

tween the Child and the Man, in regard to ability to comprehend what the Catechism says, or what the Bible says, about the Decrees of God and Predestination. Besides, the faith of the Church should never transcend, on this or any other matter, the plain teachings of Scripture; and if, in our statements regarding the divine fore-ordination, Scripture be closely adhered to, we can see no good reason why the Catechism should observe an entire silence on a subject to which the Scriptures so often and so plainly make reference.

But in making these remarks, we find ourselves defending the Catechism against the charge of being *too* comprehensive—not the reverse. We may suppose it, therefore, on all hands, admitted, that the Catechism embraces everything which should be found in such a Manual.

The Shorter Catechism characterized by Depth; yet not too deep for the young, if carefully explained to them.

2. The Shorter Catechism is *characterized by Depth*. We are quite aware that many regard this feature of it as a serious disadvantage, rather than a point of merit. Reference has already been made to the charge brought against it of introducing topics which had better be omitted: very generally, the same parties who blame it on this ground, would censure it as being also too profound for the young; as well as too hard and technical in its language. In offering a word of vindication, we assume that the Shorter Catechism is not of necessity the very first catechism used in the instruction of children. There are several excellent little catechisms of a more primary kind, which may well go before it. But, granting this, it is still urged that the Shorter Catechism is deep and technical enough for the professed theologian, and altogether too difficult for the young,—certainly not suited to those who are of “weaker capacity.” This objection to the Catechism is a very plausible one, and is thought to have force by many who are not ill-disposed towards our Standards. We are convinced, however, that the Catechism has erred on the safer side. It is far better that our children should have upon their memory definitions and statements a little in advance of them when first learned, than that in after years they should find that their Catechism, laboriously committed, is too primary—too juvenile, to be of much value as a permanent possession. These precious seeds deposited in the soil, while yet the season appears too early for growth, will in due time spring up, and yield abundant increase. It is a mistake to suppose that all the instruction communicated to children, all the definitions they commit to memory, all the views and principles

Definitions committed to memory may properly be

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