

The Family.

A LILT O' THE MAISTER

In Capernaum toon amang t'ad an' gold,
The Maister spak o' his body an' bluid
An' the wheen wha had followed him melted awa'
Like the last thin' w'ath o' the slinnet snaw
Whate' here they follow'd, I canna tell,
But they walk'd nae mair w' Emmanuel.

Oh, sad was the tear o' the Maister's ee
The unbelief o' their be'its tae see
But he turn'd tae the Twal' that had bid'd thro' a'
An' he said, "Will ye also gang awa'?"
Ye hae seen how the lave offense hae ta'en
Bairns, will ye gang as the rest hae gane?"

Then oot spak Peter—haud w'as he,
The foremost an' o' the foremost three
"Maister," he said, "wha' else can we gang?
For the world's o' life tae yer' belang.
We hae seen an' we ken whate' Son ye be—
Ye're the very Christ o' God maist hie!"

Maister, the lere o' the wastl is fair,
But it says, "Lo, here" an' it says, "Lo, there!"
An' some wan'er East, an' some wan'er West,
But nae o' them ken which way is best.
An' some follow efter the fause maistlicht,
An' are lost i' the ewelastin' nicht.

Oh, whaur can we gang, if we gang na w' thee?
Wha' canst guid tae the lan' whaur the angels be?
Or whaur is the pathway that leads like thine
Tae the fields whaur the sancts in glory shine?
Whate' lere we follow we ken fu' well!
We will walk for aye w' Emmanuel!

—John J. Napier, in *The Pilgrim Teacher*

REV. A. N. SOMERVILLE, D.D., GLASGOW,
MODERATOR OF THE FREE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND.

DR. SOMERVILLE was born in 1813, and was educated at the High School and University of his native city of Edinburgh, where he made the most of his time and opportunities. In his student days he attended the ministry of the saintly Dr. James Henderson, of Stockbridge, by which he greatly profited. His burning enthusiasm in the service of Christ burst the bonds of academic restraint, and found expression in evangelistic work in the Canon-gate, where he laboured along with his bosom friend McCheyne. Even thus early he showed preaching powers of a rare kind, and proved very popular. Tokens of Divine blessing followed their labours. One of the converts of these services, Alexander Stocks, was for many years a prominent figure in the Free Church Assembly, of which he was the zealous and useful janitor.

In due time the student became a licentiate. He finished his theological curriculum, during all of which he had the benefit of the inspiring teaching of Chalmers and Welsh. In 1835 he went to live in Roxburghshire, but could not be idle there. He acted for some months as volunteer missionary in the country districts, and preached with fervour and success in schools, farmhouses and barns. Out of these meetings grew the formation of Edgerston *quoad sacra* parish church. After discharging the duties of an assistant in Stockbridge for three months, and in Larbert for ten, he was ordained to the full charge of Anderston Church, Glasgow, in November, 1837.

In his youth and early manhood Mr. Somerville was very fond of athletic sports, and through this exercise he developed the strength of constitution which has enabled him to stand so much hard and trying work. We suspect that his gymnastic feats would not always have met with the approval of good but narrow-minded elders. Dr. Thain Davidson, in his recently-published "Forewarned—Forearmed," tells how Mr. McCheyne, of revered memory, was walking in the country one Monday morning with a couple of ministerial friends. Mr. McCheyne was in the best of spirits. While crossing a field he bounded forward, and started "leap-frog," in which his companions joined heartily. A grave elder witnessed the game with pious horror, and came up to rebuke the divines for their levity. They good-humouredly confessed the error of their ways, and promised never to do the like again.

Mr. Somerville, as might be expected, threw himself with whole-hearted consecration into the duties of his pastorate. His pulpit became a centre of inspiration and blessing. He began work at a favourable time. The long winter, which had frozen the spiritual life of Scotland, showed signs of coming to an end. Revivals raised the tide of evangelical fervour. The great religious awakening at Killyth, so much associated with the late W. C. Burns, afterwards of China, and in which Mr. Somerville with others had a part, produced a deep impression throughout the country.

The years that followed were full of events of far-reaching importance. Their conflicts and activities reached a culmination in the Disruption of 1843.

Mr. Somerville was in the front of the battle. His teaching and example so influenced his people that, when the day of trial came, they stood faithful almost to a man. The whole of the office bearers, all the Sabbath school teachers, and nearly the entire congregation, followed him in joining the Free Church. This exodus was solemn and striking. The minister lifted the Bible, which had been given to him personally, from the pulpit-desk, put it under his arm, and marched out. The forsaken church remained unoccupied for a considerable time. In 1849 it was burnt to the ground. Its blackened walls lingered a picture of desolation till they were swept away to make room for a store.

A new church was built without delay. It soon got too small to hold the crowds that flocked to hear the earnest and eloquent preacher, so the large and handsome building, now known as Anderston Free Church, was erected. It was the scene of Mr. Somerville's labours during all the after years of his pastoral life.

Notwithstanding all the harassing duties of a town charge he found time for outside activities. His attention was drawn to the multitudes in Glasgow who were as sheep without a shepherd, and for whom no man cared. The Sabbath was spent by them in lounging idleness or walking on the open spaces called Glasgow Green. His heart yearned over them, and he resolved to tell them about the Saviour's love. They would not come to him, so he would go to them; he would hold open-air meetings. Such a thing was unknown in those days except to the Methodists. The resolution was quickly carried into practice. Notices were posted up on the trees and other conspicuous objects, intimating that Mr. Somerville would preach on the Sabbath. A great crowd gathered from the cheerless streets and squalid slums of the poverty-stricken. A chair was set in the centre of the Green to do duty for a pulpit. It was mounted by the minister, who wore his bands, so as to make

apparent his clerical standing to his hearers, who, like most people in Scotland, were more inclined to accept truth from the lips of an ordained man than from those of a man who had not received the imprimatur of a recognized church.

The sermons then preached are still remembered with delight. Full of fire and fervour, they aimed straight at the conscience, and did not miss their mark. Many souls experienced the new birth, and purposeless lives were dominated with the desire to serve God. Other ministers have now taken up the work Mr. Somerville began; but it will ever remain a memorial of his consecrated energy that he was among the first in Glasgow to follow the example of his Master in going out to the highways and hedges to seek the lost sheep of society.

These labours revealed his tact and capacity for evangelistic work. The church to which he belonged was glad to utilize his gifts. It sent him in 1845 to Canada, where he preached with fiery eloquence and remarkable success; in 1846 to Shelburne, where he infused something of his own spirit into the lonely dwellers in the storm-beaten isles of the far North; and in 1847 to Airdrie, where the miners flocked to hear him, and went away with quickened resolutions to live better lives. So much speaking was bound to tell on his constitution. In 1847 he was laid aside with a "minister's sore throat." His medical advisers ordered complete rest. He took advantage of this season of leisure to travel in Palestine, visiting Mount Sinai and Petra, and to make personal acquaintance with localities sacred to him because of their associations.

On his return to Scotland he resumed his old labours with renewed zeal and strength. His congregation grew in numbers and influence under his teaching. Every agency for spreading the Gospel and promoting the welfare of humanity met with his cordial sympathy and co-operation. He did much for the cause of missions in South Africa. He was one of the secretaries of the Glasgow Bible Society, and when that useful organization joined its sister societies, he became a director of the United Societies. He was so interested in getting Bibles for China, that he went through the country pleading for the necessary funds. And so the years glided past, crowded with leni-hearted service for whatever was good and true, and bright with the happiness that such a life alone can give.

In 1859 God a wave of spiritual blessing visited Ireland. Many ministers crossed the Channel to bring back fresh fire to their own pulpits. Mr. Somerville went with them. He received a baptism of the Spirit, and returned to preach as even he had never preached before. His church was thrown open for nightly meetings, which continued for eleven months, and were productive of the best results.

In 1864 he was deeply interested in the persecution of Protestants in Spain. He followed with warm sympathy the fate of the leaders in that struggle against Popery. Manuel Matamoros, who was sentenced to nine years' transportation in the galleys for distributing Bibles, but had his sentence modified into banishment, became his friend. He met him at Lausanne, and learned to love him for his qualities of heart and mind.

Mr. Somerville went regularly to Spain for some years, and strengthened the hearts of the brave Christians there. He took an active part in the secret printing of Bibles at Malaga before permission to print them publicly was given by the authorities. After the Revolution of 1868, he helped to organize the congregation at Madrid, of which Don Antonio Carrasco became pastor.

In 1874 he was requested by the Anglo-Indian Christian Union to conduct an evangelistic campaign in India. He consented, and spent upwards of five months in going over some of the largest towns in our great Eastern Empire from Madras to Moulton. He preached to the English and to the non-Christian natives who, throughout India, came in surprising numbers to hear him. Through his visit a Y.M.C.A. was started in Bombay, which still flourishes, and is increasingly a power for good. His activities were manifold, and always attended with tokens of Divine blessing. Two years later the General Assembly of the Free Church asked him to visit Canada as their representative at the first General Assembly after the union of the Presbyterian Churches in that country. When this pleasant duty was over he found time to take an evangelistic tour. Wherever he went old friends flocked round him, and cheered his heart with reminiscences of what he had spoken thirty-one years previously, in the North American Provinces.

These services paved the way for what has been the special feature of his ministerial career. The revival of the year 1874 had drawn the Christians of Glasgow together, and filled them with an earnest desire to do good. They banded themselves under the name of the United Evangelistic Association, and resolved to give other lands the benefit of the blessing they themselves had experienced. They were led to ponder more deeply the command of the risen Redeemer: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature." They could not go themselves, as duty called them to stay, but they could send a substitute. Whom could they send? Their thoughts turned to Mr. Somerville. They unanimously invited him to resign his pastorate, which he had held for forty years, and undertake the mission to regions beyond, "with a view to the promotion of union among Christians, the furtherance of aggressive evangelistic work, and specially the proclamation of the Gospel of the grace of God wherever he should go." The document in which this unusual request was embodied lies before us as we write. It is worthy of a place in the archives of Christendom, and marks a new era in missionary zeal.

This request came to a man old in years and full of labours, who might now legitimately think of spending the evening of his life in well-won leisure. It involved much travelling and hard work. It meant perils on land and by sea, and separation from home and friends. Yet it was cheerfully granted. Mr. Somerville could not refuse it: "the love of Christ constrained him." Before he went forth on his mission, he received the honorary degree of D.D. from Glasgow University. This was a tribute to the man and to his work.

The limits of our space forbid any lengthy account of his labours as the "world-evangelist." In 1877 he visited Australia, New Zealand, and Tasmania, where he was the means of stirring up Christians to united endeavour, of inaugurating Y.M.C.A.'s, and Ladies' Societies, and of awakening the unconverted to a sense of their danger. In 1879, after a short mission in Ireland, he proceeded to France and Jersey, where permanent good was done. In the spring of 1880 he addressed large audiences, sometimes numbering 3,000, in the chief Italian cities. In 1881, and again in 1882, he devoted his energies to Germany. Some evangelistic friends in Russia asked him to go to that country. He went to St. Petersburg and Moscow, but the social crisis caused by the assassination of

the Emperor and the prohibition against preaching in the Russian language, interfered with the size of his meetings. Those who did come belonged to the upper classes, and listened attentively. In November of 1882 he responded to a cordial invitation from ministers, missionaries, and laymen at the Cape to conduct a mission in the South African colonies. It was signally successful, but was abruptly brought to a close by Dr. Somerville's illness through fatigue and exposure. Fears were entertained that his labours were ended, but they were not. A brief season of rest restored his health, and though now in his seventies, he entered on an apostolic journey to the East, beginning at Athens. At Corinth he met with strenuous opposition, but he fared better at Smyrna. He afterwards went through the other villages on the site of the Seven Churches of Asia, proclaiming afresh with fire-tipped tongue and loving heart the Gospel that had been sounded forth there 1800 years before. His mission extended to Constantinople, Bithynia, Thessalonica, Thessaly and Buxara.—*The Christian*.

WESTMINSTER THEOLOGY.

BY REV. THOS. CROSKERY, D.D.

THE time has come for considering the relation of Westminster theology to modern thought. By modern thought we mean the aspect in which the great problems of theology and religion present themselves to the Christian and the non-Christian thinkers of our time. By Westminster theology we mean the theology embodied in the Confession of Faith, as drawn up in the most vigorous period of English theology by the most grave, wise, and learned body of divines ever convened in Europe. It was the last and the most complete of the great creeds, for, as Schaff remarks, "With the standards of Westminster the creed-making period of the Reformed Churches was brought to a close." Whatever may be the influence it now exercises over the thought of men, it was once a document of immense import even in British society. Dean Stanley says:

"The Westminster Confession of Faith is a document of more interest than most Englishmen ascribe to it, with the origin of which they have more concern than they often think, and which still represents the creed of a large portion of their fellow-countrymen. The very name is significant. It proceeded, not from Scotland, not from Edinburgh, but from the English Parliament, and was drawn up in the Jerusalem Chamber, in the precincts of Westminster Abbey, under the sanction of the only authorities that then existed for ecclesiastical purposes. It is the only confession of faith which was ever imposed on the whole united kingdom. The Thirty-nine Articles never extended beyond the limits of Berwick-on-Tweed, but the Confession of Faith reigned with undisputed supremacy for ten years, under the authority of Parliament, from Cape Wrath to the Land's End."

Professor Mitchell of St. Andrew's has shown, in reply to the objections of Principal Fairbairn, the Independent, that neither the Thirty-nine Articles, nor the old Scotch Confession, nor the Confession by which the Scotch bishops tried to supersede it, proceeded from an assembly more generously or liberally constituted. But, after all, it is to be judged on its own merits, rather than by the consideration of the men who drew it up.

Whatever changes may have occurred in the theological attitude of the Churches since it was prepared two centuries ago, the Confession of Faith, with the Catechisms, was once cordially accepted as the creed alike of Presbyterians, Independents, and Baptists, and, substantially, it was accepted by a large body of Episcopalians, while it is still the established creed of some of the most religious, the most Protestant, and the most progressive nations of the world, in both hemispheres, as well as of a considerable portion of the most cultivated and thoughtful people in all English-speaking countries. Yet it is the theology of this symbolic book which modern thought, in some of its most vital and energetic forms, has stigmatised as of once false, obsolete, and inept as a scheme of thought. This is a most singular judgment.

1.—Let us try to understand the exact meaning and extent of the divergence of modern thought from Westminster theology which is implied in this judgment.

2. Thinkers who agree in nothing else agree in their strenuous rejection of Calvinism. Whether it be High Churchmen in general—Prebendary Irons being taken as a sort of representative man,—or Broad Churchmen, like Maurice, Kingsley, Hunt, and Farrar; or Liberal Evangelicals, like Ellicott; or Independents, like Dale, Fairbairn, or Baldwin Brown; or Baptists, like Samuel Cox; or Theistic Spiritualists, like Francis Newman and Frances Power Cobbe; or Unitarians, like Martineau; or Agnostics, like Huxley, Clifford, Matthew Arnold, and Leslie Stephen; or those generally who represent the *strenua inertia* of learned detestantism, they all alike regard Calvinism with hatred or scorn, and assail it in pulpit, book, or newspaper. Perhaps the most remarkable fact of all is that many of these representative theologians, notably the Broad Churchmen, who have so many points of sentimental sympathy or tolerance for eccentric and even heretical thought, should lose all their breadth and catholicity in judging Calvinism, which they denounce as a system fundamentally inconsistent with all our ideas of the justice and goodness of God.

3. Our surprise at this attitude is all the greater because all the critics of Calvinism, without distinction, praise it as a scheme that was once vital, and in fact essential, to the work that was to be done in the century of Reformation. It is represented as having been a trenchant and terrible force, "with an inflexible front to illusion and mendacity," which was both admirable and necessary for rough and revolutionary times, but as deficient now in those qualities of "sweetness and light" which are so appropriate to this age,—as if all the rough work of the world were done. Dr. Dale admits that "when Calvinism was a living faith, it had a great deal of beauty in it, and it had the strength of the granite rocks." Miss Cobbe says, "Calvinism has had its heroic age: the age of the Pilgrim Fathers, of Brainerd and Hopkins." Principal Fairbairn, who is very anxious to account for its wide acceptance in the sixteenth century, thinks that various outer events at that time "combined to make Calvinism, on the one hand, define and ground its principles, and, on the other, apply and defend its conclusions." He says the persecutions in France and Holland prepared men to accept a high and stern Calvinism as their religious faith. But they were Calvinists before they were persecuted, and Michelet says truly it was their Calvinism that nerved them to go through the persecutions. All the concessions which anti-Calvinists have made to the merits of the system in the six-

teenth and seventeenth centuries naturally suggest the rather curious question, whether what was true in those centuries can have become false in the nineteenth?

3. But another fact of importance is that Calvinism was the accepted theology of all the Churches for about a century after the Reformation. It was equally the religion of Lutherans and Reformed on the Continent, and of Anglicans and Nonconformists in England. Mr. Hunt says that for seventy years after the Reformation the Church of England followed Calvin in doctrine. Calvin's *Institutes* was the text-book in the English Universities in Queen Elizabeth's reign. The stern simplicity of Calvinism was felt especially at Oxford, where it aroused the imagination with an enthusiasm which enabled it to resist the weight of Catholic authority, and the cogency of its logic commended it to a University which still admitted the scholar to a degree after public disputation in the schools. Mr. J. R. Green, in his *Short History of the English People*, speaking of the influence of the Bible upon them, says, "The answer they found was almost necessarily a Calvinistic answer." It is needless to say again how the Independents and the Baptists stood theologically in the seventeenth century. Whatever influences, philosophical, ecclesiastical, or political, may have since come into operation to break the unity of this wide Protestant witness to Calvinism, it is a strongly significant fact that the first revived study of the truth, at the end of a millennium of darkness, should have brought nothing but Calvinism out of the Bible.

4. The second point of importance which is suggested by the facts already mentioned is that Westminster theology, or Calvinism, though not at first identified exclusively with any one form of Church-government, has come to be identified, for the most part, with the Presbyterian polity.

It would seem, indeed, as if Calvinism had some natural affinity with Presbyterianism. The ideas of the two systems are fundamentally alike. Calvinism correlates the idea of order and law with the idea of liberty by its broad enunciation of the consistency of Divine sovereignty with human responsibility. Now, while Prelacy emphasises order without liberty, and Independency liberty rather than order, Presbyterianism reconciles order with liberty in its strong but elastic scheme of government.

There is undoubtedly an intimate connection, historically and moral, between systems of doctrine and forms of government. The type of doctrine, for example, represented by the Church of Rome, is as characteristic as its hierarchical system. They are both indeed adapted to promote the priestly dependence of man on man, while Presbyterian Calvinism promotes the equality of men by establishing an equal dependence of man and God. Attempts have no doubt been made at various times to engraft an evangelical theology on the hierarchical system of Rome, but with very partial success, for, like oil and water, the two elements have refused to coalesce. The doctrine of Augustine, the greatest of the Latin Fathers, has, for example, a closer affinity to Calvinistic Protestantism than to Popery, yet it has been almost completely effaced from the living theology of the Latin Church, which still recognises him as one of its saints. The Jansenists of France and Holland, likewise, who were Augustinians in doctrine, tried to find a tenable place for themselves inside the Roman communion, but they failed in the attempt.

Similarly, in the Church of England, the religious party represented by Laud and Pusey, which preceded furthest from the Reformation, had stood firmest upon the lines of apostolic succession and a prelatical order of ministry. It is not indeed difficult to show how Calvinism first lost its hold upon Anglicanism in the seventeenth century. It held its ground firmly till the reign of Charles I., when Laud confronted it with all the combined force of sacramentalism in religion and absolutism in politics. The great body of the Anglican clergy came to regard it, both as to theology and polity, as opposed to the English constitution in Church and State. Learning to Catholic tradition, and attached to Prelacy, they felt an instinctive repugnance to a system which ground to powder every trace of a sacramental religion. It was therefore natural that Arminianism should develop in England into a creed with a high ritual, and the acknowledgment of the Divine right of kings and bishops. The fact that Calvinism killed Ritualism at the moment that it was fast developing into Popery in the Puritan age, would not be forgotten after the Restoration by the divines of the Anglican communion. It would only deepen their alienation from it.—H. & F. *Evangelical Review*

(To be continued.)

SLANG ONCE MORE.

THIS time our appeal is to the mothers. It is useless to preach to the girls so long as their mothers are guilty of using phrases which their better judgment cannot fail to condemn. Not long since we heard a cultivated Christian woman speak of "going off on her ear," in the presence of daughters whom she had reproved for using slang! Perhaps a similar experience led a writer in the *Christian Intelligencer* to say:

Should we not check our little ones when they make use of slang expressions, instead of smiling upon them as if it was clever? We should teach them that such conversation is demoralizing; that it will actually do them harm; then, as they advance in years, they may dislike and despise it. Mothers, are there not some among you who advise your daughters, as they depart from your side to attend some social gathering, to "make a maab," or who, upon their return, inquire, "Did you make a mash?" What can a mother be thinking of when she makes such an inquiry? I beg of such a one (for there are those who do this) to pause, to consider what she encourages. You cannot reasonably expect your daughter to become a pure-minded woman if you fail to be an example of such.

The common slang is erroneously thought witty. True wit may be appreciated among sensible people, but slang—never! I would challenge any one to discover any thing ennobling, any thing womanly, any thing even witty about the use of what is now-a-days termed *gentle* slang; for there are those who despise the coarse expressions which so often fall from the lips of the street-loafer, who appear to glory in such expressions as "going for him," "getting left," etc.

Where shall we find as noble types of womanhood in the future as our past records furnish us if our girls do not rid themselves of this pernicious habit? To work a reformation we must begin with the mothers. Through them we may reach the daughters, hoping for the sons to follow. Let us marshal ourselves in one grand army, mothers and daughters leading the van; sons and brothers will not be willing to be found very far in the rear.