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# THE PRESBYTERIAN.

JUNE, 1866.



On the first Wednesday of June, the highest Court of our Church meets at Toronto. It ought to be looked upon as a matter of duty by the representatives of the different Congregations throughout the Province to be present, and to assist by their counsels in promoting every object which may tend to the promotion of the prosperity of the Church, as well as of the cause of religion. Important measures will be discussed, and we trust that the complaint yearly made of the small attendance of Elders will not be necessary at this meeting. The whole business should not be left in the hands of the Ministers, not that there is any reason to find fault with the decisions hitherto arrived at, but because the care and responsibility of legislation should not be thrown altogether on their shoulders. There are matters of business, in which the advice of the Elders, as men acquainted with business, is abso-

lutely necessary. Besides, Congregations should be fully represented in all our Church Courts, and their representatives be present to obtain an accurate acquaintance with the working of the Schemes of the Church, so that they may be enabled to lay their claims before the people. This, no printed report can do.

We shall give as full a report of the proceedings of the Synod, in our next number, as our space will admit of.

Our readers will find among the contents of this number a continuation of "Glimpses of the Life of the Rev. William Ross." A pressure of other duties has prevented our respected correspondent from continuing his communications so regularly as he had anticipated. The interesting account of the struggles and successes of Mr. Ross will be read with pleasure, particularly coming from one who had an intimate personal knowledge of the subject of these "Glimpses." A continuation of them has been promised.

## News of our Church.

**PRESBYTERY OF OTTAWA.**—The usual quarterly meeting of this court was held in St. Andrew's Church, Ottawa, on Wednesday, the 9th day of May. The members present were the Rev. G. D. Ferguson, moderator; the Revs. Dr. Spence, William Y. Canning, William White, James Sierveright, J. B. Mullan, and J. C. Smith.

A report from H. J. Borthwick of his labours in the mission field of Portland, since last meeting of Presbytery, was read by the moderator. The Presbytery received the report, and resolved, that whereas Mr. Borthwick is not in a position to perform the duties of an ordained missionary, assigned to him by this Presbytery, on the 24th of August, 1864, owing to the position which he holds as master of an academy at Ottawa, the Presbytery deems it expedient, henceforth, to regard Mr. Borthwick as a minis-

ter without charge, residing within their bounds. The Presbytery at the same time desires to express its thankfulness to Mr. Borthwick for his past services, and would be most happy to receive any services which it might be in his power to render in the future.

Mr. Millar, ordained missionary, read a short report of his labours in Mountain and South Gower, since last meeting of Presbytery. The Presbytery received the report, but at the same time resolved, that as it would be unadvisable to continue Mr. Millar's labours in South Gower and Mountain, on account of the divided state of these congregations; and as there was no other field within the bounds in which the missionary would be required, the Presbytery would recommend Mr. Millar to turn his attention to some other field.

A call from the congregation of Peterboro,

to the Rev. Jas. C. Smith, M.A., of Cumberland and Buckingham, was laid upon the table.

Mr. Smith craved leave to consider the matter. It was also resolved to summon a meeting of the congregation of Cumberland and Buckingham, to state their objections, if they had any, to Mr. Smith's translation, before a meeting of the Presbytery to be held in St. Andrew's Church, Ottawa, on Wednesday, the 23rd next.

The Rev. James Sieveright gave notice that he would be prepared, at next meeting, to introduce an overture anent Presbyterial union in this province.

The convener of the "Presbytery Fund Committee" reported that the deputation had visited all the congregations within the bounds except L'Orignal and Hawkesbury—that they met with a cordial reception everywhere, and had realized about \$200.

Mr. Thomas Dobbin, student of Princeton Seminary, was appointed as catechist, to labour within the bounds during the summer months, subject to the approval of Synod.

Circular letters were read from the Presbyteries of London and Niagara.

Mr. Mullan was appointed to administer the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, at his earliest convenience, in South Gower and Mountain, and Mr. Sieveright to discharge the same duty in Portland.

The Presbytery appointed Mr. Smith to supply the station in Lower Gower, Ottawa, and the station in New Edinburgh, on May the 29th; Mr. Sieveright, on June 10th; Mr. White, June 17th; Mr. Ferguson, June 24th; Mr. Mullan, July 1st; Mr. Canning, July 8th; Mr. Sieveright, July 15th and 22nd.

The Session revised of Chelsea, L'Orignal, and Hawkesbury, were received and found carefully and correctly kept.

After a good deal of routine business the Presbytery adjourned, to meet in St. Andrew's Church, Ottawa, on the 23rd inst., at 12 o'clock, noon.

**PRESBYTERY OF QUEBEC.**—The call from the congregation of the St. Gabriel Street Church, Montreal, to the Rev. Thomas G. Smith, of Melbourne, to become their pastor, having been considered, and commissioners from Melbourne having been heard, it was resolved that the call be not sustained. Mr. Smith having left the whole matter in the hands of the Presbytery for decision, they resolved, that in the present circumstances of the Eastern Townships Mission, it would not be expedient that the translation be made.

**ST. GABRIEL STREET CHURCH, MONTREAL.**—By the decision of the Presbytery of Quebec, the call of the Rev. Mr. Smith, of Melbourne, has not been sustained. It is unfortunate that the settlement of a pastor in this charge should thus be delayed, but the congregation has resolved to lose no time in endeavouring to secure a suitable minister. In the meantime services are regularly continued, and it needs only the presence of an energetic clergyman to render this a most valuable charge.

**BEAUHARNOIS.**—ANNUAL REPORT.—The Annual Report of the congregation of Beauharnois is

short and to the point. It shows a prosperous state of affairs; a united congregation, and zealous office-bearers. During the last year extra calls have been made upon the liberality of the congregation, which appear to have been cheerfully met, in addition to all the usual obligations being fully discharged. Last year the number of pews let were the highest for the five years which are given in the report for the sake of comparison. The session account shows an expenditure of \$199.72 for ordinary and extraordinary expenditure, and for subscriptions to the different missions, leaving a small balance in hand. The Trustees' account shews expenditure for the manse, and a sum for ornamenting the church-yard, amounting in all to \$213, leaving a balance in hand of \$109.33. There is the final instalment of \$200 due on the manse on the 1st November next, towards the payment of which this balance is applicable. When that is paid, the congregation will be free of all debt. An appendix, shewing the names of pew-holders, number of seats taken, &c., makes a very complete report, and one which must be highly gratifying to pastor and people.

**KINCARDINE.**—PRESENTATION TO THE REV. MR. DAWSON.—A short time ago the Bible Class in the congregation at Kincardine, presented their teacher, the Rev. Mr. Dawson, pastor of the charge, with a copy of the Bible as a token of their regard and esteem. On the 7th of May, previous to his leaving on a short absence, the ladies of the congregation, through the hands of Mrs. McPherson and Mrs. McKendrick, presented Mr. Dawson with an affectionate address, and requested his acceptance of the sum of fifty dollars, as an expression of their well wishes. Mr. Dawson returned thanks in affectionate terms. The village of Kincardine is one of those spots which a few years ago was hewn out of the wilderness, and since its first establishment, has gone on rapidly increasing in wealth and population. The attachment which exists between pastor and people is an assurance of continuance in well-doing.

**FINCH.**—We are pleased to learn that the Reverend Hugh Lamont, who was inducted into the charge of Finch about a year ago, has received during the short period of his incumbency various substantial proofs from his congregation of the respect which they bear to him, and appreciation of his ministerial services. Among others:—A parlour carpet from the Ladies; a sleigh from A. J. Cockburn, Esquire, warden of the United Counties of Stormont, Dundas, and Glengary; and a wheeled carriage from the members of the Congregation generally. Such gifts are exceedingly creditable to the donors, as well as encouraging to the minister, and they are worthy of imitation by other Congregations, more especially in these times of high prices—to many of whose Ministers, "an augmentation of stipend," or its equivalent, the presentation of things really useful and necessary, would doubtless be highly acceptable, while they could not fail to stimulate to the more cheerful discharge of duty, on behalf of those over whom they have been placed in the Lord, and to promote whose highest good they have devoted themselves.

QUEEN'S COLLEGE.—*Alma Mater Society*.—The Annual Conversation of this Society was held on the evening of the 25th April, in Convocation Hall, which was tastefully decorated, and crowded with the elite of the city, to its utmost capacity. The Alma Mater Glee Club sang several songs and glees very creditably. Judge Draper favoured the guests with the famous song "Good Rhenish Wine." Mr. James Gildersleeve sang "In Days of Old," and Mr. Gray "The Old Piney Woods." In addition to these were a piano duett by Mrs. Murray and Miss Dupuy, a piano solo by Miss Legassic, and a recitation of Edgar Poe's "Raven" by Mr. Nicholson, prefaced by a few remarks on Poe, by the Rev. Professor Murray. The President's address was delivered by Mr. Machar immediately after the opening song, "Gaudeamus." The tableaux and experiments went off very well. During the evening a gentleman from Toronto played certain variations on the piano forte. The refreshment table was laid out in a room on the first floor, and its varied and liberal contents were done full justice to by one detachment after another of the great crowd that thronged the rooms. These annual gatherings have been popular affairs since their commencement, but the attendance on this occasion was said to be much larger than that at any previous conversazione of the Society. The entertainment was closed with the National Anthem.—*Abridged from Daily News.*

*Convocation*.—This Court met in the Convocation Hall on the last day of the Session, when there was a very large attendance to witness the conferring of degrees and the distribution of prizes, &c. After prayer by the Principal, and the reading of minutes by the Registrar, the Professors in the various departments of Arts and Theology called up their most distinguished students to receive the honours they had won. The Principal then proceeded to bestow the University prizes, announced at the close of last Session, for the best Essays on certain prescribed subjects. The best Essays had been selected, but the names of the authors could not be intimated until the sealed envelopes containing them were opened. Having opened the envelopes and read their contents, the Principal announced that the Ottawa Prize of \$40, for the best Essay, on "The Advantages and Responsibilities of our Connection with the Parent Country," had been gained by Mr. Nathan F. Dupuis, Kingston, and the Montreal Prize of \$40, for the best Essay on "The Didactic in relation to the Devotional Element in the Lord's Prayer," by Mr. Robert Jardine, Brockville. The prizes have been awarded by gentlemen, not connected with the College, acting as judges; but the Principal said he had read all the Essays given in, had found them very creditable productions, and entirely concurred in the decision of the judges. This new feature in the proceedings of the Convocation excited a great deal of interest. For a few moments, at the opening of the envelopes, there was perfect stillness in the hall, and this suspense was followed by hearty and repeated rounds of applause, as the names of the successful competitors were announced. The results were considered sufficiently encouraging to induce an effort for the continu-

ation of the arrangement, and at an advanced stage of the meeting the Principal intimated that certain gentlemen had authorized him to announce several valuable prizes for competition during the ensuing summer. The Senate had resolved upon the following list: 1. The Kingston prize of \$50, for the best Essay on "Confederation in its bearings upon the Commercial Prosperity of the British North American Colonies." 2. The Toronto prize of \$40, for the best Essay on "The Oratory of the Ancient Greeks and Romans." 3. The Montreal prize of \$40, for the best Essay on "The Sabbath in its Mosaic and Christian Aspects." 4. Church Agent's prize of \$25, for the best Essay on "The Scriptural Argument for Presbyterianism."—The first open to all registered students of next session; the second to all students in Arts and the others to all students in Divinity.

The next part of the programme was the laureation of graduates. The Registrar, Professor Murray, having administered the *Sponsio Academica*, the graduates were presented by Professor Williamson, and capped by the Principal in the following order—For the degree of *Bachelor of Arts*.—1. Nathan F. Dupuis, Kingston, with first class honours in Mathematics, Natural Philosophy, Logic, and Natural Sciences; 2. Peter C. Macgregor, Lanark; 3. Evan C. W. McColl, Kingston, with first class honours in Moral Philosophy and second class honours in Classics and Logic; 4. Robert Chambers, Norwich, with second class honours in Classics; 5. Francis H. Crysler, Bath, with first class honours in Logic and Natural Sciences, and second class honours in Moral Philosophy; 6. William Caldwell, Lanark, with second class honours in Natural Sciences; 7. Peter McLaren, Lanark; 8. Joseph S. Eakin, Markham; 9. Charles F. Ireland, Kingston.

It was also announced that the Senate had resolved to confer this degree on the Rev. Duncan Morrison, Brockville.

*Master of Arts*.—(Alphabetical list)—Edmison, Henry, B.A., Peterboro; Fraser, Donald, B.A., Glengary; Jardine, Robert, B.A., Brockville; McLennan, William, B.A., Williamstown.

*Bachelor of Divinity*.—Robert Jardine, M.A., Brockville.

The Principal having addressed the graduates on the various classes of obligations arising out of the privileges and honour of their position, they had an opportunity, for a few minutes, of receiving the congratulations of their Professors. The Principal then rose and announced the resolution of the Senate to confer two honorary degrees—the first that of Doctor of Divinity upon the Rev. John Geddie, the illustrious Missionary from the Presbyterian Church of Nova Scotia to the inhabitants of Aneiteum, one of the New Hebrides group of Islands. In announcing this degree the Principal spoke of the devoted and judicious labours of Mr. Geddie among the Aneiteumese for a period of nineteen years; of the success with which he had reduced their language to a written form, and translated the Scriptures into it, and of the grand result—the adoption of Christianity by the entire population, which, on Mr. Geddie's arrival, was

in a state of the rudest and most savage barbarism. The second honorary degree was that of Doctor of Laws, which was conferred upon the Rev. George Romanes, M.A. in recognition of his varied and extensive scholarship, and also of most valuable services rendered to the College during several years of its early history, when he had special charge of the departments of Classics and Moral Philosophy.

A valedictory address on behalf of the students, written with admirable taste and fine spirit, was delivered by Mr. Jardine; and Professor Murray, after a few appropriate remarks, said farewell to the students on behalf of the Professors.

In announcing scholarships for competition at the beginning of next session the Principal observed that he had great satisfaction in stating that the two following would be added to the list—the Hardy Scholarship of the annual value of \$50, founded by Edward Hardy, Esq., Kingston; and the Leitch Memorial Scholarship—the value of which for the first year, would be \$70—in future years, probably, a good deal more, founded by the joint subscriptions of friends of the late Principal in Scotland and Canada.

The closing business of the Convocation was the election of Fellows, which resulted as follows:

ARTS.—Nathan F. Dupuis, B.A.  
LAW.—Rev. Geo. Romanes, M.A., L.L.D.  
THEOLOGY.—Robert Jardine, M.A., B.D.  
We subjoin the prize list:

ARTS.—CLASSICS.—*Third year.*—1. P. C. McGregor, Lanark; 2. R. Chambers, N. Norwich; 3. N. F. Dupuis, Kingston, and F. H. Crysler, Bath.

*Second year.*—1. A. Nicholson, Prince Edward Island; 2. J. H. Nimmo, Kingston.

*First year.*—1. R. Crawford, Kingston; 2. W. Malloy, Vaughan; 3. J. Stuart, Waterloo and H. J. Macdonald, Kingston. Honorable mention for Latin Composition, J. F. Fraser, Kingston.

JUNIOR MATHEMATICS.—1. W. Malloy, Vaughan; 2. R. Crawford, Kingston. Honorable mention, J. Stuart, Waterloo; J. O. Mowat, Kingston.

SENIOR MATHEMATICS AND JUNIOR NATURAL PHILOSOPHY.—1. R. Campbell, Brockville; 2. J. A. McDowall, Kingston. Honorable mention, A. Nicholson, Prince Edward Island; J. F. Bain, Perth; M. Lane, Lanark.

SENIOR NATURAL PHILOSOPHY.—1. N. F. Dupuis, Kingston; 2. P. C. McGregor, Lanark; 3. W. Caldwell, Lanark; 4. R. Chambers, N. Norwich; 5. J. S. Eakin, Markham. Honorable mention, E. C. W. McColl, Kingston.

GEOLOGY.—1. A. Nicholson, Prince Edward Island; 2. J. A. McDowall, Kingston, and R. Campbell, Brockville. Honorable mention, R. Campbell, Brockville; W. H. Fuller, Kingston; J. F. Bain, Perth.

RHETORIC.—R. Crawford, Kingston.

LOGIC.—A. Nicholson, Prince Edward Island. Honorable mention, R. Campbell, Brockville; J. A. McDowall, Kingston, Summer Essay, J. H. Nimmo, Kingston.

MENTAL AND MORAL PHILOSOPHY.—1. P. C. McGregor, Lanark; 2. N. F. Dupuis, Kingston;

3. E. C. W. McColl, Kingston; Summer Essay, N. F. Dupuis, Kingston.

DIVINITY.—Best Matriculation Paper, D. Fraser, B.A., Glengary; Missionary Duty, Rob. Jardine, B.A., Brockville; Merit list by written examinations during session;

*Third year.*—R. Jardine, B.A., Brockville.

*Second year.*—1. D. McGillivray, B.A., Nova Scotia; D. Fraser, B.A., Glengary.

*Third year.*—1. W. McLennan, B.A., Williamstown; 2. J. R. Thompson, B.A., Prince Edward Island.

Pass men—Merit lists:

ARTS.—*Third year.*—D. P. Niven, Niagara.

*Second year.*—1. J. A. McDowall, Kingston, first class honours in Mathematics, Natural Philosophy and Natural Sciences; 2. R. Campbell, Brockville, do., and Logic; 3. A. Nicholson, Prince Edward Island, first class honours in Classics and Natural Sciences; 4. J. F. Bain, Perth; 5. W. H. Fuller, Kingston; 6. M. Lane, Lanark; 7. J. H. Nimmo, Kingston; 8. W. J. Muckleston, Kingston; 9. J. M. Macdonnel, Fergus.

*First year.*—1. R. Crawford, Kingston, first honours in Classics, Mathematics and Rhetoric; 2. W. Malloy, Vaughan, first honours in Mathematics; 3. J. Stuart, Waterloo; 4. J. O. Mowat, Kingston; 5. H. J. McDonald, Kingston; 6. F. Fraser, Kingston; 7. W. R. Mullock, Kingston; 8. P. S. Livingston, Dawn Mills; 9. A. B. McLean, Lanark.

THEOLOGY.—*Second year.*—1. D. Fraser, B.A., Glengary; 2. D. McGillivray, B.A., Nova Scotia; 3. J. Ferguson, B.A., Esquesing; 4. A. McBain, M.A., Thorah.

*First year.*—1. W. McLennan, B.A., Glengary; 2. S. McMorine, B.A., Almonte; 3. J. R. Thompson, B.A., Prince Edward Island; 4. J. M. Gray, Kingston.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES.—The Annual Meeting of this Board took place in the Senate Chamber, on the evening of the last day of the Session. Besides the large amount of routine business usually transacted at annual meetings, some matters of special importance were disposed of. The Rev. John H. Mackerras, M.A., was unanimously elected to the Professorship of Classical Literature. His occupancy of the office for two sessions, as interim Professor, had given entire satisfaction to the Board. Joseph A. Allen, Esq., of Alwington, was appointed Lecturer on Modern History, in room of John M. Machar, Esq., M. A., resigned. Archibald Barker, Esq., of Markham was elected a member of the Board, to supply the place made vacant by the resignation of Judge Malloch, Brockville. The Principal submitted a report of conference held by appointment of the Board with the Medical Faculty, in regard to the status of members of the Faculty, in view of the terms and requirements of the Royal Charter. The report, which was adopted, indicated that all difficulty in the matter would be effectually removed in the event of a proposal for the separate incorporation of a Medical School affiliated to the University proving successful. A movement in that direction, induced by the combined operation of several causes, had already made some progress, and public intimation had been given of an application to be made to the Legislature for an Act of Incorporation.

ration. The report recommended the Board to wait the further progress of the movement. A brief annual report to the Synod was read and after some amendments was agreed to. Financial statements prepared by the Treasurer, and duly audited were ordered to be transmitted along with it. There was read an encouraging letter from the Secretary to the Colonial Committee of the Church of Scotland, respecting an additional Professorship in the Theological Faculty. The Board adjourned

to meet at Toronto, first Wednesday of June, at five, P.M.

**DONATIONS TO THE LIBRARY.**—The Trustees of New York State Library—"Documents relating to the Colonial History of New York," 11 large 4to volumes—a very valuable work; also 16 reports of the State Cabinet of Natural History, and of the Regents of the University of New York; Board of Agriculture, Upper Canada, 4 vols.; Education Department, New Brunswick, 22 vols.

## Correspondence.

### THE UNION QUESTION.

To the Editor,



IR,—Your weekly contemporary says of me, your unfortunate correspondent, that failing certain steps on my part, "we shall consign him to the category of unprincipled writers, whose lucubrations should not find a place in the columns of a respectable periodical." Not-

withstanding this dreadful sentence I still venture to hope that you will find room for another "lucubration."

The great answer relied upon by your contemporary and his correspondents is that there is no Free Church party in Canada; that it has been absorbed; or exhaled like a morning mist; or like a Seidlitz powder, the two parties have joined, fizzed together, and settled down into a vapid compound. Such, at least, is the only conclusion I can draw from the attacks made upon me for attempting to discuss some of the preliminary points which must be raised and settled before the question can be adjudicated upon. One enthusiastic young man in a letter signed "Union" which appears in the issue of the 11th of May, says, "Evidently though he (an Elder) exhumed a document of the full age of twenty-one which may now take care of itself, he has not studied the question, at least from a Canadian stand-point. . . . *The sooner our Church and Country ceases from being pestered with imported notions, the better for both.*" The editor vouches for his correspondent being a clergyman of our Church in Canada. He must, therefore, be of the full age of twenty-one, although the evidence of the letter itself rather leads to a doubt on this point, while the words I have italicised would almost induce me to believe with Darwin, that he had been developed, but not much, and may have been in existence

for a thousand years. Whichever theory is right, it is plain he does not possess many imported ideas.

For the friends of Union to shut their eyes to the existence, in a recognisable form, of the two distinct branches of the Canada Presbyterian Church, while it is constantly forced upon their notice, reminds me strongly of the inmate of a lunatic asylum who fancied himself a king, and his table furnished with every rarity that wealth or power could procure, yet who complained that every thing he ate had the taste of porridge. The very basis of union shews the fact clearly, that it was contemplated that there should be two parties within the body, one holding one set of opinions, and the other another. Whatever may be the feelings of individual members of our Church, then, it is clear that, as a Church, we hold a third set of opinions which must either be abandoned by us, or embodied in the basis of union. If they are abandoned, we, by this step say plainly that the stand our Church took was untenable, and that the decision arrived at, after much thought, care and prayer, to remain attached to the Church of our Fathers, "was lending the weight of our influence, as a Church, to the support of principles which are incompatible with the purity and liberty of any Church, by which they are allowed—and which are fitted to do grievous injury to the cause of the Redeemer throughout the world." We thus also acknowledge that the ministers who withdrew from our Church in Canada were justified in "solemnly protesting against the synod's unfaithfulness to its avowed convictions." We swallow all this from the one party, and then the other side hands us another tonic to act as an alternative for our constitution. The U. P. side tell us that the views we hold of Church endowment are "inconsistent with the nature of religion, the spirit of the Gospel, the express appointment of Jesus Christ, and the civil rights

of man; that their tendency, as exhibited by their effects, is to secularize religion, promote hypocrisy, perpetuate error, produce infidelity, destroy the unity and purity of the Church, and disturb the peace and order of civil society."

Have our ministers never felt all the deadly effects here set forth, when they were putting their half yearly payment from the Clergy Reserves into their pockets? Probably they console themselves that although it is an endowment it is "such a little one" that it can do no harm.

If on the other hand we, as a Church, maintain our views, the basis of union will be rather a curious looking document. Will the friends of union tell me why we should not do so, if the other two parties have reserved that right to themselves?

Your obedt. servant,

AN ELDER.

*To the Editor.*

SIR,—From three communications which appeared in the Presbyterian lately, I see that your columns are once more opened to the discussion of the Union question. A free and candid discussion is a very good thing, provided the disputants conduct the discussion so that the readers, for whose special benefit they write, may understand the points at issue.

One of your correspondents, very strangely indeed, with one tremendous sweep or rather stretch of fertile imagination, accuses the leaders of the Union movement, as he pleases to call them, of seeking a union of the two churches for political purposes and on personal considerations. I hope his own mind is not his informant on this point. What can be his authority for such unmitigated imputation? I wonder if this is in accordance with "principle," or in harmony with his view of "Christian Union," *tantæ ne animis cælestibus iræ.*

Now if he includes among the "leaders" all who write on, and publicly advocate the union question, then I suppose I am one, and as such, I hurl back with just scorn any such motives as are attributed to me and others in the article signed "An Elder." I would ask "an Elder" to define what he means by "principles" as employed by him, and before doing so to eliminate prejudices from what he calls "principles" so that we may know what remains to be considered. Assertions and opinions are not always facts and arguments. Let him come to facts and the *real* state of the questions; and then should not an abler opponent meet him, I am prepared, in my own way, to deal with the

question retrospectively, as it now stands prospectively. It is the most important question that is now forcing itself upon the attention not only of Presbyterians in Canada, but also in the sister Provinces and in Scotland and elsewhere, and deserves a dispassionate consideration. For my own part I would oppose union to the last, did I believe that one single gospel truth would thereby be endangered. And the only reason for which I would urge it is, that from a careful study of the question for years, and the working of Presbyterianism in this country, I am convinced, and I think am prepared to show, that a union of the two Presbyterian bodies would, under God, be the most efficient way for advancing His glory and extending His cause in the great Canadian field, in which by His providence we are placed.

Your correspondent, Mr. Douglas, urges "Christian Union" on "Scriptural conditions." That is the very ground which I take, and I think all who advocate union in both churches, take the same ground. Mr. Douglas should distinguish between individual "Christian Union," and ecclesiastical "Christian Union." The former is a virtue which every unprejudiced Christian will exercise towards his fellow Christian, irrespective of names and outward distinction; but the latter is not only a virtue, but also a necessity for carrying forward the great purpose for which the Church has been instituted in the world. The powers that be were ordained of God—government is of Divine origin, without which society could not exist, either civilly or ecclesiastically—and unless the majority, in all deliberative bodies govern, then there is an end to all government. Mr. Douglas seems very much to fear the majority and would rather be guided in all ecclesiastical matters by his own views than by those of the majority of a Synod. Well, I suppose, in this free age he could do so, with certain modifications, but at the same time I would remind him that such conduct in the past has caused many an uncalled for schism in the Christian Church. Why this was the cause of the disruption against which he took his stand for the last twenty years, but now he is afraid of some prospective majority? What change has come over the spirit of his dream?

But, sir, I for one am not very much moved with sympathy towards those who are forever advocating union on "Scriptural conditions," for I love the notion that it is but too frequently a mere subterfuge, a mask to hide their opposition, if not their prejudices. The world is full of such: the Universalist, the Unitarian and all the other heretics, claim to act in the same way

The Scriptures are common property, and are made very common sometimes, for many, alas! see in them only the reflection of their own minds, and read them in the light of personal bias, like the lady and the clergyman who were looking at the moon to discover its inhabitants, the lady thought that she saw the shadows of two lovers, while the clergyman maintained that the shadows were those of the two towers of a cathedral—*fiungunt simul credentque*. I prefer, however, the Pauline epistles, as my authority as to what constitutes "Scriptural union."

Yours truly,

UNION.

To the Editor of the Presbyterian:

SIR,—The letter signed "Pax," has been honoured with an editorial. It was not intended for publication; but simply to direct the mind of the editor to the truth. The writer sincerely regrets having said aught that savoured of a bad spirit, to the Church of his "fathers," in which he was "born and brought up." As he owes much to that Church, he loves her much. Yet he would not desire to be found among those who honour her for what she is to be blamed; nor would he be found among those who blame her for what she ought to be praised.

It appears to "Pax" that an attempt is made by "Elder" to bring about a Union among all the Presbyterians, by extorting from them this confession of faith,—that the principle of a civil establishment of Christianity is a scriptural one. That all men should be compelled to support religion, i.e. the religion of the State. Such being the case, that we in Canada must admit that the Church of Scotland is the beau ideal of the Church of Christ.

Now, in our humble opinion, a Union among Presbyterians in Canada upon such a basis, is neither possible nor desirable. We repeat, that the theory of an establishment of religion in Canada, based upon compulsory support, is both unscriptural, and impossible. The very advocacy of such an establishment is treasonable, and would lead to rebellion and bloodshed. How foolish the imagination, that Papists and Protestants would stand quietly by and see a sect of hated dissenters take place and power over them. All things are possible with God, but we believe this is not one of the things possible with man.

What can you mean, Mr. Editor, by saying that voluntarism is a mere theory in Canada? Is it not true that those very ministers who despise this very word, are in this country, wholly dependent on it for their support?

Saving the paltry pittance a few derive from "the CLERGY RESERVES," is it not true that they have no other means of support? We repeat, then, that those who seek a Union on subscription to the faith of compulsory enactments for the support of religion, are seeking to drag in a question which must retard Union. They seek to bind a yoke on the necks of the Colonists, which neither we nor our fathers were able to bear. From the galling nature of that yoke, the people of Scotland have struggled hard to escape. Is it not true that one-half of the best of Scotia's sons have been driven from the pale of the established church, by the very fact of the civil magistrate intruding into the sacred domain of conscience, and compelling the faithful minister of Christ to take part in what he believed to be unscriptural and violent deeds, viz., to ordain ministers over reclaiming flocks. Was it not so with the Erskines of the Secession, Boston of the Relief, and Chalmers of the Free Church? One and the same wrong, led to one and the same result.

In Scotland we have now four leading Presbyterian denominations, instead of one. They are broken on this very rock which an "Elder" would raise, viz., the relations of the civil magistrate to the church. They stand as follows:—

Established Church accepts State pay and State control.

Free Church would accept State pay, but no State control.

U.P. Church accepts neither State pay nor State control.

Cameronian Church would accept both State pay and State control; *if the State were controlled only by Christ.*

We deem the third order to be the only scriptural one, and the only one practicable for Canada. As we were early led to hate "prime preachers," and compulsory "annuity taxes" to support them, we were led from conscientious motives to seek and find a church that neither sought to pamper pride or clerical tyranny on the one hand, nor popular servility on the other.

On this platform we shall be happy to meet all union men. Yet we would not seek to be lords over God's heritage. If any man holds a theory about the power of the civil magistrate in things sacred, we have no disputes with him, if he will keep his impracticable theories to himself and not disturb the peace of the realm with them.

As I do not flatter myself with a place in the pages of your excellent periodical, and



these remarks are only fit for the editorial eye,  
I subscribe myself,

Yours, truly,

P.A.R.

To the Editor :

DEAR SIR,—One of the most cheering prospects held out to Christian faith, is, that there is a time coming when we shall see eye to eye, and when the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord; and we should hail every movement, and no doubt you will welcome every contribution, that seems to tend towards this result.

With a hopeful feeling of this sort I commenced to read the article of your new contributor, the Rev. Mr. Muir, in the April number. The motto is admirable: "In things essential, unity, in things doubtful, liberty, in all things, charity." The introductory remarks are very judicious, but what are unlearned laymen like myself to think of his mode of stating the first *essential*, to which he claims the universal assent of Christians, "a belief in the atonement of Jesus Christ as the only propitiatory sacrifice to Divine justice for the sins of a guilty world." Jesus himself invites us to receive the kingdom of God as little children, but this is inviting us to receive it as learned men and philosophers, and demanding assent to a complicated and difficult proposition, the very words of which are of doubtful meaning. I have looked over Matthew, Mark, Luke, and the Acts of the Apostles with reference to this, and do not find any such expression used by our Lord or his disciples in his time. There is nothing like it in the Sermon on the Mount, in the parables, nor in the instructions to the apostles when sending them on their first mission, nor anything like it in their earliest teachings; and yet, it will surely be admitted, the great Teacher himself

and his immediate disciples knew and taught the essentials of Christianity.

Observe, I do not oppose the doctrine, nor do I object *altogether* to the mode of stating it, as the expressions of which it is made up, or similar ones, are to be found in the writings of Paul and John, but I think you will admit they belong to a second or more advanced phase of Christianity, and that your correspondent should only have asked for it a place under the second or third heading of his motto.

I am not quite sure that he will even find unity among Christians in their assent to his second proposition, namely, "a belief in the Bible as the word of God," many would think it better expressed if he had said, in the Bible as containing the word of God.

A quartz may be very rich, and yet it would be an exaggeration to call it pure gold. This must be extracted by the usual process. So in like manner the Bible contains the will and word of God, but they do not constitute it *en masse*, nor do they lie on the surface. If we would find them we must search for them as for hidden treasures. Much of this quarry of Divine truth is exceedingly rich, while in other portions the veins are small and obscure, and the pure metal scarcely obtainable in paying quantity—so to speak—by ordinary labourers, although it will still repay scientific research.

My impression is, therefore, that neither of the propositions, as stated, is entitled to be classed as *essential*, and that your correspondent, who is evidently capable of writing to edification, should look into the subject again, and I would merely venture to suggest that propositions to secure unity of assent among Christians, should be clearly embraced by the teachings of Christ himself, and should be plain even to the unlearned. Yours truly, O.

## Articles Communicated.

GLIMPSES OF THE REV. WILLIAM ROSS, THE BECHUANAN MISSIONARY. (*Continued.*)

WILLIAM, A PLOUGHBOY.



WILLIAM now devoted himself with great zeal to the drudgery of Agricultural work; and in the evenings for a time, when convenient, attended school, where he studied Algebra and the higher branches of arithmetic. He was quite delighted in "whistling behind the plough" and

singing some of the unexceptionable songs of the Scottish Ploughboy, "Robie Burns," of which he was particularly fond. He not only had, in keeping the farm books, shewn that he had according to the Scotticism "ripen his Father's bonnet," but he soon became a thorough master of every kind of field work and even of high farming, as then known. He also plumed himself on the attaining of accurate knowledge of horses, cows, and other live stock. Neither did William, in these

days of rural hard labour, forget "the one thing needful;" but he began then to have a decided taste for practical godliness, which continued steadily to grow with his growth.

#### HIS CONVERSION.

He says, "when we removed to Pitkindie, there was no dissenting chapel nearer than four or five miles, and, though we often went thus far, yet we were not so bigotted as not to attend occasionally at the Established Church at hand. In the good providence and grace of God, however, our want was soon and abundantly supplied. A few families united and presented a petition for a preacher in the Secession Church. There was in the parish, at Balfour, a chapel, erected by the Messrs. Haldane some years before, but which was now unoccupied. A favourable answer being returned, the chapel was procured, and by appointment of Presbytery, opened by the Rev. W. Proudfoot, Pitrodie, and afterwards supplied by preachers, many of them being of decided talent. The course of preachings proved to me a perfect luxury. It rivetted my attention, and the Holy Spirit wrought upon my soul so effectually that I was constrained to pray in spirit and in truth. I was one day so overpowered by the constraining love of Christ, that in the field where I was engaged in my labour, I lifted up my soul in solemn prayer to God; and at that time, I ever after thought, I experienced the saving change. I also believe that the spirit of God had been for years shewing me that I was a sinner, that I needed a Saviour, an Almighty loving Saviour. I now saw that Jesus was the very Saviour I required; I saw also the great necessity of my giving myself, soul and body, into his service. I pondered these things—I began in earnest to search the Scriptures—to listen with a new relish to the messages of mercy. I laid hold with humility, yet with confidence, on the hope set before me in the gospel. I saw Christ as my Shepherd, my Saviour, my Lord and my God; I could say one thing I do know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see! What a change? Yes, if any man be in Christ, be united to Christ, belong to Christ, he is a new creature."

#### HIS FIRST COMMUNION.

William was now desirous of testifying his love to Jesus, in obeying His dying command. "Do this in remembrance of me." He longed to take those vows upon himself which His parents did in his stead; when he was consecrated to Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, one God, in Baptism. He was examined by the

Rev. Mr. Proudfoot, and exhorted by the Rev. Mr. Fraser, of Dundee, and admitted by them to the communion. Often as he had been present, seeing, and hearing, when the Lord's Supper was celebrated and had asked, doubtless with wonder and delight, "What mean you by this service?" how different now when he actually tastes and sees there that God is good! How thrilling to hear Jesus say: "Eat, friends, drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved." What an indescribable joy a first meeting with Jesus at his table ever brings! In the far distant wilderness after many years, he, calling this season to remembrance, says: "As we approached the holy table, we sang,

'God's mercies I will ever sing,  
And with my mouth I shall  
Thy faithfulness make to be known  
To generations all.'

These words were deeply impressed on my mind. Indeed the time, the place, the service will ever remain in my memory, whilst it remains with me. I had now taken up in public the cross, and I had sworn by the most solemn of oaths that I would never be ashamed of Jesus:

'In the cross of Christ, I glory  
Towering o'er the wrecks of time;  
As the light of sacred story  
Gathers round its head sublime.

When the woes of life o'ertake me,  
Hopes deceive, and fears annoy,  
Never shall the cross forsake me,  
Lo! it glows with peace and joy.'

Nay, indeed, with Paul the great Apostle of the Gentiles, he could say, this would ever be his song in this the house of his pilgrimage: 'God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ by whom the world is crucified to me and I unto the world.' I now found great delight in prayer and meditation; my conscience was tender and checked me very often, and in any slip whatever; for still I frequently fell in thought, in word and deed. The gay and passing vanities of the world were studiously shunned, and detested by me; I desired solid enjoyment. My character began to be moulded by the inward working of the Holy Ghost. I had a great desire to be useful among my fellow-men; yet I scarcely dared to expect I would ever become a minister of the gospel!"

#### WILLIAM, A JOINER.

William had now an intense desire for knowledge; and, as he says, was anxious far more to improve his mind than to cultivate the soil he trod upon. He accordingly began to scheme how to get education, although quite foreign to the views of his parents. The plan he proposed to himself was to learn the trade of house-carpenter, and thus would he enjoy more

leisure, and more extensive opportunities of adding to his stock of intelligence. "I tried," he says, "to explain my plan to my dear parents, and others, in a general way, still reserving a secret intention to be useful to my fellow-men. I spoke not so freely as I might have done, lest my scheme might not succeed. In 1823, when I had reached the age of 21, I bound myself to serve an apprenticeship, and to push my fortune in this course, to me altogether new. My father was heartily sorry; my dear mother cried bitterly—and many thought I was throwing myself away on mere visionary notions. I had, however, weighed the matter seriously. I sought and found direction from God, and I had firmly determined, in the strength of His grace, to follow out my design. I must here notice that, to acquire speedily a thorough knowledge of my trade, and at the same time to make great progress in learning, I found to be impossible. So I gave undivided attention to my business, hoping that a favourable opportunity for study would soon present itself. Still I amused myself with books, as much as circumstances would permit. My time of servitude glided over like a dream, for I loved my new mode of living; having found, in general, a more intelligent class with whom to associate. I pleased my new masters, and satisfied all parties." Again, a little onwards, he found he had much more time than ever for reading, with first-rate sociable company, admirably adapted to further his designs. "Some wondered whereto all this would come." In Perth, and the Carse of Gowrie, as a journeyman, during nine years, he prosecuted his trade, with his grand ultimate object ever in view. It is evident, however, that he was no mean workman, when he could say, at the close: "I was one of the carpenters employed in rearing the new church of Errol," (noted for its excellence of workmanship); "I made all the corner beads of the edifice; wrought all the great mouldings in the front of the gallery, and joined and glued, perhaps, not fewer than nine hundred panels.

#### INCIDENTS.

At the various stations where he wrought, Milnathort, Kinross, Perth, Marie, Errol, Kinaird, Ballindene, Halfour, he found and attended meetings, for reading and debating; visited Sabbath Schools, assisted in teaching and addressing, deplored when necessitated to lodge where was no family prayer; rejoiced when called on to engage in that exercise, so heavenly, and so admirably fitted to the preparing of young men for conducting devotions

in public. In his journeys to and from home, which he managed to visit every week, even when at the distance of seven miles, as well as in his daily walk to business and to school, he was a close student of nature, and could say:

"Above—below—where'er I gaze,  
Thy guiding finger, Lord, I view  
Traced in the midnight planet's blaze,  
Or glistening in the morning's dew."  
What'er is beautiful or fair  
Is but Thine Own reflection there,  
Thy glory walks in every sphere,  
And all things whisper—GOD IS HERE."

Thus he looked from nature up to nature's God. But in this, he did not rest; he went upwards and upwards still to the God of grace, the God and Father of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

#### MR. ROSS A STUDENT.

A fair scholar, in the other common branches of education was Mr. Ross, while his penmanship was beautiful. He became very desirous to enter college. Relatives, and ministers faithfully endeavoured to dissuade him. In his perplexity he set out on a visit to a maternal uncle, a Minister of the Church of England, at Holme, Spalding-moor, Yorkshire; and, although he walked the greater part of the way, as it would seem, he enjoyed himself exceedingly, and was greatly benefitted by "seeing a little of the world," at the same time that he received a new impulse to press onwards. The late Rev. James Wilson, Minister of the Parish of Abernyte, and who took a deep interest in the progress of deserving young men, encouraged him to engage in college life provided he studied hard during a full, free year. A companion however made known to him that he was just about to go to a University, and William could not resist his influence and example, and so resolved to accompany him. *Perseverance* being his motto, and *looking up for a blessing*, he felt assured he could not fail. He says:—"We went together to St. Andrew's though not at all well prepared for entering on severe and lengthened studies. This was in 1832, when I was no less than thirty years of age."

#### FIRST SESSION.

It is not to be wondered at, from boys of twelve or more years this big, old classfellow should receive the appellation of "Father Ross." Yet nothing could discourage him or render himself unhappy. "We commenced," says he, "our studies with all our powers, and were not long in surpassing many who had had very superior advantages. This was no small consolation and encouragement to both of us. Though our studies were very arduous, we found that by

close application we could pass our examinations with credit to ourselves among our fellow students, and with the approbation of our professors. This my first session was certainly the opening of an era in my short history, which may be, as it has already been through infinite grace, a blessing to many, and may encourage the enterprising to persevere despite of whatever opposition. Connections were now begun that have been highly important, and habits of thinking and acting and speaking were formed, which produced a wondrous change on my previously undisciplined mind; while altogether my improvement appears to me to have been as the shape and polish which the rapid running stream has produced on the rough and shapeless stone. I began to do a little in the way of composition, and though I was as ignorant as could well be of the art, I proceeded with a determination which refused to be overcome by difficulties. *Indeed, I am not conscious of having ever entertained the thought that they could not all be surmounted.*"

#### USEFUL OCCASIONS.

"I was highly indebted to the Reverend Wm. Lothian, of the Independent Church of St. Andrews, whose uniform Christian deportment, and elegant discourses, and earnestness of manner, were greatly valued by students of all denominations. At a special meeting for the purpose, he evoked and encouraged a missionary spirit by giving an outline of the death of Dr. Carey, and his distinguished success in the great work in India. I was also greatly assisted in having a short account of the labours of a missionary in plain, unadorned but earnest words from a worthy man, James Glen. The spark was then kindled which has I trust long been fanned by the Spirit of God, into flame, and that it will go on increasing, giving me cause to delight more and more in the great work."

#### OTHER ARTS SESSIONS.

In the second and third sessions at St. Andrews, besides the classes of philosophy, he attended at least one in Hebrew, of which he seems to have been particularly fond. He took his fourth session at the London University, and in all was gladdened by receiving the commendation of the various professors.

#### VACATIONS, HIS EMPLOYMENT.

During his vacations he was always usefully employed in teaching, or being taught. Indeed "*docenti docerit*," (by teaching thou art taught,) he practically and irresistibly proved to be true. "In the summer of the first

vacations," says he, "I studied under Mr. R. F. F., then parish schoolmaster of Abernethy, also assisted in his school, and formed a friendship, which has strengthened day by day, to the present moment." Then he taught a private adventure school at Errol, assisted the Rev. W. Browning, Tillicoultry, in his large, prosperous boarding institution; and now in the Highlands was a Catechist; and now finishes by teaching two seasons, with a fellow student, Mr. John MacGregor, at the High Street Academy, Inverness. In regard to which he says, "Our classes prospered beyond our highest anticipations. We managed to defray expenses in a respectable and honourable way. I think our yearly income of £70 each was a very creditable amount. This sum and £100 which I had laid into the Bank of Scotland in my hard working youthful days, together with a small bursary in my last session enjoyed at St. Andrews, served me most honourably to pay for my four winter sessions at college, and five autumn ones at the Divinity Hall, without being indebted to a single individual. The Lord was my Helper. Neither was he unmindful of me in raising up to me many friends. Not a few of my companions are preaching the Gospel with acceptance and success."

#### SUPERINTENDENCE AND CRITICISMS.

"During my whole course of divinity, I was under the inspection, either of my professors (as is usual in the United Secession Church) or (as is also usual) under the care of the Presbytery of the District in which I lived—I was first examined by the Presbytery of Perth, and then by the Presbytery of Falkirk; I was three sessions under the care of the Presbytery of Elgin; and one under that of the Presbytery of London. The criticisms of my discourses were sometimes very flattering, at other times very severe, but *all* tended to show how I ought to behave myself in the Church of the Living God, the pillar and ground of the truth. Sometimes the remarks indeed were fitted to encourage me in no ordinary degree, and at other times to make me really know that while I gave promise of being a very useful preacher, there was little reason to think I would be very popular."

#### COLLEGE SUMMARY.

"I may yet refer to the fact that some of my compositions were lauded in a manner which I might almost say was extravagant. For instance; an Essay on Abstraction in the Logic class by Dr. James Hunter; a discourse on Watchman what of the night? before a theological society of students at St. Andrews;

another on "Thy Kingdom Come," before the Rev. A. Browning, Tillicoultry. Another upon the "Miracles of Christ," before the Presbytery of Falkirk; an exegetical exercise before the Presbytery of Elgin, at Boghole. A discourse before the same Presbytery, delivered at the Rev. Mr. Monroe's, Chapel Hill, Nigg, to a congregation on a Saturday, at the ordinance of the Lord's Supper. One at Forres on the Atonement: and an Essay on the Jews, before Dr. Duncan's class in the Hall."

## LICENSED.

"It has been always cause of thankfulness and joy to me, however, that having gone through a severe ordeal, I was counted worthy of being put into the sacred ministry. I had the high honour of being duly licensed to preach

the everlasting Gospel in June, 1840. And here it becomes me, with the deepest gratitude, to say that in all my course as a student, I had, in a very remarkable manner, seen and felt the hand of my heavenly Master."

## COME OVER AND HELP US.

He now hears the call which proves altogether irresistible.

"Men of God! Go, take your stations!  
Darkness reigns throughout the earth.  
Go, proclaim among the nations  
Joyful news of heavenly birth!  
Bear the tidings  
Of the Saviour's matchless worth.

"When exposed to fearful dangers  
Jesus will His own defend,  
Gone afar midst foes and strangers  
Jesus will appear your friend,  
And His presence  
Shall be with you to the end!"

R. F. F

## Notices and Reviews.

**HISTORY OF THE JEWISH CHURCH.** By Dean Stanley. New York: C. Scribner & Co. Montreal: Dawson Brothers, 1866.



SEAN Stanley is well known as a contributor to Jewish history. The present volume contains the substance of lectures delivered from the chair of ecclesiastical history in the University of Oxford. It embraces a history of the house of Saul; the lives of David and Solomon; the kingdoms of Israel and Juda, with their kings and prophets, and a very interesting note on the authorship of the books of the Old Testament. Without any obtrusive pretence of learning, the work shews, as it were incidentally, great research, and the flowing, easy, and graceful style in which it is written, makes it a very attractive book, enabling the reader to realize more fully the reality, and human as well as Divine interest, which attaches to the narrative of the Old Testament, transactions to which long and familiar acquaintance are apt to attach a feeling of something shadowy and unreal, as if the actors in them belonged to a world of thought and intellect, entirely removed from that in

which we move and live. The work is one that should be in every family.

**LETTERS ON PUBLIC EDUCATION IN LOWER CANADA.** By J. H. Graham, A.M., Principal of St. Francis College, Richmond, C.E.

We have received a copy of these letters, now reprinted in pamphlet form. The subject on which they treat is at the present moment one of great interest to the non-Catholic inhabitants of Lower Canada. We have frequently called attention to the alarming encroachments of the Education Office, and to claims set up by the Superintendent of Education to control the educational institutions of the country. The substitution of works advocating Roman Catholic doctrines for the ordinary school books, which have been used in Common Schools, is proceeding so rapidly, that even the most indifferent must, ere long, have their eyes awakened to the danger of this system being longer allowed to continue. The pamphlet now before us, rather than over state the evils now existing, As a contribution to the history of the encroachments of the Romish Church, it is worthy of perusal, and will furnish food for thought to those who have not hitherto paid any attention to the subject.

## The Churches and their Missions.

**PRESBYTERY OF CUPAR.**—The Presbytery met in the Session House of Parish Church, Cupar, on Tuesday—The Rev. James Campbell of Balmerino, Moderator.

On the motion of the Rev. Mr M'Nair, Auchtermuchty, the Presbytery agreed to record their sense of the great loss the Church of Scotland has sustained by the death of Alexander Macduff, Esq., Bonhard, Vice-Convener of the Endowment Scheme Committee, and that a letter of sympathy be sent through Mr Macduff's brother, the Minister of Falkland, to his family and relatives.

Mr FISHER, of Flisk, called the attention of the Presbytery to the removal by death of the Moderator of the General Assembly, and remarked that the Church was, as it were, without a head. He thought that such cases should incite them all to greater diligence in the prosecution of their work.

Some conversation took place regarding the report of the Presbytery, to be submitted to the next meeting of Synod, anent the sums collected within the bounds on behalf of the Endowment Scheme of the Church, when Mr Edgar, Newburgh, stated that he had obtained £24 additional, and Mr M'Nair reported that Mrs Bruce of Falkland had given a donation of £200 for the endowment of the Chapel at Inveriel.

The MODERATOR intimated that the Clerk of the Presbytery, Mr Brewster of Kilmarnock, was preparing an account of all the ministers of the Presbytery from the Reformation downwards. This account Mr Brewster was compiling from the Presbytery records, but these, in many cases, were incomplete, and were, he believed, supplemented by the various kirk-session records. The Moderator asked the members of the Presbytery to assist Mr Brewster, as far as possible, by searching their several records, and transmitting any item of important or interesting information to Mr Brewster, so that the work would be made as complete as possible. Mr Cochrane entered heartily into the scheme, which was approved of by the Presbytery.

The CLERK then read the following reasons for dissent by Mr Fisher, from the judgment of the Presbytery in granting at last meeting the prayer of the memorial of St Michael's congregation, Cupar, to be allowed the use of an organ in public worship:—

Because—1. While the memorialists plead the failure of the "service of song" by the congregation, they fail to show that the means recommended in our "Standards," and which are quite within their reach, and are well proved to be sufficient, have been duly employed by them.

2. While dissentient does not profess to say that instrumental music in public worship is anti-Scriptural, yet he sees no sanction whatever given to it by Christ, or by any of His Apostles, in setting up the New Testament Church, which is the declared model of the Presbyterian Church of Scotland.

3. It has ever been the public and truthful boast of this Church that she is emphatically "the Church of the poor man," and that in her humblest mission station are to be enjoyed as precious services as in her most splendid cathedral; but now, according to the pleadings, it is to be expected that the Church in which a rich man worships is that where the heart is to be most stirred, and most elevated in praise, and, in this respect, God most honoured.

4. The Church seems to the dissentient to be utterly powerless to stem a flood of kindred innovations now threatening, if a beginning be allowed to be made.

5. It seems to the dissentient that, in mingling instrumental music with our "psalms and hymns and spiritual songs," the distinctive character of our Presbyterian worship—which has been so refreshing, even by its simplicity and hallowed associations to the multitudes of worshippers in Scotland, and to Scotchmen throughout the world, for the past 300 years—is thereby so far metamorphosed, and its identity with that of the Church of our fathers effectually blotted out.

6. Were the members forming a new communion, or were the Presbytery free from State control, they could, in doctrine, worship, government, and discipline, or in the vows concerning them, make any change they might; but surely not so as at present constituted.

7. It appears, from the latest Act of Civil Law on the subject—1797—that the Church, apart from the State, is not entitled to sanction any innovation; and, accordingly, she has never to this moment done so; and that, should she of herself sanction any, she thereby renders insecure, or, as would seem, indeed forfeits, her "rights and privileges," her status and her stipends.

8. At ordination, like his brethren, dissentient declared at the call of the Presbytery, to the Great Head, in the face of the future flock, and afterwards signed a vow, that he would neither cause nor foster "divisions" in the Church—but both of which he feels he would be doing by joining in the present movement. Also, at the same solemnity he vowed that he would, "to the utmost of his power, assert, maintain, and defend the worship as then practised;" and there was *not* then, and there never had been, an organ used in public worship in any congregation of the Church of Scotland.

ROBT. FINDLAY FISHER.

On the motion of Dr WILLIAMSON, Colleskie, a Committee was appointed to prepare answers to Mr Fisher's reasons of dissent.

The MODERATOR gave in the annual report on Sabbath Schools, from which it appeared that the number of scholars on the roll within the bounds of the Presbytery for the past year was 2205, being a decrease of six on the previous year. The average attendance had been 1728, showing an increase of 137 as compared with last year. The number of teachers (male and

female) was 204, or four more than last year. The sum of £18 13s 11d had been collected for missions by the scholars. The Moderator stated that he had received reports from all the parishes with the exception of one. Mr Fisher moved adoption of the report, which was agreed to.

Mr FISHER gave notice that, at next meeting, he would move to the effect that the Presbytery overture the General Assembly to issue instructions to all the Presbyteries to see to their fidelity to the standards of the Church in reference to the Sabbath, and that a pastoral address on the subject should be read from their pulpits.

The Presbytery then adjourned to the first Tuesday of May next.

### THE COMMUNION SEASON—PROPOSED IMPROVEMENT.

*To the Editor of the Glasgow Herald.*

Sir.—In contemplation of the approaching communion, I think it very desirable that the customs of the Church, as regards that solemn period, should be reviewed, with an eye to some improvement. I need hardly state, unless for the purpose of bringing the whole subject before your readers, that the communion in our Church is preceded by certain preparatory services, with the view of assisting intending communicants in the work of self-examination. These preparatory services consist of two diets of worship on what is called the Fast day, in some cases a diet on Friday evening, and in nearly all another diet on Saturday. The communion, again, is followed by a service of thanksgiving on Monday. Now, my purpose in writing at present is to inquire if these different services accomplish the end in view or not. I believe most seriously that they do not; and further, I am bold to say that they are nothing better than a sham. Take, for example, what is called the Fastday. Is the observance of that day of such a nature as to call for its perpetuation in any other sense than as a holiday? I believe not. It is meant as a day of humiliation, and, in the abstract, may be very proper, but is observed as a day of festivity, and that by more than one-half of the members of our evangelic churches.

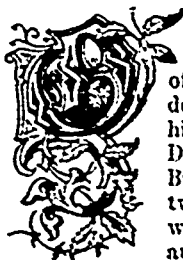
There is no doubt but that the clergy are themselves very much to blame for this state of things, as they will insist upon investing the occasion with a fuss which should not belong to it. What on earth is the meaning of gathering troops of strange clergymen to preach at people with whose circumstances they can have no local sympathy whatever? One on the forenoon and another on the afternoon of the Fast-day, a third on the Friday, and a fourth on the Saturday, and a fifth, sixth, seventh, or eighth on the Sunday, while all the time the presiding minister is sitting in his own pew, and beyond preaching on Sunday morning, and serving a table, takes merely a general superintendence of this, the most solemn work of the ministry. If I understand the ordinance of the Lord's Supper aright, I would say that it is an occasion on which a faithful minister should be very near indeed to his people, and instead of leaving the work of

preparation to any of his brethren, he should do it himself, as he should be the only, or at least the best calculated to deal with his people on such a solemnity.

It may be urged against this view that it would entail too much work upon the clergyman, but I have known cases in which a minister has preached twice on a Fast-day (not his own); then on the Saturday at another place, and in his own pulpit on the Sunday following. But is there any reason for all this preaching? I am sure there is not. If a minister would only fill his own pulpit on the preparation days, I think that his people would readily excuse him from getting up a set discourse. The diets of worship could really be made diets of worship, by means of praise, prayer, and reading of and commenting on passages from the Holy Scriptures which are calculated to be suitable to the induction of a frame of mind fitted for the occasion, without bringing ministers from all parts of the country, preaching to a people who in many cases do not understand their style, and in many cases sermons which originally were never meant for the solemnity of a communion season. I am glad to say that there are symptoms of improvement looming in the distance, and in more than one quarter ministers of the Church of Scotland are themselves conducting the communion services. No doubt they will be called innovators, but the Christian feeling and common sense of their people will commend them for endeavouring to break down a system which really has not a leg to stand upon—I am, &c.,

AN ELDER OF THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND.

### PROFESSOR MILLIGAN, OF ABERDEEN, ON THE SABBATH QUESTION.



N the afternoon of Saturday, the Rev. Professor Milligan, of the University of Aberdeen, delivered the third and last of his course of lectures on the Decalogue, in the Music Hall Buildings, Aberdeen. As on the two preceding occasions, there was a large and attentive audience.

In the concluding lecture, Professor Milligan proceeded to notice the Sabbath question, viewed in the light of those principles which he enunciated in the two previous lectures. It was obvious that the obligation to observe one day in seven as a Sabbath under the New Testament, corresponding to the Sabbath under the Old, could not be rested upon the Fourth Commandment exclusively, or with any special force. He proceeded to show that the obligation was grounded upon those principles which lay at the bottom of the whole Jewish economy. The Fourth Commandment was part of an economy which, in its particular form, was designed to serve only a temporary purpose, and in its form as a commandment it existed no more for us. That commandment, however, had never been formally repealed, but nowhere in the New Testament, while admitting that the letter was not to be observed, was there a statement which repealed that

letter. To say that the simple example of our Lord and his Apostles repealed it was not enough. One might understand the grounding of a new commandment upon such an example; but that it should be enough to repeal an old and solemnly given commandment, he could not understand. Either, therefore, He who declared "till heaven and earth pass one jot or one tittle shall in nowise pass from the law till all be fulfilled," had left His followers under that letter, or set them free from it in some other way than by repealing it. Surely the special day which God enjoined to be kept holy was a "jot or tittle" of the law—in reality, it was more. But even a "jot or tittle" of the law we had no right to change. The fact with which we had to deal was that there had been a change; and the conclusion was irresistible that the Fourth Commandment, in the special form in which it was set before us in the Decalogue, was not binding upon Christians. With reference to the theory that the commandment referred to one day in seven, rather than to the seventh day, the Rev. Professor said that statements of that nature were calculated to throw suspicion on our whole interpretation of the Scripture. No one could read the words of the commandment in a straightforward, honest spirit without seeing that what it spoke of was not one day in seven, but the seventh day. The duty of dedicating to the worship of God one day in seven was not moral. It was a positive law—a law which must be traced to the authority of the Lawgiver. Its being placed in the midst of the moral law did not prove it to be moral in itself, but it might illustrate the importance which the Lawgiver attached to the precept. He further proceeded to show that the idea of the Fourth Commandment was not reached by substituting one day of the week for another as a holy day. The principle by which the Apostle Paul determined that question was, that as every creature of God was good, that all time was equally sacred, and that he who, out of regard to the Lord, esteemed every day alike, exhibited the power of faith in a not less real and true form than he who from the same motives made distinction of days. After explaining the relation which the positive institutions under the Mosaic economy bore to the Christian, he went on to show that the same principle was applicable to the question now under notice, and that the Sabbath of the Fourth Commandment was typical of no particular ordinance now, but of a far higher and more glorious thought—of Christian joy, and privileges uninterrupted and eternal. Speaking of the grounds upon which the Sabbath rested, as expressed in Scripture, he said it was impossible to notice the many different theories, which had been broached upon the subject, and he would only say, therefore, in regard to them, that the very fact of their existence ought to make men tolerant upon the point. Professor Milligan, towards the conclusion, spoke as follows on the duty of the Church at the present crisis:—While the view taken leaves us obedience to the Divine will as a ground of obligation for the Lord's Day, it at the same time delivers us from those scruples by which the freedom and joyfulness of so accepting it

are limited or destroyed in many minds. These scruples exist, and it is the Church's duty to remove them. It is her duty not only to guide her members to holy living, but to deliver them from those petty and vexatious doubts which weaken their faith and destroy their peace. Remember the striking words of St. Paul—"Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations." Not of course that this is to be done at the expense of truth; but if any teaching has a natural tendency to create scruples, that alone would be to me a powerful argument that there is something in it defective or wrong. Let us look at the matter before us in this light. To rest the obligation of the Lord's Day upon the Fourth Commandment, either alone or mainly, is, it appears to me, inevitably to introduce perplexity into the mind. No doubt, there are thousands of the very excellent of the earth who do not feel this; but that is simply because in their own deep and happy Christian experience they have so transfigured and glorified the law that there remains for them nothing in it except its element of life and liberty. It is not so with thousands of others. You tell them that they must take the Fourth Commandment as their law. You persuade them to do so, and they do it. What is the consequence? They cannot literally carry it out. They are compelled to modify it. The secret feeling immediately arises in their minds that they are dealing with a law of God as their conscience tells them they dare not deal with it. They begin to fear that, under the pressure of circumstances, they are modifying it as they have no right to do; that in every modification which they may make they may be insensibly humouring themselves when they should only please God; that they may be yielding more than they ought to the demands of worldly interest or selfish gratification. That is not only a wrong, it is a most dangerous state of things. It destroys the simplicity of childlike obedience: it dims the singleness of eye which alone makes the body full of light: it habituates a man to doing what he is doubtful he should do, it cuts at the very root of the life of faith. Against all that would promote such a state of mind it is the duty of the Church most seriously to guard. Yet to rest the obligation of the Lord's Day mainly upon the Fourth Commandment is, in the present state of society, to foster rather than to remove such scruples. In so resting, the Church must either be a party to nourishing what it is one of her first duties to remove, or she must be content to ignore the fact—and she does ignore it—that her teaching is not producing its legitimate and logical consequences. The one course is to be faithless to her high vocation. The other is, from a consciousness of her weakness, to countenance a hollowness of obedience which must speedily and effectually sweep away all obedience that is worthy of the name. It seems to me that this must be, in thousands of minds, the inevitable result of what is at least most characteristic of the present tone of teaching upon the point. How are we to avoid it? Rest the obligation of the Lord's Day upon the ground of the general principle expressed in the whole



revelation of God, and not upon the commanding letter of a positive law with which we have little to do, and to which no man can be faithful. After pointing out and commenting briefly on the many advantages of rightly viewing such a question, the Rev. Professor concluded his interesting lecture as follows: Entertaining views and feelings such as these, I cherish the hope that the present controversy will lead only to a good result. Yet I should be false to my own convictions if I did not add that the struggle to preserve the sanctity of the Lord's Day will be a hard one. In respect both to this and to many other points of Divine truth of an even more momentous character, we have already passed into a troubled and anxious time. Happy they who can

enter their chambers and shut their doors about them—who can hide themselves, as it were, until the indignation be overpast. But that cannot be the privilege of all. May those who are placed in the front of the battle have given to them, above everything else, a single eye, an open, honest mind, and a determination to abide at every hazard by truth, and nothing but truth. What is before us we cannot say. But this we know, that the God whom we serve is the God of truth; that, if we satisfy ourselves what His truth upon this and all other questions is, and if we cling to that truth with a grasp which nothing can relax, we shall have Him upon our side; and even to fail in such a cause is victory.

## Miscellaneous.

### DR. NORMAN McLEOD ON THE BRITISH FLAG.



DR. NORMAN McLEOD said: the first thing I saw on entering the meeting to-night was this flag here—(pointing to the Union Jack). You know that is the flag of your country. Very well, that is the bravest flag in the world. (Cheers.) It is the flag of the finest country on the face of the earth. (Cheers.) There is not a country in the world—and I

have been in many—like it. (Renewed cheers.) I have been in ever so many, and I never saw more beautiful hills, more beautiful lochs, more beautiful valleys than those of our country. And there is not a town in the whole world to be compared with Edinburgh. (Cheers.) There is not a country in the world that has more beautiful songs; and there is no music that will make you laugh, and greet, and dance equal to the old Scotch music. (Cheers.) There is not a country on the face of the earth where you have more Gospel truth—where you have such Sabbath schools—where there is a clergy more earnest in instructing young and old in the fear of the Lord. What I have to say to you is—wherever you go on the face of the earth you are not to forget that flag, and you are not to disgrace your country. Over the whole world there are Scotchmen. I have preached to Scotchmen in Russia, in Sweden, in America, in Egypt, in Turkey, in Italy—there is hardly a place where I have not preached to Scotchmen: and these generally have been an honour to their country except when they take to drink, and then they become the biggest blackguards on the face of the earth. (Laughter and cheers.) Then, upon the whole, there is not a country, for the population, on the face of the earth that has contributed to the whole civilized world such a highly educated and such a thoroughly respectable and sedate people as the Scottish

nation. You may leave your country, you may go to Australia, India, or America, and may be away for forty or fifty years—I have met a man that had been for sixty years away from his native land—but never be estranged from the old country—its songs, its habits and customs, and its Church—and never be ashamed of, but honour it. (Cheers.) You must not one of you disgrace it. If you become sailors and go on board a man-of-war, fight and die at the guns sooner than disgrace that flag. If you become soldiers and go to battle, and hear the old charge that was given at Waterloo, "Scotland for ever"—wherever you go, never disgrace that flag. If cast among savages, or among those that have no liberty, never by cruelty, wickedness, or cowardice disgrace your flag, but by justice, truth, kindness, and all you have always learned in the old country, see and do honour, boys, to the old flag. (Loud cheers.) Certainly some of you will go to distant parts of the world. Well, next to the fear always confess, the religion that God has taught you in your youth. (Cheers.) Wherever you go, you are not to disgrace that flag. That flag flies in every breeze over the whole earth—fluttering in the far East where the sun rises, and seen between you and the setting sun in the far West of the Pacific. Go north, south, east, or west, the British flag flies—amid the ice of Hudson's Bay, and near the South Pole. Beyond the word of God, I do not know anything that has a more hallowing effect than the remembrance of early years at home. I do not know anything that has a greater power over men than the remembrance of the old country. It really becomes the very religion of the heart; and perhaps the very words I am saying now may in after years be remembered by some of you. Whatever you do, or wherever you are, never forget your country—never dishonour your country's flag, and always love and be obedient to your country's God—the God about whom you have been instructed in your Sabbath school. (Loud cheers.)

## ANOMALIES OF THE SERMON SYSTEM.

Some offence appears to have been taken at remarks made here and there, and especially here, regarding the statistics of preaching or sermon making lately exhibited by the Very Rev. Dean Ramsay. Speaking for ourselves, no offence was intended; but it would show either hypocrisy or inexperience to express surprise at it having been taken. In things clerical or ecclesiastical, nothing can be said, beyond an asseveration whatever is right, but offence will be taken, motives imputed, and bad words projected. The suggestion we ventured to throw out had for its sole motive a desire to afford relief at once to the clerical profession and to the vast public to which that profession ministers. Far from slighting the necessity or the value of preaching, our anxiety was to have it improved. Not even the quantity, stated in so startling a manner by the Dean, was objected to—and surely there is nothing disrespectful in speaking of the importance of maintaining or even improving the quality. We did not argue for fewer sermons, but, on the contrary, for better sermons; and, still more, the suggestion was that there might be better preaching, not only without greater labour, but with greater ease, to the preachers. Nevertheless, and as usual, the remarks have been taken in bad part by some of the very people whom they were intended to ease, if not expected to please; and, in London and elsewhere, some of the “organs” kept for that purpose have been grinding rather angry tunes upon the well-meant theme.

Retaliation, too, has been resorted to—chiefly in the shape of asseration, that the press talks more and no better than the pulpit. But, then, besides the notorious fact that two blacks do not make a white, there is the fact that we neither maintained the press to be white, nor the pulpit to be black. Nevertheless, the attempted comparison is or may be made somewhat useful, both by exhibiting more clearly the details of the case, and by its revealing as in a flash the difference not only between the two of those things fallaciously compared, but between one of those things and most all other things which occupy the thoughts and speech of men. Our esteemed clerical contemporary the *Patriot* gives us, as the result of a little calculation of his own, the total of “a million of articles on politics” put forth annually by the newspaper press—which he quite rightly infers to comprise “an awful amount of nonsense,” and quite wrongly declares to be no more reasonable or necessary than the annual four millions of sermons. Passing over the question how far our contemporary may have exaggerated the number of “articles,” he has failed duly to note that, generally speaking, an article is not one-tenth the length of a sermon, and that, after all, the short articles number only one-fourth of the long sermons. So that, even arithmetically, his comparison is fallacious and worthless. But, far more, he is comparing things unlike—things so different that what is necessary as to the one may be unpermissible or impossible as to the other. Newspaper articles refer every morning to things new, transitory, changed, and changing. Sermons, or at all events the great majority of ser-

mons, refer to things old, eternal, unchanged, and unchangeable. From all ends of the earth we have news every day—from beyond the earth (we speak it reverently) we have had no news this 1800 years. The article of to-day deals with something that was not known or had not happened till yesterday—the sermon of last Sunday deals in the main with matters that were equally open to be dealt with, and had in fact been more or less dealt with, any previous Sundays of many previous centuries. What is almost necessary, new and useful in the one case is almost as necessarily a repetition in the other. Moreover, it must not be forgotten that a sort of originality in each of the million of articles is indispensable to the continued existence of the press, whilst originality in each of the four millions sermons is not indispensable to the continued existence of the pulpit. A printed *Patriot* survives perusal, and has a certain ubiquity; but a spoken sermon perishes in the delivery, and does not travel beyond its hearers. And thus, although the same sermon were preached simultaneously in Exeter and Inverness, neither audience could ever have occasion to feel that the other's pulpit was superfluous; but if the same articles were appearing simultaneously in the *Patriot* and the *Record*, the public would certainly discover the coincidence, and reduce the one or the other of those invaluable periodicals to a choice between originality or annihilation. Hence, unless we adopt the absurd belief that there are too many newspapers in existence, we must have the million separate articles. But we need not have the four million original sermons. They cost a useless waste of power. There are only fifty Sundays in the year; and a score of “head-centres” could produce and circulate over the land enough to fill up the time far more profitably than is done in most cases. Not a church would be thinned of its attendance, and the remaining hosts of learned clerks would have opportunity of becoming still more learned and more useful.

It is really worth while to reflect whether, viewed in the light of certain results, this spendthrift style of using up our preaching power is not a serious practical evil. We do not complain of it as a hardship that so much strength should be expended on the moral teachings of Christianity, for no man doubts that these need even more repetition, enforcement, and new application than they receive from the pulpit or elsewhere. But it need hardly be said that, according to the prevailing practice, interpretation is very much more in demand than exhortation. With both preachers and congregations the most acceptable course is to speak and hear, not about the plainer and weightier matters of the law—what things we are to do, and what leave undone; but to devote ourselves to the consideration of what we ought to think, or rather what we conceit ourselves able to argue. Now, if all or most people were agreed in interpretation, or if even the much interpreting tended to produce agreement, it would hardly be possible to suppress the misgiving which arises, not only to the needlessness but as to the sinfulness of this incessant explaining. But then we have before us all, as before our ancestors, the melancholy facts that there is little

agreement, and that that little is always getting less. Take Christendom or at least Protestant Christendom—take any one country, any one town, any one street—and you find diverse interpretations preached every day. Take the former ages of the Christian era, and compare them with this age—the old controversies are here yet, and new ones are continually being added, accumulating in increasing pile over the simple truth, each disputable assertion calling forth and in a manner necessitating reply.

There is one way of accounting for all this—for incessant explanation failing to produce either understanding or concord. It may be that men seek to be wise above what is written—to find in the divine oracles more than is there—to make plain what was meant to remain in mystery—to give magnitude to *minutiae*—to make essential what is indifferent. This is a formidable explanation of the superabundance and the unfruitfulness of merely exegetical preaching, but the alternative is shocking—that the Creator has given his creatures a revelation which they are not qualified to understand. May there not, however, be an explanation given such as to free us from the necessity of embracing either alternative? Is it not just conceivable that a bad husbanding of the interpreting force at our command has something to do with the woful want of unity in the interpretations set before us? And therefore, granting that preaching ought to remain, as it is, mainly expository, ceasing to insist that there is room enough for quite as much preaching as we now have in other departments of religion—plenty of sin to combat, pride to rebuke, of sorrow to soothe—still the case for the reform humbly suggested by us already is only strengthened. For all kinds of preaching, expository preaching must require the highest qualities; and all we said and say comes to this—that without presuming to question that all the 40,000 preachers in this Island possess such qualities, it really may be questioned whether they all possess those qualities in an equal degree. The whole suggestion and offending had this extent, no more—that possibly there might in this as in all other industries be advantage in introducing something of that division of labour which goes even to the making of a pin; and surely even one sermon is worth many pins. Why should it be assumed, in the clerical profession, more than in any other, that every man is equally fitted to do everything? The assumption was always and everywhere wrong, and never so wrong as at this time and in Scotland. In about twenty years, the number of churches and preachers among us has pretty nearly doubled, and the intelligence, and quite as much the inquiringness, of congregations has more than doubled. Of course, the supply as to mere number has been made something like equal to the demand—but has the quality improved fourfold? The laws of nature and of trade alike render that an impossibility—no community of the size could furnish so great a number of men intellectually fitted for such tasks; and, as the price has rather gone down whilst the demand has been rising, such men, supposing they existed, would not come when they were called. Therefore there is nothing unreasonable, though there may be something

unpalatable, in the suggestion that, as, taking quantity into account, the supposed demand far exceeds the actual supply, there should be some economising of the material, after the plan of making more use of the best material, and less of the bad.

#### PREACHING AND PREACHERS.

THE Rev. James Cranbrook, in one of his Sunday evening services lately, preaching from Ezekiel, ch. xxxiv., v. 22, on the subject of Preaching and Preachers, made special reference to Dean Ramsay's statistics of the number of sermons preached every year in Great Britain, and to our supplementary statistics as to the hearers, &c. Mr Cranbrook considers the question a very serious one. He says:—

“There can be no doubt that, notwithstanding this quantity of preaching which is going on, and has been going on for years, there is growing up around us an amount of ignorance, vice, brutality, and misery which is perfectly appalling. Read these accounts about the casual ward paupers, and about the vagrant boys of London; read over the statistics of crime and of poverty as they are furnished from every part of this kingdom, and then tell me whether you think those 75,000 sermons every Sunday can have been doing their proper work effectually. Nay, what do these preachers themselves constantly tell us about their success in that particular department about which for the most part they chiefly concern themselves—I mean the department of building up the nation in religious or theological doctrine? They tacitly tell us their preaching has been a failure, for they are ever crying out that unbelief, scepticism, infidelity, and heresy, in all manner of forms, are fearfully increasing, and that all the younger men are led away by German Rationalism or by Materialistic Positivism. If it be so, whose fault must that be? What! are not 75,000 sermons every week sufficient to expound, guard, and build up in the faith, if indeed there be the power to expound, guard, and build up in the faith? And besides, this failure which is so generally by implication confessed with their own lips, I have mistaken the end of preaching if there be not another? Religious truth is properly the inspiration of all that is truest, purest, and noblest in man. Religious teaching should, therefore, ever be the foremost in leading men on in all forms of intellectual, moral, and social progress. From Religious teachers they should ever receive—and especially the young should ever receive—their most powerful impulses to all enlightened inquiry, to all refinement, to all higher goodness and righteousness, to all improved conditions of life. Do preachers, does preaching, effect this? Is it under the impulse of sermons men have made the immense progress that has been made in recent days in science, in political and social life, in everything which can enlighten and bless mankind? The etiquette of these public preachings fortunately spares you the pain of giving me an answer; but I cannot imagine it to be otherwise than unanimous. Well, then, I concur with the newspapers generally in the opinion they have been expressing about these 75,000 sermons of yours. I fear they [are failures. They do not do

the work they should. They have let the thinking run into infidelity, heresy, and other such things. They have let a terrible mass of crime, poverty, and misery grow up in the midst of our civilization and Christianity. And they have not led men on in science, knowledge, refinement, and a higher social life. I fear few people listen to them because they find either pleasure or profit in listening, but simply because it seems a religious duty connected with the worship of God. But now I have admitted all this, I turn round and ask you whose fault is the failure? At whose door does the sin lie? Who is answerable for the preachers and their sermons being no better and more successful than they are? Why have they not led the thinking of the most advanced? Why have they left unredeemed the pauper and criminal population of the land? Why, simply because you, the people, have made them what they are; because the generality of them could not from the nature of things rise above the average of their fellow-countrymen; because you have set the limits of their thought and action; they are your representatives and mirrors, the reflections of your own notions, thought and teaching—like people, like parsons and priests. Their failures are the failures of society. Their want of high aims and progress is the want common to them and their people. And then, besides this, there is a second cause acting upon them; congregations are for the most part intolerant of the progress of their preachers in thought and action; they rigidly mark out limits which the preachers must not pass over without rendering themselves liable to the charge of heterodoxy, and all the material consequences which flow from such a charge. It is very rarely, indeed, that a congregation believes there is any truth which remains for it to find out. Preachers are at the best only expected to bring new illustrations of the old received dogmas; and woe be to their reputation if they venture to go beyond the dogmas or to question their absolute truthfulness. And this is the case even with most of the congregations which are called liberal—they tolerate and rather like a smattering of heterodoxy in a mild form, and up to a certain point. It seems to shed a sort of intellectual halo around the members individually, of which they are proud. But if the unhappy preacher, deceived by this apparent love for the truth, independently of the reputation of it, should, in the eager search after it, be led beyond the prescribed limits—if, pushing the principles his congregation have already admitted to their logical conclusions, he be forced into convictions which they, caring nothing about logic or consistency, think ultra and shocking, but which he yet boldly and honestly announces, why, then, where is he to find the bread for his children? or, if he be a minister of the Established Church, how is he to endure the social ostracism, the branding for dishonesty to his confession, &c., to which he will have to submit? \* \* \* To me, therefore, it seems ungenerous to blame the preachers and their preaching for not being more, or doing more, than their congregations and society allow. If you want the reflection of yourselves in the mirrors you set up to be more graceful, you must first improve you

graces. And that is the practical lesson for the sake of which I have taken up and been dwelling upon this subject. I think society is prepared for a step in advance if there were but courage to take it. These outbursts in the newspapers from time to time, which the majority applaud, show that men's hearts are longing for higher truths—truths in harmony with every-day thoughts and life; they want the problems of life as they are presented to this age solved; they want to find out God's law by which society must be regulated, and the terrible disgrace the pauper and criminal population brings upon them effaced. They would be thankful, and are thankful, to any man attempting to solve these problems. And the pettish complaints we hear about preachers and their preaching seem to me only to indicate that they naturally look to those standing up between God and men, and professing to be the expounders of his will, for the solution of these problems, and for guidance to, and utterance of, that higher truth for which their hearts are longing. But the fact is, they dare not tell the preachers so. The preachers and the hearers stand in mutual fear of each other. The hearer dares not utter all the doubt and misgiving in his heart for fear the preacher should denounce him as an unbeliever, and think ill of him; and the preacher dares not tell all he knows lest he should be thought 'unsound,' and the seats in his church should become vacant. And so, through a cowardly reticence, enforced by reciprocal fears of each other, the preachers and hearers of the present day are separated in sympathies, and God's real work for us in the world is impeded.

"And where the mischief of this chiefly lies is in the effect produced upon the most intelligent of the aged and the young. It is they who feel the dissonance between their thought and conceptions of life and the preaching of the day. Those who do not exceed the average attainments may easily be satisfied with that which is the simple reflection of such attainment. But the young are rising higher, and the number of those who have risen higher is daily increasing. What can they do but turn with weariness from what has to them no possible interest, and only represents thoughts and feelings out of which they have long ago grown? What is wanted, then, is the courage to realize to one's self these facts, and to meet them. And the courage is needed upon both sides—that of the preachers and the hearers. I am quite sure that those preachers who are true to the light of God within them will never fail to find a response from the hearts of men; and it is the bounden duty of a preacher, whether he find a response or not, to be true to his light. But what I wish now more especially to say is, you will never find preachers honest and natural—that is, you will never find the generality of them so—until you are honest and natural. You will never find them resolutely facing the difficulties of this age, and endeavouring to meet its wants, until you right earnestly face them, and make the endeavour. Let the people determinately set their minds to seek out all God's truth—let them not childishly fear the bugbear of heresy and false doctrine—let them firmly believe God will help them towards more

light all that honestly seek it—let them learn to recognize the difference between religious feeling and theological dogma—let them believe God is related to the common objects and common duties of life—let them avow it freely and all the consequences, and it would soon be found that a new life and character would be imparted to the 75,000 Sunday sermons of the land."

#### DEAN RAMSAY'S LECTURE ON PREACHING AND PREACHERS.

##### JOCULARITY IN THE PULPIT—ROWLAND HILL'S ODDITIES.

There is a quality by which the pulpit of the mediæval period is distinguished, and that is a prevalence of an oddity, quaintness, and eccentricity—nay, even sometimes of what may be termed a degree of jocularitv—I mean in some preachers, for many mediæval preachers are uniformly grave and dignified. In all ages of the Church this characteristic has appeared at times in the sermons of her ministers, not, I think, apparent in the preaching of the more early preachers. It broke out in the Middle Ages, and has ever since formed a topic for men's amusement. I have, in the first lecture, under the head of dulness in sermons, given you some specimens of quaint commencements by preachers for the purpose of exciting the more lively attention of their hearers. But we now are dealing rather with that which certainly seems an extraordinary ingredient of a sermon—I mean a display of the preacher's wit or humour. I daresay the case of the late Rowland Hill occurs to the minds of many of my hearers as a preacher whose discourses were often distinguished in a remarkable degree by oddity and humour. When preaching at Wapping—a district on the Thames of which the people have always been lax in their moral conduct and religious observances—he pressed upon them the freeness of the offer of pardon and of mercy. He assured them of grace being shown to the worst of sinners. Indeed, as he told them, even such *wapping* sinners as they were might hope to be forgiven. This is pretty well matched by the mode in which a mediæval preacher enforced the lesson of a teaching Church and a learning people. He showed how ministers were to work vigorously, and how the people were quietly to attend, and he does so well and powerfully. But we can hardly avoid smiling when he quotes, in illustration of this great truth, Job i, 14—"The oxen were ploughing, and the asses feeding beside them." Take another specimen of Rowland Hill's oddity. In his time a practice had become fashionable of ladies wearing high showy head-dresses, called top-knots. Preaching to a congregation where he wished to put down this unseemly and vain display, as he considered it, as it had become common amongst some farmers' daughters, and annoyed Mr. Hill, so he gave out for his text, Matthew xxiv., 27—"Let him that is on the house-top not come down;" and then he pointed out how there was a prohibition of such head-gear in the words, "Top-not, come down!" The writings of Anthony of Padua, a mediæval preacher whom I have already named, may be

set against this fanciful use of Scriptural language in Rowland Hill. He is full of it. Thus he compares penitents to elephants. He compares apostles to ichneumons, hypocrites to hyænas, merciful men to cranes, and sinners he compares to hedgehogs. The humour or wit, or even buffoonery of the pulpit, is a very curious question in the history of preaching. In the Middle Ages much use was made of this unseemly element, and with much that was sound, and awakening, and beautiful. Some preachers there were who introduced allusions sometimes so gross, and sometimes so grotesque, that one wonders how they could be tolerated when so much was heard from the pulpits of the time that was serious, Scriptural and solemn. But this jocular style seems to have been considered a legitimate part of the preacher's office, and was in fact reduced to a system. It was called *Barlettanding* (*ars Barlettandi*), from a preacher Gabriel Barlatti, who was celebrated for it.

##### PREACHING OF THE REFORMATION PERIOD.

The division of our subject which comes next in order after mediæval preaching, is the preaching of the Reformation period. Those were stirring times, and called forth men's keenest feelings, and they tested the sincerity of men's profession. The pulpit was, of course, a main instrument, both in attacks upon the Romish supremacy, and in its defence. What an instrument did the pulpit become in such hands as those of Luther, Calvin, Knox, Latimer, Ridley, and others. With these men there was this difference between them and ordinary preachers. When they preached they proclaimed truths which they knew might cost them their life or their liberty, and with many what they uttered in the pulpit with their lips they sealed on the scaffold with their blood. I must be brief on this portion of our subject, but I have selected as example portions of the preachings of Latimer, our own reformer and martyr. Latimer's is a charming character—a joyous; indeed we may say a jolly character. There may be other reformers, says Principal Tulloch, that more engage our admiration: there is no one that more excites our love. His sermons partake of his own nature, and to this day are full of point, and are great favourites with all that take interest in them to read them, notwithstanding their quaint old English.

##### LATIMERS ATTACKS ON THE DRESS OF LADIES.

Latimer often turns upon the ladies, and attacks their abomination in dress. "What was *her* swadlyng cloth wherein lady Mary layed the wyng of heaven and earth? No doubt it was poor gere; peradventure it was her kercheefe which she tooke from her head, or such like gere; for I think Mary had not much fine gere. She was not trimmed up as our women are now a dayes; I think indede had never a vardyngalle; for she used no such superfluities as our fine damsells do now a dayes, for in the olde tyme women were content with honest and single garmentes. Now they have found out these roundabouts; they were not invented then; the devil was not so cunning to make such gere; he found it out afterwards. Therefore Mary had it not. I will say this, and yet not judge other bodyes hartes, but only

speake after daly appearaunce and experience. No doubt it was nothing but a token of fayre pride to wear such varyngales, and I therefore thinke that every godly woman should set them aside." What Master Latimer meant by the ladies' "roundabouts," which he attributes to Satan's invention, and how far, if they have such, they would take his advice after 300 years "to set them aside," I leave to the ingenuity of my lady hearers. (Laughter.)

#### PREACHERS OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

The section of our subject which embraces the preachers of the Church of England is indeed sufficiently comprehensive in itself to occupy many lectures. What a number of great names rise up before us at the mention of this section of the Christian Church! What a variety of styles! What a diversity of power! What a fund of learning, of acuteness, and of zeal may be suggested by the very mention of the Anglican pulpit! What a fund of learned discourses and of sound reasoning is comprised in the Bampton Lectures alone! What clear-headed, shrewd, and even witty discourses are supplied by such men as South—what accurate moral analysis by such men as Barrow—what sound scriptural exposition by such men as Lightfoot and Horsley—what elegant practical instruction by such men as Tillotson, Sherlock, and others—and what learning, beauty, and grace do we find in England's favourite preacher and divine, Jeremy Taylor. Taylor is a character to be loved, and whilst we admire, nay, whilst we reverence the high powers and qualities of a mind so majestic and so piercing as that of Dr. Hooker, whilst we contemplate with wonder the copious diction, the inexhaustible faculty of illustration and analysis in J. Barrow, we think of the matchless eloquence and winning words of Jeremy Taylor with affection and delight. Taylor has been styled the Shakspeare of theology; and the comparison is due to his exuberant imagination, and the charm which, like Shakspeare, he throws over the most ordinary topics by the play of his rich fancy, and the graceful selection of epithets and similes which he employs for his illustrations. Taylor was one of the most learned of our divines. I have always thought, however, that learning, and the deference he paid to learning, formed Taylor's greatest drawback and impediment. Learning was to him more of a master than a handmaid. He trusted without hesitancy and without reflection or examination to its authority, and occasionally we find him laboriously giving us the opinion of some obscure author when we wish to have his own. He seemed to receive implicitly whatever he read in a patristic or classic author. Thus he is led sometimes by contending authorities to maintain inconsistent opinions, and defends a sophistry and doubtful opinion by following speculations of others. I am quite ready to admit that all this makes him sometimes tiresome and fatiguing. But, take him in his own thoughts and his own language, he is always charming. In Taylor, personally, we seem to have a combination of the simplicity of a child acting on the eloquence of a seraph.

#### THE FRENCH PULPIT.

The French or Gallican pulpit, like the Eng-

lish, is a most comprehensive subject. What names arise before us when we speak of French preachers? Among Roman Catholic divines we have Fenelon, Pascal, Bourdaloue, Massillon, Bossuet. Amongst Protestants Claude, Saurin, Daille, Superville. The sermons of Massillon and Bourdaloue are finished, and masterly specimens of pulpit oratory. Massillon, perhaps the more elegant and more abounding in beautiful passages; but in his clear divisions, and lucid exposition, and powerful application of his text, Bourdaloue is one of the first of preachers. Still, I believe the funeral orations of Bossuet are the highest and the finest specimens of French pulpit oratory. Indeed, they are unsurpassed in solemn earnestness of tone, and in the grave dignity which becomes the praise and admiration in the house of God of departed greatness. They are perhaps unequalled by any human compositions. It is related of Robert Hall that, after reading the "Oraisons Funebres" of Bossuet, he wrote on the margin of his copy—"I never expect to hear language like this till I hear it from the lips of seraphs round the throne of God." I had prepared with great care, by the aid of a friend well versed in the French language, some extracts from the funeral oration on Henrietta Maria, Queen of England, and daughter of Henry IV. of France, and on Louis of Bourbon, Prince of Conde, but the translation, however skilfully done, gives not the force or beauty of the original, and I cannot give the French.

#### NONCONFORMIST PREACHERS—GEORGE WHITFIELD.

Of Nonconformist preachers the name of George Whitfield at once presents itself as most prominent and most popular. The effects of his eloquence are described as quite marvellous. We read of his preaching in the open air to 30,000 persons, to each one of whom he was perfectly audible. Nay more, we have heard that during one of his sermons a wall, on which many hundred persons were sitting, fell down, and so enraptured were the audience that the circumstance caused not the slightest disturbance or interruption. But Whitfield's style was exclusively for preaching. His power is lost in the reading. The printed discourses give you no idea of the effect when preached. I can give you no sample. But I remember a traditionary anecdote in the west of England of a *tour de force* made use of by the orator in those out-of-door addresses, and which he had often repeated. In preaching upon the discipline and self-denial of the saved, he wished to represent to his hearers that to secure this end they must enter the strait gate and pursue the narrow way. That salvation was not to be won except with labour and self-denial, adding—You seem to think it a very simple matter, you think it quite easy—oh, just as easy as for me to catch that insect flying past me—grasping at a fly or supposed fly. Then, after a little pause, he opened his hand, saying, in solemn tones, "But I have missed it!"

#### ROBERT HALL.

The name of Robert Hall is no doubt familiar to many of those whom I have the honour to address. Hall was a Nonconformist, and the

son of a Nonconformist. An English Baptist, of the class denominated General Baptists, to distinguish them from those called Particular Baptists, who hold a narrower and more confined view of Christian Communion. Hall was a splendid writer of English. His sermons contain passages of majestic eloquence, perhaps a little stiff or formal, but grand and dignified language. I have already referred to Hall's manner of getting up his sermons. They were not written. They were not extempore. They seem to have been built in his own mind, and formed there complete both as to argument and as to diction, and thus were poured forth to his hearers. Hall suffered in consequence of mental aberration, and was for a time under restraint. Before that time he had a chapel at Cambridge, and his sermons were often listened to by gownsmen, who filled his aisles. On his recovery he went to Leicester, and was known for years as Hall of Leicester. He then went to Bristol, where he died. It is said that he never had the same power and eloquence after his confinement. Indeed, I have been told by an intimate friend of Sedgwick that he had at Cambridge, before that retirement, listened to Hall till he could have supposed that he was listening to the words of one who belonged to an order of superior intelligence. Hall was of an independent spirit, and often winced under the control exercised, or attempted to be exercised, by English Dissenters over the preaching of their pastors.

#### ANECDOTE OF ROBERT HALL.

I had the following anecdote from Dr. Chalmers:—A member of his flock, presuming on his weight and influence in the congregation, had called upon him, and took him to task for not more frequently and more fully preaching *predestination*, which he hoped would in future be more referred to. Hall, the most moderate and cautious of men on this dark question, was very indignant. He looked steadily at his censor for a time, and replied—At anyrate, sir, I perceive that you are predestinated to be an ass, and what is more, I see that you are determined to "make your calling and election sure!"

#### SLEEPING IN CHURCH.

It is your dull sermon that causes that habit too often I fear, associated with pulpit ministration—I mean the evil habit of sleeping in church. Considering the solemn nature of the ordinance, the great and important objects on account of which men assemble in Church and the everlasting interests involved, the custom is most inconsiderate and unseemly. Perhaps the fault is shared in part both by preachers and by hearers; that is, if some preachers give cause for this bad habit by the careless and indifferent mode of their discharging their office, both as to preparation and delivery, there are, I fear, hearers who set themselves in an attitude of quiet repose, and except when specially roused and excited, they are, whether from indulged habit or constitutional tendency, too ready to fall asleep during the process of preaching. Dean Swift has a sermon addressed to persons of this character, which he opens with his usual pungent power of wit. He takes for his text,

Acts xx. ver. 9, the account of Eutychus falling asleep in a window during the preaching of Paul, and being taken up dead. He commenced with this sarcastic remark—"I have chosen these words with design, if possible, to disturb some part of this audience of half-an-hour's sleep, for the convenience and exercise thereof this place at this season of the day is very much celebrated." Then he goes on—"The preachers now in the world, however they may exceed St. Paul in the art of setting men to sleep, do extremely fall short of him in the power of working miracles; therefore hearers are become more cautious so as to choose more safe and convenient stations and postures for their repose without hazard of their persons, and upon the whole matter choose rather to trust their destruction to a miracle than their safety." Crabbe in his poem "The Parish-Register"—graphically describes the effects of a new vicar upon certain individuals of a certain congregation who were addicted to this somnolent practice. Unlike the quiet preaching of his predecessor, the young minister's words came down upon the flock like thunder, and they are thus described in their effect:—

"He such sad coil with words of vengeance kept,  
That our best sleepers startled as they slept."

A similar result has been described in a certain parish of our own country on the borders. An old clergyman, who had got a strong-lunged helper, observed that one of his hearers was becoming rather irregular in his attendance at church. Of course the divine felt it his duty to visit the backslider, and he accordingly went to the house, but the gudeman was not in. He inquired at the wife why John was seldom at church now? "Oh, indeed, minister," she replied, without the least hesitation, "that young man ye've got roars sae loud that John canna sleep sae comfortable as he did when preachin' yersel sae peaceably."

#### ANECDOTES OF ECCENTRIC PREACHERS.

One thing, however, is quite clear to my mind, and the result of a pretty long experience, and that is, no quality can be more fatal to the influence of a sermon than that of dulness. I often think of the remark made to me by a dear relative of high mental qualities and endowments in regard to preaching—"Rather than see you dull and commonplace, I would see you bordering upon the eccentric or startling." Sterne, who was certainly as much removed from the charge of dulness as most men, offered this excuse to the Archbishop of York for the eccentric manner in which one of his published sermons commenced. He was determined to stop the wandering thoughts of his hearers, and secure their attention, so, after giving out his text from Eccl. vii. 2. "It is better to go to the house of mourning than to the house of feasting," he flatly commenced his sermon with these words—"That I deny!" A Nonconformist preacher of much reputation in his day, with the same idea of arresting the people's ears, commences a funeral sermon on a good member of his congregation by shouting out three times, "Victory! victory!" A similar case of determination

to rouse the attention of his audience to his text, though of a less refined character than Sterne's I have heard told of an illiterate but clever Methodist preacher who was a collier of the district in Somerset where I held a curacy for seven years. He gave out for a text, "I can do all things." He then paused, and, looking at the Bible keenly, said in his own native Somersetshire dialect, "What's that thee says, Paul, 'I can do aal things.' I's bet thee half-a-crown o' that!" so he took half-a-crown out of his pocket, and put it on the book. However, he added, "Let's see what the apostle has to say for himself." So he read on the next words, "'Through Christ that strengtheneth me.'" Oh," says he, "if that's the terms of the bet, I'm off," and put the half-crown into his pocket again, and preached his sermon on the power of Christiana grace. But although dulness in sermons may be an evil, extravagance and eccentricity may be worse evils. It is the part of wisdom and well-regulated zeal to avoid all extremes. What we want in the pulpit is the earnest, unaffected manner in which a sensible and feeling mind would desire to communicate to others secret and solemn truths which are to himself and hearers all important for the interests of time and of eternity.

## TEXTS OF SERMONS.

One essential accompaniment of modern public productions, in which it differs from the early practice, we may, I think, suitably take into consideration at the present time. I allude to the established use of precluding every sermon by a text of Scripture, the express object of which is to fix and define the subject, and to direct the order in which it shall be treated. Nothing, I think, shows more strongly the formal, or, as we may say in common parlance, the cut and dried style of modern sermons, than the way in which hearers usually resent a minister's too discursive style of treating his subject, and his introducing a variety of topics, because, as it is said, it is wandering from his text. "Stick to your text, my Lord," it is recorded Queen Elizabeth, sharply reminded one of her bishops, who she considered was deviating into subjects which were rather irrelevant, and which were, in fact, somewhat distasteful to the royal ears. "Stick to your text," has, I believe, not unfrequently been inwardly murmured by hearers not quite so fastidious as the imperious and arbitrary Queen of England. Texts, however, now considered so necessary a part of the sermon, were not always in use, and it would be curious to know when the practice of texts came to be the iron and unbending rule it now is with preachers in England. It certainly was not so always in earlier times. Sometimes there was no text, sometimes it was taken from a verse of a hymn. In some of the sermons of Clarke, the English divine, who was one of the translators of the Bible, the text is taken from the Catechism. In many parts of Europe, though not a law, still it was a very rigid custom, and seldom departed from, to take the text from the epistle or gospel of the day. This, of course, led sometimes to a good deal of ingenious turning of words to suit the preacher's purpose. Indeed, the connection of the text with the subject is often unnatural and forced.

One of Messillon's best sermons, on the coldness and languor with which Christians too often perform the duties of religion, is preached from Luke iv. 18, and taken from the gospel of the day:—"And he rose out of the synagogue, and entered into Simon's house, and Simon's wife's mother lay sick of a fever"—which, of course, the preacher ingeniously turns to sickness and languor of religious feeling.

## ANECDOTES OF COVERT MEANINGS CONVEYED IN TEXTS.

There is often great force, and sometimes a covert meaning, conveyed in the choice of a text. An anecdote illustrative of this is recorded of Dr. Paley, the well-known author of *Natural Theology*, *Evidences of Christianity*, and other popular works. When Pitt, as first Lord of the Treasury, and Chancellor of the Exchequer, at the age of twenty-three, revisited Cambridge, where he had graduated, Paley marked, with a sarcastic eye, how assiduously some of the leading members of the University courted the youthful Prime Minister, and made up to him in view of the good things which he would now have at his disposal. It was Paley's turn to preach before the University at St. Mary's on the Sunday following Pitt's visit; accordingly he took for his text—"There is a lad here which hath five barley loaves and two small fishes," adding, as he looked round on the crowded church, "but what are they among so many." A most unfortunate result followed the selection of a text in the Chapel Royal at Dublin. Dr. Sheridan, the father of the better known Richard Brinsley Sheridan, was asked by a country clergyman to take the duty for him on the next Sunday. Sheridan was in high favour at Dublin Castle, but he unconsciously forfeited all by his text on the occasion. He took an old sermon of which the text was, "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof"—unfortunately it happened (which Sheridan had forgotten) to be the anniversary of the accession of the House of Hanover. The supposed insult to the Irish Court was never forgiven, and it is said cost the Doctor his bishopric. The Irish Government could not have bestowed one of its mitres on a head capable of such an application of the text. I remember hearing an anecdote connected with texts which was related of the eccentric minister of Montrose, Mr. Mollison, of whom many traditionary stories were current in my recollection. A widow had a house in which she resided, and to which she was much attached, close by the old parish church. The Provost and the Town Council wanted her to give it up to facilitate some plans of burgh improvements. She obstinately resisted all their solicitation, and Mr. Mollison took her part and defended her against her powerful opponents. The corporation, however, were in the end, either by Act of Parliament or decree of Court, too strong for her, and accordingly proceeded to remove the house by violent means. Mr. Mollison, to show his indignation at such conduct, on the Sunday after the work of destruction had begun gave out as his text Proverbs xiv. 1. "Every wise woman buildeth her house, but a fool pulleth it down." We have heard a preacher of this class



meeting with a repartee of an equally ingenious character with his own sermon. He was a candidate for a lectureship, and had to deliver a discourse before the trustees of the endowment, in the way of competition; so he was determined to show how clever he could be, and took for his text the single word "*But*." He deduced from thence the great truth and the important doctrine that no position is without some corresponding cross or opposite trial. Naaman was a mighty man of valour and honourable, *but* he was a leper. The five Cities of the Plain were fruitful as the garden of Eden, *but* the men of Sodom were awful sinners. The inhabitants of Ai put the Israelites to flight, *but* they wist not of the liars in wait behind the city; I called you, *but* ye answered not; come, for all things are ready, *but* they would not come;" and so on. When the clerical competitor came down to the vestry, the senior trustee of the lectureship met him and politely remarked—"Sir, you gave us a most ingenious discourse, and we are much obliged to you; *but* we don't think you are the preacher that will do for us." The lecturer concluded with a notice of the early Church, taking Chrysostom as a specimen of these preachers, and giving a sketch of his history and extracts from his sermons, and noticing the great reputation which he enjoyed throughout the whole of the early Church.

#### SCOTTISH MODERN PREACHERS.

The Dean then took as the fifth division, the Scottish modern preachers, represented specially by Chalmers and Irving. He referred to a paper which he had himself read before the Royal Society of Edinburgh, on the character of Chalmers, in the year 1850, and he quoted from it a passage on the eloquence of Chalmers. He then pointed out some peculiarities of his genius, and read one or two striking passages from his works. The Dean closed this part of his lecture by a short account of Irving, and of his extraordinary popularity in first coming to London. He quoted the highly-favourable opinion of the press; and after adding his own testimony to the surpassing merit of Irving as a Christian preacher, made some remarks on the duties of the hearers of sermons, and concluded as follows:—Sermons will vary much in language, in style, and in ability. But there are certain qualities which should be found in all sermons, and certain qualities which should be excluded from all. There should always be gravity, sincerity, simplicity, earnestness, and truth. There never should be affectation, buffoonery, or self-conceit. There never should be the vanity which would sacrifice propriety to popularity. Men will have their favourite preachers, men will have their own ideas of what are the finest sermons. But the essential elements of the true Christian orator have been already drawn by the hand of a master. And now, in taking my leave and thanking you for the manner in which you have listened to me so kindly, I will conclude my task by reciting a fine description by Cowper the poet, of the preacher whom he beautifully describes as,

"A messenger of grace to guilty man."

The passage to which I refer occurs in the second book of his poem, "*The Task*," published in 1785.

"Would I describe a preacher such as Paul,  
Were he on earth, would hear, approve, and own;  
Paul should himself direct me, I would trace  
His master strokes, and draw from his design;  
I would express him simple, grave, sincere,  
In doctrine uncorrupt; in language plain,  
And plain in manner; decent, solemn, chaste,  
And natural in gesture; much impressed  
Himself, as conscious of his awful charge.  
And anxious mainly that the flock he feeds  
May feel it too: Affectionate in look,  
And tender in address, as well becomes  
A messenger of grace to guilty man!"

A STORMY CHURCH MEETING.—The *Kilmarnock Standard* describes a singular scene which occurred at a recent meeting of St. Marnock's Church, for the purpose of hearing from the Rev. Mr. Thomson the working of the Congregational Tract Society in the course of the past year. Mr. John M'Math, the precentor, rose, and said he had a personal matter to bring up which he hoped they would consider before separating. They were aware he had for some months conducted with great success a singing class in the church. He was sorry to say Mr. Thomson had shown a spirit of marked hostility towards his efforts. The reverend gentleman had lately intimated to him that he required the church for his own purposes, and that the class must be given up for a number of months. Mr. M'Kie thought an arrangement might be come to whereby Mr. M'Math would have his meetings on nights that would not inconvenience Mr. Thomson. Rev. Mr. Thomson said he would make no agreement, and he would allow no discussion on the matter brought up. They had met for a different purpose. Mr. M'Math held that the discussion of the matter was quite legitimate. Mr. Thomson had been making false statements. Rev. Mr. Thomson said he would not listen to or answer a word. Mr. M'Kie implored the rev. gentleman to make peace, and allow the class to go on. Rev. Mr. Thomson answered "No." He had been quite annoyed by the singing class. On one occasion when he had a baptism in the vestry, and was concluding with the words "Almighty God, &c., the choir in the church broke it at once with "We're a noddin'." He had suffered more from the precentor than ever before in his life. Mr. Thomson, elder (father of the rev. gentleman), addressing Mr. M'Math, said, "You told lies; you have no right to speak." Rev. Mr. Thomson said that but for the grace of God and his sacred office, he would with his "brawny arms" have made "short work with him." He had been blamed for conspiring with two elders to put the precentor out of office. It was shameful. But he would not allow the discussion to proceed. Mr. Toll made a few earnest remarks. Mr. M'Queen substantiated Mr. Thomson's version. This emboldened the rev. gentleman, who thereupon waxed more eloquent in defence of his probrity. He was "sorry to God" that he had fallen into the hands of such "vile men." The next time Mr. M'Math attempted to use abusive language towards him he would take him by the "cuff of his neck" and turn him out of doors. The

church was now endowed; he could do as he pleased, and would have his own way; and if Mr. Peden did not remain silent he would have

him thrust out of the church by a policeman. The rev. gentleman hastily pronounced the benediction, and the meeting was at an end.

## Articles Selected.

### SYRIAN GLEANINGS.

#### THE SYCAMORE.

We had been sitting under a sycamine fig-tree (the sycamore of the Bible), and were talking of its connection with the history of Zaccheus, when, looking up, we espied two little Arab girls hidden among the branches, gathering the wretched fruit which it bore in abundance. Poor indeed must those be who live by such labour, and deep must have been the poverty of the prophet Amos, when he told the king that he was but "a herdman and a gatherer of sycamore fruit." Tasteless and woody, these sycamore figs must surely have been those in the prophet's vision, when he pronounced the figs in the second basket to be "very naughty figs, which could not be eaten, they were so bad" (Jer. xxiv. 2), and which were an apt emblem of the rejected Zedekiah and his people. Figs however they are, and the tree is a congener of the celebrated banyan-tree of India. It is one of the easiest of trees to climb, with its short stem and wide lateral branches forking out in all directions; and bearing, as it does, its little figs on small sprigs all round the trunk and principal limbs, the youngest children can safely and gather them. It bears abundantly, perhaps at all seasons, for I have certainly found its fruit from November to June. But it is a very tender tree, and does not thrive in the highlands; indeed, I cannot recall any instance in which we met with it excepting on the sea coast, where frost is unknown, and in the still warmer Jordan valley. This fact illustrates the expression in 1 Chron. xxvii. 28, "Over the olive-trees and the sycamore-tree that were in the low plains was Baal-hanan the Gederite," and also that in Ps. lxxviii. 47, "He destroyed.... their sycamore-trees with frost," for in Egypt, where the sycamore-fig is abundant, frost is of course unknown. These allusions all sufficiently show that not the oriental plane, often taken for the sycamore, and common on the banks of Syrian streams, but the *Ficus sycamorus*, or sycamine fig-tree of the lowlands, is, as I have assumed it to be, the tree spoken of both in the Old and New Testaments.

#### THE GOURD.

There has been much discussion among critics since the time of Jerome and Augustine, who used some rather strong language on the subject, as to what plant is really the gourd of Jonah. The identity of the Hebrew (*kikayon*) with the Arabic (*kurah*) has been questioned on etymological grounds, and a wildness of plants, from the ivy to the castor-oil-tree, have been introduced to provide the prophet with shade. The favourite rendering with later commentators, including the writer in Smith's Biblical Dictionary, seems to be the *Nicotia glauca*, L., or castor-oil plant. Niebuhr

alone observes that both Jews and Christians at Mosul maintained it was not this tree, *el keroa*, but *el kerra*, the gourd. The names in Palestine are almost identical, "kurah" being the gourd, "khourah" the castor-oil plant. No doubt both of these plants are common in Palestine, but it seems strange that none of the disputants should have thought of inquiring which would provide the best shade, or whether either were ever used for the purpose.

#### OPEN-AIR CONGREGATIONS.

The acoustic properties of our enclosed position deserve to be noticed. We could hear the voice of the women at Mejdal five hundred feet below us, and half a mile to the right. The Sermon on the Mount was probably delivered in this immediate neighbourhood, and it is difficult, without actually visiting the locality, to understand how many spots there are which exactly suit the conditions of the history. For instance, had it been on this border of the plain, our Lord might have climbed a few yards up the steep bank, and sat down on one of the many round boulders which project on its face, and then a vast multitude, ranged as in an amphitheatre below Him, could have heard every word, while His disciples sat closer round at His feet on the slope.

#### MY FIRST EARNINGS.

**I** WAS the eldest of my father's family. My parents, being poor, were obliged to practice the most rigid economy to keep us from actual want. I had scarcely emerged from childhood when I had an opportunity to work in a factory at very small wages. My mother needed my assistance in her domestic labours, but said I must have clothes, and she did not know how they were to be obtained unless I could earn them; and my father said I should have the privilege of doing just what I pleased with all that I could earn.

I entered the mill, and, surrounded by strange faces, commenced my new employment amidst the confused din of mysterious machinery. The days seemed exceedingly long, and to my unskilled hands, my work was very perplexing; but I was constantly cheered on by the thought that I was doing something toward lightening my parents' burdens. I had worked but two weeks when pay-day came, and I received my pittance with that peculiar joy that accompanies the successful results of the first efforts of honest industry. It was not enough to purchase a very much needed garment, but, added to what I hoped to obtain the next pay-day, would be just sufficient; so I consigned it to

my hitherto empty purse, to be kept with a miser's care.

The next morning a group of girls were standing at the entrance of the mill, planning to present a destitute Christian woman with several articles of apparel. They invited me to contribute something. I answered evasively, as I thought of my money, for which I had laboured two long weeks. They said they intended to send the articles next week; and if I decided to give anything, I might hand it to them within a few days. At night, I told mother about the plan; and she said, "Can't you send her an apron?" "If I should," said I, "I shall not have enough to purchase my dress next pay-day." "The Lord has prospered you," said she. I raised my eyes from the floor, and said, "Had I better?" "Do as you please," said she, "for 'the Lord loveth a cheerful giver.'"

The next day I revolved the subject in my mind, and finally decided that I could do with a cheaper dress; so, after I left the mill, I entered the shop to invest half of my first earnings. I called for prints, and examined piece after piece, and finally selected a substantial fabric ornamented with tiny rosebuds and violets. My precious little bundle seemed to rest my weary limbs, and cheerfully I tripped home and unrolled it. My little sisters patted it, and all admired its beauty. Mother's approving smile amply rewarded me for my sacrifice, and I wondered how I could have hesitated about it. I had not thought of making it; but mother said if I would work a little while every evening, I could get it done to send with the rest.

I finished, ironed, carefully folded, and labelled it with the words, "A present from Mary." It was much the smallest present contained in the bundle; but I thought that none of the girls felt quite so happy in giving as I did.

Pay-day again came; and much to my surprise, the pay-master said, "Your overseer says you have been very faithful: here is your pay;" and then handed me another parcel, "There is a present for you." The present exactly equalled my wages. I only said, "Thank you very, very much, sir;" but I think he guessed that I felt more than I said, for, with a smile, he replied, "Always do the best you can, and you will be prospered."

In an ecstasy of delight, I hastened to obtain the material for my dress, and found an article better and cheaper than I had expected; so I had enough to pay for it without my present. With that I purchased an article much needed in our family. The merchant said he would send it home in half an hour. I told him I would carry it myself. He said it was quite too heavy, but I thought I could not wait half an hour; so I clasped it in my arms and went home, and called a little sister to open the door; then, placing my load on the table, I said, "Here is my dress, and here is a present for mother." The surprise and delight of all was only equalled by my own satisfaction.

That was the beginning of my prosperity; and for forty years since I have never lacked the means of contributing something to a worthy object, nor have I ever needed a garment without being amply able to obtain it. "He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto

the Lord; and that which he hath given, will He pay him again." And surely He has repaid me a thousand-fold for lending him half of my first earnings.

#### SABBATH BLESSINGS.



It was the Sunday before Ascension, and a splendid day. Klaus Hoffner had put on a clean shirt and neckcloth, but his dirty jacket above them, for he meant to hoe potatoes that forenoon. Klaus was a respectable man; every one must allow that he laboured for his family, his wife and children, to the utmost of his strength. He went out regularly to work, he brought his wages undiminished home, not a penny left behind in the public-house. If he toiled all the week for strangers, he at least laboured on Sabbaths in his own little field and garden. To have plenty fruit and no weeds there, was his pride; and he would have worked even in the night to secure this. His wife was equally industrious. Nothing but a confinement ever kept her from her work, and as soon as her babies were a month old, the elder children were taught to take charge of them; People said in the village, that "if all worked for their families like the Hoffners, there would be few beggars."

"Yes," a few other voices said, "that is all good, but Klaus works too hard, 'not only through the week, but on the Sabbath-day. He comes to church only on festival days, and once a year with his wife to take the Sacrament. Their children are allowed to grow up like young calves; the wife gives herself no concern about them, they run about in torn clothes, unwashed and uncombed. They are seldom in school; and when the parents come home in the evening, they find so many things to do that they ask little as to what the children have been doing, only give a good scold if a window has been broken, or a garden-bed trampled upon."

"All that is sad necessity," other people would say. "Five children must eat, and if the parents do not work hard, where is food to come from? They have no leisure to attend to combing and washing and mending, and going to church and school. It is a pity, but what can poor people do? The Hoffners are worthy people, they would go to church if they could."

The Hoffners are worthy people! So they themselves thought. "We would willingly go to church if we could." Their conscience gave them seldom trouble about that. When the bells rung, sometimes the sound seemed to say, "Come! come!" "To-day we cannot, but next Sunday we will." Thus things went on from one Sabbath to another, till labour and weariness had so prevailed that the "come! come!" was heard no more.

On the morning we speak of, as Klaus was taking up his hoe, and Catherine, his wife, stood before her wash tub, as usual on Sunday mornings, her brother, Christopher, looked in. If he had only been ten minutes later, Klaus would have escaped a visit which was like a thorn in his eye. Christopher Gorne was the Hoffners nearest neighbour, his cottage was as small as

theirs, and rent and taxes as high. He too rented a small piece of land, for potatoes must be had. Five children were to be satisfied, and Anne, Christopher's wife, often wondered why each of the children ate as much as herself, till Christopher, wiser than she, explained how they must eat so as to grow up, while she was fully grown. Then Anne comprehended it, and troubled herself no longer on the subject, for she was of an easy temper, and content to learn from Christopher whatever she did not know herself; and all he taught was good.

Some of the neighbours, called Christopher "Godfather Easy." He troubled not himself, and let them laugh on. "We shall see, we shall see," he would say, "who is in the right." But the Hoffners were particularly provoked. "Anne does not go half so much out to field-work as I do," said Catherine; "and on Sundays she never does a hand's turn; yet they seem able to live like princes, while we toil and moil day after day to get through the world honestly." Every Sabbath morning Christopher would look in and say, "I wish you a blessed Sabbath," and then if he waited a few minutes, and saw how they were at work, this often was to Klaus like "a thorn in the eye." Had it not been a most difficult matter for any one to quarrel with Christopher, the two families would have quarrelled long ago. "If we were to kick him out of the house on Saturday night," said Klaus, "still he would call 'a blessed Sunday' through the window in the morning!" But Christopher knew well what he was doing, and that long patience brings a reward at last; he had no eyes for cross looks, no ears for cross words, and looked like one who could easily pay back blows if he pleased.

As he stepped in this morning, he wished his relatives a blessed Sabbath as usual. The couple thanked him, in a half peevish, half embarrassed manner, and Catherine hastily threw her apron over a heap of dirty plates in a corner.

"It will be better here," said Christopher coolly, placing the apron on a chair.

"Nothing but toil from morning to night!" said the wife sighing; "it is a shame to see the state we are in here."

"That is true, indeed," said Christopher, with a tone which left it doubtful whether he alluded to the toil or the shame.

"Come here, Crissy," he added, turning to a little girl of two years old, "do you know that this is Sunday? You must make yourself smart, and wash the dirt and the potatoes from your face, that we may see your red cheeks, look, how beautiful the good God has made the sky, while you stand here like a little pig!"

Crissy did not comprehend the whole of this, however she looked up wondering to the sky, and then ran into the washhouse and plunged her thick red hands and her face into water. Uncle Christopher dried her face, pushed back her hair, and called her a good girl. He was glad to observe that if the little one did not understand the meaning of all he said, the elder children did. Maria, a girl of twelve, put her long hair behind her ears, and Fritz, in a dirty blouse, slipped out of the room.

"You should have been washed and dressed

long ago, you sloven!" said the mother angrily, "Why are you standing staring there?"

"Yes Maria," said Christopher, "when your poor mother has so little time to attend to you all you must do things yourself to help her; you must rise early in the morning to wash and dress yourself, and your sisters and brothers too, one after the other. Cannot Fritz get on another blouse, before the bells begin?"

"Ah, the careless rascal," said the mother, "he has torn it. Children should never get a new article. I have had no time for eight days to mend his old one, and though he has only worn the new blouse for a week, his elbows are through already."

"Oh," said Christopher, "that is a misfortune you could not have reckoned upon. See, Fritz, your mother must give two days to work for you now."

Catherine understood what her brother was meaning. "If you had remained one day at home last week to mend your children's clothes, and make all things straight, you would have been more comfortable now, have saved money in the end, and been able to keep the Sabbath holy."

Christopher followed Fritz into the inner room, and called, "Come quick, Maria; here is something to look at!"

Maria ran in, and Catherine and Klaus followed from curiosity. "Look, Maria," said Christopher, "you must have cut the potatoes in your sleep last evening, and thrown the parings on the floor instead of taking them to the pig! See how Fritz standing amongst them is like a pig in a sty!"

Maria and Fritz laughed with their merry uncle, stuffed the parings into a basket and carried them out. Catherine scolded, and Klaus grumbled and looked ashamed. The room was indeed a sad scene of disorder.

As Catherine by turns scolded her children and bemoaned herself, Christopher said earnestly, "Yes, you poor people are to be pitied indeed!"

"Well," said Catherine abruptly, "I should think you have not much more batter for your own bread."

"Not much of the batter, certainly," said Christopher, "but listen; here is the state of the case, for six days of the week I am Christopher Gorne, a poor labouring man, who must toil hard in the sweat of my brow for bread, with my head full of many earthly cares. For Gertrude will be needing a new frock, or Carl a jacket, or both of them boots, and Anne herself is much in want of a shawl. And if the weather be cold, the garret must be filled with wood for the stove, that the children's ears may not be frozen; or the garden fences must be mended, for uncle Hoffner's geese have trampled down the beds so often. Yes, many are the cares and troubles of us poor people! Anne has her own peculiar share, the house and children are not always as she would like to see them, and she must work hard, cleaning, nursing, sewing, building, hoking, weeding; and sometimes giving a look up at the lady Auntmann, sitting all day in her parlour or her arbour. Yes, all this is for six days in the week; but when on Saturday night the evening bell rings out, then for rest and goodbye to all

our cares! they may come back on Monday morning again with a long week before them. All the house is put in order. The children are washed and the Sunday clothes laid out, and on Sabbath morning house and children look so well that Anne and I smile with satisfaction. We are happy from morning to night that day. Lady Amtmonnim cannot be happier, no, nor the king himself. On the Sabbath we are all of high rank, all the children of God, with no calling but to serve him. I would take good care not to part with such a distinction! One Sunday lately I made Miller Wenzler stare, as I passed by his hedge and saw him planting beans. 'Gorne,' he said 'you will do me a neighbourly turn and hoe potatoes with me in the afternoon?' I drew myself up proudly, and said, 'Mr. Wenzler, that is quite beneath me, it would not be becoming.' He looked at me quite astonished, just as you, Klaus, are looking now, but do not you know what I meant?' Christopher became solemn and earnest as he went on—"When the Lord Jesus has redeemed me at such a cost, and has so ennobled me that I shall inherit eternal life through him and with him,—Klaus, you believe in everlasting blessedness? Is it not so?, *could* we poor people endure our life without that faith? our life so full of labour and care, and want and weariness! Oh, Klaus, if I had not that faith I would throw myself into the river this very day! But since this faith is my only comfort, my only hope, I will not like a fool forsake it, but in love and fidelity follow my Lord and Saviour who is the only foundation on which my hope can rest. And no man can be his follower, who does not keep his commandments. He has said, 'Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.' That is a special command, but it is more, it is a rich gift of grace, a balsam for the sad words spoken to each son of Adam. 'Thou shalt eat thy bread in the sweat of thy brow.' Yes, each Sabbath day is a blessed gift, sent to lighten the heavy burdens of the week, and when we reckon up the fifty-two Sabbaths, and the festival days besides, there is a good portion of the year, in which we may as it were live in heaven upon earth."

Tears rolled down Catherine's cheeks: she did not understand her own feelings; yet she wept not from gentle emotion alone, but at the thought of how much better off in this world Anne and Christopher were than herself. She had not rest from labour, and her conscience, not quite asleep, left no peace in her heart, yet she knew of no better comfort than to groan and lament, and now she sighed deeply. As for Klaus, he was indignant,

"That you are Godfather Easy, we have known long enough," he said bitterly. "God only knows how your children are to escape starvation."

"Yes, God knows," said Christopher quickly; "and it is well for me that he does know; and that the future is not my concern. My duty is to keep his commandments, and in his goodness and wisdom he will command nothing that I cannot obey. You believe in the Lord God as well as I do; you believe that he gives you life and health, that he preserves them, and that if he pleases he can throw you on a sickbed and oblige your busy hands to take rest. And you

believe, I am sure, that if he did this, he would not leave your poor children to starve. Then do not fear to make the trial how to keep the Sabbath as the Lord commands. Throw aside your hoe now, put on your best jacket and come to church with me. And Catherine, you have still time, let the washing tub alone till Monday, and if you give a day then to washing and mending, you will save more than a day's wages. Catherine!" (his voice grew soft) "you know that I have always loved you."

Catherine's tears now flowed from real emotion, and Klaus, who would gladly have thrown aside with bitter words the sting which Christopher's words left in his heart, yet seemed moved by the kindness of his manner, and was silent.

"Next Sunday," said Catherine, "I shall really go to church."

"Come now," said her brother earnestly. "We are warned in Scripture not to delay turning to the Lord till to-morrow. There is nothing to hinder you to-day, but who can tell what God may send before another Sabbath? He bids us 'boast not of to-morrow, for we know not what a day may bring forth.'"

"Ah, well," said Klaus, "if she cannot come to-day, let her alone. I cannot come at any rate, so goodbye. Next Sunday is the Communion, we shall certainly go then, so there let it stand."

The bells began to ring, Christopher looked sadly at the pair, then shook hands kindly, and left them. His heart was sorrowful, but his trust was firm that the Lord would at last bless his prayers and efforts for their good.

Catherine felt very dull and sad as she continued her washing. The bells rung out, "Come! come! come!" and she felt as if she were despising the voice of God. He was calling, she refusing to hear. Klaus had somewhat of the same feelings. He did not like to be seen by the church-goers with the hoe in his hand, and waited behind the elder bushes. "Next Sunday I shall go to the Communion," was his comfort. "Do not delay till to-morrow; who knows what the Lord may send," he seemed still to hear these warning words. "Come! come!" called the bells. "The Lord calls now with gentle voice; if you refuse to hear that, He will call in another way."

Christopher left the disorderly house and the troubled consciences behind, and entered his own cottage, which looked to him like a corner of heaven. Anne and her children were ready in their Sunday dresses—a bright, happy band. The windows of the room were open, and sunbeams rested on the cleanly swept floor, while from the garden a sweet fragrance filled the air. Anne was preparing potatoes for the forenoon meal, but the work of her hands did not interrupt the peace of her soul. Little Kitty, four years old, held her mother's hymn-book and handkerchief, and listened attentively, while the older children repeated verses of Scripture or of hymns. As the bells rung louder, Anne hastily threw the potatoes into the pot, gave her eldest girl the charge of the baby in the cradle and the food on the fire, and then proceeded to church with her husband and the other children. The family were evidently poor enough; Christopher's coat had been dark

blue on his wedding-day, but the colour was faded now, and the seams worn. Anne's gown had been washed and mended, and bore the marks of faithful service. Little Carl's jacket was well patched, and so with the others. Yet all were so clean, so tidy, with such shining faces and smooth hair, that among all the people in church, Christopher and his family would have been remarked as patterns of neatness and propriety.

A year passed away. Christopher had faithfully continued his Sabbath wishes for his relatives, and at times it seemed as if Klaus desired to turn to better things, but he always fell back into the old ways. He went to church with Catherine occasionally, as if to show proper respect to God, and prove to his neighbours that he considered himself a Christian; but otherwise he acted as before. And his conduct was but that of many around him. They knew too much of week-day labour and weariness, but nothing of Sabbath rest and blessings; they toiled on from day to day, got little in the end. But Klaus had his own special thoughts. "I torment myself day and night, and yet am not so well off as careless Christopher yonder." It was a vexatious idea.

"Wife," he said one day, "I have been saving hard up that we might buy a couple of swine. Your brother has a good one; Anne understands housekeeping."

"Ah," replied Catherine, reproachfully, "Christopher asks no bacon to his breakfast, he is content with bread and salt."

"And, I believe," said Klaus, "they will not use so much bread in their house as we do; our rude children seem never satisfied."

"Well," said Catherine, "Anne cooks something every day; and potato soup or meal porridge does not cost so much as the dear bread."

"Then you might cook oftener, too. Try to be like Anne, and cook and mend more. Those people get on better than we do, though we work ourselves to death."

Catherine took the advice in good part; and there was some improvement in their outer life. But what avails a new patch on an old garment? The whole life of the Hoffners was wrong, no blessing rested on it, for it was a life without the fear of God. And any change as to outward things, which begins not from true repentance in the heart, can be of little use. Yet the true hearted Christopher never despaired, his prayers became only more earnest for his erring relatives, and the Lord had purposes of mercy for them.

It was once more the Sabbath before Ascension day. The bells called loudly to the house of prayer, but Klaus and Catherine could not obey. Klaus lay in bed with closed eyes and heavy breathing; his hands lay helpless by his side. While engaged in cutting down a tree, a heavy branch had fallen on his back. He was carried home insensible, and the physician could not say what the end might be. Christopher sat on the bed bathing with cold water the sufferer's forehead; Catherine stood at the foot wringing her hands.

"Pray, Catherine," said Christopher tenderly, "pray! no trial is too great while there is room for prayer!" Catherine tried, but it

was hard work. Her accusing conscience took away all strength and hope. "I have often refused to hear the Lord; how can I expect Him now to hear me?" O foolish one, wert thou a hundred thousand times unthankful and cold-hearted, yet the love, and mercy, and faithfulness of the Lord remain unchanged; only come to Him, stretch out thy hands and call upon his mercy; however great thy sins may be, the mercy of God in Christ is greater still!

"This is the punishment of our sins," she said. "Oh, Christopher, we thought that the labour of our hands could do more for our children than the blessing of the Lord!"

Christopher was silent, but Klaus opened his eyes and gently nodded his head. He was regaining consciousness, and had understood Catherine's last words. She, rejoiced by this sign of life, exclaimed, "O Lord God, how will we thank Thee, if Klaus gets well again! Yes, we are all more ready to give thanks, than to bear our cross. Catherine wished to throw off hers at once. Klaus would get well, all would soon be forgotten. But Klaus shook his head, and looked upwards.

"Oh," said Catherine weeping, "I shall pray so much to the good God, that you may not die. Look at our five children!"

They stood at the door, silent and sorrowful. Klaus clasped his hands together and wept bitterly. "I do not wish to die," he said, softly, "oh, I wish to live! but God does not need me in order to provide for you."

"No," said Christopher, "He does not need you. He has never forsaken the widow and the fatherless who put their trust in Him. He who has made use of you as an instrument hitherto, can now make use of some other. Hold fast that confidence; but still we may pray earnestly that the Lord may raise you up again, and we shall do so. Come here, children, let us all pray together." And he besought the Lord for mercy on the sufferer and the family, in simple, fervent petitions. "And now, dear children," he said, "believe that the good God in heaven will do what is best for us, and give to Him henceforth your hearts and your lives. Whatever you are in need of, pray; whatever distresses you, pray; and oh, how happy you may become, if you walk in the ways of God; whether your dear father lives or dies, it shall be well with you, if you look to your father in heaven, and ever keep his commandments before your eyes and in your hearts."

"Remember to keep the Sabbath holy," said Klaus in an agitated voice. Against this commandment he had most openly and wilfully sinned, and now it lay the heaviest on his soul. He had despised the preaching of the word in the house of prayer, and now God was preaching an awful sermon to him in his own house. Yet this very dispensation, which seemed so terrible to them all, was in reality a message of mercy and love. Christopher's prayers had been heard, and his relations were to be converted to God. Those who would not obey the gentle call of love, were to be compelled by the call of a power which they could not withstand.

Another year had passed. Klaus lived, but with little use of his hands and none of his limbs. The Sabbath bells rung, he sat before

his cottage door, Fritz and the youngest child beside him, while Catherine and the others went to church with her brother. Christopher rejoiced to find his little troop thus increased, and while he looked with compassion upon poor Klaus, comforted himself by the thought, that though his feet were powerless now, his soul had begun a new life. I and my house will serve the Lord, was now his resolve. He endured his affliction with much patience. Catherine had not to complain as formerly of bad temper or harsh words; he was always thankful and gentle towards her, and how could she be unkind to him, or complain of her own labour and fatigue when she saw him have so much to suffer? She had more to do than ever, she went out to work during the day, and was often busy at home till late at night. Yet she was happy now, for her trust was in the Lord, and the Sabbath was sanctified and devoted to His service. Klaus must now make up for the duty he had neglected; he must rest from work, not the Sabbath only,

but every day of the week. But he had time to teach his children, to sing and to pray with them. And the good effects of this were soon visible. Uncle Christopher had no longer to bid Crissy wash the dirt from her red cheeks; Maria's hair was smooth and shining; and if a new blouse or jacket could not be often bought, they were not so often torn. And Catherine would say, Christopher was right, how could we live without the Sabbath, and how strangely I deceived myself when I thought I had no time to go to church and keep the day holy! Yes, the Sabbath is a portion of heaven, when my soul can rise above the world, and I can think of what awaits us there, where I hope to be with Klaus and my children, and to forget all this life's sorrows and weariness."

To sanctify the Sabbath is not a mere command, it is a gracious message of mercy from above. He who goes without the Sabbath goes without the Lord, and has no portion in Him. He that has eyes to see, let him see; he that has ears to hear, let him hear!

H. L. L.

## Sabbath Readings.

### THE PULPIT IN THE FAMILY.

#### TAKING UP THE CROSS DAILY.\*

"If any man will be my disciple, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me."—*Luke ix. 23.*



Y this daily taking up of the cross, what are we to understand? In the experience of most men, it will be found that there is a very real sense in which the words are true. God has so ordained that much pain, much sacrifice, much self-denial, is generally involved with the patient and punctual discharge of duty. This may not be the case with the daily discharge of the avocations of life, for a certain pleasure and contentment are to be found herein, and here, only too often, men find their rest. But there are duties of a higher kind which may give us great pain and unhappiness. A fruitful case of confusion of thought has often occurred. Because God has enjoined that to which pain is often annexed, men have supposed that pain is in itself a good, and have indulged in mortification and austerity in the belief that mortification and austerity are of themselves well pleasing in the sight of God. For this extreme view, which has caused much that must have fatally obscu-

red the divine truth of the fatherhood and the love of God, we see no warrant in holy writ. If our heavenly Father sees that pain is good for us, he will certainly send it: there is no need that we should presumptuously bring it upon ourselves. Let us with a cheerful heart take the good which God gives; patiently awaiting and acquiescing in his good pleasure, if he who has given us good should in his love and wisdom send us that which we think evil. Yet it would hardly be the right thing to say, as has been said by some writers, that unless it is placed obviously before us, self-denial is not a duty. It is a duty to form a habit of self-denial, and no habit can be acquired without constant practice.

In the primitive ages of the church, the profession of Christianity was in itself a taking up of the cross. The Christian has, at times of persecution, carried his life in his hands. He might be said to die daily. Daily he came within the real peril of death. Whether such times may not again recur, is an open question, where the negative answer is perhaps not so easy as it seems. It is not so certain, however, that a larger measure of faith and endurance was required at such periods than at the present day. The supreme agony of the martyr was intensified into a moment, but great aids were vouchsafed to that great extremity. In these days the suffering less deep may be spread over a larger sur-

\* "The Path on Earth to the Gate of Heaven." By the Rev. Frederick Arnold.

face and for a longer time, and there may be a prolonged effort, equal to a concentrated effort, in taking up from day to day the cross.

Whatever in our daily life is perplexed and irksome and galling; the unfavourable outward circumstances with which we may deem ourselves undeservedly surrounded; the monotony of an uncongenial pursuit; the mortifications and deprivations of our social life,—whatever is the drawback or the shadow on our lives,—this is to us a cross, and it must be taken up. It is that *crook in the lot* of which good divines have written. In reading the experience of God's saints, we see again and again how this arises. One man suffers from a life-long neglect, or misrepresentation, or calumny. Another is for ever under the burden of poverty. Another is for ever under the burden of ill-health. Another is under the burden of multiplied responsibilities and anxieties, with which he is but little able to cope. It often also becomes an additional element in the unhappiness, that we have brought these unfavourable circumstances upon ourselves. The cross has been our own making. It is less the divine will than our own perverted will which has brought it upon us. But even here there is the consolation, that if these things have not been expressly brought about, they have, at least, been permitted, by the providence of God, and, in the wonderful workings of that providence, will be overruled to our own ultimate good and to the divine glory. But in whatever way brought and imposed, here is the cross which these circumstances constitute; and this being the case, when we recognise the cross, it is our wisdom and our duty to take it up, and so to follow Christ.

But take the case where, almost palpably and visibly, the cross is laid upon us; as when our days are darkened by the death of one we love, or when a long or incurable illness becomes our lot. Then plainly, and without any disguise, the cross is laid upon us. These are not complex and mysterious events, in which we may be at a loss to recognize the divine hand, but we see the direct and immediate work of God. Here we have a manifest call to submission, with prayer for divine support and consolation.

The denying of ourselves daily seems to be the minor degree of which the taking up the cross is the greater. Day by day we shall find both—the constant opening for self-denial, the absolute necessity in the divine

life for taking up the cross. The Christian must bear it meekly, submissively, enduringly, remembering the Master's words, "If any man will be my disciple, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow me."

THE MINISTRY OF RECONCILIATION.—'Reconciling the world.' Mark the liberality of the expression. Mark its comprehensiveness. Reconciling the world. As I said before, the apostle did not perplex himself practically in the vain attempt to arrive at definite, logically-bounded conceptions on those deep things of God, touching election and the like, on which much unprofitable discussion has often been bestowed, and which probably in this world will never be unravelled. His view was that God's object was to reconcile the world—Jew and Gentile—all men everywhere. People should be diffident in their judgments on such high matters as the decrees of the Almighty, and should remember the great possibility of error, the absolute impossibility of perfect knowledge, in regard to them. But people need not be diffident in holding that all men are invited to become partakers in the benefits of redemption. Our faculties go far enough to enable us to see quite clearly that that is what the Scriptures say in the most distinct terms, and the principle they always go upon even when it is not expressed. "God will have all men to be saved;" so it is written, and the same thing is written in other words in a hundred other passages, and I do not believe that it is written only because we do not know who the elect are, or, in other words, who those are whom God will have to be saved; but I believe it is written because it is the simple truth; and I believe therefore I am to preach Christ to you freely, because Christ is free—to you all, because it is the honest fact that He is offered to you all, and not for the mere reason that one cannot tell to whom. But the apostle adds something more, "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, *not imputing unto men their trespasses.*" This passage has nothing to do with the doctrine of imputation as held by some theologians. It has nothing to do with the imputation of either Adam's sin or of Christ's righteousness. It is not any other person's sin that the Apostle is saying God will not impute. He is saying that God was in Christ, not imputing to men their own sins; that is, not dealing with them as sinners, not dealing with them as for their sins they deserved, but shewing them undeserved kindness and forbearance. The meaning is the same as that of the passage in St. John, "God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved." This is what we are to preach with the most perfect freedom. This is the gospel of the kingdom we are to proclaim. This is the ministry of reconciliation with which the apostle and his fellow-labourers were put in charge, with which his successors in the preaching office are put in charge still.—*Sermons and Expositions by the late Dr. John Robertson.*



## "THY WILL BE DONE."\*



Y God and Father, while I stray,  
 Far from my home, on life's rough way,  
 O teach me from my heart to say,  
 "Thy will be done."

Though dark my path and sad my lot,  
 Let me be still and murmur not,  
 Or breathe the prayer divinely taught,  
 "Thy will be done."

What though in lonely grief I sigh  
 For friends beloved, no longer nigh,  
 Submissive still would I reply,  
 "Thy will be done."

Though thou hast called me to resign  
 What most I prized, it ne'er was mine ;  
 I have but yielded what was thine ;  
 "Thy will be done."

Let but my fainting heart be blest  
 With thy sweet Spirit for its guest,  
 My God, to thee I leave the rest :  
 "Thy will be done."

Renew my will from day to day ;  
 Blend it with thine ; and take away  
 All that now makes it hard to say,  
 "Thy will be done."

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\* Hymns for the worship of God, selected and arranged for the use of Congregations connected with the Church of Scotland.