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THE  
CANADIAN PRESBYTER.

MAY, 1857.

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DANGERS OF NON-ENDOWED CHURCHES. *J. Hall,*

We have no intention of discussing the general question of religious endowments. Ours is a mere humble design—to express certain observations we have made on the tendencies of those Churches to which endowments are entirely wanting.

The dangers of endowed Churches are obvious enough. They are to be found in the neglect of discipline—the claim to Church privileges as a civil right—the appointment of Ministers without any call from the Christian people—the habit of regarding the cure of souls as a “benefice,” and the Erastian control of the Church by the State, a control in some European countries so rigorous, that the Church is converted into a mere department of the Government. Against these evils, there is no need here to raise any lengthened testimony.

It is more necessary to remark, that non-endowed Churches have their perils too. Though it be granted, that the system of voluntary support is on the whole more healthy than any other, it must not be concealed, that it is attended by certain very serious disadvantages or dangers.

1. *The danger of a restless anarchical spirit.*—Changes, contentions, divisions, often for very slight cause, have been the bane and disgrace of the voluntary Churches of Europe and America. We are quite ready to admit, that an Endowment or Establishment is far from the best and noblest guarantee of Church stability; but we must also say, that it carries a powerful conservative influence which it is very difficult to maintain in its absence, and the alternative to which too often is a “Radicalism,” that knows no dignity, and enjoys no peace. If we are asked to point out a remedy or corrective for this unstable tendency of the non-endowed communities of Christians, we hesitate not to mention, as one of the foremost, an intelligent appreciation of the constitution and principles of the Church, with a firm adherence thereto. The Presbyterian Church, if her children are faithful, ought to be especially safe from the disorder to which we refer, for she has not merely a “Constitution,” but also a “government,”—and government is always essentially conservative. Securities for liberty the Presbyterian

Constitution has provided in the most ample and thorough manner. Let not this liberty be perverted into license. Let not any favor be shown to that outcry against government which is so common among the thoughtless and uneducated in both Church and State. We are convinced that there is scarcely a more sure way to injure a non-endowed Presbyterian Church, than to decri Church government, and to foster a jealous mistrust of the Judicatories or Constitutional Courts.

2. *The danger of expending too much Ministerial thought and time on the mere collection and management of money.*—This is a very obvious and serious evil. The struggle to obtain, by incessant appeals and with endless anxieties, the means absolutely necessary for the support and progress of the Church, is exceedingly irksome to those Ministers who love their own appropriate work, and have no wish to leave it or neglect it, in order to raise funds or “serve tables.” A form of this evil which has grown to a most formidable height is the employment of Pastors in collecting money from city to city, and even continent to continent, for the erection of the places of worship in which they hope to officiate. We long to see an effectual remedy applied to this most unseemly system. It must tend to dissipate the seriousness of those Ministers who engage in it, and lower their spiritual tone. It injures their status, and derogates from their influence. They are spoken of as great beggars—mendicant Friars of a Protestant order—are compelled to dance attendance on rich men, and receive the rebuffs of the rude, with as much grace as possible. All the while, the Laity are led to think that they oblige and patronise the Clergy by giving them money—whereas the favor is really conferred by the Clergy, who sacrifice their own feelings to become collectors for the benefit of the Christian people. Of course, these remarks are not pointed against the employment of Ministers by the Church at large to present in any quarter the claims of a great cause, or of an institution in which large interests are involved. We allude to the multiplication of local ‘cases’ pleaded by the local Pastors who are asked by their congregations to make a “collecting tour,” whenever a pecuniary difficulty arises, and who, yielding to the pressure, proceed, book-in-hand, to solicit, with an humble mien, the charity of the public.

This wretched system, which peculiarly attaches to the non-endowed Churches, and the entire tendency to burden the minds of the Ministers of Christ with questions of finance, loudly call for remedy. The only effectual remedy, we are persuaded, must be found in a more faithful education of the Christian Laity in their duty to be *voluntaries indeed*,—to give without solicitation and entreaty, of a willing mind. It is the duty of the Laity, and not of the Clergy, to build Churches and pay for them. If unable to pay, they, and not the Clergy, ought to “collect” what is lacking. The same may be said of all that concerns the Treasury of Christ’s House. It is incumbent on the Laity, not merely to give money when asked to do so for a worthy object, but to give thought to the conditions and wants of the Church, to devise liberal things, and, relieving the Ministry of pecuniary care, to feel the responsibility of providing means for the

order, efficiency, and increase of the Church. It is a fact worthy of note, that even in the non-endowed Churches most highly favoured with the energy of intelligent, liberal, and pious laymen, great financial efforts are almost invariably planned or wrought out by some of the Clergy. Take the instance of the Free Church of Scotland. In her General Assemblies, and on her Standing Committees, while there are to be found Christian laymen eminent for wisdom, public spirit and benevolence, yet almost all the great financial and practical efforts of that Church have been originated or guided or accomplished by the Clergy. Witness the Sustentation Fund, under Dr. Chalmers and Dr. Robert Buchanan; the School Fund, under Mr. McDonald, of Leith (formerly of Blairgowrie); the Schoolmasters' Sustentation Fund, under Dr. Candlish; the Manse Fund, under Dr. Guthrie; the thorough examination of the deeds of Church property, by Dr. Begg. The recent noble effort for the extinction of all Church debts has indeed had a "lay" origin—but it is carried on greatly through the labours of the Ministers.

Some may attribute all this to a love of moneyed power on the part of the Clergy. There are persons who labor under an idea that Protestant Ministers are a caste of Priests, with sympathies and interests entirely different from other men, and to be watched, suspected, and checked in all matters of finance and property. Our view is very different. Granted that the love of power is found in Christian Ministers—granted even, that some have developed an undue propensity to control financial matters; yet are we very sure, that the most common reason of the occupation of the Ministers of non-endowed Churches with questions of money, is that they are compelled to think of these things by the lethargy or the ecclesiastical inaptitude of the laity. In wishing that they were relieved from so unnecessary a burden of care, we must not be supposed to countenance the entire severance of the spiritual and financial departments of a Church's work. We regard this as a practical heresy, fraught with disaster to any body of Christians which it invades and infects. To exclude a Pastor, and his co-adjutors the Elders, who have rule over the flock, from all inspection and control of the Treasury—under a plea of dividing temporalities from spiritualities—is unscriptural and eminently unwise; but on the other hand, there is not a godly Minister in Christendom who will not heartily rejoice whenever the zeal and devotedness of the deacons and members of the Church shall rise to such a point as to set him free from pecuniary thoughts and calculations, that he may give himself to the Word of God and to prayer.

3. *The danger of introducing caprice and instability into the pastoral relation.*

This has not appeared to any serious extent in the non-endowed Churches of Scotland; but it is notorious in the United States, and, in a less degree, in England also. Let Canadian Churches be on their guard.

Where an endowment, or a Central Fund for the maintenance of the ministry exists, the individual clergyman is protected against injustice or caprice on the part of his people. And experience shows that without some protection, great and cruel injury may be done. We are aware that the direct dependence of a

Pastor on the flock unto whom he ministers is most happy, where there is an intelligent generous people, and where a truly religious spirit predominates. But under this unregulated system, what a power of persecuting and even unseating a Pastor is put into the hands of a few members, whose itching ears he no longer happened to please! How many a servant of God is driven from his post by a mere wind of popular caprice, or the tyranny of a few purse proud niggards, who refuse their subscriptions for his solemnly promised stipend, and so 'starve him out!' We do not ignore dangers on the other side. A clergy, too independent of the people, may disregard popular sympathies and wants. But our present object is to point out the dangers to which the non-endowed Churches are liable—dangers which should be guarded against—evils which must be remedied quickly.

We would suggest, that in all competent ways, the nature and solemnity of the pastoral tie should be inculcated on the people:—that Presbyteries should not be in haste to settle Pastors till the congregations are fully ripened for a settlement, and able to discharge their consequent responsibilities; and that any congregation found base enough to 'starve out' their minister should be dealt with most strictly, and no new settlement granted till justice is done in full. We should hold it ultimately better for the Church to lose ten congregations than to relax the principle last mentioned. Unquestionably it is also incumbent on the non-endowed Churches, to consider (as the English Congregationalists are now considering,) how they may, by a central Sustentation or supplementary fund, increase the stability of their system, and give to their ministry that measure of local independance which guarantees Pastors against servile treatment, and conduces to that most desirable end, (to speak generally) the continuance of the pastoral tie. ✓

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#### DEACONS. *A. J. Kemp,*

It is a curious fact in Ecclesiastical History that the Deaconate should, at a very early age, have been perverted from its original institution, and have fallen into all but entire neglect, even in the Churches of the Reformation. Like the lost arts of the ancients, by which they built and adorned magnificent structures which are the wonder of our day, so in the lapse of ages, the art of making Deacons, and the knowledge of their functions seem to have dropped from the practice and the tradition of the Church, and only now are we groping our way "darkling" into a knowledge of this Apostolical order of ministers. We remember that some two or three years before the Disruption of the Church of Scotland, there was a general feeling of the necessity of reviving this ancient order in the Church. It was felt by many to be both necessary and expedient that some persons should be specially and officially entrusted with the management of missionary and other benevolent funds in each congregation, in order to the efficient working of the Assembly's schemes. This led to some investigation as to the special functions with which the Deacon should be charged, and the relation which this office should hold to that of the Church Session. But nothing effectual was done in this direction until the year of the Disrup-

tion, when, for the maintenance of her ministers and other purposes, the Free Church appointed Deacons to be elected in every congregation, to whom, along with the other office-bearers, the ingathering and administration of the Church's alms should be entrusted. From that time to the present, Deacons have been appointed in every congregation of the Free Church in Scotland; and their functions have been defined and prescribed by an Act, passed by the General Assembly of 1816. It is felt in Scotland that the Free Church could not maintain herself in her present efficiency without the Deaconate, and that no substitute can be devised to take its place or to do its sacred work in the Church. It has been found true in this matter, as in all others, that the wisdom of the Bible is the best rule for the Church.

With but few exceptions, the Presbyterian Churches in England have followed the example of the Free Church in this matter, and in most of the new Churches, the Deacon's Courts there not only administer the contributions of the faithful, but also are "ex officio" trustees of the property; and in this way, the society and communion of the Saints is restored to its primitive and apostolical model.

We are aware that all the churches which belong to the Free Church family have not followed the same wise and scriptural course, but from causes which might be named, have been led to some extent to look with disfavour upon the revival of the Deaconship. In this country, a prejudice is entertained by many against the constitution of the Deacon's Courts, and the entrusting of Deacons with the administration of Church property and funds. Such feelings and views are, however, for the most part, we believe, entertained by a class of men whose ideas are of an ancient date, and who, conservative of the past in all that pertains to religious forms, wish to get on just as their fathers did without the Deacon or the Deacon's Court. We may try to enlighten such men, but we rather fear that the faithful will have to contend against them, to build up the walls of Zion, and to guard its defences, notwithstanding hostility on the part of these, their professed friends. There are others, it is true, who, while they acknowledge, with the Westminster standards, that the Deacon is both a scriptural and a permanent officer in the church, cannot as yet make up their minds as to the nature and extent of his functions, and as to the constitution of what, perhaps unfortunately, has been called by the Free Church the "Deacon's Court." With such persons, we apprehend no difficulty in adjusting the details of the Deacon's office, and feel certain that their further consideration of the question in the light of scripture and experience will lead them to see its importance to the Church.

In our present article, we shall consider the scriptural character and work of the Deaconate, and in a subsequent number, we shall discuss the question of the relation of the Deacon's office to the Church Session and the constitution of Deacons' Courts. As these questions are of vital interest to the Church in this land, we ask for a patient and unprejudiced consideration on the part of our readers of the arguments and views which in the course of these papers we shall be permitted to set before them.

Regarding the primitive origin of this office it is not necessary that we should say much. In the sixth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles it is recorded, that "there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily administrations." Upon this, the twelve Apostles called the multitude of the disciples and said: "It is not reason that we should leave the Word of God and serve tables." They counselled that men "full of the Holy Ghost" should be selected and "set over this business." Finally, seven men were chosen, whom the Apostles, by prayer and the laying on of hands, set apart to "this business," and to "serve tables."

According to the directions contained in 1 Tim iii, the Deacon was required to be a man of singular piety, prudence, sobriety, wisdom, and experience, who in ministering the office *well*, would "purchase to himself a good degree and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus." There are other places in scripture in which allusion is made to the Deacons, but these which we have mentioned, are the most explicit of any, and are authoritative as they are clear as to their qualifications and functions.

It will not be denied that, according to these texts, the Deacons were not, as a part of their office, to concern themselves with the ministration of the "Word of God." For this another and different ministry was provided. While of the elder it was required that *he* should be "apt to teach," such a gift was not prescribed as necessary for the work of the Deacon.

Again, it will be acknowledged by all Presbyterians, that the Deacons were appointed to administer the *alms* of the faithful to "*widows*," whether to any other persons, it will be observed that the text does not in so many words say. This only is directly evident, that those who are designated under the term "*widows*," had a special claim upon the ministrations of the Deacons. But it may be asked, Was this all the work that the Deacons had to do? We say, that the text speaks for itself, and from it we must find out what further they had to do, the doing of which would have been a great burden to the "*twelve*," and a hinderance to their preaching the "Word of God," and which, as a matter of course, the Deacons ought to do in every well organised Church.

Some will say at once and without hesitation, that the Deacons had the general Church poor to attend to. This we acknowledge; but it will be noted that the text only speaks of "*widows*," and says nothing about any other poor or needy persons. That they were appointed to attend to the wants of the general poor, is, therefore, a matter of inference and history, and not of positive statement. Let us then for a moment look at the grounds of this inference, and see if it will not give us a yet more comprehensive view of the Deacons work than that of attending to the general poor.

It will be seen by turning to Acts vi., 2, that the complaint of the Grecians was that their widows were neglected "*in the daily ministrations*." If then, we can discover by any process of investigation what "*the daily ministrations*" were, we shall come at the work which the Deacons had to do. For this purpose we would refer the reader to Acts iv., 35, where it is said that the prices of the things which were sold were brought, "and laid down at the Apostles' feet, and distribution was made unto every man according as he had need." This distribution is, doubtless, that which is spoken of as "*the daily ministrations*" which the Apostles had probably given in charge to some of the Jerusalem converts, and whose partiality as regards their *widows* was impugned by the Grecians. These "*daily ministrations*" were, therefore, made from the treasury of the Church, —from the *alms* that were "laid at the Apostles' feet," as the representatives and teachers of the Church. This fund, let it be noted, was none other than the free-will offerings of the faithful to the Church, committed to the Apostles for distribution, "according as every man had need." Nor was this a mere temporary source of income. The amount poured into the treasury, it is true, was unusual, but the free-will offerings, of which these are examples, continued in the Apostolical age to be the source, and the only source, of the Church's income. The Church of these days had, therefore, nothing but *alms* for her revenue; and nowhere in the New Testament is any other method of contribution inculcated than that of free and cheerful gifts. "While it remained was it not thine own," is what the Church, through the Apostles, says to every member regarding his property of whatever kind. The New Testament Church asks no tithe; it accepts with gladness the widows' mite, and does not think the thousands of the wealthy too

much to be devoted to God. Its whole revenue then, from whatever quarter it may come, whether from the individual, the society, the municipality, the State, and by whatever name it may be called, should only be free-will offerings or *alms*, out of which as its almonry distribution, should be made to every man "according as he had need." The Church is not justified in receiving anything that is not *alms*, or offerings to God. Receipt of money for value received, after the manner of the world, is abhorrent to the genius of the Gospel. The Master's injunction to his servants is, "freely ye have received, freely give." *Alms*, it will further be observed, were always given to the Church, in those days, through its recognised representatives, who were the Apostles in the case of those who sold their lands, and made offerings of the prices obtained; and in the case of the Churches in Asia, mentioned in Acts xii, were the *Elders*, to whom these were given "by the hands of Barnabas and Saul." We do not say that the money was given either to the Apostles or Elders for their own absolute disposal, such was not the nature of these gifts, but they were presented to them as the official organs of the Church for the use of the Church. Just as in these days when offerings of any kind are made to a Church, they are sent either to the pastor or to the other office-bearers, as the official representatives of the Church, so it was in the days of the Apostles, and it will be difficult, nay, impossible, we believe, to show that it should be otherwise now.

The Deacons then were charged by the Apostles with the "daily ministrations" of the Church's *alms*, in other words they were "to serve tables," even the *money tables* of the Church. The offerings put into the Apostles hands were, it would appear, entrusted to the Deacons to administer them not only to *widows*, on whose behalf the complaint was made, but also to the general poor, and to every man "according as he had need." The inference from the words of the text leads us, therefore, to comprehend within the scope of the Deacon's work, the distribution of *alms*, not only to the *general poor*, but also to "every man according as he had need." Among those who had need we must include persons who "laboured in word and doctrine," and gave themselves to the Gospel ministry; and as a matter of course, we must include Apostles, Teachers, and Evangelists. These were especially Christ's "poor one's," having left all to follow Him and to be His servants, they had a just claim on the almonry of the Church, and to live by that Gospel which they devoted their lives to preach and to propagate. The ministry are, therefore, among the number of the *poor* of the Church; too often they are painfully so, but really, in regard to support, they occupy scripturally no other position. They have a claim, it is true, to a "decent maintenance," but have no authority to make compulsory assessment for this purpose, nor is it right for them to countenance any such way of filling the treasury of the Church. Taking the Bible as our guide it would appear that, "according as every man has need" ministers are to receive support from the *alms* of the faithful, ministered to them by the Deacons, who, after the Apostolical model, are appointed and ordained to serve the "tables" of the Church. The Deacon's work is, therefore, it would appear, to administer the property given to the Church, according to the appointment of the Church, and for the purposes for which such property has been specially devoted. Can any other conclusion than this be drawn from the Word of God? Is any other view of the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church tenable than this? With just views of the Church as the "Communion of the Saints," and just conceptions of the work which the Church is appointed to do in the world for God, we cannot conceive how any man can imagine that any other office or agency than that of the Deaconship is in ordinary circumstances lawful in the Church for the administration of its property, or necessary to complete its organization.



Infinito harm has, we believe, been done to the Church by not attending to Divine teaching on this, a matter which lies at the boundary line between the Church and the World. In the early centuries the Bishops usurped the almsgiving of the Church of which St. Chrysostome and St. Jerome complain, and the Deacons instead of "serving tables" were appointed as preachers and ministers of the Word. In this way the Church became grievously corrupted, and avarice and luxury became the characteristics of the clergy.

In later times, as may be noted in the Church of Scotland of twenty years ago, the State made provision for the maintenance of the ministry without the interposition of the Deacons, the evils of which system are well known and may be observed in the unseemly conflicts which from time to time have arisen regarding the Annuity Tax in Edinburgh and other places, and in regard to the augmentation of livings in the Court of Tionds. The State besides made the Church Session the legal guardians of the poor, and thus also led to the conversion of the Eldership from a *spiritual* office to that of ministering only or chiefly at the money-tables of the Church.

In still more modern times an equally grievous corruption is, we do not hesitate to say, creeping *per incuriam* into the Church and threatening, even in the professed Free Church of Canada, to take the Erastian attitude of the European States towards the Church. Under the name of Temporal Committees, Committees of Management, and Trusteeship, the Godless world is getting into the very government of the Church. We know a case in which a man known to be an infidel held almost unlimited sway over the management and the government of a Church, much to the grief of its minister, and the vexation of the better disposed people. We know of another instance in which men, many of whom are not members, nor fit to be such, control the whole administration of a Church under the designation of a Committee, and, although wealthy, keep their minister in positive penury. We have seen too, Church Deeds so thoroughly Erastian in their character, that we are persuaded our Lord would have said to their framers, as he once said to Peter, "thou savourest not the things that be of God but those that be of men." Such instruments, we were about to say of *torture*, and perhaps we should be right in saying so, are, we have reason to believe, not uncommon in the Church of Canada, and it is high time our Christian people were warned against them, and that our Church Courts should see to it that no Church be admitted into our fellowship whose trust Deed and constitution, so called, are not in perfect harmony with the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church, and will not by any of their articles impede the exercise of her Scriptural discipline.

It will not do to tell us that Trusteeships sometimes *work well*, and in many cases are no injury to the peace or piety of the Church. We receive such statements with much suspicion. It must be an injury to the piety of the Church to find men holding office therein who are not members of the Church of Christ at all, or who, if members, are neither qualified by their piety, their prudence, or their christian temper, to hold office in the Church. And even if forms of management unknown to the constitution of the Christian Church, do sometimes *work well*, this surely is no reason why the wisdom of man should be substituted for the wisdom of God. Many bad things *work well*,—despotism in Russia may *work well*,—slavery even in America sometimes *works well*,—Episcopacy and Congregationalism and Methodism sometimes *work well*, but is that any good reason why we should adopt either the one or the other? God makes the wrath of men to praise Him, but on this account should we indulge in impious wrath? So we say that although the human expedients of Committees and Trusteeship for the management of the Church's *alms* may sometimes *work well*, yet seeing that

they are not God's ways of managing the affairs of His Kingdom, we are not permitted to adopt them as a *normal and permanent* state of things in our Churches. As temporary expedients in newly organised or weak Churches, they may be found both convenient and necessary as a sort of scaffolding by which to set up the perfect temple. It was in this way, we believe, that the evil first crept unawares into the Church; but as no one thinks of keeping up scaffolding after his house is built and completed, so we see no reason why temporary expedient should be perpetuated by the Church after its Scriptural form has been, or may be, perfected. In regard to existing arrangements, it may not at all times be possible to bring them into accord with the principles of the Church, and in such instances forbearance must be exercised, but we know one of the most stubborn of the old Erastian managements which by mutual arrangement has been quite neutralised; and we believe, that with men of piety and wisdom to deal with, every such unscriptural and unpresbyterian order of things might be brought into peaceful conformi., with the Word of God, and the Constitution of our noble Church. x

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### MAN'S RESPONSIBILITY FOR HIS BELIEF. R. F. Burr

More than a quarter of a century has passed since, in his splendid Inaugural Discourse as Lord Rector of Glasgow University, Lord Brougham gave utterance to the sentiment: "That man shall no more render account to man for his belief, over which he has himself no control. Henceforth, nothing shall prevail upon us to praise or to blame any one for that which he can no more change than he can the hue of his skin, or the height of his stature." The infidel fraternity eulogise the sentiment. In every variety of form they echo it.

Strange, that his Lordship, with all his versatility of talent, failed to see that the principle thus enunciated was entirely at variance with his practice—that if carried out, it would have stultified his whole course as a statesman and judge. No one ever rated his political opponents more severely for the principles they held and the policy they pursued. The elegant Canning, and a host of other antagonists, writhed beneath the lash he so unsparingly applied. But, apart from the score of courtesy, how unjust and ungenerous such treatment on his part, considering that the victims of his fiery epithets were virtually irresponsible, that they merited neither praise nor blame, since they could not change their opinions any more than their "hue" or their "height." And when discharging his judicial function, how could he be so cruel as to pronounce sentence on culprits who deserved to be pitied rather than punished?

This, we are persuaded, is a piece of flimsy sophistry which no man durst utter, and which would not be listened to for a moment in connection with any other subject than that of religion. It would be condemned in the senate and at the bar; it would be drowned in the tumult of the exchange and the market place. Common sense and a regard to worldly interests would rise to hoot down the traitor. Nothing more than this is requisite to undermine the foundation of all religious belief and morals, to let open the floodgates of immorality, and to make the restraints of religion like the brittle flax or the yielding sand. In opposition to such latitudinarianism we maintain, that man is responsible for the dispositions which he cherishes, for the opinions which he holds and avows, and for his habitual conduct. This is going the whole length of Scripture, but no further, which affirms that every one of us must give account of himself to God. And this meets with a response from amid the elements of man's moral nature which sets to its seal that the theory is true!

1. The responsibility of man for his belief accords with the whole *course of nature* and the laws by which the natural world is regulated. Let any of these laws be transgressed, the mere sincerity of the transgressor will not give him immunity from the consequences.

A man may swallow rank poison, firmly believing it to be medicine or food, but the deleterious qualities are not thereby extracted from it. A man may be so foolish as to handle a viper or fondle a lap-dog affected with hydrophobia, believing them to be harmless, but this belief will not prevent the venom being infused and working its fatal course. One may get upon brittle ice, believing it to be strong, but this belief will not prevent its giving way. Another may believe the earth to be stationary and the sun to be in motion, but this belief will not arrest our planet in her course or set a-going the orb of day. A third may discard the great law of gravitation, and leap from a lofty house, but the sincerity and tenacity with which he clings to his favorite notion will not prevent the sacrifice of life and limb. A fourth may so firmly believe in the weight of water and the density of the air, as to be sure that he will be sustained should he plunge into the one or try to mount into the other, but this belief will not keep him from sinking or falling. Thus it is plain, that even in regard to the life that now is, sincerity is no safeguard.

The temporal consequences that flow from our belief declare us to be accountable for it. Have we any right or reason to believe that a different course is pursued with respect to those things which are unseen and eternal? Is it likely to be different with God's moral government from what we thus find it to be with his physical?

2. The responsibility of man for his belief accords with the course of justice. Human justice would be a tyranny without it. Judicial Courts would be worse than the Inquisition. The whole apparatus of law must needs be dispensed with. It would be palpably cruel and unjust to try, sentence, and punish those who were not responsible for what they did. What is an action, but the offspring of thought, of feeling, of desire—the working out of what is within? Habits flow from the heart. Principles tell on practice. Belief affects the character. “As a man *thinketh in his heart, so is he.*” In nothing is this connexion more apparent than in regard to *religion*. The infidel and the indifferent may brave as they please with the hackneyed couplet :—

“For modes of Faith, let graceless zealots fight,  
His can't be wrong whose life is in the right.”

Yet the behaviour is invariably influenced by the belief. Why does the Pagan differ from the Mahometan and the genuine Christian from both? Why do customs prevail in the lands of the Crescent, and of Idols, that would be at once frowned down in the lands of the Bible? To the religious systems existing in each we must trace the difference. It is all the difference that exists between the Shasters and the Koran, and the Book of God. We know how the principles of infidelity have told on its votaries. The lives of prominent infidels that have been given to the world shew this. Is the mental and moral development of Romanists not affected by the dogmas they hold? Compare Belgium with Holland, Italy with Scotland, Spain with Prussia, Connaught with Ulster, Massachusetts with Mexico, the two sections of our own Province with each other. So with Unitarianism, Universalism, and other false systems. How can a man, for example, hold that there is *no Hell*, without its influencing his habits?

The connexion between faith and practice, between the creed and the conduct, is abundantly manifest. If, then, a man is no more responsible for his belief than for “the hue of his skin or the height of his stature,” how can blameworthiness belong to his acts? how can he be held guilty at the bar of any earthly

tribunal, when he could not possibly help it? There is no enormity which the admission of this principle would not palliate and defend. The butchery of the Thugs, the cannibalism of the Feejees, the outrageous excesses of the great Salt Lake, the gigantic swindling of Robson, Redpath and Huntingdon, become not merely venial but innocent. Many holding this principle expect, by the circulation of their peculiar nostrums, to convert our stray Planet into a Paradise. Let this principle obtain universal currency, and it would soon be a Pandemonium. The frame-work of society would be dissolved and men become a mass of Cains and Ishmaels. In the administration of law, the dispensing of justice, and the maintenance of all our civil and social relations, the principle is acted on, that men are accountable beings, and not mere automata.

In a Court of Justice the jury are sworn in, witnesses give evidence, members of the Bar employ arguments and appeals, the presiding judge delivers his charge. If these twelve men be not responsible for their belief and the verdict which embodies it, the oath they take is a solemn mockery, and the subsequent procedure of witnesses, counsel, and judge, a dumb show. But they feel they are responsible, and the public feel so too, and hence they are commended or condemned according to the verdict they bring in. And are we capable of weighing evidence presented to us by fallible mortals, and incapable of weighing evidence presented to us by the infallible God? If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater.

3. The principle that man is responsible for his belief accords with the dictates of *Reason and Conscience*.

Reason suggests the absurdity of all religions being alike, and of those who have turned every one to his own way, being all equally sure of reaching the City of the living God, the Heavenly Jerusalem.

Men will contend for specific principles—creeds—systems—in Science, Philosophy, Politics—in short, in every department of human effort and interest. Why should a similar definiteness be discarded in the most important of all departments—that of religion? This levelling indifferentism would not be tolerated in those, and why in this? No one dreams of broaching the impossibility of arriving at the truth in fields over which is shed nothing approaching in clearness and fulness to the flood of light that encompasses the field of the word. And yet, as if left to grope in gloom, men will cry "What is Truth?"

After all, the deficiency is not in the light, or the ability to discern it, but in the *Will*. This formed the burden of the complaint brought by Christ against the bigoted Jews. "Why do ye not understand my speech? because ye will not hear (or bear) my words." "A perverted will puts scales on the eyes of the understanding and spreads a veil over the heart in the reading of the Scriptures. The light is there, shining with unclouded lustre, but the light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehendeth it not." "Ye would not." "Ye will not come to me that ye might have life." "This is the condemnation that light hath come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil."

Evidence the most ample and adequate is provided—evidence, a small fraction of which would be enough to produce conviction on any other matter. The capacity of examining that evidence is possessed. Surely, then, it is perfectly reasonable that we should be held accountable for the exercise of our powers in the examination of that evidence. Let the light fall on bandaged eyes, or be looked at through jaundiced eyes, the fault is ours. And hence, when that light shines into the heart, no guilt is felt to be more heinous, or is more fully confessed and deeply lamented, than that of having kept it out so long, or of having regarded it through such a distorted medium. The remaining so long in unbelief, so far from being excused, is sincerely deplored, and the

wrath which it merited is earnestly deprecated. To this the awakened conscience of every true convert bears witness. And what are the lashings of that secret tormenter in the breast of the sinner—what are the pangs of remorse—but corroborative proofs? Men would not be so bent on getting rid of themselves, and rushing to scenes of false delight, did they not feel themselves verily guilty and fear the wrath to come.

4. The passages we have already quoted clearly shew that man's responsibility for his belief is a Bible truth. The Bible is full of it. Its peremptory precepts—its earnest reimonstrances—its melting appeals—its powerfully persuasive arguments—all proceed on this. God acts upon it in all his dealings with men. Jesus took it for granted during all his public ministry.

Faith is spoken of as a duty, without the performance of which it is impossible to please God: *Unbelief* as a sin peculiarly aggravated. Faith indeed is presented as the one great duty, the one thing needful; "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved," and Unbelief as the one great sin—yea, as containing in itself the very essence of all sin. Thus Jesus, in describing the work of the promised Spirit, tells us in general terms that He would convince the world of sin, and then fastens on this as being the most striking example of sin, and its very epitome—"of sin, because (or, in that) ye believe not in me." Unbelief would not thus be singled out and branded with the stigma of Christ, were it not in the highest degree culpable. Were it our misfortune merely, and not also our crime, it would not be made the subject of His withering denunciations. Nor would Faith be made as it is, the hinge on which our salvation or perdition turns. "He that believeth in the Son hath everlasting life, but he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him. He that believeth shall be saved: he that believeth not shall be damned." In what stronger light could man's responsibility for his belief be put?

Let this responsibility be practically recognized by us. Let us do nothing by which a sense of it may be weakened. Our responsibility will be exactly proportioned to our light, and our light will be proportioned to our obedience. That light will shine more and more, even unto the perfect day, if we

"With growing ardour onward move,"

"With growing brightness shine."

But if we allow ourselves after running well, to be hindered that we should not obey the truth, then the very light that is in us will prove darkness, and how great will be that darkness! "If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine." But let this be remembered, "every evil affection pours its bedimming vapours around your understanding; every sin you commit blunts your power of moral perception and involves you in danger of error. And if you continue wilfully to sin after having received the knowledge of the truth, the light that God has given you will go out in darkness, and sparks of your own kindling will encompass you and light you on your path to destruction. You shall lose your way, but you will think yourself right; your feet will stumble on the dark mountains, but you will fancy yourself walking in a smooth and level path; thick clouds shall gather over you, but to your eye they will take the form of the Castle and the battlements of Heaven; until at length your wanderings shall bring you to the verge of this world, and the awful plunge awake you to truth and to misery." "Because they received not the love of the truth that they might be saved, for this cause God shall sent them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believe not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness."

## INFANT BAPTISM.

J. Alexander

No. 1.

## ARGUMENT FROM THE ABRAHAMIC COVENANT AND ITS APPOINTED SEAL.

Much of the discussion and many of the errors which have distracted the peace of the Church in the present day have resulted from the practical oversight of a truth of vast importance, and the foundation of right conceptions in many departments of theology,—we mean the identity of the Church under various dispensations. If we carefully consider the elements of the divine dealings with the Church, whether under the Patriarchal, the Mosaic, or the Christian dispensation, we shall discover certain fundamental principles, which constitute the basis of all these dealings. Upon these our Law-giver, King and Judge, has ever acted, and they are as unchangeable as His own divine nature, and ever adapted to the necessities of man, which in all ages are the same, in his relation to God. If this be admitted, it must be allowed that religion, whether objectively considered, as a system of revealed truths, or subjectively, as the truth experienced in the heart, was essentially the same under the Abrahamic as it is under the Christian dispensation. But while religion, taking that word in its restricted sense, is the same in every age of the Church, there are many circumstantials connected with it, which may vary, according to the peculiarities of each dispensation. As the creatures of sense, we receive our knowledge through the medium of sensible objects or signs. Hence the Divine Author of our holy religion has provided ordinances, varying according to the specialities of each mode of administering the covenant, by which truths in which we are deeply interested are set before us in a clear and impressive manner. Bearing these facts in mind, we may learn to distinguish between what is essential and what circumstantial in each dispensation. As to what is essential, we observe, that that which forms the only basis of God's dealings with the sinful sons of men—that to which the very existence of a Church upon earth is to be traced—that through which exclusively pardon and acceptance are dispensed to men, is the *covenant*—the covenant of redemption viewed as an eternal compact between the Father and the Son for effecting the salvation of an innumerable company of our ruined race—the covenant of grace as to the effectual application of its glorious provisions to those chosen in Christ from before the foundation of the world. That the covenant made with Abraham, and that upon which the New Testament Church is founded, are the same, is clear from what is said in Scripture as to the identity of the Church in these two ages. In Rom. xi. the Apostle says, "If the root be holy, so also are the branches," &c. The root here evidently refers to the Church as existing before the Mosaic dispensation, or more properly to the Abrahamic Church, the *natural* branches of which were the Hebrew people. But these natural branches were broken off, and the wild olive, that is, the Church gathered from the Gentile nations, was grafted in, and made to partake of the root and fatness of the olive tree,—the Church founded in the days of Abraham. Hence unquestionably the Christian and the Mosaic Churches are spoken of as branches of the same tree, or as parts of that Church which was built upon the covenant made with Abraham. But we have assumed, what all orthodox Christians will admit, that there can or could be no Church erected in our world, save upon the basis of the covenant of grace. If, then, the Christian Church is a part of the Church of God, and if the Abrahamic Church was a part of the Church of God, both must have the same covenant, the covenant of grace, as their basis; and consequently the covenant made with Abraham was the covenant of grace.

This conclusion will receive additional confirmation if we look at the terms in which the Abrahamic covenant is expressed. Without referring to any prior communication of God to the Patriarch, we quote the words of Gen. xvii. 1. "I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect." Here we have, first, the covenant relation in which God, in great condescension and love, places himself toward His servant; and next, the corresponding duty which He requires of His servant. The few words that intimate the relation in which God places Himself to Abraham are pregnant with all those blessings which at subsequent developments of the covenant were more fully and specifically expressed. "I am to thee God Almighty—the inexhaustible, because infinite, repository of all needed blessings." "Wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, redemption," are all included. And in making over these blessings to his servant, God requires of him an entire consecration of heart, a perfect, i. e., a sincere, earnest and constant walk. Who does not recognize here the grand and essential features of the covenant of grace? Almighty sufficiency is still made over on the one hand, and evangelical obedience required on the other.

We pass by other texts which we would like to have noticed if space permitted, and observe that what is commonly called the Sinaitic covenant, or the covenant of peculiarity, made with the people and nation of Israel four hundred and thirty years afterward, did not and could not disannul this covenant. (See Gal. iii. 17.) By faith in the promised seed, in whom all nations were to be blessed, and by that alone, could men be justified, even under the Mosaic dispensation. But this dispensation, with the peculiarities of its ceremonial institutes, was chosen by God as the mode of administering the covenant best adapted to the existing condition and circumstances of the Church. We would refer the reader to a careful perusal of the third chapter of the Epistle to the Galatians in this connection.

From time to time the substance of this covenant was republished to the Church. (See Deut. x, 13.) Jeremiah foretells a time when God will enter into "a new covenant" with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. (Jer. xxxi, 31—34.) And the Apostle Paul informs us, that it is under the Christian dispensation that this covenant, which he contrasts with the Sinaitic covenant, shall be entered into. But though both the Prophet and the Apostle speak of this latter-day covenant as "a new covenant," we find, upon examination, that it is new in respect not of its essence, but of its administration. It is substantially the covenant made with Abraham. It is the very covenant which God enters into with every believer. (2 Cor. vi, 16—18.) Its glorious and all comprehensive provision is, "I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people," which includes all that is said about "the law of God being written upon their heart," "being merciful to their unrighteousness," &c.

From what has now been advanced, it is clear that the covenant made with Abraham was the covenant of grace. This is corroborated by the statements of the New Testament, that "it was confirmed of God in Christ,"—that believers as such are Abraham's seed—that he is the father of all that believe, clearly indicating his faith in God's promise made in the covenant of grace.

We have now to prove that as circumcision, the sign and seal of the covenant, was under the Old Testament administered to infants, who were thus recognized as within its bonds, so baptism, which under the New Testament occupies the same relation to the covenant of grace, and takes the place of the former ordinance, is to be administered upon the same principle, to the same class of individuals.

Circumcision is called by God (Gen. xvii, 11,) "a token of the covenant," that is, a sign, seal, or assurance on the one hand of the certainty of the blessings promised by God, and included in the words "*I will be a God unto thee, &c.*"

and on the other, of man's obligation to yield obedience to the requirements of a covenant keeping God. Agreeably to this, the same ordinance is called by the Apostle "a seal of the righteousness of faith." (Ro. iv, 11.) It is of importance clearly to understand the meaning of this expression. It does not mean that circumcision was the seal of an actually existing faith, or of a righteousness actually in the possession of an evangelical faith, for many parties who received the seal did not possess this faith, and many (infants) were not capable of exercising it. But it was "a token of the covenant" which God graciously designed to enter into with man—a seal on God's part and not on man's. But to make this matter clear, we must here advert to one peculiarity of the covenant of which it was the seal. A covenant amongst men consists of a compact between two parties by which they come under mutual obligations. The fulfilment of the obligations of the one contracting party binds the other to the fulfilment of his, and *vice versa*; and the non-fulfilment of stipulations by either party releases the other from obligation. But it must be borne in mind that these contracting parties were under no antecedent obligation on either side to enter into such a compact. But, in this last feature, the covenant of God with man differs essentially from any covenant which man makes with man. God's covenant comes to us with the sanction and authority of a law binding upon every son of man. God not only invites us to enter into the bonds of "the everlasting covenant," and offers to receive us into covenant, but as our Creator and supreme Lawgiver he commands us, his creatures, to comply with the invitation. I may be indisposed to accede to the proposed terms of a fellow man—I may have the right to refuse his proposed covenant—but I have no right to object to the terms or to refuse the covenant of my God. The covenant of grace thus assumes the aspect of a law, so far as man's duty is concerned, still retaining the features of a covenant, because in it God makes gracious promises to man, while he requires of them certain corresponding duties. In its character of a covenant, men are made parties in it; in its character of a law, they are bound to become such. In all this we are not illustrating the fact that the covenant God enters into with man is, strictly speaking, only the application of the covenant entered into with his own beloved Son, because this discussion would be foreign to our present purpose.

The seal of the covenant then is one attached to it by God, and not by man, and certifies that it is God's covenant, and that all the blessings promised are free to all who are within its bonds. This seal is set on the parties not by man, but by God, and all marked out by Him as within the covenant are to receive the seal, and it is at their peril to refuse a compliance with any demand indicated in the seal. By God's command it was placed upon all the male children of Abraham's household, (Gen. xvii,) though their consent could not be asked or obtained, and for this reason, that whether they homologated the act or not, they were under the unquestionable obligation to enter the covenant. In the Abrahamic Church, before the introduction of the Mosaic ceremonial, children received the seal of the covenant, which we have seen was the covenant of grace, and were thus recognized as within the pale of the visible Church. By this "seal of the righteousness of faith" they were taught that an all-sufficient and all-perfect righteousness was provided in the covenant, which was free to and obligatory upon the acceptance of their faith. They were reminded, when arrived at years of discretion, that the Lord's vows were upon them, and it remained for them to say whether they would joyfully accept the immeasurable boon of having "God for their God, &c.," and cheerfully comply with his requirements, or whether they would incur the fearful guilt of repudiating the Lord's claim set forth in the ordinance of circumcision, and refuse that covenant which came to them charged with boundless blessing, and the acceptance of



which was enforced by the authority of the supreme Lawgiver. And this is the very position of every baptized child, before whom, when he comes to years of reflection, the same solemn alternative must be set.

We will briefly sum up this argument, reserving other aspects of the subject for a future paper. Every believing parent of old was required to have his little ones initiated into the covenant by the solemn ordinance of circumcision. That covenant, of which circumcision was the seal and token, was the covenant of grace, whatever the form or circumstances of its administration. Those in covenant constituted the Church: that Church included believers and their infant offspring. The constitution of the Church, as to its membership, was thus settled by Divine appointment. That constitution has not been altered by any divine precept, and consequently the Church still consists of believers and their infant offspring. Or, under the Old Testament believers and their infant offspring were received into covenant with God, and received what under that administration of the covenant was its seal or token. The seal or token has been altered, but the covenant is the same, and not a word is hinted in the New Testament of any restriction or alteration as to the parties included. The inference is, that what is now the seal of the covenant is to be administered to the same parties as formerly, believers and their offspring. x

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### REVIVALS. *A. J. Hemph.*

It is well to note the operations of Divine grace which, from time to time, are manifested in the Church and the world. We may be stirred up to emulation by seeing others in positions no-wise different from our own, receiving spiritual gifts from the ascended Saviour, in which they "rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory." God has not left, nor will he ever leave, His Church without a witness of His presence and power. "Lo, I am with you always even to the end of the world," is a promise that will be fulfilled, and the fulfillment of which may be observed daily by all who consider the ways of Jehovah in the government of His kingdom. At certain periods, more than at others, it is true, the Lord has shown himself in the conversion of sinners, and the quickening of his peoples' affections. As in the case of the individual, so in that of the collective Church it may be said, "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh and whether it goeth, so is every one that is born of the Spirit." God chooses his own time when for wise purposes he gives special outpourings of his Spirit; but while this is the case it cannot be denied that a converting and reviving work has sometimes been granted to the fervent importunate prayers of one or more of God's dear children, and that all revivals are begun and carried on in the exercise of much prayer to God. Those who ask shall receive, those who seek shall find, and to those who knock it shall be opened.

That the Churches in this land have need of revival is very manifest. Never was there a period of greater spiritual lethargy and deadness than the present. This is perhaps not quite the case, when we take a generalized view of the collective Church. There is, undoubtedly, in it a great activity. Mission schemes are devised and executed, Churches are built, Colleges instituted and endowed, with much zeal and liberality. Everywhere we hear of what this Church and that is contributing for the support of Gospel ordinances amongst themselves, and for the prosecution of Christian objects beyond their own limits. The Gospel too is preached to listening crowds; the Bible is widely disseminated and

generally read in private and in the family; religious books are circulated of the highest excellency, and put within the reach of the poorest. On thus taking a general survey of Christian activity, it does appear that the followers of Christ are not idle, that they are not indifferent to public duties, and to the just claims of eternity upon their persons and their substance.

The Church, as a whole, never was perhaps in any age, even in the times of the Apostles, externally in a purer state than it is at present. There never was a purer Gospel preached as is generally preached in the pulpits of the Evangelical Churches of this period; nor was discipline ever more justly or more faithfully administered than it is at present. We do not by this mean to say that in all things we are externally perfect. Far from it. The Gospel might, we acknowledge, in many instances be more simply stated and more directly and tenderly pressed home upon the heart and conscience than it is, and the office-bearers of the Church might be much more faithful in their personal dealing with the indifferent, the unfaithful, and the erring. We, however, would say, that looking at things in the general, there is much to satisfy the Christian heart. When, however, we turn from the general aspects of things to the special—from the figures and statements of public reports to the substances and the personalities which these are supposed to represent—we find, alas! much to mourn over, and little to boast of. When we analyze the personal elements of which the Christian community is composed, we do not, it is true, find any great defect in doctrinal knowledge or apprehension of truth in the abstract—and it would be hard to say of most that they were not Christians, or that they had not well grounded hopes of salvation through the crucified Redeemer; still we should find, as a very prevalent characteristic of the Christianity amongst us, a lack, if not a deplorable lack, of what we would term, a *personal realization of Christ*. Christ *in* us the hope of glory is not the prevailing, or very conscious, experience of many professing believers. Christ on the cross, Christ in the grave, Christ risen and ascended into His glory; all these things that are *without* us may be the grounds of much confidence and hope to the minds of many, while at the same time there is no sense of their power in the inner man—in “the heart of hearts.” Men do not, so much as one would wish, speak with that holy boldness of their faith, their love to Christ and the brethren, their hope of the everlasting redemption, their assuredness of the promises of God to them, and as we find was the custom of the Saints in Apostolical times, or in the times when the Church has been blessed with special outpourings of the Spirit. Now we would say that there never can be a living piety of sufficient life to do the work of God where there is not a personal realization of Christ, of which the spontaneous expression is, “Christ is mine and I am His.” Not until this takes place is there a living experience of a true and abiding *unity* to Christ, or is the conscious likeness of Christ formed in us. It is this personal realization of Christ which is the chief mark of all God’s *working men*, and of his distinguished servants. It has enabled disciples of old to speak boldly for Christ—to glory in His Cross, and to suffer for His sake. And only this same realization of the Saviour will enable any man to deny himself the comforts and the pleasures of this life, and to take delight in doing the will of God. Personal piety and personal dedication to God is the want of our Church, and that too among all ranks in an equal degree; among young and old, rich and poor, ministers and people. We except none, and so we call upon all alike to consider this matter, and to lay it well to heart, that such remedial measures may immediately be adopted as will rescue us from our dangerous slumbering and sleeping. It is not, let it be noted, wickedness so much that we have to complain of in the Church: it is rather a spirit of worldliness which threatens to dominate over everything spiritual—which, while it would by no means give up religion, but rather would

cling to every iota of it with rigid tenacity, yet it would postpone its claims to those of things temporal, and only be religious so far as religion did not ask for troublesome or self-denying labors. A Christian of this type would say, religion must not ask me to "visit the fatherless and the widows in their afflictions;" it must not expect me to be "an instructor of the ignorant," or to make it my business to seek after the conversion of my neighbour, or in short to do or to say anything that would not perfectly accord with good breeding or the amenities of cultivated society.

How shall we reform this state of the Church? and how get out of this heedlessness of spiritual things? It cannot be denied that we ought to try and mend it—that we ought to do something to wipe this stain from the "fellowship of the Saints," and, if we may so speak, to revenge this dishonour done to Christ our Lord. Let us try, for example, if we cannot, to a greater extent than we are, be *doers* as well as hearers of the Word; and then, according to the promise, we may expect to be "blessed in our deed." But, above all, let us *pray*. After all is done that we can do, it will yet be found that we are far from the "stature of the fullness of Christ." We need the Spirit of Promise to impart continual supplies of divine grace, and to quicken us into a true Christ-like life. For this then let us pray, and "pray without ceasing," and not rest importuning God until He gives us what we ask. As a part of God's vineyard, we want the early and the latter rains, that we may flourish as the "garden of the Lord." Let it be remembered that if we ask in faith, nothing doubting, God will grant us our requests.

We have been led into these considerations by reading, in various Newspapers, accounts of striking revivals just now granted to the Churches of the neighboring States. The cities of Boston, of Brooklyn, and of New York, with many of the adjacent places and individual Churches throughout the Union, are now, it would appear, enjoying a gracious refreshing from the presence of the Lord. The week-day prayer meetings and lectures are in these Churches no longer scantily attended, but both these and the public Church services on the Sabbath have been *thronged*. In one Presbyterian Church a member thus describes the work:—"For the last few weeks God has seen fit, in His bountiful mercy, to exhibit the awakening influence of His Spirit in our midst. Especially has He blest our Sunday School. The teachers have been solemn; they have felt the mighty responsibility resting upon *them*; it has been their earnest prayer that they might "walk softly before the Lord," and God has crowned their labors with success." Of another Mission School which was started some years ago by several persons, only two of whom were professors of religion, it is related, that "after a time the result seemed so unpromising, that the idea of abandoning the enterprise was entertained. It was finally decided to struggle on a while longer, and lately there has been a revival, which has resulted thus far in the conversion of *seventeen teachers and ten scholars*."

In Dr. Krieb's Church, New York, we are told a good feeling prevails. "An unusual tenderness appeared to pervade the congregation at the late communion season. On the evening of that day the pastor preached a discourse on the duty of the Church to make special efforts to bring the poor and unequalized under the influence of the Gospel. It had been previously agreed to make a thorough exploration of the neighborhood, partly with reference to tract distribution, partly to the enlargement of the Sabbath Schools, and partly to induce neglectors of public worship to attend Church. With this combined purpose in view, one or two meetings were held to devise an efficient plan and to engage laborers. These resulted in obtaining the pledges of upwards of *sixty* persons, including the most influential people in the congregation to go out for the purpose of visiting every family in the vicinity of the Church, and to at-

"tempt to bring them by personal effort, under the influence of the truth. They are now engaged in this work, and 'they have a mind to work.'" In the Baptist and Berean Churches the same influences are manifested. In one of the Reformed Dutch Church's a good feeling was awakened during the winter; the pastor of the Church and the superintendent of the school say:—"As a settled line of policy we labour for conversions at all times. The intervals are very short when there are not some one seeking the Saviour, or rejoicing in hope in Christ." The Episcopal and Methodist Churches are also favored with similar blessings from on high. It would seem that there are favorable indications of an unusual and gracious outpouring of God's Spirit upon the entire cities of New York and Brooklyn. In Sing Sing, celebrated as the seat of the State Prison, there are also much new life among the Churches and many conversions to God. In Danville, Kentucky, the Presbyterian Churches at the last communion had many added to their number, as the fruits of a recent work of grace, a considerable number of whom were students in the college there. Churches of all evangelical denominations, colleges and Sunday schools, are thus gladdened with the outshining upon them of the light of God's countenance. In all this we see that God is no respecter of persons. He dispenses his gifts according to his good pleasure, irrespective of human associations. His eye recognises no Church but the living members of Christ's body; wherever these are found, under whatever name, he bestows upon them his covenant blessings.

This certainly rebukes the exclusiveness of those who deem themselves in their little circles the only Churches of Christ, and who unchurch all who belong to other professions. It would, however, be an extreme view to say that this encourages the notion that nothing is of importance in the Church excepting the cardinal doctrines of the Gospel, and that the minor matters of Church order and discipline are of no consequence at all in the Christian system. We do not hold this view. We think that everything in God's Word given for the direction of his people is of importance, and that it is the part of Christian wisdom to give it the place which God gives it in his kingdom and no other. The scriptural character of Church systems must be determined by other marks than that of the gift of God's Spirit to their members or the conversion of sinners by their agencies; these blessings undoubtedly teach that these communions are the "communion of saints," that God has a seed amongst them, and that some of them at least are in covenant with Christ. But they by no means prove that the contradictory things in these systems are all right. The form of the fellowship must be judged of, we say, on other grounds than that of the special grace which God bestows upon his saints. While each denomination may rejoice that God is *owning* them, let each one recognise also the fact that God is *owning* the other, and while each is bound in duty to maintain the apostolical "doctrine and fellowship" according to their own intelligent convictions of the teachings of Scripture on these points, yet this is to be done only after it has first been admitted and acknowledged that the Church of Christ is the "fellowship of the saints." On this principle we may rejoice when God is blessing our neighbors, and may pray that all who "hold the Head" may have the presence of the Spirit in his converting and awakening power amongst them.

These facts and considerations should lead us, in Canada, to pray for the blessing of the Spirit to revive God's work among us. We need it as much as the Churches of the United States. Much of our corner of the vineyard is parched and barren; many goodly trees are but leaf-bearing, or at best produce little of the beautiful fruit of the Spirit to the praise of the Redeemer. Upon our young men and maidens we need an outpouring of pentecostal grace; upon the habitues of the Church and the communion table we require a quickening influence to descend; in the pulpit we want ministers with "tongues of fire":

and in the pews a people "pricked in their hearts." We invite the co-operation of all the children of God who read these pages in special prayer to the Father of Mercies that he would grant us a personal awakening in our Churches, among both young and old, rich and poor, office-bearers and people, and that we may all have a more thorough PERSONAL REALIZATION OF CHRIST. ✕

## DISPUTED SETTLEMENTS.

*From the Free Church Record.*

A few cases of serious division in connection with the filling up of vacancies have occurred in the Free Church of late, and the matter has naturally attracted the notice of all who feel an interest in her permanent welfare. Considering how few these cases have been, and the previous inexperience of our congregations in the discharge of this new duty, there is no cause for much alarm, but rather for congratulation on the overwhelming proportion of perfectly harmonious settlements which have occurred. Some little difference of opinion, and even an occasional sample of actual division, may be anticipated as the price to be paid for every kind of liberty, and especially liberty newly acquired. It is remarkable that more cases of dispute have arisen in the Established Church, from a simple lengthening of their chain under the supervision of the civil courts, than in the Free Church, from giving the people an absolutely free choice of ministers according to the Word of God. There can be little doubt, however, that when our system has become consolidated, when all parties understand their relative positions and duties, cases of dispute will be indefinitely reduced in number, and perhaps nearly quite extinguished.

Meantime it is important, without entering minutely into the subject, to indicate in general some of the sources of our present difficulties, as proved by our own experience and that of other bodies of Christians similarly circumstanced.

There are three parties in every settlement, and *only* three, and from one or other the difficulty, when it does exist, must in every case arise, viz., the congregations, the probationers, or the presbyteries. Let us glance at the respective duties of each :—

I. *The Congregations.*—In one sense they may be said to be the parties most deeply interested in filling up a vacancy ; for their own spiritual interests and those of their children, including to some extent also those of an entire neighbourhood, and perhaps for a generation to come, are bound up in the issue. The matter is therefore one of great solemnity to them, and ought to be treated in a peculiarly earnest and prayerful spirit. They are not only called to exercise a high privilege, but to discharge a most momentous duty to the great Head of the Church and to themselves. Anything, therefore, like the mere spirit of a political contest ought to be banished as far as possible from the election of him who is to "watch for their souls as one that must give an account." This matter ought certainly to be fully explained to every congregation at the commencement of every election by some experienced member of Presbytery. During the course of the election all canvassing from door to door, so fruitful in divisions, ought to be prohibited and put down as inconsistent with the free liberty of choice and with the nature of such a transaction. The people should be strongly admonished to study not merely their own personal feelings, but the feelings of their brethren, the interests of the whole congregation and neighbourhood, "the things that make for peace, and by which they may edify one another." There is a passage in Gal. v. 13 which might form a suitable text for such a discourse, "For brethren, ye have been called unto liberty ; only use not liberty for an occasion to the

flesh, but by love serve one another." Here is the whole subject in a sentence. *First*, the position of the members of the Free Church. "They have been called unto liberty." The yoke of patronage is entirely broken; they are absolutely and completely free from all mere human control. But, *second*, there is still a great danger of this liberty being misunderstood and abused, human nature being corrupt and perverse. "Use not your liberty for an occasion to the flesh." Many bad passions are apt to be engendered and developed in connection with a disputed election—mere personal likings and dislikings, apart from the calm exercise of judgment, the heat of passions, the desire of victory. These must be subdued by Christian principle; and the Christian must prove that he is free and fitted for the privileges of freedom by ruling over his own spirit. Therefore, *third*, "We are by love to serve one another," not merely "ourselves," but "one another;" in other words, we are to study the feelings and wishes of others as much as our own, the interests of the whole congregation, and seek to preserve the "unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."

In accomplishing this object it is not necessary to select or support a candidate merely to please others, but from whose ministrations we ourselves can derive little or no advantage. Let all the preachers, if necessary, be tried. Let all parties be ready to withdraw their favourite candidates if there be a serious division of opinion, and look out for others upon whom all may cordially combine. Where the spirit of mere partisanship is banished, and a Christian, wise and loving spirit reigns, there will generally be no great difficulty in coming to an amicable arrangement. But,

II. *The Probationers*.—It is to be lamented that arrangements have not yet been made for giving our probationers a fair opportunity of being regularly heard in all our vacant congregations, and that the subject is yet encompassed by considerable difficulties. We trust that some effectual solution of this problem will soon be found, and that the mind of the whole Church will be seriously given to the matter as one of great moment. But meantime it ought to be clearly understood that beyond being fairly heard, any interference on the part of probationers in the way of canvassing, or trying by any indirect and unfair methods to promote their own election, in cases of disputed settlements, ought to be repelled as an impertinence almost approaching to simony. When ministers are ordained they are solemnly asked if they have adopted any "undue methods" to obtain that call; and apart from the becoming modesty which would make men of right feeling shrink from pressing forward their own real or imaginary claims, the Church ought to be peculiarly jealous of this element of discord. Congregations should be watchful of very forward preachers. Young men besides may rest assured that they will get, in the long run, all the honor and promotion to which they are fairly entitled, and all the more if they do not seem very eagerly to covet it. Preachers ought especially to manifest a deep sense of the responsibility of the pastoral office, and illustrate the apostolic maxim, Rom. xii. 10, "Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love, *in honour preferring one another.*"

III. *The Presbyteries*.—The duty of a Presbytery in all cases of settlements is peculiarly delicate, and calls for the exercise of high wisdom and often of great firmness. They have a twofold function in reference to all calls. They are in the first place the Judges when the people of a vacant charge are "ripe" for a call; in other words, when there is reason to believe that they are prepared to proceed to a harmonious settlement. In determining this question, a variety of elements require to be considered, unless there is absolute unanimity. If there be an objecting minority, they must consider its nature, its weight, the intensity of the opposition, and the probable consequences of proceeding to a settlement in which they cannot acquiesce. If there be any prospect of serious division, they are absolutely and justly prohibited by the law of the Church from proceeding at all.

But even if they do proceed to moderate in a call, they are still the judges whether that call, when actually made, ought to be sustained. Circumstances may emerge to overthrow their previous calculations, and they may find it necessary to set the whole proceedings aside, and instruct the people to begin anew. In this there is no interference with the just rights of the people in calling a minister in a Presbyterian Church. The liberty of Presbyterianism is liberty under regulation and is in truth liberty in its highest form; and Presbyteries must not weakly abdicate their functions, and declare for practical Independency, because the exercise of their undoubted rights, and the discharge of duties equally undoubted, may require in some cases labour and forbearance, or may even expose them to the abuse of the more ignorant amongst the people. Every form of duty implies occasional difficulty. The members of Presbytery must therefore act with calmness, dignity, and kindness, in all cases of dispute. They must on no account make themselves partisans, either in their individual or aggregate capacities, remembering that they are specially appointed to *MODERATE* in the whole matter, and that they should stand aloof from local parties with all the judicial impartiality of judges.

In a word, all parties have special duties to discharge, and if these are wisely performed in a spirit of faithfulness and prayer, the result will seldom fail ultimately to be harmonious and satisfactory. ✕

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#### MINISTERIAL SUPPORT.—No. 1.

A series of short articles under the above title are being published in the *Philadelphian Presbyterian*. They are from the pen of a distinguished layman. We present the first to our readers as well worthy of their attention.

"On the subject of ministerial support a good deal has been said, and but comparatively little done. Yet no subject connected with the prosperity of our Churches demands more immediate attention. Deeply impressed with its importance, allow me, as a lay member of a Presbyterian congregation, to say to my fellow-members a few earnest words.

Let me put to every reader the honest question, *how much do you pay your pastor?* There are many people in the congregation to which I belong who can answer this question, and a great many who cannot—who will answer, "the matter is in the hands of the board of trustees; I pay my pew-rent, at least when it's convenient; the minister gets along; lives about as well as the rest of us, and I've never troubled myself about it." Now I venture to say, *we* are not a peculiar people in this respect. A large proportion of the members of our congregations take no thought about this matter. And here is the first thing to be done—to get people to think and talk about it. The next thing is to get them to *act*. Nero fiddled while Rome burned, and we might as well fiddle while our ministers starve, as to think and talk without putting our hands in our pockets and doing something.

Now, what are the facts? Let us look them in the face. The cost of living has advanced within a few years from twenty-five to fifty per cent. The great majority of our congregations did not pay living salaries before the advance, and have not increased them since. The consequence is, that nine-tenths of our settled pastors are not fully and fairly supported; are silently struggling with embarrassments, from inability to provide for their families a competent support and keep out of debt; and struggling harder still, under such circumstances, to keep in health and heart for the fit discharge of their incessant and arduous duties.

Two things are very clear :

1. Injustice to the pastor is ruinous to the cause of religion in the Church. An illiberal, penurious spirit is fatal to piety. It is deliberate, hereditary sin; and if the grace of God ever saves the individual who indulges it, it first rescues him from its power. Men are not saved in their sins, but from their sins. Such a spirit is apt to be contagious. It spreads like all other evil examples; and the consequences are coldness, apathy, and spiritual death. No penurious Christian ever prospers in the divine life; no penurious Church ever grows in strength, and energy, and piety. No people either work or pray earnestly who do not give liberally; and hence the few revivals, the slow growth, the sickly existence of hundreds of our Churches.

2. It is an evil with which pastors cannot effectually deal. The pastor can preach against covetousness, commend the self-sacrificing spirit of the gospel, and beg for others; but he cannot ask for justice, or even beg charity for himself. At least it is a most ungracious task, a hard and cruel office for any man to be forced to take on himself, much less a Christian minister, whose character is so invaluable to himself and to the Church, and who more than any other man is liable to be misunderstood and defamed. Rather than do it, many an excellent minister has retired with broken health and bleeding heart from the pastoral office; and many more are struggling on in the ministry, whose carefully concealed penury and hidden sorrows no eye but God's ever looks upon;—none feel but themselves, and those whom they carry in their bosoms.

In my next I will consider the question, what is a fair and just ministerial support?" \*

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#### AT EVENING TIME THERE SHALL BE LIGHT.

"At evening time there shall be light,"  
 Yes, when old age shall come,  
 And night's dark shades obscure the path  
 By which we're travelling home.  
 When, wildered by the gathering gloom,  
 Appalling doubts arise,  
 The first pure beams of heavenly light,  
 Shall brighten all the skies.

"At evening time there shall be light,"  
 Oh! promise ever sweet,  
 To those who tread an unknown way,  
 With faint and faltering feet.  
 They need not fear the coming hours,  
 When daylight shall be past,  
 Since He who knows that pathway well,  
 Has promised light at last.



## WORDS OF THE WISE.

MEDITATIONS OF RICHARD SIBBS. (A. D. 1577—1635.)

## GOD OUR FATHER.

“God bears not in vain the name of a Father; He fills it up to the full: It is a name of indulgence, of hope, of provision,—a name of protection. It argues the mitigation of punishment: a little is enough for a father. In all temptations, oh let us, by prayer, fly to the arms of our heavenly Father, and expect from Him all that a father should do for his child, as provision, protection, indulgence, yea, and seasonable corrections (which are as necessary for us as our daily bread,) and when we die we may expect our inheritance, because in Christ He is our Father. But yet we must remember the name of a father is a word of relation; duty is expected from us; we must reverence Him as a father, with fear and love: He is a great God, we ought to fear Him; He is merciful, yea, hath bowels of merey, we ought to love Him; if we tremble before Him, we forget that He is loving, and if overbold, we also forget that He is a great and holy God; therefore we should always go to the throne of grace with reverence, holy love, and filial confidence in the name of Jesus.

## GODLY LOVE.

“There are four things observable in the nature of love: first, an estimation of the party beloved; secondly, a desire to be joined to him; thirdly, a settled contentment; fourthly, a desire to please the party in all things. So there is first in every Christian a high estimation of God in Christ; he makes choice of Him above all things, and speaks largely in His commendation; secondly, he desires to be united to Him; and where this desire is, there is an intercourse, he will open his mind to Him by prayer, and go to Him in all his consultations for counsel: thirdly, he places contentment in Him alone, because in the worst condition he finds peace and comfort when the light of His countenance shines upon him: fourthly, he seeks to please Him; he labours so to act, that God may in Christ delight in him; love stirs up his soul to remove all things distasteful to Him. He asks, as David did, ‘Is there yet any that is left of the house of Saul, that I may shew him kindness for Jonathan’s sake?’ How can I honour my God?

## MARKS OF THE PRESENCE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

“Where the Spirit dwells largely in any man, there is boldness in God’s cause, a contempt of the world: ‘He can do all things through Christ that strengthens him;’ his mind is content and settled; he can bear with the infirmities of others, and not be offended (for the weak in grace are soonest offended), and is ready to say, ‘Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly.’ But if corruption bears sway, then he says, ‘O stay a little that I may recover strength;’ that is, Stay a while that I may repent: the soul in such a frame not being fit to appear before God, but only when the Spirit imparts grace and divine consolations.

“The Spirit of God may be known to be in weak Christians, as the soul is known to be in the body by the pulse. Even so the Spirit is discovered by groaning under sin, sighing, complaining, that it is so with them, and no better: so that they are out of love with themselves: this is a happy sign that the Spirit dwells in such souls.

## COMFORT AT DEATH.

“It is a comfort in the hour of death, that we yield up our souls to Christ, who has gone before to provide a place for us; this was one end of His being taken up to heaven, to provide a place for us. Therefore, when we die, we have not a place to seek, our house is provided beforehand; Christ was taken up to

glory, to provide glory for us. Even as paradise was provided for Adam before he was made, so we have a heavenly paradise provided for us; we had a place in heaven before we were born. What a comfort is this at the hour of death, and at the death of our friends, that they are gone to Christ and to glory! We were shut out of the first paradise by the first Adam; our comfort is, that now the heavenly paradise in Christ is open. 'This day shalt thou be with me in paradise,' saith Christ to the penitent thief. There was an angel to keep paradise when Adam was shut out; but there is none to keep us out of heaven; nay, the angels are ready to convey our souls to heaven, as they did Lazarus; and as they accompanied Christ in His ascension to heaven, so they do the souls of His children." ✕

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 POETRY.

## THE SUPPLIANT.

All night the lonely suppliant prayed,  
 All night his earnest crying made,  
 Till standing by his side, at morn,  
 The Tempter said, in bitter scorn,  
 'Oh, peace! what profit do you gair  
 From empty words and babblings vain?  
 'Come, Lord—Oh come!' you cry alway;  
 You pour your heart out night and day;  
 Yet still no murmur of reply,  
 No voice that answers, 'Here am I.'

Then sank the stricken heart in dust,  
 That word had withered all its trust;  
 No strength retained it now to pray,  
 While Faith and Hope had fled away;  
 And ill that mourner now had fared,  
 Thus by the Tempter's art ensnared,  
 But that at length beside his bed  
 His sorrowing angel stood, and said,  
 'Doth it repent thee of thy love,  
 That never now is heard above  
 Thy prayer, that now not any more  
 It knocks at heaven's gate as before?'

'I am cast out, I find no place,  
 No hearing at the throne of grace.  
 "Come, Lord—Oh come!" I cry alway,  
 I pour my heart out night and day,  
 Yet never, until now, have won  
 The answer, "Here am I, my son."

'Oh, dull of heart! enclosed doth lie  
 In each "Come Lord!" an "Here am I."  
 Thy love, thy longing are not thine—  
 Reflections of a love divine;  
 Thy very prayer to thee was given,  
 Itself a messenger from heaven.  
 Whom God rejects, they are not so;  
 Strong bands are round them in their woe;  
 Their hearts are bound with bands of brass  
 That sigh or crying cannot pass.  
 All treasures did the Lord impart  
 To Pharaoh, save a contrite heart:  
 All other gifts unto his foes  
 He freely gives, nor grudging knows,  
 But love's sweet part and costly pain  
 A treasure to his friends remain." —TRENCH.

## REVIEWS AND NOTICES OF BOOKS.

THE TESTIMONY OF THE ROCKS; OR, GEOLOGY IN ITS BEARINGS ON THE TWO THEOLOGIES, NATURAL AND REVEALED, by HUGH MILLER, with Memorials of the Death and Character of the Author. *Boston: Gould & Lincoln. 12mo., pp. 502.*

THIS noble book crowns the monument which its distinguished and lamented author has erected for himself, and which his countrymen and the world will ever look upon with admiration. We handle this last product of Hugh Miller's genius with the solemn reverential awe with which we read the records of departed greatness and worth on the tablets of the sepulchre. Criticism is utterly disarmed. We recognize the long familiar, pellucid, delightful Saxon style,—the bold tread of a man conscious that he walks upon his own possessions,—the far reaching and sound inductions of nature's own philosopher. With what keen eye the author looks upon facts, minute though they be! and with what firm grasp he holds every new phenomenon, and every organism revealed by the Rocks, until they give up their secrets and satisfy the demands of their arch-inquisitor! There are no better examples extant of the Baconian method, in the investigation of facts, than are to be found in the writings of Hugh Miller. We witness in them all, a patience that is never wearied in searching into the arcana of Nature. Nothing is taken for granted. They do not amaze us with "doubtful disputations," or the wild speculations of "philosophy falsely so called." Over all their glorious unveiling of the great works of Jehovah, there is a manifest humility and sobriety of judgment. In the descriptions of natural objects in this volume there is the same minuteness and completeness which mark all the other works of the gifted author, and in the illustrations there are the usual Shaksperian cleanness and sharpness that gratify and delight. Like the facets of a well-cut brilliant, each topic contributes its share of light and beauty, so as, combined, to render this book an invaluable legacy in Literature, Science and Theology, to the men of this and all future generations. The "Testimony of the Rocks" will be read wherever the English language is known, and will, along with the kindred works of the author, do more to popularize Natural Science, and to confirm the Theology of the Bible, than any similar books that have yet been written. We thank God that He has been pleased to send us in these days this prophetic man, gifted to such a degree with the power to interpret to us His hand-writing upon the Rocks, and to unfold to us the wonders and the wisdom of His creative might.

The "Testimony of the Rocks" is dedicated to Dr. Miller, Professor of Surgery in the University of Edinburgh, in beautiful and affectionate terms. It contains a preface to the reader, in which there is an account of the origin of the several Lectures which the book contains, from which we quote the following:—

Of the twelve following Lectures, four, (the First, Second, Fifth, and Sixth) were delivered before the members of the Edinburgh Philosophical Institution (1852 and 1855). One (the Third) was read at Exeter Hall before the Young Men's Christian Association (1854), and the substance of two of the others (the Eleventh and Twelfth) at Glasgow, before the Geological Section of the British Association (1855). Of the five others,—written mainly to complete and impart a character of unity to the volume of which they form a part,—only three (the Fourth, Seventh, and Eighth) were addressed *visa voce* to popular audiences. The Third Lecture was published both in this country and America, and translated into some of the Continental languages. The rest now appear in print for the first time. Though their writer has had certainly no reason to complain of the measure of favor with which the read or spoken ones have been received, they are perhaps all better adapted for perusal in the closet than for delivery in the public hall or lecture room; while the two concluding Lectures are mayhap suited to interest only geologists who, having already acquainted themselves with the generally ascertained facts of their science, are curious to cultivate a further knowledge with such new facts

as in the course of discovery are from time to time added to the common fund. In such of the following Lectures as deal with but the established geologic phenomena, and owe whatever little merit they may possess to the inferences drawn from these, or on the conclusions based upon them, most of the figured illustrations, though not all, will be recognized as familiar: in the two concluding Lectures, on the contrary, they will be found to be almost entirely new. They are contributions, representative of the patient gleanings of years, to the geologic records of Scotland; and exhibit, in a more or less perfect state, no inconsiderable portion of all the forms yet detected in the rocks of her earlier Palæozoic and Secondary floras.

The contents of the book are:—The Palæontological History of Plants; The Palæontological History of Animals; The Two Records, Mosaic and Geological; The Mosaic Vision of Creation; Geology in its bearings on the Two Theologies; The Noachian Deluge; The Discoverable and the Revealed; The Geology of the Anti-Geologists; On the Less-known Fossil Floras of Scotland. Throughout the pages there are interspersed no less than 152 wood-cut illustrations, beautifully executed under the author's own critical eye. It indicates the author's affection for working-men—the rank to which he himself belonged—that this, a scientific book of the first class, and edited with scrupulous care, should be published at so unusually low a price for such works. We trust that it will be found in the library of every intelligent working-man in these Colonies. With the aid of a "Webster's Dictionary," no one need find any difficulty in understanding all the scientific terms which it contains. ✕

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TREES AND THEIR NATURE; OR, THE BUD AND ITS ATTRIBUTES. In a series of Letters to his Son, by ALEXANDER HARVEY, A.M., M.D., Southampton; illustrated with engravings. London: James Nisbet & Co.

We have not yet seen this book, but it has been noticed with peculiar favour by reviewers at home. Dr. Harvey is an esteemed elder in the Presbyterian Church, Southampton, and as it is our purpose to bring before our readers from time to time the literature of our Presbyterian Church, we make no apology for introducing to them the following extracts and critical remarks from the *English Presbyterian Messenger*:—

The return of April to us, with its buds and blossoms, makes such a subject of speculation seasonable; and as trees, whether in the garden, the field, or the forest, are universal favourites, we do not doubt that our readers will be obliged to us for bringing before them some of the views held respecting them by one who has loved them much, and studied them long with the observant eye of a genial naturalist, and the profound reflection of a true philosopher.

The common and almost universally held notion of a tree is stated by Dr. Harvey, thus—

"The common notion of a tree is that it is an *individual*, in the same sense that a dog or a horse is; and it certainly appears to be such. It is assumed that the trunk and roots, and branches, the leaves and flowers, and fruit and buds, which form component parts of every tree, go to make up one and the self-same plant, in like manner as the bones and flesh, the nerves and bloodvessels, the heart and lungs, the head and trunk and limbs of a dog, do truly form the parts of one and the self-same individual animal. Doubtless, that is the common belief. A tree is regarded as having the same sort of individuality or personality that you or I have."

Dr. Harvey's own notion of a tree is very different from this:—

"In my view it is not an individual in the proper or scientific sense of the term, but, on the contrary, a *body corporate*. Take an oak at Midsummer, in full leaf, and in its full vigour. It is neither more nor less than a collection, an aggregate, a corporation of living and growing but separate and distinct oak plants, the production of the current year, and likewise of the *dead* remains of a still larger number of individual plants of the same

kind or species, the production of a series of by-gone years. And of these oak plants, each and every one lives only *one* year, and attains its *full* growth within the year; making provision in the form of buds for the evolution of similar plants the following year. Further, the plants of each year, shooting up in spring from the buds formed by the plants of the previous year, *grow parasitically* on the persistent dead remains of these. Acquiring their maturity in summer, and reaching to the height of a few inches only, they pass into the state of old age (the sere and yellow leaf) and eventually *die* in autumn, save only the buds they have formed, which survive the winter. And thus dying, the greater part of every one of them speedily undergoes decomposition and disappears. The woody stems and roots alone remain. These, although dead, escape that process. Tipped with the living buds they abide entire—as entire, yet as destitute of vitality, as the table I am writing at; and they abide to serve to these buds and to the young oak plants that are to come of them next year (as the earth does to the acorns and their produce), the purposes both of a *temporary soil* and of a permanent *mechanical support*. Such is my apprehension of a tree.”

All this seems strange and paradoxical enough, but the consequences of such a theory of trees appear much more strange and paradoxical still.

“Regarding the tree in this light,” continues our author, “I hold that but for *accidental* causes, any and every tree might live for ever, and go on growing and enlarging to to any conceivable size. You have heard it said that the king of England never dies; and you will readily understand that what is not true of individual men may yet be true of individual families, or of the race in general. Individuals die, but the race lives and multiplies.\* The corporation of London has lasted, we may say has lived, some hundreds of years; and unless swept away by some such extraneous cause as an act of the legislature, may last till the end of time, though the individuals composing it may none of them pass the allotted three-score years and ten. Just so in respect of a tree. If what I have stated be a true account of its nature, and of the manner of its production it will of course follow that a tree is an individual in precisely the same sense as a body corporate; and that, contrary indeed to the common opinion, but in perfect consistency with the principle that all living beings are subject to the law of mortality, and have a definite size or bulk of organism, there will be no limit except from *extraneous* causes, to the size it may attain, or the number of years it may live. What is called a *genealogical* tree is constructed very exactly on the principle of this theory, and serves extremely well so far to make it intelligible; while the personality of each member of the tree is admitted, and his own individual *temporary* existence, he is yet regarded as forming a scion or branch of one *common stock*, which may have had its origin in a remote age, and may endure as *long* as the world itself.”

The inferences which Dr. Harvey himself deduces from his theory, viz., that there is no natural limit prescribed by the inherent physiology of the tree, either to its size or longevity, will probably appear to most people to be a sufficient *prima facie* argument against its truth; and as this branch of the subject admits of easy and popular treatment, we may here give a few more paragraphs from the author, both for their *inherent interest*, and as a sample of his matter and manner as a scientific writer.

“Of old trees still extant in this country, and still living and growing, we need not look beyond the yew tribe. There are, indeed, oaks, limes, sycamores, chestnuts, ashes, and others of great antiquity and vast size, some of them coeval with the Conquest, some of them probably much older still; but they all sink into insignificance before the yews. Of these, there are some at Fountain’s Abbey, near Ripon, in Yorkshire, which are believed to be more than 1,200 years old; there are two in the churchyard of Crowhurst, in Surrey, 1,450; and one at Fortingall, in Perthshire, from 2,500 to 2,600 years old. One in Brabourne churchyard, in Kent, is said to have attained the age of 3,000 years; and another at Hedsor, in Bucks, which is still in full vigour, and measures about twenty-seven feet in diameter, is reckoned to be above 3,200 years old. . . . In the Brazils, in one of the primaval forests, there are some trees supposed to be *Courbarils*, which in respect of size are truly colossal, and in respect of age have been variously computed at from 2,000 to 4,000 years. ‘Never before,’ says Martius, ‘had I beheld such enormous trunks. They looked more like living rocks than trees; for it was only on the pinnacle of their bare and naked bark that foliage could be discovered, and that at such a distance from the eye that the form of the leaves could not be made out. Fifteen Indians, with out stretched arms, could only just embrace one of them. At the bottom they were eighty-four feet in circumference and sixty feet where the boles became cylindrical. . . .’

The *Taxodium Distichum* (or deciduous cypress) seems to be the most gigantic of any on record, and to be second to none in age. Two existing specimens may be referred to—one in the churchyard of Santa Maria de Telsa, near Oaxaca in Mexico, which has a trunk ninety-three feet in girth; the other, that of Chapultepec, which is said to have a circumference of 117 feet 10 inches. Regarded as of 'wondrous' magnitude by the Spanish conquerors, this tree of Chapultepec 'certainly reaches back' (according to De Candolle) 'to the origin of the present state of the world—an epoch of which' (in his *vixw*) 'it is the most indisputable monument.' Professor Henslow, it may be observed, estimates the longevity of the *taxodium* at above 4,000 years. . . . Let these examples suffice. Enough appears from them to show that trees may attain to an age altogether wonderful, and to a size that is quite prodigious, and still continue to live and grow."

The view, given in these letters, of the nature of trees, differs widely from that commonly received among us. It neither represents the popular belief, nor does it accord with the recognised doctrines of the schools. "To the popular mind, indeed," to use Dr. H.'s own words, "it may be said to be nearly unknown, while heretofore it has failed to secure the sanction of the greater number of our scientific botanists. In the main, however, it is the same as that first set forth by De la Hire, as long ago as 1708, and subsequently held by Darwin, Mirbel, Du Petit-Thouars, Gaudichaud, and other physiologists;" and since the publication of this volume, Dr. Harvey has ascertained that the views of the eminent French physiologist, De Candolle, as set forth in his "Physiologie Végétale," published in 1832, are substantially accordant with his own. He disclaims, therefore, "all pretensions on the score of originality. He has advanced nothing that was not known or held before. The only merit he is disposed to claim in connection with it, is that of having unfolded it more systematically, and in greater detail than any of his predecessors." At the same time, it is no more than justice to Dr. Harvey to state that the theory was worked out by him, substantially as it now appears, without any assistance from others; that it was embodied in a course of lectures on physiology, which he delivered in Marischal College, Aberdeen, during the winter session of 1844, and that it was subsequently more largely developed in a paper "On the Nature, Longevity, and Size of Trees," which he published in the "Edinburgh New Philosophical Journal," for January, 1847, long before he had any knowledge of the writings of De la Hire, Darwin, Mirbel, Gaudichaud, and De Candolle.

We have only room to add that Dr. Harvey studies and expounds his favourite subject, not only with the broad and acute intellect of a philosopher, but with the devout and reverential spirit of a Christian. He has an open eye for the manifestation of God in the book of nature; and he has a fine gift for discovering and appreciating the beautiful analogies which bind together the volumes of nature and revelation—the Old Testament and the New of God's Universal Bible. To him, the Trees of the field and the forest are "The Trees of the Lord," and the Cedars of Lebanon are the Cedars which "He hath planted." Such a man and such a writer is a distinguished ornament to the eldership of our Church; and this ingenious and truly original work will find its way, we doubt not, to the hands of many of our ministers, elders, and people, who, while thankful to see examples of the combination of genius and piety appearing in *any* and *every* branch of the Church of Christ, are sensible of a special obligation to appreciate and encourage them, when they shew themselves in their own.

PERIODICALS, PAMPHLETS, &C., RECEIVED.

From Messrs. Hill & Martin, Montreal, we have received a copy of the first number of the "Chicago Magazine, or, The West as it is; illustrated," published under the auspices of the Mechanics Institution of this far-famed western city. It contains several admirable wood-cuts of notable places and buildings in the city and neighborhood. The letter-press is most creditable to the publishers. Its literature is of the first order. History, biography, travel, and story, are combined with much skill; which, together with trade statistics and literary notices, render it a most interesting magazine, and well worthy of encouragement.

We have received a short pamphlet on "Ventilation and Warming," by Sheriff Ruttan, of Cobourg, and which describes somewhat imperfectly a system for effecting the above desirable purposes, which is the result of many years study and experience. The designs of his Air-Warmer, Nos. 1 and 2, for houses, are very chaste and beautiful. We recommend parties who are erecting Churches, or planning how to heat or ventilate them, to communicate with Sheriff Ruttan. His recommendation to those about to build is that "if your architect does not know how to put lungs into your house, have nothing at all to do with him."

## SUMMARY OF INTELLIGENCE.

## MISSIONARY AND ECCLESIASTICAL.

It may be interesting to many of our readers to know, by a brief statement, what the Religious Societies of Canada East are doing in the various fields of their operations.

From the Report of the Montreal Auxiliary Bible Society, we find that it has for its sphere of operations the districts of Montreal, St. Francis, and Three Rivers, comprehending 35 Counties of Eastern Canada and 12 Counties of Canada West, with a population in 1852 of 752,240, about two-thirds of whom are Roman Catholics. For the year 1856 there were issued from the Depository 3705 Bibles, 6149 Testaments, 161 portions, altogether 12,015 copies; making the issues from the first organization of the Society, 200,005. The total receipts are £1724 6s. 7d. Besides the agent at the Depository, the Society employs one travelling agent and two colporteurs.

— The twenty-first annual report of the Montreal Religious Book and Tract Society informs us that its operations extend over Canada East and the district of the Ottawa. Its whole issue of Books and Tracts for 1856, in the English, French, Gaelic, German, Danish, Swedish, Portuguese, Spanish, Italian and Greek languages, together with Tracts for the blind, was 237,017. The receipts and expenditure for the year were £1098 16s. 4d. Five Colporteurs were employed a part of the year, and two are now engaged as permanent laborers in connection with this Society, one in the city, the other in the country.

— From the twentieth report of the Canada Sunday School Union, whose head quarters are in Montreal, it appears that it employs two permanent travelling agents to visit existing Schools and to organise new ones. Of Library Books, Bibles, Hymn Books and Tracts, it issued in 1856, 18,601, making a total since the organization of the Union of 357,584. In 105 Schools connected with this Union there are 513 male and 480 female teachers. The scholars, male and female, amount to 6225, of whom 5328 can read, and 900, or nearly one-sixth, cannot read. 20,382 volumes are reported in the Libraries, and the oldest school is that of St. Gabriel Street Presbyterian Church, Montreal, established in 1820. The total receipts and expenditure have been £535 13s. 7d.

— From the eighteenth annual report of the French Canadian Missionary Society, we find that the Institution at Point aux Trembles for Canadian boys and girls is in a good condition. There are in it about 75 scholars, 42 of whom are boys and 33 girls, under the care of 4 male and 2 female teachers. In the Institute and Mission Stations there are 200 scholars. The Society, through its agents, occupies 11 stations, employs 7 ordained permanent missionaries, 10 catechists, 1 teacher, 2 colporteurs. The Lady Directress of the Girls' Institute, with her daughter and six of the wives of the Catechists, assist as opportunity offers in missionary work. The receipts are £2947 12s. 1d. The expenditure for Point aux Trembles is £1805 11s. 1d.; for evangelization, £151 6s. 8d.; for colportage, £573 3s. 1d.; for general agent and general secretary, £444 5s. 9d.; for miscellaneous matters, £180 4s. 6d.; total, £3220 9s. 9d. We understand that the Rev. D. Fraser, of Montreal, has been requested by this Society to obtain for its services, while he is in Europe, an ordained missionary and several colporteurs.

— The Rev. Mr. Stevenson, Missionary from the Presbyterian Church of Canada, has arrived after a long passage at his destination in India. After consulting with Dr. Duff and the Missionaries in Calcutta, it has been decided that he shall occupy the City of Bancoorah, the centre of a large and populous district, in which no Missionary has yet permanently labored. He is assisted by one of the native converts from the Free Church Institute, Calcutta. Mr. S.'s letters will be found in the "Record."

— The annual meeting of Coté Street Free Church, Montreal, was held in the Church on the 23rd ult., and from the report issued it appears that the congregation are in a very flourishing condition. Much interest was added to this meeting from the circumstance that the esteemed pastor, the Rev. D. Fraser, was on the eve of departing for a few months for Europe, partly and mainly as the deputy of our College Committee, with a view of soliciting aid from the sister churches in Britain on behalf of "Knox's College," Toronto. Several of the ministerial brethren of the city took part in the proceedings, and the Divine blessing was implored on Mr. Fraser and his family, for the successful issue of his mission, and for his safe return to his attached flock.

— The annual meeting of the St. Gabriel Street Free Church, Montreal, was held on the 27th ult., in the Church, and a gratifying report was given of the progress of the congregation during the past year. The numerous friends of this venerable Church, the oldest Protestant Church in the Province, will be pleased to know that it is still in a healthy condition.

— The Rev. Thomas McCrie, D.D., Professor of Theology in the English Presbyterian College, has been lecturing with great eclat in Exeter Hall, London, on the "Early History of the English Reformation." At the first Lecture, "The Lollards in England," Professor L. Levi presided; at the second, "The Reformation under Henry VIII," Lord Panmure presided; at the third, "The Marrian Persecution," the Hon. A. Kinnaird, M.P., will preside; at the fourth, "The Martyr Bishops of England," the Earl of Shaftesbury will preside. These Lectures are delivered under the auspices of the Young Men's Presbyterian Societies, London.

The Free Church College, Edinburgh, has been closed with a most interesting and scholarly address by Principal Cunningham, D. D. To the students he says:—"That the subjects which ought to have the largest share of their time and attention at College were the critical and exact study of the Sacred Scriptures in the original languages, and the mastering of the leading doctrines of the System of Christian Theology." He further animadverts in strong terms on the statements of a late review of Dr. Chalmers' writings in the "North British Review," alleged to be written by Archbishop Whately. To three points in this article he directs attention: First, the attempt to represent Dr. Chalmers as opposed in heart and feeling to some of the Doctrines of the Confession of Faith. Second, its unscriptural and loose statements on the doctrine of Inspiration. Third, its attacks on Creeds and Confessions in general. In the treatment of each of these points the Principal, with clear and convincing reasonings, vindicates the character of his illustrious predecessor from the reviewer's aspersions, points out the ancient and Scriptural doctrines of the Church on the question of the Inspiration of the Word, and maintains the Scriptural character and the value of the Confession of Faith. He concludes by saying that "in consequence of the indications which had been given of late of the prevalence of great ignorance of the Confession of Faith among the ministers of the Free Church, he had some intention, did time permit, to go over it with the fourth year students next term." This able and interesting valedictory address was received with much applause.

**EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE.**—The Rev. Dr. Schaff says he has received the following notice from Berlin, with a request to make it known in America:—"The next meeting of the Evangelical Alliance will be held, by special invitation of the King of Prussia, in Berlin, from September 10th to the 16th. It will be preceded, on the evening of the 9th, by a prayer-meeting in the German, French, and English languages. The opening sermon will be preached by Dr. Krummacher. The first three days will be devoted to the discussion of the following questions:—1. Unity and difference among the children of God. 2. Causes and remedies of the want of Christian life and activity among the Churches. 3. The general priesthood of believers. 4. The duty of Evangelical Christians in relation to the aggressive movements of Romanism. The remainder of the season will be devoted to the hearing of reports on the state of the missionary work among Jews and heathens, and the state of Christianity and the Church in Germany, France, Holland, England, the United States, and other countries. The whole to close by the celebration of the Lord's Supper, in different languages. This will be the first meeting of the kind held in the Land of Luther and the Reformation. American Churches desiring to be represented in this Alliance, should select their delegates at an early period.

**INTERESTING STATISTICS.**—We see it stated from the census tables—(United States) that the Methodist Church is the richest in this country (in Church property), and the Presbyterian is nearly equal with it, each holding about fifteen millions of dollars' worth. Next are the Episcopalians and Baptists, with less than twelve millions each; Congregationalists, eight millions; Dutch Reformed, four millions. But the Methodists are pre-eminent not only in the money value of their churches, but in the practical matter of accommodation for hearers of the Gospel; having seats for over four million persons, or one seat for every three dollars and three-quarters' worth of property.

The Baptists come closely, if at all behind them, accommodating over three millions, or about the same proportion; and the denominations commonly understood to direct their expectations rather more to the select few who are "called" among the "wise," the "mighty," and the "noble," expend their money on a comparatively small number of more "eligible" seats for worshippers, bringing a vastly higher rent.

The Episcopalians, whose church property is about equal with that of the Baptists, make it go one-fifth as far in "preaching the Gospel to all sorts and conditions of men"—seating only six hundred thousand hearers, or one for every twenty dollars.

The Congregationalists, do better, seating eight hundred thousand, or one for every ten dollars; and the Presbyterians next best, seating over two millions, or one for every seven dollars and a half.—*Examiner.* 4



## LITERARY.

We notice the publication of a book in Edinburgh entitled "The Chronology of Creation, or Geology and Scripture reconciled, by Capt. Thos. Hutton, F. G. S.," which discusses the same questions as those contained in the "Testimony of the Rocks," of which the author takes in some respects very different views.

"The Three Gatherings" is the title of a new work from the able pen of Dr. Brown, of Edinburgh. It treats (1) of the gathering of the Outcasts of Israel; (2) of the Gentiles to those Outcasts; and (3) of all Israel and the fullness of the Gentiles.

"Christianity and our Era, a Book for the Times, by the Rev. George Gillfillan," is just issued. It treats of much the same topics as Dr. Buchanan's "Modern Atheism."

"Revival of Family Religion in opposition to the Sabbath School System," is the title of a pamphlet published in Edinburgh by the Rev. Archibald Brown, a minister of the United Original Seceders.

The Rev. Mr. Caird of Errol's Sermon before the Queen has been translated into German by Chevalier Bunsen, and 10,000 copies sold.

A CURIOUS PERIODICAL.—The Prussian periodical press can boast of a great novelty, namely, a political newspaper, written in the Hebrew language. It is published at Johannisberg, in Eastern Prussia, and its editor is a Rabbi Silbermann, at Sijik. The *Ha Magia*, the "Anouncer." It is a weekly paper, and its cost is only three shillings a quarter, or three pence the single number. The circulation of *Ha Magia* is not limited to Prussia; it has also a large sale among the Jews of Poland and Russia. During the Emperor Nicholas's reign this would have been impossible, but Alexander II has removed the prohibition against Hebrew printing and Hebrew literature in the Russian empire.

SIR WILLIAM HAMILTON'S WORKS.—The logical and metaphysical lectures of the late distinguished Professor Sir William Hamilton, of Edinburgh, will shortly appear. They are to be published by Messrs Blackwood & Sons, under the editorship of the Rev. H. L. Mansel, of Oxford, assisted by Mr J. Veitch, an old pupil of Sir William's, who, we believe, had also something to do with carrying the new edition of Dugald Stewart's works through the press. Mr Mansel's name is a guarantee of careful editorship, as he possesses in a high degree the philosophic insight and scholarly erudition indispensable for the work. He is, moreover, a professed disciple of Sir William, and by directing attention to his speculations has contributed perhaps more than any other University man to revive the study of philosophy at Oxford. The lectures, which will probably extend to three or four volumes, are we believe, left in a tolerably complete form; but whether any other papers are in a state for publication we have not yet heard. Sir William must, however, have left a number of philosophical fragments; and we hope that, in dealing with these, the editor will not be too fastidious, but, in the exercise of a wise liberality, publish as many as possible.—*Leader*.

DR. LIVINGSTONE AND THE BOOKSELLERS.—In a note to the London *Athenaeum* Dr. Livingstone says:—"The principal object of my prolonged sojourn in this country is to prepare a narrative of my travels and discoveries for general information. Great has been my surprise to find a host of pirates start up, who, upon the strength of some few extracts from certain letters of mine, collected without my consent or knowledge, have published what they are pleased to call a narrative of my travels, and, by artful wording of their advertisements, lead the public to believe that these works emanate from me. I appeal, therefore, to you from the high position and influence you hold in the world of literature, to warn the public against such deception."

ANTIQUITY OF PRINTING IN CHINA.—According to the best authorities, the art of printing was known in China upwards of 900 years ago. In the time of Confucius, B. C. 500, books were formed of slips of bamboo; and about 150 years after Christ, paper was first made; A. D. 745, books were bound into leaves; A. D. 900, printing was in general use. The process of printing is simple. The materials consist of a graver, blocks of wood, and a brush, which the printers carry with them from place to place. Without wheel, or wedge, or screw, a printer will throw of more than 2500 impressions in one day. The paper (thin) can be bought for one-fourth the price in China that it can in any other country. The works of Confucius, six volumes, four hundred leaves, octavo, can be bought for ninepence.

—A contemporary states that the authoress of the *Life of Hedley Vickers* is the lady who was to have been married to that eminent Christian soldier, should he have returned from the Crimean campaign. She is also the author of a new work, "The Victory Won."