

Luther on the Ten Commandments.

I.

IF one heresy die, by and by another springeth up: for the devil doth neither slumber nor sleep. I myself, which (although I be nothing) have been now in the ministry of Christ about twenty years, can truly witness that I have been assailed with more than twenty sects, of the which some are already destroyed; other some (as the parts and members of worms and bees that are cut asunder), do yet pant for life. But Satan, the god of all dissension, stirreth up daily new sects, and last of all (which, of all other, I should never have foreseen or once expected), he hath raised up a seed of such as teach that the Ten Commandments ought to be taken out of the Church, and that men should not be terrified with the law, but gently exhorted by the preaching of the grace of Christ, that the saying of the prophet Micah might be fulfilled, "Let no man strive nor reprove another"—as though we were ignorant, or had never been taught, that afflicted and broken spirits must be comforted by Christ. But the hard-hearted Pharisees, unto whom the grace of God is preached is vain, must be terrified with the law. And they themselves also are forced to devise and imagine certain revelations of God's wrath against the wicked and unbelievers—as though the law were or could be anything else but a revealing of God's wrath against impiety. Such is the blindness and presumption of these frantic heads, which, even by their own judgment, do condemn themselves.—*From the Preface to Luther's Commentary on the Galatians.*

II.

The greatest knowledge, then, and the greatest wisdom of Christians, is, not to know the law, to be ignorant of works, and of the whole active righteousness (i. e. of man's doing), especially when the conscience wrestleth with the judgment of God. Like as, on the contrary, amongst those which are not of the number of God's people, the greatest point of wisdom is, to know and earnestly to urge the law and the active righteousness. Works and the keeping of the law must be so strictly required in the world, as if there were no promise or grace: and that, because of the stubborn, proud and hard-hearted, before whose eyes nothing must be set but the law, that they may be terrified and humbled. For the law is given to terrify and kill such, and to exercise the old man; and both the word of grace and of wrath must be rightly divided, according to the Apostle. The flesh, or the old man, must be coupled with the law and works; the spirit, or new man, must be joined with the promise of God and His mercy. Wherefore, when I see a man that is bruised enough already, oppressed with the law, terrified with sin, and thirsting for comfort, it is time that I should remove out

of his sight the law and active righteousness, and that I should set before him, by the gospel, the christian and passive righteousness, which, excluding Moses with his law, offereth the promise made in Christ, who came for the afflicted and for sinners. Here is man raised up again, and conceiveth the good hope; neither is he any longer under the law, but under grace. How not under the law? According to the new man, to whom the law doth not appertain. For the law hath his bounds unto Christ, as Paul saith afterwards, "For Christ is the end of the law" (Rom. x. 4), who, being come, Moses ceaseth with his law, circumcision, the sacrifices, the sabbaths, yea, and all the prophets.—*From the argument of Luther's Commentary on the Epistle of the Galatians.* P. K.

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Baptism of the First Convert in Japan.

THE first convert in Japan has been baptized. An old man called Yano has been for many years a native physician, but latterly for about five years he has been connected with the missionaries, and especially under the tuition of Mr. Ballagh, a missionary of the Reformed Dutch Church. He has been a year in feeble health. In the beginning of November last, he very urgently requested baptism, expressing "clear views of his faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as the only way of salvation, and an entire renunciation of Buddhism and every other false system." After being warned of the danger that might beset him in consequence of his conversion, which, however, did not at all move him, he was, with the full consent of wife, son, and daughter, received by baptism into the Church of Christ. And so, in one more great country, ground has been broken, and Christ has one native disciple. There is the "handful of corn" in the land; may "the fruit thereof" yet "shake like Lebanon!"—*H. & F. Record.*

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Hopes of a Re-union between the Church of Scotland and the Free Church!

THAT man would require to be a wise seer indeed who would venture to predict the course of human opinion, in relation to any subject whatever. Three and twenty years ago a fierce conflict, which had been raging for a lengthened period within the walls of the Church of Scotland, came to an issue. A band of able and eloquent ministers of the Establishment seceded, drawing along with them a considerable number of lay adherents. The passions which were excited at that period, have cooled down in a remarkable degree, and by the last mail we were furnished with conclusive proof that in the Free Church there is a considerable party who are both desirous and hopeful of a re-union