment. In a religious revival, the remarkable excitement of the feelings that enter into devotion, is the thing that presents the greatest appearance, and attracts the greatest notice. It is this chiefly that distinguishes the conduct of its subjects both from the spiritual languor in which they themselves were previously sunk, and from the spiritual death in which the multitudes of unawakened sinners around them are involved. Still, even this would not amount to a genuine revival, unless attended by the controlling power of accurate knowledge. Withhold knowledge, their feelings degenerate into fanaticism, their

services into superstition, and their prayers into the wild ebullitions of phrenzy. Withhold knowledge, they become the sport of strange fancies and animal impulses, the victims of wild delusions arising from their own deceitful hearts, or of dangerous heresies urged on them by false teachers. In short, a vessel at sea without compass, without rudder, and without pilot, tossed on the billows and driven before the winds, cast away upon the rocks, or broken to pieces amid the fury of the tempest, is in a situation not more critical than those awakened persons are, who have not received the knowledge requisite to direct them, who abandon themselves to the guidance of their agitated feelings, their erroneous prejudices, and their injudicious teachers, and who are apt to "fall into temptations, and a snare, and many foolish and hurtful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition." "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge."

Accordingly, religious knowledge is one of those excellencies in which christians are desirous of making progress.—They cannot forget, that *this* was a prominent part of the image of God impressed on man in his primitive state, and that it holds a distinguished place among the gracious gifts bestowed upon him at his regeneration. They cannot forget that for the reception of this, they are endowed with capacities superior to those of unrenewed men—are furnished with the scriptures that unlock the treasures of heavenly wisdom,—and are promised the continued effusion of the Holy Spirit, from whom growing illumination comes. Neither can they forget, that the acquisition of this, besides the immediate enjoyment it affords, and the superior employment it gives, exerts a salutary influence, under the divine blessing, both in improving the benevolent affections they entertain towards their fellow men, and in strengthening the religious principles which terminate more particularly on the Supreme Being. It is not without reason, therefore, that the value of this is the theme of unceasing praise in the word of God. "Yea, doubtless," says Paul, "I count all things but dross for *the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord*, that I may *know* him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings." "And this is life eternal," says Christ, "that they might *know* thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou has sent." "Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches. But let him

that glorieth, glory in this, that he *understandeth and knoweth me*, that I am the Lord who exercise loving kindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth; for in these things I delight.

How important is it, then, that there should be an increase of scriptural knowledge in the churches! It is mortifying to think to what a low state many of them have sunk in this respect. Where now are those enlarged views of divine truth, those ample stores of religious information, that distinguished our pious ancestors in better days? Where are now those ample treasures of biblical knowledge with which the very peasants in the rural districts of Scotland put to shame the curates that presumptuously attempted to teach them, and even confounded the judges before whom they were brought, for frequenting the meetings held by their loved pastors? If we except a small minority, we must say, of modern christians generally, that they are ill informed respecting religion, shallow, superficial, and showy, hovering continually on the surface instead of looking down unto the "deep things of God," and using "the milk that new-born babes" desire, instead of receiving the "strong meat that belongeth to them that are of full age." Is it not time that some efforts were used to awaken them to a sense of their undeniable deficiencies, of their superior advantages, of their solemn responsibility? Is it not time for them to give up the unstudious habits they have long indulged, and to endeavor by reading, by careful thinking, by diligent improvement of the means of instruction to which they have access, to extend and deepen their knowledge? Is it not time for *Elders*, chosen on account of their superiority in intelligence, piety, and faithfulness, rather than other causes, to mingle more with the people of their respective districts, to impress on them the importance of increasing acquaintance with divine things, and to excite them to those various exercises, by the assiduous performance of which they might secure this end? Is it not time for *Ministers*, too, to awake to the magnitude of the office with which they are entrusted, to distribute throughout every possible channel the treasures of knowledge they have received, and to direct the inquiries of their hearers, *throughout the week*, to those sources from which they may derive further information, and to offer *special prayer* to God, that "they might be *filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding*, that they might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing,

being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God?"

(To be continued.)

DIVINE RIGHT OF PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH GOVERNMENT.

(Continued from page 215.)

The grand distinctive features of *Presbyterianism*, each of which is clearly exhibited in the New Testament, are—1. *Messiah's exclusive Headship over the Church.* "He is the Head of the body of the Church." "There is one Lord," "He is thy Lord, and worship thou him." (Col. i. 18.; Eph. iv. 5.; P'sal. xlv. 11.) 2. *Purity among the Rulers of the Church.*—"All ye," said the Saviour, "are brethren." The elder who ministers in word or doctrine is completely on a level with other preaching elders in the Church; and in exercising office-power, as far as acts of rule are concerned, he has no superiority above him who simply rules. "The elders I exhort, who am also an elder." (1 Pet. v. 1.) 3. *The principle of representation.* The ministers and elders in a Presbytery are the Church representative—elders are the choice of the people, and represent the congregation of which they are overseers. Thus, while the confusion of Independency is avoided, the liberties of the church are preserved, and the officers of Zion are "far from oppression," 4. *Subordination of ecclesiastical courts*, and consequently the existence of *courts of review and appeal.* Sessions are subordinate to Presbyteries, Presbyteries to Synods, and Synods to General Assemblies. In case of a party being injured or aggrieved, a door of redress is thus opened, and before impartial and disinterested judges, the opportunity is presented of obtaining a favourable hearing, and a re-investigation of the cause. 5. *Ordination to the ministerial office by the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery.*—While church officers are called and qualified by the Divine Redeemer, and the office is created by him, the transmission of official power is the act of those who have themselves been regularly inducted into office. Ordination constitutes the minister or ruler; without it no plea of qualifications or necessity can be considered sufficient to warrant the intrusion.

—he who is not regularly ordained, according to Christ's institution, is not the ambassador of Christ. Timothy was ordained by the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery. Lastly — *Orderly and effective co-operation.* While Presbytery preserves the Church's unity, it lays the best foundation for the execution of united counsel, for energetic exertion, and systematic movement. In this, and other particulars, it is seen to be not less the system of Scripture than of common sense. Others are obliged to adopt it in substance, though opposed to it in name—the Vestrymen and Churchwardens of Episcopal churches, the Deacons of Independency, and the Committees of Bible and Missionary Societies, are a practical recognition of the principle of Presbyterianism.*

The different parts of this system are delineated in the Scriptures of the New Testament. Even the name is Scriptural. The officers of the church are called Presbyters, and the judicatories Presbyteries: very frequently the thing is mentioned where the name is not found; and both name and thing are, therefore, warranted by the Word of God. Pastors, or teaching elders, as the highest officers in the church, having all ministerial power, are appointed in every organized church, given by Christ as the fruit of his exaltation, and made by the Holy Ghost overseers to feed the church of God on earth. (Acts xiv. 23; Eph. iv. 11; Acts xx. 28.) The *ordination* of pastors to office by the Presbytery is of Divine institution, (1 Tim. iv. 14,) and is in itself so reasonable that those who oppose it in argument are obliged to adopt it in fact. Even Episcopalians and Independents ordain men to preach the Gospel, with laying on the hands of a plurality of ordained ministers. *Ruling elders*, invested with authority by regular appointment and ordination, are also divinely prescribed. The Primitive Churches had several elders in every city, and the zeal and activity of that period forbid the idea that they were preaching elders; and expressly do the Scriptures distinguish those Presbyters who *only rule* from those "who labor in word and doctrine." (Rom. xii. 6, 8; Acts xiv. 23; 1 Tim. v. 17.) And the office of *deacons* is the subject of distinct specification—the Scriptures declaring their necessity to the church, their qualifications, the manner of appointing them, and the fact of their existence in organized churches. (Acts vi. 1; 1 Tim. iii. 8; Phil. i. 1.)

* See McLeod's *Eccles. Catechism*, Note Q., 191.

Ecclesiastical courts composed of church officers, having the power of discipline and government, after the Presbyterian form, have a Scriptural warrant for their establishment. A plurality of elders, by divine institution, are ordained in every congregation. Our Lord himself refers cases for decision to the elders met in judicature, or to the representative church; and the existence of such tribunals is matter of fact in the New Testament history. (Acts xiv. 23; Mat. xviii. 15; Tit. i. 5.) *Presbyteries* are specifically mentioned; and as a conclusive argument in favor of superior courts of judicature, the fact deserves the most attentive consideration, that the New Testament "holds forth *several distinct worshipping assemblies as ONE CHURCH, having ONE COMMON GOVERNMENT, and as a pattern to the whole Christian Church until the end of time.*"* And the *synodical assembly*, convened in Jerusalem, to decide on the question respecting circumcision, and other matters, is a standing testimony of the necessity and propriety of the highest courts of judicature in the church. From this cursory enumeration, it is abundantly manifest that the various parts of Presbyterian church government are of Divine appointment; and the system, therefore, as a whole, has appended to it the seal of Divine approbation.

In addition to what has been already advanced, we may advert, in conclusion, to one argument in favor of the Divine original of Presbytery, which to those who are properly qualified to investigate the subject, is absolutely confirmatory—an argument which the ingenuity of the opponents of Presbyterianism has never been able to disprove. It is that taken from the institution of the *Jewish Synagogue*. The synagogue order and worship, it can be easily shown, were divinely prescribed, whether synagogues existed from the time of Moses,† or were established after the return of the Jews from the Chaldean captivity, in the days of Nehemiah and Ezra. Unlike the temple worship, which was typical, and ceremonial, and was of course done away in Christ, that of the synagogue was purely moral and spiritual; and it was, therefore, proper to be adopted in its leading characters, under every dispensation. Our Lord honored the Jewish synagogues with his presence, and taught in them; the Apostles and first

* McLeod's *Eccles. Cat.* p. 52.

† This is the opinion of the celebrated Selden, (see his book *De Synedrâ Hebræorum*, p. 631,) also of Scaliger, Usher, Helvicus, Lightfoot, Grotius, and Lowman.

Christian Ministers did the same; and the early converts to Christianity seem to have maintained the order to which they had been previously accustomed, with as little change as was suitable to the genius of the New Testament dispensation. That our Lord and his apostles designed the christian church to be conformed to the model of the synagogue, is manifest from various considerations. The very name is transferred from the one to the other. The original term, which, in the Old Testament, is translated in our version an assembly or synagogue, is in the New rendered a church. In many cases, it denotes the assembly of the *Church representative* or rulers, and not the body of the people, as Independents would have us believe.* When the Apostle James speaks of the order to be observed in Christian assemblies, (Epist. ch. ii. v. 2,) he says, "If there come into your assembly a man with a gold ring," &c.—in the original it is, "If there come into your *synagogue*." And the injunction, "forsake not the assembling of yourselves together," (Heb. x. 25,) is literally "your meeting in a *synagogue*." The identity of the name thus applied to the assemblies of the Church in the Jewish synagogue and to the christian congregation, proves the order to be the same. Besides, it is a fact attested by all writers on the subject, that the *worship* of the synagogue was similar to that which is still employed in Presbyterian congregations, consisting in reading the scriptures, in delivering an exhortation or sermon, and in offering up prayers and praises. The *officers*, also, and their *duties*, and the mode of their *ordination*, were accordant with the Presbyterian form. In every synagogue there was a bishop or minister, who was likewise styled a pastor, presbyter, or angel of the church, and a bench of elders and deacons.† The pastor who was president of the court of elders, in conjunction with the other rulers, constituted a court of judicature, to which all causes in the congregation were to be brought, and from which an appeal lay to the *Sanhedrim*. Officers were ordained by the *imposition of hands*, and every Presbyter who had been himself regularly ordained, had a right to act in the transmission of office-authority to others. In fine, it is capable of the fullest proof that

* Calvin, Beza, Paræus, and even Goodwin, a celebrated Independent, who sat in the Westminster Assembly, explain the command of our Lord. (Mat. xviii. 17.) "Tell it to the Church" to be, in allusion to the practice of the synagogue, a reference to the rulers of the congregation.

† Vitringa de *Synag.* and Maimonides de *Sanhed.*

the whole order of the synagogue was that after which the New Testament Church was designed by her exalted Head to be modelled; and the former being, beyond all doubt, of Divine institution, it follows, undeniably, that the claim of the Presbyterian form of Church Government to a Divine right and original, rests on grounds the most solid and durable.

COUNSELS FOR THE CONVERTED.

(From Alleine's Alarm.)

Value no mercy barely as it may promote your temporal welfare, but view it rather in reference to eternity, and as it may serve to advance your Maker's glory.—The cipher put to the figure is of great signification; but set by itself it signifies nothing at all. Creature comforts separated from their respect to God and eternity, are of no value; but in order to these ends they signify much. We have ease and fulness when many others are in pain and poverty; and we have much the start of them, if we be wise to improve our health, in laying in apace against a wet day, and preparing apace for eternity, and serving the Lord with more diligence, and cheerfulness, and gladness of heart, in the abundance of all things; but, if this be all we have by it, that our bones lie a little softer, and our palates are tickled with a little more delight, what profit have we by our health and estates? If they that are sick or poor, love and serve the Lord better than we, they have the advantage of us; and better were it to be poor and sick as they are.

Rest not in probabilities for heaven, but labor for certainties.—Beloved, certainty may be had, else the counsel of God to make our "calling and election sure" is in vain, else the experience of the saints were but delusion, who tell us they "know they are passed from death to life," else the power of self-reflection were to no purpose, and the spirit which is in man would not know the things of man. Now, if a certainty may be had, will you not try by all means to obtain it? Sirs, you have need to push hard to get assurance, and to get it now. We are ever at miserable uncertainties for all outward enjoyments; we know not how soon we may be called to part with them all. Professing christians, will you be con-

tent to have nothing sure? Will you not settle your everlasting condition, seeing you are so unsettled as to your outward condition? What will you do in the day of visitation, when extremity comes upon you, if you have no assurance that God will receive you? It would make one's heart tremble to think of being upon such a fearful temptation as to part with all for Christ, and not to be sure of him neither. O man, what an advantage will the tempter now have upon thee, when he shall suggest, "Wilt thou be such a fool as to let all go at once? Thou seest heaven is not sure, Christ is not sure; therefore keep the world whilst thou hast it, and hold what thou hast sure." Beloved, what a fearful slighting of God, and contempt of heaven and glory, and all the promises, doth this argue, that you can be content to be at uncertainties whether they be yours or not! How many of you are there that do not know whether you be going to heaven or hell! And what desperate carelessness doth this argue, to go on from week to week in such a case! Some hopes you have that you shall do well, but put me not off with hopes. Never be satisfied till you are able to say, not only I hope I shall be saved, but I know I am "passed from death to life;" I know that "when the earthly house of this tabernacle shall be dissolved, I have a building not made with hands."

Be not satisfied with some grace: but reach after growth in grace.—Do not think all is done when you have obtained the evidence of grace, but press toward the increase. That person who doth not desire and design perfection, never came up to sincerity. He that desires grace truly, desires it not barely as a bridge to heaven, and so to seek no more than will just bear his charges thither; but he desires it for its own sake, and therefore desires the height of it. That person who desires grace only for heaven's sake, and inquires what is the lowest measure of grace that any may have to come to heaven (by which he means to be saved from misery) upon this design, that if he could but come to that pitch he would desire no more; that person is rotten at the heart. Christians, the Lord doth expect of you that you should not be babes and dwarfs; he looks now especially that you should make some progress. What do you more than heretofore? What! do you feel his spurs in your sides, and his whip at your backs, yet never mend your pace in religion, nor stir one jot the faster? Let me commend you to Paul's study, it

argues a base and unworthy spirit to content ourselves with small things in religion.

Labor that holiness may become your nature, and religion your business.—Then you are come to somewhat indeed in religion, when the work of God has become your natural and beloved employment, your meat and drink, your work and wages; when your tongues and hearts naturally run on God, as others, on and of the world. Much of that may be attained by constant care and prayer. Brethren, let God's work be done by you, not by the by, but as your greatest business: "Seek first the kingdom of God;" that so, whatsoever you do, you may be able to give the same account of yourselves that our Saviour did when they inquired of him—that you are about your Father's business.

Confine not religion to your knees, but carry on an even thread of holiness through your whole course.—It is the disgrace of religion that christians are so unlike themselves unless it be when they are in holy duties. This wounds religion to the quick, when it shall be said of professors, these men will indeed pray like angels, but for aught we can see, they are as peevish and touchy as any other men, and they are as hard in their dealings, and make as little conscience of their words as others do. Beloved, do not think religion lies only in praying, hearing, or reading; for you must be throughout religious. Sirs, bring forth your religion out of your closets into your ordinary course; let there not be a life of holiness on the outside of the cloth, but let holiness be woven into the whole of your conversation. Herein consists the excellency and difficulty of religion; when you have the baits of intemperance before you, then to hold the reins hard and deny your flesh; when you have provocation before you, then to restrain your passions and bridle your unruly member; when you have dealings with others, then to proceed by that golden rule of equity and charity to do unto others as you would have them to do in like case to you; when you are called upon by your several relations, then to behave yourselves with that tenderness and love, with that reverence and obedience, with that courtesy, condescension and kindness which become you in your various capacities. In this, I say, lies the excellence of religion.

Ever walk with your chief end in view.—It is true, according to the usual similitude, the traveller thinks not of his journey's end every step, nor need he; yet he never loses sight of it,

it is never out of his mind. Brethren, there is nothing hinders but that, with prayer and watchfulness, you might come to this in every solemn action, to mind God as your chief end. Impose this on yourselves as your daily rule to walk by, never to lie down but with these thoughts, "Well, I will make use of my bed as an ordinance of God, for my natural refreshment, that a servant of his may be fitted for his work." Never to rise up but with these thoughts, "I will set out this day in the name of the Lord, and make it my business throughout the day to please him." Never to set about your callings, but in the entrance think thus, "I will set about my employment in obedience to God, because it is his will I should walk with him in my place and station." Never to sit at your tables but thinking, "I will now eat and drink, not merely to feed my flesh, but to cherish a servant of Christ Jesus, that he may have strength for his service." Charge this upon yourselves, and examine in the evening how you have minded it, and check yourselves wherein you come short. Once learn this, and you are come to something, and shall have the undoubted evidence of your sincerity, and shall know by experience the blessed mystery of walking with God.

Be and do more than ordinary in your closets and families.

In your closets.—Be more than ever in self examination. And here let me put it to your consciences: are you habitual in examining yourselves by the word of God? Do you try yourselves by it daily? Ah, wretched negligence? What, have you given your approbation and yet forget your duty? God expects it of you, that, now you know his will, you should with more zealous fear, and tender circumspection, and holy watchfulness and self-denial, walk before him; else you will greatly excite his indignation.

Finally—In your families.—The Lord calls you to set your houses in order. O see what is amiss in them, and strive to cast out whatever may be a provocation.

KNOWLEDGE.—ITS DESIRE AND ATTAINMENT.

(From Mr. Frelinghuysen's Inaugural Address.)

The desire of knowledge is deeply fixed in the human mind. It is strong in childhood, and through every stage of

our existence exerts a constant and active influence. The untutored savage, as he roams the forest, feels within him the workings of this mighty principle of his being. He longs to know. He is awed by the displays of divine power; and when the thunder breaks around him, he adores the Great Spirit who wields it, and would learn more of his nature. He is ignorant, not of choice—the avenues of light are shut from him, and he must track his gloomy path, bereft by his condition of the means of cultivation and the gifts of science. The pursuit of knowledge is our duty and our privilege. Both may be inferred from the objects around us and the powers within us. The sun, in his course of light—the planets as they roll through immensity—every star that twinkles and every leaf that grows, furnish proof that man must, from the propensity of his nature, be curious to understand these wonderful works of God. And when he walks abroad, not as an indifferent spectator, but endowed with faculties that can scan the orbits of every planet, that follow the sun in his way and the moon in her brightness—that can explore the secret places of the earth and bring to the light of philosophy its hidden treasures—we may feel assured of the truth, that knowledge is a birth-right, which nature and duty prompt us to cultivate and acquire.

But this desire of knowledge may become inordinate and dangerous. There is a propensity in the human mind, in the pride of its self-confidence, to know too much. True philosophy is modest in its pretensions; and having ascertained the boundaries of science, is content to range within those limits.

It takes its seat amid the wonders of creation, and when approaching the line beyond which revelation will not conduct us, it checks investigation and is willing to be ignorant. But the restless spirit of bold inquiry and reckless speculation breaks over these confines and would penetrate into regions that are purposely excluded from our search. The philosopher expects to be baffled in many of his investigations—conscious that the subjects with which he deals are the workmanship of an Infinite mind, of Almighty power and perfect wisdom; he dares not pry beyond the open leaves nor rejudge the counsels of Him who spake and it was done, who commanded and it stood fast. When the book of inspiration with immutable sublimity, reveals to him that God *said* let there be light and there *was* light, his feeble powers bow in

reverence to the truth of the revelation. He dares not urge the inquiry how light was created ; the word and power of God satisfy his mind. He rests there, deeply convinced that there is no rest beside. Tell him that this is mysterious, he expects mysteries, and replies to the cavil—"who by searching can find out God?" And we may surely have compensation if needed, in the rich, broad fields open for our investigation in the worlds of matter and mind, as well as in the animating truth that what *may be* learned will form subjects for thought and study that can never be exhausted. Here is a fountain at which the wisest of all ages have refreshed and filled their desire to know—and the fountain flows still, deep and full.

Indeed, one of the best fruits of study is the conviction of our short-sightedness ; how much there is to confound us even among the humblest works of the Creator. And this conviction has always been most decided in minds the best enlightened. They have approached the nearest to the limits that bound our investigations, and can therefore best realize the fathomless abysses that lie beyond. The man who rises in sublime speculations to the justest conceptions of God and his works, will always the most readily take the lowest seat at his footstool. At this school Bacon and Newton, and Locke, were learners ; their path was traced by the good old rules of common sense, dealing with things as they ascertained them to exist. When reason fainted in the pursuit, faith sustained them. They reposed with pious confidence in the belief that he who hung out these worlds upon nothing, and has moved them ever since creation to the exactest minute, that he who clothes the flower and arms the thunder, has done all things well. May philosophy chastened by experience, resume her true position, and hold the light to realities ; and bear it only as far as its rays can be shed to illuminate, and no longer pervert her powers to bewilder and mislead.

Let it be our aim to spread with liberal hand the blessings of true science. It belongs to our seminaries to raise the standard of education ; to illustrate its practical benefits, and to bring them within the reach of all the people, the humblest as well as the highest. Our country has a deep interest in all her citizens ; and none of them should be suffered to live in ignorance. And they need not. The nature and general properties of all the objects around us may be made familiar

to every mind. While the Heavens declare the glory of God—the mechanic and the sea-boy as well as the philosopher may learn the laws by which he controls and governs those immense masses, and holds them in constant and harmonious revolution. Let the door be open to all—let knowledge be free and made accessible to all—and with the blessing of God, many generations to come may rejoice in the benefits. Let the people have light, beaming from science and religion, and the great question of self-government, that has so often trembled on the balance, will be resolved and settled as every patriot desires.

But education will fail to accomplish its best ends unless religious influence shall be mingled with intellectual cultivation. Man was created for more exalted purposes than merely to investigate the laws of the universe. His great career lies beyond time, and his endowments are adapted to his destiny. The mind and heart must be improved to glorify the Being who made him, or he violates the first law of his nature. Hence, the discoveries of science, the lights of history, and the deductions of philosophy should all connect themselves with God, to illustrate his wisdom, and power and goodness. This the immortal Newton felt to be his true glory. It has been eloquently said of him by a kindred mind—"Mark where it is that Newton finally reposes, after piercing the thickest veil that envelopes nature—grasping and arresting in their course, the most subtle of her elements and the swiftest—traversing the regions of boundless space—exploring worlds beyond the solar way, giving out the law which binds the universe in eternal order, he rests as by an inevitable necessity upon the contemplation of the great first cause, and holds it his highest *glory to have made the evidence of His existence, and the dispensations of his power and of his wisdom better understood by men.* This is the noblest direction that can be given to our pursuits. It invests the researches of science with an interest and value that may be lasting as eternity. And we, who are born to die and to meet the realities that death will disclose, should earnestly heed whatever may enlighten us in the counsels of our Redeemer and Judge.

Philosophy best promotes her true dignity by a cherished sympathy with the oracles of truth. She never inflicted so deep a wound upon all her interests, as when she strove to put down the religion of the Bible, and exalt upon its ruins the cold speculations of infidelity. The experiment was

made in France, with human passion and power to aid in the trial—and the results may be learned in a chapter of her history, among the darkest in the records of time. No one can read it, even now, at the lapse of half a century, without a shudder. France had in impious defiance denied the God of the Bible—and blotted his Sabbaths from her weeks. She had shut up his temples and, instead of the bright hopes of immortality, inscribed on the tomb “death is an eternal sleep.” The offended Judge of the universe left her to her madness—and the fruits we have seen, and the agonies and throes of a bleeding country vindicated the majesty of his laws and the honor of his name.

To cherish and promote the great interests of learning and religion, will I think, engage the earnest efforts and assiduous cares of all who are entrusted with the concerns of this University. By devoting my best exertions to carry out the enlightened plans of my honored constituents, to sustain the fame, and extend and enlarge the usefulness of this interesting seminary, I can alone, in any measure, justify the confidence that has called me to that station.

The University may become a fountain, whose streams of light and sacred influence shall continue to flow, the hope of parents and the blessing of their children, while time shall last.

Here may science flourish in her purity; here may religion ever hold her place in the heart, and hallow with her influence our studies. Amid the vicissitudes and revolutions of time, may she still lift her voice in the defence of the truth, and send forth its able advocates into all the departments of society, and whatever else shall be her destiny, may God, in his goodness, grant that neither encouragement nor countenance shall ever be given here to the delusions of a vain philosophy or a false religion.

EARLY WALDENSIAN CONFESSION OF FAITH.

There are several Confessions of the faith of the persecuted Waldenses, some of them bearing a very early date, still extant. That which we give below was adopted in the year 1120. Several subsequent confessions of the Waldenses are of a similar tenor, recognizing all the fundamental doctrines of the Reformation; but some parts of them are more pointedly directed against the errors of the Romish

church, such as the restriction of the use of scripture to the clergy, the celibacy of the clergy, the infallibility of the pope, &c. The Waldenses seem at all times to have laid particular stress upon the point of the church of Rome being the anti-christ, the harlot of Babylon, the man of sin, the son of perdition, spoken of in the New Testament prophecies; and they insisted strenuously upon the necessity of separation from her communion.—[Ed.]

1. We believe and firmly maintain all that is contained in the twelve articles of the symbol, commonly called the Apostles' Creed, and we regard as heretical whatever is inconsistent with the said twelve articles.

2. We believe there is one God, Father, Son, and Spirit.

3. We acknowledge for canonical Scriptures the books of the Holy Bible. [The books enumerated correspond exactly with our received canon; the Apocrypha is excluded.]

4. The books above mentioned teach us that there is one God Almighty, unbounded in wisdom and infinite in goodness, and who in his goodness has made all things. For he created Adam after his own image and likeness. But through the enmity of the devil and his own disobedience, Adam fell, sin entered into the world, and we became transgressors in and by Adam.

5. That Christ had been promised to the Fathers who received the law, to the end that knowing their sin by the law, and their unrighteousness and insufficiency, they might desire the coming of Christ to make satisfaction for their sins, and to accomplish the law by himself.

6. That at the time appointed by the Father, Christ was born; a time when iniquity every where abounded, to make it manifest that it was not for the sake of any good in ourselves, for we were all sinners, but that he who is true might display his grace and mercy towards us.

7. That Christ is our life, and truth and peace, and righteousness, our shepherd and advocate, our sacrifice and peace, who died for the satisfaction of all who should believe, and rose again for our justification.

8. And we also firmly believe, that there is no other mediator or advocate with God the Father, but Jesus Christ. And as to the Virgin Mary, she was holy, humble and full of grace. And this we also believe concerning all other saints, namely, that they are waiting in heaven for the resurrection of their bodies at the day of judgment.

9. We also believe that after this life there are but two places, one for those that are saved, the other for the damned,

which two we call paradise and hell, wholly denying that imaginary purgatory of anti-christ, invented in opposition to the truth.

10. Moreover we have ever regarded all the inventions of men in the affairs of religion as an unspeakable abomination before God: such as the festival days, and vigils of saints, and what is called holy water, the abstaining from flesh on certain days, and such like things, but above all, the masses.

11. We hold in abhorrence all human inventions which produce distress, and are prejudicial to the liberty of mind.

12. We consider the sacraments as signs of holy things, or as the visible emblems of invisible blessings. We regard it as proper and even necessary that believers use these symbols and forms when it can be done. Notwithstanding which we maintain that believers may be saved without these signs, when they have neither place nor opportunity of observing them.

13. We acknowledge no sacrament as of divine appointment, but baptism and the Lord's Supper.

14. We honor the secular powers with subjection, obedience, promptitude and payment.

RECENT TRIBUTE OF RESPECT TO THE MEMORY OF SCOTTISH
MARTYRS.

It is pleasing to observe the increasing attention that for a few years past has been given in Scotland and elsewhere to the memory of those devoted men, who, in times of bloodiest persecution, counted not their lives dear, when called upon to seal their testimony with their blood. The truth of the declaration—"The righteous shall be had in everlasting remembrance"—is more and more illustrated by the ways in which the Martyrs of Scotland,—their principles, their faithfulness and their sufferings are brought to view, after they had seemed for years to be, in some measure, forgotten. It is also pleasing to observe the extent to which Reformed Presbyterians are, by common consent, regarded, in the attention awakened to the memory of these Martyrs, as their true and proper descendants, holding the same testimony and maintaining the same faith with them. Generally on occasions similar to that, the account of which we give below, have Ministers of the Reformed Presbyterian church been selected and invited to officiate in the services. The following is an interesting account, furnished us, of a meeting held at Eaglesham, Scotland.—[Ed.]

Scottish Martyrs.—On Sabbath the 26th of August, 1838, the Rev.

John Graham of Wishawton, preached at Eaglesham, when a collection was made for repairing the tombstones of two martyrs, whose remains lie interred in the parish church-yard. The place of meeting was the Green, in the centre of the village. The day was pleasant, and the prospect truly delightful. To the lover of nature's beauties, no scene could have been more enchanting—the deep, fresh, luxuriant green of summer, just beginning to be mixed with the golden hues of autumn, blending beautifully as the colors of the rainbow—and the azure canopy was decorated with the richest drapery, and the scorching rays of the sun, agreeably softened by the intervention of the fleecy clouds, so that above and around all was so lovely,

“That the hues of the earth and the tints of the sky,
In color though varied, in beauty might vie.”

While to the friend of civil and religious liberty, and the lover of Scotland's Covenanted Reformation, the scenes around were calculated to excite the liveliest emotions. In every direction lay spots marked as the scenes of suffering, or the places of shelter and safety to those who jeopardized their lives in the high places of the field in behalf of that liberty and those privileges which we still enjoy, often too forgetful of the price at which they were purchased, and the blood shed for their defence and preservation. After a few very appropriate introductory remarks, Mr. Graham read a part of Psalm 137, and as these beautifully tender lines, “By Babel's streams we sat and wept,” &c., were sung to the plaintive notes of “solemn Martyrs worthy of the name,” the scenes and sufferings of other days were brought vividly before the mind. He chose for his text, Psalm cxii. 6, “The righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance;” and having made some very judicious observations on the necessity and importance of distinguishing between a respectful regard for the memory of the confessors and martyrs of Jesus, and the religious worship bestowed by the Romish church, upon the canonized dead, he proceeded to show who were the righteous mentioned in the text, that they were persons justified by the righteousness of Christ—sanctified by his Spirit—maintaining a walk worthy of their profession—and individuals attached to a righteous cause. In the illustration of this observation, he confined himself more particularly to those who adhered to the Scottish Reformation, whom he described as adhering to protestantism in opposition to popery, to presbyterianism in opposition to prelacy, and to the Covenants in opposition to those who either refused to enter into these bonds, or who basely and treacherously cast them off. After which he stated and illustrated a few of those things about the righteous that should be held in everlasting remembrance, with particular reference to the Scottish Covenanters. He enumerated particularly their principles—suffering—christian character—contendings for truth,—and final victory. In the course of the sermon, he made a luminous exhibition of their principles—an able vindication of their character—and drew a very graphic picture of their sufferings, particularly during the sanguinary reigns of the two brothers. About two thousand persons

were present. The collection amounted to 12*l* 1*s* 11*d*. Respecting the two individuals, to perpetuate whose memory the collection was made, history has left no record, while tradition is uncertain, varying and contradictory. It is generally allowed that they were shot about two miles south of Eaglesham, and that they were not natives of the parish. As 1685 was a year distinguished for the brutal ravages of a ruffian soldiery, and the number of cold-blooded murders—being a period known in these days by the expressive appellation of “killing time,” they seem to have been seeking shelter at a distance from their homes, in hopes no doubt, of obtaining it with more security. The simple inscription on their gravestone, with a few homely lines “spelt by the unlettered muse,” contains almost all that is known of their personal history. It is as follows :

“Here lie Gabriel Thomson, and Robert Lockart, who were killed for owning the Covenanted Testimony, by a party of Highlandmen and Dragoons, under the command of Ardencaple. 1st May, 1685.

“These men did search through moor and moss,
To find out all that had no pass ;
These faithful witnesses were found,
And murdered upon the ground ;
Their bodies in this grave do lie,
Their blood for vengeance yet doth cry,
This may a standing witness be
For Presbytery 'gainst Prelacy.

EXTRACTS FROM DR. HUMPHREY'S TOUR.

The Sabbath in England.—The Sabbath is awfully desecrated in England ; I do not say more so than in this country, for I am afraid we are not a whit behind her in this respect. But hundreds of thousands in that country, so highly blest and favored of heaven, do their own works and find their own pleasures on the day which the Lord hath made, and every new railroad and steamboat, “increaseth the transgressors” in the land. So far as I have been able to learn, every effort which has recently been made, whether in Parliament or out of Parliament, to preserve the Sabbath from violation, and protect those who wish to keep it in the enjoyment of their sacred rights, has failed. The charters must all be clear for *seven* days' travel in the week ; and the companies refuse to impose any restriction. When I was in England, Sir *Andrew Agnew* brought a bill into Parliament to restrain Sunday marketing ; to close the shops of all descriptions, and to prevent other violations of the day. He was seconded by many thousands of petitioners, from among the industrious classes, such as bakers, butchers, fruiterers, barbers, hackmen, &c. who complained that they were *obliged* to work on the Sabbath, or lose their customers, and of course their living. But the bill was thrown out by a great majority. Indeed,

Sir Andrew has brought up the subject for a number of years, at every session ; but there is not the least prospect that any thing will be done. One argument against the bill was, that it did not go far enough—it laid restrictions upon the poor, while it left the rich and noble at liberty to violate the Sabbath as much as they pleased. Certainly they ought to be restrained as well as the humbler classes ; and that they do violate the sacred rest to an alarming extent is certain. I will mention a single example. I happened to be in Worcester when the judges arrived in town to hold assizes ; and I copied the following notice, *verbatim*, from the Worcester Journal of July 23, 1835.

“ On Friday morning, Lord Chief Justice Denman and Mr. Justice Williams will attend divine service at the Cathedral, and afterwards proceed to their respective courts. On Sunday, the Judges will again go to the cathedral, and in the afternoon their Lordships, with a large party of nobility and gentry, the high sheriff of the county and the chairman of the quarter session, the Mayor of Worcester and other city authorities, will dine with the Bishop of Worcester at the Episcopal palace.”

Here, then, was a great dinner given on the *Sabbath*, to the Lord Chief Justice of England, by one of the highest dignitaries of the Established church ! What a spectacle ! The judges, and nobles, and magistrates, and gentry of a great Christian commonwealth, going directly from the cathedral, on the Lord's day, to a grand entertainment at—the EPISCOPAL PALACE ! It is no very great stretch of the imagination to suppose that their lordships may have gone from the Episcopal palace into court the next morning, to pronounce sentence of death on some poor guilty wretch, who would, in a few days, confess upon the gallows, that *Sabbath breaking* was the first step in his fatal career of wickedness ! Every reader will make his own reflections and draw his own conclusions. But is it likely that this is the first Sunday dinner that ever was given by the Lord Bishop of Worcester to the Chief Justice of the King's Bench, on his annual circuit ? Is not the fair inference, rather, that this is one of the regular Episcopal functions, in the diocese of Worcester ; and that in some other counties, at least, when the highest law officers of the crown come to open the assizes, they are expected, as a matter of course, to worship in the morning of the Lord's day at the cathedral, and to dine in the afternoon, with the nobility and gentry and magistrate of the county, at the *Episcopal palace*.

Calvinism in Scotland.—In Scotland, all denominations make much more of household 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 baptized.

It might naturally have been supposed, that among so many bodies of Seceders as there are from the established Church, some, at least, would have adopted a laxer theology. But this is not the case. They all rigidly adhere to the faith of their fathers. 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, as with us, but the law is enforced. I heard a Scotchman complaining bitterly of the city authorities in Edinburgh, because they will not allow travellers to do as they please on the Sabbath. And I believe that Edinburgh is the only capital in the world, from which coaches and other vehicles for conveyance of passengers are not allowed to depart, or make excursions on the Lord's day. May she long thus nobly distinguish herself, by her reverence for the fourth commandment.

Scottish Voluntaryism.—"They (the Voluntaries) will not allow the government to legislate *at all* in religious matters—not even to recognise the Christian Sabbath as a divine institution. It is true, they complain of their opponents, for endeavoring, as they allege, to prejudice the public mind against them, 'by representing them as opposed to all legislation, by which the people may be secured in a day of rest, in the midst of their toils.' But how do they repel the charges? One of the lecturers in Glasgow, (Rev. W. Anderson,) an accredited organ of the Voluntary Church Society, answers it in this way. 'None of us questions, that the civil magistrate, in full consistency with the nature of his office, as the guardian of the health and worldly interests of the lieges, may ordain such a day of cessation from labor, especially on behalf of those who are in the condition of servants; in the same way as when he limits the hours of daily labor in a cotton factory. And as a prudent and discreet judge, since many of the subjects will, from religious views, sanctify the first day of the week, at all events, he will make *his* day of civil rest, coincide with *their* day of sacred rest.'—And is this all that the rulers of a great Christian Empire may do for the Sabbath, the corner-stone of all its religious institutions—to put it on the same ground with a *cotton factory*? This, I confess, is a scrupulosity which I did not expect to find among the good ministers of Scotland. That *all* the Voluntaries are prepared thus *utterly and forever* to divorce religion from civil legislation is more than I feel authorised to say; but that most of them are, I have no doubt; and this may be taken as one of a thousand examples, to show how liable good men are, in guarding against one extreme, to fall into the opposite.

Captured Africans.—Great interest has been recently excited by the capture of a Spanish schooner, the *Amistad*, which had for some days been seen cruising off the Long Island coast, and which was taken by Lieut. Gedney, of the United States navy, and carried into New London. It seems that she had left Havana in June, for Neuviitas, another port in Cuba, having on board about 50 slaves, and while on her voyage was seized by the slaves, who killed the captain and another white man. Two of the vessel's crew escaped in the boat, and two passengers, who claim to be the owners of the slaves, were spared.—The slaves were fresh from Africa, having never probably set foot on shore in Cuba, and among them was one of heroic spirit, Jinguá, the son of an African chief, who was unable to brook the thought of spending his life in slavery. He resolved to free himself and his injured companions at all hazards, and succeeded in persuading them to join him in the daring enterprise of seizing the vessel and returning to Africa. During the day, Jinguá could direct the course of the vessel by the sun when it shone; but during the night, one of the white men, to whom her navigation had to be entrusted, still changed her course without the knowledge of the slaves, and by this means caused her to be landed on the American instead of the African coast. These deeply injured men are now in jail at New Haven, awaiting an investigation of the whole case; and we are glad to learn that they are provided for as comfortably, and dealt with as mercifully as the circumstances of their case will well admit. Very able counsel has already been procured to defend them both against the charges of murder and piracy, on which they have been indicted, and against the granting of a demand made by the Spanish minister on the government of the United States for the surrender of the schooner and the alleged slaves to the authorities of Spain, that they may be taken back to Havana, to have the case tried there. If justice be done, these poor foreigners, providentially cast among a people, whose boast is FREEDOM, will be acquitted of the charges on which they are to be tried, and the insolent demand made for the surrender of the *piratical* slave vessel, with the unfortunate victims of avarice and cruelty found on board, will be denied peremptorily and indignantly. We look upon this as one of those many ways in which God is summoning the nation to awaken to a sense of the wrongs long done to the sons and daughters of bleeding Africa. It remains to be seen what effect the Divine summons, from time to time, and in various forms given, will have upon a people awfully guilty before God in the matter of African Slavery. We will advise our readers of the result of the trials above referred to as soon as practicable, after that result is known.

The Western Sub. Synod is to meet at Jonathan's Creek, Ohio, on the last Friday of October, at 11 o'clock, A. M.

The annual session of the R. P. Theological Seminary east of the Allegheny mountains will be opened as on last year, by order of the Board of Superintendents, on the second Thursday of Nov. next. The Introductory lecture by the Professor will be delivered on that day.

THE
REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN.

VOL. III.

NOVEMBER, 1839.

No. IX.

OCCASIONAL HEARING.

1. Public worship is the great instituted means for promoting the instruction of a sinful world. By this is meant not only acts of public devotion, such as prayer and praise; but, also the preaching of the gospel: both of these are designed to promote the instruction and sanctification of the people of God. The former is speaking *unto* God; the latter a speaking *of* God and his mercies. Supplication and thanksgiving are the means of receiving Divine blessings, and of expressing our gratitude to God for those we enjoy. Yet every kind of devotional service cannot be acceptable to God; nor answer the end designed by worship. We should ask only for such things as are agreeable to the will of God, in the name of Christ, and for his sake alone.

The preaching of the gospel is "the power of God unto salvation unto every one that believeth." But, every kind of preaching, or every system of doctrine is not this "power of God." There are some who, while they profess to preach the gospel, are "the enemies of the cross of Christ;" and there are others, who "turn the grace of God into lasciviousness, denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ." It is not to be expected, that the Head of the Church will bless a system of worship, whether doctrinal or devotional, which is in truth not of his own appointment. Indeed we may employ more decided terms and say, he *will not* bless it. Nay, he *forbids* it most solemnly. "In vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." **Mat. xv. 9.**

2. It is the duty of every one favored with the opportunity, to attend the public worship of God. "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is." Heb. x. 25. "The Lord loveth the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob." Ps. lxxxvii. 2. But it is not the duty of the christian to attend every kind of public worship so called, that may be within his reach. If the devotional part is not agreeable to the will of God in substance or in manner; if the doctrines taught are not the truths of God, then it follows that no one is bound to attend such worship; because it is not God's ordinance, dispensed according to his appointment; nor can it promote the edification of the worshipper. The only rule by which worship is to be directed is the sacred scriptures: correspondence to this entitles it to our approval and observance.

It is presumed that every one making a profession of religion, makes, according to his own judgment, the best possible choice. The fact that a choice is made, is proof that it is considered the best. A man would certainly forfeit all claim to reason, who, in making choice of a religious profession, espoused one, knowing at the same time that another which he rejected was more agreeable to the revealed will of God.

Having made these preliminary statements we proceed to lay before our readers some reasons showing that it is inconsistent and improper for members of the church to indulge in the practice of OCCASIONAL HEARING.

1. *By occasional hearing we are in danger of imbibing error.* The diversity of sentiments taught in the public ministrations of religion, some of which are directly opposed to others: and the different modes of worship practised, put it beyond doubt, that error is frequently taught; and that the worship of God is often conducted in a manner not agreeable to his will.—Occasional hearing exposes to the danger of being corrupted by false doctrines; and of worshipping God in a manner not appointed in his word. "Can a man take fire into his bosom and not be burnt?" Can a man be in the way of hearing erroneous sentiments urged with all the advantages peculiar to pulpit ministrations, without danger of being corrupted? False principles plausibly stated, and perhaps elegantly illustrated, may imperceptibly find acceptance with the hearer without his ever being aware of his danger. "We can distinguish," say some, "between the good and the evil;

and while we are instructed by the former we can reject the latter!" But, there is more of boasting, than of wisdom in such a sentiment ; it savors more of inexperienced rashness, than of christian knowledge. It is not the corrected and tutored judgment of one who is aware that the heart of man is deceitful and desperately wicked. By frequently hearing, and joining in that which is false, a man becomes familiar with it ; and operating on the deceitfulness of his heart, it ceases to be so dangerous or so odious in its appearance as at first. Thus men first see, next become so familiar with error, that they embrace it. It is not every hearer of the gospel that is *capable* of detecting error, in the public ministrations of religion, disguised as it may be,—as it often is by the glare of a winning eloquence. For, then, like poison concealed in a honey-comb, it may be swallowed with pleasure.—The greater part of christians who would be able, by deliberating in their closets, comparing leisurely scripture with scripture, to come to the most correct conclusions in relation to doctrines, might be easily imposed upon by plausible statements and false reasoning flowing rapidly from the lips of an ingenious speaker. Thus, men are not unfrequently led astray, gradually and unthinkingly, from the simplicity of gospel truth. And we think it of importance here to notice that similar effects are produced in relation to the devotional part of public worship. We have known persons, who according to their own statements were even shocked when they heard for the first time a human psalmody employed in the praise of God, who after a few repetitions, could join in its use most cordially. If error is so insinuating as thus to upset received principles, and find its way into the understanding and affections of those who have professed strong attachment to truth, the safest, as well as the most dutiful course is to follow the instruction given by the Spirit of God, "Cease my son to hear the instruction that causeth to err." Besides the danger of being corrupted by error, mark the unseemly plight into which a conscientious man thrusts himself by attending worship occasionally where a human psalmody is used. His sense of religious propriety forbids him to unite in this part of the service. And instead of entering the courts of God's house with praise, he must be silent ; thus, an important part of public worship is neglected. Should not the reason, which prevents a Christian from joining in any part of the worship, prevent him from being there ?

In proportion as men of generally correct views have indulged in the practice of occasional hearing they come by and by, to think falsehood less hideous, and truth less lovely, and then is adopted the modern sentiment, that it is not of much importance what a man believes, if he is only sincere. A sentiment which is exceedingly dangerous in a practical point of view. Were it not objectionable on any other ground, this would be sufficient to brand it with disapprobation. A practice that conducts to such results is one that *must be wrong*.

2. By occasional hearing we would neutralize and vitiate our testimony. It is most contradictory for a man to make a strenuous profession of the truth, holding it up before the world as his testimony; and at the same time strengthen the hands of those who are opposed to the truth, by his practice. In such instances, the judgment formed respecting a man's views of religion will be more readily taken from his practice than his profession.

3. Because by our presence we would countenance and encourage others in error and divisive courses. We do not say, that by mere presence a man gives assent to all that may be done or said in devotional exercises, or in preaching; but, without stretching the argument so far, it cannot be denied that countenance and encouragement are thus given. However erroneous the sentiments of a man may be, or unscriptural the worship which he conducts, he will certainly consider the voluntary presence of others an encouragement for him to persevere. Thus by attending the official ministrations of such as are in error, we encourage them in their erroneous and divisive courses.

If, induced by a vain curiosity to see the theatrical pomp of popish worship, a Protestant should be tempted (as many are) so far to forget his duty as to be present at the mass or other religious services of that false system, would he not in this way encourage the practice of idolatry? Would he not in this way encourage the votaries of idolatry and superstition to continue in their hateful and sinful course of opposition to the worship of God in the way which he has appointed?

If, to gratify an itching ear and an unwarrantable lust of novelty, a man goes to a place of worship where Hopkinsianism or Arminianism may probably be taught,—or where the praise of God is sung—not in the songs of Zion, but in those of Watts or other uninspired writers—does he not, by doing so,

countenance false doctrines and unscriptural worship? And does he not thus encourage men of unscriptural principles and practices to hold them fast? If a christian so far forgets the obligation which he owes to the Lord Jesus Christ as to place himself in circumstances where he may hear instruction that disputes and denies the crown rights and royal honors of the Mediator, does he not thus tacitly countenance such doctrines? Is he not chargeable with encouraging others to pluck the diadem from the head of the Savior, and wrench from Him the death-earned honor of being "Governor among the nations?"

5. It may become the means of ensnaring others. It is not only an encouragement to such as already love error to continue in it, but the practice of attending even occasionally upon an erroneous ministry may become a snare to others. Thus the young and the unthinking may, by the example of those around them, be led to imitate such examples; and finally, in consequence of this, forsake the truth. Were a man in no danger himself, the risk which is incurred of ensnaring others by his example, should be a sufficient motive to abstain from occasional hearing. Every christian is bound by such considerations. The apostle Paul felt them so strongly that he declared he would not eat flesh while the world stood, if it caused a brother to offend.

6. The practice of occasional hearing is opposed to the authority and command of such scriptures as the following: 2 Thess. iii. 6—"Now we command you, brethren, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us." This scripture teaches, in the first place,—that it is our duty sometimes to withdraw from such as may be brethren by the profession of christianity. In the second place,—that the reason of withdrawing is disorderly walking. And this may be either practical or doctrinal.—"that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us."

From these we derive the conclusion that occasional hearing is at variance with the authority of scripture; for this practice is *not* a withdrawing from such as walk disorderly, but an intimate association with them. The sense given by commentators of this passage is, that the apostle commands the exercise of discipline, even to the extent of excommunication from the church—because of disorderly walking. If,

then, immoral conduct or heresy in doctrine,—walking not “after the tradition” of the apostle, be a sufficient reason for excommunicating such,—certainly it is a sufficient reason for not uniting in public worship with such as may hold heretical doctrines. In the context the apostle forbids every kind of association with those that are disorderly. Not only does he command the exercise of discipline, but he commands the members of the church to have no company with them.—“And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed.” If there is a sufficient reason for abstaining from ecclesiastical connexion, and for declaring a testimony in opposition to such as do wrong things and teach wrong things, the same reason should prevent us from encouraging them in their wrong courses. But if we occasionally unite with them in public worship, we give them countenance; and instead of making them “ashamed” of their divisive and schismatic course, we give them countenance, and so far take away the deserved reproach. 2 Tim. i. 13—“Hold fast the form of sound words which thou hast heard of me in faith and love, which is in Christ Jesus.” Phil. iii. 16—“Whereunto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing.” Jude, 3rd verse—“It was needful for me to write unto you and exhort you, that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered to the saints.” Is it holding “fast the form of sound words”—is it walking “by the same rule” and minding “the same thing”—is it contending earnestly “for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints”—to strengthen the hands and encourage the hearts of such as are opposed to “the form of sound words” and to the “faith once delivered to the saints?” The duty of the christian is to obey the authority of Christ, speaking in the Scriptures, “Cease, my son, to hear the instruction that causeth to err.”

THE REVIVAL OF RELIGION.—ITS NATURE.

(Continued from page 238.)

A second thing included in the revival of religion, is the *increase of religious principles*. It is a truth never to be forgot-

ten, that a great part of vital religion consists in the exercise of these principles. Implanted in the soul, on the reception of regenerating grace, and operating on their respective objects in subsequent years, they form the very life of that devotion which we present. Without, therefore, underrating the employment of the *understanding*, in studying the Holy Scriptures, or the possession of religious knowledge gathered from various sources, we must ever remember that it is chiefly in the *heart* religion dwells. Here are those gracious affections indulged, those holy desires cherished, those devout aspirations breathed, which indicate that the soul has received the quickening influence of the Divine Spirit, obtained vital union to the Redeemer, and passed into the gracious presence of its reconciled Father.

Hence it follows, that a *revival* of religion consists chiefly in the *increased activity of these gracious principles*. After suffering a temporary decay, they are restored to their former strength; or, perhaps, they are excited to a degree of spiritual energy which they had never before attained. Sustained by divine influence, they prompt those in whose breasts they have been strengthened, to a more vigorous discharge of the duties required from them in their respective relations, and to a more enlarged participation of the pleasures flowing from the religious privileges they possess. Detaching their *hearts* from the common pursuits and transitory pleasures of the world, they exalt them to higher regions of thought, feeling, and action, than those in which they have hitherto breathed,—introduce them to purer and better enjoyments than any they have been deriving from earthly sources,—and prepare them to look back on the period of spiritual languor from which they have now been delivered, not only with bitter regret, but with ingenuous shame.

How desirable, that such a revival of the religious principles in the hearts of christians were brought about! Then their *faith*—a fundamental grace—would be stronger. They would cherish a firmer persuasion of the truth, the importance, and the excellence of spiritual objects set before them in the word of God. They would experience deeper impressions on their hearts, of the infinite love of God towards sinners,—of the glory, adaptation, and all-sufficiency of the Saviour,—and of the dignity, office, and work of the Holy Spirit. They would rise above *those doubts* that occasionally haunt their minds during the period of religious decay; and reach-

ing the "full assurance of faith," would realize nearer communion with God, enlarged discoveries of his glory, and more vivid apprehensions of the glorious realities promised them in the heavenly world. Their *love* to God, too, would be increased. Instead of the indifference with which they have contemplated him,—or the hatred, under the influence of which they have turned away from him, they would feel a sacred affection glowing in their bosoms, and drawing forth their hearts towards him. In proportion as they discerned clearly the infinite excellencies that meet in his character, and actually experience the sacred pleasure which these are capable of affording, they would feel their minds elevated to him, under stronger love and warmer gratitude. They would find increased delight in drawing near to him through the medium of every religious duty; and, whether engaged in contemplating his attributes, or acknowledging his benefits, or imploring new favors of which they have discovered their need, they would feel a peculiar satisfaction, to which they have been, in a great measure, strangers, during their spiritual languor, and of which they would not deprive themselves for all the corrupting pleasures and questionable amusements they have probably allowed themselves to pursue. Their *penitential sorrow*, also, would be deepened. Nothing would strike their minds with greater surprise than their previous insensibility to the evil of sin. Impressed now with an unusual sense of its moral turpitude and infinite malignity, they would feel their hearts melted down into "godly sorrow," such as they had probably never experienced.—They would be sorry for the unnatural war they had been waging against God—for the open dishonor they had been attempting to put on his name. They would be sorry for the injurious effects they had been producing on their souls—for the bitter fruits of which they had been sowing the natural seed. They would be sorry, in a word, for all the sins now brought to their remembrance, whether committed in thought, speech, or behavior; and under the influence of this gracious affection, would they return to God with filial confidence, confess their iniquities, humble themselves before him, and promise, in dependence on offered grace, that they will henceforth "walk softly before him in the bitterness of their souls." Their *joy in God*, too, would be increased. So long as religion continues in a state of decline, this is a religious sentiment, a pleasurable emotion, to which they are almost

total strangers. How, indeed, can it be otherwise? How can they be expected to rejoice in him for whom they entertain no affection, to whom they cherish no gratitude, and of whose moral attributes, harmonizing in the redemption of their immortal souls, they are averse to cultivate a habitual remembrance? But no sooner are their minds rescued from the lethargy under which they had fallen, and brought under the reviving influences of the divine Spirit, than they would realize some measure of joy in the great objects of religion. They would rejoice in the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, subsisting in the undivided essence of Deity, and forming the appropriate, adequate, and everlasting portion of their souls. They would rejoice in all his revealed perfections, in all his gracious purposes, in all his precious promises, and in all his sacred institutions. In a word, they would rejoice in all the spiritual favors they enjoy, and in all the glorious privileges they anticipate; and, animated by this sacred feeling, they would rise superior to bodily troubles, to temporal privations, to cruel reproaches, and to all the other chastisements by which their heavenly Father prepares them, for the fullness of joy in his immediate presence. We might enlarge this enumeration of the religious principles in the renewed soul, by adding some others, and showing how they also are stimulated and invigorated when "times of refreshing come from the presence of the Lord." But it is unnecessary. Readers for themselves can pass along the chain of simple illustration, of which a few links have now been presented; and they will at once perceive, that the other principles of piety implanted in the soul,—reverence, submission, humility, and all holy desires,—are powerfully strengthened in every religious revival that descends on the church of Christ.

It is time to add a *third* thing necessary to complete a genuine revival of religion,—*an increase of religious practice*. Of what use is the foundation, even though placed on a rock, if the superstructure is not reared? Of what value is the seed, though sown on the richest soil, if it does not grow into wholesome produce? To what purpose does an orchard put forth its fragrant blossoms and its verdant leaves, unless it bend in autumn under a load of ripened fruit? In like manner, it is to little purpose that religious knowledge is treasured up in the memory, and religious principles are implanted in the heart, if corresponding practice does not ensue. Ac-

cordingly an open profession of the gospel, the observance of the public ordinances, and the performance of devotional duties, secret, domestic, and social, are indispensable to complete that "reasonable service" due to God, which has been fitly called religion,—a service which, including both correct views in the understanding and right feelings in the heart, appears in the actual discharge of external duties. "With the *mouth* confession is made unto salvation." "I beseech you, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God." "Pure religion and undefiled before God even the Father, is this, to visit the fatherless and the widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world."

How essential, then, to a complete revival of religion, is an increase of religious practice! This, indeed, would follow, by a fixed law in the human constitution, an increased activity of religious feelings, and of spiritual desires. Let *these* receive the augmentation of strength of which they now stand in need, and *that* would, in a proportionate measure, succeed, as naturally as streams flow from the fountain. So long as christians have their minds kept in that state of spiritual apathy to which they have been reduced, and their hearts unmoved by those vivid emotions which divine objects believed and contemplated are fitted to awaken, they will never rise above the coldness, the carelessness, and the irregularity with which they now attend to their religious duties. But were their minds awakened to a just sense of the momentous interests proposed to them in the glorious gospel,—were their hearts controlled by the gracious feelings that deserve the ascendancy over their natural inclinations,—and were their souls elevated to a holy superiority over the transitory interests of time, by fervent desires after the sublime realities of eternity, then would they, on the internal principles now called forth into action with new energy, rise to greater distinction for the exemplary observance of all devotional duties, and of all religious privileges.

It is gratifying even to imagine the great improvement that would take place in the religious practice of christians, were a religious revival vouchsafed. Then the secret duties of devotion, reading the Scriptures, meditation, prayer, and self-examination, would be attended to with much greater regularity, and with far higher pleasure. Then domestic worship in all its parts, and at such stated times as religious families

have ever preferred, would be observed, not only with greater punctuality, but with greater earnestness, comfort, and advantage. Then social meetings on week-days, for prayer, instead of being treated with the indifference that now characterizes many, would be frequented with the pleasure that now accrues to a few. Then the ordinances of religion in the house of God, instead of being observed in a cold, formal, unprofitable manner, would be engaged in with the whole heart, with earnest desires after gracious communion with himself through them, and in humble dependance on the promised influences of the Spirit to render them effectual.— Then the *gospel*, in its natural purity, fulness, and power, would be preferred to the sickening effusions of sentimentalism that profane many pulpits; and those smooth harangues that neither reach the conscience, nor nourish the soul, would be forsaken, without hesitation, for the faithful exhibitions of divine truth, that, under the divine Spirit, rouse the slumbering fears of sinners, and quicken the languid feelings of believers. Then, in a word, the practice of primitive piety, would be revived; the line of demarcation between the church and the world would be traced anew; and christians, separating themselves from the evils which many now countenance, and ascending the holy ground which they should never have quitted, would prove themselves “the salt of the earth,” “the lights of the world,” “a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that they should show forth the praises of Him who hath called them out of darkness into his marvellous light.”

Such are the principal elements that enter, in various proportions, into the revival of true religion. If God shall be pleased to grant the churches this favor, in answer to the prayers now rising from the bosoms of many devout worshippers, they will be distinguished by an increase of scriptural knowledge, of religious principles, and of religious duties, such as has not been realized for a long period past.

We would urge upon our readers the humbling truth, that such a revival is, at the present moment, *much needed*. Let them examine their views, their feelings, their habits by the divine law. Let them compare their spiritual attainments with those of approved saints. Do they not feel their inferiority? Are they not conscious, that, under the pressure of worldly cares, the influence of earthly pleasures, and the allowed indulgence of those natural inclinations which wage

an unceasing war with the gracious affections of the soul, they have not that growing spirituality of mind, which it is equally their duty and their interest to maintain? With what earnestness, then, ought they to seek, in every competent way the needed revival! "O Lord! revive thy work in the midst of the years." "Wilt thou revive us again, that thy people may rejoice in thee?"

Let them be animated to the use of *suitable* means for drawing down this blessing, by the precious promises in which it is offered. "They that wait upon the Lord shall *renew* their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles, they shall run and not be weary, and they shall walk and not faint." "He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he *increaseth* strength." "They that dwell under his shadow shall *return*, they shall *revive* as the corn, and *grow* as the vine." "Come, and let us return unto the Lord; for he hath torn and he will heal us; he hath smitten and he will bind us up. After two days he will *revive* us, on the third day he will raise up, and we shall live in his sight."

REMARKS ON REPENTANCE.

(From the Religious Monitor.)

The doctrine of repentance holds a conspicuous place in the Holy Scriptures. Both Testaments are full of it. It formed no inconsiderable portion of "the burden of the word of the Lord" by the mouth of the ancient prophets. John, the forerunner of the Messiah, received a particular commission to preach it. It was amply explained and forcibly inculcated by the great Prophet of the church himself during his ministry on earth: and after his ascension to heaven, it continued to be proclaimed and enforced by his Apostles in their ministrations in the church, with all the zeal, sincerity and truth, becoming men, who had been filled with the Holy Ghost. Nor is this doctrine laid down only in a speculative manner in the Holy Scriptures. We have also a practical illustration of it there in the recorded experience of David and others of the saints. Hence, by comparing the doctrine with the practical exemplification, we have given us of it in the approved experience of men of God, we shall be able to

guard against those fatal errors and mistakes, which men have created upon the subject, and which have been the means of drowning multitudes in perdition. Considering the subject as having an important bearing on the eternal interest of mankind, the following remarks are offered to the perusal of the reader, with the view of *defining* that true "repentance which is unto salvation and needeth not to be repented of."

1. *True and evangelical repentance cannot be produced by the mere strength of Nature.* Man in his fallen state still possesses a certain degree of rationality: he has more understanding than the beasts of the earth, and is wiser than the fowls of heaven. He can reason and reflect on the contrariety of sin to the divine law, and its dangerous tendency; he dreads danger and deprecates punishment, and can feel that it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God, who, in all the manifestations which he has given of himself both in his works and word, appears to be "a consuming fire" ready to devour all his adversaries. And hence, when he brings his rational nature to bear on the momentous subjects of sin and duty, time and eternity, heaven and hell, he may feel convinced of his obnoxiousness to wrath, may regret that he has sinned, and may, with a good measure of apparent zeal, engage in the reformation of his outward conduct. The mere natural man may come this length and be a natural man still. By comparing his former life with the requirements of the divine law; by hearing the severe threatenings and denunciations of the God of holiness and justice, against sin; by contemplating some visible judgments which have been, by the hand of God, inflicted on transgressors; or even by the operation of a principle of sympathy, when witnessing the agony and cries of a sin-distressed soul—he may be brought under deep convictions, may be humbled and possessed of sorrow of heart on account of his sin and guilt, and may be heard to raise the anxious cry, "what shall I do to be saved?" And yet, in all this there may be nothing of genuine repentance; nothing but what may be effected by the mere force of a rational nature; nothing but that worldly sorrow which is described as "working death;" and nothing of that "godly sorrow which worketh repentance unto salvation, not to be repented of it."

In confirmation of the truth just stated, it may be observed, that the scriptures furnish us with many examples of a kind of repentance, which is the result of nature and not of grace.

We read of some who "howled upon their beds but cried not unto the Lord." They felt a painful sense of guilt, their consciences disturbed their repose, they could not retain their feelings, they *howled* aloud like dogs; but yet in the midst of all their convictions and sobbings and cryings, the cry of faith was wanting—they *cried not unto the Lord*. Indeed, we meet with characters in the sacred record, who were abandoned by God to destruction, exhibiting a *kind* of repentance. For example, we have Pharaoh confessing his sin and promising amendment—"I have sinned; the Lord is righteous, and I and my people are wicked; I will let you go, and ye shall stay no longer." But after this, we are assured, that his heart was hardened more than every. We have Ahab also *humbling himself*; but his humiliation was the effect of those natural fears, which arose in his mind on receiving a special message of an awfully threatening nature from the Lord by the prophet Elijah, and did not proceed from any work of grace in his heart; for he remained till the day of his death a lover of false prophets, a worshipper of Baal and a rebel against the authority of the Lord God of Israel. We have Judas also *repenting*; but nevertheless, it is written of him, that he "hanged himself" and "went to his place." Of the same kind also was the repentance of the Israelites in the wilderness, as described in the seventy-eighth Psalm—"when he slew them, then they sought him: and they returned and enquired early after God. And they remembered that God was their rock, and the high God their Redeemer. Nevertheless they did flatter him with their mouth, and they lied unto him with their tongues; for their heart was not right with him, neither were they steadfast in his covenant," (verses 34-37.) Moreover we read expressly of a sorrow for sin, which is entirely different from *godly sorrow*, and is called "the sorrow of the world" which "worketh death," (2 Cor. vii. 10.) Thus the scriptures do plainly teach us, that every kind of repentance is not *repentance unto life*, and that all the efforts of nature to produce this prove utterly ineffectual. Indeed, that fallen man cannot of himself exercise true repentance is so obvious that it is exceedingly strange to find the contrary maintained by any, who profess to take the word of God for the rule of their faith. Is not man in his unrenewed state utterly helpless, seeing he is *dead in trespasses and sins*? How then can he perform that which implies life and activity, as does repentance? It is called "*repentance unto life*," because there

is life in it and life connected with it; and therefore, it cannot be performed by him who is spiritually dead. Besides, it is a work which is highly pleasing in the sight of God—"The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise,"—(Ps. li. 17.)—but every act of the unrenewed soul is displeasing to God—"The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord,"—(Prov. xv. 8.)—therefore, there is no man, unassisted by the spirit of grace, that can perform the good and acceptable work of repentance. Indeed, if there was, the words of our Lord would not hold true, that "a corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit, or a bitter fountain send forth sweet water." But the truth of the present remark will be further confirmed by the two which immediately follow.

2. *True repentance is a gracious blessing promised in the everlasting covenant.* We find it enumerated along with blessings, which are sovereignly promised in the Covenant of Grace. (Ez. xxxvi, 31.) Jehovah, after promising to give his people a new heart, declares to them—"Then shall ye remember your own evil ways, and your doings that were not good, and shall loathe yourselves in your own sight, for your iniquities and for your abominations." And elsewhere we find God promising repentance in the following absolute manner—"I will pour upon the house of David and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem the spirit of grace and of supplication; and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for it, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for it, as one is in bitterness for his first born," (Zech. xii. 10.) That repentance is one of the promised blessings of the new covenant is evident also from this, that it is sealed in baptism. Repentance, then, flows to sinners from a sovereign promise of a covenant God, through the meritorious righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ. To this source and to this channel, therefore, ought sinners to look for "repentance unto life," instead of looking to themselves and vainly attempting to produce a repentance of their own manufacture, which at best can prove no better than the repentance of Pharaoh, Ahab, or Judas. Hence—

3. *Saving repentance is the immediate product of the gracious operations of the Holy Spirit.* The bestowment of this blessing is sometimes ascribed to the Father. The apostles and brethren rejoiced when they heard of the repentance of the

Gentiles, and said, "Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life." Timothy was exhorted by Paul to "instruct in meekness those that opposed themselves, if peradventure God would give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth." Sometimes it is ascribed to the Son. "Him hath God exalted to give repentance unto Israel." "God having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you in turning away every one of you from his iniquities." But it is more peculiarly the work of the Spirit, who, in his economical character, is the immediate author of all spiritual gifts and graces. "All these worketh that one and the self-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will." "When the Spirit is come he will convince the world of sin, of righteousness and of judgment." "I will put my Spirit within you—and then ye shall loathe yourselves for your iniquities and for your abominations." "I will pour out the spirit of grace upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and—they shall mourn." The Spirit, however, in working this grace in the soul of a sinner, makes use of means. Sometimes he uses the outward dispensations of Providence for this end. When the Prodigal found himself reduced to a state of want and wretchedness, through the gratification of his lusts and sinful propensities, he *came to himself* and said, "I will arise and go to my father." Manasseh's affliction was the means of bringing him to repentance. Indeed the apostle Paul speaks of "the goodness of God," manifested in the outward dispensations of Providence, as *leading to repentance*. But it is to be observed that the dispensations of Providence have this effect upon the soul only when they are viewed in connection with the word of God. Of themselves they would only lead us further from him whose displeasure we have incurred by our transgressions. But the Holy Spirit, by means of them, brings persons to consider and reflect upon what is written in the divine word: So that ultimately it is the word of God, in every case, that is the genuine means of repentance.

And here, the *law*, as contained in the scriptures, has its use. A person must have a knowledge of his sins, before he can repent of them, and turn from them to God. But "by the law is the knowledge of sin." No man had ever known *lust*, "except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet." Neither could the just demerit of sin be known, did not the law in its penal sanction, tell us that "The wages of sin is death;"

and that, "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things, which are written in the book of the law, to do them." The law, therefore, is a glass in which we discover the holiness and justice of God, our own guilt and our own obnoxiousness to divine wrath. Hence it is evident, that a knowledge of the law is necessary to lead us to repentance. But the law of itself can never produce saving repentance. Because saving repentance implies a hope of pardon and acceptance, which, however, can only spring from a knowledge of God's gracious and reconciled character in Christ Jesus. The law as such knows nothing of pardon, and gives not the least intimation that God, upon any consideration whatever, will ever receive again into favor the guilty and condemned criminal. It only presents God to the apprehension of the sinner as an inexorable judge and enemy. And hence, although it may convince him of sin and of liability to the torments of hell, it gives no encouragement, nor holds out any inducement to him to return to the Lord, from whom he has so grievously departed: and in which true repentance greatly consists. You may, therefore, read the law and preach the law to the sinner, in all its holy requirements and terrific denunciations, and you never can produce in him repentance unto life. The law can excite in the guilty soul powerful convictions, agonizing fears, horror of conscience and mad despair; but farther than this it has no province.

Hence, it is the *gospel*, which the Spirit employs as the direct means of inducing that repentance, which is unto salvation. The gospel opens a door of hope in the valley of Achor. It points the soul, convinced by the law of sin, to the God-man Mediator, who "was wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities"—it discovers to the admiring view of him that was ready to perish under a sense of his guilt, the broken law of God as magnified and made honorable and the justice of God as satisfied, in the obedience and death of a divine Surety—yea, it presents the eternal Jehovah as a reconciled God and father in Christ Jesus. The gospel, moreover, offers pardon, life and salvation to the chief of sinners, "without money and without price," and declares that "the Son of Man came to seek and save that which was lost;" that he came, "not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance;" and that he "stands at the door and knocks," and says, "if any man will hear my voice and open the door, I will come into him and sup with him and he with me." It

is these glad tidings, therefore, of a gospel revelation applied by the Holy Spirit, which produce in the sinner genuine repentance and lead him to say with the Prodigal, "I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son; make me as one of thy hired servants."

Now from what has been stated *two* things will follow.—*First*, that it is a gross deception to tell sinners, or to encourage them for a single moment in thinking, that they have repentance in their own power and can exercise it when they please. If this be true, then, the texts above quoted, which assert that repentance is the gift of God and is particularly wrought in the soul by the Holy Spirit, must be false. But "let God be true and every man a liar."—And *Secondly*, that it is the greatest cruelty, even soul murder, to hide the gospel from sinners in the matter of repentance, and leave them to struggle with an ungracious and killing law. But we proceed remark—

4. *That saving repentance flows from faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.*—It cannot be denied, that there is a kind of repentance, which precedes faith, and which, in contradistinction of evangelical, has been termed legal repentance. It arises solely or chiefly from a work of the law upon the heart, and consists in an excruciating sense of guilt and danger, and also in sorrow that sin has been committed, not because it is dishonoring to God, but because it is destructive of the sinner's happiness. This legal repentance, in the case of elect souls, terminates in faith and evangelical repentance. The Philippian Jailor came trembling and fell down before Paul and Silas, and said, "Sirs what must I do to be saved?"—And immediately after this we read, that "he rejoiced, believing in God with all his house." His legal repentance was first; then on receiving gospel instruction he believed, truly repented and rejoiced in hope of the glory of God. But sometimes this repentance dies away from the soul and leaves it as hard and as far from God as ever. Felix trembled under the preaching of the apostle Paul, but nevertheless he dismissed that herald of salvation without embracing the Saviour or truly repenting of his sins—"Go thy way for the present, and when I have a convenient season I will send for thee;" nay, afterwards "he left Paul bound, wishing to do the Jews a pleasure."

But with respect to evangelical repentance, we maintain, that it always follows faith in the order of nature, and flows from it. Repentance is sometimes called a *returning unto God*; or at least, "a returning to God" is an essential ingredient in repentance: without it repentance is incomplete and utterly in vain. But how could a sinner return again to a forsaken God, unless he *believed* that God was gracious and willing to receive him? Is it reasonable to suppose, that the guilty and self-condemned rebel would ever return to an offended Sovereign, whom he regarded as an unreconciled enemy and inexorable judge? In such a case would he not rather cry to the rocks and mountains to hide him from the forbidding frown of his wrathful countenance? Hence, faith apprehending the mercy of God in Christ Jesus forms the legs on which the rebellious sinner returns to God. This is plain from the manner in which God addresses himself to sinners—"Turn unto the Lord your God with weeping and with supplication; for he is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and of great kindness." (Joel ii. 12.) Now, sinners must believe that God really possesses this character, or they will never be induced to turn to him "with weeping and with supplication;" that is to say, they will never savingly repent. Indeed, they must take hold by faith of his promises of pardon and acceptance, and this will powerfully and effectually draw them to him. Accordingly, we have true penitents thus expressing themselves in the language of faith—"Come and let us return unto the Lord; for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up."—(Hos. vi. 1.) And again; "Behold we come unto thee, for thou art the Lord our God." (Jer. iii. 22.) Corresponding to this, we read in the Acts of the Apostles, that "a great number believed and turned unto the Lord," (ch. xi. 21.) first, they believed and then turned or repented. And in the glorious promise, which we have had occasion to quote already, a *looking* to a crucified Redeemer is expressly given as the exciting cause of repentance—"I will pour upon the house of David and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and supplication; and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn," &c. Indeed, Christ is the only way to the Father—"no man," says he "cometh to the Father but by me." Hence, without faith in Christ it is impossible for a sinner to "come to the Father," in the way of true and genuine repentance.

But again, without union to Christ by faith we can perform no good work. "Without me," or "separate from me," says Christ, "ye can do nothing"—ye cannot *repent*, for that is a spiritual and good work, a work highly acceptable and well-pleasing to God. And in confirmation of this Paul declares, that "without faith it is impossible to please God;" and that, "whatever is not of faith is sin." It follows then, from abundance of scripture testimony, that repentance flows from faith.

Against this view of the subject it may, however, be objected, that sometimes in Scripture, repentance is mentioned before faith, as in Mark (i. 15,) "Repent and believe the gospel." But in that and all similar passages repentance is proposed as the *end*, and faith as the *means*; and as the end is always the first in intention, it is very naturally and usually stated before the means by which it is to be accomplished. "Repent:" How? or by what means? Why—"believe the gospel." Frequently the end is proposed without an immediate specification of the means by which it is attained.—But in all such cases the necessary means are implied and the use of them as much enjoined as the end itself. Hence, although Peter, for example, says nothing about faith, when on the day of Pentecost, he calls those who were "pricked in their hearts" to the exercise of repentance, (Acts ii. 38.) yet that is evidently a repentance which implies faith; for, he immediately adds—"and be baptized;" but in order to baptism a profession of *faith* in Christ is necessary. Moreover, the "pricking in the heart," mentioned in the preceding verse, was not evangelical but legal repentance: otherwise, it would have been unnecessary and superfluous in Peter in answer to the enquiry, "what shall we do?" to urge the duty of repentance. Those sin-convinced and distressed souls had not as yet exercised faith in a crucified Redeemer, and were, therefore, notwithstanding their convictions of guilt and anguish of spirit, strangers to the exercise of that "repentance which is unto salvation and needeth not to be repented of."

SIGNING THE SOLEMN LEAGUE AND COVENANT.

The following spirited account of that most interesting and important transaction, the signing of the Solemn League and Covenant, in the city of Edinburgh, and elsewhere in Scotland, in 1638, will, we

doubt not, be highly acceptable to our readers. It is extracted from a work published a few years since, entitled "The Life and Times of Alexander Henderson," by the Rev. Aiton, Minister of Dolphinton, Scotland. To such of our readers as can procure it, we recommend a careful perusal of the book. It contains much valuable information of that kind which is especially needed in these lukewarm and shaking times. ED.

"Wednesday the 28th day of February, 1638, was a proud day for Henderson, and one of the most memorable mentioned in the history of that period. By this time the Presbyterians had crowded to Edinburgh to the number of sixty thousand; and, to give all solemnity to the occasion, a fast had been appointed to be held in the Church of the Greyfriars. All were astir by the morning's dawn; the Commissioners of Barons were early met, and about half past eight Rothes and Loudon joined them.

"It was agreed that 'all the rest of the barrons and gentlemen that wer in toune sould meitt in the Greyfreer Kirk, be two hours in the efternoon, wher Rothes and Loudon sould meitt with them,' to sign the Covenant. This union, the great pillar of strength to the cause, having been thus effected with perfect harmony amid a world of difficulties, was the occasion of vast joy to all concerned.

"Long before the appointed hour, the venerable church of the Greyfriars, and the large open space around it, were filled with Presbyterians from every quarter of Scotland. At two o'clock, Rothes, Loudon, Henderson, Dickson and Johnston, arrived with a copy of the Covenant, ready for signature. Henderson constituted the meeting by prayer, 'very powerfullie and pertinentlie' to the purpose in hand. Loudon then, in an impressive speech, stated the occasion of their meeting. After mentioning that the courtiers had done every thing in their power to effect a division among the Presbyterians, and when thus weakened to introduce innovation, and that they should therefore use every lawful means for keeping themselves together in a common cause, he said, that in a former period, when Papal darkness was enlightened only from the flaming faggot of the martyr's stake, the first Reformers swore in Covenant to maintain the mostblessed word of God even unto death. In a later period, when apprehensions were entertained of the restoration of Popery, King James, the nobles, and people throughout every parish, subscribed another Covenant, as a test of their religious principles. The Covenant, now about to be read, had a similar object in view, and had been agreed to by the Commissioners. In conclusion he, in their name, solemnly took the Searcher of Hearts to witness, that they intended neither dishonor to God, nor disloyalty to the King. The Covenant was next read by Johnston, 'out of a fair parchment, about an elne squair.' When the reading was finished, there was a pause and silence still as death. Rothes broke it, by requesting that if any one of them had objections to offer, he would now be heard. They were told that if these objectors were of the south and west country, they should repair to the west end of the Kirk, where

Loudon and Dickson would reason with them ; but if they belonged to the Lothians, or to the country north of the Forth, they were to go to the east end, where he and Henderson would give them every satisfaction. 'Fou comes, and these few proposed but few doubts, which were soon resolved.' These preliminaries occupied till about four o'clock, when the venerable Earl of Sutherland stepped forward, and put the first name to the memorable document. Sir Andrew Murray, minister of Ebdy, in Fife, was the second who subscribed. After it had gone the round of the whole church, it was taken out to be signed by the crowd in the churchyard. Here it was spread before them like another roll of the prophets, upon a flat grave-stone, to be read and subscribed by as many as could get near it. Many, in addition to their name, wrote *till death*, and some even opened a vein, and subscribed with their blood. The immense sheet in a short time became so crowded with names on both sides throughout its whole space, that there was not room left for a single additional signature. Even the margin was scrawled over ; and as the document filled up, the subscribers seem to have been limited to the initial letters of their name. Zeal in the cause of Christ, and courage for the liberties of Scotland, warmed every breast. Joy was mingled with the expression of some, and the voice of shouting arose from a few. But by far the greater portion were deeply impressed with very different feelings. Most of them, of all sorts, wept bitterly for their defection from the Lord. And in testimony of his sincerity, every one confirmed his subscription by a solemn oath. With groans, and tears streaming down their faces, they all lifted up their right hands at once. When this awful appeal was made to the Searcher of Hearts, at the day of judgment, so great was the fear of again breaking this Covenant, that thousands of arms which had never trembled even when drawing the sword on the eve of battle, were now loosened at every joint. After the oath had been administered, the people were powerfully enjoined to begin their personal reformation. At the conclusion, every body seemed to feel that a great measure of the divine presence had accompanied the solemnities of the day, and with their hearts much comforted and strengthened for every duty, the enormous crowd retired about nine o'clock at night.— Well, indeed, might Henderson boast, in his reply to the Aberdeen doctors, 'that this was the day of the Lord's power, wherein we saw his people most willingly offer themselves in multitudes, like the dew-drops of the morning—this was indeed the great day of Israel, wherein the arm of the Lord was revealed—the day of the Redeemer's strength, on which the princes of the people assembled to swear their allegiance to the King of kings.'

"Next day, 1st of March, some of the leading Presbyterians went to Tailor's Hall, where the ministers who had more recently come to town were met. Here again the doubts of every one were stated with freedom, and after having been removed by arguments similar to those already detailed, about three hundred of the clergy added their names. The Covenant was next carried round the city, and signed by many

who could not attend the day before. On this occasion it is said that a multitude of women and children followed it weeping and praying. Some of the nobles took a copy with them wherever they went, and solicited the subscription of those whom they met. On the Friday a copy for signature was transmitted to every shire, bailiery, and parish. In the country, it was every where received as a sacred oracle. Much more than was necessary has been said on both sides, in an angry spirit of controversy, about children being allowed to subscribe. In answer to these imputations, Rothes expressly asserts, that only the hands of those who were admitted to the Sacrament were allowed to be put to the parchment. It has also been often asserted by the court historians, and was complained of by the Marquis of Hamilton, that coercive measures were used to procure names; and that several who refused at Glasgow, St. Andrews, and Lanark, were not only threatened, but beat into compliance. It cannot be denied, that some who had the management of the subscriptions in the country carried their zeal too far. In fact, both Rothes and Baillie lament that their good cause had been hurt by violence. But it is by no means true, that these disorders were encouraged by the leaders, or that they were even exercised to any considerable extent. The testimony of Rothes, Henderson, and Baillie, is surely conclusive on this point. All classes of the community were admitted, and public notaries were at hand to act for those who could not write; but so far from the unwilling being forced to subscribe, they were not, even after consenting, admitted to enjoy the privilege. Every body was not allowed to come forward. No distinction was made in point of rank or circumstances, but there was in respect of character and conviction. Some men, says Henderson, of no small note, offered their subscription, and were refused, till time should prove that they joined from love to the cause, and not from the fear of men. No threatenings were used except those of divine judgment; nor force, except that of reason. The matter was so holy, says Rothes, that they held it to be irreligious to use wicked means for advancing so good a work. Baillie says, that they had no remedy for such unhappy grievances, till the law was made patent. 'I was present,' says Livingston, 'at Lanark, and several other parishes, when on Sabbath, after the forenoon's sermon, the Covenant was read and sworn, and I may truly say, that in all my lifetime, excepting at the Kirk of Shotts, I never saw such motions from the Spirit of God. All the people generally and most willingly concurred. I have seen more than a thousand persons all at once lifting up their hands, and the tears falling down from their eyes; so that through the whole land, excepting the professed Papists, and some few who adhered to the prelates, people universally entered into the Covenant of God.' The writer of the Edinburgh Collections not only bears testimony in similar terms to the manner in which the Covenant was signed and sworn in the Greyfriars and College Kirks of Edinburgh, but he asserts that, on Sunday the 28th April, the Communion was solemnly given to the people in these two kirks, according as it was given before the Assem-

bly at Perth, after twenty years interruption. The same writer states, that there were about this time many Jesuits in Scotland, who labored by argument and gold to make converts. One of them, called Abernethy, made an open recantation in the Greyfriars church. On the day following that on which the Jesuit was converted, Lindsay, a minister from the north, who had long refused to subscribe the Covenant, preached in the same church. In the end of his sermon, he declared that for a long time he was in a great wrestling with the doubts of his own conscience; thereafter calling sundry times with fervent prayer to God to resolve his mind, he at length got resolution to his conscience to yield and subscribe, which he did. And he stated in his sermon, that since his subscription, he had such comfort in his mind as he was not able to express, and that for all the earth he would not turn back. All this he declared with tears in his eyes, attesting God for the verity of it, to the great consolation of all who heard him."

ECCLIASTICAL PROCEEDINGS.

Eastern Sub. Synod.—This Synod met, according to adjournment, at Coldenham, on the 8th ult.; and, after sermon by the Moderator, Rev. D. Scott, from Dan. ii. 35:—"And the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth," was constituted with prayer by the Moderator. All the Ministers belonging to the Synod were present, except Rev. Mr. Chrystie of the Southern Presbytery, and Rev. Messrs. Fisher, McKee and Roberts, of the Western Presbytery. A full delegation of Ruling Elders attended. Rev. Dr. Willson was chosen Moderator, and Rev. M. Roney, Clerk.

Several Petitions, Memorials, &c. were presented, which, as well as the action taken upon them, being chiefly of a local character, contain nothing of interest to our readers generally, beyond that which is furnished in the extracts from Reports of Committees given below.

A paper entitled "Warning on the Traffic in Ardent Spirits," was presented by the Rev. J. Milligan, and referred to a committee, who reported it with various amendments.—After mature deliberation it was adopted unanimously, as follows:

Dearly Beloved and longed for—

It is very desirable, and, indeed, necessary, that our abstract principles should work a practical effect in our own sanctification; and for

the propagation of our principles it is equally necessary that the fruits of them should be conspicuous. "Shew me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works." This every Reformer should say to all enquirers. The great Restorer of order himself required that whoever would come after him, should deny himself, and take up the cross and live *sobriety*. According to the principles of our Larger Catechism, for the right understanding of the ten commandments, we must be "careful to help others to keep the law, and be careful not to partake with others in their sin."

Drunkenness has for some time attracted the attention of the *élite* of society, and they have combined in holy energy to arrest the deadly progress of this vice. Our church has, in her pastoral care and watch for your souls, warned you against this evil, and "the soul-destroying traffic" in intoxicating liquors, and yet we hear there are among you some who continue this traffic, and we partly believe it. Dear Brethren, to such of you we say—do you disregard the warnings of your pastors, and the public opinion of all sober christians? Are you really going to let members of other churches, far behind you in truth, outstrip you in sobriety, and actually to mourn because you counteract their efforts towards temperance reform.

Dear Brethren, will you for the paltry gains in this traffic, ruin families in all their comforts, ruin souls, and poison the fountains of society, all which evils, to a lamentable extent, flow from the carrying on of this injurious traffic. Perhaps you will say that you sell to none but the sober. All the worse. To hasten the destruction of the drunkard, is less criminal than the evil of training up the incautious youth of our country to be drunkards.

But you say "if I don't sell it, some others will, and that without regard to persons whether sober or not." May be so—but even if so, you would not be to blame for this. Your example might perhaps cause other sober men to quit the practice, and surely, it would be more congenial to see none but bad men in a business like this. But oh! let not the christian, the Covenanter, be longer engaged in this pernicious employment. If it is evil—if it is sin—leave it off, and do it immediately; "Break off thy sins by righteousness, and thine iniquities by showing mercy to the poor," is the divine direction given in the word of God,—Dan. iv. 27. You say you have no other way of supporting your family. Ah! is not God able to give you an hundred fold more in this present life, and in the world to come, life everlasting. If they are condemned who do not give to the indigent, if they are condemned who do not visit the prisoner, what will be done to those who aid in making them indigent and in preparing thoughtless men for prisons and penitentiaries? Do you deny this? Can you doubt it? At the least, you cannot say that your capital, your labor, and your time, devoted to this traffic, are employed for the good of your fellow-men, and the glory of our covenanted God. You cannot say that in this you are now benefactors—that parents, and wives, and friends, should "rise up and call you blessed," while you "hold the

bottle to the mouth" of the son and the husband, and "give him drink." Cease then to carry on this traffic, for the sake of the poor, for your own sake, for the sake of society, for the church's sake, and that you may glorify your God.

A Commission of Synod, appointed at last meeting to visit the Ryegate congregation reported their proceedings. The report was adopted, and such farther action as seemed necessary was taken upon the business which it presented. The local character of this, except so much as is referred to in the reports of committees given below, renders its details uninteresting. It is believed the action of Synod will remove any difficulties that may have existed. The following report of the Committee on Presbyterial reports was adopted.

The Committee &c., respectfully report, That from the papers submitted to them, it appears that the Northern Presbytery has become disorganized, by reason of losing the regular time of adjournment.*— It also appears, that in part of the bounds of that Presbytery, things are in an unsettled and agitated state. And it also appears, that a call sustained by the Pittsburgh Presbytery, upon one of the two ministers of the Northern Presbytery, was laid before said Northern Presbytery prior to the time of its becoming disorganized, on which no final action has been taken.

Your committee therefore recommend,

1. That, inasmuch as a Presbytery in which only two ministers are, may find great difficulty in attending profitably to all Presbyterial business, in an agitated state of things, and inasmuch as the call made upon one of the ministers of the Northern Presbytery renders it possible that he may be removed from the bounds, the ministers and congregations within the bounds of the Northern Presbytery be, until order be taken in the premises by General Synod, annexed to the Southern Presbytery; and that all unfinished business lying before said Northern Presbytery at the time of its disorganization, be now issued by this Synod, or referred to the Southern Presbytery.

2. In reference to the organization of the Barnet congregation, your committee recommend that the members of said congregation be enjoined to settle immediately their respective dues, and that, under the circumstances of the case, they who so settle be regarded as forming the Barnet congregation.

* This was occasioned by the sickness of the Rev. S. M. Willson, by which he was prevented from attending at the time to which the Presbytery had adjourned. As the only other minister in the Presbytery, with ruling elders, proceeded to constitute and transact Presbyterial business, Mr. Willson declined afterwards to unite in constituting the Presbytery. This will explain a part of the report of the Committee on Discipline.

The Committee on Discipline reported. The report, of which the following are extracts, was adopted.

“From papers referred to them, your Committee find that the Northern Presbytery has become disorganized; and that one minister, with ruling elders, proceeded to act in Presbyterial capacity, in more instances than one; therefore;

1. Resolved, that all the doings of this part of said Presbytery are, and hereby are declared to be, null and void; such part of a Presbytery having no authority to act in Presbyterial capacity.

And, Whereas it appears that the *Declaratory* act passed by General Synod at its last meeting respecting the reading of lines in singing in public worship has been disregarded by two of the congregations within the bounds of the Northern Presbytery; therefore;

2. Resolved, that the sessions of those congregations be ordered to carry into effect the act of General Synod on the subject of singing.

And, whereas a call has been made on the Rev. James Milligan, by the congregation of Greensburgh, &c. which has been sustained by the Pittsburgh Presbytery as a regular gospel call, but has not, because of difficulties heretofore existing, been offered to him; therefore;

3. Resolved, that said call be now presented to Mr. Milligan.

Against the adoption of the 2nd resolution above, Messrs. Kenan and Coburn protested, and appealed to General Synod. The call referred to in the 3d resolution was presented by the Moderator to Mr. Milligan, and by him accepted. The court directed the Moderator and Clerk to furnish Mr. Milligan with a certificate to the Pittsburgh Presbytery.

The Committee on Signs of the Times reported causes of Thanksgiving and Fasting,* which were adopted.

CAUSES OF THANKSGIVING.

To the question, “Watchman, what of the night?” the answer is given, “The morning cometh.” Yes, blessed be the Father of lights, the darkness that now covers the earth will not always last. God will yet say to Zion, long enveloped in dark and dreary clouds, arise from thy depression. His rising glory will soon dissipate the dense cloud, that has long sat on Zion’s summit, and on all her environs. She that was deemed “desolate and forsaken,” will yet be most graciously cheered by the return and blessed embraces of her

* The Causes of Fasting will be given in our January No.

dear Lord. But ah ! how many times the scornful foe has said, "Where is the promise of his coming?" The reason why this so often occurs is, that we look away from God to ourselves, or to some human machinery, that we expect to do great things. Whenever our attention and our trust stop short of God, we are sure to meet with disappointments and reverses. It is obvious that God intends to hide pride from all faces, and have all the glory of reclaiming a sinful world, and of restoring joy and comfort to his disconsolate Zion. It is also obvious that God has fulfilled his predicted *purposes* in reference to the *calamities* of his church ; and will he fail to make good his gracious *promises* in reference to her *deliverance*? No ; he will arise and plead the cause of his people. And, notwithstanding all the distresses and distractions of this cloudy and dark day, we have many and strong reasons of gratitude and thankfulness to our covenant God and heavenly Father. A few of these we specify.

1. *The season has been a very fruitful one generally throughout the land.* The vanities of the heathen cannot give rain ; but God has granted the early and the latter rain, seasonably and plentifully. Though insects and blight have, to some extent, blasted the husbandman's prospects, yet there is plenty of food for man and for beast—there is bread to the eater and seed to the sower.

2. *The season has been healthful, as well as fruitful.* Though pestilence has raged in some cities of the south, yet no epidemic has prevailed within our bounds. On the contrary, the bloom of health has risen on the cheek of youth, and the vigor of strength has been seen in the fields of industry ; the hum of busy cheerfulness has mingled with the songs of birds, and "in dwellings of the righteous has been heard the melody of joy and health."

3. *The business of society has been prosperous.* The labourer has been compensated for his toil ; the free poor have had ample opportunity of providing for themselves and their households ; while, in many instances, the industrious and prudent have been allowed rapidly to increase their substance. The immigrant poor of other lands have found a hospitable home on the fruitful soil of our country. The charitable and humane, the christian and the philanthropist have been cheered with the peaceable deportment, and the rising prosperity of the emancipated in the neighboring isles. The hands of those who plead the cause of the "poor and needy"

have been strengthened by the efforts of many in Great Britain, who having under God, effected emancipation in the West Indies, are now pleading with energy the cause of millions of oppressed ones in the East Indies. These means have been blessed for the relief of suffering man; by them the despised and neglected cause of God has, in many instances, been indirectly vindicated, and the particular testimony of the church has received strong corroboration in the public mind. For the help thus afforded, we ought to thank God and take courage. Even the controversy, that this peculiar kind of agency elicits, gives information. Many run to and fro, and knowledge is increased. Painful as are the bickerings of spirit, and animosity of temper, important principles are receiving illustration and establishment.

4. *Though the state of religion is far from being what it ought to be, yet our privileges are great, and encouraging prospects are still increasing.* The improvements in book-making—the increased facilities of travelling—the great efforts of mercantile men, in enlightened nations, to carry their commerce to the remotest climes—and even the political schemes of worldly men, have been overruled, in the providence of the Mediator, for opening up channels by which the light of gospel truth and of religious and civil liberty, with all its accompanying blessings, may be made to shine upon these hitherto darkened lands. The accounts from the South Sea Islands, in relation to the progress and influence of gospel truth, are highly encouraging. In our own connections in this land, and in the lands of our fathers' sepulchres, while in some places the ways of Zion mourn, in others societies and congregations are starting up, almost immediately, into existence; and many who do not think it convenient immediately to unite with us, are more and more persuaded of the truth of our principles and of the importance of their adoption. Even things that seem to operate unfavorably are clearly working together for good. When opposition is offered to the progress of true religion, men are immediately prompted to be more fervent in prayer, more diligent in duty, and more patient in tribulation. Thus the righteous are like the palm tree. Self-denial in *civil* matters, obloquy and reproach afford opportunity for the pious to go forth without the camp bearing Christ's reproach. The diversity of character, talent and disposition, even in the church, afford an opportunity of forbearance in things not settled; while infirmities and trou-

bles give opportunity of bearing one another's burdens, that so we may fulfil the law of Christ.

For these, and many other causes which might be enumerated, we ought to be uniformly thankful; and to give a social expression of our gratitude and sense of obligation, to the Most High, Synod appoints the **FIRST THURSDAY** of December, 1839, to be observed by all the people under their care, as a day of **THANKS-GIVING**.

After attending to the above and other business, Synod adjourned, with prayer and singing the 133rd Psalm, to meet in Albany, on the 2nd Tuesday of October, 1840, at 10 o'clock, A. M.

Southern Presbytery.—This court met, agreeably to adjournment, at Coldenham, on the 9th ult. During the sessions, Rev. J. Milligan and Rev. S. M. Willson, with Messrs. J. Coburn, D. Kenan, S. Babcock, and J. Shaw, ruling elders, took their seats as members, in accordance with an order of the E. S. Synod, annexing, for the present, the ministers and congregations within the bounds of the Northern Presbytery, to the Southern.* Two pieces of trial were received, and unanimously sustained, from James M. Beattie, a student of Theology of the 4th year; and the remaining pieces of trial for licensure were assigned him.

Two calls, one by the congregation of Conococheague, the other by the 2nd congregation of New-York, made upon Mr. A. Stevenson, a licentiate under the care of Presbytery, were received and sustained as regular Gospel calls. Upon presentation, Mr. Stevenson accepted the call from the 2nd congregation, New-York. The 14th inst. was appointed as the time for his ordination, and installation to the pastoral charge of said congregation. Supplies were appointed to the several vacancies; but, as a copy of the appointments has not yet been furnished us, we cannot give them in detail. They may be expected in our next No. Presbytery appointed its next stated meeting to be held in Philadelphia on the Wednesday week preceding the next meeting of General Synod.

Theological Seminary, east of the Alleghany mountains.—The Board of Superintendants of this Institution held their annual meeting at Coldenham, commencing on the 10th ult. Three students, Messrs. Z. R. Willson, J. W. Shaw, and N. Allen,

*See page 283.

made application for admission to the Seminary, and to be taken under the direction of the Board. After a lengthened examination, which was deemed highly satisfactory, they were severally received,—Mr. Willson as a student of the 2nd year, and Messrs. Shaw and Allen of the 1st. These, with Mr. J. M. Beattie, previously in the Seminary, make the number of students in attendance, four. The annual session of the Institution commenced on the day above named. We would gladly receive from any one an account of the Theological Seminary west of the Alleghany mountains, that we might lay it also before our readers.

ITEMS.

Estimate of the office of Ruling Elder.—During the residence of Sir Ralph Abercrombie at the ancient seat of his family, in Clackmannanshire, his humility and Christian deportment pointed him out as a proper person to fill the office of an Elder in his parish church. Being ordained according to the order of the church of Scotland, when the solemnity was ended, he thus addressed the minister: “Sir, I have often been entrusted by my sovereign with honorable and important commands, in my profession as a soldier; and his majesty has been pleased to reward my services with distinguished marks of his royal approbation; but to be the humble instrument, in the office of an Elder, of putting the tokens of my Saviour’s dying love into the hands of one of the humblest of his followers, I conceive to be the highest honor that I can receive on this side heaven.”

Burying alive of Widows in India.—The burying alive of widows manifests, if that were possible, a still more abominable state of feeling toward woman than the burning them alive. The *Weaners* (a caste or tribe so called) bury their dead. When, therefore, a widow of this tribe is deluded into the determination not to survive her husband, she is buried alive with the dead body. In this kind of immolation, the children and relations dig the grave. After certain ceremonies have been attended to, the poor widow arrives, and is let down into the pit. She sits in the centre, taking the dead body on her lap, and encircling it with her arms. These relations now begin to throw in the soil; and after a short space, two of them descend into the grave, and tread the earth firmly round the body of the widow. She sits, a calm and

unremonstrating spectator of the horrid process. She sees the earth rising higher and higher around her, without upbraiding her murderers, or making the least effort to arise and make her escape. At length the earth reaches her lips—covers her head. The rest of the earth is then hastily thrown in, and these children and relations mount the grave, and tread down the earth upon the head of the suffering widow—the friend—the mother.—*Ward's Letters.*

Interesting Facts.—Gibbon, who, in his celebrated History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, has left an imperishable memorial of his enmity to the Gospel, and the religion which it inculcates, resided many years in Switzerland, where, with the profits of his works, he purchased a considerable estate. This property has descended to a gentleman who, out of his rents, expends a large sum annually in the promulgation of that very Gospel, which his predecessor insidiously endeavored to undermine, not having had courage nor honesty enough openly to assail it. Voltaire boasted, that with one hand he would overthrow that edifice of Christianity, which required the hands of twelve apostles to build up. At this day the press which he employed at Fery to print his blasphemies, and to make good his vain boast, is actually employed at Geneva in printing the Holy Scriptures. Thus the self-same engine which he set to work to destroy the credit of the Bible, is engaged in disseminating its truth. Similar to the above, in the instruction and encouragement which it gives, is the remarkable circumstance, that the first meeting, held for the purpose of taking measures for the re-formation of an auxiliary Bible Society in Edinburgh, was held in the very room in which Hume the infidel died. Such instances of Providential occurrences as these shew that the triumph of the wicked is short. They should be carefully marked by all the people of God, in order that they may the more clearly see the various ways in which he sets the good over against the evil, a diligent observance of such occurrences—and they are frequent—is well calculated to encourage our hopes, strengthen our faith and increase that patience in which, amidst abounding wickedness, trials and temptations, we should possess our souls.

There were in England during the year ending June 30, 1839, 111,481 registered marriages. Of these 107,201 were performed according to the rights of the Established Church, and 4,280 in licensed places of worship, of which 76 were between Quakers, and 135 between Jews. The births were, during the same period, 204,863 males and 194,849 females. The deaths were 335,956, of which 131,034 were children under five years of age. The average mortality is as 1 in 45. Twenty per cent of the total deaths is attributed to consumption.

The 1st Thursday of December next is the day appointed by E. S. Synod as a day of Thanksgiving; and the 1st Thursday of February, 1840, as a day of Fasting.

THE
REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN.

VOL. III.

DECEMBER, 1839.

No. X.

THE REVIVAL OF RELIGION.—ITS ADVANTAGES.

Having, in former articles, given a brief account of the chief characteristics of a religious revival, we would now point out a few of its important benefits. These benefits would appear to be neither few nor small, would men only examine them with the care requisite to understand their superior value, and to form a correct estimate. Why should they neglect, amid so many warnings, every day sounding in their ears, to do this? Why should they evince such anxiety to increase their wealth, their possessions, their pleasures, their honors, and their friends, and yet put forth no exertions to augment an interest superior to them all? Why should they prefer the inferior gratifications of this mortal life, to the exalted pleasures of eternal duration—the transitory privileges of a world in which they are only strangers, to the everlasting immunities of a better country in which they should become citizens? Why do they not awake to the worth of their souls, the importance of their privileges, and the grandeur of their prospects, and strive, by all means in their power, to secure to themselves those peculiar benefits, that would accrue from the increase of vital godliness? They are such as the following:

The revival of religion in believers, would produce *clearer evidences of their interest in the Saviour*. It cannot be denied, that a very large class of those who, in modern times, profess religion, are involved in distressing doubts respecting their personal salvation. Even though they have experienced impressions of divine truth on their minds, though they have

been admitted to the most solemn privileges in the church, and though they attend with various degrees of feeling to the private and social duties of devotion, they are haunted with unceasing fears, that their hearts have never undergone that gracious change, without which external forms are nugatory. They feel such an indifference on their minds to the interests of vital religion, and the concerns of eternal happiness; and they experience such a want of those lively affections and spiritual desires, in which the essence of true piety consists, that they cannot resist the conclusion, either that they are altogether destitute of that which, they know, forms man's chief excellence, or possess it in so small a degree, as scarcely to separate them from the class of mere formalists. Now, is not this a painful situation to be in? While they have neither the calmness of insensibility, nor the comfort of assurance, must they not feel peculiarly miserable? And desirous of dispelling the doubts that brood over their souls under their present lethargy, and of obtaining that "good hope through grace," which the Divine Comforter has come to bestow; must they not be anxious to use any means, by which the internal evidences of their believing in the Lord Jesus Christ may be rendered clearer, stronger, more numerous, and more satisfactory?

Towards the attainment of this peculiar privilege, we cannot propose any other means, than the revival of their personal religion. Until this is increased, especially in those gracious emotions which constitute its living principles, they cannot escape from those distressing fears, and those harassing doubts, to which they are, in their present state, exposed. A simple illustration will place this in a more impressive light. So long as an individual continues in a state of profound sleep, produced either by unusual fatigue, or by a strong soporific, the symptoms of life in his body are not very decided to the eye of observers. They may even harbor a suspicion, whether the vital spark has not fled from the motionless frame,—whether the death-like stillness that has supervened, may not be the precursor of approaching dissolution. So is it with the christian. While his mind remains in a state of spiritual languor, compared in the scriptures to corporeal sleep,—while his religious affections are suffering decay, under noxious influences which he does not strive to resist,—while, in a word, his spiritual energies are giving way to the soft approaches of indolence, which he does not exert him-

self to oppose, he cannot present any decisive evidences that he has ever been endued with spiritual life by the Divine Spirit, or is now enjoying vital union to the Divine Redeemer. But let his soul obtain a religious revival, under the fertilizing dews of divine influence,—let its religious principles, being duly invigorated, obtain the ascendancy over his whole mind,—and let its spiritual desires, rising above the low attainments with which they are now satisfied, seek gratification in enlarged discoveries of his glory, and increased manifestations of his love; and there will be preponderating evidence afforded, of his having been made alive to God by the quickening energy of the Holy Spirit, and of his interest in that grace, of which he shall then be reaping the distinguished fruits. “Hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him.”

Now, is not this assurance an advantage worthy of being sought after, by every means fitted to bring about the revival of true religion? Even though it should not rise into the full persuasion of our saving interest in the Redeemer, and though it were subject to numerous fluctuations occasioned by changes over which we have no control, yet would it promote purposes most important to our improvement, happiness, and welfare. It would stimulate to the habitual exercise of gratitude, veneration, confidence, and submission, with which we ought ever to contemplate, worship, and obey God. It would impel to the vigorous discharge of the several duties required from us, in our respective relations, with a cheerfulness, an activity, and delight that desponding believers never feel. It would animate, both to the habitual repression of those corrupt passions, that wage an injurious war against our true interests; and to the diligent cultivation of those pious affections, and pure dispositions, which, established in the soul, qualify for celestial enjoyments. In fine, it would arm our minds with moral strength and gracious fortitude, under those diversified trials we endure, for detaching our hearts from the momentary interests of this world, and for exalting them to the superior pleasures provided for us in the mansions of immortal purity, peace, and joy. “Let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another.”

A *second* advantage that would accrue from the revival of religion in believers, is *the increase of peace in their minds*. This peace would arise from a variety of sources, over which re-

ligion exerts a powerful influence, as *the approbation of conscience,—the government of the passions.*

To all it must be perfectly evident, that the increase of religion in their hearts would be followed with that inward tranquility that never fails to result from an *approving conscience*. So long as they are conscious of the decline of religious feeling in their breasts, through their own fault, they cannot escape the rebukes of this internal monitor. The very remembrance of that spirituality of mind from which they have fallen, and of that languor into which they have suffered themselves to relapse ; the very remembrance of the evil passions they have been indulging, of the injurious pleasures they have been pursuing, and of the irregularity with which they have been improving the means of their religious advancement, must draw upon them its sharpest rebukes.—These rebukes will disturb their minds in every situation into which they enter—in solitude, where they are thrown principally on their own reflections,—in society, where they are brought into comparison with persons of superior sanctity,—and in the house of God, where they are led to consider, at once, the voluntary deficiencies with which they are chargeable, and the high attainments to which they should aspire. But from such rebukes they would be delivered, were they to return to God with renewed feelings of increased devotion. Let them seek the revival of those religious principles that are ready to die,—let them shun the evils that have hitherto retarded their progress,—let them pursue with diligence the course recommended to them in the word of God, and consonant to the decisions of enlightened conscience; then shall they experience an inward satisfaction, a serene joy; to which they are now, in a great measure, strangers. “The backslider in heart shall be filled with his own ways ; and a good man shall be satisfied from himself.” “Our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world.”

Peace of mind would be farther promoted, by *that government of the passions* which religion helps powerfully to support. In a country, when the civil authorities lose that ascendancy over the community which they have been accustomed to maintain, what other consequences can be expected than disorder and anarchy, the strife of evil passions, and the confusion of jarring interests? On the other hand, when these au-

thorities regain the righteous supremacy to which they are entitled, and administer the laws of good government, with an energy becoming the moral institution of Heaven ; how pleasing are the scenes of peace, and order, and prosperity, and comfort, that beautify the whole land ! Something similar takes place in the mind of the christian. When, in consequence of spiritual declension, his religious principles lose the superior control which they have been exercising over his inferior principles, and sink into a state of languor that unfits them for the interior dominion they are required to uphold, it is very natural that all the sinful passions, not yet wholly subdued, should rise up with a force most injurious to his religious improvement, and his virtuous tranquility. But, if from this temporary depression, these principles were raised to their rightful supremacy,—if to them were subjected the natural inclinations of the heart, and the irregular appetites of the body, then should follow a measure of internal peace, most conducive to his spiritual welfare. How desirable, how important, how necessary is the revival of religion in this view ! It would powerfully check the strife of angry passions and malignant tempers : it would greatly strengthen the power of religious affections and benevolent dispositions, and exalt them to a commanding eminence, from which they would keep in check all the evil principles remaining in the mind ; just as a devoted garrison, stationed in an elevated fortress, can keep down all the turbulent inhabitants of the surrounding country. “The Lord will bless his people with *peace*.” “Great peace have they who love thy law.” “Thou wilt keep him in *perfect peace*, whose mind is stayed on thee : because he trusteth in thee.” “To be spiritually minded is life and *peace*.” “Be careful for nothing ; but in every thing by prayer, and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God ; and the *peace* of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.”

A *third* advantage that would result to believers from the revival of religion in their minds, is a *higher degree of joy in the great objects of religion*. It is true, religion has long been considered by multitudes in all ranks of society, as the parent of *melancholy*. This disease no sooner makes its appearance in persons who have any pretensions to religion, than it is, without inquiry, referred to this single cause. Superficial observers, unstudious declaimers, never wait to examine,

whether there may not exist other causes much more likely to have produced this evil ; nor have they the least conception of the utter absurdity with which they are chargeable, in tracing to such a source, a disorder of which it could not be the true occasion. Even some medical writers, whose studies should have saved them from the illogical reasonings into which some others have fallen, have given countenance to the same pernicious delusion ; and, while they must have known, that this is a malady that springs chiefly from physical causes in the body, have not scrupled to refer it to religious impressions on the mind. Hence, in the list of diseases which they have enumerated, even in works of no mean repute, they have given what they call *religious melancholy*—just as strange a conjunction of words, as is to be met with in the records of the English language. As well might a mathematician talk of a square circle, or a circular square, which are physical impossibilities. As well might a naturalist trace the noxious vapors that pollute the air, to the crystal fountain, and the occasional snows that mantle the ground, to the bright beams of the meridian sun.

But while religion is calculated to afford the purest, highest, and richest joys, those in whose bosom it is declining, do not receive them. *They* are not soothed, supported, and cheered by religion. Rather, it is a burden that depresses their spirits—a task that hangs always heavy on their hands. Its doctrines would be spurned, were it not the pleasure they afford to their imaginations ; and its observances would be neglected, were it not the sort of satisfaction they afford to their consciences. How, indeed, can it be otherwise ?—When they treat religion as a matter inferior in importance to their secular pursuits,—when they keep her on the back ground, push her into a corner, and treat her with unmerited neglect, how can they expect her to pour into their minds, those sacred joys which she justly reserves for her devoted friends ? Like an insulted visitant, whose choicest gifts are undervalued, and whose just requirements are despised, she turns away from them with righteous resentment, leaves them to their present sorrows, and carries her consolations to others who are more inclined to appreciate their peculiar value. How important to their true happiness, to their religious enjoyment, were a revival of religion in their souls ! Then should they experience the comfort of those truths, of which they have now little more than a speculative knowledge, and

of those privileges to which they now conform, with little more than a formal observance. Then should they rejoice in God their gracious Father, in Jesus their blessed Saviour, in the Holy Spirit the true Comforter. Then should they rejoice in the ministrations of angels to their eternal interests, in the labors of ministers for their edification, and in the subordination of all things in the material universe, to their ultimate welfare. Then should they rejoice in their religious privileges, their spiritual blessings, and their sanctified afflictions. Then should they rejoice in the triumphs of grace, over the remains of corruption; in the subserviency of physical sufferings, to the production of moral fruits; and in the progress of the soul to that matured excellence, which at once illustrates the glorious agency of the Spirit, and qualifies for the unmingled pleasures of heaven. "These things write we unto you, that your joy may be full;" "for your furtherance and joy of faith, that your rejoicing may be more abundant in Jesus Christ."

(To be continued.)

REMARKS ON REPENTANCE.

(Continued from p. 276.)

5. *Genuine repentance is a permanent and continued exercise of the believing soul.* It has been divided into *initial* and *progressive*—that which is first called into operation in the work of saving conversion, and that which continues to be exercised by the believer until he is completely delivered from the "body of death." But from first to last it retains and exhibits the same character. The repentance of a sinner, when first brought to God, and the repentance of an experienced saint, are, in kind, precisely one and the same; even as the rising sun is the same with that which reaches the meridian and sets in the western sky. To use the beautiful illustration of another—The waters which gushed from the smitten rock followed the Israelites through the wilderness till they reached the shores of Canaan, so the heart, smitten in conversion with repentance, continues to bleed till it is bound up with a bandage of glory. That is not to be regarded as true repentance whose exercise is but temporary. Every pang of conscience, every fear for sin, every wish for pardon, which are only

transient in their duration, should not be dignified with the name of repentance. But such, it is to be feared, is the repentance of many whose names are trumpeted abroad as *converts*. The christian profession, however, receives little credit from such; for soon, "their root is found to be rottenness, and their blossom goes up as the dust." Such was the repentance of Pharaoh, Ahab, the Israelites in the wilderness, and others, whose cases are delineated in the page of revelation. But true repentance is an abiding principle in the soul. It is an open fountain, from which the streams of humiliation and godly sorrow incessantly flow. Hence, God's people are characterized as *meek, lowly-minded, contrite, poor in spirit, &c.* This is their constant and prevailing character. "To that man will I look," says Jehovah, "who is poor and of a contrite spirit and who trembleth at my word." Accordingly, we find the saints, long after their first repentance, continuing in the exercise of that grace. Look at David! Many of his Psalms are penitential. In the Fifty-first, he says in the language of bitter repentance, "my sin is ever before me." We find him again and again repenting of his sins. Indeed he abounded in the exercise of this grace even to the last. And in so doing he only exemplified what is common to all the saints.

But although repentance be an abiding principle in the believer, there are certain occasions when it is more particularly called forth into exercise: as

1. *The commission of some heinous sin.* It was after David had sinned in "the matter of Uriah the Hittite," that he composed the Fifty-first Psalm, in which he so bitterly laments his sin and folly, and makes his supplication for pardoning mercy—"Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I acknowledge my transgressions; and my sin is ever before me. Against thee, thee only have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight," &c. In like manner also, we find that Peter, after he denied his Lord, "went out and wept bitterly." And, indeed, wherever the grace of repentance exists in any soul, the fresh commission of sin, especially if it be of the grosser kind, will sooner or later call it forth into exercise.

2. *The sins and errors of the church.* A church cannot be guilty of errors, whether doctrinal or practical, without involving all the individual members of it in guilt before God. Individual counsel, approbation, silence, connivance, indif-

ference, or simple adherence, is all that is necessary here to make one a *particeps criminis*, a partaker of the common guilt. And when this guilt is seen, repentance is the certain consequence. Thus, by means of a Letter which Paul addressed to the Corinthian church and in which he exposed their errors and sinful conduct, that church was brought in her individual members, to the exercise of deep and sincere repentance. "For though I made you sorry with a letter I do not repent—for, behold this self-same thing, that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you, yea, what clearing of yourselves, yea, what indignation, yea, what fear, yea, what vehement desire, yea, what zeal, yea, what revenge!" 1 Cor. vii. 8-11.

3. *Afflictions.* Afflictions, whether they come as judgments or as chastisements, are evidences of sin and guilt, and therefore call to the exercise of repentance. And the child of God, when afflicted, does in this way improve his affliction—he makes diligent search for his sins, and he mourns over them before God—"he hears the rod and who hath appointed it." Thus it was with David—"Thy hand presseth me sore—neither is there any rest in my bones, because of my sin." Ps. xxxviii. 2, 3.

4. *A near view of the glorious perfections of God.* The clearer that our views are of the Great God, especially of his moral attributes, the more sinful, polluted and vile do we appear in our own eyes. Hence, where the grace of repentance exists in any soul, fresh discoveries respecting the character of the Holy One of Israel, will surely draw it forth into exercise. After God had made a particular manifestation of himself to Job, we find that man of God thus giving expression to his views and feelings—"I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear; but now mine eye seeth thee; wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." Job, xlii. 5, 6. Isaiah, also, when he had seen a vision of the glory of the God of Israel, was led to exclaim—"Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for mine eyes have seen the king, the Lord of hosts." Isa. vi. 5.

5. *A lively view of indwelling-sin.* That this also furnishes believers with a proper occasion for the exercise of repentance, their own experience abundantly testifies. For where is there one of them, that is not at times filled with abhorrence and loathing of self, on account of the general depravity and

corruption of his nature? The experience of the apostle Paul is common in some degree to all the saints—"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?"

Such, then, are some of the occasions which are calculated to excite the grace of repentance in believers, and call it forth into exercise. But I pass to another general remark:

6. *True repentance is a very extensive and complicated exercise.* All attempts to simplify the subject of repentance by reducing it to any single operation of the soul, is only to substitute a human invention in the room of that repentance which is so amply described in the holy scriptures. True repentance, like true faith, is a complicated act of the new creature. Metaphysical minds have indeed speculated on the nature of faith till they have made it consist simply in an assent of the understanding to revealed truth—a faith no more like the "faith of God's elect," than a single beam is like a beautiful and well constructed edifice. For, if you take from faith its appropriating character, you annihilate its very essence; and by referring it solely to the understanding, you contradict the word of God, which also refers it to the heart—"with the heart man believeth unto righteousness." In like manner repentance is made to suffer the loss of its scriptural character, when it is confined to mere convictions for sin; or when it is confined to sorrow for sin; or when it is confined to amendment of life; or when it is confined to any other particular act, or operation. It is various and complicated in its nature. Hence it is expressed by different words of somewhat different shades of meaning.

The word most frequently used in the New Testament to express it, literally signifies *to change one's mind, or take an after-thought.* We read that Esau "could find no place for repentance [in Isaac his father] though he sought it carefully with tears;" that is, with all his moving entreaties, he could not prevail upon his father "to change his mind" and take back the blessing from Jacob and bestow it on him. Accordingly, this word, as used to denote evangelical repentance, is very extensive in its signification. It calls upon sinners to *change their minds* respecting God, and no longer regard him as "a hard master, reaping where he had not sowed," but as a most bountiful and compassionate Being; to change

their minds respecting Christ, and no longer regard him as "a root sprung out of a dry ground having no form or comeliness," but as "the chiefest among ten thousand" and the one "altogether lovely;" to change their minds respecting sin, and no longer regard it as a sweet and delicious morsel, but as a bitter, cursed, and abominable thing; to change their minds respecting themselves, and no longer regard themselves as acceptable unto God, but as "dead in trespasses and sins;" in a word, to change their minds respecting their course of conduct, and no longer be found toiling in the service of Satan, but engaged in the service of their great Creator and rightful Lord. Repentance, then, as expressed by this word, is a very extensive and complicated work, and, as was observed before, evidently implies the exercise of a living faith.

But there is another word used in the New Testament to express repentance, which literally signifies a *painful concern* and *anxiety of mind* arising from the consideration of something that has been done. This is the word that Matthew employs to express the repentance of Judas. That traitor experienced a most painful and excruciating sense of guilt, in having "betrayed the innocent blood," although he experienced no real "change of mind" in relation to God and divine things. Accordingly when this word is used to express gospel repentance it shows us that there is implied in it "godly sorrow" for sin and a real concern to obtain deliverance from its guilt and condemnation.

There are several other words used in scripture, and particularly in the Old Testament, to express repentance, or rather constituent parts of repentance, which plainly show that there is in that gracious exercise of soul a feeling of *shame* and *sorrow* and *humiliation* and *self-abhorrence*, on account of sin, together with a *hatred* and *confession* of sin, and a sincere and joyful abandonment of its service forever. Hence, then, from these considerations it necessarily follows, that repentance is an extensive and complicated work, and cannot be referred, without destroying its true character, to any single exercise or act of the soul.

7. *Saving repentance is characterized by a turning from sin to God.* We read of a "repentance from dead works." All those gracious calls we meet with in the scripture, to *return to the Lord*, are calls to repentance. And, indeed, a return of the soul from sin to God is necessary to complete the idea of a scriptural repentance. To illustrate the present remark

two things are to be noticed—from what, and to what, does the soul *turn* in the work of repentance?

1. It turns from sin. A sense of the evil of sin, sorrow for it, hatred of it, self-loathing and shame on account of it, and a willingness to confess it, are all proved to be real and genuine by this turning away of the soul from the love and commission of it. Without this, it is evident there is no reality or sincerity in the case.

Now, the true penitent turns not merely from his outward and gross sins, but from all his sins, even the sins of the heart, his most beloved lusts, his most adored idols; he casts them all to “the moles and to bats,” turns from them with perfect loathing and exclaims, “What have I to do any more with idols?” And not only so, but he also turns away from the very occasions of sin, and is heard making his supplication in the words of the Psalmist, “Turn thou away mine eyes from beholding vanity.” And in so doing he is only obeying the express command of God, “Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men: avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away.”

But we are not to suppose that this turning from sin is perfect in the present life, or that it fully comes up to the requirements of the divine law; for this would be to make *sanctification* perfect in its state of incipience and progression; nevertheless it possesses such marks as these, and which evidently distinguish it from the turning of hypocrites:—It is *voluntary*. Some turn from their sins because they cannot help themselves. They do it not from choice, but from constraint: and hence, when the constraint is removed they turn again to their sins, “like the dog to his vomit, and the sow that was washed to her wallowing again in the mire.” And this turning of the true penitent is not only voluntary, it is also *sincere*; it springs from the heart, and is not promoted by selfish considerations, but by true love to God and holiness. And it is moreover *universal*, extending to all known sins, making no exception, saying of none, “Is it not a little one, O spare it!” but in obedience to Christ, plucking out, cutting off and casting away the offending right eye, right hand and right foot. Says God by the prophet Ezekiel, “Turn away your faces from ALL your abominations—cast away from you ALL your transgressions.” But,

2. The soul in repentance turns to God. The language of true penitents is, “come and let us return unto the Lord.”

“Let us return unto our first husband, for it was better with us then than now.” Yes, wherever true repentance is exercised there is a “returning to the Lord with weeping and with supplication.” This is beautifully illustrated in the history of the prodigal son. He departed from his father’s house and went into a far country, where he indulged himself in all manner of wickedness and folly; and his repentance is expressed by his returning again with shame and sorrow to his father. “I will arise and go to my father.” In this return to God, the soul makes choice of him—“Behold we come unto thee, for thou art the Lord our God.” “Other lords and lovers beside thee have had dominion over us; but by thee will we make mention of thy name.” The soul chooses God for its portion—“Whom have I in heaven but thee, and there is none on earth that I desire besides thee—Thou art the strength of my heart and my portion forever.” “I cried unto thee, O Lord; I said, thou art my refuge and my portion in the land of the living.” And the soul chooses the service of God—“Choose ye this day whom ye will serve—as for me and my house we will serve the Lord.” Indeed, “the conscience is purged from dead works to serve the living God.” In a word, the returning penitent makes a cordial surrender of himself to God—yields up himself wholly to the Lord to be used, governed and disposed of according to the dictates of his infinite wisdom and love. He presents his ear that God may nail it to the door-post, in token of his willingness to serve him and abide in his house forever. “Make me as one of thine hired servants.” “O Lord, truly I am thy servant; I am thy servant, and the son of thine handmaid; thou hast loosed my bonds.”

Lastly. *Repentance is not a condition of pardon, but is nevertheless inseparably connected with salvation.* This remark is added by way of caution and application. If we are not greatly mistaken, sinners are led, by means of the instruction which they generally hear, to regard repentance as the *condition* of their obtaining pardon from God. But it cannot be so: because repentance *follows* pardon. Pardon is a leading branch of justification, but faith in Christ, in the first moment of its exercise, brings the soul into a justified state, and since repentance, as was before proved, follows faith in the order of nature and flows from it, it must of necessity also follow pardon. Again, all must admit that true repentance flows from love to God. It is impossible for persons truly to repent of

their sins while they continue to hate God. But love to God flows from pardon. The design of the parable of the two debtors is to prove this fact. Having nothing to pay, their creditor "frankly forgave them both." Now, "tell me," says Christ to Simon, "which of them will love him most?" implying that neither of them would have loved him, had he not generously forgiven them their debts. Indeed, he afterwards states, that to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little; consequently, if nothing be forgiven there will be no love at all. And hence, as to the woman who was the subject of conversation, our Saviour plainly intimates, that her "loving much" was an evidence that "much had been forgiven her." As love to God, therefore, follows pardon, and as repentance flows from love to God, it must also, in the order of nature, follow pardon, and consequently cannot be its condition.

And corresponding to this doctrine, we find that, upon every offer of pardon and salvation to the sinner, an immediate acceptance is demanded; he is not allowed to wait till he has taken time to repent; his first and immediate duty is to accept joyfully of that which is offered him. He is not asked to bring repentance, or any thing else in his hand as a price for the obtaining of pardon: nay, let him, as being totally destitute of all good, presently accept the gracious offer; and then for this divine act of unmerited pardon let him, in a way of gratitude and love, repent all his days, and perform every other good work required at his hands.

The intelligent reader will understand that we are here speaking of *judicial* and not of *fatherly* pardon—of that which proceeds from God as a judge and is bestowed *in* justification, and not of that which proceeds from him as a father, and is bestowed *after* justification; and which contemplates sin as a breach of the law, not in its covenant form, but as a rule of life, in the hand of the Mediator. With respect to this latter kind of pardon, the scriptures seem to make it depend in some measure, upon the exercise of repentance on the part of the believer; but with respect to the former, it is bestowed in a free and absolute manner, simply on account of the merit of Christ, and without any conditional dependence whatever on the repenting of the sinner, as has been sufficiently shown.

But though repentance be not a condition of pardon, yet it has an inseparable connection with salvation. The words of our Lord are most explicit—"Except ye repent ye shall all

likewise perish." The impenitent cannot be received into heaven. The gates of paradise are forever barred against them. They must have their portion with the "unbelieving," in "the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone." It would be derogatory to the wisdom and purity and glory of the divine government to admit sinners, apostates, rebels into heaven without having ever repented of their sins. Surely the Universal Judge could never consistently say to such, "Well done, good and faithful servants, enter ye into the joys of your Lord." Repentance is a part of that "holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord." Is it conceded that "he that believeth not shall be damned?" But the apostles were commissioned to preach "repentance towards God" as well as faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ." The one is as necessary as the other, and without either of them no man shall be permitted to enjoy the light of that "great city, the holy Jerusalem." In view, then, of the connection which God has established between repentance and salvation, let guilty men hearken attentively to the voice which is incessantly crying to them from every page of the word of life; Repent! Repent!

PROCEEDINGS OF THE REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN SYNOD OF
IRELAND.

The interest which a large majority of our readers are known justly to take in the proceedings of the Reformed Presbyterian Synod in Ireland, is sufficient apology for giving *entire* the minutes of its last meeting. We regret that we did not receive them at an earlier period.—ED.

BALLYMENA,

Tuesday, July 9th, 1839, Twelve o'clock, noon.

THE SYNOD of the REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH in Ireland met, and a sermon was preached from Isaiah liv. 11. 12,—“O thou afflicted, tossed with tempests, and not comforted!” &c.—by the Rev. J. Stott, the Moderator, who constituted the Synod by prayer.

The Roll being called, the following Ministers and Ruling Elders were present:—

Of the WESTERN PRESBYTERY—Rev. J. P. Sweeny, A. Eullerton, Gordon T. Ewing, J. Stott; with Messrs. Wm.

King, James Mitchell, Matthew Hodge, David Speer, Alexander Buchanan, Ruling Elders.

Of the **EASTERN PRESBYTERY**—Rev. J. Paul, D. D., J. Alexander, W. Henry, D. D., C. Houston ; with Messrs. Wm. Cambridge, James Morton, Andrew Blakely, John M'Kee, (alternate), Wm. Wright.

Of the **NORTHERN PRESBYTERY**—Rev. W. J. Stavely, S. Cameron, J. Dick, J. Smith, S. Carlisle, T. Houston, W. Tolland ; with Messrs. Samuel Jackson, Robert Archibald, Henry Mulliken (alternate.) John Aiken, Robert Adams, Samuel Pollock, Robert Robinson, and David Guthrie, Ruling Elders.

Of the **SOUTHERN PRESBYTERY**—Rev. W. Gibson.

LIVERPOOL—Rev. J. Nevin.

CONGREGATION of BALLYCLARE—Robert Witherhead, Commissioned Ruling Elder.

ABSENT—Rev. Messrs. Gamble, Britten, Graham, Cathcart, and Hawthorne.

The names of Rev. Robert J. Watt, and Rev. James Steen, are added to the Roll ; the former having been ordained by the Northern Presbytery, and the latter by the Southern Presbytery ; also, the name of Mr. John Hawthorne, Mr. Steen's Elder.

1, The Rev. Wm. Gibson, and the Rev. Arthur Fullerton, are nominated for the Moderatorship, and the Roll being called, Mr. Fullerton is elected.

2. Agreed, that the time of meeting each morning shall be 7 o'clock ; that Synod adjourn each day at 3 o'clock, and resume its proceedings at 5 o'clock, p. m. ; that there be devotional exercises at the commencement of each public session, at 10 o'clock, a. m. ; that Dr. Paul conduct these exercises to-morrow ; that Presbyteries be allowed to meet this evening during the recess ; and that the members of Synod meet as a Committee of Bills to-morrow, at 7 o'clock, a. m.

3. The Minutes of Synod's proceedings at its meeting last year are read.

Agreed, that the Missionary Board meet at half-past 7 o'clock to-morrow evening.

At 5 o'clock, adjourned by prayer.

Wednesday, Ten o'clock, A. M.

The Synod meets, and is constituted.

The Rev. Messrs. Graham and Hawthorne are now present.

The Rev. Samuel Simms is reported to have been ordained by the Southern Presbytery, and his name, with John M'Auley, his Elder, is entered on the Roll.

Messrs. Wm. Harvey, John Gordon, Wm. Moore, and Robert Porter, Ruling Elders, are present, and their names enrolled.

Dr. Paul conducts the devotional exercises, and the Rev. T. Houston is appointed to conduct them to-morrow.

4. The Minutes of Synod's proceedings, at its meeting in July, 1838, are again read and approved.

5. The following Reports of Presbyteries are read:—

THE WESTERN PRESBYTERY report, that since the last annual meeting of Synod, they have held six regular meetings—that the days of Thanksgiving and Fasting have been observed—that the vacancy of Derry continues to enjoy the dispensation of word and sacrament, and that the Missionary Stations at Donegal, Omagh, and Binn, have a prosperous appearance.

The Members of Presbytery still entertain the thought, that in these times of Zion's trouble they enjoy a degree of their Master's presence. The attendance of their congregations on instituted ordinances, and the character they maintain, afford them cause to believe that their labours will not be in vain in the Lord. Nor do they with indifference behold an increased love to Covenanting principles manifested by those who belong to other religious communities. They would intimate to Synod, that Mr. Samuel B. Stevenson, having finished his Collegiate course, is recommended for general examination.

*The Rev. J. P. Sweeny is their Moderator, and
Rev. Alexander Britten, Clerk.*

THE EASTERN PRESBYTERY report, that they have attended to the usual routine of official duty;—that Mr. Buchanan, at last Meeting, laid before them satisfactory testimonials of his having attended to Natural Philosophy, Hebrew, Greek, Biblical Criticism, Divinity, and Ecclesiastical History; that they have also under their care Mr. William Close, who attended the Belfast College, last Session.

They report, that the Congregation of Bailliesmill petitioned for liberty to apply to Synod for separation from the Eastern Presbytery.—Neither Mr. Graham, nor any of his Elders, had attended the meetings of Presbytery during the last year; nor had any reasons been assigned for wishing to withdraw. Under these circumstances, the Presbytery, instead of granting the prayer of the petition, resolved to report the case to Synod, as they hereby do.

At the last Meeting of Presbytery, the following resolution was adopted:—That it be recommended to Synod to take measures for having the FORMULA of Questions proposed at Ordination; the TERMS of COMMUNION and the TESTIMONY, which have received the sanction of the sister Synod in Scotland, submitted to the considerations of the

subordinate Judicatories in Ireland, with the view of their being adopted by us, provided they are approved by our Ecclesiastical Judicatories.

*The Rev. John Alexander is their Moderator, and
Dr. Paul, Clerk.*

THE NORTHERN PRESBYTERY report, that since the last meeting of Synod, they have held five regular meetings, the last of which was at Dervock, as a Visitation Presbytery for the Congregation of Dervock and Ballymoney. They report with pleasure, that the Minister and Elders are attentive in the discharge of their respective duties, and that the Congregation enjoys comfort and prosperity.

In October last, Mr. Samuel Simms was licensed to preach the everlasting gospel. The Second Reformed Presbyterian Congregation in Belfast having addressed a unanimous call to Mr. R. J. Watt, which he accepted; and the Presbytery having heard from him, with approbation, the usual pieces of trial, did ordain him to the office of the Holy Ministry, and the pastoral charge of that congregation on the 3d inst. The Days of Fasting and Thanksgiving appointed by Synod have been observed by the different congregations under the care of Presbytery; the Sacrament of our Lord's Supper has been dispensed; attendance has been shown to other ordinances; and, notwithstanding that the pressure of the times has been felt by a considerable number of the members of the Church, contributions have been furnished in support of the cause of Missions. The Presbytery report, with humble gratitude to the Church's exalted Head, that peace exists within their borders; and they have some reason to say, that their people walking in the fear of the Lord, and in steadfast adherence to the Church's bound up law and sealed testimony are edified.

The following students, in different degrees of forwardness, are at present under the care of Presbytery:—Messrs. Henry S. M'Kee, Hutchinson M'Faddin, Wm. M'Dowell, Robert Nevin, James MacKeown, Stewart Fullerton, James Kennedy, James Clarke, William M'Carrol, Wm. M'Caw, and Alexander Savage. Of these, H. S. M'Kee, having finished the usual course of studies, and having graduated in the University of Glasgow, is recommended to Synod for general Examination.

The Presbytery record, with sympathy towards bereaved relatives, the early removal, by death, of Mr. James Nevin, a student characterized by early piety and promising talents.

*The Rev. Samuel Carlile is Moderator for the present year,
and the Rev. Thomas Houston, Clerk.*

THE SOUTHERN PRESBYTERY report that six meetings have been held since last meeting of Synod. The vacant Congregations have been regularly supplied. On the 15th of May last, the Presbytery ordained the Rev. Samuel Simms to the office of the Holy Ministry, and the pastoral charge of Loughbrickland Congregation; and on the 4th of June they ordained the Rev. James Steen in the Congregation of

Dromore. A call was presented to Mr. T. Carlile from the vacant Congregation of Rathfriland, of which he accepted, and his ordination is appointed to take place on the 30th inst. A call was also presented to Mr. W. Sweeny, from the vacant congregation of Ballylane, of which he accepted.

They have under their care, as Students of Moral Philosophy, Messrs. James Lawson, and Robert Clokey.

The days of Fasting and Thanksgiving, have been observed. The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, has been celebrated in two of their Congregations.

The vacancy of Grange has been supplied, partly by the Synod, partly by the Presbytery, and partly by the Missionary Board. The smaller stations have not required any supply.

The Presbytery lately visited the Congregation at Ballenon, and found the Minister and Elders assiduous in the performance of their respective duties; the Congregation has been greatly weakened by emigration, and by the erection of a new Congregation, lately, in its vicinity. They, also, lately visited the Congregation of Coronery, in which, they regret to report, that they found unpleasant feelings existing between the Pastor and the People. They have pleasure, however, in reporting, that through the great and indefatigable exertions of the Rev. W. Gibson, a comfortable house of worship has been erected there, on the estate of Sir Geo. Hudson, who granted the site of the house *rent free*, and has enclosed and planted the ground at his own expense.

Presbytery request the advice of Synod, in relation to a certain paper laid before them.

*The Rev. W. Gibson, is their Moderator, and the
Rev. J. Hawthorne, Clerk.*

6. In accordance with the latter part of the Eastern Presbytery's report, it is moved by the Rev. C. Houston and seconded by Dr. Henry, that Synod adopt measures for having the **FORMULA** of questions proposed at ordination, the **TERMS** of communion, and the **TESTIMONY**, which have received the sanction of the sister Synod in Scotland, submitted to the consideration of the subordinate Judicatories in Ireland, with the view of being adopted by us, provided they are approved by our Ecclesiastical Judicatories;—and, in addition, moved by Rev. G. T. Ewing, and seconded by Rev. J. P. Sweeny—That all discussion on the papers now lying on Synod's table be suspended until the documents mentioned in the motion be submitted for consideration to our inferior Judicatories, and the result of their deliberations returned to Synod. Moved as *amendment* by the Rev. W. Toland, and seconded by Mr. S. Jackson, Ruling Elder—That the Synod recommend to the consideration of the subordinate Judicatories, the historical and doctrinal parts of the Testimony of the Scottish Reformed Presbyterian Synod, with a view to their adoption by this church—and that the papers now lying on the Synod's table, be held *in retentis* till the reports from the inferior Judicatories be received and adjudicated on.

The Roll is called, and the second motion is carried by a majority of twelve votes.

The Ministers and Elders of the Eastern Presbytery desire their **DISSENT** to be recorded.

Adjourned by prayer.

Wednesday, five o'clock, p. m.

7. The Synod meets and is constituted. Agreed that early attention be given by the Financial Committee to the settlement of accounts due to the Clerk for the Minutes of Synod, and to the receiving of contributions from the congregations to the **SYNODICAL FUND**. Mr. Smith tenders his resignation as Treasurer of this fund, and Mr. Graham is appointed to succeed him. The Financial Committee is appointed to meet at half-past 4 o'clock to-morrow, p. m.

8. Agreed that application be made by each Presbytery for such a number of the copies of the Testimony of the Church in Scotland as they require, for the purpose of having them submitted to the consideration of the subordinate Judicatories. The Rev. T. Cathcart is now present, and his name is placed on the Roll.

9. An arrangement is made for the distribution of the copies of Synod's pamphlet that remain unsold among the congregations, so that Mr. W. Moore, the Treasurer, may be furnished with the means of liquidating the debt due to the printer.

10. Inquiry is made if the Moderator or Dr. Paul had attended the late examinations in the Royal Belfast Institution; and Dr. Paul makes some statements expressive of the great satisfaction he had felt in attending these examinations, and highly commends some recently appointed classes, as the Moral Philosophy class under Dr. Cooke and Rev. Mr. Mollyneux, the Church History class under Dr. Reid, and the Biblical Criticism class under Dr. Davidson.

It is stated that a reply had not been sent to the letter of the Faculty addressed last year to this Synod, in consequence of the scroll having been lost, and Dr. Henry and Mr. Stott are now appointed to prepare a reply, accompanied with an apology for the delay.

11. A letter is laid on the table and read, from the Rev. J. Steen, intimating that "the Presbyterian Synod of Ireland, distinguished by the name Seceders, has unanimously resolved to request the co-operation of the Reformed Presbyterian Synod in establishing and conducting a *Foreign Mission*."

This communication is favorably received, and held *in retentis*.

12. The Rev. T. Houston states the circumstance that occasioned him to omit writing to J. Ross, Hammersmith, acknowledging, in the name of Synod, the donation of 150 copies of a Tract, &c., and he is instructed to write at his earliest convenience.

13. Resolved, that the last Thursday of November be observed by the members of Synod, and the people under their care, as a day of Thanksgiving; and the last Thursday of January, 1840, as a day of Fasting. Liberty of change is granted to those Congregations that now apply for it.

14. Agreed, that the Report of the Missionary Board be heard to-morrow, after the devotional exercises, and that the Court then proceed with the examination of Students.

15. The next annual meeting of the Synod is appointed to be held in Moneymore, on the 2nd Tuesday of July, 1840, at 12 o'clock, noon.

Agreed, that the members of Synod meet as a Committee of Bills, at 7 o'clock, to-morrow, a. m.

Adjourned by prayer.

Thursday, ten o'clock, a. m.

The Synod meets and is constituted.

The Rev. T. Houston conducts the devotional exercises, and the Rev. T. Cathcart is appointed for to-morrow morning.

16. Agreeably to the arrangement of the former Session, the Rev. T. Houston, one of the Secretaries, reads the eleventh Annual Report of the Missionary Board.

Agreed, that this Report be received, and the thanks of the Synod returned to the Directors, and that they be requested to continue in office. The Moderator expresses the thanks of the Synod to the Directors, who consent to continue in office. The Rev. W. J. Stavelly, by the desire of the court, engages in prayer, giving thanks to the God of Missions, for the success with which he has been pleased to bless the Missionary enterprise.

17. Petitions are laid on the table, and read from Covenanters, in Manchester, Dublin, and Drogheda.

Agreed, that the prayer of these petitions be granted as far as practicable. Mr. Graham is appointed to supply Manchester during the month of August.

The Missionary Board is appointed to act as a Committee of Synod, in relation to Manchester, and the congregation of Ballyclare.—The petition from Drogheda, is referred to the Southern Presbytery. Dublin is to be supplied by the Southern Presbytery, on the last three Sabbaths of October, by the Northern Presbytery in November, and by the Western Presbytery in December.

18. Resolved, that the Rev. Thomas Houston again address a circular to the Licentiates, on the subject of going out to St. Johns, New Brunswick, for one year at least, in compliance with the prayer of the members of the Reformed Presbyterian Church in that place. Intimation is made by Dr. Henry, that Mr. Russell had not received the circular formerly sent to Licentiates, and that there is a probability, that if the matter were brought before his mind, and seriously and prayerfully considered by him, he might feel it his duty to comply with the request. It is agreed, that if Mr. Russell resolve to go out, the Eastern Presbytery adopt measures for his ordination, assisted by the Committee of Synod, in relation to his mission.

19. A letter from the Faculty of the Royal Belfast Institution, is laid on the table, and read. Agreed, that Dr. Henry and Mr. Stott

combine a reply to it, with the letter that they were formerly appointed to prepare.

Adjourned by prayer.

Thursday, five o'clock, p. m.

The Synod meets, and is constituted.

20. The certificates and class tickets of Mr. Henry S. M'Kee, and those of Mr. Samuel B. Stevenson, with the Degree of the former from the University of Glasgow, are produced and read. The examination of these students, agreeably to the rule of Synod, is proceeded with, and continued until nine o'clock. Their answers are satisfactory, and are sustained. Their Presbyteries are instructed to take them under trials for license.

Adjourned by prayer.

Friday, ten o'clock, a. m.

The Synod meets, and is constituted.

Mr. Cameron, in the absence of Mr. Cathcart, conducts the devotional exercises.

21. Agreed, that the application of the Synod's resolution respecting the attendance of its students on Moral Philosophy in the Seminaries, be held *in retentis*, as regards the Universities of Glasgow and Edinburgh.

22. The draught of a letter to the Faculty of the Royal Belfast Institution is read by Dr. Henry, and is approved.

23. The Rev. J. Smyth turns the attention of the Court to the motion of which he gave notice, and which is recorded in Minute 22d, of the Meeting of July, 1837; and the Synod renews the expression of their hope, that the venders of ardent spirits, if there be any such, in the fellowship of our church, will feel it their duty to relinquish a traffic so dangerous to themselves, and injurious to society.

24. Reference is made to Minute 28th, of Synod's Meeting, in July, 1837; and it is stated, that a petition from the people who obtained leave to withdraw from Newtonards Congregation, is on the table since the meeting of last year, and that a Commissioner from that people is now present. It is moved and seconded that this petition be now read; moved as an amendment by Mr. Stavely, seconded by Mr. Cameron, that the petition from persons lately disannexed from Dr. Henry's Congregation be not received, until the Congregation be previously apprized. On the call of the roll, it is carried that the petition be read. Dr. Henry *dissents* and *protests*. It is subsequently moved by Mr. Stott, and seconded by Mr. Sweeny, that, as the petition appears to involve the interests of Newtonards Congregation, the consideration of it be deferred till next annual meeting of Synod, and the Session and Congregation are hereby noticed to that effect. This motion is carried.

25. The Rev. J. Stott defers the motion of which he gave notice, respecting the organization of Congregational Sabbath Schools.

26. The Rev. J. Smyth defers his notice of motion, recorded in Minute 17th, of Synod's meeting, in October, 1837.

27. The case of the Rev. J. Nevin and the Congregation of Liverpool, is taken under consideration in the following order :—

The Report of the Synod's Committee, in this case, is read :—The correspondence of the Clerk of Committee with Mr. Nevin, and the Congregation of Liverpool ;—Mr. Nevin's protest and appeal ;—Memorial to Synod, from the Members and Friends of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, in Liverpool, stately, or occasionally worshipping with Mr. Nevin. After the reading of these papers, and after some explanations, Mr. Nevin, by advice, withdraws his protest and appeal.

Adjourned by prayer.

Friday, five o'clock, p. m.

The Synod meets, and is constituted.

It is moved by Rev. G. T. Ewing, and seconded by Mr. James Morton, Elder, that the following Report of the Committee, in the case of Mr. Nevin and the Congregation of Liverpool be received.

"The Committee consider the pastoral relation between the Rev. John Nevin and the Congregation of Liverpool as still subsisting, and regard Mr. Nevin as acting unpresbyterially in leaving his charge in a manner inconsistent with ordination obligations. They regard him, moreover, as having acted injuriously to the Congregation, in forsaking his flock, and in commencing preaching to a different audience in the same town ; and they cannot think that the reasons which he has offered justify such a course of procedure."

It is moved by Dr. Henry, and seconded by Dr. Paul—That the Rev. W. J. Stavely tender advice and admonition to Mr. Nevin.

Some discussion ensues respecting the degree of censure ; the roll is called and the vote taken, "*admonish* or *rebuke*,"—it is carried "*admonish*," only six voting for "*rebuke*." The admonition is solemnly tendered by the Rev. W. J. Stavely.

Agreed that the pastoral relation between the Rev. John Nevin and the Reformed Presbyterian Congregation of Liverpool be now dissolved. By the desire of Synod, this is carried into effect by Dr. Henry, who occupies the chair. Mr. Nevin is desired to express his wish in relation to his being connected with a particular Presbytery, and he intimates his choice of the Eastern Presbytery.

28. The case of the Rev. William Gibson and the Congregation of Coronery is taken under consideration. Mr. Gibson's petition to Synod, and his reasons of protest against the proceedings of the Southern Presbytery are read.

After a patient hearing of the case, the following motion is made by the Rev. T. Houston, seconded by the Rev. J. Dick, and *adopted*—"*That as it has appeared to the Synod that the dissensions between the Rev. W. Gibson and the Congregation of Coronery have prevailed to such a degree, and for such a length of time, that they are now irreme-*

diable—the Court, therefore, considers it expedient, that the pastoral relation between Mr. Gibson and the Congregation be dissolved, and they instruct the Southern Presbytery to dissolve this relation, but only on the condition that the Presbytery will hold the Congregation bound to pay to Mr. Gibson the amount of stipend which is justly due to him, and that they (the Congregation) will moreover become bound to liquidate whatever debt may be due for the erection of the Meeting-house, and to make reasonable remuneration to Mr. Gibson for his exertions in obtaining the means of building a comfortable House of Worship.”

29. The Rev. J. Dick gives notice of motion for the formation of a Fifth Presbytery, comprising the Congregations of Dromore, Bailismill, Knockbracken, Second Belfast, and Ballyclare.

30. Memorials from the Rev. G. T. Ewing, and from the Congregations of Knockbracken and Ballymoney, which had been read in the Committee of Bills, are withdrawn, by the desire of the parties, and with the consent of the Court.

31. The following appointments are assigned to the Licentiates :—

Mr. RUSSELL—In the Northern Presbytery, in September; in the Southern Presbytery, in October; in the Eastern Presbytery, in November, December, February, and May; under the Missionary Board, in August, March, and April.

Mr. STAVELY—In the Western Presbytery, in August and September; in the Eastern Presbytery, in October, January and April; in the Southern Presbytery, in February; in the Northern Presbytery in June.

Mr. R. JOHNSON—In the Eastern Presbytery, the last two Sabbaths of July and the month of August; in the Northern Presbytery, in November and February; in the Southern Presbytery, in December; in the Western Presbytery, in April and May; under the Missionary Board, in September, October, June, and till the Meeting of Synod.

Mr. T. JOHNSTON—In the Southern Presbytery, in August and May; in the Eastern Presbytery, in September, March, June, and till the meeting of Synod; in the Western Presbytery, in December; in the Northern Presbytery, in April; under the Missionary Board, in January and February.

32. The Rev. J. Alexander reads the following *protest* :—

“I protest against the conduct of this Synod in sitting to such an unseasonable hour, in doing business without consulting the members more generally, and also on account of agreeing to dissolve the meeting of Synod without making arrangements for taking up and adjudicating on some papers of great importance. This I do in behalf of myself and adherents. “JOHN ALEXANDER.”

The Rev. C. Houston joins in this protest. Drs. Paul and Henry had previously retired, *verbally* protesting.

At a few minutes before one o'clock on Saturday morning, the Synod is adjourned by prayer from the Moderator, until the next annual meeting.

(Signed,) CLARKE HOUSTON,

SYNOD'S CLERK.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES OF
THE WESTERN S. SYNOD,

Adopted at its Session, October 26th, 1839.

CAUSES OF FASTING.

Corruption of nature, the common sin of our race, discovers itself in a countless variety of individual and social violations of the divine law. "Behold I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me," is a confession that expresses the moral condition of every one that comes into the world. "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked," and out of it "proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witnesses, blasphemies."

In calling on ourselves and the congregations under our care to bow down before the Lord our God, in fasting, humiliation and confession, we would enumerate, as pressing causes for engaging in this duty, a few of the prevailing sins of this age—putrid streams flowing from the deadly fountain of original corruption.

1. Covetousness. "Take heed," says our Savior, "beware of covetousness." The emphatic language of this warning strongly expresses the danger and deceitfulness of this sin. But, alas! the kind admonition is, for the most part, disregarded. Men, generally, are making "gold their hope, and saying to the fine gold, thou art our confidence." "Love of money," declared by the apostle to be "the root of evil," seems now to be the moving principle of every human undertaking. And, although in the prevailing pecuniary embarrassments, as well as in the instances in which God has recently "called to contend by fire" in several of our principal cities, there is visible evidence that "riches make to themselves wings and fly away," still this unholy principle is acquiring, rather than losing, strength. "This people turneth not to him that smiteth them, neither do they seek the Lord of hosts." The acquisition of wealth, either for the sordid purpose of merely possessing it, or with the not less wicked design of spending it in the gratification of lusts that are "earthly, sensual, devilish," draws largely on that time which is given us, to attend to the momentous concerns

of the immortal soul. Nations, impelled by covetousness, are ready to blow the trump of war whenever another nation, under the same malign influence, interferes with their unholy schemes for augmenting their wealth and power. And even those who profess to be "seeking a better country, that is a heavenly," burden themselves with the things of this life, forgetting that "they that will be rich fall into temptation, and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition." This moth is eating out the very vitals of religion, leaving little more than a "form" instead of "the power of godliness."

The Lord of the whole earth requires us to honor him with our substance. In his providence he is opening numerous channels through which christians can distribute of what God has given them for promoting his glorious cause. But so far from gladly availing ourselves of these opportunities, we are rather disposed to say to the naked and destitute, "be ye warmed and filled." The sympathies of the church are fast drying up, and her energies in promoting the interests of her Lord's kingdom paralyzed by the blighting influence of this baneful spirit. Let us confess our covetousness and pray for a spirit to "devise liberal things."

2. Insubordination. If it be asked where is the evidence of the prevalence of this spirit, the answer is—every where. Indeed, insubordination among the nations of the earth who refuse to obey the law of God, might naturally have been expected. Society can be held together by no cords but those which were made in heaven. The great bond which once united society in all its departments, being broken by man's revolt from his Maker, disorder among the rebels is the natural consequence. Nor is it to be expected that social order will prevail to any extent, or for any duration, till nations "kiss the Son," and yield obedience to his law. To do this, they seem exceedingly averse. "Who is the Lord that we should obey him?" is the practical language of every nation under heaven. In our own land this fatal poison is diffused through all the arteries and veins of the social system. All the practical immoralities of our nation—sabbath-breaking, slavery, false swearing, and the exaltation of vile men to places of power, may be traced to the same origin—a refusal in the Constitution to acknowledge the authority of God—to submit to his Son, and obey his law. And the worst symptom of the disease is, that some who have lately

risen up to plead for the injured right of man overlook this source of vitality to the system they propose to abolish. They seem to forget that God has "things that are his," and that the first act of national justice is due to the "King of nations." It is lamentable that men, with an end so important in view, should, in the means of attaining it, be so fatally mistaken.

This evil spirit is operating extensively in the church.—Resistance to the power which the Lord has ordained for edification and not for destruction, so far from exciting popular disapprobation, is generally hailed as an evidence of a manly and independent spirit. The decisions of inferior courts are frequently disregarded, and offenders against the law of the house of God climb through the different gradations of the judicatories of the church till they reach the supreme court, burdening and distracting it by a needless accumulation of perplexing business. Let us mourn the prevalence of this sin, and the strife and contention of which it is the fruitful source.

3. Insensibility. This Laodicean spirit prevails to an extent truly alarming. These are days when professors are neither cold nor hot. Perilous times have indeed come when there are so many who "have the form of godliness, but deny the power thereof." Alas! how little life! how little zeal! how little activity! in divine things is manifested! Carnality, with its benumbing touch, deadens the soul. The things that remain are ready to die. The preaching of "the gospel of Christ, which is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believes," is almost without effect. "The god of this world blinds the minds of them that believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them." "Iniquity abounds, and the love of many waxes cold." The Lord is on his way, yet the slothful servants are not watching. "While the bridegroom carries the virgins slumber and sleep."

Is it not so, that professors of religion have but little relish for spiritual things? "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh," but how little is our conversation in heaven! In our social intercourse, how little is the savor of his name diffused, which "is as ointment poured forth." From our conversation it would be often hard to determine that we are christians. "This is a lamentation and shall be for a lamentation."

In view of these sins, and all others of which we are guilty before God, we call on ourselves, and the Lord's people un-

der our care, in the language of the prophet—"Sanctify ye a fast, call a solemn assembly, gather the elders and all the inhabitants of the land unto the house of the Lord your God, cry unto the Lord. Let us rend our hearts, and not our garments, and turn unto the Lord our God. Who knoweth if he will return and repent and leave a blessing behind him."

CAUSES OF THANKSGIVING.

Notwithstanding the magnitude of our iniquities, and the visible evidence of divine displeasure on their account, we have still many causes of thanksgiving to the Lord our God. "He hath not dealt with us after our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities."

1. External prosperity is generally enjoyed. Although the nations of the earth have not yet "beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning hooks," there is, nevertheless, a disposition prevailing favorable to peace. In our own land we do not hear "the sound of the trumpet, the alarm of war." The pestilence is not, as in former years, "walking in darkness, nor destruction wasting at noonday." The Lord has liberally crowned the year with his goodness. The earth has yielded her increase.

2. The means of grace are continued. The gospel of Jesus Christ is still preached in our land. The scriptures are translated into many languages, so that the time seems to be rapidly approaching when "every man may hear in his own tongue in which he was born, the wonderful works of God." The church, notwithstanding the number and malice of her enemies, is still preserved. The testimony of Jesus is still, with some degree of faithfulness, maintained by those whom he honors as his witnesses.

3. The signs of the times are encouraging. The movements which are making in favor of liberty, however wild and extravagant in most instances, are indications that the downfall of despotism is near at hand. While the "spirits of devils" are abroad, "gathering the kings of the earth and of the whole world together, to the battle of the great day of God Almighty," there seems to be a developement of an accompanying sign, the drying up of "the waters of the great river Euphrates, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared." The rapid progress of a revolution in the Ottoman empire, with the attending circumstances, seems to be

opening the way for the greater extension of Messiah's visible kingdom.

Let us then, beloved brethren, call on our souls, and all that is within us, to magnify the name of the Lord our God. "Praise God for he is good, for his mercy endureth forever."

The Synod appointed the **FOURTH THURSDAY** of December next to be observed as a day of Thanksgiving, and the **THIRD THURSDAY** of March, 1840, to be observed as a day of Fasting by all the people under their inspection.

THE TURKISH EMPIRE.

The actual condition and the future prospects of the Turkish Empire have long been the object of intense interest to all who watch the signs of the times. To the statesmen of every European court the falling power of the Ottoman Porte has for many years been a subject of anxious concern. Such an empire cannot be broken up without producing convulsion. And while the eagle eye of Russia has long marked Constantinople for her prey, and France longs to hold Egypt as a tributary, England beholds her eastern possessions endangered by these ambitious projects, while France, Prussia, and Austria, all unite with England in more or less deprecating the aggrandizement of the Northern Autocrat.

But to the eye of the Christian the fall of Turkey is regarded with a deeper and more far-reaching interest. He remembers that in the rise of the Saracenic and Turkish powers the judgments of the Almighty were poured out upon an apostate branch of Christendom, and he knows that in the downfall of the same powers he may discern the dawn of the returning light which once shone so brightly in the East. He remembers, also, that beneath the hoof of the Mahommedan invader Jerusalem and the Holy Land are trodden down, and while he does not sympathize with the blind superstition of the crusading warriors of the dark ages, he cannot but feel that it is a deep humiliation to all Christendom that the standard of the false prophet should wave over the mountains of Judea, and his spiritual as well as temporal dominion prevail in that land

"Over whose acres walked those blessed feet
Which *eighteen* hundred years ago were nailed,
For our advantage, to the bitter cross."

The undisturbed possession of Palestine by the successors of Mahomet, must be regarded as a token that the righteous judgments of the Most High have not yet run their course against his ancient people, that nation to whom he gave the Holy Land for an inheritance. And now that the Empire of the Ottoman is shaken to its centre, and the possession of Syria is becoming a matter of hot dispute, which engages the five great powers of Europe, it is not unreasonable to conclude that the domination of the false prophet is drawing to its close.

It is now rather more than twenty years since Mr. Hallam, in his *History of the Middle Ages*, wrote as follows: "In the present day, we anticipate, with an assurance that none can deem extravagant, the approaching subversion of the Ottoman power; but the signs of internal weakness have not yet been confirmed by the dismemberment of provinces; and the arch of dominion, that long since has seemed nodding to its fall, and totters at every blast of the north, still rests upon the land-marks of ancient conquest, and spans the ample regions from Bagdad to Belgrade." "Far different," adds Mr. Hallam, "were the events that preceded the dissolution of the Greek Empire. Every province was in turn subdued; every city opened her gates to the conqueror; the limbs were lopped off one by one; but the pulse still beat at the heart, and the majesty of the Roman name was ultimately confined to the walls of Constantinople."

Since Mr. Hallam thus wrote, how many events have been crowded into the narrow space of twenty years, all tending to supply the materials which were wanting to establish a parallel between the fall of the Greek and the decay of the Turkish Empires? Since that period Greece, torn from the grasp of the Ottoman Porte, has risen into an independent kingdom; the treaty of Adrianople surrendered new principalities to the Russian, who for the first time had passed the Balkan and found himself almost within sight of the Bosphorus; Mehemet Ali has all the while been steadily encroaching upon the Sultan, until not only Egypt and Syria own his superior sway, but he insists upon these once mighty kingdoms, together with other territories being forever separated from Turkey. If to this we add the establishment of the French in Africa, we shall have a picture of the waning glory of the Crescent, which cannot fail to suggest most of the circumstances which were wanting to complete the par-

allel between the fall of the two Empires of which Constantinople has been so long the metropolis.

It is one of not the least remarkable facts connected with the gradual downfall of Turkey, that it is going on in spite of every effort to arrest its progress. In vain did the late Sultan, aided by all the great powers of Europe, introduce European discipline into his armies, and labor to promote civilization among his people. His armies never stood before the Egyptian conqueror, and almost every event that happened turned out to be, like the loss of his fleet at Navarino, "un-ward." If "the stars in their courses fought against Sisera," so does it appear that Providence has of late uniformly frowned on every attempt to bolster up the Turkish power. In vain did the great powers unite to support the Sultan. At the very moment when his life was most essential to the integrity of his empire, he was cut off by death, and his sceptre placed in the hands of a youth. Treachery then completes what death had begun; his fleet sails down the Dardanelles, not to oppose his rebellious vassal; but to assist him; his armies are overthrown on the plains of Syria, just as a messenger is posting onwards to forbid hostilities, and proclaim the intervention of the European powers; and finally, it would seem that France is about to aid the pretensions of Mehemet, and so complete the dismemberment of the empire.

In these events it is impossible not to discern the hand of God, and not to contemplate with a chastened interest the rapid progress to dissolution of one of the great barriers to the progress of Christianity.—*London Record.*

ORDINATION.

On Thursday, the 14th ult. Mr. Andrew Stevenson was, by the Southern Presbytery, ordained to the office of the holy ministry, and installed in the pastoral charge of the 2nd Reformed Presbyterian congregation of the city of New-York. The Rev. James Chrystie, appointed to preside on the occasion, preached a peculiarly appropriate discourse from Acts xxvi. 17—"Delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee." After sermon the questions of the formula were put to Mr. Stevenson, and by

him distinctly answered. He was then solemnly ordained to the office of the holy ministry by prayer and "the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery." After signing the formula of questions, Mr. Stevenson received the right hand of fellowship from his fellow Presbyters; and, in the usual form, a cordial welcome from the elders and many members of the congregation as their pastor. Mr. Chrystie then delivered the charges to the pastor and people. During the time of the whole services a large audience were in attendance.

On the same day the following persons were appointed delegates to attend the next meeting of General Synod: viz. Dr. Willson, M. Roney, D. Scott, J. M. Willson, and A. Stevenson, ministers; with Messrs. Wm. Cowan, Jr. (John Brown his alternate,) John Renfrew, Jr. (John Thomson his alternate,) David McAlister, (Joseph Wiggins his alternate,) John Beattie, and Alexander Shields, (Wm. Stewart his alternate,) Ruling Elders. The moderation of a call was granted to the congregation of Conococheague, and Rev. J. M. Willson appointed to preside therein when requested by the congregation.

ITEMS.

We understand that the monument at Drumclog, erected in commemoration of the glorious triumph obtained by a party of Scottish Covenanters over the ferocious Graham of Claverhouse and his bloody dragoons, on the 1st June, 1679, is now finished. It is gothic, twenty-three feet high, and does great credit to the taste and talent of Mr. Robert Thom, sculptor, Glasgow, the architect and builder of it.—*Scottish Guardian*.

Of the present reigning sovereigns of Europe, seventeen are Lutheran; seventeen are Catholic; six Reformed (Calvinistic opposed to Lutheran); six Evangelical (a term substituted in the room of Lutheran and Calvinist, it being the purpose to unite them); one is Protestant Episcopal, Queen Victoria; one is of the Greek Church, Emperor of Russia; and one Mahomedan, Sultan of Turkey. The king of Saxony is a Catholic, though the greater part of his subjects are Protestant; the king of Belgium is a Protestant, though his subjects are mostly Catholics; and the king of Greece is a Catholic, though most of his subjects are of the Greek Church.

Thursday, the 26th inst. is the day appointed by the Western Sub. Synod to be observed as a day of Thanksgiving.

THE
REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN.

VOL. III.

JANUARY, 1840.

No. XI.

THE REVIVAL OF RELIGION.—ITS ADVANTAGES.

(Continued from p. 295.)

A *fourth* advantage that believers would derive from the revival of religion in their souls is, *increased comfort under their various trials*. It is matter of daily observation, particularly to the ministers of religion, that many, of whose piety they cannot doubt, enjoy, in the seasons of their affliction, but a small measure of those "strong consolations," which *religion* is so well fitted to afford. They have comfort in the sympathies, attentions, good offices, and kind enquiries of their friends. They have comfort in the applications by which their bodily sufferings are alleviated; in the cordials that revive their natural spirits; and in the pleasing *incidents* by which their minds are diverted from the sorrows they cannot assuage. But as to the comfort that *should* arise from believing in the Saviour; from communion with God; from discoveries of his abundant grace; and from the growing expectation of his eternal glory: of *this* they experience, in most cases, but a small share. How, indeed, can they have more, in the state of spiritual decay into which they have sunk? While they have little consciousness of spiritual life—while memory reproaches them with the frequent omission of their religious duties, privileges, and opportunities—and while conscience tells them that, for their giving way to sinful inclinations, and ensnaring pleasures, they might be corrected with still greater chastisements than they now endure—how is it possible for them to have *much* comfort from religion?—a messenger of

mercy whom they have slighted and neglected in the time of their temporal welfare, and who may justly leave them to the bitter fruits that this undutiful behaviour so naturally produces. There is just one way of increasing the comfort they would enjoy under their present troubles ; and that is an increase of that vital religion which they have been suffering to decline in their hearts for some time past. Were *this* to be revived, under a plentiful effusion of the Spirit, along with the use of required efforts ; who could tell the increase of genuine peace, of holy joy, that should soothe their troubled minds, and brighten their gloomy countenances !

Numerous are the consolations that an increase of personal piety would bring to afflicted believers. They would be consoled by the assurance, that they have obtained precious faith in Christ, true repentance, and all the other gracious principles implanted in the souls of genuine saints. They would be consoled with the persuasion, that all their outward troubles have originated in the love, not in the wrath of God, and are sweetened with the smiles of a gracious Father, not embittered with the frowns of an offended Judge. They would be consoled with the conviction, that they are adapted by unerring wisdom, to the correction of evil principles, from which they have not yet been delivered ; to the invigoration of religious affections, which it is their greatest interest to have strengthened ; and to the production of the "peaceable fruits of righteousness," so ornamental in the christian character. They would be consoled with the increased enjoyment of the presence of God ; with the enlarged discoveries of his goodness ; and with those special manifestations of the Saviour, usually made to his afflicted followers. In a word, they would be consoled with the anticipation, not only of gracious support under their protracted trials, but also of ultimate deliverance from them ; of immediate admission into heaven, and of access to those everlasting glories, with which the sufferings of the present time are not worthy to be compared. Who then would not wish to have the principles of religion increased in his soul, that he might realize an increase of these spiritual consolations ? Then should they rise superior to the pressure of their severest troubles, possess unusual equanimity, and move in a region of spiritual delights, of which, while religion declines, they have only a dim and distant prospect. Then should they understand from their own experience, and adopt with sincere gratitude, the language of

primitive believers: "We glory in tribulations also, knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope; and hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts, by the Holy Ghost which is given to us." "For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet *the inward man is renewed day by day*. For our light affliction which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."

A *fifth* advantage that would arise from the revival of religion, would be, the better observance of its distinguishing ordinances. As these ordinances have been instituted for shewing forth the honor of the divine Saviour, and promoting the salvation of immortal souls; so must their increased observance be accounted a matter of paramount importance. But how shall this object be gained to any extent, while the churches continue in a state of spiritual slumber, secularity, and indolence? How shall individuals pay a devout regard to religious institutions, however sacred, while they feel so little love, gratitude, and submission, to him by whom they have been appointed? As well might we expect from a *mind* hardened into indifference to the happiness of others, the greatest proofs of benevolence; or from a *body* laid prostrate under a paralytic affection, the most active exertions in business. But let men's minds be quickened into concern respecting their own vital interests; let their hearts glow with the warmth of sanctified affections towards God, and pant with earnest desires after nearer communion with him, then would they observe more regularly those ordinances through which he makes himself known to his worshippers, and by which he draws perishing sinners to the Redeemer. We shall illustrate this remark by two examples.

All will admit the *worship of God in families* to be an institution eminently important; but this will never be observed in a spiritual manner, in the thousands of families by whom it has hitherto been neglected, till they enjoy a revival of true religion. Nothing less will awaken them from their present apathy, convince them of their guilt in having hitherto lived without God, and prompt them to encounter all difficulties that may meet them in commencing a practice to which they have not been accustomed. But if *this* were produced in their minds, few exercises would prove more congenial to their feelings, desires and convictions, than *domestic worship*.

With alacrity, becoming the service of God, would they assemble, at stated times, around the domestic altar, and present those sacrifices of spiritual devotion which God has promised with complacency to receive. Then, throughout the land, every house would be a temple, and every parent a priest; while children, domestics, and visitors, exalted to the rank of worshippers, should receive a hallowed influence, the very reverse of the "fury poured out on families that call not on his name."

It will also be granted, that *the Sabbath* is an institution of supreme importance to the religion, morals, and prosperity of the country, no less than to the spiritual welfare of individuals. But never will this institution be observed, with the religious feelings becoming its sanctity, till these feelings are reproduced in the minds of men by divine influence. We readily admit, that a legislative enactment, prohibiting those gross violations that take place in modern times, in almost all parts of the country, and enforced with specific penalties, on a scale graduated according to the offences to which they are annexed, would be an important measure. Such an enactment, if illustrated by the example of the higher orders, and executed with energy by the local magistrates, would powerfully contribute to prevent that open desecration of the Sabbath now so prevalent, by operating on the *fears* of those who cannot feel the force of superior principles. Still, the spiritual observance of this day, by the conscientious discharge of the religious duties for which it was instituted, and by which it is honored, is a result that no legislative wisdom or judicial power can secure. For this we must look to a revival of religion in the land. Whenever the professors of religion shall receive the quickening showers of divine influence, "delight themselves in the Lord, and ride upon the high places of the earth," then shall they cease to "do their own ways, to find their own pleasures, and to speak their own words," on that "holy day;" and shall endeavor conscientiously to spend it in those religious services,—secret, domestic and public,—for which it has been set apart, by divine appointment, and by which the honor of the Redeemer, the best interests of men, and the temporal welfare of the community, are so eminently promoted.

Such are a few of the distinguished benefits that would accrue from the general revival of true religion. We might have enumerated others not less important. Would it not

contribute to awaken attention to religion, among the thousands who have never felt its hallowed impressions? Would it not raise the standard of morality, now so low in most parts of our degenerate nation—promote the purification of the churches from those evils which have accumulated from the decline of religion,—banish many immoralities from the country,—avert the calamities now impending over us, on account of our national guilt,—and procure even those temporal blessings which have never been withheld from national obedience? But we have no farther space for illustration.

EARLY TESTIMONY AGAINST THE CONSTITUTION OF THE
ASSOCIATE REFORMED SYNOD.

We lay before our readers the following old and important document, not doubting that they will regard it as a highly interesting and instructive article. It is entitled—*The Constitution of the Associate Reformed Synod in America, considered, disowned, and testified against, as inconsistent with the REFORMATION Constitution of Britain and Ireland; by the Reformed Presbytery.* It was prepared, adopted, and published in 1783, by the then highest Judicatory of the Reformed Presbyterian Church in Scotland. During the preceding year, 1782, the UNION between the Reformed Presbytery and two Associate Presbyteries, all in America, was completed, after having been five years in agitation, and the *New Body* was constituted. The earliest opportunity was taken by the Church in Scotland to express her testimony against the union, which she considered essentially defective in many important particulars, and, on the part of Reformed Presbyterians who joined in it, a gross relinquishment of their Reformation attainments. This testimony forms the document given below. Many of our readers will be able to see, in the subsequent practice of the Associate Reformed church, the evidence and illustration of the correctness of the views entertained and expressed by the Church in Scotland, in relation to the Union, when she had nothing from which to form a judgment but the Terms on which that union was effected.—ED.

The Reformed Presbytery having received at different times, through various channels, some intelligence of an Ecclesiastical Union being formed between their brethren in the ministry in America, and some members of the Associate Synod—were at last put in possession of full information of that matter, by a copy of the terms of their union, transmitted to them by a member of the new association by authority, bearing the title of *The Constitution of the Associate-Reformed Synod.* On re-

cept of this new performance, the presbytery ordered it to be read, paragraph by paragraph, by their clerk in the face of the meeting, after which the mind of all the members was taken with respect to the soundness of the terms of their union as expressed thereon; when it appeared that the happiest unanimity prevailed through the whole court, that this recent union, whereby the parties had raised themselves to the dignity of a synod, was so far from being a laudable attainment towards the healing of breaches, upon the only justifiable ground of truth, that, in their brethren, it was a manifest relinquishment, in many respects, of the noble cause on behalf of which they, in connection with this presbytery, had formerly displayed a banner; and that the news of this new performance, instead of meeting their approbation, was considered by them as the messenger of heavy tidings, conveying the disagreeable information of an union which had involved in apostacy their brethren, with whom they wished and even hoped to have lived and died in the bond of truth. The presbytery next deliberated what now became their own duty in relation to this unexpected event, when they also agreed that something should be done by them in condemnation of a measure so much to be deplored, to which they were the more prompted, in regard, that they had received several letters from private christians in America, complaining of the defection of their ministers from the testimony formerly espoused by them, upon a coalescence taking place between them and some Seceding ministers; and requesting advice from them, as to their present duty, in such a trying juncture. For this purpose the presbytery nominated a committee of their number, with instructions and powers, to meet and draw up a paper expressive of their sentiments about the union, and to transmit copies thereof to their quondam brethren, and these private christians in America, for their consideration.

The several members of the committee as nominated by the presbytery accordingly met, and, after prayer to God for direction, entered upon the serious consideration of the important business committed to them.

It is with the deepest regret, that the committee find themselves laid under the disagreeable necessity of appearing against the conduct of their brethren; but when the defence of truth calls them out, no tie whatsoever must be allowed to counteract the superior obligation of faithfulness, they

therefore cannot be blamed in using christian freedom with their brethren on this mournful occasion.

The committee cannot help being of the opinion, that it would have been nothing more than consonant to the laws of ecclesiastical society, for their brethren to have acknowledged and consulted with the mother church at home, previous to their adopting a measure, which, as themselves in synod declare*, finally dissolves all church fellowship with her, except the church here shall explicitly own their new constitution in company with their friends of the Secession. The committee would not be inattentive to the peculiar embarrassments their brethren might be in, arising from the commotions of America, at the commencement of the union; but they cannot allow that there is sufficient force in this to justify a deed of the kind, concerted and finished altogether independent of the church at home; did practices of this kind become general, all social connection would be at an end. Changes in religion made by churches, especially those which affect the general interests of the gospel and the common bond of union in the catholic body, ought to be cautiously proceeded in. They are sorry to think, that while their brethren have neglected the church here, they seem to have been carried on, in the completion of this union under the influence of their new friends; as, in the inconsistent jumble of principles emitted by the synod (if first principles they may be allowed to have) there are to be seen various traces of a seceding pen, and the cause of truth, formerly in controversy betwixt the parties, is in a great measure yielded up. The appellation, *The Associate-Reformed Synod*, by which they have distinguished themselves as a church, resigns the honors of the day to the seceding body, and seems to indicate a predilection for their testimony, in point of reformation-principles, before the testimony they had solemnly espoused; if the thing comprehended under the name had been right, the title of the court with more propriety would have read, *The Reformed-Associate Synod*; as it is certain there was a standing testimony for the reformation cause, long before the associated seceders were heard of.

This new synod, in the summary view they have exhibited of their constitutional doctrinal principles, have thought pro-

* See page 27 of the Constitution of the Associate-Reformed Synod when treating on the subject of rules.

per to arrange them under eight distinct articles, which the committee will examine in order. In general, it may be remarked, that the expressions of the synod are laid in such ambiguous forms, and there are so numerous apparent inconsistencies running through these articles, that it is no easy task to form an idea of their genuine meaning: this duplicity of expression may have arisen from the different characters of the constituent members of the synod, as composed of persons formerly holding jarring principles, and who have not, either one or all of the parties, so far as we are told, expressly renounced to one another their old principles; but the whole impelled from a fondness to become members of the same church, have conceived their terms of coalescence after such sort as to offend none, while, alas! precious truth falls to the ground thereby.

The first article sets out with the declared resolution of the synod to adhere "to the system of truth laid down in the Holy Scriptures, and exhibited in the Confession of Faith, and Catechisms larger and shorter," &c. If this article had ended in agreeableness to its beginning, little objection could have been made thereto, but the progress and conclusion of it stain the beauty of the whole: the synod immediately say, "This declaration does not, however, extend to the following sections of the Confession of Faith, which define the powers of civil government in relation to religion, viz. chap. xx. sect. 4, chap. xxiii. sect. 3, chap. xxxi. sect. 2; these sections are reserved for a candid discussion on some future occasion, as God may be pleased to direct." The synod are the best judges of their own reasons for making this exception of these passages out of their general acknowledgment of the Confession of Faith, but the passages themselves are all those parts of that excellent standard which define the powers of magistrates about religion and the church of God. The defectiveness of the adopting act of the synod is no dark evidence that they are not of the same faith with our zealous reformers, else why refer it for future discussion on this important subject? While they have not avowed their sentiments on this head, the synod are liable to the charge of being deficient in fundamentals: there is reason to fear they may have caught the epidemic infection of the age, an evil that seems to rage violently in their own country, that civil government is conversant about secular affairs only. With whatever class of professors this synod may be conjoined, they

have no title to be accounted the followers of the reformed-church of Britain and Ireland; a consent given by our brethren in synod to this exception involves them in deep apostacy from their former profession, and throws a slur upon the heroic contendings and sufferings of our pious ancestors for the divine ordinance of civil government, and the principle upon which they acted in endeavoring to extend reformation, namely, that the revelation of the moral law in the word of God, wherever it obtains, obliges all nations to conform thereto in their civil establishments; and that therefore when there is a contradiction and opposition to this law in the constitution of magistracy there is a contradiction and opposition to the ordinance of God's precept, and so the constitutional deed does not oblige the inhabitants in a subjection thereto for conscience sake, as to God's ordinance.

The synod plead a right to adjust the circumstances of public worship, and ecclesiastical policy to the situation in which providence may place them. If this respects the outward circumstances of worship as to time and place only, there can be no ground of contest here; a power of this kind never was denied in the covenanted churches; but there is reason to apprehend something more is couched under the expression, as the synod have warily adopted the Directory for public worship with general reserve; did they speak out their sentiments more fully the world would know them better. As to ecclesiastical policy; the policy ordained by the glorious Head of the church is invariably fixed by him to remain the same in all times and places: nor can there be any thing so very uncommon in the state of the church of Christ in America, as to warrant this new synod to claim peculiar powers to themselves, in adjusting the circumstances of her worship and government. The conclusion of this article grants a liberty to every member of synod to call in question, and dispute the truth of any article of their received confession of faith in open synod, provided it be managed with a becoming decorum. If a member of court shall be found to deviate from the received faith and practice of the church, it becomes the immediate duty of the court to endeavor to convince the conscience of the offender, and to restore him again to the truth; but judicial permission granted to a member to introduce and dispute in open court his heretical opinions, or to form objections to all the articles of revealed religion without holding the objector liable to censure, is not only highly dangerous, but

it is utterly irreconcilable to the notion of first or received principles in a church. The moment Paul saw Peter to deviate from the truth of the gospel, he withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed. The indulgence the synod have bestowed upon any of their members, is homogenous with the liberty they have taken to themselves in referring the excepted articles of the Confession of Faith to a future discussion, which, if ever it take place, may either effectuate their dissolution, or produce an act of mutual forbearance, indulging one another in their respective opinions. The indulgence granted to their members, and the liberty assumed to themselves, go very far to pronounce that either there is nothing certain in religion, or that the synod have no positive system of faith delivered to them, for which in duty they are bound earnestly to contend against all opposition from within and from without.

In article second the synod "declare their hearty approbation of the earnest contending for the truth, and magnanimous sufferings in its defence by which their pious ancestors were enabled to distinguish themselves in the two last centuries." This declaration cannot be understood in a sense more extensive than the act of synod adopting the reformation standards, but it is well known the ordinance of civil government according to God's word, as defined in the excepted articles of the Confession of Faith, was one, and a very particular one too, of the great truths for which our ancestors in the last century bled and died; the synod therefore might have been so plain as to have set aside this also, and told the world they would consider this head of suffering again, but for the present they had not made up their mind about it. They further declare their "affectionate remembrance of the National Covenant of Scotland, and of the Solemn League and Covenant of Scotland, England, and Ireland, as well intended engagements to support the cause of civil and religious liberty." Here the synod profess a regard for our solemn covenants; but this profession of our brethren is lame, in as much as they do not explicitly own the moral obligation of these national transactions upon themselves in their own persons; though the descendants of such as vowed. Their language upon this point is rather shuffling; nor does their foot note amend the matter greatly. No change of place can annul the obligation of an oath to Jehovah, consisting of moral duties upon the person or persons who have

sworn it, of which kind our solemn covenants are ; and if they are of this nature where can be the objection against professing and holding out the same covenants, as to the spirit and substance of them, (*mutatis mutandis,*) to the people of America, to be accepted and sworn by them in their respective places and stations, any more than to those Isles ? Moral duties are the same all the world over, and professors of religion in America are as much bound to worship God after the manner pointed out in his own word, to support the purity of the ordinances of the ministry and magistracy, to love and perform all good offices to one another, to strengthen their hands mutually in the ways of the Lord, and to exert an active zealous opposition against idolatry, heresy, and vice as the church in our own lands ; but these were the great objects of our solemn covenants, why not then bring the people of America under the same obligations in entering into a church capacity without delaying the work to an uncertain future period ? Had the synod felt in their consciences the obligation of the duty of explicit covenanting, as they profess to have done, why did they not proceed to testify this in the performance of the duty itself, as a mean of cementing their union, of building up the kingdom of Christ among them, and of evidencing their cordial approbation of the covenanting conduct of our pious ancestors, in their noble struggle for civil and religious liberty ? The synod hold themselves bound by the divine authority to practise all the moral duties contained in our solemn covenants according to their circumstances. Here again the reader is left at a loss, they have not told us what moral duties comport with their circumstances and what not, though it is pretty evident that this limitation is intended to restrict the duties in these covenants ; which renders their affectionate remembrance of them as deficient as their acceptance of the other reformation standards. They also declare their "intention to carry with them all the judicial testimonies against defection from the faith once delivered to the saints, which have been emitted in the present age by their brethren in Britain, as far as these testimonies serve to display the truth, and comport with the circumstances of their church." Most of the approbations and disapprobations of this synod, as also their resolutions to drop or prosecute the testimonies and confessions of the church in Britain, are qualified from their own circumstances, which, in how far they differ from the circumstances of the

church here, they have not told the world. To us it appears an inscrutable mystery, that a testimony displayed for the truth in Britain will not comport with the circumstances of the church in America, or in any place of the world. It has long been the unhappiness of professors of religion in Britain and Ireland to be divided in sentiment amongst themselves, which hath given birth to opposite testimonies. But for any thing the synod have declared here, no person can learn what testimony of the church in Britain they wish to support amongst themselves in America. This general and doubtful plan of things, however, seems to be the great hinge on which the constitution turns.

In article third, the synod profess a regard for the religious denominations in Britain to which they formerly belonged, a desire to correspond, and to concur with them in promoting true religion. We would indeed fondly hope our brethren have not altogether forgotten the church with which they once joined in sweet counsel in God's house ; but the committee have reason to ask them, where the evidence of respect for the church and a desire to correspond with her appears, in the strange step they have taken to abandon her communion for the society of those against whom they had formerly testified, without first obtaining from them a full renunciation of their old errors.

Our brethren now consider the church in Britain and Ireland as existing in no other relation to them than one to which "they formerly belonged," a fair confession, they have cut the staff of bands asunder, and broken the brotherhood between Judah and Israel. As to the desire of holding an amicable correspondence and of concurring with her in any just measure for promoting true religion, the question again recurs where is the consistency of doing this upon the principles of the synod while they declare, in article 4th, their fixed resolution never to suffer the religious controversies of the church here to be introduced into their court, and also in the rules of this new synod, subjoined to their articles, that they will receive no minister coming from this church into their communion, but upon the express condition of homologating this new constitution, with his resolution pledged to adhere to it : though on the same terms they might receive one coming from the Papal or Episcopalian churches into the closest connection with them. If the cause of the church in Britain and Ireland is the cause of God and true religion, why did they

forsake her communion? if it is not, how will they justify their consciences in promoting with her the cause of error; and if they cannot admit the ministers of the church in this country to officiate with them in the duties of the ministry in America, how can they concur with them in their ministerial functions out of America? this strange inconsistency can be explained upon no principle but this, that our brethren imagine the terms of ecclesiastical communion in and out of America to be diverse; but how very opposite is this to the holy scriptures, in which we are taught, there is but *one body, one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism*, Eph. iv, 4. 5.

In article fourth, the synod declare their resolution never to suffer to be introduced into their church, the local controversies about the civil establishment of the Presbyterian religion—or any unnecessary disputes about the origin of civil dominion.” &c. And “they esteem themselves bound to detach their religious profession from all foreign connections.” Here the synod have dug a deep and gloomy grave for the burial of the whole of the civil reformation of Britain and Ireland; never, at no future time, are the civil establishment of the Presbyterian religion, and the origin of civil dominion to be introduced as a subject of discussion into their church. What more effectual measure could the most inveterate enemies of our reformation interest adopt to check its progress, and sink its name into oblivion; after this barefaced decretal with what shew of truth can the synod claim relation to the old reformers of these islands. While they declare their resolution, in the first article, to allow any of their members the liberty of disputing in the face of their court the soundness of all the fundamental doctrines of the Christian religion; they here shut the door forever against making mention of our glorious civil reformation. But in doing so, they certainly have forgotten the reserve taken to themselves for admitting unto a candid discussion, in some future time, those sections of the Confession of Faith which treat of the origin of civil dominion, the qualifications and duties of civil magistrates. To give a plausible coloring to this deed, the synod have called these subjects “local controversies” and “unnecessary disputes.” For our part we are ignorant of any doctrines in religion that can be considered local: the whole system of the Christian faith is committed as a trust to all nations, tongues and kindreds to whom it is revealed. It sometimes indeed happens that a part of the catholic body of the

church, living in a particular place of the world, is providentially called out to defend a certain doctrine of the church's faith impugned amongst them, (as was the case of the church in these lands in relation to the civil establishment of the Presbyterian religion and the origin of civil dominion) but this by no means renders the doctrine local; nay, the church resident in other places of the world, upon becoming acquainted therewith, is bound to approve and honour the contending part in her maintenance of the truth; as much as the more remote members of an extended empire are bound to applaud the patriotic zeal of their fellow subjects, in repelling the invasion of the common enemy, that may have been more immediately directed against that part of the country which they inhabit. Unnecessary disputes about religion ought ever to be avoided, but when the least iota of precious truth suffers opposition, silence in the church is a most heinous evil.—The synod's resolution to detach their profession of religion from all foreign connections, contains in it the very soul and spirit of independency, and tends to destroy that universal unity in faith, practice, profession, and testimony which cements together, before the world, the one church of the Living God, scattered through the various kingdoms of the world. It savors too much of the spirit of the kingdoms of this world that claim internal sovereignty in Law, counsel, and operation, independent of each other; but since the spiritual kingdom of the Messiah is one in faith, in hope and baptism, &c. there can be no foundation in its peculiar constitution, for a part thereof to avow a profession of religion detached from all other parts of the same kingdom divided from each other by extensive tracts, and wide oceans, or living under distinct civil governments. But how does this deed of synod comport with their readiness to concur with the church here in promoting true religion; since their religious profession has no connection with that of our's?

(To be continued.)

LETTER ON CATHOLIC COMMUNION.

(From the Religious Monitor for 1825.)

My dear Sir,

In a late conversation you requested me to give you my views in writing on the much controverted subject of Catholic, or free Communion. Most cheerfully will I comply with

your request, so far as my leisure will permit. My numerous avocations, however will not permit me at present, fully to enter into the merits of the cause. All that I can do, is to sketch a few plain hints on the subject, the chasms in which can be supplied from your own reflections. In entering upon the subject, we must take facts as we find them actually existing, and draw our conclusions accordingly. It must be taken for granted, that there exist sufficient and valid reasons for a separate communion, or at least, that the professed followers of Jesus *believe* them to be sufficient. To suppose otherwise, would be to tax them with disregard to the decisions of conscience, and also the authority of God's word. The question then in dispute is, not whether the church should be so regulated by the decisions of God's word, as to have all her partition walls broken down, and her parts consolidated into one great communion, the internal intercourse of which should be impeded by no bars or hindrances, but such as necessarily arise from local circumstances; for on this point all are agreed. All declamations, therefore, on the evils which arise from divisions in the church, are entirely out of place in the discussion of this subject. But the question is simply this. In the present divided state of the church, while each of her branches has its distinct, and in many respects *opposite* creed, is it proper or expedient for the members of these different branches to sit down with each other at the table of the Lord, and at the same time maintain a standing testimony, in their public standards, against each other's creed as unscriptural and erroneous?

The following are a few reasons why I consider the practice unwarranted and improper.

1. IT IS INCONSISTENT WITH THEIR PUBLIC PROFESSION.—The public standards of a church exhibit the principles on which her distinct association is formed. In other words, these standards contain the declared terms of communion in that society. This indeed is the common sense of mankind. When we wish to learn the principles of a society, we naturally go for information to the public documents, judicially emitted by its constituted authorities. But in admitting members to the communion or privileges of the society, it is necessary that an approbation or belief of these principles, should be declared or professed; otherwise the society has no security, that in process of time, her real and her declared principles will not stand in direct opposition to each other; which

would infer the flagrant guilt of solemnly declaring to God and the world, that her principles are different from what they really are. Every society, therefore, that wishes to preserve the truth, as it is in Jesus in its purity, will make her standards the test of orthodoxy, and the terms of admission to her communion. Nor will it be easy to find any society so barefaced as to admit that she does not *intend* them to be so applied. But in admitting the members of other societies to communion with her occasionally, without any retraction of their errors, she is virtually declaring that these standards do *not* contain her terms of communion. It is also inconsistent, because it is requiring one term of communion to-day, and another to-morrow. And besides, it is admitting the members of other societies to communion, on principles on which we would neither admit nor retain *our own* members. Is this consistency? If it be, I see not on what principles any man can be excluded from church communion, on account of heresy, as long as there is a possibility of his being a Christian at all.

2. The arguments adduced in favour of the practice, if they prove any thing, *prove too much* for the purpose of those who use them. I believe it will be difficult to find an argument to support occasional communion between different churches, which, if properly employed, will not prove that all their walls of separation should be done away. Did time permit, it would be very easy to show the truth of this remark. Take for instance the great and fundamental argument employed by the advocates of free communion, viz. *The unity of the church of Christ*. Turn it whatever way you can, you will find it impossible to apply it to the question before us, without perceiving the conclusion staring you in the face, that the partition wall should be taken down, not merely to-day, but for ever. This however, is a conclusion, to which our opponents are not prepared to come, and we cannot allow them the use of an argument just to a certain point, unless they will take and apply it, in toto. When they are prepared for this, we have other ground on which to contend. At present it is sufficient to observe, what has been always admitted as a sound principle, that an argument which proves too much proves nothing to the purpose.

3. The practice of occasional communion, is *schismatic in its principle*. It will be admitted, that participating in the Lord's supper is, if not the most solemn, at least among the

most solemn acts of divine service in which Christians can associate together. If then they can conscientiously unite in this solemn service, surely their consciences would permit them to unite in other services *less* solemn; and it will be extremely difficult to conceive of one that can be an exception. Besides, as we may hereafter remark, this service is, in its spirit, an epitome of all others. It follows therefore, that when they do not unite with their brethren formally and permanently, it is not because they are deterred by any considerations of conscience. But, separations in the church of Christ, which are not founded on the decisions of conscience, are the very essence of schism.

4. Again, I object to the practice, because when the principle is once admitted, *there are no definite limits that can consistently be set to its operation.* The only principle on which it can be defended with any consistency at all, is this, "that *probable* Christianity is the rule and measure of church communion." Now what is the point to which this principle will naturally lead us? Why, it is evidently this, that we are to extend our communion to every society which denominates itself a church of Christ, however impure either in faith or practice. To seek for any middle ground here is a vain attempt. It has been tried, but always without success. For, if we say that all who are *sound in the faith*, should be embraced to the exclusion of others, the question will return, "how is the church to *try* soundness in the faith but by her own avowed principles?" And do these not take it always for granted, that others are more or less *unsound*? And to what point of heresy may she extend her fraternal embrace? And where is the boundary line beyond which she may not go?—These, with many similar enquiries, will naturally arise out of the subject, and it will be impossible ever to answer them on the supposition made. Now combine this consideration with what has been adverted to, and we shall be directly led to the conclusion, that there can be no such thing as a lawful or warrantable separation from a church, however over-run with, and persevering in error, so long as she is in any sense a church of Christ.

5. I object farther to the practice, as being *unfriendly to the cause of truth.* When professors of different and opposite creeds cherish such intercourse, it has a native tendency to lead them to the belief, that the matters in dispute between them are of little moment. And here it is to be observed,

that the soundest part is always most subject to the impression of the sentiments of their opponents. Many an individual, by the practice of free communion, has been gradually and insensibly led to lose his veneration for the truths of his peculiar profession. But I believe no individual has ever yet been led by this practice, to cherish a higher reverence for the truth, or more sensibly to realize its importance.— And this view of the subject seems to be corroborated by facts; for error has been spreading through the American churches with rapid strides, since free communion has become so fashionable. But it may be said, that “what has been lost on the side of truth has been gained on the side of peace.” This I dispute, and remark.

6. That I object to the practice as being not only unfriendly to truth, but *hostile to a spirit of harmony between different churches*. It will be acknowledged, that the more closely men of different parties in politics come in contact with each other on political subjects, there is the greater danger of discord between them. While they keep at a respectful distance from each other, they may live as friends and neighbours, in mutual amity; but when they meet together on a field where their different sentiments are called into view, then it may be expected that the fire of discord will burst forth. This is the dictate of universal experience. And in what way will the principle apply to diversity of sentiment in political matters, in which it will not apply when *religion* is the subject of dispute? The experience of all ages tells us, that of all contentions, religious contentions have been the most acrimonious, and the most easily inflamed. Permit me here to transcribe a passage from a Sermon preached at the opening of the General Assembly in 1808, by the Rev. Dr. Alexander, formerly of Philadelphia, now of Princeton. “Unity without agreement is a solecism. Those attempts which have for their object, the bringing into the same society, and under the same denomination, people of widely different sentiments, are deserving of little commendation. *The nearer such jarring materials are brought together, the greater will be the discord.* Truth, and an agreement in the acknowledgment of truth, are the only solid foundation of christian unity and peace.” I may add, that this view seems to be confirmed by facts, as far as I have had the opportunity of observing. However plausible the practice has at first appeared, as a harmonizing measure, it has commonly issued in a widening of the breach.

7. I may add, that the practice of free communion is *subversive of the principles of social order*. In no well regulated society, would an individual be admitted to the most precious and important privileges of the society, who is in no respect subject to the control or jurisdiction of that society. But in every case of free communion we behold this practical solecism. The individual whom we admit to the Lord's table with us to-day, is not under our control to-morrow. And if he were, we could not call him to account for his errors, because we have admitted him to communion with us already, knowing that he held and avowed them. I know not how this can be candidly answered. I have read one attempt at an answer, and I lately *heard* another; but if they were intended as argumentation, they wofully miscarried, for they were a burlesque upon logic.

Our opponents object, that by restricting our communion to the members of our own society, we in effect unchurch all others. It requires a great stretch of charity indeed, to believe that any man is sincere and honest in making this objection. It is so evidently false in fact, that it scarcely deserves, and certainly does not need, an answer. Our excluding them from our communion pronounces nothing whatever on their character as Christians. It merely declares, that we consider them, either in a greater or less degree, unscriptural in their faith or practice; and that, while we consider ourselves publicly called to testify against their errors, consistency requires that we should not homologate their creed by intercommunion.

A fashionable strain of declamation, both from the Pulpit and the Press, has been this. "This table is the Lord's and not yours. How then dare you presume to refuse its provision to any that you believe to be his children?" To this, I answer,—1. Its being the Lord's table is the very reason why we consider ourselves under obligation to preserve it pure. Were it merely our own, personal benevolence and courtesy would be our guides, not conscience; but as it is his, it must be regulated by the principles of his own word, as we believe and profess them. 2. Let us suppose that one of these gentlemen is the Moderator of a Church Session; a case might occur, as many such *have* occurred, in which he would find it necessary to suspend from sealing ordinances a man, whom at the same time he believes to be a child of God. Now let us suppose that during his suspension the Lord's supper should be dispensed, and the individual in question should

come forward and ask the Moderator, Is this your table or the Lord's? Answer, it is the Lord's. Do you believe me to be a child of God? Answer, I do. Well Sir, how dare you refuse me a seat at my Father's table, and a share in its provision? To this question I know what I could answer; but I must leave it to the ingenuity of the objector to devise an answer on his own principles.

Again, we hear it often said, that however much we differ about other things, yet we agree respecting the ordinance of the Lord's supper, and therefore, may lawfully join together here at least. Without enquiring here whether the conclusion is contained in the premises, I would observe, that the assertion is entirely founded in a mistake. The essence of communicating does not consist in eating bread and drinking wine, unless we admit that the Popish doctrine of "opus operatum," is true;—but it consists in the exercise of the mind in the use of, and in reference to, these symbols. Now how is a worthy communicant exercised at the Lord's table? Surely an important part of his exercise consists in dedication, and engagement to the service of God. But this engagement, if sincere, must be unreserved. He must engage that he will maintain, not a part, but the whole, of the Lord's cause, as far as he knows it. In other words, that he will profess—and maintain—and act—as he believes the word of God directs and reveals. It is evident therefore, that the whole of his distinctive profession must enter into the spirit of his engagement. If then we suppose that a Calvinist and an Arminian are seated together, their engagements must be just as contradictory as their creeds. Each is solemnly pledging to the omniscient God his belief in, and his devotion to that which the other is as solemnly pledging himself to oppose. Is this agreement? Is this Christian harmony? If it be, the distinction between truth and falsehood is all a fable.

I believe that many men, are advocates of free communion, because it has become fashionable, and they have never thoroughly examined the subject for themselves. There is indeed something vastly imposing in its aspect, when viewed with a transient glance, but examine it more closely, and it will stand the test neither of reason, nor of revelation. And when it has run its course, it will be discarded from all the more orthodox portions of the church, as a dangerous and noxious excrescence. Thus, Sir, I have, in compliance with your request, hastily thrown together my thoughts on this much litigated subject. This is not all, nor the half of what might be said, but it is all that my leisure at present will permit.

CAUSES OF FASTING.

(Adopted by the E. S. Synod, Oct. 1839.)

1. We have great reason to fear, from the want of spirituality of mind and heavenliness of conversation, that there is a mournful want of wrestling with God in secret prayer. On this account we should join trembling with our mirth. What a pity it is, that when God is inviting us to private, and, as it were, confidential interviews with himself, we have so little regard to duty and to interest, as to attend to this important and profitable service so coldly and so carelessly, that no common friend would consider himself well treated, if conversation were held with him in so yawning and indifferent a manner. And all this when we are pretending to plead for pardon and sue for salvation and favors.

2. In the business of Family and Social religion of all kinds ; oh ! how cold and formal, and how easy to find excuses ! If family intercourse were uniformly of that affectionate and devout character which it should be ; if we made the soul's interests of supreme concern, we could talk together in a more spiritual way, and pray for and with each other more fervently than we do. So, if neighbors and church members had all that holy solicitude for one another's spiritual interests, and that complacency for each other's company which they should, we might hail the pleasant hour when we would enjoy the pleasure of mutual edification and holy fellowship. But, oh ! how different, when in many instances, a little hurry of business, or perhaps, a visit from a friend will be embraced as a pretext for neglecting society.

3. The Sabbath is profaned, not only by travelling, attending to business, and in many ways performing unnecessary labor, but even those, who are in some measure influenced by conscience, or the force of custom, so as to abstain from unnecessary labor, yet, spend the Sabbath to very little purpose—lounging and loitering, visiting and gossiping, or indulging in idle, worldly conversation ; and thus suffer the precious hours of the Sabbath to pass without any useful improvement. We do not, as we should, call the Sabbath "a delight," but "a weariness,"—we do not call it "the holy of the Lord, honorable," but view it too much as a day of merely ignoble rest, and altogether a time of mere repose from sec-

ular toil. We rest, that we may employ our refreshed faculties in greater diligence in secular business during the ensuing week.

4. Even when we go to the place of public worship, how often is it to gaze at fellow worshippers, rather than to look at the Saviour, that we may be saved! How many are there, who spend the Sabbath morning in all the bustle, that variety of dress and luxury of animal gratification can dictate, fixing attire, and arranging the hair with far more exactness than they do the heart! The conversation, even in going to, or coming from the house of prayer, is not, in many instances, so well ordered as it should be on secular days.—How often can we see the indiscreet, frivolous, and sometimes even wanton look, instead of the solemn mien, and holy smile of heavenly joy! The fashion of many faces testifies against the persons who wear them. But alas! what is the conversation when we return home? We talk about the dress, persons and behavior of our fellow worshippers, or other things equally unbecoming the Lord's day. And if we get our conversation elevated to any thing like Sabbath conversation, it is not sufficiently practical. All is general. What a great sermon! How powerfully he argued! How ably he refuted that heresy! Or perhaps, our minister was very dull, very diffusive, very abusive. Oh how difficult it is to preach to fastidious people, who want rather to occupy the chair of the critic, than to lie low at the feet of Jesus, to learn from his ministers wisdom, and find out the way of salvation!

5. There is an alarming tendency in the churches of the Reformation generally, and in our own church particularly, to exult in the excellency of the Reformation, without knowing what are its principles. We are zealous for the forms of religion without increasing the attention we ought to give to the power and practice of godliness. The world, in its wealth, its honors, its pomp, its equipage and its influence, —oh! how lamentably eager we are to grasp these bursting bubbles! and how careless we are about the true, substantial and durable riches of the heavenly kingdom!

6. Another evil we "see under the sun, and it is common among men," is evil-speaking. It is much easier to censure others, than to discover and reform our own faults. It seems as if Beelzebub were sending forth his swarms of flies to glide over the sound parts of the body, and to fasten upon the sores.

And generally, the more malicious, worthless and mischievous any one is, the more assiduous he is in finding out the real or supposed faults of others, that he may find a character similar to himself. In this way the tale-bearer and whisperer, with their unbridled tongues, "set on fire the course of nature" and are themselves "set on fire of hell." "The devil is come down, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time." How much should we pray that he may soon be cast down, and these days be shortened? And yet how many will still be employed as speaking trumpets to the cruel enemy. We wish to be exempted from slander ourselves, but are, at the same time, ready to echo and pass the evil rumor. "Report say they, and we will report." We talk against brethren and put the sons of our common mother to shame.

7. In regard to political affairs, we need to be doubly on our guard. The prince of darkness, who rules in the hearts of the children of disobedience, is trying every method to *seduc*e those who refuse to "say a confederacy" with ungodly civil powers; and he will probably before long, try to *compel* the saints of the Most High to submit to the impious and cruel administrations of his kingdom. His opposition to reform, in regard to sobriety and righteousness, has been tremendous. Many have been scourged and buffeted, and one has been slain for disturbing the repose of his drunken and unrighteous reign: and when the question comes fully up, Shall God or man be supreme?—shall the arbitrary rule of despotism, or the mild and holy laws of Christ prevail? then will there be many martyred Lovejoys—many Alton scenes. The article of the Church's Testimony, that Christ, as Mediator, is the supreme Lawgiver of nations, must yet be sealed with the blood of his Witnesses; and though it may not be known, for a little time yet, where they shall be slain, it is hardly to be expected that they will enjoy much repose or safety in any part, while that bloody scene is in progress any where. This country has too much connection with the great city of the Latin earth to enjoy peace, while, in any of her streets, the Witnesses are slain. Indeed, peace cannot be expected until the catastrophe of the nations, in the great battle of Armageddon be past, and the "remnant be affrighted, and give glory to God." Besides, we have had too much participation in the sins of the nations to expect, on good grounds, that we shall altogether escape a participation of their plagues. It is necessary that we pass through fire and

water, before we are brought to the wealthy place of either millennial or celestial joy.

We ought to fast and pray that better days than the present may speedily come—that God's wrath may be turned away from us, poor, miserable sinners—that the lonely daughter of Zion may be visited and comforted—that we may be so directed and strengthened in these very perilous times, that we may neither, by entangling connections and engagements, become partakers of other men's sins; nor, by pharisaical pride, omit any social duty. We need to pray that in these shaking times, we be not shaken out of the church of God—that we may be kept from compromising any principle of our Testimony for truth and righteousness, and in opposition to all error and wickedness. We need to pray, that in these litigious times, we may be enabled, as far as possible, to "follow peace with all men, and holiness without which no man shall see the Lord."

For the above and other reasons, some of which are conspicuous to our observation, and others to our faith, Synod appoints the **FIRST THURSDAY** of February, 1840, to be observed by themselves, and all the people under their charge, as a day of Fasting, Humiliation and Prayer.

**PRACTICAL OPPOSITION OF THE UNITED STATES' GOVERNMENT
TO GOD'S LAW.**

In theory it was probably the intention of the framers of the United States Constitution to make it perfectly neutral between God and his enemies. But it is perfectly impossible for any individual moral agent, or an association of moral agents, to assume and occupy such a position in relation to God the Creator and Moral Governor. "Curse ye Meroz, curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof, because they came not to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty." They who *refuse to do* what God enjoins, are as really opposed to his law as those *who do* what he forbids. The practical immoralities of the United States' government all Christians will probably admit do not consist in mere omissions.

While Mr. Jefferson was President of the United States, a letter was written him by the Rev. Dr. Miller, of New-

York, on the subject of appointing a fast day. The President, in his reply, among other remarks, says :—"I consider the government of the United States, as interdicted by the Constitution from intermeddling with religious institutions.* This is undoubtedly the true exposition of the Constitution. But no doubt Mr. Jefferson was glad to shield himself behind the Constitution in making this indirect attack on a religion which he despised, and in writing to a clergyman of a denomination that he detested. To one of his deistical associates he writes :—"They," the Presbyterians, "pant to re-establish *by law*, that holy inquisition which they can now only infuse into *public opinion*."† Of the Old Testament, he writes, "The fumes of the most disordered imaginations, were recorded in their" (the Jews') "religious code as special communications of Deity." Of the New Testament he says: "We find in the writings of his" (Christ's) "biographers, matter of two distinct descriptions. First a ground work of vulgar ignorance, of things impossible, of superstitions, &c."‡—Such are the vulgar blasphemies of one of the great presidential idols of the American people. They accord with the *practical* infidelity of the other chief magistrates of the nation. There has never to this time been a president of the United States who did not read newspapers, write letters on affairs of state and transact other secular business on the Sabbath. They have all attended balls and theatres. No one of them ever made, before or while he was president, a profession of his faith in Christ at a christian communion table, It is true the elder Mr. Adams did receive the communion from the hands of Dr. Priestly the Socinian, but Socinianism is not Christianity.

Gen. Jackson, when requested by the Dutch Reformed Synod, during his presidency, the first year of cholera, to recommend a fast day, refused on the same ground that Mr. Jefferson did before him. It is impossible to adduce testimony rendering it probable that any president of the United States ever did an official act from a regard to the authority of Christ, or in obedience to his law. Except the late Attorney General, Mr. Butler, can there be named one member of any president's cabinet—the head of any department of state, that has professed to be a religious man ?

* Jeff. Writings. Vol. IV. p. 103.

† Ibid. vol. IV. p. 322.

‡ Ibid. p. 326.

A very great majority of all the members of Congress, from the first organization of the government, have been irreligious men ; and many of them grossly immoral. This will not be denied by the most zealous advocates of the government. Is it possible that a government, in which a vast majority of all the officers, civil, naval, and military are notoriously wicked men, can be administered otherwise than in opposition to the law of God? Whatever some may erroneously plead in behalf of the christianity of the constitution, one thing is undeniable, it has always been administered, and was framed by unchristian men.

On the subject of the Sabbath mail, both houses of congress sanctioned that gross and most scandalous violation of the Lord's day, when they refused to reform the evil at the prayer of many thousands of petitioners.

Congress has often, when the 4th of March was on Monday, continued their last session several hours on Sabbath morning. Last 4th of March they adjourned at three o'clock on Sabbath morning to meet at ten on the same day. They sat till two, P. M., and met at four, and continued in session till midnight, thus sitting fifteen hours on the Lord's day. This wickedness they committed, while, in addition to all the late judgments, that of war was impending over the nation. The principal difference, however, between that Sabbath and others at Washington, during the sessions of congress, was, that the sin of Sabbath violation was committed publicly in the face of the nation. Committee business, and all other official duties that can be transacted without the formal meeting of Congress, have always desecrated the Lord's day at the capitol.

The laws of God are practically violated by the general government in the vigorous, vigilant, and persevering support which it gives to Negro slavery. Since its organization, there is nothing over which it has watched with more unceasing attention, than that of holding in bondage millions of unoffending human beings. Congress has passed a law making it imperative on all magistrates in the free states to deliver up every colored man claimed as a slave, on the testimony of the claimant, and without trial by jury. The operation of this most iniquitous law has been to reduce many free citizens to slavery.

Since the organization of the commonwealth, under the national constitution, seven states, Kentucky, Tennessee, Lou-

isiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Missouri, and Arkansas, have been admitted into the Union, with slaveholding constitutions and numerous slaves. By the admission of a state, the general government is pledged to the support of that state, in carrying out all the principles and provisions of the constitution which has been canvassed by congress. Besides the oaths of twenty-six congresses, here have been seven solemn pledges by the nation through its government, to perpetuate this violation of God's law of nature and his written law—this outrage on human rights.

None of all those practical evils violates the constitution. What article forbids presidents and other officers of the government to avow contempt for christianity, to drink to drunkenness, to swear profanely, to gamble, to commit harlotry? Where does the constitution forbid congress, or any other branch of the government, to transact official business on the Sabbath? And so far from forbidding, the constitution guarantees slavery.

But the government has advanced so far as to violate their own constitution, which contains a provision for securing the right of petition. Three times, by what are well called the Pinckney, Patton and Atherton gags, the privilege of petitioning for the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia, or in the Territories, or for the arresting of the internal slave trade, has been solemnly denied. In this, their oath to support the constitution has been violated. Surely it is well for Reformed Presbyterians that they have not mixed up their religion with these profane politics, and that they do not hold offices amidst all this corruption, nor swear oaths binding themselves to support these deeds of dishonor done to God, and these outrages on the rights of man. "Ye shall not follow a multitude to do evil."

PROFANATION OF THE "OATH."

The oath is a divinely instituted ordinance, and should be employed, both by him who administers, and him to whom it is administered, with all holy reverence and fear. The name of God is that by which alone men ought to swear. "Thou shalt fear the Lord—and shalt swear by his name." Deut. vi. 13. The use, or rather the abuse of this ordinance has become so common, that men think little of its solemnity. Hence its frequent profanation passes, in a great measure, unnoticed and unlamented. Such an incident, however, as we record below,

should fill the heart of every christian and every true patriot with unmingled grief. For truly it is painful to reflect, that in a court in the city of New-York, sanction should be given to the principles set forth, and that any part of the judiciary in a christian land should officiate in the performance of such idolatrous rites, and so trifle with the sacredness of one of Heaven's institutions. It illustrates the true genius of the civil institutions of the country. How long, Oh! how long will the eyes of professing christians be shut upon these abominations every day perpetrated. But we, without further remarks of this kind, give an account of the incident referred to.—ED.

On Friday, the 6th ult., a suit was tried before Judge Schiefflin in the Marine Court, and a young man named Aryouk, about seventeen years old, a native of China, who could speak English tolerably well, was called by one of the parties as a witness. The opposite party objected to his evidence being received on the ground that he was not a Christian, nor believed in the existence of God. He was then asked by the Court if he believed in Christianity, and he replied in the negative. He was next asked, did he believe in a God, and he said, "I do; for there are several gods in our temples in China." The Court then quoted a section of the Revised Statutes, which says that "Every person believing in any other than the Christian religion, shall be sworn according to the peculiar ceremonies of his religion," and asked the witness what was the formula of an oath in China? The witness replied that a person about to give evidence first goes to one of their temples where there are idols, and that he reads, or there is read for him, a portion of the Chinese Bible, after which the witness spits on the ground, and then takes in his hand a saucer containing salt, and dashes them against the ground, by doing which the saucer is broken in pieces and the salt scattered along the floor. When this has been done the witness then goes before a mandarin and gives his evidence. The Court then asked the witness by whom had the book been written which he called the Chinese Bible, or whether it was supposed to have been the work of Confucius. To this the witness replied that he had never heard of such a person, nor could he tell by whom the book had been written, nor did he know any thing more about it, except that it was the sacred book of the Chinese, and the only English word that he was acquainted with, which conveyed his idea of it was the word *Bible*. On hearing this the Judge said that he could not see how the statute could be complied with, which enacted that a witness should be sworn according to the peculiar ceremonies of his religion. It was true that the Court might for the purpose be considered a temple, as it was called the Temple of Justice, and the ceremonies of spitting on the ground and throwing down a saucer with salt in it might also be performed, but then there were no idols in the Court, nor could the Judge tell what was the name or nature of the book which the witness called his Bible. Under all the circumstances of the case, Judge Schiefflin therefore determined to make no decision as to whether the witness could be sworn at all, or his evidence received, until he further considered the question and consulted with the other Judges of the Court.

On Saturday Aryouk, the Chinese witness, attended in Court, accompanied by another native of China, who was the plaintiff. On being questioned, he said it would be sufficient to have the oath administered in the following manner, which *was done accordingly*. The plaintiff knelt down, and the witness took in his hand what he called the Chinese Bible, and the Judge, as does the mandarin in such cases, told the witness to tell the truth. The witness then handed the Bible to the plaintiff. The witness then took a china cup in his hand, and held it while the plaintiff read aloud a small portion of the Chinese Bible. When the plaintiff stopped reading, the witness then handed him the cup, which the plaintiff dashed against the ground with much vehemence of manner, and of course broke it in pieces. The witness then shut up the book, and witness and plaintiff kissed it, and the plaintiff stood up. The plaintiff then required the Judge to put his, the plaintiff's, name in that part of the Bible which he had read, which the Judge did, and the witness then began to give his evidence. Prior to the oath being administered, the court had decided that according to the Revised Statutes, the oath could be legally administered, as it was the form in which oaths were sometimes administered in China.

The difficulty in relation to the witness being sworn in a temple was obviated by the witness stating that their Chinese courts are held in their temples, or, as he called them, churches. So that a temple and court of Justice in China is one and the same thing. What he called the Bible is a small pamphlet containing a portion of the writings of Confucius, in the Chinese language, and having a Mandarin's signature on the cover, to attest its being a genuine copy of the work.

OBITUARY OF THE LATE REV. JOHN FAIRLEY.

(Abridged from the Scottish Presbyterian.)

From the standing of this venerable minister in the Reformed Synod, whose labours had been distributed over almost the whole extent of the community, our readers will expect from us a brief sketch of his life and character.

He was the eldest son of the Rev. John Fairley, of Newton-head, near Douglas, one of the old ministers who planted the Reformed Presbyterian Church in this country. Educated under his gifted and pious father, and under a most amiable and excellent mother, he feared the Lord from his youth. His father, along with his fellow-labourers, the Rev. Messrs. M'Millan, Thorburn, and Courtas, having been engaged in an almost constant itinerancy over Scotland, he was much under the care of his mother, and profited greatly by her instructions and example. On the part of both parents he was the child of many prayers, and was no doubt often dedicated to the Lord. He discovered an inclination towards the holy ministry, and was sent to the University of Glasgow. Having finished his academical course, and subsequently his studies in Divinity, he was licensed to preach the gospel in 1791. Young, talented, well-educated, and of agreeable manners, he became

a general favourite, greatly acceptable in his public ministrations, and much loved in private life. A call was moderated in his favour in the congregation of Edinburgh and Pentland, which was not prosecuted, owing to some divisions among the people. He soon after received a call from the congregation of Sandhills and Glasgow, and was ordained a colleague with the Rev. John M^cMillan in 1794, and continued in the pastoral charge of the congregation till 1807.

In his ministry, the atonement, the grace of God, and the everlasting covenant, were his favourite themes. He was methodical in the distribution of his subject, and correct and evangelical in the prosecution of it, and always spiritual, and savouring much of the unction of him whose "name is as ointment poured forth." His ministrations were exceedingly acceptable and useful to many, if the love and respect with which he was regarded may be received as a proof of this. He was not forgetful of the public cause, on account of which the Church had assumed the standing of dissent at the Revolution, treating it with equal judgment, fidelity, and Christian temper. He came into public life in a period of great interest. The excitement produced by the American war had not subsided, when the revolution in France and the subsequent war threw society into violent agitation. He kept his eye upon the aspects of Providence, to improve them as he found to be his duty. His political sentiments were, certainly, on the side of the liberties of mankind, but he had not taken his notions of liberty from the school of the French revolution, but from his Bible, which provides for the rights of God and of man. He often lamented the war, and spoke of it, not with the mercenary grumbling of a financier at its cost, but with the humanity of a man and the conscience of a Christian—his humanity weeping over the tide of human blood; his conscience trembling at the responsibility which the shedding of that blood incurred.

The days of trial come to all, and in the case of our reverend father they came soon. His congregation came to be agitated with dissensions on some public measures. His health had suffered much from a fever, and bodily infirmities ensued, which unfitted him to prosecute his ministry with his wonted vigour. His mother, for whom he cherished the most tender affection, died, and his worthy father soon followed her to the grave. Clouds returned after the rain. Agitations of different kinds continuing in his congregation, and his voice having become weak, he was loosed from his pastoral charge in 1807. The measure was gone into by the Presbytery solely on the ground of the weakness of his voice, for his moral and Christian character defied all challenge. He resigned his pastoral charge, retaining his ministry, and claiming liberty to labor as ability and opportunity might be given.

Although the circumstances of his family, after his separation from his congregation, might have warranted his betaking himself to secular life—and he had the best opportunity of doing so with promising advantage—he could never bring his mind to this: or, to speak more correctly, he never thought of it. He loved the ministry which he had received from the Lord Jesus, and felt strongly the responsibility con-

nected with his ordination to that ministry, and his obligation to serve Christ to the utmost of his ability. He manifested a great willingness to preach, and indeed, never seemed so happy as when doing something in the way of his office. After a little time his health began to improve, his spirits recovered, and his services became increasingly acceptable. Indeed, with the exception of the difficulty felt by some occasionally of not hearing him satisfactorily, he was universally acceptable in the congregations. He supplied in vacancies, dispensed baptism, presided in judicial business, ordained elders, assisted on occasions of the dispensation of the Lord's Supper, and officiated in other ministerial duties as required. He was marked for the spirituality and unction of his communion addresses. He often travelled to a great distance in the service of the church. In the latter years of his life his labours had become more abundant, and occasionally for some months in the summer as regular as those of a pastor, although not confined to a place. Nor were his services limited to ministerial duties. He devoted a part of his leisure time to writing. He wrote the edition of the Warning against Popery, which was published in 1817; and the Historical View of the Testimony of the Church, which was submitted as an overture. For a period not much short of half a century, he had been actively employed in the service of the church. He continued his labors till within a few months of his death, enjoying considerable health and spirits; the almond flourish, and other symptoms, nevertheless, indicating that it was toward evening.

Upwards of three years before his death, our father was visited with a great affliction in the death of his second son, a young man in the flower of his age. This appears to have been received and improved by him as a premonition of his own departure. His mind, after this, seemed to be under peculiarly solemn impressions of death and eternity. Aware of his situation, and having solemn presentiments of the approaching event, he deliberately set his house in order, and prepared to leave his family and the world. He was calm, patient, and failed not to express his exclusive reliance on the atonement of Jesus Christ for hope in the life to come. He frequently spoke of the days of his youth, and of his covenant with God; still exercising a present trust in Christ.

With the advice of his medical attendants he went to Bute, in the month of July, and spent a few weeks, without any sensible improvement in his health. He had expressed, indeed, that he did not entertain great expectations from the change of air, but was willing to try it in the way of dutiful use of means. He left the shore in the full view of going to his long home. His loving wife and dutiful family were in constant attendance; brethren in the ministry and christian friends joined them in sympathy and prayer, while they watched over a life that was dear to them. He was near the bounds which he was not to pass. The approaching change indicated itself—his strength gradually sunk. He continued, while able to speak, to testify his hope in the Saviour; and on the morning of Tuesday, the 8th of August, at eight o'clock, without any bodily struggle, he fell asleep—we hope in

Christ. His mortal remains were deposited in earth's lowest room, in the Necropolis, accompanied by a numerous assembly of ministers and friends sincerely lamenting the occasion.

When the saints and servants of Christ die, they live in the memory of their character and labors. It is so with the Rev. Mr. Fairley,—being dead he yet speaketh. He was a man of decided and well sustained piety. No man was more unpretending in this respect, and cautious in speaking on this subject as regarded himself. But his piety could not be hid. He walked humbly with God. At other seasons than morning and evening he was known to retire and commune with his God. He loved the saints, and took pleasure in their society and converse. He was a regular attendant on fellowship societies, and much edified others with his instructive observations, his counsels, prayers, and christian spirit. When he had no opportunity of exercising his ministry, he was a regular attendant at the house of God; and was observed hearing the gospel with deep interest, from the lips of his junior brethren. His desire for the sanctuary continued unquenched after his physical strength to attend had failed; evincing that when the outward man was perishing, the inward man was maintaining its vigor, seeking after its proper aliment, and in preparation for being brought immediately near to the fountain of life. He also walked worthily of his holy vocation, adorning the gospel of Christ. He sustained not only an unblemished reputation, but was exemplary and ornamental. Nor must we omit to notice his unshaken attachment to the cause of the Reformation. Though educated a Dissenter, he embraced his profession from judgment and persuasion. He vindicated dissent, and long lamented the legal doctrine and lax discipline in many parts of the established church, as well as the political subserviency of her courts, and the patronage exercised over her congregations. But he was not blind to christian excellency wherever it appeared; and he rejoiced in every good thing in individual or community. He was, to his last, a firm Dissenter; and while sensitively alive to the injury done to the interests of religion by worldly and political ascendancy over the Church, he had no sympathy with a spurious liberalism, which proscribes the rights of the Moral Governor, and unsettles the rights of man, by removing them from their only proper basis, and throwing them on human calculations of advantage. He held the holy Scriptures to be a perfect authoritative rule of universal obligation upon man and upon society, wherever they are known. Our father, through the grace of God, finished his course with an unspotted reputation; neither the ministry nor the Christian cause suffering from immorality or misconduct of his. His hoary head was found in the way of righteousness; and he has left a memory that is blessed. It only remains when fathers are removed, in circumstances of Christian hope, that the children betake themselves to the God whom they served on earth, and now enjoy in heaven, and that they be followers of them, as they were of Christ.

The 6th inst. Fast-day by E.S. Syuod.—The 19th March by W.S. Synod

THE

REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN.

VOL. III.

FEBRUARY, 1840.

No. XII.

PARENTAL INSTRUCTION.

It is often said that the children of professors of religion are not better than others; and particular instances are referred to, of the immoral character of such. The design of such common-place remarks is to reproach christianity; and their obvious tendency is to discourage the application of christian principle to domestic instruction. Such sentiments should receive no countenance from the friends of truth; they are at variance with moral principle, and contradicted by the sacred writings. "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it," is an aphorism sanctioned by the Spirit of God. This scripture contains a great moral principle which will be verified in proportion to the correctness and extent of its application in the instruction of children. It is not denied, that the children of professors of religion, of even pious parents, sometimes become profligate; but we are not prepared to admit such cases as objections to the principle laid down in the text; instead of questioning this, it would be wiser as well as safer to question the faithfulness of its application. The course of domestic education pursued by many parents is badly calculated for training children in the way they should go. It is often exceedingly inefficient as to plan; and more frequently still it is neglected in the application of its details,—a lifeless body, destitute of the animating principle of christian earnestness and energy. At other times and in other hands it fails, because of the harsh and rigid manner of its application. In the one case, the parent

falls short of his duty; in the other, he over-does it. Domestic education should be made to bear on the different constituent parts of our nature,—the understanding, the will, and the affections. These powers of the mind have all felt the depraving influence of sin; the understanding is darkened, the will is perverse, and the affections are alienated from God: they need to be corrected and trained by suitable education.

1. The intellectual powers of children should be cultivated. The general improvement of the mind is of vast importance: education constitutes the difference between civilization and barbarism; and gives to the civilized immense advantages over barbarians. "Knowledge is power," said the illustrious Bacon. General knowledge, of every kind, tends to the development and enlargement of the mental powers; the more it is cultivated the better. But mere literary and scientific knowledge by no means constitutes the mental instruction included in training "a child in the way in which he should go." General knowledge, other things being equal, will always give an advantage in the acquisition of that which is religious; but there may be, as there often is, a large share of mere mental education, where there is little or perhaps no religious education. There can be no difficulty in giving a preference in such circumstances; the humblest and most illiterate christian, who only knows his Bible, possesses a knowledge that is infinitely superior to that of a Voltaire or a Hume. While the general instruction of a child is not to be overlooked, but on the contrary should be as enlarged and liberal as the means and opportunities of a parent will admit, it is only a secondary consideration compared with its religious instruction. Indeed, the great value of the former is its subserviency to the moral and spiritual interests of mankind; otherwise, "knowledge puffeth up." The Scriptures give us a painful view of the necessity of early religious instruction: "The wicked are estranged from the womb, they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies, having the understanding darkened." Man is ignorant of himself, of God, and of his duty.

A child should be instructed in relation to himself; that he is a guilty and depraved creature, and therefore entirely disposed to go astray, and liable to the Divine displeasure. Self-knowledge is of the very last importance; to obtain it, the work must be early begun, by sowing the good seed of

Scripture truth in the mind, and in due time it will bring forth the fruits of righteousness. However profound the doctrine of original sin may be, the statements of Scripture asserting the fact are within the comprehension of even a child, and ought, at an early age, to be impressed on the mind. The early impression of this truth will, on the one hand, tend to the suppression of evil, and on the other to the encouragement of good dispositions. It will weaken the rising feeling of pride, and cherish the lowly grace of humility.

The character of God, too, merits particular attention as a part of early education—the perfections of God,—his power, his wisdom, and especially his moral perfections, his holiness, his justice, his goodness, and his faithfulness. There is, in these views of God, opened up a most extensive field of inquiry. A child should be made to understand that the holiness and justice of God's nature make him displeased with sin and with sinners; that he is angry with ill men every day; that his justice dictates the infliction of punishment, which sooner or later overtakes the impenitent. In connexion with this, the mercy of God should be inculcated on the youthful mind; but it should be shown to be mercy in harmony with the other Divine perfections: that while God pardons sin, it is through the perfect righteousness of Christ, the only way of salvation. The practical duties which man owes to God should also form a prominent part of parental instruction. "These words which I command thee this day shall be in thine heart, and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children." Deut. vi. 6. These are the duty of obedience to the law of God, and dependence upon his promises.

There is a popular but dangerous sentiment entertained respecting the instruction of children in the knowledge of gospel truth, which every pious parent will avoid: namely—that their minds should be left unoccupied by this subject till they can judge and determine for themselves. The professed reason given for this extraordinary sentiment is, lest the minds of children become prejudiced; but the real reason is a hatred of Divine truth; it is infidelity thrusting itself forward disguised with the mask of assumed candor. The thing is impracticable; but were it practicable it ought not to be attempted. It is impossible to keep the minds of children unoccupied; if they are not filled with truth they will be with error. As an uncultivated garden is soon overrun with noxious weeds, so a mind, where the culture of truth is

neglected, is soon blinded by falsehood: if truth is not planted by the hand of education, error will spontaneously spring up. And were it possible to keep the youthful mind unoccupied in relation to religious subjects, it would be criminal to make the attempt. Children have a right to such instruction, and parents are bound by the law of God and the dictates of common sense to furnish them with the means of obtaining it.

2. The improvement of the heart and affections demands particular attention. The testimony of God is, that "every imagination of the heart is only evil continually. The heart of man is deceitful and desperately wicked, who can know it?" It is necessary, therefore, to press with the utmost assiduity upon the minds of children a love of moral excellence; and the indispensable necessity of their being sanctified by the power of the Holy Spirit. They should be early taught to discriminate between right and wrong; to love the one and hate the other:—that "whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise to think on these things." Love to God should be particularly urged, and his infinite excellence pointed out as the ground of his claim upon their affections. That they should love him because he is holy, just, and good; holy in all his ways and righteous in all his works. Children do not naturally love God; they very early manifest the enmity of their hearts; and if this enmity is left unsubdued by moral culture, it must become settled and determined hostility in subsequent life to God and every thing that is good. "As the twig is bent the tree's inclined." If the improvement of the heart is neglected in the spring of youth, it will be over-run with the most disgusting vices in the summer and autumn of life. A parent's care should then be to nip the hurtful growth in its first buddings, by teaching his child a love of moral excellence. In connexion with love to God, children should be taught love to man, and encouraged in the exercise of kindness and affection to all around them. And that if they are offended, or even injured, they ought not to retaliate by rendering evil for evil, but to be of a forgiving disposition towards all men. Pride, turbulence, cruelty and avarice should be carefully repressed. These dispositions, if not checked in childhood, will grow and strengthen with the growth of the individual; in after life they will destroy his peace of mind, make him a hurtful, if not a dangerous member of society; and, it may be, bring him to

an ignominious death. If parents would but seriously ponder the awful havoc which unrestrained passions make in society, they would be more careful and conscientious in cultivating the hearts of their children, that they may be sanctified by the truth of God.

3. Domestic instruction, to be successful, must be supported by suitable government. Neither domestic nor national society can exist without this. Experience teaches man the use of government; but God has not left us to find it out in this way; he has instituted it and revealed it in the Scriptures. It is not then a human device, growing out of the necessity of the case, and dictated only by prudential considerations. It is an appointment of heaven. There are important principles by which a parent should be guided in the exercise of domestic government, and without which domestic education can never be communicated with success; the practical value of instruction will depend, in a great measure, upon the system of domestic government. Parents do not generally reflect upon the cause of their frequent disappointment regarding domestic instruction. They have frequently to mourn over blasted hopes and highly cherished expectations of their children, which may be evidently traced, by others, back to an ill regulated domestic management,—to a state of things which it would be a gross misnomer to call government. What a spectacle to see a professedly christian family over which the parents have no other control than what is *conceded* by the *condescension* of the children! A favor which parents are permitted to possess only by a kind of *sufferance*! To verify the truth of this, and satisfy our readers that such a state of things prevails in society, we ask them to open their eyes and just look at many families as they really are; perhaps the reader may do well to look at his own first, and see that it is well governed before he makes an application of our remark to those of his neighbors.

Domestic government should be firm and decisive. Parents ought never to permit their authority to be questioned; if they do, it will soon be despised and trampled upon. The law of God requires children to obey their parents, and it commands parents to rule their households in the fear of God. But if authority is disputed, then both government and submission are at an end. The parent that holds the reins of government with an unsteady hand is soon eased of his burden; soon are they wrenched from his vacillating grasp

and shared in common with the little tyrants of the domestic circle, while the dethroned parent must satisfy himself with an unmeaning approval of their caprice.

Domestic government should be kind and affectionate.—Harshness and violence are incalculably injurious, because they defeat the object of government. Children are sagacious enough to observe the disposition under the influence of which parents act; and if they have reason to think it is that of passion they feel themselves excused from obedience. There should then be the fixed impression produced on the minds of children that government is exercised for their good,—that it is dictated by love and not by passion. But this can be done only by a uniform manifestation of kindness,—thus persuading a child of the parent's interest in its welfare.

Parents should exercise self-denial. Feeling ought never to be a directing principle in the exercise of domestic government; mere feeling must be sacrificed to the future good of a child. Present indulgence frequently becomes the cause of future wretchedness. The thing enjoined may be very disagreeable to a child, and it may be very unpleasant for a parent to compel obedience; but the present and future good of the child requires it. The man who, in childhood, had always been humored, whose desires had always been gratified, and whose will had always been indulged, is but ill prepared to submit to either Divine or human laws.

Domestic government should be vigilant. A parent cannot be too watchful: vigilance will often prevent the necessity of further action. The negligence of parents is often the cause of the faults of children; they are neglected, perhaps, as it respects both instruction and government, till some very glaring fault is committed, and then they are sorely punished; while probably a moderate share of attention would have prevented the existence of the evil.

Finally—Domestic government should be corrective.—“Folly is bound up in the heart of a child, but the rod driveth it out.” If gentle admonition will not correct an evil, then the rod must be applied; such is the will of God. The parent who neglects this despises a Divine institution: but he does it at the risk of the child's ruin. “He that spareth the rod, hateth the child.” This part of domestic government is perfectly consistent with the exercise of the utmost affection to the object of discipline,—for it is the good of the child that is designed. “Whom God loveth he chasteneth.”

So, also, every wise parent will manifest his love by correcting the folly of his child. Success here does not depend upon the amount of correction, but on the manner it is applied, and the known certainty of its application if required.

Parental instruction and government, to be successful, must be sustained by a becoming example. It will prove a fruitless task to attempt the enlightenment of the head and the purifying of the heart if example is not added to precept.—For a parent to teach his child to pray and love God, while he does neither himself; to urge the culture of the heart, and yet live in the indulgence of enmity and passion; to demand filial obedience, and yet live in disregard of the Divine law—are an outrage upon consistency that must paralyze all his efforts. When the pious parent has done his utmost his reliance is on God, and in faith of this he will make it the subject of daily and earnest prayer.

EARLY TESTIMONY AGAINST THE CONSTITUTION OF THE
ASSOCIATE REFORMED SYNOD.

(Continued from page 334.)

In article fifth the synod lay down their sentiments about discipline, in the branches of deposition and excommunication. They speak of a distinction betwixt the deposition of a minister, and a dissolution of his connexion with their church. Query—What is the real difference the synod would state betwixt a formal deposition, and a final dissolution of the union betwixt them and a brother, upon offences given by him? The synod confine the ground of deposition to notorious violations of the law of God, in practice, and such errors in principle as unhinge the christian profession. But may not a violent opposition to any of the christian doctrines and duties, engaged to by a minister at his ordination, accompanied with a contemptuous refusal to submit to his brethren over him in the Lord, be sustained as relevant grounds for inflicting upon him the censure of deposition from the office of the holy ministry, received by him on such a footing? And is not a judicial dissolution of the connexion betwixt the synod and a private member of the church: or in other words, a solemn judicial withholding of the seals of

the covenant from him, or her, as unworthy to partake thereof, an excommunication of the person from the privileges of the christian church? If there be a difference, we would be glad to know from our brethren in what it consists.

In article sixth the synod hold out their terms of fixed communion to the world, and declare that these "shall be soundness in the faith, as defined in the above mentioned Confessions of Faith, Catechisms," &c. Communion with the church, is either christian or official; as no limitation is put upon communion, we are allowed to extend it to both kinds. The reader is advised, that the above mentioned are the terms of fixed communion; fixed communion seems to be opposed to what the synod, in the following article, design by the name of occasional communion: as no distinction is offered of this last kind of communion, the reader is left at an uncertainty what idea to affix thereto. Do our brethren by occasional communion, understand communion for once, or returning communion after long intervals? In what laws, or precedents of scripture have they found room for this division of communion? A distinction of this kind is found nowhere, but in the latitudinarian opinions of men. Search the whole scriptures, and you will find no traces of this, either in the Jewish or Christian church: they never extended private or official communion to any, but those with whom they meant to continue it, provided the receivers persevered to act conformably to the dictates of their holy religion. How absurd would it be in the church to bestow official communion upon a person, by investing him with the sacred office of the ministry, under a declaration, that, upon his instalment therein, he was to be no longer of their communion? Is it not equally preposterous to admit unto the enjoyment of the privilege of the seals of the covenant of grace, a person, over whom the church has no jurisdiction? The synod have established distinct terms of admission to each of these two kinds of communion; those who wish to enjoy their fixed communion, must be sound in the faith, as above defined; but we would ask our brethren, how can a person's acknowledgment of the soundness of the faith, as expressed in the confession, be stated as a term of communion, in a consistency with the synod's laying open all the doctrines of that confession to objections? nay, how can it be said there is any faith at all in a church, whose doctrines are liable to disputation? The synod have set aside some articles of the Con-

fession of Faith for future discussion, but, they have not said, if an acknowledged adherence to the articles excepted out of the confession would be reckoned by them unsoundness in the faith, and so to exclude the adherent from communion with their church.

In article seventh, the synod declare their willingness to hold occasional communion with churches of other denominations. This behoves to be done either by admitting *them* to the privilege of receiving from the synod the seals of the covenant, and liberty to officiate in conjunction with their office bearers; or by *their* receiving the same things from other denominations. The authority, under which they would patronize this practice, is the following expression of the Confession of Faith: "To extend communion to all who in every place call upon the name of the Lord Jesus;" these words are taken out of the Scriptures, and as explained in them, and understood by the compilers of the Confession, they mean those *only* who call upon, and worship the Lord Jesus, after the manner he has appointed to be done in his own divine institutions and ordinances; and not those who profess to call upon and worship the Lord Jesus in a way not established by him in his word. All christian sectaries profess to call upon and worship the Lord Jesus; Popish, Episcopalian, Arminian, do so; but we are commanded to go to the law and testimony, for if any speak not according to these things, it is because there is no light in them. The synod's application of the expression to support the cause of promiscuous communion, on certain occasions, is a gross perversion of its genuine meaning. There is nothing in the practice of our reformers to vindicate their sense of it. The Solemn League and Covenant, in which our reformers league and bind themselves together, or state the terms of communion with them by others, is such, as may easily convince any person, that the synod's interpretation of this passage is fallacious. The kind of communion plead for by the synod here, shifts the ground of church fellowship from an agreement in the faith and practice of true religion, to the supposed goodness of persons; a most dangerous maxim in the communion of the church.

In the eighth and last article, the synod make another boast of having detached their principles from local peculiarities; a striking indication of their conceited fondness for this new modeled profession of their own, by which they

would bury in everlasting oblivion all that the good hand of God upon his people enabled them to do for his cause and interest, in former ages, and different countries from their own, as inclusive of both the principles of religion on which they proceeded, and the application thereof to particular objects, as presented in the course of providence.

In this article they also point out the mode to be observed by persons in making application for admission to fixed communion with them; and enjoin it upon bodies of people belonging to other denominations of Presbyterians, who cannot be seasonably provided in gospel ordinances by the judicatory under whose inspection they are, that, previous to their being admitted into communion with the synod, they shall inform the judicatory over them, of the reasons of their intended application, and use all due means to obtain the concurrence of the judicatory. To us this appears to be a very strange plan of forming church connections; inasmuch as it implies that these bodies of people, supposed to make application to the synod, are still of the same principles with those of the church to which they formerly belonged, as different from the principles of the synod, but finding it difficult for the time being to receive a full supply of gospel ordinances, have thought proper to apply to the synod for that purpose. If these supposed bodies of people shall be found so loose as to seek admission into communion with a church whose principles they cannot adopt; a church professing to bear a pointed testimony against the errors which prevail in their country, should be so strict as not to open the gates of their church fellowship to admit them; nor is there any weight in the destitute state of these bodies of people, to warrant a church to deviate from the plain path of duty to extend relief to them. But this charitable decision of synod exhibits in a moving light their wide latitudinarian scheme of communion. If these bodies of people had seen the evil of their former principles, and the soundness of those of the synod, they might well state before the judicatory, from which they withdrew, their errors, as just grounds of a separation; but, in this case, there is no necessity for them to endeavour to procure the concurrence of the judicatory in their intended application to another court; nay, it would be absurd and inconsistent in them once to attempt it, and while the synod obliges them to do so, as it recognizes the lawfulness of the authority of the judicatory over them, so it has a manifest ten-

dency to destroy what is the only justifiable ground of forsaking the communion of a church, viz. defection from the faith and ordinances of Christ. The synod would do well to recollect the words of the prophet, *Open ye the gates that the righteous nation which keepeth the truth may enter in.* Isa. xxvi. 2.

The questions to be proposed unto those who enter into office contained in the formula, and the rules established for directing the judicial operations of the synod, in so far as these reduplicate upon the articles, must be viewed in the same light with them. On the whole, the committee find themselves in duty bound to testify against this synodical union of their brethren, with those of the seceding ministers, with whom they have chosen to associate themselves, on the reasons assigned above, and therefore they did, and hereby do, testify, and declare against this as an ambiguous—defective—loose—unstable—latitudinarian—and local union, opposite to, and eversive of, the covenanted union of Britain and Ireland, in the bond of which they and their brethren were once connected. An ambiguous union, the terms of it being so very doubtful; a defective union, omitting some of the substantial truths of God, and attainments of the reformed covenanted church of Britain and Ireland; a loose union, being founded on very general principles; an unstable union, referring truths about which members are not supposed to be agreed to a future discussion, which may in the issue tend to annihilate the synodical connection; a local union, being detached from all foreign connections with the Christian church in any other parts of the world, and having for its limits the boundaries of the American states.

The committee having delivered their sentiments concerning this synodical union, would now entreat their brethren, in the bowels of our Lord Jesus Christ, seriously to review the nature and tendency of the union in the light of the word of God, to give their observations on it a dispassionate hearing, and, persuaded as they are, that their brethren will find them agreeable to truth, to allow them to have their due influence upon their minds; in doing which they must be convinced, that in the hour of coalition, they have been deceived into an apostacy from their former profession, though perhaps meaning to act in the spirit of it, and that therefore their present duty, remembering from whence they have fallen, is to repent, return, and to do their first works. The gra-

cious call of God to them in his word is, *Turn, O backsliding children, for I am married unto you*;—the exhortation of this church with them is, Why should our staff of brotherhood be broken asunder? we are brethren, the sons of one mother; why then should division be found amongst us? Though you are now in the hands of another fellowship, it is not yet too late to think of disconnection. We are afraid there are some amongst you who trouble you, and labor to pervert the faith you once espoused, and have so far brought you into bondage, but on your return to your former profession and duty, be assured you will find the church here ready to embrace you with the most cordial reception. As your defection from her communion hath wounded her dearest comforts, nothing but your return can furnish to her true consolation; she hath no greater joy than when all her connections walk in the truth. Be persuaded then, *our dear brethren*, to reflect upon your present course; try your ways—and speedily turn your feet unto God's testimonies; which may the Lord himself, who gathers the dispersed of Israel into one, enable you to do. But if it shall be our mortification to find, that you still remain inflexible in your present union, then we must adjure you to bear witness, that not we, but you, by an obstinate dereliction of the common profession we made of the covenanted testimony of Christ, have broken our ecclesiastical union, that all the disagreeable consequences resulting therefrom lie at your door; and to a greater than man you have to answer.

To those of the people who, following their ministers, have been drawn away from their profession, into a submission to this synod in their scheme of principles, the committee would say, What cause have you now discovered in the good profession you once made, that you have so far turned your back upon it? where now is that ancient zeal, which carried you over these wide seas to this country, to seek for yourselves pastors of the reformation church? Have length of time, political revolutions, and the influence of falling churchmen, extinguished all that? But, Oh consider! that no vicissitudes in human affairs can produce any alteration in the precepts of religion, and the permanent obligation lying upon us to prosecute the same. Believe it that the changes which have of late passed over your country, and the instability of your spiritual guides leave the cause of truth the same; hearken to it, *dear friends*, apostacy in the members of

the church, is a very heinous evil before that God who keepeth truth for evermore ; defection from, or neutrality about any divine truth, opens a door for more of the same kind. A loose scheme of principles, such as is that of the synod, whereby defection is promoted from former attainments, and the communion of the church laid open to the supposed pious of all denominations, has a native tendency to introduce into the church indifference about every other truth, but those which are supposed to be amongst the essentials of salvation, and who can say where suppositions of this kind will stop ? Though the ministers you obtained from this church have deviated from the profession they made at the time you received them in that character, and the relation was formed between you and them, that by no means lays any obligation upon you to follow them in their back-sliding ways. Let it not be always said, *The leaders of this people have caused them to err.* Recall to your minds the many awful threatenings a jealous God hath denounced in his word against those who turn aside ; though he may give pardon to his own people, guilty in this respect, he will certainly take vengeance upon their inventions. There is one request the church in this country hath to ask of you, which is that you will attentively consider their judgment of the synodical union, to which your practices have said Amen ; and, if with them you are now able to discern it to be an union which hath involved in apostacy all parties, it will be truly Christian and noble in you to disclaim all future connection with it, and again to return to the profession of the truth, in which desirable event, the church that nourished you in your infancy, will, with parental affection rejoice to receive you as her returning children into her tenderest care, and, by the assistance of God, bestow upon you all the help their situation can afford ; but, if deaf to the voice of the church, you persevere in the choice you have made, then know that there hath been a warning sent you from the word of the Lord—and it is at your peril to reject it.

Before we conclude, the committee would tender a few things to those private Christians who have transmitted by letters their complaint upon the union of synod. Though the apostacy of the ministers, and the great majority of the people, have given them the most sensible pain ; notwithstanding the committee rejoice to find, that there are any left in the church in America, who have not bowed the knee to

this synodical union, and, that the Lord hath still a remnant to witness for himself, in that quarter of the world. The committee condole most feelingly with the disappointed, destitute, and tried condition of those members; and they do assure them they have the tenderest sympathy of the church in this country, who desire not to forget them in their prayers before the great Shepherd of Israel, who knows all his own sheep, and is known of them. To those members the committee would recommend a patient continuance in a wise, bold, and steadfast maintenance of the covenanted testimony of the church of Britain and Ireland in her purest times; a testimony that hath been marked with signal tokens of the divine approbation; stood the test of ages; and has been sealed with the best blood of faithful martyrs. As ye have withstood the force of the artifices laid to ensnare you into the common apostacy, in the day of coalition, endeavor, in dependence upon grace, still to exercise a continued vigilance, lest any avail themselves of philosophy and vain deceit to spoil you of your crown of glory. You have kept the ground whilst others have fallen, let it never be said, in any after period, that ye also have gone away. Remember that perseverance to the end is the criterion of Christ's faithful witnesses. Deserted by your spiritual guides, who were bound to watch over your souls in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, as it would be inconsistent with a proper testimony against their backsliding, so it is far from being the judgment of this church to advise you to go after them, and now to attend upon their official ministrations; you will at once evidence the truest love for their good, and exhibit the fairest testimony against their evils, by a continued declining of their public ministry; and though in your forlorn state, you may not enjoy the sweet voice of the gospel from the mouth of men, as formerly, yet remember, that the Master of assemblies can feed your souls, manifest himself to your consolation, and advance your eternal salvation, in the believing and diligent use of the private means of grace, to which the faithful have often had recourse in similar circumstances, and which in their joyful experience, have been found to be to their disconsolate souls refreshing wells of salvation. Whilst thus appearing in the public character of witnesses, forget not that your great spiritual duty is, to live in the daily exercise of faith upon Jesus, a crucified Saviour, for the sanctification of your persons, and the establishment of your practices in the paths of true and un-

defiled religion, against the power of the prevailing vices wherewith you are surrounded. Let your lights of truth, holiness, and virtue so shine before others, that you may be the acknowledged followers of the Lamb ; let the wisdom of serpents and the innocence of doves mark all your footsteps ; remember that a life of good offices to all, and a tender concern for souls, are inseparable from the character of true Church members. Those of you who live contiguous will see it to be your duty, and find it to be your interest, to convene upon the holy Sabbath, and at other seasons, for the performance of private social worship ; and all of you ought to form a general correspondence amongst yourselves, in order to strengthen the hands of one another in your present broken state, in supporting the cause of truth we all profess. The Church in this country is willing to hold a correspondence with you ;—as a proof of which they have transmitted this short view of their judgment of the union, both for the conviction of declining members, and the confirmation of you who still avow an adherence to your ancient profession ; but, as they are partly ignorant of the state of matters amongst you at large, and as there may be internal differences amongst you in relation to your duty to the ministers of your former connexion, (a thing scarcely to be wondered at, in your very trying situation,) they would desire you to meet together amongst yourselves, or so to correspond, as to be able to collect the views of different persons, where they disagree ; and, along with these, to send over a state of your situation, at large, from which they will be better enabled to judge of your case ; till then, they assure you of their most sincere wishes for your prosperity in religion, and your steadfastness in the truth, under the great trial Divine Providence hath laid before you. As to your desire, that the Church would so far sympathize with your destitute state, as to send over a supply of ministers to dispense to you the ordinances of salvation, we can assure you, that they are ready to do every thing in their power for your edification ; and sincerely wish they may be enabled to grant you the prayer of your request, in sending over a mission of faithful laborers into our vineyard, if future information expected from you shall discover this to be our duty ; but they would wish to wait the issue of their judgment of the union upon the ministers who have left you, and also your return, both of which may tend to throw more light upon their duty in this particular. And now, *dear*

Christian friends and brethren in the Lord Jesus, we recommend you to the care of the Chief Shepherd, in whose hands Jehovah hath entrusted both the concerns of his own glory, and the salvation of his people ; nay, he looks upon your afflictions, and sends seasonable help to you in your extremity ; and, when it would have been no hard thing for his Almighty power to have raised Isaac out of his own ashes, may he raise up to you a faithful priesthood, that will execute all his pleasure. May the spirit of wisdom be given unto you, to know the times and your own duty therein. Farewell, *dearly beloved in the Lord.*

“The observations of the Committee upon the articles of union being read before the Reformed Presbytery, were approved by them ; and the Presbytery order them to be printed, and to be transmitted, with all convenient speed to America. “Extracted by ARCHD. MASON, Cl. Pr.”

LIBERTY WITHOUT PRINCIPLE.

(Extracted from the Covenanter.)

In its strict and proper acceptation, LIBERALITY is a valuable mental endowment : we are free to profess ourselves among its fondest admirers, as all intolerance, bigotry, and persecution we regard with entire abhorrence. But, taking into account the sentiments and conduct of those who are most noisy in the praise of liberality, and judging the tree by its fruits, it is obvious there is a spurious liberality current in our day which only bears the outward impress, but contains not a particle of the genuine coin. In fact, a very slight acquaintance with public men and measures is sufficient to satisfy us, that the most boasting liberals of the day are, in reality, the most illiberal, and that such as are most ready to brand others with intolerance, are only tolerant of views and practices that tend to disorder, or help forward their own schemes of innovation ; while the virulence and deadly hate with which they pursue men of a better way, show them to be most intolerant, and is, in truth, a fair exemplification of bigotry and modern persecution, under the specious pretext of liberality. Were we to offer a leading characteristic of such liberality, we would say, it is “*liberality without princi-*

ple." Sir Edward Parry, on a late occasion, well characterised it, when he described it as "*an increasing disregard of all scriptural and vital religion whatever.*"

In the first place, it is held, by liberals, to be arrogance and presumption to pronounce what doctrines are true or false, inasmuch as the subject is involved in mystery, and great and learned men have differed in opinion, and professed themselves unable to come to a satisfactory decision.—The subject is confessedly obscure and mysterious—good and wise men have differed; therefore it is wrong to dogmatize, and the safe course is to hold no fixed opinion ourselves, and to make a very liberal allowance for diversity of opinion on the part of others. Now all this amounts, in reality, to affirming, that there is no fixed, infallible and immutable standard, by which religious sentiments can be determined; or that the Bible, the Divine standard of faith and practice, is so obscure that it cannot be taken as a guide to which the conduct of the understanding may be safely entrusted. We are free to avow ourselves of the old school of philosophy, in maintaining that the distinction between truth and error is not a mere changeable relation, but is real, permanent and immutable; and we hold, that though truth, like some precious metals, lies deep, and is not to be discovered without patient investigation, yet it may be found, by diligent research, in connexion with a right moral frame of understanding and heart. And, furthermore, we think it clear that the Bible would not deserve to be received as a revelation from heaven, and could not be regarded as a proper standard—a perfect and sufficient rule of faith and practice, if it did not inculcate important truths of religion, in a manner so plain and unambiguous, that not philosophers merely, but the mass of mankind, may come to a general understanding of its contents. That there are mysteries in the Bible, we freely admit; the nature of the subjects which it reveals renders this indispensable; in fact, without these mysteries, the volume of inspiration would want one grand proof of its Divine original, just as the volumes of creation and providence would want a main evidence of their emanating from the Infinite Mind, if they held forth no marks of a wisdom unsearchable, of designs unfathomable. But while even of the mysteries of revelation it may be truly said, "all things are plain to him that understandeth," the Bible contains much in relation both to faith and practice that is easily understood,

much that is so plain, that "he that runs may read." The Word of life is said to be "a light to the feet and a lamp to the path," and the way of life is declared to be a way in which "the wayfaring man, though a fool, shall not err." The things of salvation are declared by the Saviour to be "revealed to babes," while they are hid from the wise and prudent; and in very clear and unambiguous terms he has said, "If any man will do the will of my Father, he will know of the doctrine whether it be of God." The radical defect lies here. Men's hearts are in fault; their disinclination to do God's will blinds their judgment, perverts their understanding, and leads them away from truth into the perplexed mazes of error. They do not come with a prayerful and docile spirit to the Word: they ask not, with sincerity, the Spirit to guide them into all truth; for they feel not their need of his guidance; and we may, therefore, cease to wonder that they are unable to come to definite views, or that men should entertain different and discordant sentiments on fundamental doctrines. The reason is, they refuse to take God's way of understanding the truth. While they act thus, is it not righteous that they should be left to wander vainly in counsels of their own?

The prescriptive argument in favor of scepticism or error, taken from the opinions and conduct of learned men, avails little. While it may be easily shown, that men of the most enlarged minds, some of the most eminent philosophers, and men of science and literature, have been the advocates of evangelical religion, we freely admit that a large proportion of the learned world have either been sceptics, or the avowed enemies to Christianity, or the advocates of dangerous error. But this is just what might be expected, just what the Bible itself declares, "The world by wisdom knew not God." "Not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called. But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise." Pride of intellect, inordinate desire of fame, and even baser principles than these, sadly predominate among men of learning—principles directly opposed to the spirit of the Gospel. Need we wonder that men under the influence of such principles should rather be found leagued with systems that foster them, than with that which aims to eradicate them entirely? He that spake as never man spake explains the whole matter, when he says, in reference to such characters—"How can ye believe

who receive honor one of another, and seek not that honor that cometh from God only." The liberal and plausible pretence against strictness in religious sentiment, taken from the conduct of men of learning, is indeed liberality without principle: in fact, it amounts to a plea set up in favor of universal scepticism, as Christianity itself has had its keenest opponents among the learned, and there is hardly an opinion, however absurd in religion, which has not had learned men for its supporters. Those who advance an argument of this kind, had need to beware lest they themselves number among such as are "ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth."—2 Tim. iii. 5-7.

Secondly.—Another chief maxim of the *liberalism* of the day is, that different modes of worship are equally acceptable to God, and that, consequently, it were altogether wrong to condemn men for their way of worship. This averment is made in different ways. Sincerity is regarded as every thing, and purity of worship as of little or no value. John Wesley more than once, in his writings, declares, that it matters little where we worship, if we are sincere; and many religionists, and men of no religion, since his day, have avowed the same sentiment. Let it suffice to remark, that the liberality which regards false worship with such favor, receives not the slightest countenance from sacred Scripture. "Confounded be all they that worship graven images," is the solemn denunciation of the inspired Prophet. The Faithful and True Witness himself declares—"In vain do ye worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." It need not be pleaded that the worship is not offered to the picture or image, but to God through the image, as a help to devotion—even granting this, which is far from the fact, in many instances, where is the least scriptural warrant for such a mode of worship? Do not the Scriptures every where represent Christ as the alone Mediator between God and man? Are we not warranted, from their plainest and oft-repeated declarations, to affirm, that to worship God through any other medium, is to pour contempt on Him who is "the Way, the Truth, and the Life;" to offer strange fire before the Lord; and is, in short, will-worship and idolatry? The liberality which extends favor to false worship—which would place the rankest superstition on a level with enlightened and scriptural piety—which exalts blind sincerity to the throne of Divine truth—and condemns, in unmeasured

terms, efforts to enlighten the votaries of superstition and idolatry—is, in truth, unprincipled and inhuman—unprincipled, as those who are most ready to avow it themselves compass sea and earth, and often employ the vilest fraud and artifice, to make one proselyte—inhuman, as it betrays the most callous unconcern, worse than those who, beholding a hopeless maniac careering on the top of a precipice, make no effort to save him.

Furthermore, it is alleged that religious sentiments affect not morals, and it is plausibly urged, that men of acknowledged excellence are to be found among all denominations. Were it even admitted, that, under different systems of religious belief, there have been various instances of moral worth, this would, by no means, justify such a conclusion. It may be granted, that, in some few cases, men have regulated their life by a better standard than the defective creed which they held; while, on the other hand, the purest system has sometimes failed to influence the lives of some that have outwardly professed to adhere to it; and yet still the connexion so well expressed by the poet holds good—

“Faults in the life breed errors in the brain,
And these reciprocally those again.”

Indeed, the mere outward conduct, in particular instances, cannot warrant general conclusions respecting the moral or religious principles. The morality of actions can never be determined apart from a consideration of the motives from which they spring. The Heathens themselves maintained so much. “As the lowest parts of a ship,” says Demosthenes, “ought to be the strongest, so, also, ought the *principles* and foundations of actions to be true and just.”* In the Ethics of the Bible, the *love of God* is regarded as the grand motive which constitutes the goodness of an action; and the *law of God*, the rule by which it is to be determined. Well has the poet expressed it:—

“Talk they of morals, O thou bleeding Love!
Thou Maker of new morals to mankind. The grand morality
Is love of thee.”†

The Scriptures always represent the truth alone as the grand instrument of sanctification. Though we cannot inspect the internal principles of others, yet, when they publicly avow their opposition to the truth—when they build not

* Demosth. Olynth. II. | † Night Thoughts. †

on the only foundation, or openly profess that a love of fame, self-interest, and, in fact, any thing but the love of God, is the *governing* principle of their life, then is it liberality far beyond what the Scriptures warrant to hold, that such persons have equal claims to be considered Christians, as the sincere believer in the Trinity, or that their actions, however praised, proceed from right principles.

The *symptoms* of this spurious liberality in religion are plentifully furnished. We see it in the good fellowship maintained by religious men with infidels, the determined enemies of all religion, and in the favor shown by Protestants to the devoted hirelings of Rome. For political purposes, Protestants say a confederacy with such; and it has become fashionable to palliate the abominations of the Popish Church, to speak of Papists as fellow-Christians, and to apologize for using the uncourtly terms, Popery and Papists, when speaking of the Antichristian system and its abettors. Speaking of Roman Catholics, the *Eclectic Review* says—"The imputation of fraud, hypocrisy, or insincerity, which are personal qualities, applied to bodies or communities, will be found, on examination, alike absurd and ungenerous."* A religious man, it is obvious, must either abandon his principles, or he can have no consistent fellowship with those who would subvert his dearest hopes; and every Protestant, of whatever name, is solemnly pledged to consider Popery as a system of blasphemy, idolatry, lies, and delusion. What Protestant is prepared to say, that Popery, as a system, is not the great "*Mystery of Iniquity?*" Have not all sound expositors agreed, that it is the coming of this system which is said to be "with all power, and signs, and lying wonders, with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish, because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved?"—2 Thess. ii. 10. Whence, then, originates all this favor for a system so monstrous—all this countenance to those who are employing their most strenuous efforts to uphold it? On the part of Protestants, can it be considered less than liberality without principle—the abandonment of

* An able writer, in the *Edinburgh Christian Instructor*, justly observes, that "this nicety of distinction betwixt persons und communities, is abundantly ridiculous. At this rate, to impute fraud or dishonesty to a band of robbers, must be *equally* absurd and ungenerous; because fraud and dishonesty are personal qualities, and a band of robbers, too, is a community."

the great principles of their forefathers' protest—the relinquishment of those scriptural principles, which they themselves have solemnly professed to embrace and maintain ?

Farther evidence of *liberality* without principle is furnished in the facility with which men break the most solemn vows, change their sentiments, or, what is still worse, pretend, before men, to hold fast their profession, while they labor to undermine the very principles to which they are solemnly pledged. Individuals, and even religious communities, in our day, seem to account vows as mere ropes of sand. The cause of apostacy is openly pleaded under the deceitful maxim, that “wise men change often—fools never ;” and men eat the bread of the Church, while they labor to overturn the fundamental principles of her constitution. Under the covert of high pretensions of piety and zeal for reform, they appear to wish it to be overlooked or forgotten, that they have ever been bound by solemn vows ; or they seem desirous that such deeds should now be considered antiquated—the enactments of a former age, which were never intended to have any practical application. All this is now fashionable *liberality* ; but it requires no great extent of discrimination to perceive, that it betrays an utter destitution of proper principle. Engagements between man and man, when properly formed, are esteemed sacred. Shall men, therefore, dare to break their covenant with God, with impunity ? If it is sinful after vows to make enquiry, how can any pretensions of superior light or *liberality* justify the direct violation, or the secret contravention of solemn vows ? It requires no proof to show, that *liberality* of this nature is stretched much too far—that it is *liberality* without principle.

A last evidence of spurious *liberality* which we notice, is the manner in which the loudest declaimers in favor of *liberality* violate the plainest principles of Christian charity. One of the chief characteristics of the charity of the Gospel is, that it “*vaunteth* not itself.” Compare this with the publications of the liberal press, with the speeches and discourses of so called liberals, which are full of boasting and self-gratulation—and how wide the contrast ! As the very reverse of the Charity “which thinketh no evil,” is “not easily provoked,” and “rejoiceth in the truth,” the spirit of modern pretenders to *liberality* leads them to bear false witness—in all possible ways to vilify and reproach the friends of true religion—cover their names with obloquy, and impute opinions and

motives to them, and consequences to their sentiments, which they abhor. A principle productive of such fruits must proceed from another source than the Spirit of Truth: under its closest disguise, it must be pronounced to be an unprincipled liberality, which discovers an unceasing hostility to the form and power of vital godliness.

REFLECTIONS FOR THE NEW YEAR.

“This year thou mayest die.”

If of no one it can be said, “This year thou *shalt* die,” of any one it may be said, “This year thou *mayest* die.” Then, since this year we may die, preparation for death is a duty of all others the most important; for of all events it is the most certain; though of the time we have no knowledge. This very consideration ought to make us more studious of preparation than if we really knew the time when death, with all its awful importance, would be actually realized by us. Did we know that the time was far distant, however certain, we would be strongly inclined to procrastinate in the great work of preparation. What is that preparation which is necessary to meet death with safety and comfort? It may all be comprised in *union and conformity to Christ*; both of which are expressed in 2 Cor. v. 17, “If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature.”—In him by being united by faith to him having been “chosen in him before the foundation of the world.” There must also be conformity to Christ by regeneration and sanctification, without which none shall ever inherit the kingdom of glory: for “without holiness no man shall see the Lord;” and, says Christ, “except a man be born again he cannot enter the kingdom of God.” This is a saving, supernatural change; to effect which we ourselves are as incompetent as we are to create a world. Some modern theologians represent this change as wholly within the compass of our own power. Of such it may be said, they “know not what they say, nor whereof they affirm.” Nor do they know that they are wretched, and miserable and blind, and naked; and that the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint, and that without Christ they can do nothing. But he has said, “Except I wash you, you have no

part in me." Though for this we are wholly incompetent, we may expect to obtain it only by a diligent use of the appointed means. "To escape the wrath and curse of God due to us for sin, God requireth of us faith in Jesus Christ, repentance unto life, with the diligent use of all the outward and ordinary means whereby Christ communicateth to us the benefits of redemption." Though by these, grace is communicated to the destined heirs of salvation, they are fearfully neglected; which neglect is nothing less than neglecting the great salvation. They who continue this neglect, and, alas! they are many, how shall they, how can they, escape the wrath of Jehovah? The wrath of God abideth on them. To such it will certainly be said, "Behold, ye despisers, wonder and perish!" They will wonder at their own folly in neglecting the means of divine appointment, adapted to obtain enjoyments the most glorious and permanent as the ages of eternity. And by this neglect they are exposed to misery the most tremendous, and of duration without end.

Since this year we may die, we are called upon rightly to improve time. Time is precious, it is short, it is uncertain; this year we may die. Though often warned both by the word and providence of God, death comes very unexpectedly, like a thief in the night, upon millions and millions of the human family. However long any may live in the world, the year will come when they must die. The antediluvians, though long warned, were at length surprised by the tremendous deluge that swept them all away. The present is the day of our merciful visitation. *Now* is the accepted time, *now* is the day of grace and salvation. Notwithstanding the value, the brevity, and the uncertainty of time, how much is trifled away in absolute idleness, or in employment worse than idleness—in the dram shop, at the gambling table, in the dancing hall and other nocturnal revelries, employed for the delusive purpose of "killing time"—a most felonious murder. Time hangs heavy on the hands of the sons and daughters of pleasure. The brevity of time is, in Scripture, compared to a shadow, a hand breadth, a weaver's shuttle, a flower, nothing, and vanity; yet its value is not appreciated till it be gone; as we proverbially say of the well, its value is not known till it be dry. To see the value of time, visit the beds of the dying; time then appears to them more precious than sums of gold and silver, yea, more precious than the world itself. However much the thoughtless may trifle with and

misimprove it, the period will arrive when, with regard to them, time shall be no longer. This year they may die.

Since this year we may die, then we ought to think much of our latter end. "O that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end." This event, of all others the most certain and important, is of all others the least thought of, and made a matter of the least concern; a consideration that bespeaks the most consummate folly. This folly appears the greater from the consideration that of this event we are very frequently admonished both by the word and providence of God. Every death admonishes us that ours may be the next; that this year we may die. We read of one who had abundance of this world's goods, in which he greatly gloried, and who calculated on a long life; but in the midst of his self gratulations, it was said to him, "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee." We read of another who wallowed in wealth, and sought no other enjoyment than the gratification of his senses; but in a very unexpected hour death seized him, changed his countenance, and sent him away; and "in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torment." His wealth and luxurious living were no security against the king of terrors, or the torments of the damned. His fate is that of all who live without God in the world, neglecting the great salvation, the means of grace, the Saviour, their latter end, and their immortal souls, never thinking that this year they may die.

If this year we may die, then what manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness? How few are concerned to have a conversation becoming the gospel. They live rather in conformity to the world, than as strangers and pilgrims on earth. What little evidence of being under the influence of the gospel, of being transformed by the renewing of their minds, and of having their conversation in heaven! Being content with a name to live, and a form of godliness, the duties of religion are either wholly neglected or but partially observed; such little consider that this year the midnight cry may be heard, "Behold, the bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet him."

This subject addresses itself to all, especially to the aged. Aged sinner, art thou prepared to meet death, or dost thou think that this year thou mayest die? What effect has this thought upon your conduct? Are you continuing to neglect the ordinances of God's grace; or are you improving them as

the only means of grace and salvation? Are you repenting of your sins, or continuing their practice? Are you living without God, in conformity to the world lying in wickedness, or are you running the race that is set before you, looking unto Jesus, who is saying, Hear, and your soul shall live, look unto me and be saved.

This subject also addresses itself to the young. You, no doubt, expect to live long; your constitution is firm, your health is good: yet this year you may die: for the young die as well as the old. You know of many of your own age that are dead; then this year you also may die. They had the same advantages, the same prospects of long life, as you, yet they died, and are made a warning to you, as you must also be made a warning to others. This year you may die.

This subject also addresses persons living without God in the world, in habits of sin—drinking, swearing, Sabbath profanation, and in the neglect of religion, which, though the one thing needful, is treated by you as a matter unworthy of your notice. Continuing thus, you may expect that God will laugh at your calamity and mock when your fear cometh. Notwithstanding your contempt of religion, and boldness in sin, this year you may die. D.

Cabin Hill, January 6, 1840.

ANECDOTE OF THE REV. GEORGE GILLESPIE.

In that venerable Assembly of Divines which met at Westminster in the year 1643 the very learned Selden had a seat. He, assisted by the counsel and Rabbinical learning of Coleman and Lightfoot, and supported by the national feeling, and the prejudices and opinions of Parliament, argued the cause of *Erastianism* in the grand debate upon ecclesiastical order. The question excited much interest; the whole church, a great nation, awaited the result with anxiety.

The Rev. George Gillespie, one of the ministers of Edinburgh, and a commissioner to the Assembly from the Church of Scotland, was observed to be engaged occasionally with his pen, while Selden spoke. It was supposed he was taking notes of the argument. He, too, was learned, talented and of great reading; but he was young, pious, modest, and a stranger in London. He had not yet acquired celebrity in the Assembly. Some of the most grave and pious divines, however, had previous opportunities of satisfying themselves as to his views of divine truth and ecclesiastical order. They also knew the church which he represented to be *anti-Erastian*. They went to his chair

and requested him to speak. They enquired if he had taken notes. He was silent. They saw the paper on which he had written. The only words upon it were, GIVE LIGHT, LORD, AND DIRECTION. These were often repeated. At length a venerable friend said to him, "Rise, George, rise and defend your principles, your country, your church, and the kingdom of your God. Rise up, man, and defend the right of the Lord Jesus Christ to govern, by his own laws, the Church which he purchased with his blood." Mr. Gillespie complied. He began by giving a summary of the argument of his learned antagonist, distinguishing the several principles which it involved, and then requested to be corrected if he made any unfair statements. Selden replied, if Mr. Gillespie will refute these principles with the same accuracy with which he has stated them, the controversy is over. Mr. Gillespie had in his hand a two-edged sword. He contended successfully for the prerogatives of his Redeemer's crown, and the independency of his kingdom. He triumphed. Mr. Selden himself observed, with astonishment, "This young man by his speech has swept away the learning and labor of my life." Erastianism was condemned, and Presbyterianism was established by the Westminster Assembly.

JOHN KNOX'S DISPUTATION WITH THE PAPISTS.

One day at a public disputation, in the parish church, in the presence of a great number of people, Annan being beat from all his defences, had recourse, as his last resort, to the infallibility of the church, which having condemned the tenets of the Lutherans as heretical, all further disputation, he alleged, was unnecessary. Knox replied, that it was first requisite to ascertain the true church, by the marks given in Scripture, lest they should receive as their spiritual mother a harlot, instead of the immaculate spouse of Jesus Christ; "For," said he, "as for your Roman church, as it is now corrupted, wherein stands the hope of your victory, I no more doubt that it is the synagogue of Satan, and the head thereof, called the pope, to be *the man of sin*, of whom the apostle speaks, than I doubt that Jesus Christ suffered by the procurement of the visible church, at Jerusalem. Yea, I offer myself, by word or writing, to prove the Roman Church this day, farther degenerate, than even the church of the Jews, from the ordinances given by Moses, when they consented to the innocent death of Jesus Christ." This was a bold charge, but the minds of the people came prepared to listen to the proof. They exclaimed, that if this were true, they had been miserably deceived; and insisted, as they could not read his writings, that he should ascend the pulpit and give them an opportunity of hearing the proof of what he had so confidently affirmed. The challenge was not retracted, and the request was reasonable; therefore, the following Sabbath was fixed for making good his promise.

On the day appointed, Knox appeared in the pulpit of the parish church, and gave out for his text, Dan. vii. 24, 25. After explaining the vision and showing that the four kingdoms of Babylon, Persia, Greece, and Rome, were emblematically represented by the four animals, seen in vision by Daniel, he proceeded to show, that out of the ruins of the last of these empires arose the power described in the text, which could be no other than the degenerate church of Rome. He compared the parallel passages in the New Testament, and showed that the king mentioned in the text was the person called the *man of sin*, the *antichrist*, the *Babylonian harlot*; and that this did not mean any single person, but a multitude or body under a wicked head, including a succession of persons occupying the same station. To show that the papal power was antichrist, he described it under the three heads, of life, doctrine, and laws. The lives of the popes he depicted from ecclesiastical history, their doctrine he contrasted with that of the New Testament, and their laws with the institutions of Christ. He cited from the Canon law the blasphemous titles and prerogatives, ascribed to the pope, as the additional proof, that he was described in the text. In conclusion, he invited any, who might think that his quotations produced from Scripture, history, or the writings of the fathers and doctors of the church, were unfairly made, to come to him, and in the presence of witnesses he would give them satisfaction. Among the auditors on this occasion, were John Mair, his old preceptor, the members of the university, the sub-prior of the abbey, and a great number of canons and friars of different orders.

This sermon, delivered with a good degree of that fervid eloquence for which Knox was so distinguished, made a great noise, and excited much speculation among all classes. The former preachers of reformed doctrine, not excepting Wishart, had contented themselves with rejecting some of the grosser errors of the established religion; but Knox struck, at once, at the root of popery, boldly pronouncing the pope to be antichrist, and the whole system erroneous and unscriptural.

It was impossible for such a sermon to escape animadversion. By the order of the Bishop of St. Andrews, Winram, the sub-prior, summoned Knox to appear before him; when nine articles drawn from his sermon were exhibited. Knox knew that in heart, Winram, the sub-prior, was favorable to the reformation; he therefore appealed solemnly to him to declare, whether any thing which he had said was contrary to the Scriptures; and if he thought that the doctrine preached was true, it was his duty to give it the sanction of his authority. Winram answered with great caution, saying, that he did not come there as a judge, and would neither approve nor condemn; he wished for a free conference, and if Knox pleased, would reason with him a little. He then proceeded to state some objections to one of the propositions maintained by Knox, but soon devolved the dispute on a grey headed friar, who was present; who, though he took it up with great confidence, was soon forced to yield with disgrace. For having rashly

engaged to prove the institutions of the popish ceremonies, and being pushed by his antagonist from the Gospels and Acts to the Epistles, and from one Epistle to another; he was driven at last to affirm "That the apostles had not received the Holy Ghost, when they wrote the epistles, but that they afterwards received Him, and then ordained the ceremonies of the church." Here the sub-prior interposed and said, "Father, what say you? God forbid that you say *that*; for then, farewell the ground of our faith." The friar, abashed and confounded, attempted to correct his error, but in vain. Knox could not afterwards bring him up to the argument upon any of the articles; but henceforth he resolved all into the authority of the church.

Instructed by the issue of this convention, the papists avoided, for the future, all disputation, which they found tended only to the injury of their cause. Had the castle of St. Andrews been in their power, they would soon have silenced these troublesome preachers; but as matters stood, more moderate and crafty measures were necessary. The plan which they adopted was, that all the learned men in the abbey and university should preach in their turn, and thus Knox and Rough would seldom have the opportunity of addressing the people in public; but they made it a rule not to touch on any of the points in dispute. Knox said, that he only wished that they could be induced to be as industrious in their vocation through the week—but he declared, that he would rejoice that the gospel was preached, and that no opposition was given in their discourses to evangelical truth.

UNION OF THE ULSTER AND SECESSION SYNODS OF IRELAND.

The spirit of *coalition* between different denominations of professing christians, which has hitherto proved to be a spirit of *disunion* and *division*, seems to be summoning its energies with more than wonted vigor. During the past year, one of the Secession Synods of Scotland, by an almost unanimous agreement, fell back into the bosom of the established church of Scotland, from which their ancestors had seceded in the days of the Erskines. In this country, two conventions have recently been held, composed of delegates from the Associate Reformed Church, and the body generally known by the name of Newlight Covenanters, at which conventions the way has been pretty fully prepared for the amalgamation of the two bodies. In Ireland, as appears from the following official document, but little remains to be done to effect a union between the Synod of Ulster and the Secession Synod of that country. Each appointed a committee of conference with a

view to Union, the committees have met and agreed upon the terms, which, according to general expectation, will be approved.—Ed.

Agreeably to the direction of the two Synods, at their last meetings, the Committees appointed to confer upon the subject of Union, met in the Presbyterian church, Fisherwick Place, on the 28th of August. On the motion of the two Moderators, the United Committees agreed to elect as Chairman the senior minister present, when the Rev. Thomas Miller, of Cookstown, was chosen, and the meeting was opened with prayer. The Rev. George Bellis was requested to act as Secretary. A general conversation ensued on the best method of conducting the deliberations of the meeting, when the following resolutions were agreed to :

1. "That union among Christian churches for mutual edification, and for the extension of the gospel, is agreeable to the Scriptures, and, at all times, highly desirable.

2. "That the leadings of divine Providence seem to favor a union between those Presbyterian Churches in Ireland, that maintain the Doctrinal Standards of the Church of Scotland, in the profession of which they were originally planted.

3. "That, whereas, the General Synod of Ulster did appoint a Committee to consider of this matter, and the Presbyterian Synod of Ireland, distinguished by the name of Seceders, did appoint another Committee for the same purpose—these Committees, now in joint meeting assembled, do proceed to consider the details of a union, upon the principle that each Synod receives the Westminster Confession of Faith as founded on, and agreeable to the Holy Scriptures, in the same manner as it was received by the Church of Scotland, in the year 1647."

These resolutions having been unanimously adopted, a Sub-Committee, consisting of an equal number from each Committee, was appointed to prepare a course of proceeding, and submit, in a digested form, the various subjects that should be considered and discussed by the Joint-Committee. After deliberation the Sub-Committee submitted their report, when it was resolved by the Joint-Committees,

1. "That, the Synods respectively acknowledge each other as equal and co-ordinate church courts.

2. "The Committee of the Synod of Ulster, for the information and satisfaction of their brethren of the Secession, state that the Synod of Ulster require from all candidates for license, or ordination, subscription to the Westminster Confession of Faith, in the following words, viz. 'I believe the Westminster Confession of Faith to be founded on, and agreeable to the Word of God, and, as such, subscribe it as the Confession of my Faith,'—that, the practice of their Presbyteries is uniform in this matter, and a report of their faithfulness annually made to the Synod ; that the Synod of Ulster maintains the rights of the people in the election of ministers and other office-bearers, without any interference or control whatsoever of private patrons, or of the State ; and that as a court of Christ, the Synod is perfectly free in all

matters of doctrine, order, and discipline, from the interference or control of any other church.

3. "The Committee of the Secession Synod, for the information and satisfaction of their brethren of the Synod of Ulster, state, that the Secession Synod require from all candidates for license or ordination, subscription and acknowledgment of the Confession of Faith, in answer to the following question :

"Do you sincerely own and believe the whole doctrines contained in the Confession of Faith, Larger and Shorter Catechisms, compiled by the Assembly of Divines that met at Westminster, with Commissioners from the Church of Scotland, as the said Confession and Catechisms were received and approved by the Acts of the General Assembly, 1647 and 1648, to be founded on the Word of God, and do you acknowledge the said Confession and Catechisms, as the confession of your faith?" That the practice of their several Presbyteries is uniform in this matter, and a report of their faithfulness annually made to the Synod. They farther desire to state, that, as individuals and as a Church Court, they continue to approve, profess, and maintain the original principles of the Fathers of the Secession in their faithful witness-bearing and labors, for soundness of doctrine, strictness of discipline, and the assertion and maintenance of the rights of church members ; and that, as a Church Court, they are perfectly free, in all matters of doctrine, order, and discipline, from the interference or control of any other church.

4. "The Joint-Committees mutually acknowledging, that the modes of receiving candidates for license or ordination, as practised in their respective Synods, are equally satisfactory, do yet resolve to recommend the adoption of one common formula and practice as a part of the basis of union.

5. "The Joint-Committees agree to recommend, that it be recognized as a principle of the contemplated union of the Synods, that all ruling elders, before being considered qualified to sit in Church Courts, or otherwise exercise the office of elders, shall produce documentary evidence of their free election, public ordination and subscription to the Westminster Confession of Faith.

5. "The Joint-Committees agree to recommend, that it be acknowledged as a principle of the contemplated union, that any member or elder known to maintain or teach doctrines contrary to the Westminster Confession shall be amenable to the discipline of the United Church.

7. "The Joint-Committees resolve to recommend the recognition and adoption of public baptism, as agreeable to Scripture, to the nature and ends of the ordinance, and the original practice of the Presbyterian churches in these kingdoms.

8. "The Joint-Committees resolve to recommend, that every election of office-bearers shall be, at least by a majority of communicants ; and that the amount of stipend paid by electors shall not be calculated in the decision.

9. "That the contemplated union be formed with an earnest desire, prayer and resolution, to seek, obtain, and enforce increased strictness

of discipline in the admission, oversight, or, when need demands, the exclusion of members.

10. "In the event of union, the designation of the united bodies shall be 'The Presbyterian Church in Ireland,' and that of its supreme court, 'The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland.'

11. "It is recommended, that the Moderators be directed to call meetings of their respective Synods at Belfast, on Wednesday, the 8th of April next, to receive and deliberate on the reports of the Committees.

12. "The Joint Committees do now adjourn till Tuesday, the 7th of April next, at 5. P. M., in Fisherwick-Place."

These resolutions are now published for the information of the Ministers and Congregations of both Synods.

The Joint-Committees are happy to state, that the spirit in which the entire business was conducted was most pleasing. There was a delightful manifestation of the unity of brethren. No unpleasant difference of opinion arose, while every topic was canvassed with the utmost freedom. The Committees now recommend this subject to the prayerful consideration of the members of their respective Churches, in the humble hope that He who is Head over all things to his body, the Church, and who has prayed that His disciples may all be one, will order these proceedings to the advancement of His kingdom and glory.

(Signed by order.)

Belfast, 29th August. 1839.

GEORGE BELLIS, Secretary.

ITEMS.

The captured Africans.—In our October No. we gave a succinct account of the capture of the Spanish schooner *Amistad*, having on board a number of unfortunate victims to the accursed Slave Trade. After several civil processes, tending to settle the points of law involved in the case, the grand question has at length been settled. Judge Judson, of the District court of Connecticut, has decided that the Africans shall not be delivered to the Spanish minister, to be sent back to Havana as the property of Ruez and Montez, the fiends in human shape that claimed them; but to the President of the United States, that he, according to an Act of Congress passed in 1819, which provides for this case, may send them back to their native land. The communication of this decision to Cinquez and his companions is said to have filled them with joy almost frantic, in their manifestation of which a scene occurred altogether indescribable. And no wonder; for in that moment, their fears of death, or of slavery worse than death, and the awful suspense in which they had long been held were dismissed; while the sense of liberty and the prospect of returning to their father-land must have filled their minds with joy ecstatic and transporting. Every one should mark and admire the eventful and continued dispensations of Divine Providence by which these *stolen* men have been rescued from the bonds of slavery, and furnished with prospect of being restored as freemen to their homes and the embrace of those who can rejoice with them indeed. Let the reader pray that these dispensations may tend to the speedy overthrow of the system of slavery, and to the bringing of many of Africa's long devoted race to the liberty wherewith Christ makes his people free.

