

determines the character of pulpit deliverances. Biblical Jews make Biblical pulpits. The power of the Sabbath school in promoting and sustaining Bible study must issue in assigning, sooner or later, their proper place to Rhetoric and Philosophy in pulpit ministrations. We look, moreover, largely to the Sunday school in this respect to help to give a mortal blow to the sensational devices which yet too widely disfigure the pulpit methods of our day, because healthy appetites best secure healthy supplies of food.

4. Consider, fourthly, the bearing of the Sabbath school upon the home. The power of the Sunday school discharging aright Christ's commission to make all nations His scholars, has had a most beneficial effect upon home life and teaching. Opposition was offered to the Sabbath school, on the ground of its arrogating parental functions in seeking to teach the young, and thus tending to destroy the sense of obligation in parents, upon whom specially devolved the duty of the religious instruction of their children. Whatever apparent force lay in this plea, experience has completely destroyed it. Like other objections that seemed valid at first sight, it has failed when put to actual trial. Railways were opposed on one ground, among others, that the use of horses would become obsolete. It was advocated that the employment of machinery would result in dispensing with human toil. But a new order of things calls up new requirements, which before its introduction were unforeseen. Sabbath school studies have been introduced into the home to engage alike the minds of parents and children. The Sabbath school has brushed off the dust that too long has lain upon family Bibles, and made the Word of God an open book in thousands of homes, where before the era of modern Sabbath schools it had been a sealed volume. History demonstrates, beyond a doubt, that the efficiency of the Sabbath school and family religion are inseparably connected, and that the prosperity of the former is a measure of that of the latter.

5. We come in the last place to consider the power of the Sabbath school upon the world generally. Baron Bunsen alleged that "the Apostolic Church made the school the connecting link between herself and the world." The Bible-school was a great factor in changing art and literature from being Pagan into Christian. Previous to the Bible-school taking its due place in Church work in our day, art and literature had little incentive to choose themes from, or to making allusion to the Bible, owing to the ignorance respecting it of all classes in the community, both in mansion and cot. Sir Joshua Reynolds's famous picture of Samuel answering God's call, was unknown as to its subject by the aristocratic people of his time. He was asked on all sides, by those in the highest social circles, who Samuel was. All this is now changed, and largely through Sunday school studies. These studies have kept busy the best pencils and pens during the last thirty years. Sabbath-schools have operated greatly to keep Scriptural interests before the world, through the powerful way they have exerted upon the secular as well as the religious people; upon the literary magazines as well as the theological reviews. Verily the grain of seed sown in our day by Robert Raikes has grown into a mighty tree bearing already precious fruit for "the healing of the nations." Emerson said Britain could better afford to part with her navy than to lose her Shakespeare. It is surely not too much for us to affirm that by retaining a more and more vital and luminous relation to the Bible, the world shall yet witness the day when men "shall beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning hooks," for there shall be nothing to hurt or destroy, when all nations apprehending the Fatherhood of God shall practice the brotherhood of man.

Correspondence.

THE SABBATH DAY.

[To the Editor of the Presbyterian Review.]
SIR,—An esteemed friend in England has sent me the enclosed letter on a very interesting subject. The view presented is new to me, but it has commended itself to many thoughtful students of Scripture, and is well worthy of our attention. The fact that there are so many Saturday Sabbatists on this continent, makes the question a very practical one, and I should like much to hear the views of trustworthy interpreters of Scripture on the subject. Yours, etc.,

A. B. MACKAY.
MONTREAL, May 22, 1880.

"I do not know whether you have ever considered the question whether the present Sunday is the day originally sanctified by God at the Creation. You may remember that Archbishop Usher held the view that it is, and I know of nothing in Scripture to contradict it. Presuming that the creation of the world commenced on Monday, Sunday, although the seventh day of creation, would have been the first day of man's week, he having been created on the sixth day. The special reverence in which Sunday has been held by some nations of old, tends to point out a traditional sanctity for this day, even after they had left off worshipping the true God. If you refer to Exodus xvi. 23, you will find, according to the new version, that the Jews had a Sabbath appointed them—'And this is that which the Lord hath spoken, to-morrow is a solemn rest, a holy Sabbath unto the Lord.' And it is easy to conceive that the day God would appoint for the Jews

as their most holy day, would not be that which was held by the idolatrous nations around as their most holy day—carrying out His Divine plan of keeping them a peculiar people, a separate nation. Later, when our Lord rose from the tomb, and the Jewish Dispensation came to an end, the reasons for a separate Sabbath for the Jews would also have ceased to exist, and the Sabbath sanctified at the Creation became again the Sabbath of the Church of God, a day further sanctified a few weeks later on by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on that day. This view appears to me much more in accordance with the unchangeable nature of God than the labored attempts so often made to prove the propriety of a change of day. The closer we follow the clear and direct teaching of God's Word, the safer shall we be. May we never forget God's foreknowledge, and that when the Sabbath was sanctified at the Creation, He knew the whole of the events of the future. The beautiful harmony of God's providence must be viewed as a continuous whole."

[Our columns are open to a discussion of this interesting topic. ED. REVIEW.]

Church News.

SYNOD OF TORONTO AND KINGSTON.

THE GALT HERESY CASE—SPEECHES BY REV. DR. MIDDLEMISS AND REV. PAUL MACLAREN.

(Specially reported for the Presbyterian Review.)

REV. DR. MIDDLEMISS.

Dr. Middlemiss, after referring to the action of the Synod in appointing assessors, and to the proceedings of the Kirk Session, in seeking to ascertain from the parties themselves what they believed and were teaching, spoke as follows:

"So far as Christian doctrine is concerned, the Synod will see all the questions put to the parties bore upon one point, namely, whether, in the communication of His grace or saving goodness to the Christian believer, God does in any case in this life, not only deliver him from the guilt (or condemnation) and the dominion (or ruling power) of sin, but also deliver him from its inhabitation, as a living and operative or actively rebellious resident, and thus so deliver him from sin that he lives without being guilty of any sin in thought, word or deed. We are all agreed that the Christian believer, the man who, being 'born of God,' is in living union with Christ by faith, is not only from the moment of his union with Christ, delivered from the guilt of sin, so that there is no condemnation to him, but also freed from the dominion of sin, so that it does not reign in him and he cannot live in sin. But the question is, whether, in any case, God goes beyond this, in the present life, or that He frees the believer from sin that he lives entirely without sin, and has thus no occasion to confess sin and ask forgiveness."

"I must crave," he said, "the patience of the Synod, while I endeavor to make this matter plain; because it is the core of the difference between the appellants and us; and we had no little difficulty in getting rank and straight forward answers from some of them. Some of them did not consider that we were not dealing judicially or magisterially with them, but paternally, and that it was their duty to be perfectly frank and sincere with us when the spreading of error being alleged against them, we sought to ascertain from their own lips the views which they actually held and taught, and not to challenge our right to interrogate them, as persons charged with crime before a judge may do. But to the point. That God should permit the existence of sin in the Christian believer, whom He has delivered from its guilt and dominion, is a part of the great mystery of the existence of sin under the moral government of One who is infinite in power, wisdom, and goodness—the perfection of all that is great and good. That he does not utterly destroy or extinguish, in this life, the corruption of our fallen nature, besides delivering us from the condemnation and the reigning power of sin, adds nothing to the essential mystery of the existence of sin. Sin is in me, as it is in the world, only by God's permission; and it is permitted in the one case, as in the other, only that it may be over-ruled for good. That it is in me by my birth is but a part of the one great mystery. By God's permission, another (not God but a creature) has injured me; it being a part of the awful mystery, that one creature can be the author of sin in another as well as in himself. But that sin is in me, whether reigning in me in my natural fallen state, or dwelling in me, after God has broken its reigning power, is not God's doing. If, being a believer, sin dwells in me, a living actively rebellious resident, I owe it to another creature and not to God. To Him I owe only the dethronement of sin with the forgiveness of it. He is the author only of the good that is in me, not of the sin, whether it reigns or only dwells in me. All this, I take it, is universally understood and accepted among us as fundamental truth."

"Then again, turning to the provision that God has made for our deliverance from sin, we all rejoice to know that it is complete, and our faith looks forward to the time when the last vestige of sin shall be swept from the earth. Finding us in a helpless state of sin and misery, wretched outcast infants, whose helplessness it is not in the power of language to exaggerate, God has provided in and by Christ for our being made entirely worthy of Himself in character and condition. His purpose shall not fail of its accomplishment; and it is a matter of express revelation that at Christ's second coming the destruction of the last enemy will complete the bestowment upon us of all the good secured for us by the great sacrifice. But complete as is the provision, and sure as is the fulfillment of God's purpose, to bestow upon us all the saving good, He does not at once communicate all the good that is ours in purpose and provision. He could do so. But we cannot later from the infancy of His power and goodness, either the measure of the goodness He will communicate, or the time and circumstances of its communication. Not only could He, if it pleased Him (and His pleasure is wisdom), ordain that perfect sinlessness should be attainable by the believer in this life; but He could ordain that sinless perfection should be simulta-

neous with the believing reception of Christ, or that every believer should be sinlessly perfect from the moment of his being united with Christ by faith. And more than this; if it so pleased Him, He could ordain not only that perfect freedom from all the consequences of sin should be attainable in this life; but that such freedom should be the actual experience of every believer. In short, the power and goodness of God are sufficient to make every Christian entirely free from sin, suffering and death, from the moment of his conversion, so that no believer should ever sin, suffer or die, but either be taken to heaven immediately, or be kept here for a longer or shorter period without sinning, or suffering, and then translated as Enoch and Elijah were. But He has not so ordained. Why He has not, we need not inquire. We are sure His pleasure is wisdom, and it is our wisdom to accept His pleasure with humility, submission, trust and gratitude. In communicating to believers from the fountain of His infinite goodness, He is pleased, in the hour of their conversion to God or union with Christ, to free them from the guilt and the dominion of sin and to make them His sons and daughters, to put them in the same relation to Himself as Christ is, as His subjects and children. 'There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.' 'Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed on us, that we should be called the Sons of God' etc.

"But much remains all his life matter of promise to the believer. It has not pleased God that he should be exempt from suffering while in the body, or that he should have experience of the redemption of the body, till Christ re-appears. And the question that is now raised by the case of the appellants is, not can God so communicate His goodness to the Christian believer that he may or shall, with or without conditions, be or live, at any time in this life, entirely without sin, so living that, for the time being, he has no sin to confess and seek the forgiveness of—not, I say, can God do this? but has He promised it? Setting aside all the verbiage that has become associated with what is called the holiness movement, and eschewing all ambiguous language and doubtful terms, that is the question: Has God promised conditionally or unconditionally that He will or may impart to the believer, in this life, such grace—grace, that is, in such kind and measure—that he shall live entirely free from sin, in thought, word and deed? Or is this a communication of Divine grace that is reserved for another state than the present. The appellants, as is manifest, not only from their answers to the questions of the Kirk Session, which form part of the record, but from their pleadings here this afternoon, affirm that God has promised this communication as an experience in this life, and that it is their own experience. I do not enter into the discussion of the matter, in its doctrinal aspect, as my brother, Dr. Torrance, is to follow me in that line. But I say, if our Standards pronounce distinctly and emphatically on any one subject, it is on this, and in direct opposition to the views and claims of the appellants. This Church has always taught, in terms, one would think, beyond the possibility of misapprehension, that God has not promised to extinguish in us or remove from us, in this life, the corruption of our fallen nature; but that, on the contrary, He permits it to remain in those that are regenerated; and it affirms that although this corruption be through Christ pardoned and mortified (so that no believer is under the dominion of sin or lives in sin), yet both itself and all its motions are truly and properly sin (Confession of Faith, vi. 3, 6). It has always taught that 'no man is able, either of himself, or by any grace received in this life, perfectly to keep the commandments of God, but doth daily break them in thought, word and deed' (Larger Catechism, Q. 149). It has always taught that 'no mere man since the fall is able in this life perfectly to keep the commandments of God, but doth daily break them,' etc. (Shorter Catechism, Q. 82). The appellants try to evade the force of this last statement by suggesting that, by a 'mere man' is meant an unregenerate man, although they can hardly but know that the Westminster Divines meant a man who is more than a man as Christ is, and intended simply to except Him from their denial of human sinlessness. Nor do they consider what an incredible absurdity they charge upon those great men in supposing they thought it needful to construct an article of religion affirming that an unregenerate man cannot perfectly keep the law of God. And does it not occur to them that to believe that any man, however holy, is more than a man, or, in the language of some, is *godlike*, is to believe a blasphemous falsehood? The appellants also endeavor to evade our reference to the fifth petition of the Lord's Prayer, proving that no believer in this life is beyond the need of daily confessing, and asking forgiveness, by saying that by our 'debts' are meant our obligations to Christ which we can never fully repay. To say nothing of the essential inconsistency of asking forgiveness for what, according to them, is not sinful, do they not know that in the Gospel according to Luke, the fifth petition reads, 'Forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us?'

"I cannot but wonder that the appellants, as honest men and women, can hesitate, for a moment, to make frank acknowledgment that their views are diametrically in opposition to the teaching of the Standards of the Church. They maintain that God does, on certain conditions, which the believer may fulfil, impart to him such grace, that he lives without sinning in any relation human or divine, and that they have received such grace; while the Standards most positively and strongly deny that it is imparted to any in this life. It is vain for them to attempt to evade the charge of contrariety to the Standards in the claim they make of entire freedom from sin. To affirm, as they do (Reasons 3 and 4), that they do not believe in or teach absolute perfection, and that they do not teach sanctification, heart purity, or Christian perfection, as a second blessing, is beside the point; for no such charge is made against them. And it is equally beside the point, to say (Reason 5) that they emphasize the receiving of the Holy Ghost in a Pentecostal sense, and to refer to John iii. 6, 9, and Romans viii. 4; for we all believe that it is the privilege of all believers to receive

the Holy Ghost for all the personal saving ends for which He was given on the day of Pentecost; and that no one who is born of God can live in sin as the children of the wicked one do. The Synod will note that the appellants habitually misapply what the Scriptures affirm respecting all believers, in support of their error in relation to the attainments of a particular class of believers. Passages that teach of believers, universally and without exception, that they cannot live in sin, they quote as proving that some believers live without sinning. A most incredible as one might suppose it to be, in persons who have had the advantages of the appellants, it can hardly be doubted that they fail to distinguish between the imminence of sin and its inhabitation, between its reigning and its rebelling, between not living in sin and being without sin. But not the less dangerous, on that account, is the error into which they have fallen."

"I shall not detain the Synod by pointing out, at any length, the extreme danger of the views of the appellants. But reference must be made to it, as justifying the action of the Session, and of the Presbytery in sustaining that of the Session. If it is really so that, in the communication of God's grace to Christian believers, He does not, in this life, go beyond delivering them from the condemnation and dominion of sin, but permits its remaining in them—a living and actively rebellious, though dethroned, resident—so long as they are at home in the body and absent from the Lord,—if, in other words, entire deliverance from sin is a communication of grace reserved for the believer's quitting the body to be present with the Lord (as there are other communications of Divine goodness reserved for the Lord's second coming)—if, I say, this is really the teaching of Scripture, then the persuasion that this communication of grace is not a reserve of the Divine goodness, but a present experience, cannot but be fraught with unspeakable danger, involving, as it must, utterly false as well as slight views of sin and great obtuseness of perception in relation to it. If I believe that God has made to me a communication of His grace that he has not made, and makes to no man till he quits the body; if I believe that God has entirely delivered me from sin, while it is yet in me a living resident, ever acting in accordance with its essential nature; if I believe that I am not, when I am actually sinning daily in thought, word and deed, I can only be deceiving myself, so that I see not the sinfulness of tendencies, dispositions, thoughts, feelings, acts, and practices that are really sinful. Evidence is not wanting that it is so, in the case of the appellants. Dispositions, and desires, and feelings of a sinful character, the outcome of the sin that dwells in us, are regarded as not sinful, but as being the sinless outcome of the essential God-imparted aptitudes of humanity. Allow me, in illustration, to quote briefly from a pamphlet on 'The Holy Life,' by James F. Govan, the present head of a body in England (Faith Mission Pilgrims): 'He can take away sin from our inmost being,' and it is their claim that God has done so in their own experience. But mark what follows. 'We find in James that every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust and enticed. Then, when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin. When a man feels a desire drawing towards sin, it does not say he has sinned, but only that he is tempted.' This is very like a reply that I got from one of the appellants before the Session, who, I could not but think, identified indwelling sin with the essential aptitudes of human nature. Is there any considerate Christian who does not see the extreme danger of this? Should the appellants themselves escape, will not their followers be landed in the theology of Robert Buras:

"If I have wandered in those paths
Of life I ought to shun;
Thou knowest that Thou hast formed me
With passions wild and strong."

"Apart from the evil moral tendency of the identification of the remaining corruption of our fallen nature with the God-imparted, sinless aptitudes of humanity, surely, if a man thinks he is living without sin by believing that what is sinful is not sinful, he must be at least seriously wanting in what is an essential element of genuine religion—conviction of sin."

"I am willing to believe that the error of the appellants is largely one of judgment. I have already referred to their not distinguishing between the dominion of sin and its inhabitation, etc. I find the complete oversight of this distinction running through a long letter which I received, a few days ago, from one who has been led to adopt the views of the appellants. She speaks of herself as having formerly been 'making Christ the minister of sin,' and adds, 'Surely we must live in sin and have the joy of the Christian,' not seeming to know that we hold that a man cannot live in sin and be a Christian. Indeed, they seem to me to have become entangled in the *antinomianism* of believing that, if a man has a right intellectual apprehension of the doctrine of gratuitous justification, and is willing to be pardoned, he is in a state of salvation, although he may be under the dominion of sin and living in it; forgetting that deliverance from the guilt of sin is inseparable from deliverance from its dominion, as faith is inseparable from regeneration."

Dr. Middlemiss, after referring to objections made to the regularity of the proceedings, and urging that not only had all their rights been fully accorded to the appellants, but that they had been dealt with in the exercise of the utmost patience, kindness and consideration, concluded as follows:—

"We are all agreed that the low spiritual condition of the membership of our churches is to be acknowledged with sincere grief and humiliation, and that there is hardly any limit to the possibilities of the Christian life, as we see in the high attainments of a few, who, however, are the farthest from thinking highly of their own attainments. But to ground these possibilities on a false principle is unspeakably dangerous; and I trust no uncertain sound will be issued here in reference to that principle."

"I have refrained from all reference to the irrelevant declamation with which the action of the Galt Session has been assailed, especially by parties charging us

with inconsistency, in allowing immoral persons—the drunkard, the impure, the profane, the money-grabber, and the follower of pleasure—to nestle in the Church and sit at the Lord's table, and casting out good Christian men and women of consecrated lives, who, to say the worst, have only mistaken the meaning of a few passages of Scripture. I regret extremely that such a charge should have been endorsed at your bar this afternoon by one of the appellants; because, indeed, it involves misrepresentation of the grossest kind. The Church hardly ever deals with a case of unsound doctrine. This is the first time, during a long ministry, that I have had personally to do with a case of the kind. And surely, though I would be the last to draw the line between essential and non-essential in Christian doctrine, there are doctrines whose repudiation is inconsistent with faith in Christ. It is not said our doctrine of indwelling sin in the Christian believer is not one of the essentials or fundamentals, I will say, it is made at least a very close approach to it. Very surely, you are not far from the region of the essentials, when you are dealing with man's views of sin. I have no hesitation in saying that to-day you are dealing with an error that will poison the spiritual life at its very fountain, and foster a deceitful counterfeit of genuine piety. And our assailants forget, if they are not recklessly blind to the fact, that the appellants have not been disciplined for their error, dangerous as it is and diametrically opposed to the Standards of the Church, but for their expressed determination to press their views upon the acceptance of others. Even had their error been one of comparatively little evil consequence, Christian courtesy, one would think, should suggest their withdrawal from our communion, instead of disturbing its peace by the active dissemination of views so notoriously contrary to its Standards. But since they refuse to withdraw, I believe the Synod will see that the Galt Kirk Session has done the least that it could do, if the Church is to be freed of the responsibility of the dissemination of error, which we know to be of a very injurious character in relation to the spiritual interests of men."

REV. DR. MACLAREN.

was of opinion that substantial justice had been done to the appellants in the proceedings of the Presbytery and Session. They had pleaded that the decision at which they had arrived when they sent it back to the Session with assessors. If, at this earlier stage, the Presbytery decided against them, they should at that stage have appealed to the Synod. But in no case could this procedure affect them injuriously, because it did not interfere in any way with their opportunity of vindicating themselves and of bringing their case under the review of the higher courts of the Church."

The objection that specific charges were not formulated against them was of no great weight. The Rule 260, which they quote from the Book of Forms, applies only in the case of libel, as is evident from Rule 268. But the Session did not proceed by libel, and it is not usual to do so, except in the case of ministers, and sometimes other office-bearers. The citation, no doubt, might have been more specific, but in dealing with private members the laws and customs of the Presbyterian Church do not require the same formalities as in dealing with an elder, and still less in disciplining a minister. In the Book of the United Presbyterian Church, p. 76, the matter is well stated: "As Church courts are entirely spiritual, and their decisions are unattended with any civil effect, the nature of the procedure, and the ends to be promoted by it, seem to render it unnecessary that they should be bound down by minute forms. It is enough that care is taken that substantial justice is done to the party, and full opportunity allowed to vindicate his innocence, or extenuate his guilt." And in reference to the right of the Session to examine the parties accused, the same Book is equally explicit. "In the next section but one, it says, 'When the accused appears, he is interrogated as to the matter of fact.' According to the procedure of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, as you will see from 'Baird's Digest,' p. 127, a minister suspected of error can be examined before he is received by the Presbytery. In respect to its being a hardship that a man is made to testify against himself, the author replies 'that however this may be in a civil court, that in a court where the Holy Ghost presides, no man is warranted to hold back any fact which the court should know as affecting his relations to the Church.'"

In the case before us, there is happily no dispute as to the facts. The testimony of the appellants themselves, as to what they hold and teach, was taken. The only question which can be raised, and which really is raised, is in reference to the true bearing of their admissions and avowals."

In dealing with this important case, on its merits, it seemed to him that there were two questions which the Synod required to settle, viz. Do the appellants, according to the Subordinate Standards and the Word of God, hold and teach error? and if so, How should they be dealt with? The charge of following divisive courses, although very important, is so connected with their teaching error, that it seemed to him scarcely to demand separate attention."

The error which these brethren are charged with holding and teaching is substantially what is known as the Doctrine of Entire Sanctification in the Present Life. They assure us, however, that they do not believe in or teach absolute perfection, but precisely what they mean by absolute perfection. They also reject the phrase 'sinless perfection,' and certain words which have a well-known current value, as defining their view. They wish us to regard them as presenting the question wholly as a matter of experience. They assure us that they have attained an experience in which they had no consciousness of sin. They claim personally to have lived for periods of greater or less duration without any consciousness of sin, and that there have been periods when they did not need to confess sin, or ask forgiveness for it."

It was evident to him that such an experience can be accounted for in one of two ways: either (1) there was no sin present in their hearts and lives to be

recognized, and they were for the time being sinlessly perfect, or (2) their consciences or moral natures had become so bewildered, drugged or deadened, that they ceased to perform their function. In other words, it seemed to him that such an experience as these appellants claimed, can be the result only of perfect holiness, or of spiritual blindness. These brethren certainly will not claim that their experience results from the lack of 'spiritual discernment'; it is evident that whatever the form of words in which they clothe their notions, that what they hold and teach is what is ordinarily known as 'sinless perfection.' They do not imagine that they have no consciousness of sin, because they are living under a terrible delusion, but because for the time being there is no sin within them of which they can be conscious."

Paul, before his conversion, had an experience which corresponded wonderfully with that of the appellants. (When he confined his attention to the letter of the law and to the shunning of what he overtook transgression, he seems to have had no consciousness of sin. He regarded himself as "being the righteousness which is in the law blameless." In another of his Epistles, referring to this same period of his life, he tells us, "I had not known sin, by the law, for I had not known lust, except the law had said thou shalt not covet." It would seem that until he discovered the spirituality of the law of God and the extent of its requirements, as reaching to the very disposition and demanding the entire conformity of the state and condition, the tendencies and desires of the heart to the image of God, that he was very well satisfied with himself, and his conscience gave him no trouble. He declares, "I was alive without the law once, but when the commandment came, sin revived and I died." The moment that the commandment came home to him in the full extent of its demands, his delusion was over and he felt himself a lost sinner. There is, however, one important point of difference between the Apostle Paul and these brethren: Paul, when he was afterwards taught of God, related his experience as a warning to others to shun the delusion by which he was carried away, they relate their experience that others may be stimulated and encouraged to seek a similar experience for themselves."

He considered that it was not necessary to add one word to the clear statements of Dr. Middlemiss to show that this doctrine clearly contradicted the teaching of our Standards. The language of the Larger Catechism, Q. 149 admits of no ambiguity: "No man is able, either of himself or by any grace received in this life, perfectly to keep the commandments of God; but doth daily break them in thought, word and deed." In Confession, Ch. 13, after stating the progressive nature of sanctification, it is added in section 2, "This sanctification is throughout the whole man, yet imperfect in this life, there abiding still some remnants of corruption in every part; whence ariseth a continual and irreconcilable war, the flesh lusting against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh." Chap. vi. 3, condemns in the most definite manner the views embraced by the appellants. The Shorter Catechism, Q. 82, is also explicit. He felt sure that it was quite unnecessary to spend time on this point. No member of this Synod can entertain any doubt in reference to the doctrine of the Reformed Churches or of the Westminster Confession and Catechisms."

He held that the doctrine of the Standards was not less clearly the doctrine of the Word of God. The Scriptures do not harmonize with any experience which does not confess sin and seek pardon for it. It is a remarkable fact that in the record of the Bible saints, we find no trace of such an experience as the appellants describe. If in that model prayer which Christ taught his followers, there is a petition for the forgiveness of sins, it is surely evidence that they have sinned to forgive. The appellants tell us that these are "debts of gratitude" which we can never pay, but he could scarcely suppose that they imagine that debts of that sort need forgiveness. There is certainly nothing in the language of our Lord to suggest that he referred to anything but sins in the ordinary sense. In Matthew, he uses the words "debts" and "trespasses," while in the parallel passage in Luke they are expressly called "sins." Some, indeed, tell us that our Lord refers to "involuntary improprieties," but it appeared plain to him that these "involuntary improprieties," "debts of gratitude," or whatever they are called, are either sins or they are not. If they are not sins, they need no forgiveness. If they are sins, Christians should have a consciousness of them, and in that consciousness pray for their forgiveness."

He referred also to the emphatic language of John, which, if it stood alone in Scripture, should settle this question. "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." The context which introduces these words gives also increased force to their teaching. He has just been describing the Christian in the highest manifestation of the new life—"walking in the light," as God is in the light, and of such he declares that the blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin. It is this statement that he follows up and enforces by the declaration, "If we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us."

The real question we have to settle, he held, was, What is sin? If we confess sin to outward acts, to volitions or to what involves a deliberate consent of the will to that which is evil, he would not question but that a Christian may for a shorter or longer period live without sin. But this, he believed, is not the Biblical conception of sin. "Sin is any want of conformity unto or transgression of the law of God," a definition which was an exact expression of the sense of 1 John 3:4, where the word which we translate "transgression of the law," means whatever comes short of, or goes beyond, the standard of the law."

The doctrine of the appellants was substantially that of the Romish Church in reference to sin, which Protestants, since the time of the Reformation, have strenuously rejected. The Reformed Churches have always held, in opposition to Rome, that consciousness is sin, and under consciousness they included the habitual inclination or bias towards

(Continued on last page.)