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# THE CANADIAN UNITED PRESBYTERIAN MAGAZINE.

VOL. II.

TORONTO, AUGUST 1, 1855.

No. 8.

## Miscellaneous Articles.

### FAITH AND WORKS.

#### A SHORT EXPOSITION OF JAMES II. 14-26.

This passage is involved in some difficulty, and has been the subject of no little controversy, on account of its apparent inconsistency with the cardinal doctrine of justification by faith. On this ground some of the Reformers, and particularly Luther, taking advantage of some ancient but short-lived doubts and surmises as to the authenticity of the Epistle of James, were disposed to expunge it from the Sacred Canon. It is the design of this paper to give a brief explanation of the passage referred to, and to show that so far from contradicting, it confirms and establishes the current testimony of Scripture. We assume it as an axiom that the Scripture cannot contradict itself, for God is of one mind, without variableness or shadow of a change. When, therefore, any apparent discrepancy occurs, it is to be presumed that it lies not in the Scripture, but in our mode of apprehending it, or in the imperfection of human language, which like everything human is necessarily defective, and is, therefore, a frequent source of misapprehension and error. There is no doctrine more fully and explicitly laid down in the Word of God than that of our universal depravity by nature, and the impossibility of our restoration to the Divine favour by any deeds or worthiness of our own; and that consequently our salvation is entirely of grace, human merit having no place in it whatever. Now, this is one of the leading doctrines of Scripture, the very basis of the remedial scheme or economy of mercy, and it is taught with such frequency and clearness that we may well pause when we meet with any solitary expression of an opposite tendency and consider whether we have a right conception of its meaning. But we do the sacred writers injustice if we suppose that in any instance they contradict or oppose each other. They are distinguished by differences of style and phraseology, for they were men of different casts of mind and of varied attainments; they wrote in different ages and countries; they looked at objects from different points of view; and had often different ends to accomplish. Now, in interpreting an author, we ought always to consider the grand scope or drift of his reasoning; and this will often furnish us with a key to his meaning, when otherwise we might be left in uncertainty.

or darkness. It has been justly remarked that the style of James is more concise, sententious, and abrupt than that of any other of the Apostles and Evangelists, and that his object is very different from that of Paul in the Epistle to the Romans. Paul had to do with those who denied, or objected to, the doctrine of grace, James with those who perverted it and turned it into licentiousness; and this circumstance will account for discrepancies of language which at first sight appear startling, but will soon vanish away. That their sentiments are not different, but substantially the same, is evident from the following considerations. While James affirms that Abraham was justified by works, he tells us expressly that so far from disagreeing with Paul or Moses his doctrine was confirmatory of that which they taught, "And the Scripture was fulfilled which said, Abraham believed in God, and it was counted to him for righteousness." Again, James with all his supposed partiality for good works, maintains as zealously the necessity of faith in all our approaches to God as Paul does; he tells us that we are to ask spiritual blessings "in faith, nothing wavering," and that the "prayer of faith shall heal the sick," &c.; on the other hand, Paul while he contends for justification by faith without works is otherwise as devoted a champion for holiness or good works as James.\* Here then are two great points on which both Paul and James are agreed, the necessity of faith, and the necessity of good works. But while faith and works are equally necessary, they occupy different places in the system of revealed truth, and perform different functions in the economy of grace, and we are not at liberty to reverse the order in which they stand, or put the one in the place of the other. Faith is the cause, holiness or good works the effect—faith is the foundation, holiness the superstructure—faith is the fountain, holiness the stream—faith is the tree, holiness or good works the fruit. In a word, what God has joined together must not be separated, and what he has put asunder must not be joined. By good works or "works of law" shall no man be justified, and yet the man who is justified must be careful to maintain good works, and none will be justified who are destitute of good works.

Let us now proceed to explain the verses in their order:—

Verse 14, "What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him?" In these words the Apostle seems to refer to the prevailing error of that age, the profession of Christianity by men who were strangers to the Christian character, and who abused the doctrine of grace, so as to encourage themselves in sin. Such men are to be found in every country and age. Though destitute of the faith of the Gospel, they make high pretensions to it, they boast of their attainments, and rest in an empty profession to the neglect of holiness in heart and life. Now, as the Apostle asks, of what avail is such a profession? Can *this* faith—for so may the words be rendered, can such a faith save them? Assuredly it can, if it can justify them; but this is nowhere taught in Scripture. The faith which justifies is a holy faith, a faith fruitful in holy obedience, and not a mere hypocritical pretence, or empty profession; a name only to live while we are dead in sin. It will be observed that the Apostle does not affirm that the man really possesses the faith to which he lays claim; he merely *says* or *pretends* that he has it; but it is unaccompanied by good works, it is a mere floating opinion in his head which has little or no influence on his heart, and being weighed in the balances is found wanting. The interrogation here put by the Apostle is equivalent to a denial. It is as if he had said, "By no means, it cannot save him."

Verses 15, 16, 17, "If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food; and one of you say unto them depart in peace, be you warmed or filled;

\* For instance he affirms, that "without holiness no man shall see God," and "these things I will that thou affirm constantly that they who have believed in God, be careful to maintain good works."

notwithstanding you give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit? Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead being alone." The worthlessness of a merely nominal faith is here shown by comparing it to that spurious benevolence which consists solely in good words and wishes. Such a philanthropy is not only useless, but a reproach to its possessor, for his conduct gives the lie to his professions; and, instead of relieving, only mocks and insults the objects of his pretended sympathy. Now, if such heartless conduct is a proof of the utter want of real sympathy and compassion, so in like manner that faith which is unproductive of good works, is equally unprofitable and worthless. It is a mere speculative opinion of fancy, which has no vitality or life. It is a shadow without a substance, a form without the reality, and is no better than a corpse, all whose vital functions have ceased, which is no longer animated or moved by a living principle within, but is about to crumble into dust.

Verses 18, 19, 20, "Yea, a man may say, thou hast faith and I have works, show me thy faith without thy works, and I will show thee my faith by my works. Thou believest that there is one God; thou dost well; the devils also believe and tremble. But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead." Here the Apostle puts the faith of the insincere professor again to the test. As the faith of the Gospel uniformly produces holiness of life, so the latter may be taken as a proof or evidence of the former; but a faith without works is incapable of having its existence proved at all, and consequently cannot be the faith of God's elect. He supposes a real Christian to challenge his opponent in the following manner: "You boast of your faith, are you prepared to show that it is genuine and not an empty profession? for my part I have nothing to boast of, I am at best but an unprofitable servant; but I trust that notwithstanding all my imperfections I have in some measure felt the power of divine grace in subduing my corruptions, purifying my heart, and disposing me to run in the way of God's commandments. Is this the case with you? Is your faith of an humbling, self-denying, operative character? Do you feel the fire of divine love constraining you to consecrate your talents to the service of God and the good of your fellow-men? You tell me that you believe in one God; this, so far as it goes, is very good; it lies at the foundation of true religion, and without it we cannot offer rational and acceptable homage to God. But if this is all that you believe it will serve you nothing. The very devils believe this, and yet it gives them no confidence in God, no hope in his mercy; on the contrary, they tremble from the apprehension of his vengeance. Unless your faith, therefore, is very different from their's, it will not save you from condemnation and ruin, it is in fact utterly worthless." It has been repeatedly stated that true faith lies at the foundation of all holy obedience. By faith the Christian lives, by faith he stands, by faith he walks, by faith he "can do all things." But the faith of the hypocrite—for that is the proper meaning of the term which is rendered *vain man*—is dead being alive. It gives him a name to live, but leaves him under the unbroken dominion of spiritual death. Such a faith is not only useless but pernicious, as it commonly flatters and deceives him to his ruin. Hence our Lord in his discourses and sayings uniformly insists on the necessity of holiness; his exhortations are all of a practical character, bearing directly on the heart and life. And nowhere does he so strongly express his indignation as when he denounces the hypocrisy of the Pharisees, who clung to the forms but rejected the substance of vital godliness, and who loved the praise of men, more than the praise of God. "Ye shall know them," he says, "by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit, but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them."

[To be concluded in our next.]

## UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH HISTORY.

BY THE REV. DR. FERRIER, CALEDONIA.

In the circumstances we have described respecting the deplorable condition of the country in a moral and religious view, it will not appear wonderful that one of the distinguished fathers of the Synod—the Rev. Alexander Moncrieff—one of the four Brethren, should have come forward with a proposal to petition the Sovereign to interpose his Royal authority in endeavouring, by legal enactments, to stem this flood of corruption, and to redress the grievances of which the Synod complained. This venerable minister, it appears, was like many of that age, and some of the present, still under the influence of intolerant principles. This excellent father of our Church was a gentleman of rank, and seems to have held those high-toned political principles which were common among persons of his station, and these were tinged with the religious prejudices of the age.

The subject to be introduced will throw some light on the views of this Synod, or rather, on the different views entertained by its members, as to the duty of the civil magistrate in matters of religion.

Mr. Moncrieff introduced into the Synod, at its meeting in April, 1759, a proposal to consider, “If it is a called-for duty to lay before the King, our grievances concerning the present state of religion in these lands, together with a dutiful and suitable petition for redress of the same.” This proposal was accompanied by a paper containing reasons in support of the affirmative side of the question. This document lay on the Synod’s table till their meeting in October, that year, when it was agreed that the matter should be set aside as at present inexpedient.

Mr. Gibb was the chief opponent of Mr. Moncrieff’s proposal—maintaining that it was not competent for them, as an ecclesiastical Court, to petition the King on such a subject. He afterwards published his sentiments in his Display, from which we quote the following:—

“We ought to sigh and cry for public and prevailing abominations. But we may not arrogate that what men owe to God and their own consciences, about the purging of these abominations, is a thing which they owe to us as a redress of our grievances. Whenever we should hear of any profane or illegal usages taking place in any cities of Britain and Ireland, or in any families that we have no inspection of, we might as well take upon us to call these things our grievances; and might go to claim a reformation of them from the magistrates of these cities, or the masters of these families, as a thing which is due to us—a redress of our grievances.

“We have no account of the Lord’s prophets, under the Old Testament, ever going to deal particularly with the rulers, except when they had a particular, immediate, and extraordinary mission from the Lord to do so; or were some way called upon by these rulers. They dealt with the rulers, in the way of delivering a message to them from the Lord; but never in a way of representation and petition about the Lord’s work.

“The step now proposed seems to be unscriptural, or to have no countenance from any precepts or examples of the Lord’s word. The Scripture enjoins us to obey the civil powers in all things lawful, to honor them, to pay them tribute, and to pray for them, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. But no precept appears to be in the Scripture for any other or higher sphere of duty towards them, in the case of such as have providentially no immediate communication with them.

“If there could be a time for any such application to civil powers as is now proposed, it would seem to have been in the first period of the Gospel, when

Apostles were employed to fight against the fashionable corruptions of the world, in propagating the Christian religion—men who had an universal commission for that end, were privileged with supernatural assistance and infallible conduct in the matter, and who were endued with a power of working miracles, by which their authority could easily be documented to earthly powers, whenever needful. But, in all the course of their ministry, they made no such application to these powers. They never called in the assistance of the secular arm against the prevailing abominations, whatever advantage they had for doing so, from the universality of their commission, and the miraculous powers with which it was accompanied. Our Lord did not see meet to make choice of that secular way, for promoting the interests of His kingdom.”

It appears from the opinions expressed in these quotations, to which others might be added, that whilst Mr. Moncrieff, and some of his brethren, were of Old Light sentiments on this subject, Mr. Gib in particular, and others, were far in advance of their day, and had clear and enlightened views, materially the same as those brought forward in modern times. We rather wonder at Mr. Moncrieff's zealous advocacy of an opposite course, especially as he could not but know the sentiments of the Synod in their answers to Mr. Nairne, in the drawing up of which, it is believed, he had a principal share. We are inclined to ascribe his zeal on this subject to his strong loyalty, which must have led him, in the present instance, to overshoot his mark. In this cause he, doubtless, was carried a step beyond the dictates of cool reflection, and what probably, had he looked at the matter fully and impartially, would have appeared to himself to be untenable.

Soon after this, in April, 1761, the Presbytery of Glasgow, and the Irish Presbytery, transmitted overtures to the Synod, respecting the alleged duty of presenting a loyal address to King George III., on his recent accession to the British throne. This brought forward Mr. Moncrieff again, who craved that these overtures should be considered in connexion with his former motion. This, however, was refused; for although they were not unwilling to reconsider the motion of Mr. Moncrieff, yet they did not wish to blend these matters together.

These overtures occasioned considerable discussion; and the reasoning against them was conducted chiefly on the ground that the law did not recognize the General Associate Synod as a Church, and thus an address by them in that capacity would not be received: and even though they should agree to prepare an address, yet they could have no access to the reigning Sovereign, in their ecclesiastical capacity, for its presentation.

But whilst they refused to entertain the proposal of an address, they declared their loyalty in the following explicit terms:—

“It is manifest, by many public and unquestionable evidences, that the testimony in which they are engaged, and which they reckon themselves obliged to maintain against the corruptions and defections of this period, both in Church and State, has been all along accompanied with a sincere and steadfast loyalty to the civil government, in a zealous opposition to Jacobitism, and all other principles of rebellion or disaffection; yet they take the present opportunity to declare, as they do hereby heartily agree in declaring, that they can yield to none of their fellow-subjects in prizing the civil government under which they live, as the best modelled government throughout the world; in respect to the memory of our late Sovereign, King George II., as one of the best of kings, of the mildest administration, who ruled over us as the common father of his people; in thankfulness for the peaceable accession of our present Sovereign, King George III., to the throne of these kingdoms; in rejoicing at the auspicious beginning of his reign; in a firm resolution to support and live dutifully under his government, in our several stations and capacities, according to the word of God, and our received and known principles founded thereon, to which we are bound by solemn covenant; in an inviolable attachment to

the Protestant succession in the illustrious family of Hanover; and in a full purpose still to maintain these principles among the people under our inspection."\*

In the meantime, Mr. Moncrieff very pertinaciously held to his motion, which he brought forward again in August, 1761. It was, however, negatived by the almost unanimous voice of the Synod. Mr. Moncrieff craved that the door might be open to him, and all who joined him to exonerate themselves in this matter, as they saw cause.

But this venerable Father of the Secession was now near the close of his pilgrimage. He died on the 7th October, 1761, in the sixty-seventh year of his age, the forty-second of his ministry, and the twentieth of his Professorship. He had already obtained his son, the Rev. Matthew Moncrieff, as his colleague in the ministry; and soon after his death, another son, the Rev. Wm. Moncrieff, of Alloa, was appointed as his successor in the Theological Chair.

"His character," says Dr. McKerrow, "ranked high, both as a man and as a minister. He possessed great firmness, and dignity, and independence of mind. Descended from a highly respectable family, he had received, in early life, an excellent education; and at an early period his mind was deeply imbued with a sense of religion. Though, from the respectability of his connexions, the fairest worldly prospects opened upon his view, yet, renouncing every worldly pursuit, he made the Christian ministry his deliberate and decided choice. For discharging the duties of this honorable office, he was no less qualified by his personal piety, than by his extensive theological attainments."

"The most remarkable feature of his character," says Dr. Young, of Perth, who writes his Memoirs, "and that which armed him with most of his power, was a deep-toned devotional spirit. All that has come down to us respecting him, whether recorded or oral, represents him as eminently a man of prayer. Everything which presented the least dubiety, or gave him unusual pain or pleasure, was with him an errand to the throne of grace. 'Be careful for nothing; but in everything, by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God,' was remarkably the motto of his life; and he had his reward; for, although his troubles were not few, yet in the midst of them all, and upon the whole, 'the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, kept his heart and mind, through Christ Jesus.' Not only was it his practice to engage in secret prayer three times every day, 'morning, evening, and at noon,' but he was observed to retire for this exercise, at other times, as incident or inclination gave him the impulse. He could not live without prayer; and when opportunity of retirement was denied him, he had recourse to ejaculation. Even when in company, it was no rare thing for him to rise from his seat, and take a few steps through the room, or to stand before the window, as if looking out, that, unobserved, he might pour out his heart before God."

About this time the attention of the Synod was again turned to the cause of missions; and laudable efforts were made by them to extend the Gospel both at home and abroad. Preachers were sent to Ireland, and there the cause of this branch of the Secession had already made considerable progress. Several places, particularly in the north of England, were supplied with sermon; and in consequence of application, supply of preachers was sent to the Isle of Man. But the chief effort at this period was directed to America. Mr. Matthew Henderson had been missioned to Pennsylvania, to strengthen the hands of brethren there; and now, in the year 1761, no less than three missionaries,

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\* On one occasion, the Principal of Edinburgh College being introduced to King George III., his Majesty, among other things, enquired what kind of people the Seceders of Scotland were, and how they were affected towards his Government? The Principal, honorably to himself, replied, "Your Majesty has not more loyal and devoted subjects in any part of your dominions, than the Seceders of Scotland."

namely, Messrs. John Mason, Robert Annan, and John Stewart, were sent out at the expense of the Synod, to join the brethren on this side of the Atlantic.

The transatlantic mission seems to have been a favorite scheme of this Church, and one which, from time to time, they prosecuted with zeal; for we find them giving great encouragement to the Society for propagating Christian Knowledge, in their benevolent efforts to convey the tidings of Christian truth to the American Indians. The Synod at present were about to fit out other three missionaries of their own to Pennsylvania, which prevented them from collecting among their congregations for the special object of the Society; but they ordered their Treasurer to transmit £50 sterling for the sole purpose of aiding in the propagation of Christianity among the Indian tribes.

The Churches of the Seceders, having originated chiefly from the prevalence of error in the Established Church, have been all along distinguished for their fidelity in the preservation of sound doctrine. The General Associate Synod, in particular, on various occasions, had cases of error before them, and in every instance we find them most prompt, zealous, and faithful, in purging their Church where any root of bitterness, of this description, seemed to be springing up among them. So much was this the case, that their opponents in the Establishment, sometimes to shelter themselves from suspicion or accusation of being heterodox, for which there was abundant cause, were ready to ascribe the prevalence of error to the Secession, simply because they found their courts occasionally dealing openly with individuals who were charged with it. Amidst the multitude of erroneous preaching in the Established Church, no notice was taken, in general, of any case; and thus that denomination had sometimes credit for being sound, when there was only silence respecting countless existing cases of error; and the Secession, though perhaps never surpassed in orthodoxy, have been accused of being all unsound, because they publicly judged and condemned every such error as it appeared. Of late years this has been remarkably verified in regard to what is called the Morisonian controversy, of which we may afterwards have occasion to speak. Our United Presbyterian Church has been exhibited by their opponents as being all tinged with Morisonianism, because they have been firm and faithful in expelling from their Church those who avowed such doctrines; whereas it has been stated that in some other Churches, where more worldly policy is practised, such errors prevail to a great extent, their advocates being allowed to pass uncensured. This disposition, among some opponents, to give way to groundless slander,\* where commendation would be more appropriate, was felt, in those early times to which we are referring; but it did not operate to induce the Courts of the Secession to remain silent in any case where serious error was taught by any of their ministers. It never could be said of this Church that they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God. They were independent of human applause, preferring the blessing of those against whom men say all manner of evil falsely for Christ's sake.

At the meeting of the General Associate Synod in April, 1762, the Presbytery of Perth and Dunfermline made a Representation of the case of Mr. Robt. Carmichael, minister at Coupar Angus, in reference to certain erroneous views he had been propagating. In consequence, the Synod appointed his appearance before them at their meeting in September next. He appeared accordingly, and admitted, in general, the correctness of the Presbytery's Representation; and he read a paper, maintaining such views as the following:—

“That faith is not the instrument, but a fruit and evidence of justification; that faith is nothing else but a belief of the truth, and not of a thing that has no existence until it be believed; that there is no foundation in Scripture for the universal call and offer of the Gospel, so much contended for; that God

\* Let our Free Church brethren take a hint here, although we have no particular reference to them.



makes no offer of Christ, his righteousness, and salvation, to any sinner, upon condition of his receiving and accepting thereof," &c. Such, and such like tenets were held and defended by Mr. Carmichael.

He also maintained certain views respecting National Churches, the power of the civil magistrate, and the spiritual nature of Christ's kingdom, which, although they would not now be condemned, were then, in a great measure, new to our Church, which had not advanced sufficiently to entertain them, yet which probably might have been met with forbearance, but for the doctrinal errors he maintained. Mr. Carmichael conducted himself in a most becoming manner before the Court, and they were disposed to treat him with the utmost lenity. But as he persisted in maintaining principles which were contrary to the standards, they were at length shut up to the necessity of proceeding to his deposition.

(To be continued.)

### PROPOSED CONCERT FOR PRAYER.

[The subjoined article is by the Rev. Dr. Brown of Edinburgh, who prepared it at the request of the Editor of the *United Presbyterian Missionary Record*, in which it appeared last month. Our readers, we are persuaded, will thank us for transferring it to our pages; and we trust they will give it the solemn consideration it so amply deserves. It does not matter much what part of the time for the proposed concert is already past. A commencement may be made at any time; and if the matter be conscientiously approved of there is no need for limiting oneself to a year.]

A tract under the name of "Proposal for United Prayer, an Address by Ministers of the Gospel, and others, of the Evangelical Churches in England, Scotland, and Ireland," is at present in the course of extensive circulation throughout the United Kingdom and the Colonies. As we are deeply convinced of the importance and seasonableness of this proposal, we are desirous to bring its claims before our readers, in the hope that very many of them will be induced to accede to it, and, equally as a matter of duty and privilege, follow it out to its practical objects. [Zech. viii. 20-22.]

The address proceeds on principles which every enlightened Christian will readily admit—"That the dispensation of the fulness of the times, under which the church is now placed, is pre-eminently the ministration of the Spirit"—that the peculiar blessings of that economy are all, directly or indirectly, the fruits and gifts of the Spirit—that these blessings are "linked inseparably with the importunate prayers of the living church"—that without believing, earnest, persevering prayer, these blessings are not to be expected, and that by believing, earnest, persevering prayer, these blessings are sure to be obtained—that the first fruits of these blessings in the Pentecostal period were communicated in answer to such prayer—that the measure of their communication, in every succeeding age, has been proportioned to the extent to which such prayer has prevailed—and that the full harvest of saving blessing which the church is warranted to expect for herself and for the world, cannot reasonably be hoped for without the employment, by Christians, of such prayer, the answer to which can alone form qualified agents, sustain and guide their exertions, and crown them with the desired success, in the destruction of the works of the devil, the establishment of the kingdom of God, the gathering in of the chosen people, and, in one world, fitting the church for its final state of perfection in holiness and in happiness.

These principles lay a deep and broad foundation for such a concert of prayer as is proposed, at all times; and to the neglect of this may be traced in a good measure much of what, in the state of the church and the world at present, is so just a cause of regret, not unmixed with wonder. But it does appear that, "in the present condition of this great country, of Europe, and of the world, there are circumstances of a peculiar character," calling on British Christians, by distinct, understood agreement, to present united, fervent, believing prayers, in order to the obtaining for themselves, their families, their churches, their country, the world, a large measure of heavenly communications appropriate to the remarkable circumstances in

which they are placed. The peculiar state of the continental nations of Europe previous to the rise of the present war—the present mournful war itself, in its different aspects—the moral and religious state of our own beloved country, a state so promising in some points of view, so threatening in others, a state of fierce conflict between the powers of good and of evil, which must lead, and that soon, either to the most delightful or to the most disastrous results—the very peculiar condition of the vast colonial possessions of this country—the wonderful revolution which has taken place and is in progress in China, a country comprehending so large a proportion of the inhabitants of our globe—the singularly interesting state of the inhabitants of our vast possessions in India, amid the breaking up of their ancient superstitions—the condition of the two great systems of imposture and religious tyranny which have so long and so effectually checked and opposed the progress of genuine Christianity, Popery and Mahommedanism—and the urgent calls which missionaries, in all parts of the heathen world, are making for increased help and blessing—all these present to the reflecting Christian mind overwhelming reasons why the disciples of Christ, the true friends of mankind, should, as one man, unite in the use of what Scripture teaches them to consider as the grand means—the means that secures all other necessary means—of at once arresting the evils which seem impending, and securing the blessings which seem ready to be bestowed on the church and the world.

The proposal made in the address referred to is, that Christians should agree that, so far as possible, some portion of every day should be spent in special prayer for certain blessings bearing on individual Christian improvement, on the revival of a spiritual Christianity in the church, and on its dissemination throughout the world.

It is not doubted that the adoption of this proposal in good earnest will lead to increased prayer on these subjects at the family altar, in the devotions of the assembled churches on the Lord's day, and in social meetings for prayer, whether congregational or select, whether periodical or occasional; but the object specifically and principally aimed at is to secure *increased prayer daily in secret* about the matters referred to. It is most justly observed, that it can scarcely be questioned that the chief want among us lies practically in the restraining of Peniel-like wrestling with God in secret. It is comparatively easy to give attendance on meetings; it is another thing to "take hold of God day after day in secret, apart from the excitements of a crowd."\* While no meeting, however numerous, would secure such prayers, these secret prayers could scarcely fail to secure such meetings, and, what is still more important, secure the truth and reality of the exercises in them.

It is wished, then, that every day those who join in the concert should, humbling themselves before God, under a deep sense of guilt, depravity, and helplessness, and making confession of the sinfulness of our race, our own individual sinfulness—our sins as members of families—our sins as members of churches—our sins as belonging to a civil community, engage in earnest prayer, that we may be forgiven and sanctified—that the Holy Spirit may be shed forth abundantly on ourselves, our fellow-Christians, our fellow-men—that we and all our brethren in Christ may be better fitted to honour God and do good to mankind—that the churches of Christ may be revived, becoming more pure, more united, more spiritual, and more zealous, active, and successful in the good work of the Lord—that the ministry may be rendered more enlightened, more faithful, more affectionate, more laborious—that the gospel may be more fully and purely preached—that families may become nurseries for the church on earth, for the church in heaven—that all divine institutions may be rendered effectual for these purposes by divine influence—that all things in the churches may be increasingly ordered according to the mind and will of the Lord, as made known in the Scriptures—that God would protect our country from all danger—that He would bestow heavenly and spiritual blessings on our beloved Sovereign, her consort and children, and all our magistrates—that He would impress on all classes a growing horror of war, and desire of peace—that He would make our rulers clearly to understand and faithfully to perform the duties of the present crisis—that He would protect and bless those who keep the battle from our gates, and make the hazards and sufferings of warfare the means of spiritual good to our soldiers and sailors—that He would turn war into peace, and scatter those

\* "Suggestions for Daily Prayer," No. 1., p. 8.

who delight in war—that He would repress the swelling tide of profaneness, intemperance, and profligacy—that He would suggest and prosper fit means for reclaiming the ignorant, and thoughtless, and immoral of our people, especially in large cities—that He would overrule the present remarkable commotions among the nations of the earth to the removal of the obstacles in the way of the circulation of the Bible, the preaching of the gospel, and the establishment of the kingdom of Christ—that he would raise up qualified missionaries, and bless their labours for the conversion of the heathen—that He would watch over churches gathered from the heathen by their means—that He would hasten the overthrow of Mahomedanism, and Popery, and every form of error and superstition—that He would put down all institutions embodying falsehood and fostering depravity—polygamy, caste, slavery, and disorder and misgovernment in all their forms—that He would graciously accomplish His promises respecting His ancient people—and that, in His time, He may come whose right it is to reign, and the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ.

Although these several subjects of prayer have been set down in a particular order, it is not, of course, intended that that order should in every case, and at all times, be observed by those who may join in the proposed concert. That must be left to the determination of individuals, and the drawings of the Spirit of Grace, who bloweth where, and how it listeth. Yet it may be stated, that it will generally be found of advantage to follow a distinct order in continued supplication for a variety of objects, either proceeding from the lesser to the greater, from the nearer to the more remote—the circle thus always enlarging; or, beginning with that whose circumference is most ample, and descending to matters subordinate to it and to each other.

Such is the proposal, and we cannot persuade ourselves that many words can be necessary to induce Christians generally to embrace it. The few words we employ we would wish to be powerful ones, and therefore we prefer using the words of others rather than our own.

Let JONATHAN EDWARDS plead the cause:—“It becomes Christians, with whose character a narrow selfish spirit, above all others, disagrees, to be much in prayer for that public mercy, wherein consists the welfare and happiness of the whole body of Christ, of which they are members, and the greatest good of mankind: and union or agreement in prayer is especially becoming in praying for that mercy. Such a union would not only be beautiful but profitable also. It would promote charity and public spirit. Great encouragement is given in the Word of God to express union and agreement in prayer, Dan. ii. 16–19; Esther iv. 15–17. Christ is pleased to give this great encouragement to the union of his followers in the excellent and holy exercise of seeking and serving God, Matt. xviii. 19. A holy union and communion of his people being that which he greatly desires and delights in. John xvii.”\*

Let JOHN FOSTER plead the cause:—“The noblest of all human means must be that which obtains the exertion of Divine power. The means, which, introducing no foreign agency, are applied directly and immediately to these objects, seem to wear such a defined proportion to these objects, as to assign and limit the probable effect. This strict proportion exists no longer, and therefore the probable effects become too great for calculation, when that expedient is solemnly employed which is appointed as the means of engaging the Divine energy to act on the object.” “It is visionary to expect an unusual success in the human administration of religion, unless there are unusual means. An emphatical spirit of prayer would be such an omen. If the whole, or the greater number of the disciples of Christianity, with an earnest unalterable resolution of each, were to combine that Heaven should not withhold one single influence which the very utmost effort of conspiring and persevering supplication could obtain, it would be a sign that a revolution of the world was at hand.”†

Let HUGH HEUGH plead the cause: “No one fact is more uniformly attested by Divine authority, and by the experience of the church, than that every eminent

\* “Humble attempts to promote explicit agreement and visible union of God’s people in extraordinary prayer.” Part vi. sec. 7.

† Essay iii. Sec. 5.

revival of religion has been preceded by and accompanied with abundant prayer. This is pre-eminently the divinely appointed means for obtaining promised good, for drawing down that influence, without which all other means shall be powerless. Prayer still, as of old, shuts and opens heaven. Let prayer revive in its fervent importunity, in its bold yet humble confidence, and revival will infallibly ensue. The Lord hath not forgotten to be gracious; he is ever mindful of his covenant. And if we are enabled to avail ourselves of the privilege he thus vouchsafes, assuredly he will be faithful to his promise, Matt. xviii. 19; Luke xi. 9, 10, 13. Let the cry of believing prayer, for an effusion of the Holy Ghost, ascend from every believing heart to the throne of God, and drops from heaven shall descend: yea, showers of blessing.\*

Let JAMES DOUGLAS plead the cause:—"Everything at the present moment depends upon prayer. If prayer be restrained, the reviving work of the Spirit is restrained also, religion will gradually decay, and Britain will follow the fate of the nations that have gone to ruin before it. But, if prayer be abundantly poured out before God, that of itself would be a sign and a pledge, that this country is not only to be spared, but made a chief instrument in promoting the divine purposes, and in forwarding the glory of the latter days."†

These are powerful pleadings; these are able advocates. But there is an infinitely more accomplished ADVOCATE. Let us hear how HE pleads his own cause:—"For Zion's sake I will not hold my peace; and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth." "Ye that make mention of the Lord, (ye that are the Lord's remembrancers), keep not silence, and give Him no rest, till He establish, and till he make Jerusalem a praise in the earth."

We conclude, in the words of one now with God, who laboured much in this good cause, and within no narrow circle was honoured to be the means of much good:‡ "If when the primitive church assembled with one accord in one place in Jerusalem, the Holy Spirit was remarkably poured out in answer to their united prayers, Acts ii. 1, 2; what might we not expect, if all Christians throughout the world would agree together, as concerning what they should ask? Matt. xviii. 19. If, in answer to the prayers of the 120 disciples, Acts i. 15, the Pentecostal first fruits were given; might we not hope that a full harvest would be reaped, when thousands or tens of thousands came in one body to the Throne of Grace, all guided by the same Spirit of Adoption, all pleading the finished work of Immanuel, and praying that He, the adorable Redeemer, might see of the travail of his soul, and be fully satisfied. Isa. liii. 11."

It is with great satisfaction that we can add, that the proposal has been very extensively acceded to in the various evangelical communities of our country, and that it has received the hearty approval and warm recommendation of the supreme courts of two large bodies, the Free Church of Scotland and the United Presbyterian Church, at their late meetings in Edinburgh.

#### THE MINUTE OF SYNOD.

The following is the deed of the Synod of the United Presbyterian Church, referred to in the close of the preceding paper:—

*Edinburgh, 5, Queen Street, 9th May, 1855.*

"The Rev. Dr. John Brown called the attention of the Synod to a printed document entitled 'A Proposal for United Prayer,' which had lately emanated from a number of ministers and members of the evangelical churches in England, Scotland, and Ireland, in which they invite their brethren to enter with them into concert for special supplication during the next twelve months, on subjects closely connected with the revival of personal godliness and the great interests of the Church and the world, it being understood that any individual entering into the concert shall, in secret and family prayer, make conscience of earnestly supplicating God for the

\* Address on the Revival of Religion, p. 12.

† Thoughts on Prayer, p. 10, 11

‡ The late Robert Woodrow, Esq., Suggestions for Daily Prayer, No. 1. p. 8.

specified blessings, and employ his influence in order to have a prominent place given to these objects in all meetings for prayer with which he may be connected. The Synod cordially approving of the objects of the proposal, and of the means indicated for gaining them, recommend their ministers and people to put themselves, without delay, in possession of the document referred to, as containing a powerful enforcement, and an excellent directory for combined prayer, to take the whole subject into their most serious consideration, and to yield their ready co-operation in an effort so plainly based on scriptural principles, and calculated so directly to promote the kingdom of God both within and around us."

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## Reviews of Books.

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REMAINS OF THE REV. ROBERT SHIRRA, KIRKCALDY; WITH A MEMOIR BY THE REV. JOHN B. JOHNSTON, KIRKCALDY; 12mo., pp. 197; Kirkcaldy, J. Crawford, 1850.

There are few persons in the lowlands of Scotland who have not heard of Mr. Shirra as a clerical notability. Every advantage which, after such a lapse of time, could be had for narrating his history and delineating his character, was enjoyed by the author of this Memoir. Mr. Johnston, who is now a minister of the U. P. Church in Glasgow, was, when he wrote the little volume, Colleague in Kirkcaldy, to the Rev. James Law who was himself the immediate successor to Mr. Shirra, and entered on office several years prior to the death of the latter. The comical anecdotes indicative of shrewdness and humour, and savouring strongly of fervent piety, but bordering on extravagance, and not free from professional indecorum, which were afloat respecting him were innumerable; and doubtless there must have been some occasion for them. Accordingly when his Memoir was announced we well remember, multitudes were eager to see it, in the hope of finding it a perfect ecclesiastical Joe Miller; and grievous was the disappointment experienced when they learned that many of the ludicrous stories they had heard, or had been, themselves, in the habit of relating, were either the grossest exaggerations and caricatures of incidents which could scarcely be called amusing, or were absolutely without foundation in fact—"told," Mr. Johnston says, "as suits the humour of the compilers of jest books, of Rowland Hill, Thom of Govan, or any other clergyman of known eccentric habits."

The story of his praying Paul Jones, the American Pirate, out of the Firth of Forth, has been very widely circulated. The following version of it is given in *Harper's Magazine* for July:—

"Early the next morning the *Bon Homme Richard* appeared, bearing directly toward Kirkcaldy, on the northern shore. The people believed that he was coming to plunder and destroy; and, at their earnest solicitation, the minister of the town? an eccentric, and not always a very reverential man, led his flock to the beach, and kneeling down, thus prayed for deliverance from the approaching cruiser:

"Now, deer Laird, dinna ye think it a shame for ye to send this vile pirit to reb our folk o' Kirkcaldy, for ye ken they're poor enow already, and hae naething to spare. The wa the ween blaws, he'll be here in a jiffie, and wha kens what we may do? He's nae too guid for ony thing. Mickle's the mischief he's dune already. He'll burn their hooses, tak their very claes, and

tirl them to the sark; and, waes me! wha kens but the bluidy villain may tak their lives! The puir weemen are maist frightened out o' their wits, and the bairns skirling after them. I canna thol't it! I canna thol't it! I hae been lang a faithfu' servant to ye, Laird; but gin ye dinna turn the ween aboot, and blaw the scoundrel out o' our gate, I'll na staur a fit, but will just sit here till the tide comes. Sae, tak yere wull o't."

While the minister was praying the white caps began to dot the Frith. A heavy gale swept over the waters, and Jones was compelled to abandon his enterprise, and put to sea. The summons for the magistrates of Leith was never delivered; and the good people of Kirkcaldy always regarded that timely gale as an answer to the earnest prayer of Mr. Shirra. In after years, when complimented for the power of that appeal, the old minister would humbly say, "I prayed—the Laird sent the weend!"

Now, that Mr. Shirra, like some other good men of his class and day, occasionally spoke of God, and to God, in a manner not quite consistent with reverence and godly fear, we suspect, must be admitted. But it is taxing our credulity a little too largely, to tell us that he ever came within sight of such absurdity and blasphemy, as the above. Indeed, we suppose the people of Kirkcaldy would require an intpreter, for some of the Scotch words put into his mouth. Mr. Johnston's account, which we believe may be fully relied on, is as follows:—

"There are few who have not heard the story which is told of Mr. Shirra, respecting the threatened destruction of the shipping in the port of Leith by the American pirate, Paul Jones, in the year 1799. The story has been variously related. It has been said, that when the inhabitants of Kirkcaldy were in a state of great excitement and consternation at the sight of the free-booter's squadron, Mr. Shirra took an old arm-chair and sat down in it on the sands, declaring that if God did not listen to his prayer, and send a strong westerly wind to drive the pirate's vessels out of the Firth, he would sit there and be drowned. This version of the story is clumsy and offensive, and, we are glad to say, absolutely false. It was made, and circulated, and believed, by those who did not know Mr. Shirra.

"By others it has been related, that on the morning when Paul Jones was attempting to sail to Leith from the little island of Inchkeith, on the east of which his vessels had been riding at anchor during the preceding night, Mr. Shirra went to the shore of Kirkcaldy, and kneeling on the sands, in the midst of a great and terror-stricken multitude, poured out an earnest prayer for deliverance. It is added, that while he was thus engaged, the wind, which was blowing from the west, increased to a violent gale; in consequence of which, Paul Jones and those under his authority were obliged to sail eastward, and, ere long, were driven out to sea.

"This edition of the story, though more in accordance with Mr. Shirra's known character and habits, is no better authenticated than that which we have given above. The anecdote, as we have it from unquestionable authority, is deprived of much of the air of romance which the imagination of story-tellers has cast around it. It is as follows:—On the morning after the ships had anchored under cover of Inchkeith, Mr. Shirra went into the house of one of the members of his congregation, who lived upon the shore, and inquired, 'What vessels those were that were beating up the Firth?' The person addressed said, that he had heard from some of his neighbours, that they were American privateers. On hearing this, Mr. Shirra looked up to heaven and said, 'Lord, if they are enemies, put thou a hook in their nose and a bridle in their jaws, and take them back to where they came from.' In going along the shore, a little afterwards, Mr. Shirra said to a friend, 'The Lord wi' his wind could easily blaw them out o' the Firth.' The result is well known. The wind

being contrary and increasing to a gale, the pirate found it impracticable to effect his object, and retired."

Many of our readers may not be aware that Mr. Shirra, after a long and popular, and we doubt not, very successful ministry, got into difficulties with his congregation, when his mind seems, through old age, to have become somewhat unhinged. In fact he and his people had for a long time not understood one another on the subject of politics, which he was rather prone to introduce into the pulpit. As has always been very common with a population engaged in manufactures, they inclined to a pretty decided liberalism, and he was rather keen on the opposite side. The result was, that he found it necessary to demit his charge. To their credit, however, they allowed him £65 stg., per annum till his death, not a large sum certainly, but very respectable as a retiring allowance, if compared with the stipends of the day. And their conduct was all the more commendable that when the rancorous controversy sprung up in the Synod between the Old and New Light parties, he adhered to the former, and clung to the principle of an ecclesiastical establishment which was so hateful to them. It is pleasing, however, to be able to add that Christian charity in a great measure excluded the venom of partizanship from his heart. We have it on good authority that after he had retired to his native Stirling, and had become so weak that visitors generally were refused access to him, the Rev. Michael Gilfillan of Dumblane, an old friend now severed from him in ecclesiastical fellowship, called for him one day; and Mr. Shirra on hearing his well known voice shouted out, "Let in Michawel, Bishop o' Dumblane;" and on Mr. G., reaching the apartment, Mr. Shirra, who was reading some waspish Old Light pamphlet, made it spin to the remote corner of the room, and holding out his hand said, "Come away Michel, man, an' let's ha'e a crack about heeven; for that trash has no fuid for my sowl."

Mr. Johnston has executed his undertaking with great judgment and ability; and given us, we are persuaded, a very faithful portrait of his celebrated predecessor. Mr. Shirra is represented as a man of good natural abilities, great shrewdness and sagacity, ready wit, a keen sense of the ludicrous, as thoroughly versed in Scripture and of a remarkably devotional spirit. After all the abatements and modifications which truth has demanded, there is still in the book a great deal that will be found exceedingly interesting and amusing to those who are sufficiently Scotch to be able to appreciate it. He died on the 12th Sept. 1803, in the 80th year of his age.

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CANADA: AN ESSAY TO WHICH WAS AWARDED THE FIRST PRIZE BY THE PARIS EXHIBITION COMMITTEE OF CANADA. By J. SHERRIDAN HOGAN. Small 8vo, pp. 110. Montreal: J. Lovell; 1855.

This Essay, which obtained the first prize, was one of eighteen, examined, we have no doubt, quite candidly by the Judges. There was also a nineteenth, passed over on account of its being "illegibly written." We understand some printers in Toronto are succeeding in deciphering it, and we hope to have an opportunity of noticing it by and bye. In the meantime, we can speak favourably of Mr. Hogan's. It is well composed, and seems written in a fair, impartial, and generous spirit. It gives a great

deal of information respecting the country, which must, in the main, be correct, and represents, of course, the progress, in almost every department, as being, especially of late, amazingly rapid. We must say, however, that we desiderate more full and precise statistical accounts; and on testing a little some of those given, in which we feel particularly interested, the conclusion to which we are led is, that the author's neighbour would need to come after him and search him.

"Of the various religious denominations," he says, "the recent census affords the most accurate information." If by this he means, the most accurate that can be obtained, perhaps he is right; but we have always understood the census to be grossly deceptive. Taking its data as presented by himself, we must demur to some of the deductions. Thus, he says, p. 75, "one-tenth are Presbyterians." Now, on the next page, without making any demand on the three classes, "Creed not known," "Creed not given," and "Protestants," we find there are different sections of Presbyterians exhibited to the number of 251,705, while the entire population is given as 1,842,265. We are mistaken if it be not implied in all this, that the Presbyterians, instead of being only one-tenth, are considerably more than one-eighth. We must say, too, we were startled by the statement, that while the Presbyterians are one-tenth, one-twenty-fourth (little short of one-half of them) belongs to the Church of Scotland. We cannot refrain from adding, and we do so with a feeling of shame, that it speaks volumes for the indifference, supineness, and lethargy of our own Church, that instead of there being in the Census Tables a heading "United Presbyterians," we just come in at the tail, among the loose fish and non-descripts, "Other Presbyterians." How many smaller bodies—Bible Christians, Christian Church, Second Adventists, Disciples, not to mention others—have got a distinct niche for themselves. This, however, is not the fault of Mr. Hogan. The following is the conclusion of the Essay:—

"Canada, in its present position to Great Britain, may be looked upon as a married son. He has a house of his own to care for. He has his own fortune to make. He has his own children to look after and to provide for. But these children cling around their grandfather Britain's knee. They hear his tales of his glory, and they are made manly. They drink in his lessons of wisdom, and they are made good. They are warmed with his, and their own forefathers' patriotism, and they are prepared, as on a recent occasion, to lavish their treasures in his support, and to shed their hearts' blood, if needs be, to maintain his freedom, and to bear aloft his honor. Such a people, in a rich and magnificent country, cannot but have a great and a glorious destiny."

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## Missionary Intelligence.

### UPPER CANADA TRACT SOCIETY.

*To the Editor of the United Presbyterian Magazine.*

Sir,—Permit me through your columns to call the attention of the public to the recent appointment of the Rev. James Nall, as Agent of the Upper Canada Religious Tract Society. His duties are to preach, hold public meetings, and collect funds on behalf of the Society, to establish branches auxiliary to it, and to take the oversight of its Colporteurs.

I may add, in deference to the prevalent sensitiveness on the subject of slavery,



that Mr. Nall is a Congregational minister, of English birth and education, and an Anti-slavery man. He has laboured in this Province for about twenty years. He never was an agent of the American Tract Society, and is the only Agent now in the field under our direction.\*

Let me bespeak for Mr. Nall the confidence and liberal co-operation of all christians. The cause which he is engaged to advocate is one that commends itself to every Christian and Philanthropist. Its importance can scarcely be over-estimated. By means of Colportage the Gospel is carried to every door. The remote, the neglectful, the sick, have the glad tidings announced to them, in instances where, in all probability, but for this instrumentality, the sound would never reach.

This Society only waits for pecuniary means to occupy the whole of our territory. We are desirous of sending at least one labourer into each county. The men can easily be obtained; already, more applications for employment have been received than can be entertained. We look, therefore, to the Christian public for support. We ask the ministers of the different Churches to aid our Agent and co-operate with him in the advancement of this great and good cause.

ARTHUR WICKSON, *Secretary.*

Toronto, July, 1855.

#### AUSTRALIA.

The following letter from the Rev. James Ballantyne, dated Melbourne, March 9, shows the prospects of usefulness that are being presented:—

Through a newspaper transmitted to you after my arrival here, you will ere this time have learned that our party reached this distant colony in health and safety. In point of speed our voyage was without a parallel, and those who had experience on the deep, spoke of it as resembling a pleasure-sail on some inland lake on a summer's day, rather than an ordinary passage across such mighty wastes of waters. As I look back upon it, I can only regard it as one continued succession of mercies from Him, "in whose hand our breath is, and whose are all our ways." Well may we raise our stone of remembrance," and say, "hitherto hath the Lord helped us."

The friends here did not expect us quite so early. They were therefore somewhat taken by surprise, and were not in such a state of forwardness in the matter of arrangements for our coming, as they could have wished to be in.

Since our arrival two public meetings have been held to welcome us, one in the Rev. Mr. Ramsay's church, Melbourne, and the other in the United Presbyterian church, Geelong. These meetings were numerously attended, and the spirit that pervaded them was animated and encouraging.

So far as future spheres of labour are concerned, we cannot yet speak definitely. In the course of a week or two, we hope to be able to do so. I may, however, simply mention to you, the doors of usefulness which are open, and which invite immediate ingress. The Rev. Mr. Ramsay's people have resolved to erect their church into a collegiate charge, and are to moderate in a call accordingly on the first Sabbath of April. In compliance with a petition presented to the presbytery at its meeting this week, and signed by about a hundred names, I have been appointed to open a new station on Emerald Hill, on Sabbath first, one of the numerous populous suburbs of the city. This locality is very promising, as in addition to a large general population, several hundreds of the United Presbyterians are known to be resident in it. It is also expected that we shall in like manner occupy at least another new locality in the city, in a few weeks. The church in Geelong is anxious to secure the labour of a settled pastor immediately. I preached there on Sabbath last, and had an overflowing audience. About a dozen families from Edinburgh and Leith waited to see me at the close of divine service. The field here is remarkably promising. At present there is absolutely not church accommodation for the Presbyterians in Geelong, and if we don't help on the work of extension by settling a minister there, other denominations will be under the necessity of raising additional churches.

\* We are not aware of any sensitiveness in reference to Mr. Nall. The sensitiveness relates to the publications of the American Tract Society.—Ed.

The universal opinion seems to be, that an energetic minister would, in the course of a very few weeks, rally round him a numerous and influential congregation. The congregations of Gisborne and Bacchus-Marsh are also anxious to secure the services of settled pastors without delay. There are other fields, too, which might be occupied were there men and means, but which must form the subject of future communications.

## DUKE TOWN.

The Rev. W. Anderson says, 28th March:—We are quite busy at present preparing a temporary residence, in expectation that another mission-house will be forthcoming in due time. Our present premises would not, we fear, afford us sufficient protection from wind and wet during the approaching rainy season. You will be glad to learn that a number of our river friends have contributed liberally to the purchase of another house for us. We are indebted to several of the gentlemen in the river for more than their pecuniary contributions; in particular, to Captain Baak, for several articles of provision and important repairs to our boat; and to J. S. Morgan, Esq., for articles of provision and the loan of a body of powerful Kroomen, for the getting of posts, &c., for our new erection.

I send you a list of the more important and useful of my books which were destroyed by the fire of the 9th ult. Perhaps some friends may have some of the volumes to spare. Mrs. A. made strong efforts to save them all, but it was impossible. She continued throwing them down from the shelves when no one could go near her to receive them, owing to the smoke which filled the room, and the burning timbers which were falling around her, and on her. So intent was she on her purpose of saving, that she perceived not her danger. A river friend, however, providentially saw her when she was on the point of falling down suffocated, and on the instant he snatched her up in his arms, and placed her in safety in the open air.

On the day of the fire, and when the house was almost consumed, I happened to be going into the yard with Cobbin's Condensed Commentary under my arm. A great woman, one of the native ladies, was standing at the gate. On my approach, she thus addressed me with much appearance of feeling, "mbom, mbom!" "pity, pity!" equal to "I condole with you on your loss." I told her (in Efik) that it was true that I felt sorry about the house and other things which had been burned, but pointing to my bible, I said to her (translating the Efik literally) "something live here make my heart very strong in time of this big trouble." On hearing this, the good woman shrank back, and looked with a good deal of alarm at my book. She, doubtless, thought that it must be my *big juju*, and that though it might protect me, it might injure her. This led me to explain to her briefly what the Bible is, and what it does. She listened with much interest, and afterwards went on her way. This, thought I, may be one design of this painful dispensation, that we may have an opportunity of glorifying God in the fires, by showing to the poor benighted ones around us that our religion affords—what theirs does not—something to support and cheer in the hour of severe trial.

Death has been busy among the chiefs of this town since the year began. In January, Egbo Jack, an old man of considerable influence, was called away. He had frequently spurned the word of God, and mocked the message of the Most High. He mocks no more! In February, Mr. Young, whose name has figured largely, if not very brightly, in Efik history for many years, was called on to stand before the Judge of all. He died on Sabbath, the 11th. On the previous Sabbath I addressed him on the great subject, founding my remarks on the story of Naaman the Syrian. He listened with deep attention. I saw him but once after that. He was very ill. I prayed with him, and pointed him to the Saviour. After this he sent for Mr. Haddison to read to him from the Word of God, and to pray with him. I am not altogether destitute of confidence that he prayed for himself—that he looked to the Saviour of sinners for mercy. And "who can tell?" But I proceed no further. "The day will declare it."—On Friday, the 9th inst., Antika Cobham entered the eternal world. For years the word of God was spoken Sabbath after Sabbath in his yard. He never did pay much attention to it, however, and for some Sabbaths before his death he would not listen to it at all. These repeated inroads of the King of Terrors call loudly on those who are entrusted with the message of mercy to be

diligent in their endeavours to save souls from death. They call loudly on all to prepare for another world.—*U. P. Missionary Record.*

[It will be understood that the above letter relates to the late burning of the Mission Premises. It is delightful to learn that some friends connected with the ship "Lady Head," belong to Messrs. Stewart & Douglas, Liverpool, subscribed upwards of £100 for the re-building.]

REV. DR. DUFF.

We are glad to learn that Dr. Duff has been for some time considerably improved in health, and is earnestly longing to return to his labours in the East, which he hopes to be able to do in the course of the approaching autumn. He has lately visited various parts of Italy, from the Valleys where he addressed the Waldensian Synod, to Turin, Genoa, Rome, Sicily, Malta, and elsewhere. The last intelligence is from Malta, dated 9th June, and though his health has varied, it has upon the whole considerably improved.—*Edinburgh Witness.*

THE BUXTON SETTLEMENT IN CANADA WEST.

DEAR SIR,—When I called at your office a few days ago to hand in a contribution for the Calabar Mission, from the Buxton Mission Sabbath-school, Canada West, you expressed a desire that I should furnish a short statement for insertion in your Magazine, regarding this latter mission. With that request I now comply.

The Buxton Settlement (named after Sir Thomas Fowell Buxton) lies a few miles south of the town of Chatham near the northern shore of Lake Erie. It was formed about six years ago by an association organized for the social improvement of the African population in the province. A large tract of land was purchased by this Association, and sold to negro settlers, on very easy terms, in lots of 50 acres each. About 200 families are now located on this block of land, besides a large number who have been attracted to the immediate neighborhood by the peculiar advantages of the place. The experiment has been eminently successful. The settlers are prosperous, and universally marked for their industry and sobriety. Drinking is unknown.

To meet the religious wants of this community, the Free Presbyterian Church of Canada undertook to support a mission among them. The Rev. W. King, the missionary, entered on his duties at the close of 1849, amid dark prospects, and surrounding difficulties. But God smiled on the effort. There has been a fully organized congregation for some time—the members numbering, I believe, about 40, and the attendance from 200 to 300.

A Sabbath-school was also begun at the same period with two pupils. It now numbers 150, under a staff of efficient teachers. Last year they got a missionary box, into which they dropped their coppers from Sabbath to Sabbath; and thus, though poor, and but a mission school themselves, they are learning the lesson of Christian liberality. At their Anniversary Meeting held two months ago, the box was opened, and its entire contents, £2 6s. 0d. sterling, were unanimously voted by these Africans of the far west to help your missionaries at Calabar to spread the glad tidings among the Africans of the east.

I may also state that there is a large and flourishing day-school at Buxton. Of this school I had the honor to be teacher during the first six months of its existence. At present there are two teachers, a male and a female, the former of whom, Mr. Wilson, was at one time with Mr. Waddel (of Calabar) in the West Indies. A good many of the more advanced boys have been studying Classics and Mathematics with great success, with a view of entering college; and eventually, most of them, it is hoped, of becoming missionaries to their countrymen either in America or elsewhere. Thus, some of them may yet follow their contribution to Africa to declare personally to their sable kinsmen, the wonders of redeeming love.

JOHN RENNIE.

Edinburgh, 20th March, 1855.

[The above letter, which appears in the *U. P. Missionary Record* will, on divers accounts, be interesting to our readers. The writer is a late Student of Knox's College, who spent last winter in Edinburgh.]

## Ecclesiastical Notices.

### ALBION AND VAUGHAN.

The U. P. congregations of these places, had the Rev. Peter Glassford inducted as their Pastor by the Presbytery of Toronto, on the 8rd of July. The Rev. Mr. Jennings commenced the services and preached from Psalm cxlii 4, last clause. The Rev. Dr. Taylor put the Questions of the Formula, offered up the Induction Prayer, and gave the Charge to the minister. The Rev. Mr. Coutts gave the Charge to the congregation and concluded the services. The audience was respectable, and apparently interested. This district has been long settled, and is considerably populous. The temporal circumstances of the people are excellent, and daily improving. Mr. Glassford has given them a preference over several other congregations; and we trust that under the Divine blessing, his settlement amongst them will be productive of great spiritual prosperity and comfort.

### CHATHAM.

The Rev. John Fraser lately tendered his resignation of the Pastoral charge of the United Presbyterian Congregation here, which the Presbytery accepted, after taking the regular steps, by summoning the Congregation and otherwise.

### GREYFRIARS, GLASGOW—SCOTLAND.

The Rev. Mr. Cairns of Berwick, has declined the unanimous and very earnest Call of this large and opulent congregation. The reasons he assigns, and which he read at length, in the Presbytery of Coldstream and Berwick, are chiefly three: first, the fear of aggravating a complaint under which he has been labouring, and for which the air of Glasgow is deemed unfavourable; secondly, a desire to retain his influence in a town which may be considered one of the outposts of the U. P. Church; and lastly, an aversion to such an interference as a Glasgow charge would occasion, with the plan of his life, which is to devote himself, more and more, to the preparation of works in sacred literature. In an ordinary man, a good deal of this would

have been simply amusing vanity. In Mr. Cairns, it was just and dignified self-appreciation; and we have the authority of Milton, or of Milton's Raphael, for saying:—

“ Oft-times nothing profits more  
Than self-esteem, grounded on just and  
right,  
Well managed.”

Verily the age demands works in sacred literature, which shall harmonise sound theology and sound philosophy,—holy writ and common sense. Surely both are of God.

### BLLENHEIM.

The Bible class in the U. P. congregation here, taught by Rev. George Murray, their minister, lately presented to him a considerable sum of money, to be expended on what he deemed most desirable and useful. Accordingly, it has been laid out in the purchase of an excellent English lever watch, with gold casing. This donation does much credit to the hearts of the young people who raised it, and cannot but be highly gratifying to the receiver. While, of late, a number of instances have appeared in the Magazine, of liberal testimonials of esteem to the younger brethren in the ministry; to cheer them on in putting their hand to the plough, this mark of regard for a veteran in the service, who has laboured much over a wide field since about the commencement of the Mission, is particularly honourable to the parties concerned. And it is nothing but what truth and justice call for, to add here, that the people of the congregation of Blenheim stand distinguished, in the judgment of those who know them, for their steadfast adherence to principle, and their fine Christian spirit, through trial and fluctuation.—*Communicated.*

### ANCASTER.

The United Presbyterian Presbytery of Flamboro' met on Tuesday, 10th July, for ordaining Mr. John Lees as minister of the congregations in this Township. The Rev. Mr. Porteous preached from

Col. iii. 4. The Rev. Dr. Ferrier put the questions of the formula, offered up the ordination prayer, and addressed the minister and the congregation. The audience was large, and seemed deeply interested in the solemn services of the day. Besides the Presbytery, there were present eight ministers, including the Rev. Mr. Irvine of the Free Church, and the Rev. Mr. Burnet of the Church of Scotland, (both in Hamilton) and both of whom took part in the ordination by the imposition of hands. The place of meeting was the church belonging to the congregation in connection with the Scotch Establishment, which was politely offered by the Trustees, without solicitation; and the continued use of which, when unoccupied, is also offered to Mr. Lees and his congregation. He intends, we believe, to preach in the village of Ancaster on Sabbath forenoons, and alternately in Ancaster East, and Ancaster West, in the afternoons. The Presbyterians of the three denominations in the Township have generally united, and the settlement is exceedingly harmonious and comfortable. Mr. Lees, who is of Canadian training, we are persuaded will prove a very diligent and faithful pastor; and we earnestly hope the Divine blessing will abundantly attend his labours in so interesting and important a field. His call to it, (which was not his only one) presents an exception to the rule that a prophet has no honour in his own country.

#### FUND FOR AIDING STUDENTS.

Agreeably to appointment of Synod, several of the congregations have been visited on the business of this fund; and there appears a cordial disposition to support it. In every place arrangements were made for taking up a subscription in the course of two or three months; and some individuals made handsome offers on the spot. At Hamilton, on the 17th July, after a Committee had been unanimously appointed, a gentleman rose and said:—"If the congregation will contribute £50, I will add to it £25." Two days before, we saw another gentleman intimately acquainted with that city, who said:—"If Hamilton is well managed, £20 might be got from it." Without the slightest attempt at management—literally without anything but a plain, blunt statement of truth and duty, his estimate, we expect, will be about quadrupled. The simple fact is, many

of the people of Canada are rich, and those to whom the gospel is, from Sabbath to Sabbath, faithfully and earnestly preached, and whose hearts the Lord has touched, will, like similar people elsewhere, respond, whenever the duty and privilege of honouring the Lord with their substance are unfalteringly declared. It is not in sanctified humanity, on this, any more than on the other side of the Atlantic, to resist the argument from the constraining love of Christ. Dollars and Land are idols which, as such, shall be utterly abolished. Galilean! Thou hast conquered—and wilt conquer.

#### PROBATIONER LICENSED.

On the 4th of July, Mr. John Fotheringham, student in Divinity, was licensed by the United Presbyterian Presbytery of London, C. W. Mr. Fotheringham is an Orcadian by birth, but has been educated in Canada; and we shall be disappointed if he do not prove an honour to our denomination. For precision and accuracy he has rarely been surpassed; and should it please Providence to spare him, his attainments will not be limited in their range. He gained, two successive years, a prize for Hebrew in University college; and had he not left town before the end of the Session, he would, this year, without doubt, have gained the prize for Syriac and Arabic.

#### GODERICH.

The United Presbyterian Congregation here, lately called the Rev. John Fraser to be their Pastor; and the call having been sustained by the Presbytery of London, and accepted by Mr. Fraser, his Induction was appointed to take place on the 18th of July. The sphere of labour on which he enters is peculiarly interesting. Goderich is the key to a large and important district of country.

#### M'KILLOP.

In a letter to the Editor of the *U. P. Missionary Record*, the Rev. Mr. Barr says:—"I have now been fully a year over this charge. During that period, under the blessing of God, in addition to preaching every Sabbath to the congregation, I have taught a Bible-class throughout last summer, consisting of about fifty young persons; formed and kept up two weekly prayer-meetings; preached several times in the township of Grey; formed and supplied two stations, at which I preached once a fortnight—the one at Clinton, eight miles

off, the other at Hullit, about seven miles off; formed a Sabbath-school library, consisting of an hundred and twenty volumes; procured a communion service; ordained two additional elders, and received twenty-six additional members; and the congregation has paid off about £100 of debt. I have received from the congregation £80 currency. Since the day of my ordination here, I decline receiving anything from the Mission funds, on the principle that the congregation are able to sustain their own minister."

He adds that he has transmitted £5 from his congregation, for the Mission funds of the Home Synod. All this is certainly very creditable to Mr. Barr and his people; though there will always, of course, be a diversity of opinion respecting the expediency of sending missionary

money to Scotland, while it so greatly needed here.

#### INGERSOLL.

It was here, not at Woodstock as stated in our last, and on the 4th Sabbath of May, that the new U. P. Church was opened. We shall be obliged if our correspondents will be distinct and specific in their communications of intelligence. Such an expression as "our new church" is apt to be misunderstood when a minister has more congregations than one.

#### LAKE SHORE—OWEN SOUND.

The U. P. Congregation, here, have unanimously called Mr. Robt. Dewar, Probationer.

#### CANADIAN U. P. SYNOD.

We regret the mistake we, last month, committed in stating that it was the Rev. Mr. Duff, who proposed the Moderator. The honor belongs to the Rev. Mr. Coutts.

### SYNOD OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF CANADA.

This Synod met at Montreal on the 14th of June. After the usual preliminaries the Rev. T. Lawrie, of West Gwillimbury, was elected Moderator. On the Roll of Synod were 104 Ministers, of whom 63, together with 29 Elders, were present. After devotional exercises, the Synod received the Report of the Committee on the Revival of Religion, which was highly approved and ordered to be printed in the *Record*, with a Pastoral Address; and the Synod earnestly recommended special prayer by all the Presbyteries and members of the Church in the present eventful crisis of the Church and the Nation. Regarding the employment of Ministers from other denominations, the Synod enacted that those having only private certificates shall not be employed at all without the express sanction of the Synod; that those having testimonials from the ecclesiastical body to which they formerly belonged may lay these before an ordinary meeting of a Presbytery, which shall not proceed to the consideration of them till next ordinary meeting after an interval of at least two months,—that if the Presbytery be not then unanimous regarding the case, the applicant shall not be employed, but that if unanimous, they may avail themselves of his services till the period of his formal reception. On receiving the Report of the Home Mission Committee, for which the thanks of the Synod were tendered, it was agreed that the Committee be instructed to prosecute their laudable endeavours to procure Ministers from Scotland—that Ministers and Elders be exhorted to use efforts in seeking out young men for the ministry—that Ministers should devote a portion of their time to Missionary labours, and that Presbyteries should hold Annual Missionary Meetings in all their Congregations. The thanks of the Synod were returned to Alexander Gillespie, Esqr., London, for a donation of £100 in aid of Home Missions. The Synod received, and approved of the Report of the College Committee, which represented the institution as in a flourishing condition. It was agreed that the study of Hebrew should be earlier commenced, and that a Committee be appointed to endeavour to render the classes in University College more available for the students of the Church. The Synod gave authority for taking two students in Divinity on trials for license; and permitted the Rev. Mr. Bethune from Prince Edward's Island to be inducted by the Presbytery of London before the expiry of twelve months.

The Synod approved of an overture for urging Congregations to exert themselves in the erection of Manses. The Committees on College Buildings and Deed reported, and the Synod instructed them to proceed to raise subscriptions to the extent of £10,000, and to frame a deed securing the property to the principles of the Free

Church as at present defined in her standards. The employment of the Rev. A. C. Geikie, by the Home Mission Committee, till he be formally received was sanctioned. The next business related to union\* with the U. P. Church, and of this we gave the report in our last No. It was agreed that a collection be made by all the congregations for the French Canadian Mission. An overture was presented by Elders in favour of the better support of the Ministry. The Synod approved and recommended Congregations to make increased efforts, and also to defray the expenses of Ministers and Elders attending Synod. An overture in favour of Colportage was presented. The Synod approved and recommended Presbyteries to introduce a system of Colportage in their bounds. A Committee was also appointed to mature a scheme for a Board of Publication and Colportage. On receiving the report of the Committee on Sabbath Schools, it was agreed that a Periodical suitable for Sabbath School Teachers and Scholars should be established. The Synod appointed a Committee to prepare a small Manual of discipline for the guidance of Church Courts. An overture was presented respecting the introduction of instrumental music in public worship. The Synod declared such music not to be permitted in the Church, and recommended the cultivation of vocal music. Committees on the Registration of Births, Marriages and Deaths, and on Sabbath Observance, were re-appointed. The Synod strongly disapproved of some parts of the Act for secularizing the Clergy Reserves, as perpetuating the evil. An overture and various papers on Intemperance were presented. The Synod recommended Ministers to give prominence to the subject in every competent way and petitioned the Legislature for a Prohibitory Law. The Synod approved of overtures for the establishment of Congregational Libraries, and for procuring books for Ministers on reasonable terms, and referred these subjects to Committees. After some other pieces of business of less public interest, the Synod having been addressed by the Moderator, adjourned to meet at London on the second Wednesday of June, 1856.

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SYNOD OF THE U. P. CHURCH, SCOTLAND.

We resume our report from page 183.. The Synod received all the applicants there named. On re-admitting the Rev. Alex. Rutherford, no longer a Morisonian, the Moderator said, "I have much pleasure in stating to you, in a public manner, that the prayer of your petition has been answered by this Church, that the sentence of suspension has been taken away, and that you are now restored to the full status of a minister in connection with it. Not only so, but this deed has been done unanimously, and not only unanimously, but in the most frank, hearty, and cordial manner. I think, Sir, that all of us who know you are satisfied that whatever errors you may have committed in connection with this subject, were errors of judgment, that you have been always honest and conscientious in the changes of opinion that have taken place; and for my own part, much as you have erred in this manner, I feel my heart warmed to see the full, frank, and cordial manner in which you have come forward and declared that, as an honest man, you have now changed your opinions, and wish to come back to the bosom of that Church from which you had been estranged. It does you much credit that you not only retracted your opinions, but had the manliness and moral courage to come forward and ask re-admission into that Church with which you were formerly connected."—An overture from the Presbytery of Paisley and Greenock was taken into consideration, proposing that the Synod should recommend ministers, elders, and members to use constitutional means for securing that Proclamations for Fast-days should be couched in terms less offensive than that lately issued, and more adapted to the circumstances of a free community. The Synod appointed a Committee to frame a minute strongly disapproving of such language as that of the late edict.—An overture was adopted, from the Presbytery of Kilmarnock, proposing that a committee should be appointed to devise and carry out some method for the more effective explanation and recommendation of the several schemes of the Church.—The Committee on the better Support of the Ministry, reported that they had visited a number of congregations, and corresponded with more, urging those which gave stipends under £150, with manse, to make an effort to raise that sum; also urging those whose stipends were under £120, to make additional efforts, and affording them supplement to that

amount. £1,180 had been given in aid, and a number of congregations had raised an increased amount for themselves. The Committee was re-appointed, and a collection be ordered to be made in March next.—The Synod took up an overture from the Presbytery of Lancashire respecting missionary operations and Church extension in England, stating that they had instituted a Board for these purposes in connection with the Presbytery, and praying the Synod to transfer to their care the weak congregations and stations in the district at present under the charge of the Home Mission Committee. The Rev. R. Selkirk Scott, of Manchester (formerly assistant to Sir W. Hamilton), said there were, in Manchester and the adjacent townships, about 200,000 persons, many of them Scotchmen, who went to no place of worship; that there was room for additional Churches; that the Free Church had five churches in Manchester, and four in Liverpool, while the U. P. Church had only two in the former, and one in the latter; that the sum annually raised in the Presbytery for the Synod's Home Missions had been about £130; that the newly instituted Board had raised £500 in two months, and pledged itself to raise £2000 in two years; and that he had no doubt that should the Synod sanction their procedure, they would rear a number of new congregations, and send as much money as formerly for the schemes of the Church. Mr. S. Stitt, elder, Birkenhead, said that "they proposed to purchase an iron church capable of containing 400 people. The cost of this iron church would be £420, and it would be an exceedingly comfortable place of worship. They proposed to plant it in some locality where they had the prospect of success, and to use it for the purpose of getting parties gathered into it, who, they hoped, would in the end erect a permanent place of worship. They would then transfer the iron church to some other place; and an expense of £20 was all that was required for taking it down, and transporting it to some other place. This was a perfectly practicable plan, and they were decided upon its adoption. The Synod would lose nothing in a pecuniary sense, by agreeing to the request contained in the overture from the Presbytery of Lancashire. The promoters of it were satisfied that if Presbyterianism were properly worked, and adapted, without any abandonment of its chief features and principles, to the mind of England, it would progress extensively in that country; and for all the reasons that had been stated, he fervently trusted that the prayer of the overture would be granted." The Synod cordially approved of the overture, and fully sanctioned the Lancashire Board.—The Rev. Dr. John Brown introduced the subject of the General Union for Prayer, and said:—"The members of this Court were already aware that a number of ministers and members of the various evangelical churches in England, Scotland, and Ireland had already entered into an engagement among themselves, and had presented a proposal for united prayer amongst Christian brethren. This proposal, which he believed was in the hands of a number of the members of the Court, was in the course of pretty general circulation. It had been brought under the notice of many of the principal religious May meetings in London, and had met with very general and warm acceptance from good ministers and good men of all denominations. The proposal originated in this, that the peculiar circumstances of the world and of this country, viewed in the light of Scripture, seemed to be giving forth a very loud call for Christians to apply to Him who alone could bring order out of confusion, and good out of evil, and it was proposed that there should be an understanding or agreement for special prayer on specific subjects over a considerable period—say 12 months. The duty of confession of their individual sins, their sins as families, their sins as Churches, their sins as a nation enjoying peculiar privileges and chargeable with corresponding guilt was enforced; and the need there was for an outpouring of the Holy Spirit in these circumstances urged. After quoting from the circular on the subject, the Rev. Doctor said that the committee which had been appointed to superintend the circulation of information in connection with this matter were particularly desirous of the favourable notice of the Synod, being fully persuaded that a recommendation, however general, from a body so influential, would be greatly useful, both within its own pale and without it, in inducing Christians to take part in what they considered a very important work, bearing directly upon the highest of all objects—the glory of God and the best interests of mankind. He thought this was one of the very best kinds of Christian alliance. It was good men operating as one body—separated by place, but still coming together as one body,



worshipping God in the name of the same Mediator, and relying on the same Spirit, and asking the same blessings; and it was the most likely way, with a blessing from on high, of securing visible union grounded on scriptural principles. He trusted that it would prove to be the small cloud which would by and by darken the heaven with clouds of blessing, and would make the Church of God like a well-watered garden." Dr. Young of Perth "concurred in what had been so well said by Dr. Brown, and observed that the movement which had taken place beyond them, was a movement of men distinguished for Christian piety in various denominations, and some of whom were in their own, and was well fitted in the providence of God to make an impression upon them. He hoped the Synod would frame such a minute as would indicate to the evangelical community their catholic concurrence in what had been suggested. It had happened before now that public prayer had been an apology for comparative superficiality in personal and secret prayer; but he hoped that against that they would guard on the present occasion. Whatever might be the issue of the tumults which seemed to be threatening Europe, they might be assured of this, that if they did as was suggested here, there would be ushered in a calm and holy sunshine, under which the seed of the Gospel would spring up, and they might expect to see an abundant harvest of souls to the Lord Jesus." The deliverance of the Synod on the subject will be found on page 265.

—The Committee on Theological Education reported that in all the departments under their superintendence, matters were in a satisfactory condition. The number of students at the Hall was 117. Upwards of £127 had been expended on books for the Library, and 26 volumes had been received as donations. From the Report of the Committee on Ministers' Libraries, *i.e.*, Libraries belonging to congregations for the use of their ministers, it appeared that 112 Libraries in all had received supplements, and that the Committee had £800 to apply in a similar way.—With regard to the Summary of Principles which has been for some time in course of preparation, the Synod adopted by a majority the following motion, "That the Synod, without entering on a minute examination of the Summary prepared by the Committee, approve of it, as fitted to promote the end in view in its preparation, namely, that of affording, especially to persons seeking admission into the fellowship of the Church, a distinct account of its rise and past history, and of the views of divine truth which it holds; and authorize the publication of the Summary in a cheap form for general circulation. At the same time, the Synod declare that the Summary is not to be regarded in any respect as an addition to, or as superseding the recognized Standards of the Church, which remain as stand in the Basis of Union."

At the great Missionary meeting, a number of eloquent, instructive, and stimulating speeches were delivered. That of the Rev. F. Monod, of the Evangelical Union, France, contained the following interesting passage:—"The total expenditure of their churches, which were eighteen when the Synod opened, numbering 1,100 members—during the last three years was £7,880, not including their expenses for church building, or congregational, or individual contributions to their religious societies. Out of this £7,880, £7,000 had been spent on the churches themselves, the stipends of the ministers, or schools, and the support of Gospel ordinances amongst them; £880 had been spent on evangelization, bursaries, and general expenses. Now, out of this £7,880, £6,000 had been raised in the churches themselves—and that divided among these 1,100 members in three years, gave them the sum of 36s. or 37s. as contributed by each member yearly. He called upon the brethren who knew anything of France, to say if this was not astonishing—if it was not a great deal. He would venture to ask, what would be the revenue of the United Presbyterian Church of Scotland if all her members contributed at that rate? He had made a calculation. A friend beside him informed him that their number was 150,000, which, at the rate of contribution he had stated, would produce a revenue of £243,000. Their Union had received from sister churches in the same three years £1,880, which was something less than one-fourth of their whole revenue. Eleven churches out of the eighteen received help from the central fund, and the other seven required no help. The help tendered to these eleven churches in those three years was £960; that was £320 a year, or on an average £29 to each church. Let, therefore, no man say that their dear people in France did not do their part; and let no man say that the Union of the Evangelical Church in France

was supported solely, nay, chiefly, by foreign money. He would state one other fact, viz., that of the £1,880 received from foreign churches in these three years, £1,500 or £1,600 had come from the United Presbyterian Church of Scotland; and he heartily returned them thanks in his own name and that of his brethren, as they had, by their contribution, given bread to many a poor minister, who, but for it, would have wanted bread. They had helped on the cause of their common Lord and Master—they had helped churches, which, probably, but for this money, would have disappeared. He had further to state, that this sum of £1,500 or £1,600 did not include the £500 which the Church had voted a few months ago to the Union, and which had not been entered in the Union's last account. He could assure them that this £500 had timeously come to their help, as their exchequer was dry at the time, and their treasurer was under the painful necessity of declaring that there was nothing in it to give anything to the churches for the three first months of this year. On his (M. Monod's) reading at the Synod the letter he had received from his venerable friend, Mr. Somerville, announcing that the United Presbyterian Board had voted this £500, the announcement was received with cheers and tears. He could assure them that many heartfelt prayers had been offered to the donors and their Church. The United Presbyterian Church had done much for them, but they must not relax, but rather the contrary, for by the very blessing of God upon them their wants were increasing. Seven new churches had joined their Union since the meeting of the Synod in 1852, and only one of these was self-supporting. The number of their members had increased from 1,100 to 1,800; their twenty-five churches numbered twenty ordained ministers; and the others were under the spiritual care of what they termed evangelists, until the time came when they had also ordained ministers. He was also happy to say, that two of the churches that had joined them were in the Cevennes; and the Union had thus planted its standard in that part of the country which was noted in the bloody history of Protestantism in France. He trusted that they would seek to make the alliance between their country and his country not merely a political alliance, but seek to be soldiers of the same army, of which Jesus Christ was the great Captain. Let them fight together, under his banner, the battles of the Lord, and the final end would be victory."—The Synod next proceeded to consider, what had excited very special interest, the advice given by the Mission Board, respecting the admission of slaveholders at Calabar to the fellowship of the Church. The Rev. W. Anderson, of Calabar, had intimated to the Board that he had admitted to the Church three young men—slaveholders—on their signing the following declaration:—

"Believing that there is neither male nor female, bond or free in Christ Jesus, I hereby promise in the presence of the Great God who rules all things, that I shall give all my servants what is just and equal for their work; that I shall consider them in the light of *servants*, not as *property*; that I shall permit and encourage them to attend on such means of religious instruction as the church may be able to send them; that I shall on no account maim them, pull out their teeth, or cut off their ears, or allow any other to do such things to them; that I shall never *sell* any of them, except incorrigible offenders whose lives would be endangered by their remaining in old Calabar; and that I shall ever act towards them as in the sight of my Great Master in heaven, who, I know, will render to every man according to his works. It shall be my constant endeavour to act towards my inferiors and my equals on the principle embodied by our Lord and Saviour in the golden rule."

To this the Board replied:—

"As by the law and custom of Calabar, it appears that legal manumission is at present impracticable, and as the missionaries would not be justified in excluding from the fellowship of the church, any that give satisfactory evidence of conversion, and that are willing to obey the laws of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Board agree to state that, guided by the resolutions of the Synod, they are of opinion that, in the present condition of society at Calabar, persons holding slaves may be admitted into church fellowship on their signing such a declaration as the following:—

"Believing that all men are equal in the sight of God, and that under the Gospel, there is in Christ Jesus neither bond nor free, I hereby, as a servant of Christ, and to obey the commands of God's word, promise in the sight of the great God, my divine Master, that I shall regard those persons placed under my care, as *ser-*

*vants*, not as *property*; that I shall give them what is just and equal for their work that I shall encourage them to obtain education for themselves and their children and to attend on such means of religious instruction as the church may be able to afford them; that I shall endeavor, as far as I can, to secure the making of laws to promote personal freedom; that as soon as it can be done, I shall legally set free all those under my care; and that, in the meantime, I shall treat them with kindness and equity, it being my constant aim to act upon the command of the Lord Jesus Christ, to do unto others as I should wish them to do unto me.”

After an animated discussion, and a very ample vindication of the Board by the Mission Secretary, the Synod adopted the following motion:—“In respect that the minute of Committee on Foreign Missions expresses an opinion designed to carry out in their spirit the previous resolutions and instructions of the Synod, which has always condemned the system of slavery, and repudiated fellowship with slaveholders; in respect that the declaration emitted by the committee to be subscribed and adhered to, if sanctioned by the Synod, as a condition of admission into the Church at Calabar, distinctly specifies that, in obedience to the law of Christ, ‘slavering,’ in the ordinary sense of the expression, is renounced, and those formerly held by the parties as slaves are henceforth to be regarded and treated as “servants under the law of kindness and equity which the gospel prescribes; in respect, also, that the said declaration provides, that the nominal connection which, for a time, may still subsist between entrants into the Church and slavery, is only tolerated because it is altogether unavoidable—that it implies, while it continues, no treatment inconsistent with Christian law, and cannot be taken advantage of without sin in regard to mere purposes of gain, no sale of slaves being allowed, except in commutation of the extreme penalty of the law, in the cases of those guilty of criminal offences, exposing them to death; and in respect, further, that said declaration pledges those admitted to the membership of the Church, to use every means in their power, civil, social, and religious, for effecting the extinction of slavery, and carrying out the principles of this Church in seeking to do away with slaveholding on the part of all who make a profession of Christianity, the Synod approves of the foresaid minute of committee and declaration for the guidance of the missionaries in the admission of members into the Church in Old Calabar.”—The Committee on Public Questions gave in their report, relating chiefly to the Education Bills before Parliament. After a debate unusually exciting, and characterised by consummate ability, the Synod agreed to express in a series of resolutions their strong condemnation of Mr. Stirling’s bill, and, by a majority of 70 to 43, their modified approval of the Lord Advocate’s, as the best which, at present, can be obtained.—An Overture was presented from the Presbytery of Glasgow, to the effect that a Committee on Public Questions should not again be appointed. On introducing the overture Dr. Robson said that the discussions which had taken place during this meeting of the Synod pleaded powerfully in its support. The discussion of such matters do not lie within their province, and they should not introduce political questions into the deliberations of the Court. They could, as citizens, meet on the platform for the purpose of discussing such questions, but the Church was not the proper place for them, and the Government ought to know nothing of them as a spiritual court. Dr. Brown of Edinburgh gave, as he has long done, his zealous support to the same views, and the business was disposed of by the Synod’s agreeing that, in the meantime, the Committee should not be reappointed. The Committee on Scholarships reported that fifty-three students attending the University, and twenty-seven attending the Divinity Hall had entered into competition—that twenty-seven scholarships of £10 each had been awarded to the former class, and nineteen the same value to the latter—and that the Committee recommended that hereafter scholarships should be given only to University students. The Synod approved the Report. An overture by several members of the Presbytery of Edinburgh was presented in favour of an improvement of Psalmody, and the Synod agreed to approve highly of the object of the overture, and, in terms of its prayer, appointed a Committee to take the subject of Psalmody into consideration, make provision for lectures illustrative of the principles and art of sacred music, and issue from time to time such papers as to them shall seem advisable for promoting the improve-

ment of the Psalmody throughout the Church. After some other business of little public interest, an address from the Moderator and devotional exercises, the Synod adjourned.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND.

The Assembly met on the 24th May. The Rev. Dr. Bell, of Linlithgow, was chosen Moderator. It was agreed that a loyal and dutiful address be presented to the Queen, with reference to the war. The Home Mission Committee reported that many chapels lately shut up were now filled with large congregations, and that 108 had received grants amounting to £4,370. The Committee on the Colonial Scheme reported that in Queen's College, Kingston, C.W., there were 56 students, and 53 in the preparatory school, and that a considerable sum would be secured to the Church, and probably £500 yearly to the College, from the Clergy Reserves. The Convener said that in 1821 there were in Canada three Presbyterian Churches; now 77 ministers and 35 vacancies, and that (we copy from the *Witness*) there are in Canada 90,000 persons of Scottish origin, fully two-thirds of whom belong to the sister Church. The Committee were instructed to apply to Government for a piece of land to Queen's College Kingston. The Committee on Popery reported that 13 agents were employed in Edinburgh to lecture and hold controversial meetings. The Foreign Mission Committee reported that progress was making at Calcutta; that eight baptisms had taken place at Madras, and that the Committee had £2268 at their credit. The Committee on Sabbath Schools reported that the Scholars were 90,846—the teachers 7030. The Assembly agreed to petition Parliament in favour of Mr. Stirling's and against the Lord Advocate's Education Bill. The Committee on the Endowment Scheme reported that the fund now amounted to £196,201. The Rev. James Dickson of the Free Church, was re-admitted to the Establishment. The Assembly petitioned Parliament against the Bill for legalising marriage with a deceased wife's sister. After transacting a number of other pieces of business, which our space will not permit us to notice, the Moderator addressed the Assembly, and having engaged in devotional exercises, the Assembly was dissolved. Next meeting, was appointed by the Moderator, and by the Commissioner in name of the Queen, to be held on 22nd May, 1856.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE FREE CHURCH—SCOTLAND.

We regret that the few following items are all for which we can find space. The Assembly's sittings were from 24th May to 4th June. The Rev. Dr. Henderson of Glasgow was elected Moderator, and the office of Clerk being vacant, the Rev. Sir H. Moncrieff, Baronet, was appointed to fill it. For the schemes of the Church there ought to have been, throughout the year, 4,54<sup>c</sup> collections, and there was a deficiency of only 137. The Committee for the Conversion of the Jews reported that it was now out of debt. The School at Pesth was attended by 370 pupils. At Constantinople the war had occasioned some interruption, but the prejudices of the Turks seemed to be subsiding. At Galata, Hasskeny and Amsterdam, the work was going quietly on. A favourable report was made respecting the Evangelisation of Ireland. The Home Mission Committee had 72 stations, of which 12 were new. The affair respecting the Sustentation Fund was, for the time, arranged by adopting Dr. Candlish's motion for an equal dividend. The College question was settled by sanctioning the Hall at Aberdeen; and it was agreed that there should be also a Theological College at Glasgow, Dr. Clark having offered a subscription of £30,000, and others having agreed to raise the like sum for buildings and endowment. The Committee on Colonial and Continental Churches reported, referring to the rapid progress in Canada and Australia, and stating that they had £1,000 in hand for sending out ministers. The Committee on Foreign Missions reported that in Caffraria 44 adults and 15 children had been baptized, and that there were still 50 candidates—that at Bombay the number of pupils is 1302, while 12 adults and 15 children had been baptized—that at Poona the pupils are 766, Baptisms, 4 adults and 2 children—that at Nagpore the pupils are 725—that at Calcutta there are on the roll 1420 pupils, and that there had been 9 baptisms—that at Chinsurah the pupils are from 800 to 900, baptisms 6—that at Bansberia the

pupils are 292, and at Colma 226; and that at Madras the pupils are 2400, while the gospel is preached every Sabbath to 2000 heathens. The Assembly devoted a diet to special prayer with reference to the state of the nations and the Church, and recommended the proposed Concert for Prayer. The entire sum raised for all the schemes during the year, was £308,050 sterling.

U. P. MISSION COMMITTEE.

This Committee met on the 10th July in the Village of Ancaster. The sub-committee reported that they had examined an application by Mr. Devine for £7 9s. 6d., and authorized the Treasurer to pay the amount. The sub-Committee's conduct was sustained, and they were re-appointed. The following letter was received from the Rev. Mr. Somerville, Mission Secretary, Scotland:—

Office of United Presbyterian Church, 5, Queen Street, EDINBURGH, 1st June, 1855.  
REV. ROBERT TORRANCE,

MY DEAR SIR,—I write to you as the Convener of the Missionary Committee of the Canadian Synod, and I am happy to inform you, that, on the 10th April the Committee on Foreign Missions accepted as a Missionary for Canada the Rev. DAVID TODD, late of Stonehaven, and that on the 29th ult. the Board of Missions accepted the offered services for Canada of the Rev. William McGowan, Minister of Sandwick, Orkney, the Rev. Walter Inglis, late Missionary (under the London Society, among the Bechuanas in South Africa, Mr. James Caldwell, Preacher, who has just come from the Free Church, and of Mr. Thomas Watson, Preacher. We have had very favourable testimonials in the case of all these brethren, and we cherish the confident expectation that they will, from their talents, their energy and their zeal, prove able fellow-workers with you in the great and good cause in which you are engaged.

These five brethren, who will sail in the course of the summer, with the five that came out last year, complete the number of ten preachers which your Synod two years ago requested, and which the Committee on Foreign Missions promised to endeavour to send. As we have not had any official communication from your Synod for twelve months, it is not likely that the Committee will accept any more offers till your Synod send a request to that effect.

With very cordial regards, I am, my dear Sir,

Yours very sincerely,

ANDREW SOMERVILLE,  
*Secretary.*

It was thereupon unanimously agreed that the thanks of this Committee be tendered, in name of the Synod, to the Mission Board in Scotland for the supply of Missionaries sent out, that the need of additional labourers for the Gospel field be, at the same time, stated, and that the Board be informed that any number of qualified persons they may see proper to send will be thankfully received.

Several applications by probationers, and one from a Congregation, for supplement, were considered and decided on, and some reports transmitted by the Presbytery of Flamboro' were handed over to the sub-committee for examination.

The next meeting was appointed to be held in Flamboro' on the Tuesday after the second Sabbath of January, 1856, at four o'clock in the afternoon. Closed with the benediction.

## Gleanings.

### SLAVERY IN THE UNITED STATES.

[The following is from an article bearing the above title in the *Edinburgh Review* for April last. Each paragraph is to be regarded as detached. Brother Jonathan is not flattered; it is to be hoped he will be instructed and improved. The tone of the British press is healthful and refreshing:—

“The sympathy with Russia which has been manifested by some of the inhabitants

of the Southern States, supports the remark, that the defenders of slavery in America naturally become the enemies of freedom in Europe. The good sense and the liberality of the opinions of a neutral may generally be tested by the side which his wishes take in the present war. The people, that is to say, the mass of inhabitants, of Europe, are anti-Russian. They see that wherever Russian power, or even Russian influence, extends, it brings with it repression, ignorance, religious intolerance, the slavery of the press, commercial restriction, and every other oppression by which improvement can be arrested and Europe forced back into a barbarism worse than that of the dark ages, as the barbarism of communities that have once been civilised is more corrupt and more hopeless than that of a race that still retains, like our Saxon ancestors, the vigour and independence of their still less civilised progenitors." The Continental despots and their courtiers look forward to Russian preponderance with expectations similar to those of their subjects; but, with the intense selfishness which belongs to power ill acquired or ill used, the greater part of them desire it on the very grounds on which their subjects dread it. They believe, as the Russian Government itself believes, that knowledge, toleration, self-respect, freedom of the press, freedom of trade, freedom of intercourse,—in short, all that raises man intellectually and morally, is favourable to the object of their hatred and terror, political liberty. Hence their love of Russia, as the type and the supporter of what they call order,—as their faithful ally in their struggle against improvement,—as the great and generous friend, whose ready sympathy can always be relied on by a king, or a prince, or a grand duke, at variance with his subjects, and whose active aid will be given as soon as the interference of England and France is no longer to be feared. The slave holders and slave traders of America are too strong to need to look for assistance to Russia; but they sympathise with her partly for some of the reasons which govern the petty tyrants of Italy and Germany, and partly for reasons of their own. They hate England as abolitionist, just as Ferdinand hates her as liberal. They love Russia, as he does, for her intolerance of liberty and knowledge. And there is between the two countries the strong bond of similarity of institutions. Russia and the Southern States of the American Union are the only civilised—or, at least, not confessedly barbarian—slave holders left in the world. Slavery in Russia is indeed far milder, and far less diffused, and it is gradually wearing out. But while it lasts Southern America has the countenance of one companion."

"The penalties on aiding or concealing a fugitive, or directly or indirectly obstructing a slave-hunter, must render anxious the life of every man of common humanity who lives near the line of a fugitive's escape. Those penalties are, to men of the moderate fortunes common in America, absolutely ruinous. Yet who when he rises in the morning can say, that he shall not render himself liable to them in the course of the day, or of the night? Few Englishmen,—we hope few Americans,—who had to choose between the incurring those penalties and the turning out a fugitive helpless before his pursuers, would hesitate. But what can be said of the freeman of a country which has submitted to a law which exposes all its citizens to the alternative of imprisonment and ruin, or of eternal unavailing remorse?"

"Such oppression is not to be found in Naples, in Turkey, or in Russia. We do not believe that such oppression is to be found in any other part of the world, civilised or uncivilised. We do not believe that such oppression ever existed before. The slavery of Greece, as well as that of Rome, was atrocious. We have no doubt that it was far more cruel—using the word cruel to signify the infliction of torture, of death,—than that of America. It was characterised by the indifference to human life and to human suffering which belongs to Paganism. But its oppression was less degrading, less systematic, less unrelenting. It deprived the slave of liberty, but it left him hope. It gave to the master full power to ill treat his slaves, but it also gave to him full power to benefit them. The slave might be instructed, he might have his peculium, he might have his freedom.

'Et spes libertatis erat, et cura peculi.'

Republican America has elaborated a tyranny such as no democracy, no aristocracy, no monarchy, no despotism ever perpetrated, or, as far as we know, ever imagined."

"As for the clergy, the most powerful body in the United States, the body through whose influence slavery was gradually extinguished in Europe, they are utterly

corrupted by their subserviency to their employers. Some of them are members of the vigilance committees, who form an Inquisition, differing from that of Rome only in that it persecutes abolitionists instead of heretics, and that its proceedings are illegal, and consequently that it employs mobs for its instruments instead of officials. All of them have prostituted their knowledge, and the respect due to their functions by indiscriminate defence not only of slavery, but of the very laws which, while they last, render slavery irremediable."

"That Providence will, in its own way, and in its own time, work out a cure, we believe; because we believe improvement, progressive, though always slow and often interrupted, to be among the laws by which this earth is governed. But we do not venture to hope that we, or our sons, or our grandsons, will see American slavery extirpated from the earth."

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OLIVER CROMWELL'S NATIONAL FAST.

"The common and notorious sins so boldly and impenitently practised amongst us, notwithstanding all our deliverances and mercies, together with the present rod of an exceeding and universal drought, which hath lain upon us for some years, and still continues and increases upon us, threatening famine and mortality, are no less than the voice of God, calling aloud in our ears to fasting, and mourning, and great abasement of soul before Him.

"And although the general end and intendment of inviting to a day of fast be, that all, of every condition and quality whatever, do try and examine their heart and way more especially according to their own light, and in the use of such helps and means as the Lord in his providence shall afford to each one, before and upon the said day of meeting; yet finding some thoughts set seriously upon our heart, we judged it not amiss to recommend the same to Christian consideration, not to impose them upon any, or to confine any within the compass thereof; but leaving every man free to the grace of God, and to the work of his Spirit, who worketh all things in the hearts of the sons of men, according to the counsel and good pleasure of His own will.

"It cannot be denied but that God hath vouchsafed to appear much in working the deliverance of this nation from their bondage and thralldom, both spiritual and civil, and procuring for them a just liberty by his own people.

"Do we now walk worthy of our high calling, in humbleness and lowliness of mind, holding forth those virtues of Christ in time of peace, which were our strength, by the efficacy of which all our great things were accomplished in time of war?

"Have we a heart prepared as willingly to communicate the said just freedom and liberty to one another, as we were industrious to get it?

"Do we thankfully acknowledge our mercy in the liberty of worshiping God in holiness and righteousness without fear, being delivered out of the hands of our enemies?

"Is brotherly love, and a healing spirit, of that force and value amongst us that it ought?

"Do we own one another more for the grace of God, and for the spiritual regeneration, and for the image of *Christ* in each other, or for our agreement with each other in this or that form or opinion?

"Do we first search for the kingdom of *Christ* within us before we seek one without us? Or, do we listen to them that say concerning the coming of *Christ*, *L. here, and to there*?

"Do we not more contend for saints having rule in the world than over their own hearts?

"Are there not too many amongst us that cry up the Spirit, with a neglect of love, joy, peace, meekness, patience, goodness, temperance, long-suffering, forbearance, brotherly-kindness and charity, which are the fruits of the Spirit?

"How do we carry ourselves, not only to the Churches of God, and the saints, but towards them that are without?

"Do not some of us affirm ourselves to be the only true ministry, and true Churches of *Christ*, and ourselves only to have the ordinances in purity, excluding our brethren, though of equal gifts, and having as large a seal of their ministry,

and desiring with as much fervour and zeal to enjoy the ordinances in their utmost purity?

“Do we remember old Puritan, or rather primitive simplicity, self-denial, mercy to the poor, uprightness, and justice? Or are we not herein put to shame by those we easily call Anti-christian or carnal?”

“Hath not one that we judge to be without, equal justice with one we will call a brother?”

“Do we contend for the faith once delivered to the saints, as the things of faith ought to be contended for, with love, patience, tenderness, zeal by persuasion; or rather, imposingly, proudly, carnally, provokingly, sensually, thereby prejudicing the truth; and whilst we are calling aloud for the propagation of the gospel, do we not put stumbling-blocks in the way of the same, and too much endeavour to make good the slander of the world in charging profession with faction?”

“For want of circumspection and care herein, and a due regard to sincerity and uprightness, have not many apostatized, running after fancies and notions, listening to petty dreams, worshiping of angels, and been carried away by their impulses; and instead of contending for the faith, and holding the form of sound words, contended against magistracy, against Scriptures, and against ordinances, too much verifying the prophecies of Peter and Jude, in the following words? [Here follows a quotation from 2 Peter, ii. 1-3, 10-15, and Jude, 4-8, 10-13, 16-19; and then the declaration proceeds thus.]

“Notwithstanding all these evils, and worse, are upon us, and in the midst of us, like grey hairs here and there, and we know it not, our pride testifying to our face, Hosea, vii. 9, 10; and we return not to the Lord our God, nor seek Him for all this, but these things are contended for, and justified under the notion of liberty, it being too commonly said that the magistrate hath nothing to do either in repressing or remedying these things. We do hereby appeal to the hearts and consciences of all fearing the Lord, whether there be not as great cause as ever to lay our mouths in the dust, and abhor ourselves before the Lord for these abominations, whereby the eyes of his jealousy are provoked, and to seek pardon and remedy from himself for these things.

“Add we to these the resistance, hatred, and neglect of the gospel by the generality of men; the contempt and despite done to the sincere professors of it even for the image of Christ in them—(although they have been instruments of many mercies and of the obtaining a just freedom for the nation)—the wickedness, oaths, drunkenness, revellings, and all manner of licentiousness, for which things' sake the Scriptures have said that the wrath of God shall undoubtedly overtake the children of disobedience. And lastly, the impunity of these things, through the neglect of the magistracy throughout the nation; and then judge whether there be not cause that we be called upon, and do call upon each other seriously to lay these things to heart, being greatly abased before the Lord for them.

“Upon the serious consideration of these things, we judge it not only warrantable, but a duty, to call upon you, and ourselves to set apart time to humble our souls before the Lord; to cry unto Him for broken and penitent hearts, that He would turn away His wrath, and be reconciled to us; for the Lord is merciful, gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin, and will by no means clear the guilty, who are only such as go on in their hardened and impenitent hearts, refusing the grace offered by Jesus Christ.

“It is therefore hereby declared, that we and our Council do purpose, by the grace of God, to set apart Friday next, being the 24th of this present March, for a day of humiliation.

“And it is hereby ordered, that timely notice be given to the cities of London and Westminster, who together with the out-parishes, we doubt not, will willingly keep the same day; and that like notice be given throughout England and Wales to have their several meetings upon the same day fortnight; and that copies hereof be printed and published, to be sent to the several parts of the nation, to invite them unto the performance of this duty.

“Given at Whitehall, March 20, 1653.

“J. THURLOB.”  
(Secretary of State to Cromwell.)



[The preceding is indeed a remarkable document. It presents a most advantageous contrast with one lately issued by the Government at home, in which our Sovereign is made to speak thus: "And we do strictly charge and command that the said day be reverently and devoutly observed by all our loving subjects in Scotland, as they tender the favour of Almighty God, and would avoid his wrath and indignation." In one respect at least the former days were better than these. Oliver's enlightenment was marvellous for his period. But, after all, his views regarding civil and religious liberty were indistinct and hazy. He saw men as trees walking. His proclamation is not quite consistent with itself. It reminds one very much of the writings of Owen and others of that day, on the head of Magistracy in its relation to matters of religion.

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#### JESTS UPON SCRIPTURE.

It is very common with some persons, says the *Christian Messenger*, to raise a laugh by means of some ludicrous story connected with a text of Scripture. Sometimes it is a play on the words, a pun; at other times a blunder; and not seldom, a downright impiety. Whatever be its form even when lightest, it is no venial offence, leading as it does to profane contempt of God's Word. Those who practise this have never been celebrated for genuine wit. The laughter which they call forth is provoked solely by the unexpected contrast between the solemn words of Scripture and some droll idea. There is no real wit in the case; and the dullest persons in society are most remarkable for these attempts.

The evils arising from this practice are greater than they appear at first. It leads, in general, to irreverence for Scripture. No man would jest with the dying words of his father or his mother; yet the words of God are quite as solemn. When we have heard a comic or vulgar tale connected with a text of Scripture, such is the power of association, that we never hear the text afterwards without thinking of the jest. The effect of this is obvious. He who is much engaged in this kind of false wit will come at length to have a large portion of Holy Scripture spotted over by his unclean fancy.

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#### ANECDOTE OF JOHN NEWTON.

Two or three years before the death of that eminent servant of Christ, John Newton of London, when his sight was become so dim, that he was no longer able to read, an aged friend and brother in the ministry called on him to breakfast. Family prayer followed, and the portion of Scripture for the day was read to him. In it occurred the verse, "By the grace of God I am what I am." It was the pious man's custom on these occasions to make a short familiar exposition on the passage read. After the reading of this passage he paused for a moment, and then uttered this affecting soliloquy:—"I am not what I ought to be. Ah, how imperfect and deficient—I am not what I wish to be. I abhor what is evil, and I would cleave to what is good! I am not what I hope to be—soon, soon shall I put off mortality, and with mortality all sin and imperfection.—Yet—though I am not what I ought to be; nor what I wish to be; nor what I hope to be, I can truly say, I am not what I once was—a slave to sin and Satan; and I can heartily join with the apostle, and acknowledge 'By the grace of God I am what I am.' Let us pray."

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#### METHODISM IN GREAT BRITAIN.

The returns of membership in the thirty-two "districts" of England, Scotland, and Wales, show a net decrease in the membership of the English Wesleyan Church of 3,121 during the year, there being a decrease in twenty-one districts of 4,376 and an increase in the other eleven of 1,258. The largest decrease—1,022—is in Cornwall, and is attributed mainly to emigration. The war in the Crimea has also drawn off during the year at least 1,000 male adult members of the Wesleyan Church.—*Exchange*.