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ON BAPTISM.

Continued from page 61.

No. III. *Of Baptism, as it regards the Subjects of it.*

THIS is the proper place to put the question, Of what use is baptism to an infant? Before giving a direct answer, it may be proper to take notice of two very general opinions on this point, both of which are extremes, and both are erroneous,—the former, pushing the words of Scripture beyond what the analogy of faith or the common use of the language of the Bible will allow; the other, not amounting to what the Scripture plainly teaches; the one, obviously intended to aggrandize Church power; the other, favourable to the neglect of parental duty.—The one, corrupting the doctrine of the Scripture; the other, unfavourable to the interests of morality.

1. There are who assert that, to baptize is to regenerate a child,—that the baptized are translated from the curse of Adam to the grace of Christ,—that in baptism original guilt is washed away and actual sin forgiven,—that the baptized become partakers of the Holy Ghost, and heirs of eternal life; and that all this is true of every one who is rightly baptized. To be rightly baptized, according to those who hold these opinions, is to be baptized by a Clergyman who has received Episcopal ordination, and by none other. This doctrine is founded upon the assumption that baptism by water is the regeneration spoken of in the New Testament: that all such expressions as, “regeneration,” “born of water and the spirit,” “begotten again to a lively hope,” “born of incorruptible seed,” relate to the one simple act of being baptized by one who has been episcopally ordained.

We know of no task more irksome than to write a regular refutation of palpable nonsense; and at present we shall not attempt it. We think it sufficient to state, that according as we read the Bible, and according as it is explained by a great majority of the orthodox, *Regeneration* describes a great spiritual change effected by the spirit of God; by which change a man becomes a new creature—is raised out of a state of death into a state of life—becomes a partaker of a divine nature, and is justified so that he cannot come into condemnation. To assert that all this either means simply water baptism, or is effected in, or by, water baptism, would lead to some startling consequences. It would lead to a belief that every “rightly baptized” person is truly a believer and has received power to become a child of God;—that he does not commit sin; for the Apostle John asserts that, “whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin;”—that he overcomes the world; for the same Apostle says that, all “who

are born of God overcome the world." Now, can any man believe that all this is true of every one "rightly baptized?" Is it not true on the other hand, that many who have been baptized in every way,—baptized in infancy and baptized in mature age,—baptized by sprinkling and baptized by immersion;—baptized by those who have been episcopally ordained and by those who have received no ordination at all; live as the world live,—without fearing God, and having no hope? Again; the doctrine which we oppose would lead to the belief that all who are not baptized are lost. The Lord Jesus said to Nicodemus, "Except a man be born again he cannot see the Kingdom of God," if regeneration then is effected in or by baptism, and if to be baptized is to be regenerated, then all who are not baptized do perish; they cannot see the Kingdom of God.—All unbaptized children are consequently lost.

Besides, are there not instances of persons who have become believers by reading the Word of God, and who have never had an opportunity of enjoying religious ordinances? Is there not a whole denomination of professing christians who conscientiously disbelieve in an outward baptism—the Quakers—these are of consequence all lost;—they have not been, according to the doctrine above stated, regenerated, and the Lord says that whoever is not regenerated cannot see the Kingdom of God. Once more. In the case of an adult, a person must be regenerated before he can be baptized. John baptized those who were penitent and confessed their sins, Philip baptized the Ethiopian Eunuch on the assurance that "he believed with all his heart," Peter baptized Cornelius and those gathered together in his house *after* the Holy Ghost had fallen upon them, Paul was baptized by Ananias after he had been converted, and does not every christian church require in adults a profession of their faith in order to their being baptized,—and they are baptized when there are evidences that they are believers. Adults, then, are baptized, not that they may be regenerated, but because they are regenerated already or believed to be so.

2. The other opinion respecting the uses of baptism which we regard as erroneous, is the opposite extreme to the one now stated,—It is an error in defect, while the other is an error in excess. It is this, that baptism is of no use to an infant while it is an infant; but that when the infant arrives at the years of discretion, and when told that he was baptized in his infancy, and in that ordinance devoted to God, he may regard himself as already pledged to believe in God and to serve Him. According to this, there is nothing in baptism but its moral influence, and that influence amounts to nothing till the baptized person become old enough to feel the influence of moral obligations.

That an obligation of a moral nature lies upon those who have been consecrated to God in their infancy by their believing parents, in an ordinance of God's own institution, is an opinion which we think few persons will deny. But, whatever the nature or the amount of that obligation be,

is of no consequence in the enquiry, Of what use is baptism to an infant ? In reply to this I observe,

1. That every ordinance connected with the covenant of grace, is intended and fitted to be of use to those for whose benefit it was instituted. The primary object of all ordinances is to shew forth the glory of God, and the secondary object is the profit of those who observe them. It is by aiming at the former that the latter is secured. The ordinances of public and private worship ; the Sacraments, and indeed, every duty, are memorials of God's Gracious character, or acts of homage paid to his supremacy ; and it cannot be, that he can be remembered and obeyed with right motives, without benefit to the worshipper. Now if it please God to institute services, in which babes and sucklings are to take a part in shewing forth his praise, the service in which they take a part must be of advantage to them.

It has already been shewn that, baptism is a seal of the covenant of grace, suitable to the New Testament dispensation, just as circumcision was a seal of the same covenant under the former economy, and also that, God in that covenant promises to be a God to his people and to their children ; when, therefore, by an act of faith and obedience, an authorized appeal is made to the faithfulness of God by believing parents, there is that done which is done in all other religious services, and than which nothing more can be done in any. If then there be profit in any service, there is in this all that belongs to any service, and advantage may be derived from it, as well as from any other.

In baptism, an infant is placed in the very circumstances in which the promise of God may meet it. It is, as it were, laid upon his covenant ; an appeal is made to his faithfulness ; and can any thing more be done in any case to obtain the blessing of God ? Whether the blessing shall actually be given, depends upon a condition with which our services have nothing to do, a condition which we cannot control nor influence, viz. the sovereignty of efficacious grace, in which, the spirit of God executes the purposes of election. Enough for us it is to know what God requires of us and to do his will, the rest must be left to himself ; and while so leaving it, there is every encouragement to believe that, when he gives the disposition to trust his promise and grace to act upon that trust, he has given this grace preparatory to his giving the blessing.

But it may be replied that neither the faith nor the obedience are the infant's. True ; But it hath pleased God under all the stages of the dispensations of grace to include the children with their parents in his promise. It was so from Adam to Noah,—from Noah to Abraham ; and then the covenant is declared to be an everlasting covenant, which has since been ratified and confirmed by the blood of Christ. To assert that the clause which respects children, has a reference to the national privileges of the Jews, is to commit a glaring anachronism—it was in it, and acted upon before Abraham's days—before Israel existed any where but in the

purposes of God, and it remains after Israel as a nation has ceased to exist.

The principle of blessing children by means of their parents is not a new one even in the covenant of promise. It lies at the foundation of God's administrations in nature and in providence, as well as in grace. It is the law of nature that, through parents, children should receive the blessings of their heavenly father. "The strong natural affection, planted in the heart of a parent to his offspring, shews, by the light of nature, that our Lord cares for children in this way. Surely He who implanted this affection in the parent's breast, loves the child by the care of the parent. If this be so in a natural sense, is it not equally the case in a spiritual sense? If the love of God be shed abroad in the heart of a parent, by the Holy Ghost given unto him, and if he love his child with this divine love, does it not prove, that, in so far, the Holy Spirit loves the child." * If so, it is acting on a grand principle, universal in God's government, to regard the believing parent as the medium through which, blessing is communicated to the infant,—the sacrament of baptism is the seal of this.

Although the dispensation of Grace is wholly a matter of revelation, yet when revealed, there can be traced in it certain general principles which shew, that the mind which presides over the kingdom of nature and the kingdom of Grace, is One. And it is no small evidence of the truth of revelation, that it is in perfect keeping with the other works of God. To leave children out of a recognized interest in the blessings of salvation into which their parents have been introduced would be *unnatural*. It would be a solecism in the administration of God, a variance with the perfect scheme of heaven's mercy and with the analogies of nature.

But it may still be replied, what spiritual benefit can an infant enjoy? In answer it may be asked, what spiritual benefit, essential to salvation, can an infant *not* enjoy? An infant is capable of justification through the imputed righteousness of Christ and of sanctification by the Spirit of Christ. All other blessings are connected with circumstances which do not exist to children, and they, therefore, neither have them nor need them. The righteousness by which an infant is justified, is the same thing as the righteousness of faith, by which an adult is justified. To say that it is not capable of this, is to say, in as many words, that it is incapable of being saved. If this righteousness cannot be enjoyed without actual believing, then the case of infants is utterly hopeless. Baptism recognizes their capability of having that righteousness *without* faith, which can be possessed by adults only *through* faith. And did infant baptism go no farther than this, it is an ordinance on which every Christian would set the highest value. If it were set aside there would not

* Treatise on Infant Baptism, by James Kidd, D. D.

remain in the word of God, any thing sufficiently distinct to meet the anxieties which every christian parent feels about the eternal welfare of his offspring, especially of those who may have fallen into an infant's grave. The attempt to rest hopes for them on their supposed innocence—on the supposition that Christ took away all original sin from all the posterity of Adam—on the uncertain application of the phrase “of such is the Kingdom of Heaven” will fail of producing satisfaction. The only evidence which no dispute can weaken is, that the seals of the covenant of grace are, by the authority of God, to be put upon the infants of believing parents.

2. Another use of baptism to infants is, that their connexion with the Church of God is, by that ordinance publicly declared. This must be profitable to them in various ways.

The Church is God's family on earth ; and as he has promised to dwell in the Church—and to bless her provision it may well be expected that, while He is distributing the blessings of His goodness amongst those of full growth, He will not be forgetful of the babes. 'Twere unlike a father to provide only for the strong, and to neglect the infants of the family.

Let it not be said, that he may provide for them without their being regarded as formally connected with the church. An objection of this sort looks very like dictating to God what he ought to do : and besides, goes much farther than merely questioning the use of baptism to an infant. God may, for he can, build up men in faith and love without either baptism or the Lord's Supper ; are therefore these sacraments to be set aside as unnecessary ?—Many young persons not connected with the church are brought up in Christian knowledge as well as those who are. Is it therefore of no importance to be within the pale of the church ?—For us it is enough to know what God requires, and not to sit in judgment on the propriety of his institutions.

Infants, by being baptized, are recognized as having a formal connexion with the Church, and thereby have an interest in the prayers of the church. This will appear to be no mean advantage when we remember the special pleasure which Christ says he takes in the assemblies of his people,—the promises He has made of being present when they meet in his name, and the assurances he gives them, that he will hear and answer their prayers. Of these the following passages may be quoted as proof. “He loves the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob.” *Ps.* 87 : 2. “Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.” *Mat.* 18 : 20. “If two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven.” *Mat.* 18 : 19. A church rightly instructed and constituted, must regard their baptized infants as belonging to their fellowship, and it is the most natural thing in the world for them, to crave the blessing of the Father of mercies to come down

upon those, who are "to shew forth his praises to another age." And surely he will not "scorn their prayer."

3. By being recognized as members of the church, a deeper interest by far, will be felt in them, than if they were regarded as heathens, which they must be, if there were nothing to connect them with the church of God. Out of this interest for them, will come not only special prayers, but also superintendance. "Viewing baptism as introducing infants to a visible state of discipleship, we are to consider others as teachers and overlookers of these disciples : and then the usefulness of such an institution will display itself before us. We see an infant baptized.—If our views terminated there, alas, what is it?—The baptism of a baby. Things that are little in themselves, become great by their connexion with, and relation to others. We see an infant baptized—What does it import? He is received into discipleship, i. e. to be a scholar in a christian school. Now carry your views into the department of parents, pastors, elders, and members ; and listen to the silent language of this institution. "Parents, Pastors, and people pray for us ; during our tender infancy pray for us. And when matured by age, cause the doctrine you profess, to drop upon us as the rain, to distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as showers upon the grass. Watch over us with united care and bring us up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." It is a dispensation grand and merciful, calculated most powerfully to turn the attention of the church to the concerns of those who are rising into life, and posting into eternity. *

4. Few things can be supposed better fitted to impress a parent's mind with the obligation which lies upon him, to train up a child in the fear of God than this, that he has in a solemn service, given his child to God and pledged himself by solemn vows, to rear it for God. If the service impress the parent's mind and lead him to be faithful, the infant must have the benefit of it.—The parent's fervent prayers and his conscientious and persevering diligence in forming the principles and guiding the affections of his interesting charge, are just the means which God has provided for the religious training of the young. And his prayers will be the more persevering from the fact he is pledged by his own vows to educate them for God.

That churches and parents are often neglectful of their duty to the young, is confessed, and cannot be too deeply lamented. Their remissness may, to a certain extent, be accounted for, from their incorrect ideas respecting the nature of baptism and the relation in which a baptized child stands to them and to the church. Were the church and parents to act their part faithfully, what a change should soon be seen upon society ! Instead of the youth of both sexes learning first the ways of the world,—associating with the profane and the ungodly,—acquiring habits of thought-

* Edwards on Baptism.

lessness and folly which load them and fetter them through life, we should see them trained up in the way which leads to glory and honor and immortality;—with a sensibility that would be hurt by whatever might have, even the appearance of evil, and having a delicacy of moral feeling that would make them shrink from whatever is wrong. “The church has a duty to perform in this matter which is seldom realized. It is her’s, by her pastor and eldership, to stimulate and guide parents in this arduous and momentous labour; to see that proper schools for her baptized youth are formed or selected; to put the Bible and suitable catechisms, and other compends of religious truth into their hands; to convene them at stated intervals for instruction, exhortation and prayer; to remind them from time to time, with parental tenderness, of their duty to confess Christ, and recognize their relation to his church, by their own personal act; and, if they fall into gross error, or open immorality, or continue to neglect religion, to exercise toward them, with parental affection, and yet with firmness, that discipline which Christ has appointed expressly for the benefit of all the members, and especially of the youthful members of his covenanted family. If this plan were faithfully pursued with our baptized youth, I am constrained to concur with the pious Mr. Baxter in believing that in nineteen cases out of twenty, our children, consecrated to God in their infancy would grow up dutiful, sober, orderly, and serious, and before they reached mature age, recognize their membership by a personal act, with sincerity and to edification. Happy era! When shall the church of God be blessed with such fidelity, and with such results. *

* Miller on Baptism.

**Analysis of Paul's Address to the Jews in the Synagogue at
Antioch, in Pisidia.**

Acts xiii. 14—52.

AFTER leaving Perga, where it is probable, Paul and Barnabas were not very successful in making converts, they proceeded to Antioch in Pisidia where their labours were remarkably blessed; an account of which we have in the thirteenth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles.

For many obvious reasons it was necessary that the Gospel should be spoken to the Jews, first; Paul therefore went into the synagogue at Antioch on the Sabbath day. Wherever the Jews dwelt in considerable numbers they had a Synagogue in which they met on the Sabbath for public religious worship. The synagogue was therefore the most suita-

ble place for meeting with the Jews and addressing them on religious subjects. Thither Paul and Barnabas went. After the reading of that portion of "the law and the prophets" which formed the lesson for the day, the rulers of the synagogue invited them to address the congregation.

The discourse which Paul delivered on that occasion is, in every way, worthy of the attention of christians, as being a specimen of Paul's manner of addressing Jews and Proselytes; of the arguments which he employed to bring them over to believe in the messiahship of Christ and of the stile in which he applied this doctrine so as to induce them to believe, as sinners, on Christ for salvation. In a short account given of his preaching at Thessalonica it appears, that he followed the same train of argument there as he did at Antioch. "He reasoned with them out of the Scriptures, opening and alledging that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; and that this Jesus is Christ." chap. 17: 2, 3. There was but one course for him to take. He needed to prove from their Scriptures that Jesus was the Messiah, and then to persuade them to believe in him. By comparing Stephen's speech before the council with Paul's at Antioch it will be seen that both travelled over the same ground. Had Stephen been allowed to finish his address, it is probable, that he would have brought it to the same point as Paul brought his. Whether Paul copied that eminent *disputer* whose speech he certainly heard, it is of little consequence to enquire, and the more especially as every man who understood the subject must have taken the same course.

Let us now attend to the manner in which Paul set his argument.

1. He takes a rapid survey of the history of the Israelites from the time of their leaving Egypt till the reign of David. His object in this seems to have been to shew, that the Israelites had been specially favoured by God, and that their whole history was a series of steps preparing for the advent of a great deliverer. Of the coming of this Deliverer many promises had been made to David, a man after God's own heart: in particular, that God would raise up one to sit upon his throne (Ps. 132: 11) whose dominion should be everlasting and universal. (Ps. 72.) This promise was made in the most solemn manner, "The Lord sware in truth to David." So far Paul and the Jews were on common ground.

2. Paul next asserts that Jesus of Nazareth was the promised Savior. This was the point to be proved. The Jews believed that the promise to David *would be* fulfilled; Paul said that it *was* fulfilled. The first proof adduced by the Apostle was, the testimony of John Baptist, who was strictly speaking, a Jewish prophet. Now John openly declared, that he was sent to prepare the way of the coming Messiah, and more than this, he, on two occasions, pointed to Jesus as he walked and said, "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world;" saying of him that he came to do what the Messiah was promised to do.

At this stage of the argument, anxious to turn to good account the proof so far as he had gone, Paul said to his audience, "Men and brethren,

children of the stock of Abraham and whosoever among you feareth God, to you is the word of this salvation sent." (ch. 13: 26.) This direct appeal is satisfactory proof, that while Paul exerted himself to convince his audience that Jesus was the Christ, he kept steadily in view the grand aim of the Gospel which is to induce men to come to Christ that they may be saved.

3. Paul now meets an objection which his hearers might make against his doctrine. He does not, indeed, formally state the objection, but he gives the answer to it. This is very common in the writings of Paul. The objection is, How can the Messiahship of Jesus of Nazareth be reconciled with the fact, that the Jewish rulers, the highest authority in the country, rejected him and put him to death? The answer to this is as follows: "They that dwell at Jerusalem and their rulers—knew him not nor yet the voices of the prophets which are read every Sabbath day." (27.) This may seem a strange assertion, and yet it is true; the Jewish rulers did not understand the character of the Messiah as drawn by the prophets, and consequently could not see in him the character of the Messiah when he came into the world. Their minds were blinded by the hope of a temporal Deliverer, and not finding in the prophet of Galilee the qualities of a warrior and a conqueror they would not involve themselves in a quarrel with the Roman government for the sake of one who seemed unfit to emancipate them. They therefore rejected him. The fact stated by Paul that the rulers did not understand the scriptures which were daily read to them need surprise no one. 2. At the very time the Jewish rulers were rejecting Jesus, and putting him to death they were unconsciously fulfilling the predictions of the prophets, "They fulfilled them in condemning him." (27). The whole structure of the emblematic dispensation of Moses, and the predictions of the prophets go to shew that the "Messiah should be cut off" that he should be "wounded for the transgressions of men,"—"bruised for their iniquities," and that he should "die for their sins." The opposition of the rulers was therefore, a part of the evidence of the Messiahship of Jesus. 3. As the death of Christ was then, no proof against his Messiahship, so it was no proof against the excellence of his character. "They found no cause of death in him. There was indeed an effort made to criminate him, but it broke down through disagreement in the testimony of the suborned witnesses. Moreover, Pilate, heathen though he was, declared that he found no fault in him; and when prevailed upon by the importunity of the Jews he consented that it should be even as they desired, he washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person." Mat. 27: 24. 4. To complete the proof of his Messiahship, so far as they could, "they took him down from the tree and laid him in a sepulchre;" (29) thereby fulfilling a plain prediction of one of their most eminent prophets, "He made his grave with the rich in his death." Is. 53: 10. Had the Jewish rulers not done all this, it would have been

impossible to have proved that Jesus was the Christ. How wonderful are the counsels of the eternal mind!

4. Paul next brings on the testimony of God. "God raised him from the dead." (30). It will not, for a moment, be believed, that God would work such a miracle to support the claims of an impostor. By raising him from the dead God declared, with power, that Jesus was his Son.

But was it a fact that Jesus was raised from the dead? To this Paul replies, that he "was seen many days of them which came up with him from Galilee to Jerusalem, who are his witnesses to the people." (31) They were perfectly acquainted with him, and therefore competent to bear witness to the fact:

At this stage Paul made another direct appeal to his audience, to awaken in them those sentiments which such a manifestation of the grace of God ought to call forth, "We declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the fathers, God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again." (32, 33) This address was thrown in with consummate skill. There was no topic better fitted to interest a Jew, than that God had remembered the promises made to the fathers, and that he lived to see the days of the Great Deliverer. There was but a step between the emotions which this was fitted to call up, and believing in Jesus to salvation. To this grand object all Paul's arguments and reasonings were ever directed. However eager in accumulating "demonstrations strong," he never forgot, that he was sent forth to "open men's eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they might receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith in Jesus." Acts 26: 18.

But the resurrection of Jesus was not only a proof of his Messiahship, as being a direct testimony given by God himself, it was also the fulfilment of an ancient prediction, "Thou art my Son this day have I begotten thee." Ps. 2: 7. The meaning which Paul attached to this passage may be known from the use which he makes of it in another place, "declared to be the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead." Rom. 1: 4. But it was not only foretold that he should be raised from the dead, but that he should "no more return to corruption." For in another Psalm (16: 10) it is said, "Thou shalt not suffer thine Holy One to see corruption." That passage, Paul affirms, could not apply to David, for David "was laid unto his fathers, and saw corruption: but he whom God raised again saw no corruption." [36, 37] Inasmuch, then, as Jesus was raised from the dead, he was set down on the throne of David, and by him would be bestowed upon the Church all the blessings which God had promised through the Messiah, here called the sure mercies of David. This he could do, as being "given for a witness to the people, a leader and commander to the people." Is. 55: 4.

Having finished the proof of the Messiahship of Jesus, Paul proceeds to

bring home the important truth to the consciences of his hearers, so as to persuade them to believe in him that they might be saved. The arguments which he employs for this are the three following.

1. "Be it known to you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached to you the forgiveness of sins." Paul now speaks to them not as Jews, but as men,—as sinners. His language implies, that the remission of sins *may* be obtained, and that it may be obtained by Jesus Christ. That death, on account of which many objected to him, was the very reason why sinners should trust in Him, for by it, he made an atonement for sin; so that God can be just even while he justifies the ungodly. Every thing in the manner by which God has determined to save sinners, is at once, in the highest degree, honouring to Him, and suitable to man. The salvation is worthy of God; it is complete and it is free, so that whosoever believeth on Him shall not perish but have everlasting life.

2. Paul next tells his audience, that they could not obtain salvation in any other way, not even by the laws of Moses. "By Him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the laws of Moses." [39]. The Jews had so far mistaken the nature of the dispensation of Moses as to suppose, that justification could be obtained by keeping its precepts, and by its sacrifices and purifications. This was a topic on which they had strong prejudices; and in combating which, there was need for the utmost caution mingled with faithfulness. Even at this day, when the legal temper has not the apology of a misunderstood economy to protect it, it is heard with impatience. Paul's statement is, that by Jesus is obtained the remission of *all* sins. In this respect, the announcements of the Gospel are incomparably greater than any thing which the law had to offer; for there were many sins for which there was even no ceremonial provision made in the law of Moses. Were we, however, to suppose that Paul urged upon his audience faith in Jesus Christ on this ground, that there might through him, be obtained pardon for some sins, for which there was no provision made in the law, we should suppose, that there were *some* sins for which expiation was made by the law, but that the atonement by Christ could secure the remission of certain other sins, to which the law did not reach. In thinking so we should mistake his meaning. The language of Paul is not, justified from all the things from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses, his meaning is, that sinners may, by faith, be justified from *all* sins, while by deeds of law no justification at all could be had. To have stated less than this, would have been to conceal the very glory of the gospel for fear of giving offence to the Jews.

3. Paul's third argument is a solemn warning to the Jews of the consequences of rejecting salvation by Jesus, "Beware therefore, lest that come upon you, which is spoken of in the prophets; "Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish: for I work a work in your days, a work

which ye shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you." [40, 41] This warning is quoted from Habakkuk, 1: 5. God, by the prophet, threatens to bring the terrible Chaldeans into the land of Israel to punish the people for their sins. The havock and the misery produced by their incroad would be almost incredible. The people would wonder at the tale, and be cut off like others. In that terrible visitation the Jews might see a specimen of the plagues with which they should be visited, if they despised the Son of God and rejected the offers of His mercy. The allusion is to the destruction of Jerusalem, a calamity sent upon the Jews because of their unbelief, and which for the same reason, continues to this day.

It may be instructive to notice the manner in which a Jewish audience bore all this.

The more bigoted of them went out of the synagogue to mark their disapprobation of what they had heard; and with feelings stronger than disapprobation, if we may judge from their behavior on the following Sabbath. There were, however, many that believed, whom Paul and Barnabas exhorted to continue in the grace of God. There was quite an excitement in the city. On the next Sabbath almost the whole city was gathered together to hear the word of God. [44] The Jews, in an outrageous manner, contradicted and blasphemed as usual. Paul plainly and boldly told them that since they put away from them the word of God, he would turn to the Gentiles. "And when the Gentiles heard this they were glad and glorified the word of the Lord; and as many as were ordained, [according to the sovereign purpose of God's will,] to eternal life believed.

This discourse is remarkable as being a specimen of Paul's preaching to his countrymen. It has high qualities amongst which may be noticed,

1. A perfect acquaintance with the people whom he addressed. He knew the manner in which they had been educated, he was thoroughly acquainted with all their religious opinions, he knew their prejudices and the firm hold which these had taken of them. And he could, and did, adapt his addresses to them in the very way most likely to produce an impression. Every person knows, that in all societies there are certain allusions, which, but to hint at, will produce an irresistible excitement either for or against a speaker. If a person ignorant of his audience, should stumble upon some unpopular subject, he may array against him feelings and prejudices which it will be out of his power to control. A skilful orator will avoid all such. And such an orator was Paul. Every topic which he introduces and the manner in which he manages it, leaves upon our mind this conviction, that he spake to Jews just as Jews ought to have been spoken to.

2. The line of argument which Paul followed was the most proper to be used. He wished to convince them, that Jesus was the Christ. To prove this, he shews first from their own scriptures what the Messiah

should do and suffer, and then tells them that in Jesus of Nazareth, were found all those marks by which the Messiah was described by their prophets. While handling this subject, the clearness and force of his argument, together with the depth of his knowledge of the Scripture, must be apparent to every reader. All his discourses and all his epistles are characterized by no quality more remarkable than sound solid argument.

3. Paul knew his audience not only as Jews but as sinners. It is a matter of vast difficulty to speak to sinners as they ought to be spoken to. To do this, a man must have an extensive and accurate acquaintance with human nature; above all, he must know himself and he must know the Scriptures. Descriptions of sinners are often given in such a style, as that no man can feel that what is spoken is correctly applicable to himself. The same may be said of many descriptions of the Christian character. It is sometimes pitched in such a way as to seem a caricature, at other times it is so drawn, as to conceal its grand lineaments. The management of an argument is one of the easiest parts of a minister's duty: the description of character is one of the most difficult.

4. In Paul's Addresses we observe an ever prevailing desire to do good. Three times in the course of his discourse at Antioch, does he pause to press home upon his audience the reception of the great truths he was delivering. An Apostle, and every minister is sent to persuade men to be reconciled to God. On this point every word ought to tell.

Paul's discourse at Antioch is farther remarkable, as being the first offer of salvation to a heathen audience. Hitherto, the gospel had been preached to Jews and proselytes only. The Ethiopian eunuch and Cornelius were certainly proselytes. Sergius Paulus most probably was a heathen, but he was but a solitary individual. It was at Antioch, that salvation was first publicly preached to a heathen assembly. What results have come out of that small beginning!

Of Presbyterian Church Order.

The Christian Church, being "the Kingdom of God among men," is, in the things of God, subject to none but her supreme Ruler in heaven. This however does not preclude a subordinate administration of her affairs on the earth, conducted by men who belong to herself, and are appointed by Christ, her great Head, to watch over her interests. Such an administration is indispensable to her order and purity, if not to her visible existence, as a holy community, gathered from the children of this world, still dwelling among them, and ever in danger of being snared into sin. Rules must be framed for the admission of her members and office-bearers, for the regulation of their conduct after they are admitted, or for their expulsion, when, by misconduct, they have forfeited their title to her fellowship. For these important ends, the great Head of the church has made provision. He is her only Lawgiver, and all the rules laid down for her government must be founded on his word. Since, in the wisdom and good-

ness of God, the doctrines and duties taught in the Scriptures are not given to us in a systematic shape, we cannot expect to find in them a form of church government minutely detailed. But it is nevertheless true—and the appeal uniformly made to the Scriptures by all Christian parties, for a confirmation of their particular views, evinces a general belief—that they do contain instructions about the government of the church, which, if rightly understood, will lead to the formation of a system entirely in accordance with the mind of Christ.

The New Testament Church was planted, and for a time governed, by extraordinary office-bearers, who were infallibly guided by the spirit of God, and possessed miraculous powers; and before these were removed, two classes of office-bearers were appointed over her, namely, elders and deacons. (a) The elders, to whom the government of the church was committed, were of two kinds—those whose office was limited to rule or government, and those who, in addition to this, laboured in word and doctrine. (b) They are also called bishops, pastors, ministers, ambassadors and angels, which terms are descriptive not of distinct offices, but of duties connected with the same office. (c) The word of God, then, recognizes no office in the church, since the apostolic age, above that of a teaching elder or presbyter. It is opposed, on the one hand, to Independence, which lodges the power of government in all the members of the church; (d) and on the other to diocesan Episcopacy, which gives to one class of teaching elders authority over their brethren.

To whatever extent the primitive church might increase in any place, it is clear that it consisted at first of a single congregation. In every such congregation, elders were ordained; (e) and as a plurality of ruling elders was more necessary than of teaching elders, it may be concluded that the majority were of the former class. When this was effected in any particular congregation or church, that congregation or church seems to have been considered as completely organized, or furnished with every thing in point of external arrangement, which the spirit of God judged necessary to the edification of its members. (f) These rulers being appointed, it follows that they must have possessed the power of meeting together, and of adopting such measures as were agreeable to the mind of Christ for the edification of his body. Thus was formed an eldership or session, to which belonged the government of a particular congregation.

As the church increased in any town or district, want of suitable accommodation for coming together in one place, or other inconveniencies, shewed the necessity for forming a second congregation, or a third, or a fourth, as the case might be; and as elders were to be ordained in every church, each of these was furnished with elders, or had a session constituted over it, with powers exactly the same with those possessed by the elders of the first congregation. Among these distinct congregations a union subsisted; they were one body; and are presented to view as the Church of God in that town or district. Their numbers or distance from one another prevented them from regularly worshipping together on the same spot, or under the same roof; but they were still one church, and the unity of their fellowship was maintained and manifested by the joint meetings of their elders to superintend their common concerns. There were elders of the church at Jerusalem, (g) and of the church at Ephesus; (h) and, as there is reason to conclude that in each of these places there was a plurality of congregations, (i) these elders are represented to us,

(a) Phil. i. 1.

(c) Acts xx. 17. Titus i. 5, 7.

(e) Acts xiv. 23. Titus i. 5.

(g) Acts xi, 29, 30.

(b) 1 Tim. v. 17.

(d) Heb. xiii. 7, 17.

(f) Acts xiv. 23. Titus i. 5.

(h) Acts xx. 17.

(i) Acts xxi. 20, 1 Cor. xvi. 8, 19

not as elders of a particular congregation only, but also as elders of the church, which included all the congregations associated into one church in one or other of these places. These elderships or presbyteries, it is obvious, possessed a power corresponding to that of the sessions, and growing out of it—a power, namely, to deliberate and decide in matters of administration affecting the interest of the associated congregations of which the Holy Ghost had made them overseers. (*d*) Here, then, we have the principle of Presbyterian church government in all its Scriptural simplicity—an organized eldership of individual congregations and an organized eldership of a number of congregations,—united and forming one church. The same great principle may be established by a reference to the church at Rome, or at Corinth, or at Colosse, (*e*) in each of which places there were distinct congregations, and yet but one church.

This principle once ascertained, may be carried to any extent as an instrument of order and unity in the church. When Christians are so multiplied in any one place, that they must form a plurality of congregations, their ecclesiastical unity, as we have seen, is still evinced by the joint co-operation of the elderships belonging to these congregations; and when congregations are multiplied in various places remote from each other, the same thing takes place—being one in Christ Jesus, they are still of one fellowship, however far they may be scattered abroad over the face of the earth; and by the principle of Presbytery, provision is made for exemplifying this by the meetings of the elderships of the whole, as often as distance may permit, or the necessities of the church may require. Hence the idea of a general Synod.

It is with reference to the management of the affairs of the church, that the Holy Ghost says—“Let all things be done decently and in order.”—(1 Cor. xiv. 40.) The exhortation is addressed to the understandings of her rulers, and requires from them the exercise of sound judgment and Christian discretion, in bringing the general principles which Christ has given for the government of his Church, into operation. This discretion naturally suggests, that when distance of place, or other causes, render it difficult or impracticable to assemble the whole eldership of the church, the expedient of delegation may be resorted to—an expedient which, so far from being opposed by the general principle of Presbytery, is, in fact, embodied in it, and easily inferred from the passages in support of it which have already been adduced. What are the elders of a single congregation, but persons chosen by it, and authorised by Christ to act for it in matters of rule or oversight? And what are the elders of a whole presbytery, but persons chosen and ordained in the same way, to act in matters of rule or oversight, for all the congregations which may happen to be under its inspection? There is nothing on the score of principle to prevent all the elders within the bounds of a presbytery from sitting and acting at all its meetings; but this is found to be inconvenient, and delegation is introduced for the simple purpose of obviating the inconvenience. The same remarks apply to a synod, where the difficulty of assembling all the elders of a widely extended church is, of course, much greater. It is not unworthy of remark, that delegation, in this way, may be contracted or extended according to circumstances. It is suited to the case of a single congregation, and it is suited to the case of a church, which may spread its congregations, by the grace of God, over the whole inhabited world. We have instance of this expedient in the Synod of Jerusalem, (Acts xv. *passim*.) which met on a reference from the church at

1 Cor. xvi. 8, 19. (*d*) Acts xiv. 23. Titus i. 5. Acts xi. 30. and xx. 28, 31.

(*e*) Rom. xvi. 5. 1 Cor. xvi. 19. Col. iv. 15.

Antioch, in which Paul and Barnabas were representatives, and whose decision was binding on all the churches.

In this case there were specialities, arising, on the one hand, from the presence of extraordinary rulers, and on the other, from the absence, to a great extent, of delegates from the churches, there being but few regularly organized churches then in existence. It is remarkable, however, that the apostles present did not decide as inspired men, but simply gave their judgment along with their brethren, as if they had been ordinary elders.

The history of this assembly clearly shews, that the churches then existing were in a state of union—that their union was evinced by a joint meeting of their elders to deliberate about their common affairs—that, to a certain extent, they met by delegation—that a case was brought for judgment from a smaller to a greater meeting of the Elders—that a judgment or “decree” was passed upon that case, not by exclusive apostolic authority, but as the result of discussion and deliberative proceedings—and that all the churches were bound “in the Lord” to acquiesce in that decree.

These are the elements of that subordination of sessions to presbyteries, and of presbyteries to a Synod, or General Assembly, which characterizes that system of government to which the United Secession Church has all along adhered. It is not pretended that all the *minutiae* of the system are completely detailed in the word of God, but only that its outline is there, with such a specimen of its operation as is sufficient to guide the exercise of Christian discretion in filling up that outline. It is principle and example, rather than detail, which Christ has given to guide his Church in matters of government; and any particular form of government is to be received or rejected, according as it agrees or disagrees with what he has spoken.

Here, then, we have an outline of church government founded on the word of God, in which the rulers are not lawgivers, but simply administrators, and which is applicable to any church, however large or small, proving itself an instrument of unity and order, while at the same time it secures the Christian rights and liberties of the obscurest individual. It contains provisions which are admirably fitted, on the one hand, to prevent the restless and ambitious from attaining an influence adverse to Christian edification, and on the other, to protect the retiring and the timid from injury or oppression. In a well-regulated Presbyterian church, any individual member may have the judgment of the whole church through her united eldership—through the men, namely, whom the church, in her several congregations, has chosen to rule over her, because she confides in their piety and prudence—on any point which aggrieves him, whether in doctrine, or in worship, or in discipline, or in government. By the observance of a few plain forms, which exist because they are necessary to preserve impartiality, he can carry his case to the session of the congregation to which he belongs, and if its judgment does not satisfy him, he can carry it to the presbytery or to the synod, the general assembly of the elders; while at every step of his progress, the elders to whom he appeals are bound by solemn Christian ordination, to treat him with affection and fidelity, and to do their utmost to decide his case according to the mind of Christ.

It is not easy to conceive of a system which more effectually combines justice with subjection, and liberty with order, than that which is thus provided. We regard it as a special display of the wisdom and love of the Head of the church; and we cannot help observing, with much delight, that in proportion as civil society gets free from the yoke of oppression, or rises to sound views of national liberty, as opposed alike to anarchy and despotism, it approximates the great principles—particularly the principle

of elective representation—which Christ has laid down for the government of his church.

The above sketch proceeds on the assumption, that the church is a spiritual community, which has received from Christ her head, and holds within herself, all the power that is necessary for the administration of her affairs, that she is entirely distinct from civil governments, and requires nothing from them but that civil protection to which all her members, in their civil capacity, are fully entitled—that she addresses herself to the consciences and hearts of men, disclaiming all compulsory power over their persons or property—and that the right of private judgment in all matters which relate to religion, is universal and inalienable. It is deeply to be regretted that her presbyterian government, so pure and spiritual in itself, has been so much perverted, and so grievously exposed to misapprehension by corrupt administrations.—*Introduction to forms of Procedure in the Church Courts of the United Secession Church.*

*The Unitarians in England have assumed the name of Presbytery, without being regulated by its principles; and who does not know the lamentable extent to which these principles have been perverted, by the secular connections of the Church of Scotland?

THE LAST DAYS OF LUTHER.

His complaint became more decided, and his constitution long racked by the stone, began evidently to give way. Violent headaches, and the decaying sight of one of his eyes, gave symptoms of an event which must soon deprive Protestantism of its first and ablest friend. But his course was loftily completed. He had fought his fight, he was now to receive his crown. He had taken a journey to Eisleben, his native place, on the application of the Count of Mansfeld, to arbitrate a dispute relative to the mines. In full consciousness of his own infirmities, he had undergone this harassing journey, as a promoter of peace. "I write to you," said he in a letter to a friend, "though I am old, decrepit, inactive, languid, and now with but one eye. When drawing to the brink of the grave, I had hopes of a reasonable share of rest; but I continue to be overpowered with writing, preaching, and business, in the same manner as if I had not discharged my part of those duties in the early period of life!" The journey was in the depth of a German winter; and by the overflowing of the river Issel, it was prolonged to five days. The effort was too much for his feeble frame; and after various changes of his disorder during three weeks; Luther, on the 18th of February, 1546, breathed the last breath of life, devoted to the most glorious duty that Providence gives to man—the promulgation of its own eternal truths, in simplicity, in holiness, and in power. The highest honours were paid to his memory. His body after lying in state in the principal church, was escorted by the principal nobility of the Electorate on horseback, and an immense concourse of the people, on its way to Wittenberg. Wherever it stopped, the population of the towns received it with tears and prayers; hymns were sung, and sermons were delivered over the remains of their common father in the faith. At Wittenberg the whole university, the magistracy, and the people came out to meet the procession; and the funeral ceremony was begun with an oration by Pommeranus, a celebrated divine, and closed by a pathetic sermon

from Melancthon. His picture was afterwards hung up in the hall of the university.

But the true and imperishable monument of Luther is,—THE REFORMATION.—*Croly's Historical Sketches.*

THE CARDINAL POINT.

I HAVE often forewarned you, our greatest and most pressing danger is, lest the devil should contrive to take away from us the purer doctrines of faith, and bring back into the Church the exploded notions of works, and human traditions. It is of great moment, therefore, that this doctrine of faith should be kept in the constant and public exercise both of reading and hearing. For though it be ever so well known and digested, yet the devil is not dead, but walketh about constantly, and seeketh to devour us. Moreover, the flesh is yet alive; and all sorts of temptations vex and oppress us on every side. Wherefore this Christian article can never be handled and inculcated enough. If this doctrine fall and perish, the knowledge of every truth in religion will fall and perish with it. On the contrary, if this do but flourish, all good things will also flourish; namely, true religion, the true worship of God, the glory of God, and a bright knowledge of every thing which it becomes a Christian to know.—*Milner's Church History, quoted from Luther.*

AFRICA.

Mr. Walter Inglis having completed his studies as a missionary student at the Glasgow Theological Academy, has been appointed to accompany the Rev. Robert Moffat, on his return to the scene of his former labours. His ordination took place on the evening of Tuesday the 25th of October last, at Edinburgh, in the church of the Rev. Dr. Brown, Broughton Place. This large place of worship was crowded to excess long before the hour of meeting, and hundreds had to go away, there not being even standing room for them in the passages. The services of the evening were introduced by the Rev. John Cooper of Fala, by singing, reading the Scriptures, and prayer. Dr. Paterson asked the usual questions, to which Mr. Inglis returned most appropriate answers, which were listened to with deep and solemn attention by the numerous audience. The Rev. Dr. Brown offered up the ordination prayer, surrounded by nearly all the dissenting ministers in the city and neighborhood, and some from a considerable distance, all eager to take part in commending the young missionary to the grace of God, by the laying on of their hands, and thus testify the interest they felt in him, and the cause to which he devoted himself. The Rev. Robert Moffat then addressed Mr. Inglis, giving a graphic description of the missionary field he was about to occupy, pointing out the difficulties and dangers he might expect to encounter, illustrating his statement with striking anecdotes from his own experience, and intermingling the whole with suitable advices as to the manner in which he should conduct himself, in carrying on the work of evangelization and civilization among the people

to whom he was going. Mr. Moffat then concluded with a solemn address to those present, urging them to more prayer, more zeal, and more liberality, on behalf of missionary work. All present agreed that it was the most solemn and interesting service of the kind they had ever witnessed.

REV. MR. MOFFAT.

An exceedingly interesting meeting was held on November 3rd, in the Waterloo Rooms, Edinburgh, for the purpose of presenting a copy of the latest edition of the Encyclopædia Britannica to the Rev. Robert Moffat, as an expression of affectionate regard from some of his friends of different Christian denominations in Edinburgh, and its neighborhood. The large room was filled in every part, and the platform was occupied by ministers and friends of almost every evangelical body.

Mr. Moffat has laboured for twenty three years in South Africa with remarkable success. Few men in any cause have encountered more or greater dangers, and few have had such remarkable evidences of the watchfulness and blessing of God. The Church at the Kuruman alone numbers 300 members. He returned to Britain to get his translation of the New Testament into the Bechuana language, printed. He goes back to the wilds of Africa to seek to promote the honours of his Master and the glorious cause, in which, he said, I desire live and labour, and die.

The Rev. Henry Grey addressed the meeting, and presented the gift to Mr. Moffat. Mr. Moffat made a long and very interesting speech, from which we select the following passage :

"That you may have some adequate idea of the spiritual state of Africa, I mention another circumstance which you should know, that you may see in what light the poor Hottentots were viewed. They were filthy; they were lazy to a proverb, but we have seen them raised by the blessed gospel from the abyss of woe to be the sons of God. The fact I mention will also show what the missionary had to encounter in labouring to raise them to the privileges of the gospel. They were formerly the most degraded slaves of the boors. When I first landed on the shores of Africa, it was necessary for me, though I was only going beyond the colony to teach the natives the gospel, to get a permission from the governor. It was at first refused, and I was detained fifteen months in the colony. I lived all that time with a pious farmer, who taught me Dutch, so that before I left I was able to preach in this language. Thus, what appeared to be a hindrance turned out to the furtherance of the gospel, for I was enabled to make known to the Africans the gospel in the language they understood. I proceeded into the interior, as missionaries are generally forced to travel, halting if possible where there is water, and rendered watchful while they are there by the sound of the hyena. In this journey I had occasion to halt at a farm, and being under the necessity of asking permission to stay, I went bashfully to the great farmer, humbly to present my request. I asked him if I could remain for a night, and the very utterance of the simple words made me afraid, the man appeared so terrible. When he heard my petition, he gave such a roar as made me all tremble again, and I thought, if driven from this place, what am I to do. Every means, however, had not been tried, and I thought, since I have not succeeded with the goodman, I will try the goodwife, whose heart I thought might be softer. The request was presented to her, and soon I was delighted to learn that

there was no objection to my remaining. She, in a little, asked me where I was going, and for what purpose. On being told that I was going to Orange river to teach the tribes the way of salvation, she could not repress her absolute amazement. "To Namagua Land!" she said, "will the people there, think you, listen to the gospel or understand it?" At length, seeing what I was, she asked if I would preach the gospel that night to them. Oh yes, I replied; nothing will give me greater delight. I got a loaf of bread, sat down with my people to eat in a corner by ourselves, waiting till the congregation should assemble. I was alone, I mean in the Scripture sense, in which it is not good for a man to be alone. The farmers there think a great deal of themselves. This man had a hundred Hottentots with him. After finishing my simple repast, I got a large Dutch Bible, and chose as my text these words, "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation." When I had found my text, seeing only few persons of the household present, I thought with myself, can this be all my congregation? I looked down the long dark house, and could discern only three boys and two girls, along with the farmer and his wife, as my auditory. I was afraid to ask the farmer about the other people of the house, but I at last ventured to say, "Are there none of your servants about the place who may come in?" "Eh!" he replied, with a roar of mingled amazement and contempt, "Hottentots! are you come to preach to Hottentots? Go to the mountains and preach to the baboons, or I will bring my dogs if you like, that you may preach to them." Well, I thought, what shall I do? I considered my text not just suitable for such a man, so I turned up the gospel by Luke till I found the place I wanted, and trying then, if ever I did, to throw into my voice the softness of the woman of Canaan herself, I read as my text, "Truth, Lord, yet the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from the master's table." This I repeated twice. The great man was as if panic struck, he arose and clapped me on the shoulder, saying, "No more of that, I will bring all the Hottentots in the place," and I soon had a congregation. They listened to me throughout with a death-like silence, and after they were away, the farmer said to me, "Who hardened your sledge hammer to give my head such a blow; you have broken me, I will never object to the preaching of the gospel to the Hottentots again."

The Rev. Dr. Brown gave the valedictory address, from which we select the following fine passages :

"Honoured and beloved brother—I have now, in the name of this assembly of friends to address to you a few words of cordial valediction. The leading topic of my address will necessarily be, the sentiment which has pervaded all the exercises of this evening—honour to whom honour is due. . . . I am sure I speak the sentiments of this meeting—I believe I speak the sentiments of the religious public of Scotland, of Britain, of the Christian world—when I say we honour you in our hearts. We honour you for your apostolic spirit, for your apostolic labours, and for your apostolic success; and in cherishing and expressing this sentiment of cordial affectionate respect and esteem, we are persuaded we are honouring Him who has so honoured you. . . . We are now about to part, it must be to many of us—it may be to all of us, in reference to you—a final parting. I mean not that we are never to meet again; but that our next meeting is likely to be the meeting which has no parting—the meeting at "the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and at our gathering together in him." If we should never more meet here, we hope to meet there with you and our brethren and sisters who go with you, and multitudes of the Bechuanas and other African tribes brought to God through your instrumentality, and to hear from your lips and theirs the history of Africa's

moral desert becoming as the garden of the Lord, and, together with you and them, to raise the anthem "to Him that loved us and washed us from our sins in his blood—to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever." And now my honored and dear brother, I bid you an affectionate farewell. And may Jehovah bless thee and keep thee; may Jehovah make his face to shine upon thee and be gracious unto thee; may Jehovah lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace." "The Lord be thy keeper, the Lord be thy shade on thy right hand; may the sun not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night; the Lord preserve thee from all evil; the Lord preserve thy soul; the Lord preserve thy going out, and thy coming in, from this time forth, even for ever more." FAREWELL.

CHURCH OF SCOTLAND.

THE CONVOCATION OF THE NON-INTRUSION PARTY.

This Assembly was opened on Thursday, 17th November, in St. George's Church with a Sermon by Dr. Chalmers on Ps. 112: 4, "Unto the upright there ariseth light in darkness." After which the convocation adjourned to Roxburgh Church, and sat with closed doors till Thursday the 24th November, when it terminated its proceedings at an open meeting in Lady Glenorchy's chapel. The *Witness newspaper* says the number of ministers in the Church of Scotland does not exceed 1200; and the *quo ad sacra* ministers are, as far as we can ascertain, 200, exclusive of 40 Parliamentary ministers. At the Convocation, of the 478 ministers present, there were certainly not so many as 150 whether Parliamentary or unendowed, and there remain 330 others." From this, it is evident that the Convocation consisted of but a little more than a fourth part of the Parish ministers. This is an important element in estimating the influence which the non-intrusion party may exert in getting the law of the land altered to suit their views.

In giving an account of the convocation "Dr. Candlish dwelt on the unanimity which, upon the whole, characterized their deliberations, though there were, confessedly, times when they were apparently about to do something unseemly, and Satan was like to get the advantage."

There were two sets of resolutions adopted by the Convocation. The former was merely declaratory and was concurred in by 427 ministers: the latter sets forth the determination of those who agreed to it, in case Parliament shall not grant them the spiritual independence which they claim. Their meaning is very plainly expressed in the following passage. "That it is the duty of the ministers now assembled, and of all who adhere to their views, to make a solemn representation to her Majesty's government, and to both Houses of Parliament, setting forth the imminent and extreme peril of the Establishment, the incalculable value of the benefits it confers on the country, and the pain and reluctance with which they are forced to contemplate the possibility of the church's separation, for conscience sake, from the state—respectfully calling upon the rulers of this nation to maintain the constitution inviolate, and to uphold a pure establishment of religion in the land—and finally, intimating, that as the endowments of the church are undoubtedly at the disposal of the supreme power of the state, with whom it rests, either to continue to the church her possession of them, free from any limitation of her spiritual jurisdiction and freedom, or to withdraw them altogether—so it must be the duty of the church, and, consequently, in dependence on the grace of God, it is

the determination of the brethren now assembled—if no measure such as they have declared to be indispensable be granted—to tender the resignation of those civil advantages, which they can no longer hold in consistency with the free and full exercise of their spiritual functions, and to cast themselves on such provision as God in his providence, may afford; maintaining still uncompromised the principle of a right scriptural connection between the church and the state, and solemnly entering their protest against the judgment of which they complain, as in their decided opinion altogether contrary to what has ever hitherto been understood to be the law and constitution of this country.” The second set of resolutions was concurred in by 354 ministers, twenty-one of whom, however, modified their adherence to the last resolution, in this way, viz. :—“ While disagreeing with the doctrine which seems implied in the resolution, that the silence of the legislature constitutes an obligation in our consciences to regard the compact between church and state as altered, we adhere in so far, that the silence of the legislature, after a reasonable time, will, on the ground of christian expediency, oblige us to leave the Establishment.”

Whether, upon the supposition that the Parliament shall not accede to their views, the 354 ministers who concurred in the resolution, will leave the establishment, is a question, to which very opposite answers have been given. They who are opposed to the non-intrusion party, ridicule the idea of their leaving the establishment, and maintain that they will cling to their state allowance on any terms, till death do them part. *The Witness* (devoted to non-intrusionism) has some misgivings as to the amount of credit which they may get for honesty. His language is, “we do not entertain sanguine hopes that the good and faithful ministers who now adorn the Church of Scotland, and so many of whom have solemnly declared their determination, in a certain definite event, to withdraw, will ever get credit for their honesty.” There can, we think, be little doubt that this opinion is gathering strength every day. That some will secede from the Establishment we think is certain—as for the rest, time will tell. The scheme on which they rely for subsistence when stripped of their endowments that “of having a common fund, out of which all are to be paid fixed salaries, without respect to talent or industry, may be begun, but a year or two will see it ended. The possession of such a fund, it is well known, has rendered the Wesleyans the most priest-ridden body in the kingdom.”

By appointment of the Convocation an address to the Christian people of Scotland has been published. It is very long, and very wordy, and not very clear. We do not intend to review it, but to notice some things stated in it which will enable us to understand the present position of that body—the objects for which they are contending, and their relative position to Voluntary Presbyterians.

1. The non-intrusionists contend for civil establishments in religion. They maintain “the right and duty of civil magistrates to *establish*, protect and defend Christ’s church by all means competent to them in their own province, as the free and responsible servants of Him who is the prince of the kings of the earth: and yet, the perfect liberty and the exclusive spiritual jurisdiction of the church as a kingdom which is not of this world, but subject in doctrine, discipline and worship to the sole supremacy of Christ her Head, owning no other rule than that of his word, and no other government than that which he has instituted in the hand of church officers, distinct from the civil magistrate.” It is then evident that they maintain in broad terms the right of the magistrate to *establish* religion. In all that they have done, they have not departed a hair’s breadth from

that wholly unscriptural dogma. While they are striving for liberty to themselves they wish to be a dominant church, and to treat all not of their sect as an inferior caste. We were struck with the paradoxical assertion that the "perfect liberty" for which they contend, and the establishment of the church by the civil magistrate, "although often supposed to be at variance, are perfectly consistent with each other." We ask where is the proof of this? History furnishes none for it, but many against it. Where was an established church in possession of this liberty? When was it not a tool of the state? Besides, there is no natural affinity between these things. They are not of the same order. To maintain that they are consistent is risking a statement with a bold face on the chance of its being believed.

It is manifest that the unqualified manner in which they contend for the establishment theory, "separates them as completely from their evangelical brethren of non-established communions holding the voluntary principle, as any doctrinal heresy could do."

2. There is a great deal of special, unfair, pleading in the Address, to make it appear that, the ministers of the Convocation are contending for the same objects for which the covenanters struggled so long and suffered so much. There is, to a Scotsman, a charm in the very name Covenanters. It calls to remembrance the most interesting, the most spirit-stirring period of the history of Scotland; and for any party to claim kindred with these remarkable men, is to enlist in its favour strong sympathies. The authors of the address were aware of this, and have drawn largely on the national feelings of their countrymen. Now the point for which the non-intrusionists are contending is simply the enjoyment of endowments along with the full liberty to rule the church as they please. The liberty of ordering the affairs of a christian church, according to the word of God, they may have at any moment. The law does not compel men to hold any particular system of religious truth or form of discipline and worship; every man is allowed to choose for himself; but the non-intrusionists wish to keep the endowments, and it is for these that they are contending. Now the Covenanters contended for liberty to preach the gospel, and for liberty to hear it, but never spoke a word about endowments. They took joyfully the spoiling of their goods, provided that they could enjoy the privilege of worshipping God according to their consciences. The very thing for which they have suffered so much, the non-intrusionists have, or may have, for the taking, and nobody will find fault with them. The whole passage about the Covenanters belongs to that kind of rhetoric called clap-trap.

3. The authors of the address seem to think that the most disastrous effects to religion will result from their being necessitated to leave the established church. It might appear from this that they have not much confidence in the simple truths of the gospel, unless they be accompanied with the "might and mastery" of an establishment. This is unworthy of those who are contending for the honour of Christ and for the pure ordinances of his church. Is it not true that the gospel was preached with power and that sinners were converted by thousands, centuries before establishments or endowments were ever heard of? Is it not true that the gospel is preached at this moment in many heathen lands with great success and without endowments? Why then hold out the idea, dishonouring to the Omnipotence of God's truth when accompanied with God's blessing, that its progress will be retarded for want of endowments and an establishment?

We have watched the movement in the Church of Scotland with deep interest. It began with a design to extinguish the Secession and all dissent. Almost every step taken, has been away from the point aimed at, and to-

wards the very thing which was most opposed. Light has come in upon the movement party very slowly. There were deep prejudices to be eradicated. The Church of Scotland is obviously in a transition state. That good will be the result we have no doubt. God seems to be leading the blind by a way that they know not, and in paths that they have not trodden. We hope He may make darkness light before them and crooked things straight. There was very great difficulty in curing the Jewish Christians of their fondness for the ordinances of Moses, till the temple was destroyed and the nation broken up. When the movement party shall have separated from the establishment, they will see much which they cannot see now. And therefore, for their own sakes, and for the sake of the truth, the sooner the separation takes place the better.

MISSIONARY PRESBYTERY IN THE CANADAS.

At the meeting of Presbytery on the 2nd February, it was, after long deliberation on the state of the mission, unanimously agreed to form a missionary fund, to assist weak congregations, and to aid generally, in supplying destitute places with religious ordinances.

For the purpose of carrying this into effect, it was resolved that, Deputations be appointed to hold meetings of a missionary character with the several congregations, to explain the views of the Presbytery, and to aid in organizing in each congregation, an association to collect subscriptions to aid the missionary efforts of the Presbytery throughout the Province.

Appointed, the Rev. Messrs. Proudfoot, Skinner, and Murray, the Deputation for the West; the Rev. Messrs. Christie, Roy, and Barrie, for the Gore and Niagara Districts; the Rev. Messrs. Fraser and Jennings, for that part of the Home District northward of Toronto; and the Rev. Messrs. Thornton and Dick, for the eastern part of the Home District and for the Newcastle District.

Said Deputations to report at next meeting of Presbytery, which is to be held at Hamilton, on the 26th July next.

Appointed Robert Christie, Esq., Dumfries, Treasurer of Missionary Fund.

We have been much pleased to learn that the United Associate Congregation in St. Catharines begins to realize the expectations which were formed from the settlement of the Rev. Mr. Porteous, as their Pastor. At the dispensation of the Lord's Supper on the 16th ult., between twenty and thirty members were added to the church. May God prosper them more and more!

SCOTLAND.

PRESBYTERIAL NOTICES. (From the Secession Magazine.) The Rev. T. Jamieson was inducted to the charge of the U. A. Congregation, Prince's street, Kilmarnock, on Nov. 2nd.

Mr. Wm. Lander was ordained to the office of the holy Ministry, and the Pastoral charge of the U. A. Congregation of Port Glasgow, as colleague to the Rev. D. Inglis, on Nov. 23rd.

Mr. John Baird was ordained over the second United Associate Congregation, Jedburgh, on January 18th.

We are sorry to have to record the death of the Rev. D. Inglis, of Greenlaw. He died on Tuesday, Dec. 13th. He was a sincere Christian and faithful Minister—loved and respected when living, and honoured when dead. "The righteous shall be held in everlasting remembrance."