

Consequences.

BY M. S. MERCER.

Written for the Review.

The music of the stars was heard no more upon the earth when sin fell sore upon the land, and bitterness of heart became the lot of man condemned to grief and deep unrest.

No longer did the Father smile upon the children of His love, nor angels joy in Edenland. And perfect peace was gone and happiness was clouded with the pall of wrath. As pilgrims turned to foreign lands the dwellers of the sacred vale became, and tears their eyes bedewed and deep regret and sorrow fell. Then soon the gates of Paradise were closed and fiery flame return denied, and from the earth where fruit and flowers grew sprang noxious growth and noisome pestilence prevailed. Alone they wandering turned their faces to the chilling winds and hunger drove them, toil oppressed, to bear the heavy weight of human woe. Thus fell the heritage of sin upon the lives of men and thus was heaven lost and holiness, and portion taken in the realms of night for all mankind and lifelong burdens for the hand and heart.

Yet love was stronger in the heart of God than wrath and pity turned Him to consider fallen man and the estate that he had lost obedient to the voice of sin. And hope grew in the heart of man through promise given, and age to age endured till faith had ripened in the prophet mind that man should be redeemed obedient to the voice of love.

It happened on the Plains of Bethlehem that shepherds watched their flocks by night, the glory of the Heavenly King around them shone and angel voices said:—"Behold the tidings of great joy—a Saviour unto man is born, let all the earth break forth in song." And glad voice rose upon the air and rested on the heart of man and glory filled the earth, and sea, and sky, and hope that long had led through sacrifice with faltering light was charmed unto the Star of Bethlehem with confidence and deeper joy—and from the hallowed mount the promise of redeeming love was heard—"The poor in spirit shall rejoice and they that mourn shall sing; the meek shall find a resting place, the hungry shall be filled—and mercy unto mercy turns, the pure shall speak with God and they that peace on earth shall make and bear the rod for righteous sake shall be the children of the king when heaven their welcome home shall ring."

Now may the sons of men rejoice that fatal stain of sin is cast upon the choice of loving less the darkness of the world than light, for love hath conquered consequence of sin when life shall fade and turn again unto its parent heart.

Notes on the Glasgow Council.

BY REV. PRINCIPAL DYKES, LONDON.

Had not the Editor imposed the task upon me, I should have shrunk from venturing to lay before the readers of this "Register" any impressions of mine on the good and bad points of the Glasgow Council, "and especially how future Councils may be improved." But such an invitation deserves a candid response.

I ask myself—What uses may the General Council of our Alliance be expected to serve? And I answer my question by saying: Three services at least it may conceivably render.

First and most easily, such a convention of representative men from all parts of the Presbyterian world may promote mutual acquaintance and friendly feeling between widely sundered brethren. This is in itself no mean end of the gathering; and this it attains as much by the social functions which incidentally attend it as by the assembling of the members in Session. From this point of view I think the impression at Glasgow was that the Sixth Council had proved as successful as any of its predecessors. Glasgow hospitality was unstinted. The brotherliness of the meetings was unbroken. New friendships were formed, old ones revived; and the delegates had not only ample opportunity to fraternize, but seemed to avail themselves of it, with good will.

More difficult to secure, yet still more important, is the second end of a Council—to further the exchange of ideas, and to mature opinion through fraternal dis-

cussion of points of practical interest. I say, of "practical interest," for I do not think so much is to be gained by *viva voce* discussion of academic questions in theological science, like the Higher Criticism, as by exchanging ideas and experiences on matters like discipline, worship, methods of Christian effort, and the general working of our common system.

From this point of view I am bound to say that, in my judgment, a good deal more might be made of the opportunity. The same old complaint uttered at previous Councils was again to be heard: Too many Papers and too little time for discussing them. Indeed, almost no time at all. It looked as if the Programme Committee had been afraid of open discussion. What they were really afraid of was probably this—that open discussion would flag or wander from the point, and be a waste of time. It is, I think, a vain fear. You bring together three hundred picked men accustomed to speak, many of them to lead, in their own church courts at home; and they may be trusted to fill up a couple of hours with ten minute speeches on any fitting topic of real concern, and to do it profitably.

Suppose that, next time, we get only *one* set paper at each morning and afternoon sitting; and devote all the rest of the time to free speech, not above one or two of the speakers to be "arranged for" or bespoke before hand. And is it so necessary that the Papers be by members of the Council? If it were allowed to invite a Paper from the most competent man in all our churches, to be read for him, if needful, in his absence, what a text for discussion would such a supremely good twenty minutes' statement furnish for a two hours' talk! Only the topics might need to be fewer and more carefully selected: such topics as lend themselves not to oratory, but to practical exchange of suggestion and of opinion. I think we need not be quite so timid on the ventilation of matters where some difference both of opinion and of practice obtains among us? Why should we? We are well trained by our free system to discuss differences amicably, and to learn from one another. I am speaking here, of course, of day meetings only, when the Council is almost in private, and when, indeed, it might with advantage assemble in some smaller room better adapted than St. Andrew's Hall, Glasgow, for deliberative purposes. As to the evening meetings, designed more for popular effect and telling oratory, these could hardly be improved.

A third aim it is to be hoped the Alliance will more and more set before itself—to initiate, or to facilitate, joint action on the part of the allied Churches. It is the most difficult, but, if obtainable, is the most valuable of all the ends which such a league can contemplate. I am afraid not a great deal was done at Glasgow to advance co-operation. One suggestion only do I recall, but that is one well worth doing a good deal to realize. It was proposed to the American and British Presbyterians to do more, and to do it with more concert, in the way of planting chaplaincies at Continental centres where such English-speaking agents would be a support to our Continental brethren. Along this line, perhaps the Eastern and Western Sections may find it practicable to advance a little way during the next three years. And while referring to this, may I say that I do not see why our friends from Continental lands might not be permitted to make more use of their own languages, of French and German especially. If in open Council it is inexpedient to have addresses which for most of the audience would need to be translated: at all events, other more retired meetings could be held where those foreign friends could utter all that is in their hearts in their own tongue to as many as could understand. Above all, why should not much more retired and sectional meetings have a devotional character? Did we pray enough together when we met last June?

The Power of the Glorified Christ.*

BY REV. ADDISON P. FOSTER, D.D.

CHRIST'S POWER SECURED BY HIS DEATH.

At the close of Christ's public ministry, when depressed at the attitude of the Jews towards him, a company of the Greeks sought to see him. Their visit brought to him a

*An Exposition based on (John xii. 20-50); in the Bible Study Union Course on "The Teachings of Christ."