

ledging its faults, resolves to follow justice at all hazards and administer equal rights to all.

In an old catechism, man's chief end is given as the glorifying of God and the enjoyment of Him for ever. The "for ever" manifestly includes the now with the hereafter. The next question gives the Scriptures as the rule by which man may both glorify God and enjoy Him. Asking some children what they understood by a rule, a bright eyed little one replied "to draw a straight line by." A mathematical definition of a straight line comes to my mind, "that which lies evenly between two points," and a theorem that the line thus drawn was the shortest possible; then irresistibly the conviction pressed, the most direct path to peace and heaven is God's rule of righteousness. Individually, socially, we save ourselves from ten thousand perplexities by walking in the way of God's commandments. Our past dealings with the aborigines have been characterized in many instances by selfishness and deceit, by lust for gain and forgetfulness of God. We are atoning for it by the blood of some of our best citizens.

Though the mills of God grind slowly, yet they grind exceeding small;  
Though with patience He stands waiting, with exactness grinds He all.

#### CONGREGATIONAL UNION OF SCOTLAND.

The seventy-third anniversary meetings of the Congregational Union of Scotland were held in Aberdeen, April 26, and following days. Special services were held on Sunday in all the churches of the denomination in the city, and on Monday evening a united communion service was held in Belmont Church. The regular business meetings began in the same church on Tuesday forenoon. Satisfactory reports on the Widows' and Provident Funds were presented and adopted. Reference was made in the annual report on the Theological Hall to the losses sustained by the Church through the deaths of Dr. Lindsay Alexander and Dr. A. T. Gowan; of Miss Baxter, of Ellangowan, who had increased the funds of the Hall by £18,000; and of Mr. William Farquhar Keith, also a liberal contributor to this scheme. It was intimated that the mansion in George Square, Edinburgh, presented by Miss Baxter, had undergone the alterations necessary to adapt it to the uses of the Hall, and it was expected that the Principal's class this year would number thirty. In the evening a public meeting of the Union was held. It was found necessary to reduce the scale on which grants had been paid to ministers from the Supplementary Stipend Fund from £14, £21,

and £28, to £10, £15, and £20, the new scale to be adopted next year with regard to new applicants. The annual business meeting of the Union was held on Wednesday at one o'clock. The treasurer's report showed that the total sum contributed to the Union during the year amounted to over £1,207, rather less than the previous year. Rev. George McHardy, of Kirkcaldy, was appointed chairman for the ensuing year, and Rev. E. Heath, Broughty Ferry, delegate to the Congregational Union of England. Another public meeting was held in the evening under the presidency of Lord Provost Matthews.

At the deacons and delegates' breakfast on Thursday morning a resolution was adopted to the effect that a committee be appointed to confer with the laymen of the Evangelical Union to ascertain their feeling in regard to the union with the Congregational body. The annual meeting of the Total Abstinence Society was held at eleven and the conference of the Scottish Congregationalists at one. Rev. A. Goodrich, who presided at the latter, said that they were not met there as a union but as pastors, and as such he thought they ought to do something to form public opinion which was really a formative power in national life. Rev. A. B. Morris moved: "That this Conference desires to express its appreciation of the earnest efforts which the Government are making in the interests of peace in the existing relations between this country and Russia, earnestly prays that their efforts may be successful, and expresses its unabated confidence in the wisdom, patriotism, and fair dealing of Her Majesty's Government." The motion was unanimously carried, amid applause, and it was agreed to telegraph its terms to Mr. Gladstone. Rev. Dr. Pillans moved that the Conference petition the House of Commons in favour of Mr. Dick Peddie's Disestablishment Bill, and this was also unanimously agreed to.

The gatherings of the Union were brought to a close with the usual *conversazione*, held in the Music Hall.

#### TOO MUCH RELIGION.

We live in an age of pretension. The clerk in the grocery store must have his letters addressed Plantagenet Vandyke Higgins, Esq., though he cannot tell whether Esq. is name or surname, or only Darwinian survival from a pagan ancestor. Distinctive national dresses are fast disappearing as savouring of a peasant extraction; and our domestics are enquired for as Miss Mary Jane. No one wants to appear before the world as just exactly what he is, or be valued according to education, character or work. Spartan simplicity is extinct: when a contractor makes money and sets up in a big house, he spells his name (formerly John Smith) John de Smythe, though all familiar with the vagaries of modern fashion can detect the original form. It is the same in