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THE  
CANADIAN  
CHRISTIAN EXAMINER,  
AND  
PRESBYTERIAN REVIEW.

FOR

MARCH—DECEMBER 1837.

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VOL. I.

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NIAGARA, U. C. PUBLISHED BY W. D. MILLER, GENERAL AGENT, Queen-Street.

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PRINTED BY THOMAS SEWELL.

*Wm. M. Gillinray*

THE  
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CHRISTIAN EXAMINER,  
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PRESBYTERIAN REVIEW.

VOLUME I.                      DECEMBER, 1837.                      NUMBER 10.

CONTENTS.

RELIGIOUS COMMUNICATIONS Etc.	ECCLESIASTICAL INTELLIGENCE.
Causes of Division in the Church and Prospects of Unity, . . . . . 338	Extracts from the Note Book of a Missionary. . . . . 362
On Fasting. . . . . 345	Presbytery of Toronto. . . . . 368
Biographical Sketch of the Rev Samuel Rutherford. . . . . 351	POETRY.
Practical Sermons—No. IV. . . . . 339	Sabbath Eve. . . . . 369
	Index, Vol. I. . . . . 369

The profits of this work will be devoted to the extension of Missionary labour in Canada.



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To whom communications may be addressed, POST PAID.

PRINTED BY THOMAS SEWELL.

Price ten shillings currency in advance per annum. Postage included.

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RELIGIOUS COMMUNICATIONS ETC.

FOR THE CHRISTIAN EXAMINER.

CAUSES OF DIVISION IN THE CHURCH  
AND PROSPECTS OF UNITY.

Sacred history makes known to us that at a very early period of the church, and even when it was under apostolic superintendence, it began to be agitated with discordant sentiments, and violent contentions. Strife and debate arose even within those sacred precincts where the gospel of peace had shed its light and soothing influence on the darkened understandings and warring passions of such as owned obedience to the faith, and who were united in the bands of a love that never faileth. It would appear, at least in reference to the Christian community in Corinth,\* that these disputes originated from an undue partiality in different parties each to

their favorite teacher—a too frequent cause of schism in the body of Christ during all its subsequent history. “One admired the plainness and the purity of Paul’s doctrine; another was charmed with the eloquence of Apollos: one professed adherence to Cephas on account of his greater veneration for Jewish ceremonies; and another prided himself on his superiority to human teachers, and professed to be a follower of Christ alone, perhaps because he belonged to the church of Jerusalem, and had seen Christ in the flesh.” These were certainly in themselves harmless partialities. Such predilections seem to be unavoidable, constituted as human nature is, in a society of persons whose capacities, acquirements and tastes are unequal and various. We cannot perceive that there was aught morally wrong in one man, who perhaps

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\*See Epistles to the Corinthians, passim.

better able to appreciate it than some of his brethren, preferred the close and nervous reasoning of the apostle of the Gentiles; or in the other, who, inferior in intellectual attainment might be more charmed with harmonious cadences and graceful gestures: and it was quite natural in a Jew, who retained his veneration for the ritual of his fathers, to hold in higher esteem the apostle of the circumcision; and we cannot but regard it as an amiable trait in the character of one who had enjoyed the personal teaching of Him who spake as never man spake, that he highly estimated this singular felicity, and in a peculiar sense called Christ, master. The error consisted not in the indulgence of these preferences, but in certain affections of mind, and sectarian practices which were permitted to grow out of them.

For it is manifest that the undue indulgence of these predilections for particular teachers, led to the introduction into the Corinthian church of a practice that prevailed among the philosophical sects of Greece—that of assuming the name of the teachers whom they respectively followed. It was customary to designate the different schools of philosophy by the names of their founders; hence we have the Epicureans, Pyrrhonists, Platonists, and hence the people of Antioch, following this custom first called the disciples of Christ, CHRISTIANS. In this there was no impropriety for the name designated the class and the creed. But all the Christian teachers taught the same gospel of which Christ was the author, and they were nothing more than the instruments of its diffusion—and consequently for their followers to assume their name, was something more blamable than to introduce an unnecessary and improper distinction—it was to rob Christ of the glory due unto His Name.

Partiality for the human instruments, led the partizans of each to forget the Divine teacher, and hence the peculiar pungency of the apostles' ironical questions—"Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?"

But another evil grew out of their improper party distinctions—a spirit of intolerance. Diversity of opinion as to the merits of their respective teachers, produced mutual disaffection and hostility. Names, which at first meant no more than the harmless preference of the individual, became at length the incentive of controversy and the watch word of party. Debates on trivial questions conducted by the unskillful, some times it may be in harsh and acrimonious language, and seldom with any scrupulous fairness of argument, never fail to awaken bad passions—the mother and nurse of intolerance. Hence arise divisions: and divisions in any community are more easily made than healed. One should think it would have been very easy for one member of the Corinthian church to admire the wisdom of Paul without being alienated from another who praised the eloquence of Apollos; but this, the judgment of a spectator at a distance, is not always the sentiment of a man tossed on the waves of party, dizzy with the agitation, and rendered insensible to every motive of forbearance and charity. What a lamentable record of these evils does the history of the church present! How mournfully do they sometimes fall under our own observation!

Let it not be overlooked, however, that the authorized teachers were in no degree to blame for those divisions which had arisen in the primitive church. There was no ambiguity in their doctrine, no discrepancy in their discipline. Guided by the same spirit, Paul and

Apollos, and Cephas, spoke the same things, and were perfectly joined together in the same mind, and in the same judgment. Some errors indeed had been introduced by *false* teachers, and some *sinful practices*—retained by some of the converts from their former superstitions—were not yet laid aside;—but none of these seem to have been causes of division in the Corinthian church. These causes were chiefly to be found in their unreasonable preference for particular teachers and not in diversity of doctrine. In this respect the divisions which existed in the church *then*, differ from the divisions which exist in the church *now*; the former arose from diversity of gifts in the teachers; the latter, at least in the great branches of the Christian family, arise from various causes quite independent of the personal qualifications of particular religious teachers. Let us illustrate this subject.

The church has long been divided on the question of its government. Dispute on this point could not arise in the apostolic age—for the company of the faithful would naturally and implicitly submit to those men who by miraculous signs gave certain evidence that they bore the commission of heaven. Accordingly we never find any disunion among the apostles themselves on the ground of superiority or precedence. Peter never pretended to be the superior of Paul, nor did Paul assume any authority over John. Guided by the same spirit they were perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment—and each seems to have labored in his own sphere, and to have ruled with apostolic authority over those he was instrumental in converting to the faith. Nor does it appear that their authority was ever disputed by the company of believers who regarded them

as the inspired ambassadors of Christ, as teachers and parents—as overseers in the house of God whom it were impiety to disobey. While the church, therefore, remained under such authority there were no divisions on the question of its government.

But when these divinely commissioned men rested from their labors, they were succeeded by pastors who did not enter into their full authority, because they were not, like the apostles, possessed of inspiration and infallibility. Their successors in preaching and government—for they had no successors as apostles—were not inspired—were not infallible—and consequently they could not pretend to assert the same authority either as instructors or rulers. When they governed, or enacted any discipline, they were bound to appeal to apostolic practice or precept: if they were not borne out by either, their discipline rested only on human authority, and could not be of imperative obligation. It seems that there must have arisen at a very early period of the church, a considerable diversity in the mode of its government. Had the apostles laid down a fixed standard—had they been as explicit on the order of discipline as they are upon the subject of doctrine—this diversity could scarcely have arisen. But it must be manifest that there is little very positive or explicit on this subject in the New Testament scriptures. And it is not improbable that the apostolic practice itself might be varied according to circumstances. We need not be surprised therefore that some diversity of opinion and practice should very soon prevail on a subject on which no clear positive rule had been laid down by inspired authority; and that in proportion as men departed from the Christian temper of

unity and forbearance, the causes of division should be multiplied.

The church is at present divided on the subject of its government into three grand branches—the Episcopalian, the Presbyterian, and the Congregational. Of these, the Episcopal, which holds that the entire spiritual government of the church is invested in diocesan bishops—has the greatest number of adherents, for besides a large body of protestants, the church of Rome adheres to this system of government. The Presbyterian party, which holds that spiritual jurisdiction is invested in the Presbytery, that is in the ministers and elders of a defined territory, comprehends a considerable portion of the reformed churches. The Congregational party, which may be considered an offshoot of the Presbyterian, do not, strictly adhere to any system of government, but each society is guided solely by the public voice of its own members. We do not at present intend to enter into any discussion on the comparative merits of these three systems. We now simply advert to the fact of their existence, and that their respective supporters generally allege the united authority of scripture, history, and expediency for their establishment. Here then we have a cause of division different from any that existed while the church was under apostolic superintendence. That was founded on a mere preference for particular teachers; this arises from disagreement on the interpretation of scripture, of apostolical practice, and of expediency. It is scarcely to be expected that there will ever be an entire unanimity of sentiment on these points, since the Holy Spirit has been pleased to leave them indeterminate.

But agreed as Christians are on the great ends for which spiritual government is instituted in the church—it is

quite possible for them all to aim at the same thing, though by methods somewhat different; to be actuated by the same kind affection towards each other; and to be guided by the same practical judgment in all matters referring to their own salvation, or the extension of the Redeemer's kingdom in the world. Whenever such heartfelt sentiments shall prevail in the church, divisions on matters of mere opinion will be more rare—Christians will be so enwrapped with the grand objects of their faith and vocation as to lose sight of minute diversities—and there are few enlightened Christians, methinks, who would not rather see the church united on some modification of any of the three systems of government, than see it disunited and enfeebled in its power of achieving larger conquests over the kingdom of darkness.

Another cause of division may be found in difference of doctrine. The doctrines of Christianity are contained in a written record. It is impossible perhaps to write in any human language in such a manner as to preclude the possibility of misinterpretation. Although the record itself were quite free from ambiguity, the conclusions that men draw from it would soon become dissimilar, and many times contrary. It would be nothing more than what was to be expected that some diversity of belief should exist among Christians on the sublime mysteries of their faith. But when we look narrowly into the creeds of different churches, we may be as much surprised by their similarity as by their differences. The doctrines contained in the creed commonly called the apostles', seem to be admitted by nearly all—and it confessedly contains the main pillars of the Christian faith. It is true that different sectaries have connected with these pillars various

drapery. The papist adorns them in such excess as almost to conceal them; and even the protestant sometimes indulges his fancy and makes them appear very unlike what they are in their naked majesty and proportions. But still these pillars remaining, we may hope that they will one day be stripped of their cobwebs and incumbrances, and stand forth in that beauty which they received from the hand of the Divine Architect. We may hope that the Romanist will abandon his dark and uncertain traditions, and adhere exclusively to the law and to the testimony—that brighter light shining in on the Protestant churches, will cause nicer shades of doubtful opinions to melt away, and that, all returning to the simplicity of the Gospel of Christ, may yet, in the sense intended, be perfectly joined together in the same mind, and in the same judgment.

A third cause of division may be found in the ritual of public worship—that is, the form and order in which the worship of God is conducted in the Christian assembly, and the ordinances of the church are administered. All that is wanted here is a return to primitive simplicity. Numerous rites and ceremonies have in latter ages been admitted into the church, which the apostles never practised and never enjoined. In the manner of offering praise to God all denominations of Christians seem to agree—singing psalms to God with the voice, accompanied, or not, with instrumental music. In making supplication to God some use a prescribed form, others offer up their desires unto God as the spirit may give them utterance. In the manner of celebrating the Lord's supper there is no material difference among Protestants. On the administration of baptism, disputes have arisen, as to its manner, by sprinkling or immersion, and as to its subjects, in-

fant or adults. May we not safely state, that although on these points there be some allowance for difference of opinion, there is none which ought to disturb the unity of the church, or preclude the exercise of Christian forbearance. Why should we be offended because a community of our fellow Christians in their supplications to God should use always the same form? If they find it more profitable—why not? We might feel it an irksome restraint—we might question the authority of any one who should prescribe in that matter—we might prefer offering up our prayers unto God according to the ever varying desires and circumstances of human life—and by so doing in our own judgment we follow the more excellent way. But this is not a sufficient reason for breaking asunder the bonds of Christian unity. I may not become a stated member of their assembly, but I may still regard them as brethren in Christ: and the same sentiments may be cherished by Christians whether they commemorate their Lord's death, sitting around his table, or kneeling around an altar—whether in infancy or mature life they have received the waters of baptism. It is a pity, we may sometimes think, that there is not greater uniformity throughout the church in the modes of its worship; we may fervently desire to see it; in regard to outward form and order in the worship of God we reckon it attainable; we may look forward to a purer state of the church when greater uniformity shall exist in its order, and when in the full sense of the apostle, all shall speak the same thing, and there shall be no divisions among us; but we shall be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.

A fourth cause of division may be found in the different views entertained



on the subject of ministerial order and qualification. From the apostolical age there has been an order of men in the church specially set apart and ordained for the pastoral office. Every sect in the church still professes to preserve this order, except the Quakers, and perhaps a few other sectaries still more inconsiderable than they. Wherever in any of the known regular churches there is a congregation, there must be a pastor to preside over it, and to dispense its ordinances. Widely different as the Episcopalian, Presbyterian and Independent systems are in many respects, they all agree in the necessity of an educated and ordained ministry. There is therefore a high degree of unanimity throughout the Christian church—as to the necessity of an ordained, or constituted ministry by whom alone the ordinances of the church may be duly administered. They are all agreed also, we think on this point, that ordination, or the appointment to the office of the holy ministry, can only come from persons who are themselves invested with the office, that is from ministers. Hence among the adherents of Episcopacy, ordination is administered by the Bishop alone; among the adherents of Presbytery that rite is performed by the ministerial members of Presbytery; among the Independents, a pastor is commonly ordained by a few of the ministers of neighboring congregations. There is much diversity indeed in the mode, but it is pleasing to observe a uniformity in the scriptural principle, that no one is entitled to exercise the office of the Christian ministry unless he be specially called and ordained to it, and that the right of ordaining belongs only to those who are already invested with the ministerial character. “Here they are perfectly joined together in the same mind, and in the same judgment.” Let us now advert to the points and causes of their difference. According to the Episcopal system, the Bishop claims to be a higher order than the Presbyter, maintains that a title to that office can only be conferred by himself, and consequently refuses to acknowledge the ministerial character and acts of all such as have not received prelatice ordination; moreover he claims the sole right in virtue of his office of superintending all spiritual affairs within his diocese, and of deciding in all matters of controversy that may arise within it. But according to the Presbyterian system, this prelatice authority is deemed an usurpation; it is contended that all Presbyters or elders are of the same rank, without any precedence, except such as is temporary and elective, and that regular ordination can be conferred only by the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery; and the Presbytery claim the same right collectively, which the episcopal prelate does individually, of superintending and regulating the spiritual affairs of all congregations within their bounds. On the other hand the Independent system disclaims the authority both of Bishop and Presbytery; it owns no spiritual jurisdiction whatever; no necessary bond of union between ministers and congregations; according to it every little community stands alone and is entitled to manage its own affairs without any control or superintendence, or any tribunal to which it may appeal should disputes arise. Here then there are systems which cannot coalesce; and until they receive some modification there can be no hope of unity in the church. Episcopacy and Independentism, in their pure model, are the two extremes; in the former an individual grasps all power; in the latter all authority is anni-

bilated; the one is pure spiritual monarchy, the other is unlimited spiritual democracy; in the former the order of the church is subjected to the will of an individual from whose decision there is no appeal; in the latter it is subjected to the will of the people on whose unreasonable caprice there is no restraint. Strange if such extremes should ever meet! Incredible that such contrary systems should ever be blended into one! Yet strange and incredible as it may seem there are signs of such an approximation. In the Protestant Episcopal church in the United States, there is a periodical convention of Bishops, ministers and lay-men, which differs in little but the name, from a Presbyterian synod. In the Episcopal church of England attempts are at this moment being made by its most enlightened friends to have its convocations restored; this will soon doubtless be obtained, and then its resemblance to the Presbyterian model of ministerial order will not be so very distant. On the other hand, among the congregational churches in England, Wales, Scotland and the United States, unions and consociations have been for some years formed, in which ministers and delegates assemble annually to deliberate on subjects of common interest and the best means of extending their cause—and although they have not assumed any judicial authority, their decisions are nearly equivalent. Is not such a union, then virtually tantamount to a Presbytery or Synod by whatever name it may be designated? Thus we think we are able to see the two extremes converging; while they still retain their distinctive appellations there is a growing correspondence in their views and practices; and we cannot refrain from indulging the hope, that, when party and educational prejudices are more subdued by

the spirit of Christian charity, there may come a time when the points of disagreement, as to ecclesiastical order, between these three grand branches of the Protestant reformed church, shall dwindle to so trivial a magnitude, as shall be no bar to their cordial fellowship, and when it may be said of them, they are perfectly joined together in the same mind, and the same practical judgment.

We shall advert only to one other cause of division in the Christian church—the spirit of faction. Something like it appeared among the Corinthians; the tendency to it is strong in human nature, and until the gospel exerts its fuller influence, it will occasionally manifest itself. It is this spirit which leads a man to fret and murmur if affairs are not managed exactly to his mind. He gathers around him the disaffected for any cause and from every quarter. They magnify the alleged corruptions, find in them a pretext for separation, and go forth to sow in other soils the seeds of discord. For this evil we cannot see any complete prevention in this world. The church on earth, even in its purest state, is but a community of imperfect beings; and it should not surprise us that we often find within it, some whose jarring and discontented spirits refuse to be regulated by its principles, and soothed by its hopes. We are told by one who knew the heart of man and the prospects of his church, that “offences must come.” Let them come then. It is ours to seek grace from heaven that we may be prepared to meet them. When thus prepared we shall not be greatly moved by those instances of weakness and perversity which no man can live long without witnessing in the circle of his fellowship. The church is as the ocean. Its surface is ruffled

by the passing wind; but there is a vast deep tide which the winds disturb not; which moves onward in its course with a majestic regularity under the resistless guidance of a power in heaven. And when this tide has rolled to the shores of eternity the multitude of the redeemed—when the plan of mercy is completed—when all its objects are put in possession of the purchased inheritance, every thing that hurts or offends will be far removed; and in the light and love of the heavenly world, the intercession of the Redeemer in behalf of his church shall have met its complete fulfilment: “I pray that they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us.”

Mean while let us not forget the duties incumbent on us as Christians, surrounded as we are by those divisions which unhappily distract the church. We cannot now appeal to the living apostles as the unerring arbiters of our controversies, for all of these have long since been removed from earth, and are become lights in a firmament overcast by no storms. But we can appeal to their conduct, and writings; and we may thus imbibe their pure principles, and their peaceful spirit. We must not cease to take part in the affairs of the church because they may happen to be distracted. Shall we timidly, or with a disgust that betokens no Christian forbearance, retire from its fellowship, and from some solitary corner survey its contentions without one effort to remove them? Had the primitive confessors manifested such a spirit when the storm arose, the ark of our safety might have perished, and the light of the gospel been extinguished not only in the “eye of Greece,” but of the world. It would have been as the timid surrender of the ship to a *misguided rather than a mutinous crew.*

It would have been the betrayal of their Master’s cause when it most needed their support. To take part in the affairs of the church when all things go smoothly is what any one may do, however weak his attachment to the Christian cause. But to remain by it in the hour of peril, when faithless men have brought into it the unhallowed contentions of the world, when even many true disciples are yielding to that feverish irritation that will sometimes *creep over them in the hour of trial*—to hold on at the post of duty in those trying circumstances when discord warps the judgment and inflames the passions—to be calm with the furious, to persuade the partizan to concord, to pray with those whose fellowship tends rather to quench devotion than to fan it—to persevere thus acting when hope is almost dead—to sit in humble expectation when the vessel is driven with the wind and tossed and the master seems asleep—can only arise from a sincere faith in him whom winds and waves obey, and who though he hath permitted his church to be distracted by the ignorance and wickedness of men—will assuredly preserve her from the destroyer, and cause her to flourish while the sun and moon endure.

In surveying the comminuted state of the Christian church on this continent, ought it not to be the earnest prayer of Christians of every name that we may all be led to clearer views of what the apostles taught, and animated with a larger share of their spirit. In the interpretation of the sacred oracles—the church’s only sure and unerring rule—the sincere and spiritual mind will always have the clearest apprehension. Yet in this imperfect life we see only as through a glass darkly—and what is discerned by one with some distinctness may be nearly invisible to another

whose mental vision is less perfect. Amidst that diversity of opinion, however, on indeterminate questions which we cannot hope to see wholly removed in this state of being, how soothing is it to trace a remarkable unity of belief throughout the principal branches of the christian family, in the great fundamental truths of revelation. We often are pleased to recognize the lineaments of a brother in Christ in one whose soul is as it were *tattooed* with the dirty paint of ignorance and superstition. And are we not encouraged to hope, when the blessings of a christian education shall be more widely diffused throughout every rank of life, that there will be a blending of the divided family into one—having one faith, one hope, one baptism, one God, and Father of all—above all, and through all, and in all.

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### ON FASTING.

According to appointment of Synod, a day of fasting is soon to be observed by all our congregations.\* We fully agree with our Supreme Court in the propriety of setting apart such a season at the

\* The Synod considering that the judgments of God have been recently visited on these provinces, as well as other parts of the world, in drying up some of the sources of temporal prosperity, and the infliction of other calamities, while there are few indications that men have humbled themselves under the Divine hand, and learned righteousness; and considering also that the whole Church does greatly need the gracious influences of the Holy Spirit, in order to the growth and extension of true religion, resolved—that a day be observed throughout the Church for fasting, humiliation, and prayer, and that such day be the 7th of December next ensuing; that Ministers, Elders, and people may on that day, as with one heart, humble themselves under the mighty hand of God—deprecate his deserved displeasure—and entreat his favour towards this land, and the quickening influence of the Holy Spirit on themselves and all the Churches of the Lord Jesus Christ.

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present juncture. The commercial difficulties that have now for a length of time pressed sorely upon us, and the too manifest overlooking of the hand of God in them and consequent refusing to profit by them, combined with other circumstances in the aspect of these provinces, demand, as we conceive, a deep and united humiliation of ourselves before our justly provoked God. We trust, therefore, that the Synod's appointment will be every where regarded by our people, and that there will at this time be a general mourning for our sins, accompanied by a steadfast turning from them. If such shall be the case, the issue will be blessed, for the word standeth sure, "Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted." In the prospect of such a solemnity some observations on Fasting may not be unreasonable from those who take to themselves the name of CHRISTIAN EXAMINERS.

Fasting, in its ordinary acceptation, is the abstaining from food and drink; but as it is used in Scripture, it has a much more extensive signification. It implies not merely the abstaining for a time from food and drink, but also the denying and chastening of all the bodily senses and appetites; and this, to the end that the soul, freed from the weight and encumbrance of an indulged and pampered body, may bow itself in deeper humiliation before God, open up to him, with a more solemn and pungent sense of their exceeding sinfulness, its own sins and the sins of its people, and pour out itself in more earnest and heartfelt and prolonged supplications that he would be pleased to avert his heavy judgments, and in wrath remember mercy.

That fasting is a duty there can be no doubt. Solemnly enjoined to be observed by the Israelites on "the day of atone-

ment," it was constantly practised by them under the Old Testament, and we find it continued by God's people under the New. Our Lord himself fasted; he speaks to his disciples of things that could be effected only "through prayer and fasting;" and though in answer to a question put to him in reference to this practice by the disciples of John, he speaks of it as an exercise not so specially appropriate to the circumstances of his own followers at that particular time, he intimates the approach of a season when, as it would be appropriate to their circumstances, so would it be practised by them. "Can the children of the bride-chamber mourn, as long as the bridegroom is with them? but the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken from them, and then shall they fast." Accordingly we find that when he was taken from them they *did* fast; they were "in fastings often," nor did they almost ever ordain persons to the work of the ministry, or engage in any other important duty, without having first "fasted and prayed." Looking back to the earlier dispensation, David, we find, "wept and chastened his soul with fasting." Daniel, too, sought the Lord "with fasting and sackcloth and ashes;" for a season "eating no pleasant bread," nor suffering "wine and flesh to come into his mouth." When Jonah proclaimed to the people of Nineveh, "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown, the people believed God, and proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them even to the least of them. For word came unto the King of Nineveh; and he arose from his throne, and he laid aside his robe from him, and covered him with sackcloth, and sat in ashes. And he caused it to be proclaimed and published through Nineveh, (by the decree of the King

and his nobles) saying, let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste any thing, let them not feed nor drink water: But let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily unto God; yea, let them turn every one from his evil way, and from the violence that is in their hands. Who can tell if God will turn and repent: and turn away from his fierce anger, that we perish not? And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way—and God repented of the evil that he had said that he would do unto them; and he did it not."

Fasting, as we are reminded by the last instance of it is a *natural expression* of godly sorrow. It is not an arbitrary thing, but a thing which in deep grief we cannot but choose to do. Only let our sins be vividly called to our remembrance, and let us be burdened and bowed down under a sense of them, and we shall have small appetite for dainty meat, and the pampering of the body will be the last thing we shall think of. It is from its being thus founded in nature that the practice of fasting has been enjoined and observed at seasons when deep grief is usually felt, such as when the affecting scenes of Calvary are to be more especially brought under the view in the Sacrament of the Supper, or as when some calamity is felt or apprehended, such as plague, pestilence, war, or famine, or civil or ecclesiastical convulsion. At such seasons of sorrow, a people have been naturally led, with one accord, to appoint and keep a day, or days, for afflicting their souls; and as they have felt that while the grief already pressing upon them has led to this ordinance, the ordinance itself has had a powerful re-action, and tended greatly to deepen their godly sorrow, they have also been led at other times to appoint fasts for the purpose of a-

wakening those tender and pungent emotions on account of sin which they have seen it to be blessed to feel, but which they have felt to be in danger of being smothered by a life of unbroken worldly indulgence or care or occupation.

Let none, then, think lightly of the practice of fasting, as if it were unimportant or unnecessary. Let it be seen that the heart in fasting is humbled and penitent, for otherwise our fasting will be hateful to God and injurious to ourselves; but this being attended to, let not the thing itself be regarded as supererogatory and uncalled-for. The minuter details of the practice, indeed, it may be impossible, as it would be unsubservient to any good purpose, to fix in all cases. Abstinence from all food, for example, it would not be proper to insist on in every instance; for in persons of weak constitutions this would be so far from tending to secure the ends of fasting that it would directly hinder them by rendering the person fasting unable to engage in the exercises calculated to attain them. For such persons it is altogether necessary to take a little food during their seasons of fasting, yet not for the gratification of animal appetite, but solely for the strengthening of their bodily frame; that the soul may thus be able to continue in humiliation, contrition and prayer. The importance of the thing itself, however, is not at all affected by such accommodations to special necessities; the duty and the blessedness of fasting, in its true scriptural sense, still stand upon their own grounds; and it may be for us solemnly to enquire, in these evil days on which we are fallen, whether the apostacy that prevails among many, and the low and declining state of religion too observable among

many others, may not in a great measure be owing to this, that the practice of fasting has fallen so much into disuse, if not into contempt. May it not be that through this disuse men, having nothing to break that soft and luxurious or uninterruptedly occupied life which is incompatible with godliness, have in multitudes of cases sunk either into continued surfeiting and drunkenness or into "cares of this life," heedless that because of these things the wrath of God cometh upon the children of disobedience? We cannot disguise from our readers our strong conviction that it is for Christians in these times solemnly to consider whether if fasting, according to its scriptural idea, were more practised, the heart, instead of being wholly sensualized, as it often is, by unrestrained and uninterrupted animal indulgence or by ever-carking earthly anxieties might not be awakened to feel its own plagues and its awful degradation,—might not be made to see that one thing was yet more needful to it than the unbounded enlargement of its means of carnal gratification, and might not thus come back to God by supplication and fasting and weeping, instead of plunging recklessly, in the determined pursuit of a gain that will soon perish, into those "temptations and snares and foolish and hurtful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition."

Fasting is to be either private or public;—private as in particular families, or more private still as in particular individuals—public is observed by a nation; or by a particular Church, or within a particular congregation. There is to be private fasting. Of this fasting, and of the most private kind of it—namely, of individuals sequestered from others, our Lord treats in the sixth chapter

of Matthew's Gospel, verse 16. 13 It is indeed true that what he here says will also apply to a considerable extent to fasting of a public kind ; but it is of the fasting of an individual who afflicts his soul in secrecy and solitude, that he treats in those words, "Then, when thou fastest, anoint thine head, and wash thy face, that thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father which is in secret, and thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly."

This fasting is to be conducted *without ostentation*. It is like private or closet prayer; it is a thing between the individual and God. It can serve no good purpose to make it much, if at all, known. It might indeed prove injurious, instead of profitable, by drawing off our attention from what ought wholly to engage it, to the opinions which our fellow men may entertain of us, and by lifting us up with pride, should we know that others admire us for our chastened and devotional habits, and look up to us as persons of a more exalted and severer sanctity, dwelling more habitually on the borders of heaven. That we may avoid all such dangers, when our fast is private—before God only—and when others have nothing to do with it, except as they are affectionately remembered by us at the throne of grace, we must shun every thing that might draw upon us the observations of men—the studied sadness of the countenance, the disfiguring of the face, the squalid appearance about which the pharisaical hypocrites were so solicitous that they might appear unto men to fast, and for which the Saviour most emphatically says of them, "verily they have their reward." These, as things calculated to attract notice, we must, when we fast privately, utterly repudiate and avoid ; and particularly

must we do this if we have at any time felt ourselves in danger of loving the praise of men. So far from letting our fasting be thus openly known, unless when some special cause for revealing it occurs, we are to hide it deep within the recesses of our own spirit. That it may be pure from all vanity and pride, so far as these are fed by human praise, instead of affecting any squalidness of appearance, or casting a studied gloom over our visage, or disfiguring or altering the pleasantness of our face, we are to anoint our head, and wash our face, that we appear not unto men to fast, but unto our Father which seeth in secret ; and then, though we have none of the reward which the hypocrites had, we shall not go unrewarded : we shall be abundantly recompensed. We have a Father who seeth in secret, who, while he fills the circle of heaven and earth, is equally present to every movement of each individual soul, discerns our most hidden contrition on account of sin, and will reward us openly. He will reward us openly *as respects ourselves*. He sets a mark upon those who sigh and cry for the abominations that have been done by them and their people ; and the result of this godly humiliation and grief will be peace and quietness and assurance—often indeed known to themselves only and with which a stranger doth not intermeddle ; which as the world cannot give, so neither can it take away. Nor will our father give us peace only, but prosperity also ; he "will turn again our" spiritual "captivity like the streams in the south ;" and, watered by the dews of his spirit, we "shall grow as the lily, and cast out our roots as Lebanon." And thus shall we be rewarded openly *as respects others*. Men, from the peace which they behold us enjoying, and from the holiness which they

behold us following after, will take knowledge of us that we have been with Jesus. Even as to the Israelites the light of the uncreated glory yet lingered on the face of Moses after he had descended to them from communing with God upon the Mount, so shall we "shine as lights in the world holding forth the word of life," nor shine altogether in vain but to the inducing of some at least who observe us to give glory to God on the day of visitation, and, to take hold of us saying, "We will go with you, for God is with you of a truth." Not that in speaking of this open reward as respects others in this present time we wish to put out of view the reward which they who have fasted and mourned might well receive in the day of God; but that joining the two rewards together, and marking how the one leads on to the other, we wish to call to remembrance that the time is at hand when "they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars forever and ever."

But there is also to be public fasting. Public fasting, as has already been observed, is, where not national, the fasting of a particular church or community, or of a particular congregation. Now it is to be remarked that several of the rules given by our Lord for private fasting are equally to be observed in public fasting. There is to be no ostentation in this kind any more than in the other; there is to be no *shew* of fasting but the *reality* of it; no appearance to men to fast, but the appearance to our Father to fast—that is, the fasting in deed and in truth, the afflicting our souls not with feigned but with unfeigned grief. In a public fast, however, such as our church now has it in prospect to keep, while there should be no ostentation, neither

should there be, as indeed there cannot properly be, any concealment of it. So far from its being proper to aim at concealment in this case, it is altogether right that there should be a decent open profession that we are so engaged. The fast is by mutual agreement:—it is ordained by an authority, which a christian people should respect, that of their lawfully constituted Supreme Court; it is known some time before hand when it is to take place; the body come together openly to celebrate it; it is known to the world around us that we are so engaged; and why, then, in such a case aim at concealment which, as it could not be attained, so neither would it be right or desirable, but the reverse, as obstructing some of the most important ends for which a public fast is instituted.

It is of much importance to mark distinctly the difference in this respect between a private and a public fast, as from neglect of this, serious error has been sometimes fallen into in regard to the directions of our Lord concerning fasting already referred to. We have heard of persons defending their disregard of a public fast appointed within their community—defending the doing of things altogether incompatible with the exercises appropriate to such a solemnity—on the ground that no less an authority than that of our blessed Saviour had enjoined them to avoid all appearance of such austerity, and even to engage in their ordinary business and pursue their ordinary pleasures that the appearance of it might be the more surely and effectually avoided. Such a line of defence in regard to the matter could only have arisen from confounding private and public fasting, and making what applies exclusively to the one, apply to the other also. In individual and private fasting all publicity is carefully



to be avoided, yet certainly not even here is privacy to be studied to such an extent as to lead the individual for the sake of concealment to do things inconsistent with all fasting—to “feast himself without fear,” and to “find all his pleasures;” but in regard to public fasting the case is altogether different. As privacy cannot be preserved here, so neither is it to be studied; indeed the studying of it would be altogether wrong; it were an offence to be punished by him whose eyes behold, whose eyelids try the children of men. When the judgments of God are come upon a people, it is proper that they should publicly humble themselves under his mighty hand; he has been publicly dishonoured by them, and, it is fit that they should publicly confess their iniquity; their sins against him have many of them been open, or if they have not themselves been open, their effects have been so, and it is right that open also should be the abasement and bitterness of their souls. Not that in such a case we are to fast for show—to fast that we may be seen of men; no, but we are to fast in reality—we are to lift up the voice together in truth—from our dwellings where we have lain in the dust of humiliation before our offended God, every family apart, and every individual apart, we are to go into the courts of the Lord’s house to weep there in company, and there to be ashamed and confounded together for our common reproach: and all our demeanour on that day is to be such as will shew to those who look upon us that the anguish of our soul is great, that “the hand of God has touched us;” and if we did indeed hold such a fast as this unto the Lord, we should think little whether others beheld us or not, nor indeed would it harm us, as it would scarcely meet our notice if ten thou-

sand were around us whether to mark our solemnity in scorn or to laud us for our austerity and our grief. We are not, we repeat it, to *fast for appearance* at a public, any more than at a private fast; but the appearance, if we have the reality, we are not to be careful to avoid, nor can we conceive any thing more indicative of a mind utterly debased, more offensive in the eye of God, and more fitted to draw down his heaviest indignation, than for a man on an occasion when the people of God with whom he possesses and claims church relationship are weeping, both in secret places and in the place of the sanctuary, for abounding iniquity and for apprehended judgment and desolation, to go his way and pursue his gains, or occupy himself with his cares, or summon around him the festive assembly and indulge his levity and “find his pleasure,” and when he has done so, to come out with the apology. ‘Our Lord says; fasting is to be private, and I am only acting in the spirit of those words of his, “Anoint thine head, and wash thy face, and appear not unto men to fast.” If indeed our keeping a public fast, such as that we now contemplate, is a matter of hollow hypocrisy altogether; and there is among us no sense of sin, no grief for its prevalence, and for the dishonour it does to God; and all the sorrow for iniquity we profess is but a pretence, a mockery of the Most High; then let our solemnity be contemned—let individual members of our community trample it in the dust, for it will matter little that they do so; yea, let our name as a church perish from the earth, for in that case it will be of little moment that she should have her place among the churches continued to her. But if there yet exist some lingering fear of God before our eyes as a people, if amidst our multiplied and ag-

gravated iniquities spiritual death has not yet set upon us its irretrievable seal, if even still, deep as are our depression and nakedness and poverty, there is found in us some good thing, however small, toward the Lord our God, let none of us harden our hearts against him by casting from us the observance of our approaching appointed fast, but let each one of us, wholly forgetting what other men will think or say of us, "set our face unto the Lord God, to seek him by prayer and supplications, with fasting," and with confession of our own sins, and of the sins of our people. And blessed shall we be in our deed. Verily we shall have our reward. The God whom we seek will turn from the fierceness of his anger towards us. Great as our past provocations have been, he will not enter in among us to destroy, for he is God and not man. He will revive us again, that his people may rejoice in him; he will shew us his mercy, and grant us his salvation. The holy mountain of our God for which we present our supplications before the Lord will not be forgotten by him forever, but will yet be "established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it." While the way of the wicked shall perish, the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous; he marks and keeps his own, nor will suffer them to be hurt when "he cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquities" Thus run the several commissions to the man clothed with linen, which had the writer's inkhorn by his side, and to his five companions who had every one his destroying weapon in his hand. To the one the Lord said, "Go through the midst of the city, and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh

and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof. And to the other he said in mine hearing, go ye after him into the city, and smite; let not your eyes spare, neither have ye pity: Slay utterly old and young, both maids, and little children and women; but come not near any man upon whom is the mark."

K.

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*From the Scottish Christian Herald.*

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF  
THE REV. SAMUEL RUTHERFORD,

Principal of St. Mary's College, St. Andrews.

Considerable doubt exists as to the birth-place and parentage of this celebrated divine: the most probable opinion, however, is that which has been stated by Wodrow, that he was sprung of poor and honest parents in Teviotdale. Where he received his early education, has never been ascertained; but he seems to have given such indications of talent, as to have encouraged his parents in affording him an opportunity of still farther prosecuting his studies. Accordingly, in 1617, he was sent to the University of Edinburgh; and in four years, he obtained the degree of Master of Arts. At college, Rutherford distinguished himself among his fellow-students by his attainments, particularly in classical literature; so that, in two years after he had received his degree in the Arts, he was elected Professor of Humanity.

At the time when he was admitted a regent, the university, though it had only existed for forty years, had attained no small celebrity, and possessed, among its Professors, some men of fame and of extensive scholarship. With such associates Mr. Rutherford entered upon his important duties with enthusiasm and energy; and there is little doubt that he must have proved a most able and successful teacher.

Of this, however, we have no certain information, as his connection with the university appears to have terminated in the short space of two years. Some reports having arisen to his disadvantage, whether true or false it is impossible now to ascertain, he resigned his professorship, and devoted himself to the study of theology.

In 1627, we find him settled as parish minister of Anwoth, in the stewardry of Kirkcudbright. This appointment he obtained through Gordon of Kenmure, a gentleman distinguished in those days as the assiduous and active promoter of true religion, as far as his influence extended. At the period when Mr. Rutherford became minister of Anwoth, Prelacy had so far gained the ascendancy over Presbyterianism, that although many secretly adhered to the principles of their fathers, the jurisdiction of Bishops in Scotland was openly recognised and avowed. No minister could enter upon a charge without declaring his submission to all the conditions imposed by the bishop of the diocese within which the parish was situated. In the case of Mr. Rutherford, however, there seems to have been an exception; for, according to the statement of Mr. M'Ward, his friend and pupil, corroborated by Wodrow, he obtained full possession of all his rights and privileges as a parish minister, "without giving any engagement to the bishop."

The harmony and happiness which prevailed in the parish of Anwoth on the reception of Mr. Rutherford as their pastor, was peculiarly gratifying to his mind, and afforded him the prospect of much comfort and usefulness; and in this respect his anticipations were more than realized. The people loved and revered him; they waited upon his ministry with regularity and evident profit; for, to use the words of his cotemporary Livingstone, "while he was at Anwoth, he was the instrument of much good among a poor ignorant people, many of whom he brought to the knowledge and practice of religion."

The industry and zeal with which Mr. Rutherford discharged his important functions as a minister, are almost incredible. He was accustomed to rise every morning at three o'clock; the early part of the day was devoted to prayer, meditation, and study; and the rest to his more public duties, such as the visitation of the sick, and the catechising of the different families of his flock. "My witness is above," he says in one of his letters to his beloved people, "that *your* heaven would be two heavens to *me*, and the salvation of *you* all as two salvations to *me*."

The fame of Mr. Rutherford was not confined to his own parish, but extended also to the surrounding district. Multitudes came from all quarters to Anwoth on the Sabbath, and more especially on sacramental occasions, to listen to the faithful ministrations of this devoted minister of Christ. For a few years after he came to Galloway, his life was a scene of unclouded prosperity, of unbroken and uninterrupted peace. As a follower of Him who said, "In the world ye shall have tribulation," the pious Rutherford could not, and in reality did not, expect that such a state of things would always continue. Many were the trials which yet awaited him in this vale of tears; and ere long he began to feel that suffering of one kind or another is the portion of man, and more especially of the man who is to be distinguished by high attainments in the divine life, or extensive usefulness in the Church of God. He was doomed to experience severe family distress and painful bereavements. His wife, after a tedious and protracted illness of thirteen months, died in June 1630, in less than five years after their marriage. Her children seem to have been cut off before her, so that Mr. Rutherford was left alone to lament his loss. To add to his distress, he had been seized previously to the decease of his wife with a fever, which continued for thirteen weeks, leaving him on his recovery in such a state of debility as to suspend for a time his attention to his pastoral duties. Amid his accumul-

ed sorrows, however, he endured as seeing him who is invisible, knowing that in heaven he had an everlasting portion, which no time, no change could destroy.

From the position which Mr. Rutherford held, as the most influential minister in the county within which he resided, his correspondence on public matters was very extensive. The age in which he lived was one of melancholy interest to the Church of Scotland. The attempt, first of James VI., and then of Charles I., to impose upon the Scottish Presbyterians the yoke of Episcopacy, had been uniformly resisted, but with varied success; and though at the period to which we now refer, when Mr. Rutherford was located in Galloway, Prelacy was triumphant in the country, yet he was well known to entertain opinions decidedly in favour of Presbytery. And these sentiments, however opposite to the then ascendant party, he was far from concealing, but openly avowed them whenever an opportunity of doing so occurred. In any other individual than Mr. Rutherford, probably, such conduct would not have been tolerated. The high respect, however, in which he was held by men of all parties, and the tolerant spirit of Bishop Lamb, who then presided over the diocese of Galloway, prevented him from being subjected to the persecution which would have otherwise fallen to his lot. While thus permitted calmly to prosecute his ministerial duties, he published a very learned and elaborate work upon the Arminian controversy. Mr. Rutherford's sentiments were strictly Calvinistic, and the ability and logical tact with which he supported his own views, and refuted the arguments of his opponents, soon established his fame as a powerful controversialist and a sound divine.

In consequence of the death of Bishop Lamb, in 1634, Thomas Sydeserff, Bishop of Brechin, a man of Arminian principles, and of an intolerant character, was translated to the see of Galloway. No sooner had the new diocesan entered upon his office, than he proceeded to adopt the most arbi-

trary and unpopular measures. He erected a High Commission Court within his diocese, composed exclusively of his own dependants; and before this court, were forthwith summoned all who would not conform in every respect to the demands of Prelacy. To Sydeserff, the faithful pastor of Anwoth was peculiarly obnoxious; and as soon as possible, therefore, he was accused of non-conformity before a High Commission Court, held at Wigtown in 1636, and deprived of his ministerial office. The Bishop was anxious to have this sentence confirmed by a court of the same kind held at Edinburgh, and there accordingly Mr. Rutherford was cited to appear, when, for three days, accusations of the most extravagant nature were preferred against him. With the undaunted fortitude of conscious integrity, he replied to their charges; but although the strongest influence was exerted in his behalf, and although the evidence was insufficient to convince any other than prejudiced minds, judgment was given against him. He was deposed from the pastoral office, and sentenced to be confined within the town of Aberdeen, during the King's pleasure.

The sentence passed upon this faithful servant of Christ, severe and unjust though it was, did not discourage him. He seems, on the contrary, to have been able, like the great apostle of the Gentiles, to "glory in tribulation." "I go to my King's palace at Aberdeen," says he; "tongue, and pen, and wit, cannot express my joy." A short period only being allotted him between the passing of the sentence and the commencement of his term of imprisonment, he had no opportunity of returning to see his friends in Galloway. On his journey to "Christ's palace in Aberdeen," as he calls it, he paid a visit to the Rev. David Dickson, minister of Irvine, a man of great piety and learning, who afterward filled, with very high honour, the chair of theology in the College of Edinburgh. On entering the town which was appointed to be the place of his imprisonment, Mr. Rutherford was accompanied by a depu-

tation of his people from Anwoth, who had travelled many miles to testify their sincere regard for their devoted pastor, who was now about to enjoy the exalted privilege of being "the Lord's prisoner." "In the world ye shall have tribulation, but in me ye shall have peace."

At this period, Aberdeen was the stronghold of Episcopacy and Arminianism. The most influential men, both clerical and lay, were violently opposed to Presbytery; and in these circumstances, Mr. Rutherford could not be expected to feel much comfort or happiness in their society. Gradually, however, the inhabitants began to take an interest in him as a persecuted servant of God. Such, at length, was the attention and kindness shown him by many respectable citizens of the place, that he was permitted to conduct religious services in their families. Intelligence of this fact soon reached the ears of the professors of the University and the ministers of the city, who thought it necessary to take steps for the diminution, if possible, of his influence. For this purpose, they denounced, from the pulpit, Presbyterian principles, and challenged Mr. Rutherford to engage with them in public disputations. But all was unavailing; he became more popular and influential than ever, and his opinions spread among the people to an extent which, to his enemies, was quite alarming. In this dilemma, application was made to the legislature to have him either confined more strictly, or sent farther north than Aberdeen, or banished from the kingdom altogether. The last expedient was adopted by the King, who dispatched a warrant to Scotland for the banishment of Mr. Rutherford. With the greatest calmness and composure he looked forward to the prospect of banishment. "Whither I go," said he, "I know not: but I am ready at the Lord's call." The Lord, however, in his providence interposed, and, by a train of unexpected events, prevented the warrant from being ever carried into execution.

In the meantime, the gloomy state of

affairs in Scotland weighed heavily upon the spirits of Mr. Rutherford. But ever and anon his soul was refreshed with the hopes of brighter days, and he felt that he himself had been called to the high honor of being persecuted for righteousness' sake. Numerous were the letters of consolation and encouragement, and even warm congratulation on this subject which he was incessantly receiving; and besides the exalted communion which he enjoyed with God, he felt it a peculiar privilege to communicate his own feelings by letter to his Christian friends in different quarters of the country. These letters, which have since been published, are well known to the pious families among our Scottish peasantry. In England, also, they have been held in high estimation, and the Christian-minded Cecil speaks of them in terms of warm commendation. "Rutherford's Letters," says he, "is one of my classics. Were truth the beam, I have no doubt that if Homer, and Virgil, and Horace, and all that the world has agreed to idolize, were weighed against that book, they would be lighter than vanity."

While imprisoned in Aberdeen, Mr. Rutherford felt deeply for his attached flock at Anwoth. Bishop Sydserff had attempted to thrust in upon them a minister, who, being both an Episcopalian and an Arminian, was violently opposed by the people. They still regarded their former pastor as having been unjustly withdrawn from them, and they longed and prayed, therefore, for his return. This happy event, in the course of affairs, was at last accomplished. Charles I., by the advice of Archbishop Laud, directed his efforts towards the complete extirpation of every remnant of Presbyterianism in Scotland. With this view he promulgated a series of canons, the most arbitrary and unjust, demanding conformity in every point to the forms and ceremonies of Prelacy in its grossest aspect, evidently with an ulterior design to establish Popery. These canons, followed as they speedily were by a decree enforcing the use of the liturgy in the

churches, roused the people to an immediate and determined resistance, and the result is well known. Presbytery became the established form of religion in Scotland, and a free General Assembly was summoned to meet at Glasgow, in November of that year, and a Parliament in May of the subsequent year.

It was during the struggle which Presbyterians successfully made at this period to resist the innovations of Prelacy that Mr. Rutherford quitted his imprisonment at Aberdeen, and returned to the pastoral charge of his flock at Anwoth.

In the General Assembly which was convened at Glasgow in 1638, Mr. Rutherford, along with others who had incurred the censures of the High Commission Court, were called upon to explain the grounds on which they had been accused; and, after due deliberation, a decision was passed in favour of the persecuted ministers, and they were recognised as members of court. At this Assembly, one of the most memorable in the annals of the Scottish Church, Prelacy was abolished, and the Presbyterian constitution, even in its minutest details, fully re-established. The Bishops were deprived of their power, and the greater number of them were excommunicated. In all the proceedings of this eventful period, Mr. Rutherford took a lively interest, rejoicing in the triumph of those principles which he had so long and so consistently advocated, and for which he had endured so many and severe privations.

Shortly after the meeting of the Glasgow Assembly, an application was made by the city of Edinburgh to the Assembly's Commission, to have Mr. Rutherford transferred from Anwoth to the metropolis, that he might have the opportunity of exercising his talents in a more important and extensive sphere. So sure, indeed, do the city rulers appear to have been of obtaining his services, that he was elected a minister of Edinburgh two months after the rising of the Assembly. Another application, however, was made to have

him appointed Professor of Divinity in the New College, St. Andrews. The Commission preferred the latter situation. Petitions against his removal were presented from the county of Galloway, and from the parishioners of Anwoth, and he himself urged, in a respectful petition, his "bodily weakness and mental incapacity." All was unavailing: the interests of the Church demanded his appointment, and the commission therefore ordained that he should occupy a chair for which he was considered as pre-eminently qualified. He still, however, entertained hopes, that the Assembly, at its next meeting, would refuse to confirm the decision of the Commission. In this, however, he was disappointed, and nothing remained for him but to submit calmly to his removal from his beloved people. The office which Mr. Rutherford was now called to occupy was one of the most useful and highly honorable to which he could have been promoted. He felt the responsibility connected with its duties; but after the deep distress he had experienced at Aberdeen on account of his "Silent Sabbaths," he could not bear the thought of being deprived of the privilege of publicly proclaiming the Gospel of Christ. On his earnest application, therefore, to the Assembly, they yielded to his wishes on this point, and appointed him colleague to Mr. Robert Blair, who had been recently translated from Ayr, to be one of the ministers of the town of St. Andrews.

In the public concerns of the Church and the country Mr. Rutherford was deeply interested. Himself a conscientious admirer of Presbytery, he rejoiced in the complete establishment of the system in Scotland, and the increasing attachment to it which was manifested in England. To his principles he firmly adhered, and such was the confidence reposed in him by his brethren, that he was appointed by the Assembly one of the Scots commissioners to the General Assembly of Divines, held at Westminster. On this important mis-

sion he remained in London four years, and by his talents and learning he proved no small acquisition to the venerable Synod. In their discussions he and his fellow commissioners took an ample share, and the result of their important deliberations was both gratifying to himself personally, and satisfactory to those over whose interests he had been deputed to watch. The Directory for Public Worship, the Confession of Faith, the Larger and Shorter Catechisms, and the Form of Church Government, were all of them framed by the Westminster Assembly, and in drawing up these valuable and important documents, Mr. Rutherford was actively employed along with the other members of the Synod.

While in London, however, he did not limit his labours to the business of the Synod of Divines; he was also engaged in the preparation of various controversial as well as practical works, of a theological kind, which he published during that period. The only publication, not strictly in accordance with his profession as a divine, which he produced on this occasion, was one entitled "Lex, Rex," The Law and the King, which was intended as a reply to a book which had been published in support of absolute monarchy. Though thus busily occupied, however, he longed to return to his important duties at St. Andrews, and the more so as his own declining health, as well as that of his wife, seemed to call for a removal to his native country. His distress, besides, had been still farther aggravated by the death of two of his children, in addition to two which he had lost a short time before leaving Scotland. In these circumstances he had made frequent applications to be released from his attendance in London. But, for a considerable time, it was not deemed expedient to comply with his request, his presence at the Westminster Assembly being regarded as too important to be dispensed with. At length, however, the Assembly of 1647 permitted him to return home.

The able and efficient manner in which Mr. Rutherford discharged the high trust reposed in him, as one of the commissioners to the Synod of Divines at Westminster, raised him higher than ever in the estimation of his countrymen; and accordingly, a few months after he had resumed his duties at St. Andrews, he was appointed Principal of the New College. The honour thus conferred on him brought him very little, if any, additional labour; it was a gratifying proof to him, however, that his merits, both as an author and a divine, were duly appreciated. In 1649 an attempt was made in the General Assembly to procure his transference to the Divinity Chair at Edinburgh, but this intention, as Baillie states, being "thought absurd," was laid aside. About the same time a university having been established at Hardevyck, in Holland, he was invited to occupy the chair of Divinity and Hebrew in that seminary. This invitation, as well as a similar application shortly after from Utrecht, he respectfully declined, being unwilling to abandon the Church of Scotland, at a period when his services were so much required.

At this period, in consequence of the death of Charles I., who, though he had been obliged to make concessions, was still at heart the inveterate enemy of Presbyterianism, considerable fears were entertained by the Scottish people, that under the government of his son, who, it was thought, would succeed him, their ecclesiastical privileges might be again abridged. Charles II. was crowned at Seone, and in passing through Fifeshire, before his coronation, the young king visited St. Andrews, when Mr. Rutherford delivered before him an oration in Latin, dwelling chiefly upon the duty of kings. In the meantime, however, the Independents had acquired the ascendancy, and England had become a republic. The events which followed during the usurpation of Cromwell, and onwards to the Restoration, it is impossible in our limited space minutely to detail. Suffice it to say, that in the proceedings of

that stormy period Mr. Rutherford acted a very conspicuous part; and from the unflinching tenacity with which he maintained the opinions he had adopted, he was regarded by many of his brethren, especially of the Presbytery of St. Andrews and the Synod of Fife, as actuated too strongly by party-spirit.

Amid all the commotions, however, in which he found himself involved, he published several valuable works on Practical Theology, as well as some productions of a controversial nature. The last work of which he lived to superintend the publication, appeared in 1679, under the title of "Influences of the Life of Grace." With this piece of practical theology terminated the literary labours of a most erudite divine and accomplished scholar.

Though the life of Mr. Rutherford was now verging to its close, he lived long enough to see the commencement of one of the darkest periods in Scotland's ecclesiastical, and even her civil history. No sooner had the Second Charles been restored to his kingdom, than steps were taken for the overthrow of Presbytery in his northern dominions. This design he was not long in finding means of accomplishing, and that too in a quarter where it might have been least of all expected. The Scottish Parliament, which convened on the 1st of January 1651, invested the king with arbitrary power, recalled the Covenant, and abolished Presbytery; and by one deed, "the act recissory," as it was termed, they annulled the decrees of all the Parliaments which since 1638 had sanctioned the Presbyterian system, or ratified the Solemn League and Covenant.

In such a state of things Mr. Rutherford could not expect to escape persecution in one shape or other. His work which he had published when in London, called "Lex, Rex," was ordered to be burnt by the hands of the common hangman; he was deprived of his offices both in the

University and the Church, his stipend was confiscated, he himself was ordered to be confined to his own house, and cited to appear before the ensuing Parliament on a charge of treason. Thus far they were permitted to harass this eminent servant of God; but their power could extend no farther. His health, which had been rapidly declining, was now such, that he was quite incapable of obeying the citation to appear before the Parliament.

Knowing well that death could not be far distant, he proceeded to arrange all his affairs, that he might leave nothing undone which his friends or the Church expected from him. In his last sickness he bore ample testimony to the saving efficacy of that Gospel which it had been always his delight to preach.

"One morning, as he recovered out of fainting, in which they who looked on expected his dissolution, he said, 'I feel—I feel—I believe—I joy and rejoice—I feed on manna!' A little after he said, 'I have been a wicked, sinful man, but I stand at the best pass that ever a man did; Christ is mine, and I am his.' And then spoke much of the white stone, and the new name. Mr. Blair, who loved to hear Christ commended with all his heart, said to him again, 'What think ye now of Christ?' To which he required: 'I shall live and adore him. Glory, glory to my Creator, and to my Redeemer for ever! Glory shines in Immanuel's land!'

"In the afternoon of that day he said, 'Oh, that all my brethren in the public may know what a master I have served, and what peace I have this day: I shall sleep in Christ, and when I awake, I shall be satisfied with his likeness.' And he said, 'This night shall close the door, and put my anchor within the vail, and I shall go away in a sleep, by five o'clock in the morning.' Though he was very weak, he had often this expression, 'Oh,



or arms to embrace him! oh, for a well-tuned harp!

“Afterwards, when some spoke to Mr. Rutherford of his former painfulness, and faithfulness in the work of God, he said ‘I disclaim all that; the part I would be at is redemption and forgiveness, through his blood. “Thou shalt shew me the path of life, in thy sight is fulness of joy.” There is nothing now betwixt me and the Resurrection; but “to-day thou shalt be with me in paradise.” Mr. Blair saying, ‘Shall I praise the Lord for all the mercies he hath done for you, and is to do?’ He answered, ‘Oh, for a well-tuned harp!’ To his child he said, ‘I have again left you upon the Lord; it may be you will tell this to others: that the lines are fallen to me in pleasant places, I have a goodly heritage: I bless the Lord that gave me counsel.”

In such a devotional frame of spirit died Mr. Samuel Rutherford, on the 19th of March 1661, about five o’clock in the morning, as he himself had foretold. His praise for learning and piety, and true Christian worth, has long been, and still is, in all the Churches.

#### DEATH OF A BELIEVER.

When a believer yields his breath,  
I follow him with eyes of faith  
Where sense can see no more;  
Methinks I see him spread his wings,  
And soar above material things,  
To yon celestial shore.

No tongue can tell, no fancy paint,  
What transport fills th’ enraptur’d saint,  
Of paradise possess’d:  
His wants abundantly supplied,  
His wishes fully satisfied,  
Himself supremely blest!

#### PRACTICAL SERMONS.

##### No. IV.

By the Rev. T. C. Wilson.

Minister of St. Andrews Church, Perth.

Surely I know that it shall be well with them that fear God. Ecclesiastes 15.

In this discourse I shall endeavour to answer the following questions.

1. WHAT IS IT TO FEAR GOD?
2. IN WHAT RESPECT SHALL IT BE WELL WITH THEM THAT FEAR GOD?
3. WHAT ASSURANCE HAVE WE THAT IT SHALL BE WELL WITH THEM THAT FEAR GOD?

##### 1. WHAT IS IT TO FEAR GOD?

To fear God, as the expression is used in scripture, implies a number of things. It refers both to the disposition, and practice of the true believer. It is a prominent characteristic of unbelievers, that there is no fear of God before their eyes. To fear God and keep his commandments, is said to be the whole duty of man. The fear of God, it is also declared, is the beginning of wisdom: by which we understand, that they who do not fear God, have not yet begun to be wise.

To fear God, does not merely mean to be afraid of his wrath, or to tremble at those judgments which he brings upon the earth, or to feel alarm at the prospect of those threatened woes which are reserved for the impenitent and unbelieving, when they die; for the wicked themselves have often been filled with this kind of fear. There are none who shew themselves to be greater cowards in the time of danger, or in the prospect of death, than many of those, of whom, in the language of scripture, it may be said, that they have no fear of God before their eyes:—therefore the

fear of God is something very different from that slavish dread of his wrath, which, when, his judgments are abroad, or in the prospect of death, sometimes agitates so violently, the minds of those who are unprepared to die.

When sinners are first awakened to a sense of their guilt and ruined condition, when, on the one hand, they feel how wickedly they have rebelled against God, and broken his laws, and how full of evil are their hearts, and desperately wicked, and on the other hand, perceive the miserable end to which their rebellion must lead, and listen to the threatening denounced against sin, and see before them the blackness of darkness forever, and think of the worm that dieth not, and the fire that is not quenched ;—it is then that in deep felt fear of the wrath of God, they are often impelled, in their agony to cry, what must we do to be saved ? But there are many who never get farther than this. There are many who at some time or other, have been exceedingly anxious about their souls whose anxiety has passed away, and their alarm has entirely subsided, without any improvement having been effected in their souls, and who have continued as destitute of the right fear of God, as if they never had experienced such convictions and alarm.

When sinners are awakened to see their ruined condition and are afraid of the wrath of God, there is only one way by which this fear can be effectually removed, and their minds brought into a state of tranquility and peace. They only who are justified by faith, have peace with God. Every other kind of peace which sinners enjoy is false and delusive. There is no peace to the wicked. They may say peace, peace, but there is no peace. That peace which unbelievers often have, and in which

many of them die, is only the prelude to eternal loss of peace—the calm which precedes that storm of divine wrath from which they shall find no covering forever.

But the peace which is enjoyed by those who have fled for refuge to Christ, put their trust in him, and become his followers, is enduring and cannot be taken from them. It arises from a sense of the gracious love of a reconciled God, and from the joyful feeling of being reconciled to him, in consequence of which they are enabled to say, "We have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear, but we have received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father ; the spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God."

Thus we are led, from a consideration of the relation in which believers stand to God, as his sons and daughters, adopted into his family, and reconciled unto him, to understand clearly what is meant by the fear of God, as applied to those to whom the gracious promise in the text is made. To illustrate this, let us suppose, first, the case of a father who has a wicked and disobedient son ; he dislikes his father, and despises his authority, and disobeys his commands ; but he fears him also, for he knows that he has both power and resolution to punish him for disobedience if he will not repent. This fear will force him to be obedient at times ; but as long as he continues to dislike his father, and to take pleasure in doing evil, his obedience will be forced and tardy, and whenever he can hope to transgress with impunity, he will take his own way, and shew himself to be a perverse and disobedient son. And this is a plain illustration of the case and conduct of those who have not been reconciled to God.

Their obedience is selfish and partial ; their fear of God is a cowardly, slavish fear. Were they only sure that they could disobey him with impunity, they would constantly do it. They would set at nought all his counsel. They would renounce his authority, and bid defiance to his laws : as it is, they are his enemies in their hearts, and the fear which they experience towards him, is not that godly fear, in reference to which the promise in the text is given.

Let us next suppose the case of a father who has a dutiful son, or let us suppose the undutiful son reconciled to his father, and mutual affection and confidence established between them. In this case also, the son fears his father, but it is a very different kind of fear from what he had before. He fears to offend, or displease, or break the commands of a father who is the object of his love; and even though in obeying him he may be required to do many things contrary to his own interests, or otherwise disagreeable in themselves, still he cheerfully obeys, delighting to shew his love, and hearty submission to his father's will, by a faithful and steady compliance with whatever he requires.

Such is the obedience of the true believer, and the principle of godly fear by which he is ever led. God has been reconciled to him by the blood of the cross,—and he has been reconciled to God by the power of the holy spirit. He loves God with the affection of a son. He fears his displeasure because he loves him, and his obedience is a hearty obedience, not because he will be punished if he disobeys, but because he feels constrained by the love of Christ to live not unto himself, but unto God. This is that new obedience which is rendered by those who are justified by faith, and

which springs from principles of holy love, and godly fear implanted in the hearts of those who are the children of God by faith in Jesus Christ.

2. Let us farther enquire, IN WHAT RESPECT IT SHALL BE WELL WITH THEM THAT FEAR GOD.

It shall be well with them in regard to their temporal, their spiritual, and their eternal good.

As to the first of these, it may often perhaps appear to be otherwise ; for it is evident that the people of God are not exempted from the ordinary trials and sorrows of life, and that in many cases, they suffer in addition to these, various afflictions which are peculiar to themselves. Still it will be found, and thousands have experienced it, that even in regard to a present life, and the enjoyment of earthly blessings, it is better with them that fear God, than it is with the wicked, when their corn and their wine are increased. The blessing of the Lord, it maketh rich, and he addeth no sorrow with it. The enjoyment of prosperity is productive of a happiness to their souls of which unbelievers can form no idea, and of which, while unbelievers, they can never partake ; and if they suffer adversity, and are poor and unhonored among men, they have learned to be content in whatever state they are. It is sufficient to make them happy, to know that their lot is ordered by God, by their Father in Heaven who knows better than they do, what is for their good, and who has promised them all needful earthly blessings, if they seek his kingdom first ; so that even in regard to their temporal good, godliness with contentment is to them great gain.

Again, in regard to the spiritual good of them that fear God, it is also well with them. The path of the just, we

are told, is like the shining light, which shineth more and more unto the perfect day. All things, it is said, work together for good to them that love God. The very afflictions of life, prove blessings to their souls, and assurance of Gods love, peace of conscience, and joy in the Holy Ghost, are to them continual tokens of their progress in grace, and their occurring of those true riches which never fade away.

And it is well with them that fear God, also in regard to their everlasting good. The light afflictions of life which are but for a moment, are working out for them a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. Being justified by faith they rejoice in hope of the glory of God. Nothing can separate them from the love of Christ, and while travelling through the wilderness of the world, they are looking forward with joyful hearts to mansions of rest, where they shall hunger no more, nor thirst any more; and when the last mortal struggle comes on, death and its terrors have no sting for them; the grave, so gloomy to others, they can contemplate undismayed, for Christ is theirs, and heaven is theirs, and theirs is a crown of glory, and an incorruptible inheritance: they are sons and daughters of Almighty God, and joint heirs with Christ, and they can look beyond the valley of the shadow of death and see their purchased inheritance, stretching out before them in all the splendour and glory of everlasting day.

“ There everlasting spring abides,  
And never withering flowers;  
Death, like a narrow sea, divides  
This heavenly land from ours.  
There pain and sickness never come,  
And grief no more complains;  
Health triumphs in immortal bloom,  
And endless pleasure reigns.  
No clouds those blissful regions know,  
Forever bright and fair;  
For sin the source of mortal woe,  
Can never enter there.

There no alternate night is known,  
Nor Sun's faint sickly ray;  
But glory from the sacred throne,  
Spreads everlasting day.”

3. WHAT ASSURANCE HAVE WE THAT IT SHALL BE WELL WITH THEM THAT FEAR GOD ?

It is easy to answer this question. God has said that it shall be well with them that fear Him; and he is not a man that he should lie, nor the son of man that he should repent. He has promised that bread will be given them, and that their water shall be sure; and that his grace is sufficient for them in every time of need. He assures them that nothing can separate them from his love, and that in obeying his word, and believing in Christ, they have built upon a rock, against which the gates of hell shall not prevail. And these promises have been abundantly fulfilled in the experience of his people. In all generations he has been their dwelling place, their Father, and their Friend; and true believers have experience that he is still the same, still faithful to his promises, still rich in mercy and abundant in grace, still worthy to be feared, and loved, and trusted. And could we obtain the testimony of those who have died in the Lord, were we permitted to ask of any of those spirits of the just who have gone before us, and are now with Christ, whether they can testify to the truth of the promise, that it shall be well with them that fear God, they would give us such a history of what they had experienced of his faithfulness and love, in all the dispensations of providence, and grace, while they sojourned on earth, and of the blessedness of their state beyond death and the grave, as would triumphantly confirm the truth of the gracious declaration, that it shall be well with them in all time, and forever.

And now, it remains for you to enquire how far you are interested, or not, in this gracious declaration, and whether you are of those who fear the Lord, or of those who have not the fear of God before their eyes, as upon this it depends whether it shall be well with you or ill. If you are of those who fear the Lord, who having been adopted into His family, have acquired the disposition of his children, have received the spirit of adoption, and learned to say to him Abba Father!—O ! then it shall be well with you through life, and ever more. God has said that it shall be so. Christ your Redeemer has said so too, and the holy spirit has confirmed it in the happy experience of the multitudes of his saints. The afflictions of life, so grievous to others, will be blessings to you, and all things will work together for your good. When death approaches, you need not be alarmed, for death cannot separate you from the love of the Saviour, who rose triumphant from the grave, and secured the happy resurrection of all his people; and when you enter at last the world of spirits, you will meet your Redeemer there, ready to receive you, and to give you the crown of life which fadeth not away; and the loud hosannahs of happy angels, and their songs and acclamations of joy, will tell you how welcome you are to enter, and dwell in Immanuel's land. Be not then weary in well doing, nor faint in your minds, for in due season ye shall reap if ye faint not.

But if it shall thus be well with believers, O it shall be ill with you who do not fear the Lord. You shall be as miserable as the others shall be happy; and you must go away into everlasting punishment while they are received into life everlasting. Ye, who are neglecting your souls, or treating religion as a

secondary thing, are exposing yourselves to fearful danger and trifling away that precious time, which is given you, that you may improve it to escape from hell, and to lay up treasure in heaven. And what do you gain by doing so? You may be gaining the world, but you are losing your soul. You may be pleasing men, but you are displeasing God, and crucifying the Saviour, and doing despite to the spirit of grace. You may be enjoying the pleasures of sin, but it is only for a season, and surely the end of these things is death—eternal death. This you may escape by giving yourselves to Christ. All will yet be well with you, if you will only become followers of that which is good. Amen!

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#### EXTRACTS FROM THE NOTE BOOK OF A MISSIONARY.

MR. EDITOR,

When lately turning over some MSS. I came upon a Note Book containing notices of my Missionary Travels in this Province of a somewhat minuter kind, than those which I reported at the time to the Synod. I had actually forgotten, that I had made these notes; and so, when I perused them, they seemed to have a freshness even to myself. For who does not know that while we never lose our identity we yet very soon forget what manner of persons we were at some former period. The trains of thought which had passed through our minds and even the incidents which occasioned them, are alike forgotten. Few have such tenacious memories as to wish like Themistocles for the art of forgetting things.

For want of some readier communication, I transcribe these notes for the Examiner. I make no important alteration on

them, for were I to do so, they would no longer be what they are—Notes made at the time to which they refer. On this account, I do not expunge some reflections which have a private bearing, and which would not probably have been written at first had the Notes been intended for the eye of the public. Hoping they may not be uninteresting to some of your readers.

I remain

Yours, affectionately  
PRESBYTER.

T. T.

November, 18th 1837.

1834, June 25th—Proceeded to Dundas and arrived there about 6, P. M. in expectation of addressing a meeting on the subject of our Missions. But Mr. Stark had not received my letter of the 20th inst. requesting him to call a meeting; and I was thus disappointed.

June 26th—Spent this day with Mr. S. in calling on several of his people to invite them to a meeting in the evening; and in writing letters, to make appointments for my intended visit to the London District. In the evening, I addressed a small congregation. The sum of £3 7s. 6d. was subscribed to our Mission Fund; of which £2 15s. was paid.

June 27th—Before setting out to the Grand River, I received 15s. of additional subscriptions from Mr. Wharrie. Proceeded by the Swamp Road to the Grand River. Not having travelled the Road before, I found it somewhat dreary. Was agreeably surprised when I came in sight of the Grand River at Bryant's Tavern—from the width of the River, and the great volume of water that was rolling onwards, through the dark woods. Did not know until then of the title it has to the name it has obtained. While busy for a moment in tracing a resemblance between it, and the Tay, or Tync of our native land; thought how natural it was for the Roman soldiers to find an image of their own Tiber, even in our Tay, as story tells that,

when from one of the lofty eminences, they first gazed upon that noble stream they exclaimed *Eccc Tiberim*.

Called on Francis Webster, Esq. and was kindly welcomed by him.

Saturday—Rode out to see a Camp Meeting five or six miles from Mr. Webster's. In the course of my ride saw great numbers of laborers busy on the works now in progress for rendering the Grand River navigable. Passed several Indian Farms, and saw several of the Indians by the road side intoxicated. How affecting their moral and spiritual condition! just brought to know some of the comforts of their civilized neighbors; and yet unable to compete with them in any occupation—over-reached by the covetous—tempted to drunkenness and other sins, by the example of those who bear the Christian name, and thus encouraged in their heathenism and repelled from the Saviour by the conduct of those who profess to be his followers. May the Lord have pity on them, and send a faithful minister among them, and turn the hearts of the professed Christians who are now crowding in upon them to seek their good.

After entering on a piece of new road cut through the woods and riding for about a mile, saw some indications of the assemblage at the Camp Meeting. As I came up I found that these were booths, or stands, at which cakes and bread, beer and cider were sold. From this part of the main road, a lane led through the woods on the right, towards the River. Here I perceived horses, some saddled, some in wagons tied to the trees: but the most unexpected sight which I saw was a stand with printed calicoes, silk handkerchiefs, and various other tempting articles of female apparel exposed to sale—so readily does covetousness like every other disposition of corrupt nature discover itself in large assemblages of people, however, serious or solemn may have been the occasion of their meeting. A few stragglers, and several Indians were lounging about this place. One Indian boy I observed

very busy shooting arrows at the birds amongst the trees.

The encampment was in the woods about two hundred yards distant from the stand just described. As I approached it I could hear the preacher distinctly reading one of Watt's Hymns.

The appearance of the meeting so far was entirely adverse to serious emotions. Yet the voice of the preacher, before I could fully see him in the congregation, and still more the words which he read fell with peculiar solemnity on my ear, the words were these

How could I bear to hear thy voice  
Pronounce the sound—depart ?

The thunder of that dismal word  
Would so torment my ear  
'T would tear my soul asunder Lord  
With most tormenting fear &c

I was soon close on the congregation, and dismounted from my horse. For a few moments, I was a mere spectator of the novel scene, without attending to the religious exercise. I saw before me a circular space of sixty, or seventy yards diameter on which the trees had been cut down. They were laid in parallel rows with boards across them for seats; and here was a small congregation of some 50, or 60 persons, the rain as I was told having prevented a large attendance. In the woods, skirting the circular clearing which had been made for the congregation, were a number of shanties constructed with boards for the occupation of those who were spending day and night in these religious exercises. The preachers stood on a covered scaffold erected at one side of the open space. He who led the devotions wore a jean coat, and had a handkerchief tied round his head and so presented a grotesque rather than reverend appearance. He prayed, after the singing was ended, and many loud and apparently earnest ejaculations from the people broke in on the address to the throne of grace which he was offering up. This, however is by

no means a certain indication of deep feeling in Methodist worshippers. and I saw very visible indications of listlessness and inattention amongst several of the people. The blessing closed this service. And an intimation made by the preacher reminded me, that the soul in vain courts the remotest local retreats to escape from corporeal cares. It ran in words like the following: "Brother———will preach at 5 o'clock, and the sisters are requested to have the dinners over, in time for prayer meetings in the shanties at 3 o'clock."

As I retired from this meeting, I saw a man in a state of intoxication at a stand where beer was sold; I had seen nothing in the services, peculiar to a Camp Meeting such as the retiring of companies for prayer or giving signals; and the solemnity of the scene fell far short of the Tent preachings that were so common in country parishes in Scotland on Sacramental occasions in my youthful days. Often have I mingled in the vast assemblage of sober worshippers on a hill side, or in a church yard, that were listening to the clear expositions and pathetic appeals that hour after hour were made to them by one minister after another from the TEXT. And the walk homewards often of many miles length afforded ample opportunity to meditate on the truth that had been heard. The kind of sutlery establishments which follow the Camp Meetings in this country, and are in some respects inseparable from the system of bivouacking day and night in the woods, indicate as I think, something reprehensible in the system.

In the evening a man who was apparently a half Indian called on Mr. Webster for some wine to be used in celebrating the Lord's Supper on the following day at the Camp-Meeting. Hearing him addressed as John Norton, and knowing that the lands which the late Major Norton possessed were in the neighborhood, I concluded that this might be the son of that remarkable man; nor was I mistaken

I had seen him when a boy with his father in Scotland soon after the late war with the United States: but could recognize nothing of the appearance which he then had in the plain Canadian Farmer who was now before me. I had a short conversation with him about his friends in Scotland, his father having been related to a near kinsman of my own; and also respecting his history since his return from Scotland. But night was approaching, and he was in haste to depart.—How wonderful was it, thought I, that, I should meet the son of Norton the Indian Chief, in the very region which many years ago I had heard him describe at my brother-in-law's table to the astonishment of myself and many other listeners! His vivid description of the rivers, and cataracts, and Lakes, and forests of Canada, are not even yet effaced from my memory. And still I remember to have then felt the stirrings of an ambition to visit the wondrous scenes which he described. And, now have I visited these scenes, not however as an idle gazer but, blessed be the God of my mercies, as a minister—an unworthy minister of the gospel of his Son. And Norton who received substantial rewards for his services in war from the British Government, who was honoured with personal attentions by the Prince Regent, and who has found even a more durable honour in the records of the British and Foreign Bible Society, as a translator of a portion of the volume of inspiration, has long since died in ignominious exile. His son too, whom he had placed under accomplished teachers in Scotland, and for whom, he had no doubt anticipated a career of advancement like his own—was now not the heir of his lands, but a humble farmer, and as I had just seen him, a leader of a Methodist Camp Meeting!

June 29th, Sabbath.—The morning wet. Towards eleven o'clock, however, the weather cleared up, and notwithstanding the rain that had fallen, and the attractions of the Camp Meeting—for almost all the settlers in the neighbourhood were as I leav-

ed engaged to attend it, a considerable congregation assembled in Mr. Webster's barn. I preached from Galatians 6. 14. In the afternoon, I preached in a school-house a few miles higher up the River, on the border of the lands which had belonged to Mr. Norton. The house was well filled; though, few of the congregation of the morning attended. The population here is very numerous at present, from the works for rendering the River navigable, that are now in progress.

Met at Mr. Webster's with Mr. Blair, a lineal descendant of the author of THE GRAVE, and a grand-nephew of the not less famed Dr. Hugh Blair. The question was put to me at Mr. Webster's whether I would be disposed to settle in the neighborhood in the event of a call being given to me, by a considerable body of the settlers. To this, I could only reply that much consideration would be required before I could give an answer to the question.

It is yet uncertain whether my present office is to be a permanent one—and whether I ought to continue in it; and whether supposing I did continue in it, I could at the same time undertake the ministry amongst a people such as those on the Grand River. The locality in respect to scenery is agreeable. The population must rapidly increase; and then, there are the poor benighted Cayugas amongst whom a minister might hope to find an entrance with the glad tidings of Salvation. On the other hand, the situation is too secluded from the rest of the Province, for the residence of a minister who would take a particular interest in any of the general concerns of the church. However, I am not at present called on to make a decision; and I doubt not, but that the Lord will make good to me, and to mine His gracious promise "I will instruct thee, and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go; I will guide thee with mine eye."

June 20th.—Proceeded this morning for the London District; and to avoid the journey round by Bramford, made for the road that leads from the Grand



River, a little below Mr. Webster's. This is called the South Talbot Road. It passes through the Indian Lands, and the Township of Walpole. I was favoured with the company and guidance of Mr. Blair for several miles. Forging the river about two miles below Mr. Webster's, we struck into the woods, and pursued a mazy and entangled path, fit only for Indians to thread, as indeed it was a mere Indian Track. After a ride of about 2 hours we came on the log house of Mr. Blair. It stands on a fine terrace, that slopes to the river, and commands one of the finest views of the river that I had seen. There is only one other human habitation in sight. Mr. Blair's house which is small, and of the rudest kind, is soon to become what it has been designed for, his stable, as he is about to erect a suitable dwelling house. Yet, here, he, an accomplished scholar, and polished gentleman, an alumnus of Trinity College Dublin, and recently an officer in the army, together with his brother who has been in the East Indies, are for the time shut out from the world; and employed in the toilsome work of clearing the primeval forest. They are cheered however, with the hopes of soon beholding fertile fields around them; and of seeing the adjacent bank cleared by other settlers: and indeed the town of Cayuga \* which as yet exists only on the Chart of the Surveyor is soon to rise up within their view; as building lots are now greedily purchased by speculators. Surely the Christian Labourer who is intrusted with the incorruptible seed of the word, and has a field allotted to him to cultivate, in which fruit to the glory of God may be gathered should labour diligently and perseveringly, animated with the hope of an immortal harvest.

Mr. Blair accompanied me, after a short rest, and refreshment at his house, for about two miles farther. Our course was

\* This place we believe has since taken up the name York which the metropolis has rejected.

traceable only by the Surveyor's blaze on the trees, until we reached the magnificent opening in the woods known as the South Talbot Road. Here leaving my intelligent and interesting guide, not without affectionate longings for his best interest, I proceeded alone on my way.

The sun's rays no longer intercepted by the woods were now streaming down light and heat upon me with, as I thought, an unusual intensity. The cut in the woods is here broader than the common road allowance, a long stretch of it was seen before me, and the trees which wall the road are of the loftiest kind; so that, I could not but feel my own littleness as well as loneliness—Yet, who that in the scenes of nature, sees the workmanship, and the agency of God—of God his friend, and father, can think himself to be alone or forgotten, or uncared for?

(To be Continued.)

THE PRESBYTERY OF TORONTO, met for ordinary business on the 31st ult. The Rev. Mr. Tawse preached on the occasion. Mr. Rintoul resigned the office of Clerk, and Mr. Bell who had been for some time past Conjoint Clerk was appointed sole Clerk.\*

A proposal from the Presbytery of Hamilton for a correspondence between the two Presbyteries, by the mutual delegation of a member of each, was agreed to on the understanding, that the delegate shall only have an advisory power in the Presbytery to which he is sent. And it was resolved to refer to the Synod the consideration of the expediency of recommending that some such system of correspondence be kept up amongst the other Presbyteries.

A petition and complaint of Robert Menzies, against a sentence of the Church Session of Esquimes, for suspending him from Church privileges, for alleged rashness in taking an oath in the Court of Quarter Sessions was received: and the Presbytery resolved to investigate the case in the Township of Esquimes.

Reports of Missionary service by several of the members, were read. A lengthened report by Mr. McMillan of a tour

\* Mr. Bell's address, Rev. A. W. Bell, Etobicoke, Upper Canada.

by himself, and Mr McNaughton, through the Townships of Mono, Melancthon, and Nottawasaga drew the commendation of the brethren, and will yet we trust be transferred to the columns of the Examiner.

It was Resolved, that each minister of the Presbytery shall during the ensuing three months devote at least one Sabbath, and as many week days as may be practicable, in Missionary work according to the following scheme.

MESSRS. McNAUGHTON, AND McMILLAN, to visit Mono, Melancthon, Nottawasaga, and Sunnidale.

MESSRS. FERGUSON AND RINTOUL, Nas-sawaga, Esquesing, and Chincouacousy.

MESSRS. BELL, AND MURRAY, Dundas Street, with the country to the North and South, as far as convenient.

MESSRS. GEORGE, AND LEACH, York, to Markham, Pickering, and Darlington.

MESSRS. TAWSE, AND McKILLICAN, Thorah, Eldon, Georgina, Brock, Oro, and Orillia.

The committee appointed at a former meeting, to prepare a scheme for Presbyterial visitations produced a report of which the following is a copy.

"The committee recommend the Presbytery to adopt the following method of visitation of congregations, which they have drawn up with some modifications upon the scheme of Presbyterial visitations recommended and enjoyed by the General Assembly.

Besides visitations that may be made on emergent occasions; the whole of the congregations are to be visited in order.

When a visitation is appointed for a particular congregation, the minister of that congregation is to intimate it from the pulpit, at least two calendar months previously to its taking place, and is to cite the Elders and all the members of the church in full communion to attend; that they may acquaint the Presbytery with the state of the congregation in every point; and, that if any of them have certain knowledge of any thing amiss in their minister and elders, they do then also acquaint the Presbytery therewith: provided always, that in the event of personal offences, real or supposed, the party offended shall have first attempted a reconciliation according to our Lords injunction in Matthew xviii. and failed in obtaining it. And that in the event of public offences or matters of complaint, the Sessions shall have been notified of the same at least two weeks before the visitation.

When the Presbytery have met, they shall confer with the minister and elders

in private to enquire into the state of the congregation, and ascertain what matters are likely to be brought out in the course of the visitation. After a sermon by one of the Presbytery, the Records of the Session shall be examined; a committee shall confer with the minister of the congregation in a brotherly way concerning his culture of personal religion, and his ministerial work as in respect to his preparation for it, his occupation in it, and the fruits of it. The elders too shall be faithfully and affectionately counselled and admonished in regard to personal and domestic religion, and their walk and conversation before the church and the world. They are then to be interrogated.

FIRST. Concerning the personal deportment of the minister before his people, and the world; and the nature and kind of his intercourse with them.

SECONDLY. Concerning his ministry of the word, as to its faithfulness, soundness, plainness, and adaptation to the circumstances and character of the people—the length, frequency and form of the discourses, and to what extent they consist of lecturing and preaching.

THIRDLY. Concerning his private ministrations—such as the stated visitation of the flock, the visitation of the sick, the aged, the infirm, the bereaved, the afflicted in mind; and, the adaptation of his instructions to them severally.

FOURTHLY. Concerning his administration of baptism, to what extent, and on what occasions privately, and whether to the children of any who are not themselves in full communion with the church.

FIFTHLY. Concerning his administration of the Lord's Supper, such, as its frequency, the order in which it is conducted, the method of training Catechumens, and the measures used with those who continue in the neglect of the ordinance.

SIXTHLY. Concerning the number of elders, the frequency of meetings of Session whether they are held for prayer, and if so, how often. The faithfulness and diligence with which discipline is exercised—the efforts made for counteracting vice and immorality. The extent of co-operation between Minister and elders. The instrumentality employed for promoting the cause of Christ, in the neighborhood, or throughout the world, as through Sabbath-schools, Bible classes, prayer meetings, and contributions for Missionary and other kindred objects.

The Presbytery shall first call in the members of the church who are in full communion and interrogate them, concerning the minister and elders, allowing

them to speak on any matters of complaint, only when they have acted according to the method above mentioned for obtaining satisfaction, or have lodged a complaint with the Session, and have failed in obtaining satisfaction.

After this, the Presbytery shall call in the minister, and interrogate him concerning the order and regularity of the meetings of the Session—and concerning the elders, as respects their subscribing, the confession of Faith, the consistency of their deportment towards their families, socially, the church, and the world—as respects also their having distinct districts—their fidelity and diligence in attending to their duties, and that especially of attending the higher judicatories when called so to do.

The Presbytery shall thereafter examine the minister and elders concerning the people's attendance on divine ordinances, and their profiting by them, the respect yielded by them to the discipline of the church, and the members of the Session,—their diligence in the education of their children, their observance of the Lord's day, and of family worship, and the indications generally of the power and influence of piety amongst them.

The Presbytery shall interrogate, lastly, minister, elders, trustees, or deacons, and the members of the church concerning the state of the church, manse and glebe (if any,) the amount of funds raised, and the appropriation of the same, as, for the stipend to the minister; for his expenses and that of the elders in attending the judicatories, for the relief of the poor and the extension of the gospel; and also concerning the cultivation of Sacred Music in the congregation.

The interrogations having been made all parties are to be encouraged or admonished severally, or such other procedure is to be adopted as the case may seem to require. And the Moderator may close the whole with an address to the congregation and prayer."

The Presbytery received the report, and a motion was made and seconded to adopt it, another to reject it was made and seconded. All the members present were heard in support of one or the other, when on a division three voted for the former and three for the latter motion. The Moderator gave his casting vote in favour of the former which was accordingly carried. Against this however Mr. Leach protested and appealed to the next Session of Synod.

The Presbytery took up the matter of the

legislative incorporation of the church, and involved on them by the Synod; and appointed Messrs. Leach, Bell, George, Rintoul and Murray ministers, with Edward Thomson Esq. and Mr. William Paterson elders, a committee on this subject with instructions to them to call a special meeting of Presbytery if they shall see cause. Mr. Leach was appointed convener of this committee.

The Presbytery in consideration of the present low state of true religion, unanimously resolved that a considerable portion of the time of the next ordinary meeting shall be devoted to prayer, and conference on the means best adapted for promoting the kingdom of Christ in the surrounding community. Ministers to come to it with their own matured views, and to report the sentiments of their Sessions.

After some other business the Presbytery closed its meeting on the evening of the 1st November at 10 o'clock.

The next ordinary meeting is to be held in Esquering on the second Tuesday of January next.

W R.

### SABBATH EVE.

"Sweet is the light of SABBATH EVE,  
And soft the sunbeam lingering there,  
Those sacred hours this low earth leave  
Wasted on wings of praise and prayer.

This time how lonely and how still!  
Peace shines and smiles on all below,  
The plain, the stream, the wood, the hill,  
All fair with evening's setting glow.

SEASON OF REST! the tranquil soul  
Feels thy sweet calm, and melts in love;  
And, while these sacred moments roll,  
Faith sees a smiling heaven above.

How short the time, how soon the sun  
Sets; and dark night resumes her reign,  
And soon the hours of rest are done,  
Then morrow brings the world again.

Yet will our journey not be long,  
Our pilgrimage will soon be trod,  
And we shall join the ceaseless song,  
The endless Sabbath of our God!"

EDMESTON

# INDEX.

PAGE		PAGE	
<b>RELIGIOUS COMMUNICATIONS, &amp;c.</b>		<b>PRACTICAL SERMONS.</b>	
Apostolic Teaching, manner of.....	65	No 1. By the Rev Robert Macgill	111
Armenian Clergy.....	105-142	of Niagara.....	111
Christian Examiner.....	1	2 By the Rev. Alexander Mc-	191-230
Christian Ministry, the institution and		Natueghon, of Lancaster, Glengary	191-230
preparation of the.....	6-33	3 By the Rev. Robert Macgill	307
Christianity, universal diffusion of.....	100	of Niagara.....	307
Christ's first advent, Divine wisdom		4 By the Rev T C. Wilson, of	358
displayed in the period of.....	225	Pent.....	358
Churches, constitution of.....	219		
Church, on the Legislative incorpo-		—	
ration of the.....	185		
“ Causes of division in the.....	337	<b>MISSIONARY AND ECCLESIASTICAL</b>	
Clinton Ice Spring, visit to the.....	138	<b>INTELLIGENCE.</b>	
Congregational Libraries.....	15	Annual Returns.....	30
Contributors, hint to.....	32	Australian Churches and Schools.....	162
Correspondence of the Honorable		China, an appeal for.....	94
William Morris.....	261	Church of Scotland, General Assem-	
Deacons, brief inquiry into the Scrip-		bly of.....	165
tural institution of.....	179	“ “ Proceedings of in re-	
Education, hints on.....	44	ference to the Synod of Ulster.....	319
“ Religious, hints on.....	118	Church extension in Scotland.....	206
“ Society, American.....	315	East India Missionary, Dr. Duff, Let-	
Elders, address to.....	17	ter of.....	55
Examiner, advantages of such a pub-		Edinburgh Gaelic School Society.....	200
lication.....	50	Fejees, cruel customs of the.....	95
On Fasting.....	345	General Synod of Ulster.....	224
General Assembly of the Presbyteri-		Letter, the Rev. Dr. Burns's.....	207
an Church in the United States, visit		Missionary Society, Cobourg.....	59
to the.....	71	“ “ Colonial, London.....	160
Hamilton the Rev. Dr. William, Re-		Mission, the India, Report on.....	234
mains of.....	297	Missionary Intelligence from the	
Missionary, extracts from the note		Rev. Mr. Gardiner.....	14
book of a.....	362	Prayer, Extemporary.....	93
Pastoral letter, the Moderator's.....	129	Presbytery of Hamilton.....	27-62-63-204-335
Philadelphia Convention of 1837,		“ Toronto.....	29-61-160-366
Testimony and Memorial of the.....	150	“ “ Missionary visit	
Phonetic Writing, origin and pro-		within the bounds of the.....	122
gress of.....	169	“ Kingston.....	128
Review of a Sermon preached be-		“ Quebec.....	156-203-243
fore the Presbytery of Toronto.....	87	Presbyterian Books.....	31
Rutherford, the Rev. Samuel, biogra-		Presbyterianism in Ulster.....	93
phical sketch of.....	331	Presbyterian Church in Canada	
Sabbath, Address on the observance		claims and rights of.....	Principal
of the.....	97	McFarland.....	327
Spark the Rev. Alexander, D. D			
Memoir of.....	209		
Temperance, Review of a Sermon on.....	23		

THE INDEX TO VOL. I.

	PAGE.		PAGE.
" Sir George Grey's answer to.....	331	" Remarks on the late meeting of.....	259
Religion in New South Wales, provision for.....	94	United States, destitution of Ministers in the.....	186
Reports of the Rev. Daniel Allan.....	233		
Speech of the Rev. Dr. Duff.....	238	—	
Synod Library.....	31	POETRY.	
Synod of Nova Scotia.....	202	Babylon.....	128
" Of Canada.....	244	Elijah's Interview.....	208
" Commission of.....	28-64-248	Pilate's Question.....	260
" Roll of 1837.....	46	Prayer.....	248
		Sabbath Eve.....	368

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ERRATA.


The reader is requested to make the following corrections in Mr. Morris's Correspondence. In letter of the 14th Sept. for "to His Excellency by Lord Glenelg"—read by His Excellency to Lord Glenelg—and in next line for "Glenelg" read "Goderich."

In Mr. Rintoul's Schedule page 280, Peterborough and Cavan are stated to have received £135 17s. 10d. from Government towards building churches in these places. Peterborough has received no aid from Government. Cavan only received £65.

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The account of the proceedings of the Synod's Committee on the Synod Library, is again unavoidably postponed. It will appear in our next number.

**The first Number of the second volume of the Christian Examiner, and Presbyterian Review, will be published early in January, on fine super-royal octavo. Price to subscribers only 10s. per annum (Postage included) payable in advance. If not paid till after six months—the charge will be 12s. 6d.**

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Money remittances have been received from PERTH, Chatham, Brockville and Carlton Place.

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