

abandoned, or not general, or not as it should be. Somewhat definite, if not more comforting, are such statements as that it is sadly neglected save by a few, or that it is not regularly observed except by the staid and old-fashioned, or that there is an almost entire lack of it. But in most cases it is both possible and wise to get much more precious information. There may be a very few places like that whose sessions say, 'We doubt the wisdom of making any general investigation in this community. That method has been tried with rather unfortunate results' but many sessions in every Synod can give the exact number of families in their congregations which observe this practice. The convener of one Presbyterial committee tells us that in making his first pastoral calls in his present congregation he asks the head of each household, in the presence of his family, whether he conducted family worship, and in no case did he fail to get an answer on which he believes he can rely. In those congregations whose sessions know the state of things, family worship is observed in 4 families out of 31, in one-tenth, one-sixth, one-fifth, one-fourth, one-half, and again in three-fifths, two-thirds, three-fourths, four-fifths and five-sixths of the homes. It is questionable whether the spiritual life of the congregation corresponds exactly with the extent to which this practice is in vogue. Nor does it seem possible to distinguish between various sections of the country. However, the Presbyteries of Sydney and Inverness give the most cheering report, the latter even finding family worship observed by some parents who are not communicants while, as it might be expected, the state of the newer districts is least encouraging. It should also be said that from Manitoba and the North-West, Montreal and Ottawa, and elsewhere comes the good news that there is some improvement, that the cloud is lifting, that this matter is receiving greater attention. The Synod of Toronto and Kingston even says, 'It may be that hitherto we have been casting shame upon our people when they should have been commended.' In these signs let us rejoice; 'family religion,' to quote from the Presbytery of Prince Edward Island, 'is the foundation of all that is solid and strong in congregational life and has been the glory of Presbyterianism in the lands where she shaped character into high and holy endeavor. A revival of family religion would speedily lead to the larger revival of congregational and national religions.'

#### Mr. MacInnes' Criticism.

In his address at the General Assembly of the Australian Church, the Moderator, Mr. MacInnes, thinks that he, assisted by the new school of critics, has slain the Theory of Verbal Inspiration; that now it is forever dead, without hope of resurrection, and no matter if the caricature of Divine Inspiration which he has sketched is dead, it does not seem necessary to have any mourners or funeral. Was his theory of Verbal Inspiration ever alive, or held by any but individual men? What reformed church ever put such a theory in its symbolic books as a definition of Divine Inspiration? Certainly, as Mr. MacInnes avers, the Westminster standards are not responsible for his caricature; it is not taught therein. The slaughter of Mr. MacInnes' *Bete noi*: will not affect in any way the Presbyterian Church, yet the standards strenuously assert an inspiration which belongs to the written

language, call it verbal or plenary, or any other name you please, it is divine, so that the Scripture is God's Word and not man's. Here are the careful definitions in the chief symbolic book.

Confession of Faith, Chap. 1. Sec. (1) "It pleased the Lord at sundry times and in divers manners to reveal Himself and to declare His will unto His Church; and afterwards . . . to commit the same wholly into writing." Sec. (2) "Under the name of Holy Scripture or the Word of God written are now contained" (here follow the Canonical Books of the Old and New Testaments) "all which are given by inspiration of God, to be the rule of faith and life." Sec. (4) "The authority of the Holy Scripture, for which it ought to be believed and obeyed, dependeth . . . wholly upon God (who is truth itself) the author thereof, and therefore it is to be received because it is the Word of God." Of a truth Mr. MacInnes' theory of Verbal Inspiration is not found here; but we have something far superior—we have a statement of facts—viz., that the Lord committed the revelation of Himself and of His will which He made to *writing*; in such a sense that although fallible men wrote the books, they are not the authors of the word written, but God is the author; and the *writings* are divinely inspired. Further in Chap. 1, Sec. (8) it is said "The Old Testament in Hebrew, and the New Testament in Greek, being immediately inspired by God . . . are therefore authentic" also "They should be translated into the vulgar language of every nation." This process of translation is the work of fallible men; but the "Word of God written" after being translated is none the less God's Word; nor does translation in any way detract from its authority as the Word of God. Divine Inspiration and authority do not depend on the particular language in which we read God's Word. It is something spiritual; transcending the forms of the letters, the spelling of the words, and the idioms of the language in which God's revelation of Himself and His will is presented; something that results from the revealing of the truth and the committing of the revelation to writing alike being the Work of God, and not of fallible men. Thus our critics fail to recognize or at least duly to estimate and respect.

The late Dr. Martin has well put the dilemma, and let our critics take their choice—If these writings are not the Word of God who cares? The denial of their authority and truthfulness is a matter of moonshine. But if they are the Word of God, who dares? To tamper with Holy Scripture, deny its authority, or charge it with untruthfulness is a crime against God and man.—C.

#### President Patton Honored.

It was a graceful and well-deserved tribute to a distinguished Canadian abroad, the conferring of the degree of LL.D., on Rev. Dr. Patton, of Princeton, by the University of Toronto. The honor was conferred on a man of remarkable parts, one who has played a part of very great importance in the Presbyterian Church in America, and whose career for many reasons has been of peculiar interest to Presbyterians in Canada. As was said by Mr. King in proposing Dr. Patton, he is not a stranger to Canada, nor to the Canadian people, and bound to this country by academic ties which cannot be forgotten. He is an alumnus of Knox College, many of whose graduates are graduates of Princeton,