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THE  
Presbyterian Magazine.

VOL. 1.

MARCH, 1843.

No. 3.

WHAT IS THE CHURCH?

IN the original language of the New Testament the word—*Ecclesia*—translated Church, literally signifies any kind of Assembly, political, or religious, confused or regular. In the states of ancient Greece, the name, *Ecclesia*, was given to any assembly of people, called by a public herald, to meet at a certain time, in a place, either named in the proclamation, or generally understood,—to consult together respecting some business of general interest to the community. The historian of the Acts of the Apostles, in accommodation to Grecian custom, gives the same name to the riotous concourse of the idolatrous Ephesians in the theatre, occasioned by the diminution of the votaries of Diana, through the instrumentality of Paul and his co-adjutors: “For the assembly—*ecclesia*—was confused”—(ch. 19. 32). He also gives the same name to the ordinary meeting of the civil court, to which the town-clerk referred, when he said, “It shall be determined by a lawful assembly”—*ecclesia*—(ch. 19. 39). We cannot, therefore, from the literal import and common use of the word, *ecclesia*, amongst the Greeks, derive much assistance in solving the question, What is the Church?

The name, *Ecclesia*, is, however, given by the Greek Translators of the Old Testament Scriptures, to the assembly of the Israelites, called to meet in one place, at certain seasons of the year, to celebrate the solemn festivals of their national religion. With this translation of the Scriptures, our Lord and his Apostles were intimately acquainted; and from it they borrowed *Ecclesia*, to designate the religious society which they founded. We are not told, why they did not prefer *synagoga*, which literally signifies, gathered together, and which among the Jews designated their religious societies. It may be, they preferred *Ecclesia*, because it was a term much more extensively known, and, at least, much more popular beyond the limits of Judea, than *synagoga*: moreover, it served to distinguish the societies of Christians from the synagogues of the Jews. But whatever may have been the reason of their preferring *Ecclesia* to *Synagoga*, we have no difficulty in ascertaining, that they meant it to designate the singular religious society which they founded and organized, and which we, in our own language call—*The Church*. But we have not yet, answered the question, What is the Church?

The meaning of the word Church, is more limited and precise in the English language, than the corresponding word in the Greek: it being always used to designate a religious society, or the house in which the

members of a religious society assemble together for public worship. There is, however, nothing in the world, about which men are more divided in their opinions, than in answering the question, *What is the Church?* Every religious sect appropriates the title, *Church*, to itself; and some sects—particularly the Roman Catholic and Episcopalian—deny the right of any other sect, to assume the title. But it is not from the mere opinions, or assertions of arrogant men, that a satisfactory solution, can be formed to the question, *What is the Church?*—it is from the Word of God.

It cannot, indeed, be rationally supposed, that the Great King and Head of the Church ever intended that men should have any difficulty, in ascertaining, *What is the Church*; and none can feel any great difficulty, who submits to believe the response of the Holy Oracles of God. There can be no doubt, our Lord indoctrinated his Apostles, while he was with them on earth, in the knowledge of what is the Church: and there is abundant proof of their having been well instructed. For example,—when our Lord put the question to them: “But whom say ye that I am?” Simon Peter’s answer,—“Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God,”—evinces his saving knowledge, and clearly exhibits, the original foundation of the Church in its faith and profession. His answer was perfectly satisfactory: “And Jesus answered, and said unto him, Blessed art thou Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter; and upon this rock I will build my Church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.” (Matt. 16, 15—18). The foundation, founder, corner-stone, and builder of the Church, is “Christ, the Son of the living God:” and the faith, and profession of faith in this doctrine, is absolutely essential to salvation, and to the very constitution and existence of the Christian Church. God, by the word of the Gospel, calls men out of the world of mankind to this faith and the profession of it; and all, who by the Holy Ghost, “Can say that Jesus is the Lord,” believe with their hearts and confess with their mouths that besides Christ, “There is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.” These are, “Holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling,” whom “God hath from the beginning chosen to salvation through sanctification of the spirit and belief of the truth.” And were they a multitude which no man could number, and distant from each other as the poles of the earth, they are one body in Christ, their living head,—united together by the bonds of love and devotion to Him, and have all “one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father.” This holy community excludes none from an equal participation of its invaluable immunities, on account of country, colour, language, kindred, or meanness of rank: “There is neither Greek, nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all.” By the Holy Ghost they are all baptized into one body, and have fellowship

with one another, and "with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ." "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Greeks, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit." This is the true Church which Christ purchased with his blood,—in which God delights to dwell,—to which the promises are made, and which Christ will present, at last, before the presence of the Father, "a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing."

But although the true church includes only converted men and women who "live by faith on the son of God," and "follow holiness without which no man shall see the Lord," yet, "the Lord only knoweth, with certainty them that are his." There is a vast number of people who profess to be members of the Church of Christ, that have never been effectually called "by the hearing of Faith." Many of those whom we, in the judgment of charity, believe to be converted persons and the sanctified in Christ Jesus, may in the sight of Him who searcheth the reins and hearts of the children of men be only whited sepulchres—detestable hypocrites. We have no means of scrutinizing the hearts of our fellow men; we can only judge of the outward practice. We cannot affirm with absolute certainty, that this, or that man, or woman, is regenerated by the Spirit of God and enrolled in the book of life; but we know, assuredly, that those who make no profession of faith in "Christ, the Son of the living God," and bring not forth the fruits of holiness in their walk and conversation, have no claim to be acknowledged members of the visible church. The members of the Apostolic Churches are called Saints and Faithful in Christ Jesus,—not that they were all truly worthy of being so called, but because they all professed to believe in "Christ, the son of the living God," and observed the instructions of the Gospel. There are indeed societies that profess to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and to observe his ordinances, but their errors, doctrinal and practical, are so numerous, that it is difficult to decide, whether we are bound to acknowledge them as true Churches of Christ, on account of the truths which they profess to believe, and the ordinances and commandments which they observe, or to reject them for their errors. We have, however, no hesitation in affirming, that any society, or association claiming the title of *the Church*, must, at the very least, publicly profess to believe in "Christ, the son of the living God," and observe his ordinances; otherwise, it is not "built upon the foundation of the Apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ 'himself being the chief corner stone.'"

We find, that in the Jewish Churches, a public profession of religion was strictly enjoined. That church included the whole nation within its pale; and although they were "not all Israel, who were of Israel,"—not all saints and faithful, yet they all made a public profession of religion, and are therefore called a holy nation. They received the charter of their church from God when they came to Sinai, and it reads thus—"Now

therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people : for all the earth is mine : and ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation." (Ex. 19. 5, 6). They unanimsly accepted of this charter ; " All the people answered together, and said, ' All that the Lord hath spoken we will do.' " (ver. 8.) Moses frequently reminded them of the covenant which God made with them ; and a short time before his death, he thus addressed them : " Thou hast avouched the Lord this day to be thy God, and to walk in his ways, and to keep his statutes, and his commandments, and his judgements, and to hearken unto his voice. And the Lord hath avouched thee this day to be his peculiar people, as he hath promised thee, and that thou shouldest keep all his commandments ; and to make thee high above all nations which he hath made, in praise, and in name, and in honour ; and that thou mayest be an holy people unto the Lord thy God, as he hath spoken." (Deut. 26. 17—19). The church is, doubtless, now under a better dispensation ; but still, it is the same Church which has been from the beginning ; and requires, as public and as extensive, a profession of religion, as did the Church of Israel. This is evident from the declaration of our Lord, " Whosoever, therefore, shall confess me before men, him will I confess also, before my Father, who is in heaven." (Matt. 10. 32). Similar to this, is the declaration of Paul : " If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart, that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." (Rom. 10. 9, 10.) These passages, and others which might be quoted, clearly imply the duty of making a public profession of religion. There can be no doubt of a public profession having been made by the first christians. Paul telling the Corinthians, the estimation in which they were held by their fellow Christians thus declares, " They glorify God for your professed subjection unto the Gospel of Christ ;" or rather. " for your subjection to the Gospel of Christ, which you have professed." (2 Cor. 9, 13). In his Epistle to the Hebrews, he thus exhorts : " Seeing, then, that we have a great High Priest, who is passed into the heavens, Jesus, the son of God ; let us hold fast our profession. Having an High Priest over the house of God, let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering : for He is faithful who promised." (Heb. 4, 14, and 10, 21, 23). These passages evidently imply the existence of a public profession of religion amongst the primitive churches, and in relation to it, they were the Kingdom of God, and a holy nation. The example of the Apostolic Church in this, has all the authority of a rule or precept in all time coming ; whosoever, therefore, maketh a credible, public profession of faith in Christ,—observing his ordinances and obeying his laws, is entitled to be acknowledged a member of the visible Church.

But the Universal visible Church cannot, like the national Church of

the Jews, assemble together in one place at stated times to observe the institutions of the gospel. It is necessarily divided into a great many societies and associations, but still each is an integral part of the Universal Church, and may, with propriety, be called, *the Church*. There is no law of heaven fixing a certain number of persons, as being absolutely necessary to the formation, or existence of a Church. Wherever there are two or three professing faith in Christ, they may by virtue of his warrant and appointment, meet for religious conversation and devotional exercises. Our Lord declares, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." Such a society, though not organized with Office-bearers, has a public profession—the essential characteristic of a Church, and is also an integral part of the Universal visible Church. A religious family, in which the several parts of worship are daily performed, is, from the head of it being ruler, religious teacher, and leader of the devotional exercises, to some extent an organized church. We read of the church, "in the house of Aquila and Priscilla," and of the church, "in the house of Nymphas." There may have been others associated with these families in religious worship and christian communion. Be this however as it may, in as much as each of these families made, separately, a public profession of the true religion,—each exhibited an essential characteristic of *the Church*, and was an integral part of the Universal visible Church. One congregation of men and women professing subjection to the Gospel of Christ, observing the ordinances of religion and having a compliment of office-bearers, to teach, rule, exercise discipline, and manage its affairs, is the Church regularly organized; but still, it is only an integral part of the Universal visible Church. Such was the Church of Ephesus; the office-bearers of which Paul exhorted, saying: "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the Church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." (Act. 20, 28.) A number of regularly organized congregations, associated together under one general jurisdiction, for mutual edification and the defence of the truths of the Gospel, is *the Church*; but still, it is only an integral part of the Universal visible Church. All the disciples in Antioch are called the Church; but it is obvious from their being called "a great number" and "much people" that there must have been, at least, more than one congregation of them. All the disciples in Jerusalem are called *the Church*; but as there were many thousands of them, and as the Apostles continued a long time after the day of Pentecost, labouring among them, there must have been several congregations of them. The minister and elders of a single congregation, or of a number of associated congregations are, in their meetings to decide controversies, give advice, and to administer discipline,—the Church: because they are freely chosen to their several offices by the congregation, or congregations to which they belong, their acts are authoritatively, the acts of the whole congregation, or asso-

ciated church. Our Lord, when instructing his disciples how to deal with an offending, refractory brother, said: "And if he shall neglect to hear thee, tell it to the Church; but if he neglect to hear the Church, let him be unto thee as a heathen man, and a publican." The Church in this passage must, obviously be understood of those whose office it is, to deal with offenders, and to administer discipline.

We have now answered the question What is the Church? and the substance of the answer is this: Every voluntary association of professedly converted persons, observing the ordinances and laws of Christ, is the true Church. It is therefore evident, that no one section of the Church, however high its pretensions, has a right to claim being considered more than merely an integral part of the Universal visible Church.

W. B.

### **On the Need there is for a Sabbath.**

#### ARTICLE I. ITS NECESSITY.

#### *Mark II, 27,—The Sabbath was made for Man.*

There is a certain degree of sacredness associated with the Sabbath, which does not belong to any other day of the week. There are few who do not regard that day with more or less reverence. The cause of this general respect for the Sabbath is probably tradition; men have always been accustomed to distinguish it from other days by a cessation from labour and by an observance of religious duties. The motives which lead men to venerate the Sabbath differ according to the different views which they have of its nature and importance. There is also a great diversity in the degree of reverence that is paid to the Sabbath owing to the kind of motives which influence men in keeping it. The utility of the day as one set apart for a general cessation from labour is universally admitted; but how few possess correct notions of its nature and design as a day of rest. Some spend the Sabbath as a common holiday, others regard it as a fit season for devotion; they attend divine service in the church, and spend the rest of the day in visiting, or, as they phrase it, in harmless recreation; some observe the day from habit, because they have been trained to the external observance of it from their youth; others follow the example of their associates, but there are some who have derived their views of the nature and design of the Sabbath from the Scriptures, and who improve it as a day of rest and spiritual communion with their God in the public and private ordinances of religion. Nor is this general respect for the Sabbath a matter of small importance; it is intimately connected with general

morals. Where it is wanting, the tone of morality must be low, and where it exists in a high degree, a healthy state of moral principle and honorable feeling may be expected. Something like a general respect for the Sabbath is not confined to one age or country, it is almost universal. Indications of it may be found amongst most nations. Indeed, the Sabbath seems to be an institution not only well adapted to our race, but indispensably necessary to the well being of mankind; and were its nature and design better understood, there is reason to think that the day would be better improved and more generally hallowed than it is.

It is intended to treat of the Sabbath in a short series of articles: the first is on the necessity of such an institution to mankind.

The necessity of such an institution as the Sabbath arises out of the moral constitution of man and out of the nature of society.

Man is a being of a high order. His superiority consists in his being endowed with intellectual and moral powers, by which he is rendered capable of knowledge and of moral government. The book of nature invites his attention and opens up extensive fields for investigation. In tracing the works of the Creator he learns much of his power, wisdom and goodness; he becomes convinced of his own insignificance amongst the endless variety of objects that meet his eye, and of his continual dependence on God. Many seek no other instruction respecting their duty but what they derive from this source. The book of revelation, however, not only teaches the same things more fully and clearly; it does more; it unfolds God's character and discloses his purpose of redemption; it teaches man the way to heaven and happiness which he could not learn from any other quarter. Deriving from these sources correct views of the divine character and purposes, and of his own condition, his moral powers will teach him to adore a Being so full of majesty, to admire His unbounded goodness, to tremble before His power and justice, to love him for his mercy, and to cherish feelings of gratitude for benefits continually received. Knowing that his life is the gift of his Creator, and taught by numerous instances of preservation that it is entirely at the disposal and under the care of Divine providence, he must feel that he is accountable for the manner in which he spends it, his own experience must teach him submission and resignation to God's will; gratitude must lead him to acknowledge and to praise his Maker, and if he has sinned he must naturally be desirous to deprecate his anger. Whilst the inferior animals are wholly concerned about having their hunger satisfied, their thirst allayed, and about the enjoyment of their liberty; and having these, realize all the happiness of which they are susceptible; man is capable of varied and extensive knowledge of the Creator and of his works, which knowledge calls up the loftiest and purest emotions in his heart, the expression of which constitutes the worship due to God.

It is, however to be observed, that the obligation to these duties is universal: no one is exempted; and as this obligation imposes a certain



responsibility, so it also confers a certain individuality of character ; every one stands alone in the sight of God, and of every one his Omniscience takes particular cognizance. None can discharge these duties for another. The responsibility is individual, and every man must render an account for himself. The neglect of these duties brings guilt, and guilt brings punishment ; the performance of them is pleasing to God, and it may be the means of obtaining many valuable blessings.

Now this individual responsibility evidently suggests the propriety and necessity of having a certain portion of time set apart for religious duties. The fact that man is endowed with moral powers, shews that the whole of his time is not to be occupied with the concerns of the present life, but that a certain portion of it must be devoted to the worship of God. For private duties every one should select for himself a retired spot and a convenient time ; for family duties, the head of the household should fix the time ; for public worship, the nature of society requires that certain fixed times should be determined when labour and business shall be suspended and religious duties performed. Because,

1. The common intercourse of society renders such an arrangement necessary.

When a whole community give their attention to religious duties at the same time, these duties cannot interfere with the other business of life. If there were no such arrangement as this, numerous interruptions would occur to every one, which might lead to the neglect of them. The worldly interests of every man are closely interwoven with those of others ; the prosperity of one man's business often depends upon the time of another ; how much injury might result to the employer, if the person employed should select for religious services the very time which his master's business most urgently required his attendance ! How great would be the inconvenience to those living in the country, if, on coming into the city, they should find the merchants so employed as to exclude business for the day. Order is required to regulate the intercourse of society, as well as the affairs of a family, and every difficulty and inconvenience is obviated by allotting a certain portion of time for the exercises of religion ; thus an opportunity is furnished to all, and none can plead excuse.

2. The simultaneous performance of certain acts arises out of the nature of society. This principle is frequently exemplified : for instance, if the inhabitants of a city wish to testify their loyalty to their Sovereign on some particular occasion, every inhabitant does not draw up his congratulatory address and present it in person, but they meet together in classes or by corporations, and appoint proper persons to draw up their address and present it in their name. So, when men have duties to perform to the Sovereign of the universe, it must be quite natural for them, to meet together according as circumstances may permit ; and unite in paying their tribute of homage to Him. Since the continued goodness of God which confers many benefits and prevents many evils lays mankind under in-

creasing obligations of gratitude, it is evident that they must meet frequently for the simultaneous performance of the duties of religion: hence the necessity of stated times being set apart for this purpose. The Sabbath is then just a stated allotment of time intended to give mankind an opportunity of worshipping their common Benefactor together.

3. Mankind are naturally disposed to set apart days for commemorating important events.

In proportion to the importance of an event is the interest felt in the day commemorative of it, and the joy which the return of it calls forth. The birth day of a Sovereign is celebrated throughout all his dominions: anniversaries are appointed to keep up the remembrance of important national events. In this respect the Sabbath becomes one of the most solemn and universally interesting of commemorative institutions. It is the day on which God rested from the works of creation; it is also the day on which the Saviour rose victorious from the grave—and gave assurance to all men that the work of redemption was consummated. This view of the nature of the Sabbath points out the appropriate employment of the day, viz. meditation and conversation upon the events commemorated—the works of creation and especially the work of redemption: and the worship of God, which consists in the expression of those emotions and desires which the contemplation of these works is fitted to excite in the soul of man.

4. If the sabbath were observed as it ought to be, much happiness would be derived from its appropriate exercises.

From the exercise of religious emotions man derives a high degree of pure satisfaction. The pleasure is in proportion to the interest felt in them. Now the Sabbath affords better opportunities for indulging in these *in private* than any other day of the week; and viewed in this light it must be indispensably necessary to mankind. But from the *social* exercises of religion a much greater degree of enjoyment will be realized. The Sabbath therefore commends itself as an institution eminently fitted to bring to those who observe it aright the holiest pleasures which can be enjoyed in time, and besides, it presents the best resemblance to the exercises and the bliss of heaven. Take away the Sabbath and you deprive man of the means of obtaining the purest and most elevated delight, viz. that which results from social religious exercises.

Wherever intelligent and moral beings are, institutions similar to the Sabbath must exist. There is nothing inconsistent in the supposition, that holy angels in heaven observe stated times of assembling together, to declare God's perfections and celebrate his worship.

In conclusion—the Sabbath was given to man before he fell. If it was necessary in a state of innocence, it must be much more so now that he has become a sinner, ignorant, apt to forget God, and either to neglect worshipping him, or to give that worship to another which is due to him alone: hence the imperative necessity of times being set apart for purposes purely religious.

B. B.

## ON BAPTISM.

(Continued from page 32.)

*On Baptism, so far as Parents are concerned.*

BAPTISM, besides being a symbol of the two fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith, is also a memorial of a most important event in the history of Grace. It is at present assumed, that Baptism holds in the New Dispensation the same place which circumcision held in the old; that is, it is a token, a rite commemorative, of that covenant of promise which God made with Abraham.

That Covenant was not an act giving birth to a new nation merely, it was an act giving being and form to a new community founded on a great religious principle. The language in which it runs is as follows. "I will make of thee a great nation"—"I will be a God to thee and to thy seed after thee, in their generations"—"In thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed." Now these promises that he should be the heir of the world, were not made to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith. Rom. 10: 13. He was selected to stand at the head of that dispensation, the characteristic of which is, that salvation is through the righteousness of faith. He was, himself, a specimen of the system, for he was justified by faith: "He believed God and it was counted to him for righteousness." Rom. 4: 3. Such was the true nature of the Abrahamic covenant.

The Memorial—the token, that God made such a covenant, was to the generations that followed, the rite of circumcision. "The token of my covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant"—It shall be a token of the covenant betwixt me and you. Gen. 17: 11. Accordingly, Abraham received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of faith which he had, being yet uncircumcised, that he might be the father of all them that believed,—that righteousness might be imputed to them also. Rom. 4: 11.

The giving of this covenant may be regarded as the foundation of the whole system of grace: not indeed that it was the first act,—for that is to be found in the first promise,—but because of the greater clearness and distinctness with which the promise was then revealed; because, an actual separation of the church from the world was then effected, and because, special privileges were then given to them, it may be regarded as the commencement of that system which has been acted upon ever since. The leading feature of that system is that justification is by the righteousness of faith. That is the everlasting character of the dispensation of Grace.

The Church is one. The various forms under which the covenant of grace has been administered have not been a succession of experiments, each diverse from the one that preceded it, but gradual developments of the purpose formed in the divine mind from eternity. In these several dispensations there have been no essential alterations. The history of the

covenant of Grace, presents to us a constant progress. Benefits and blessings once granted have never been withdrawn. There has been no repealing of any thing essential. The new dispensation effected no organic change; it is merely the completing of the system,—it is the bringing into act the shadowings of the ancient economy—it is the unfolding of the whole mystery which was but dimly seen by former generations. Every thing essential to the covenant of grace is now the same as before.

There is reason to believe that many, when they speak of the Old Testament dispensation, are thinking of the ceremonial institutions of Moses. These ceremonial institutions, however, were no necessary part of the dispensation which began with Abraham. The dispensation of grace existed for centuries before the days of Moses, and it has existed for many centuries after his laws have all been abrogated. The ceremonial institutions of Moses formed a special code for a particular people, to serve an important but temporary object. They were a schoolmaster to bring men to Christ; and when Christ came, the whole system fell to the ground. But the covenant made with Abraham being an everlasting covenant remained, and not only remained but was carried forward to the point at which it aimed,—the blessing of the families of the earth in Christ Jesus.

Circumcision did not belong to the Mosaic dispensation. It belonged to the Abrahamic covenant. It was a token of the covenant which God made with Abraham, and he received it as a seal of the righteousness of faith. It was an institution connected with that covenant. It "was not of Moses, but of the fathers." John 7: 22.

Now the covenant with Abraham runs thus, "I will be a God to thee and to thy seed after thee." "The promise was to him and his seed." It is on this ground that the offspring of the children of believing Abraham are brought within the provisions of the covenant of grace. The covenant with Abraham still exists. Children under it are recognized as belonging to the Church of God. It was remarked above, that the making of the Covenant with Abraham was a step in advance of all that existed previously, and also, that whatever is granted by God under that covenant is never repealed. The covenant exists and the right of the offspring of believers to the privileges granted by that covenant still remains. Nothing short of an express revelation from heaven will suffice to take from them what God distinctly and freely gave to them.

It is further to be remarked, that every great step in the development of the purposes of grace, has had its appropriate tokens or seals; and to suppose that the richest and fullest of all the dispensations of grace is without any such is to suppose a solecism in the most perfect of all the works of God. The end to which all this leads, is that baptism corresponds to circumcision. They are both seals of the same covenant—they symbolize the same truths, and they are administered to the same subjects.

It is common to talk of all that existed before the coming of Christ as being carnal, and of the gospel dispensation as being alone spiritual. Such language is correct if the contrast be between the ceremonial institutions of Moses, and the christian dispensation; but is incorrect, if it be between the covenant made with Abraham and the new economy for these cannot be properly contrasted. A thing cannot be contrasted with itself. The one is the beginning, the other is the completing of the same system, and the one, so far as it goes, is as truly spiritual as the other.

What has now been stated will solve the question; what infants are to be baptized?—"The infants of such as are members of the visible church." The promise made to Abraham was to himself and his seed. Believers are the children of Abraham, and therefore the promise is to them and to their seed. It has already been stated that baptism is a church ordinance, and therefore a parent must be in the church, by making a public profession of his faith, and by conforming to the institutions of Christ, before his children can be the subjects of this scriptural ordinance. If then, the parent is not himself and for himself a believer in God's promise, he cannot take hold of the covenant for himself and; still less for his offspring. For such a person to offer his child for baptism is to perform, not an act of faith whereby he glorifies God, but an act of superstition or impiety in which there is no believing worship.

When, therefore, a christian parent, acting in knowledge and faith, devotes his child to God in baptism, he lays hold on the covenant in which God promises to be a God to him and his seed; he believes God's word; and claims an interest for himself and his child in those blessings which it promises. If he do not this, he does nothing.

But parents are still farther concerned in the baptism of their children, in as much as a new relationship is formed between them by this ordinance. Antecedent to baptism the parent and child are connected by that universal law which binds all creatures to their parents; a relationship which he shares with the beasts of the field, and which will account for almost all the manifestations of feeling which he makes towards his offspring. But the case is altogether different when he has placed his child, by a solemn act of God's appointing, under the covenant of promise. The child has now been given to God, and the parent is the guide and the guardian of one declared to belong to the family of God.

Out of this relationship may be deduced the duty of a Christian parent to his baptized children. He must regard them as devoted to God; he must make them acquainted with the character and the will of their heavenly Father; he must often talk to them of Him, and talk of Him in such a way as may be best fitted to induce them to love Him and obey Him; he must accustom them to do those things which are pleasing to God; he must use all his influence and all his authority to prevent their acquiring sinful habits, and he must, as having a deeply responsible

charge, supplicate direction from God how he may best discharge his duty to God and to them, and the blessing of God to crown his labours with success. And besides all this, he must study to set before his children such an example as it may be proper for them to copy.

How unlike to all this, is the conduct of many who have got their children baptized in the name of the Trinity. They seem to regard them only as their future helps in "the work and toil of their hands," and they train them as a man trains a yoke of oxen; and what education they give them is solely to qualify them to provide for their wants, by their labour or skill. When parents thus neglect their vows, and mistake their duties, is it at all to be wondered at, that children grow up without the fear of God, and become an easy prey to every temptation?

(To be continued.)

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## CHARLES AND HIS MOTHER.

### A DIALOGUE.

*Charles.* Mother, may I play with the baby a little while before I go to school?

*Mother.* She is asleep now, my son; but you may go softly and look at her.

*C.* She is just going to wake up, mother! she is smiling and moving her little hands.

*M.* No, she is only dreaming; don't hold the curtain back so far, the sun shines on her face.

*C.* I wonder what she is dreaming about; she looks very sober now; what a pity she can't tell us when she wakes! Mother, I shall be glad when Susan grows a little bigger, and can run about, and talk, and play with me; I don't think a little baby is good for much.

*M.* And what if she should never grow up, Charles?

*C.* What! be always a little baby?

*M.* No, my son; what if she should die?

*C.* Die! O, that can't be; she has only just begun to live?

*M.* Who made her live?

*C.* God, you told me.

*M.* And cannot God make her die when he pleases?

*C.* I suppose he can; but he never does, does he? Does he ever kill such little babies as Susan?

*M.* They very often die, Charles.

*C.* I never heard of that before; I hope Susan will not die. How old is she, mother?

*M.* Eight months.

*C.* O, Mother, mother, that is too young to die ; I am sure she won't. Here am I, seven years old, and I am not dead yet.

*M.* And I am twenty-seven, my dear boy ; but for all that, you and Susan may die before I do, if it should please God.

*C.* What makes the tears come in your eyes, mother ? we shan't die, I know. See how Susan keeps stirring about, see how red her cheeks are !

*M.* She is not well ; she is feverish, Charles. Do you know there are two little white teeth trying to get through her gums, and they give her a great deal of pain ? I shall send for the doctor to-day. The clock is striking nine, Charles, and you must go to school.

*C.* O dear ! and where is my little satchel ? and where is my spelling-book, I wonder ?

*M.* You had better look in the breakfast-room ; and, Charles, be sure you shut the window ; it is very damp this morning.

*C.* Yes, mother. I wonder what I did with my cap.

*M.* Don't bang the door, Charles—and don't forget to shut the window. I must take the baby down this morning.

TUESDAY MORNING.

*Charles meets the Doctor coming out of his Mother's Chamber.*

*C.* Are you the doctor, sir ?

*D.* Yes, my little man.

*C.* Is the baby almost well again ?

*D.* O no ! no !

*C.* Why they told me you were coming to cure her, and you came three times yester-day ; for I saw your old horse out of the school room window.

*D.* But she is very sick, little boy ; some body left a window open yesterday when it was almost raining, and the nursery maid carried her into a damp room while they were sweeping the nursery.

*C.* O, doctor, what shall I do ? what shall I do ?

*D.* Don't cry, my little fellow ; what is the matter, now ?

*C.* It was I, it was I, that left the window open ! mother told me to shut it, and I was hunting for my cap and forgot all about it.

*D.* Well, that was wrong ; but hush up, if your mother hears you sobbing so bitterly, she will feel much worse. It was a pity you forgot the window.

*C.* O, my poor little sister ! will you cure her ? you can cure her, sir, can't you sir ?

*D.* I will try, but God must help us.

*C.* And won't he help you, do you think he will make Susan die ?

*D.* I cannot tell indeed ; but you must ask him to make her well.

*C.* How can I ask him ?

*D.* In your prayers ; do you not say your prayers every night ?

C. Yes, the Lord's prayer, and two other prayers ; but there is nothing in them about Susan's being sick.

D. And can't you make a little prayer on purpose.

C. I don't know ; I never tried.

D. Then go up into your chamber, my dear child and kneel down, where you always say your prayers every night, and pray to God just as if you could see him in the room with you. You may depend upon it He is there.

C. Shall I ask him to help to cure Susan ?

D. Ask him to cure her, if it is best she should get well.

C. Why, it is best certainly. And will it be wrong to tell him how sorry I am that I forgot the window, and ask him to forgive me ?

D. No, it will be quite right.

C. Then I will go this minute. You must come again before dinner—won't you ?

D. Yes, I must indeed.

WEDNESDAY MORNING.

*Charles comes softly into his Mother's chamber, half dressed.*

C. Mother, are you here ? it is so dark I cannot see you.

M. I am here, sitting by the bed, my son.

C. The fire is out, and the candle is just going out ; may I open the shutter a little way, so that I can see the baby, mother ? I won't wake her.

M. She is not asleep, my dear boy. But what made you wake at day break ?

C. I kept thinking of Susan when I was asleep, mother. What makes her so still ? is the pain better ?

M. It is all gone, Charles ; she will never feel it again ; open the shutters wide and come here.

C. O, mother, mother ! (*burying his face in her lap.*) I do not wish to look at her.

M. What is the matter, Charles ? tell me.

C. She is dead—she is dead! the tears keep rolling down your cheeks,—and she is lying just like my little canary bird—and I do believe she is dead !

M. Yes ! my baby is dead, Charles ! and—

C. Don't cry, don't cry ! dear mother ; you did not cry when I came in—I will leave off crying if you will, mother.

M. Look at her little pale face, Charles ;—why are you unwilling to look at her ?

C. I do not know. Will you take her off the bed ? Are you afraid to hold her in your arms ?

M. O, no ; I have held her a great while to-night, Charles, and she died in my lap.

C. And were you all alone ?

M. No, there were two or three people with me then, and they were very kind ; but I sent them all away at last.



*C.* Why, mother ?

*M.* Because sometimes I wanted to cry, and sometimes to pray, and I liked better to be alone. I was praying when you came in, Charles,

*C.* Mother, I prayed yesterday about Susan, but God did not mind it. What makes you pray now that she is dead ?

*M.* I was praying that I might remember how happy little Susan's soul is, and that I might not be so wicked as to complain because God had taken her away again ; and that I might be a better woman now, and think more of heaven.

*C.* You need not pray for that, mother ; you are a very good woman, the best woman in the world.

*M.* Nobody can be good without praying, my son ; and I had a great many things to beg of God. I was asking him to make the little boy who is spared to me a good child.

*C.* Ah, mother, that is because I forgot the window !

*M.* No, my child, I was not thinking of that then ; but if you should pray to God to help you to cure your faults, you will find it becomes much easier for you.

*C.* Then why did he not cure Susan's sickness when I begged him so hard ?

*M.* Are you sure that it would have been better for Susan to live ?

*C.* I don't know ; she would have cried sometimes, I suppose.

*M.* But she never will cry now, Charles ; her soul is with God in heaven, and her body cannot feel pain now.

*C.* But it would have been better for us if she had lived to grow up, mother. What makes you cry again ?

*Enter Aunt Catharine.*

*C.* I am glad you have come, aunt ; I have made mother cry again, and I cannot help crying too. I do think it would have been better for us if Susan had not died,

*A.* Your mother thought so at first, Charles ; but now she knows it would have been wrong to have wished little Susan here just for her own pleasure, when the little creature is happier in heaven. Besides, God would not have taken her if it had been for your mother's real good to let her stay.

*C.* I cannot understand that, do you mother ?

*M.* I do ! I do ! but I cannot talk about it now.

*C.* So sudden ! three days ago she was well !

*A.* Come, my dear child, come and let me finish dressing you, and your mother will talk to you about Susan very often ; kiss the dear baby's cheek, Charles,—your mother is holding her up to you.

*C.* O, if she could only be made alive again !

*A.* Hush—do not sob so loud ! come with me, Charles, and I will tell you how we think God has already made her alive in heaven.—*Christian Magazine.*

## Unity in Diversity, and Diversity in Unity.

We are about to contemplate the diversities, or, as they have been since called, *variations* of the Reformation. These diversities are among its most essential characters.

Unity in diversity, and diversity in unity—is a law of Nature, and also of the Church.

Truth may be compared to the light of the Sun. The light comes from heaven colourless, and ever the same; and yet it takes different hues on earth, varying according to the objects on which it falls. Thus different formularies may sometimes express the same christian Truth, viewed under different aspects.

How dull would be this visible creation, if all its boundless variety of shape and colour were to give place to an unbroken uniformity! And may we not add how melancholy would be its aspect, if all created beings did but compose a solitary and vast *Unity*!

The unity which comes from Heaven doubtless has its place,—but the diversity of *human nature* has its proper place also. In religion we must neither leave out God nor man. Without unity your religion cannot be of God,—without diversity, it cannot be the religion of man. And it ought to be of both. Would you banish from creation a law that its Divine Author has imposed upon it, namely,—that of boundless diversity? “Things without life giving sound,” said Paul, “whether pipe or harp, except they give a *distinction* in the sounds, how shall it be known what is piped or harped?” 1 Cor: xiv. 7. But, if in religion there is a diversity, the result of distinction of individuality, and which, by consequence, must subsist even in heaven,—there is a diversity which is the fruit of man’s rebellion,—and this last is indeed a serious evil.

There are two opposite tendencies which may equally mislead us. The one consists in the exaggeration of *diversity*,—the other, in extending the *unity*. The great doctrines of man’s salvation are as a line of demarcation between these two errors. To require more than the reception of those doctrines, is to disallow the diversity:—to require any thing less, is to infringe the unity.

This latter departure is that of rash and unruly minds, looking beyond, or out of Jesus Christ, in the desire to set up systems and doctrines of men.

- The former appears in various exclusive sects and is more especially seen in that of Rome.

It is the duty of the Church to reject Error from her bosom. If this be neglected, Christianity cannot be upheld; but, pushed to an extreme, it would follow that the Church should take proceedings against the smallest deviations, and intervene in mere disputes about words; faith would be silenced, and christian feeling reduced to slavery. Not such was the condition of the Church in those times of real Catholicity,—the first ages:

It cast out the sects which impugned the fundamental truths of the Gospel, but where these were received, it left full liberty to faith. Rome soon departed from these wise precedents, and, in proportion as an authoritative teaching of man established itself within the Church, there appeared a Unity of man's imposing.

A system of human appointment being once devised, rigour went on increasing from age to age. Christian liberty, respected by the catholicity of the earliest ages, was first limited, then chained, and finally stifled.

Conviction, which, by the laws of our nature, as well as of God's word, should be freely formed in the heart and understanding, was imposed by external authority, ready framed and squared by the masters of mankind. Thought, will, and feeling, all those faculties of our nature, which, once subjected to the Word and Spirit of God, should be left free in their working, were hindered of their proper liberty, and compelled to find vent in forms that had been previously settled. The mind of man became a sort of mirror wherein impressions to which it was a stranger were reproduced, but which, of itself, presented nothing! Doubtless there were those who were taught of God,—but the great majority of Christians received the convictions of other men;—a personal faith was a thing of rare occurrence: the Reformation it was that restored this treasure to the Church.

And yet there was, for a while, a space within which the human mind was permitted to move at large,—certain opinions, at least, which Christians were at liberty to receive or reject at will. But, as a besieging army, day by day, contracts its lines, compelling the garrison to confine their movements within the narrow enclosure of the fortress, and, at last, obliging it to surrender at discretion, just so, the hierarchy, from age to age, and almost from year to year, has gone on restricting the liberty allowed for a time to the human mind, until, at last, by successive encroachments, there remained no liberty at all. That which was to be believed,—loved,—or done,—was regulated and decreed in the courts of the Roman chancery. The faithful were relieved from the trouble of examining, reflecting, and combating; all they had to do was to repeat the formularies that had been taught them!

From that period, whenever, in the bosom of Roman Catholicism, a man has appeared inheriting the Catholicity of apostolic times, such a one, feeling his inability to act out the life imparted to him, in the bonds in which he is held, has been led to burst those bonds, and give to the astonished world another example of a Christian walking at liberty in the acknowledgement of no law but the law of God.

The Reformation, in restoring liberty to the Church, must therefore restore to it its original diversity, and people it with families united by the great features of resemblance derived from their common head, but varying in secondary features, and reminding us of the varieties inherent in human nature. Perhaps it might have been allowed to subsist in the

Universal Church without leading to sectarian divisions, and yet we must remember that *Sects* are only the expressions of this diversity.—*D'Aubigne's History of the Reformation, vol. iii. 235—238.*

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**God answers Prayer, but not always in our way.**

Not one prayer that is offered from the ground of the heart in sincerity and faith, will fail to bring down a divine blessing. Truly does the great hearer of prayer say, "I never said unto the seed of Jacob seek ye me in vain." But God does not always, perhaps not often, take our method in answering prayer. We pray, for instance, for faith and imagine that it is to descend, with a kind of gentle illapse, into the soul. Our prayer will be answered—but how? We attempt to lean on every earthly prop. God knocks the staff from under us. Do we fall? No, for faith is now called into exercise to support us. Again, we are thinking of sailing to heaven in a calm. God raises a great tempest, and breaks the ship, and tosses us into the waves. Do we sink? No. Now our faith is called into exercise and saves us.

We pray for charity. God makes us parties in distressing scenes. God suffers us to be wronged, then bids us love.

We pray for humanity. God does not overrule some leading infirmity of our heart: we stumble and fall—and in the midst of sorrow and shame, humility is formed.

We pray for happiness, for comfort, for joy. We have already formed our plan of happiness. We have our little paradise around us. We hope we shall not experience those losses and sorrows which we have seen overwhelm others.

Suddenly, however, all our earthly schemes are broken up. A child dies—a friend is taken away—our own abode is unfixed. And are we unhappy? No, God now comforts us, and he makes our comforts to flow from himself. We wished to dwell in our own house, but we must dwell in houses that we have not builded. We wished to drink of our own wells, but we must drink of wells that we have not digged. We wished to pluck fruit from our own vineyard, but we must take it from one we have not planted. God very commonly, as tribulation abounds, makes our consolation to abound. Is the christian afflicted? his joy, his comfort is not ended. He is near that will bind up that broken heart. Yes, believe, your prayers are heard. Out of this very cloud that seems to darken the heavens, you shall hear the voice "thou art my beloved son."

With regard to supplies in time of exigency—we pray to have our wants

supplied. We think of a certain quarter, whence help will come. But we are wofully disappointed—no help appears. In this person, we say, we shall find a friend ; but he is removed, or dies, or is too much occupied. No help appears. But when we have wearied ourselves to find the way—and all to no purpose,—God opens an unseen door—and in such a manner as to show that “the Lord hath done it ;” and thus sends the needed help. Our wisdom is to go to God with all our burdens, to lay them at his feet, and to leave the whole matter of our deliverance in his hands. He sees things from the beginning to the end—and will make all things, to those that love him, and call on his name, to work together for their everlasting good.—*Epis. Recorder.*

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#### Efficacy of Prayer.

Some of the most striking proofs of the efficacy of prayer, occur in immediate connexion with the exceptions to its prevalence, under the extraordinary circumstances which take the case out of the general rule. We may instance the intercession of Abraham for Sodom, which, though unsuccessful, would have prevailed, had there been ten righteous persons in the city. Again, the Divine declaration in Jer. 15: 1,—which the fact above mentioned serves to explain—that, though Moses and Samuel interceded, yet could not the sin of Jerusalem be forgiven, strongly implies the efficacy of their intercession on former occasions. The manner in which the request of Moses, to be permitted to enter the land of Canaan, is denied, Deut. 3: 25, 26, while it supplies many other useful lessons, indirectly illustrates the mighty prevalence of prayer in all ordinary cases : even in this, an equivalent favour was bestowed. And, in connexion with the prevalence of the intercessions of Moses for the children of Israël, it teaches us that the prayers of the good on behalf of others, may be accepted and answered, when their requests for themselves are denied. To advert to one passage more ; the limitation set to our prayers, or rather to our hopes, and the warrant of faith, in 1 John 5: 16, strongly implies the certain efficacy of intercessory prayer in every other case. It would seem as if the Almighty hearer of prayer was unwilling that his people should proffer any requests which should not be complied with, lest the assurance of their faith should be weakened ; or lest the law of His operations should seem to be suspended, which connects asking with receiving, prayer with its answer, and faith with its reward. Men ought always to pray, and not to faint, Luke 18: 1.—*N. Y. Observer.*

Rev. Mr. Skinner's Letter to the Editor.

*To the Editor of the Presbyterian Magazine.*

Rev. Sir—One valuable object in view by your Magazine, is to present to your readers Missionary intelligence. The Church of which we form an interesting portion is a Missionary Church, and she is now sustaining well that holy character. The "Missionary Presbytery of the Canadas" is her right hand in her missionary efforts. I hope, therefore, that some account of our missionary labours, in the land of our adoption—now our beloved home—shall occasionally occupy your pages, and gratify your readers.

Soon after my Pastoral relation was formed, in 1840, with the congregations of the English Settlement, and Bethel, on the Proof Line, London, I became aware of the want of religious privileges by many in the country around. My congregations had voluntarily given their Minister their solemn pledge, that they should leave him and his family without carefulness as to temporal support. Responding to this truly Scriptural engagement to duty, he resolved, as far as he should be enabled, to spend and be spent in the work to which he was called. He viewed himself, now, as the Missionary of his own Congregation, as well as one of those of the United Secession Church. Two stations were opened in the remote parts of the township—one in the Irish and another in the Welsh settlement. These are still sustained. The gospel seems to be acceptable. The services are on week day. In both of them we have some Church members.

He regards, however, as his most important sphere of missionary labour, the township of Adelaide. The Rev. Mr. Proudfoot had on some occasions visited that township, and preached in it. Still, that the Presbyterian population might be benefitted by our mission, they had to be sought out. In the autumn of 1840, four stations were opened in Adelaide, and two in the adjoining township of Warwick—three on the Egremont road, and three off, in other settlements. These were sustained by monthly week-day sermon, except, in a few instances, when the state of the roads prevented. In October, 1841, the supply in Warwick was discontinued—partly, because the labour was so great; the distance, in going and returning, not being less than ninety miles of roads, always tedious, and often difficult—but, chiefly, because a student of the Congregational Theological Academy had begun to labour regularly in that neighborhood.

It is encouraging to state, that Presbyterians in Adelaide, formerly altogether destitute of a dispensation of public ordinances, seem to value their privileges, and to profit by them; others also make the same acknowledgment. They love to speak of them as very precious, and as being greater than they once expected they should enjoy. They greet the missionary with heartfelt, and, he thinks, with Christian affection. It would be difficult to over estimate the overflowing of kindness which proceed from

a grateful people,—the chief outward return which they have yet been able to make for gospel privileges. However, they are not ignorant, that wherever gratitude to God for the gift of His dear son really exists, a necessary evidence is, a cheerful liberality in the support of the Gospel of Christ Jesus.

It is still more gratifying to remark, that, by the Divine blessing, there are evident tokens, that the gospel is not preached to them in vain. A marked improvement is perceptible in the case of some, as to propriety of speech. It is wished that the same remark may soon be applicable to many others.

No less evident, it is understood, is the growing regard for the sanctification of the Lord's day.

One Sabbath school has been in operation, and another has just begun under the direction of a valuable man in society, and in the Church, lately, an Elder in the Relief Congregation in Partick, in Scotland.

Habits of sobriety have been formed in some cases, where inebriety had been too frequently manifested.

The worship of God in the family, formerly neglected, except in one or two instances, is acknowledged as an incumbent Christian duty; and performed so far as the writer has been able to learn by personal enquiry—in all the families in fellowship with our Church. He suspects that it may not be constantly observed, morning and evening, in some cases; but of this he hopes soon to be able to satisfy himself. It is his hope and his prayer that the brethren in Adelaide may continue “to grow in grace, and in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ”—that their hearts may be comforted, and that they may be established in every good word and work.

In November, 1841, after a satisfactory acquaintanceship had been formed, and means had been afforded them to become acquainted with the principles of our Church, application was made by fifteen persons to the Session of the English Settlement Congregation, for admission to church fellowship. The petition being supported by the Moderator, its prayer was granted. In June, 1842, six other individuals were received. The Session having advised that they should select one of their members, with a view to ordination, to the office of Ruling Elder, William Shields was chosen, and after usual preparatory steps were taken, a deputation of Session repaired to Adelaide, and on the 24th of September he was solemnly set apart to that office, he having, more especially committed to his oversight, that portion of the church residing in Adelaide. On the same day, the deputation admitted others to church fellowship. Next day, being the Sabbath, the Lord's Supper was celebrated by more than forty communicants. It was a time of solemn gladness of heart, we hope, to not a few—a day which will long be remembered in Adelaide, and which will not be forgotten in eternity. It was as the beginning of days to some. To others it recalled vivid impressions of former times, in distant lands. When in Adelaide, as elsewhere in Canada, we saw

brethren sitting together at the communion table, collected, under Divine guidance, from various countries, we remembered also, that the blessings of a gracious covenant are not limited to one nation, nor to one section of the Church on earth. The private dwelling in which we worshipped was Jehovah's temple, consecrated by his presence, and by the devout observance of gospel ordinances. The Lord is faithful who has said "where two are three are gathered together in my name there am I in the midst of them."

For my brethren and companions sakes, I will now say, peace be within the walls of our Zion—"because of the house of the Lord our God, I will seek thy good." May the Church be edified, walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost.

I am, Rev. Sir, Yours, &c.

JAMES SKINNER.

London Township, Feb. 1843.

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"O that I had the wings of a dove; then would I flee away,  
and be at rest!"—*Psalmist.*

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O that I had the skylark's wings  
To aid me in my flight!  
When high its heavenly anthem rings,  
Beyond the bowers of light:  
Then would I flee,—but where, ah, say!  
Shall earthly spirit dare to soar?  
Beyond the portals of decay,  
Where sorrow wakes no more?

Oh, who that ere in this wide scene  
Hath travell'd, day by day,  
Nor felt the feverish cares that woan  
The soul from earth away?  
At evening's close, or morning's rise,  
Owned no calm longing in his breast,  
That he could soar to other skies,  
And haply be at rest?

Bright is the opening morn of youth?  
How soon 'tis overcast!  
E'en friendship wears the rose of truth,  
'To wither in the blast!  
O'er all the wreck of early ties,  
Of friendship's, loves, and boyhood's years,  
The heart! the heart! in secret sighs,  
And sorrow's aspect wears!



We wander forth in search of bliss,  
 But ah ! how oft in vain !  
 The cups are poison'd that we kiss ;  
 Yet on we madly drain ;  
 Hope, still the syren of our flight,  
 Forever leads the soul astray,  
 And lures us with her phantom light—  
 Still beckoning to betray.

Then, oh, that to the spirit's goal  
 The skylark's wings were mine !  
 How soon this tired and fever'd soul  
 On earth would cease to pine !  
 No more, with sorrow-sunken eye,  
 To wander, with its ills oppress'd ;  
 But with the lark exulting fly,  
 And haply be at rest.

London:

J. N.

**SCOTLAND.***Important Decision against the Claims of the Scottish Church.*

The Stewarton case came on for judgment on the 19th January, in the Court of Session, Edinburgh. The consulted Judges had previously given in their opinions, which were six against the claims of the Church and three in their favor. On Thursday the Lord President and Lord Mackenzie delivered their opinions : and on Friday Lord Fullerton and Lord Jeffrey theirs. Their lordships were unanimous in opinion against the claims of the Church, and pronounced an interlocutor, suspending the proceeding complained of, (the exclusion by the General Assembly, of the Ministers appointed by the Patron,) and declaring the interdict already granted perpetual, and decern.

**NOTES TO CORRESPONDENTS.**

D. C. Will see from this number that he is, for the present, anticipated.

R. P.'s well written and accurate communication is for the present delayed ; because, to insert it without a qualification, might lead to a belief that we approve *in toto* of the proceedings which he describes : and were a qualification appended, it would be necessary to assign reasons, which would require more space than at present can be spared, to a subject, highly interesting, but requiring great skill and prudence in the handling of it.