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THE CANADIAN

CHRISTIAN EXAMINER,

AND

PRESBYTERIAN REVIEW.

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RELIGIOUS COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

FOR THE CHRISTIAN EXAMINER.

REVIEW OF A WORK ENTITLED, "ESSAYS ON THE FORMATION AND PUBLICATION OF OPINIONS, AND ON OTHER SUBJECTS. SECOND EDITION LONDON 1826." BY THE REV. D. WILKIE, L. L. D. QUEBEC.

The style in which these Essays are written, is the very best that can be conceived for the discussion of philosophical subjects. It is cool, dispassionate, and perspicuous in the highest degree. There is every where the utmost firmness, arising from conviction, in the statement of opinions; while every the slightest approach is avoided to that warmth of expression which would engage any of the passions on the side which is so clearly supported. It would scarcely be possible, out of the whole mass of modern authors, to select a more just example of pure philosophical writing, uninfluenced by passions and feelings.

It is scarcely necessary to add, that this is the spirit in which truth ought always to be sought, as it is clearly that in which it ought always to be expressed, when propounded to the understanding. The Author of the observations here submitted would reckon it unpardonable, in exercising in some degree the office of a critic on these essays, to deviate from the impartial, candid, and altogether

praiseworthy example which they exhibit. Without at all arrogating to himself the same excellence of style, he lays full claim to the same spirit of candor and dispassionate coolness in the investigation of the subject.

Of the ten Essays of which the work consists, the two first, while they are the longest, are also by far the most important. They are entitled, "ON THE FORMATION AND PUBLICATION OF OPINIONS," a designation which sufficiently indicates the objects of which they treat.

In the first section of this Essay, some just observations are made on the meanings of the terms, belief, doubt, disbelief, assent and opinion. Among other things, it is observed with great justice, that the word, *belief*, is, in common language, taken often for the system of truths believed, as well as for the state of the mind when it assents to the truth of a proposition. The latter is the proper use of the word. The word *opinion* is understood to mean a proposition, assented to, after doubt, deliberation, and argument.

After some other pertinent remarks on the use of the terms to be employed in this discussion, the author proceeds, in section second, to announce his leading proposition, that *belief* is in all

cases, and, in every degree of it, an involuntary act of the understanding. Had this proposition been limited to cases in which the mind is fairly, and undeniably seeking for information, and fully competent to weigh the evidence obtained, there seems to be very little ground for doubting the truth of what it asserts. The mind then proceeds upon clear and satisfactory evidence, and can neither give nor withhold its assent, but according to that degree of evidence which is before it. But, when daily and manifest proofs are constantly at hand to show that mankind form many of their opinions from prejudice, passion, interest, habit, negligence, and indifference about truth, it seems far too sweeping a conclusion, to assert, that all opinions formed in this manner are involuntary. If prevailing desires, interested pursuits, carelessness, inattention, be voluntary acts or habits dependent on choice, the opinions formed in consequence of these causes, must be so also. If these are not voluntary, it will be difficult to show that any acts whatever are of that character.

But it is time to consider the proofs or arguments which the author has adduced in support of his assertion. They may be reduced to three : First, that the evidence in favor of propositions concerning which different opinions are entertained, does not differ in its nature, but only in degree, from that in favour of propositions which command universal assent ; Secondly, that the mind is passive in the reception of all the impressions that influence belief or disbelief, and consequently cannot itself produce any change in that effect ; Thirdly, that every one is conscious of not being able to resist any evidence fairly laid before him.

With regard to the first of these, it is granted by all inquirers, that in the case of propositions admitting of arithmetical or mathematical proof, or of proof from experiments, or of historical events perfectly authenticated, the mind cannot refuse its assent. But it by no means follows, as the author argues, that in doubtful or uncertain propositions, the mind must be still equally incapable of resisting or qualifying according to its choice, the assent which it gives or refuses. In such cases there is often much difficulty in balancing different kinds and degrees of evidence. Wishes and desires lead to overlook doubtful arguments. Previous habits of thinking give an undue weight to one set of arguments above another. All are not prepared to sacrifice every thing in favour of truth. Perhaps no man is prepared to do so with regard to every kind of truth. And if the mind has any predilection in favour of one side of the question more than the other, it soon, too soon,

learns to dwell upon those views of the subject which go to confirm what it desires. And in the end it frequently forgets that there existed any cause for hesitation. It feels as confident in its own belief as if it had never entertained a doubt. These are voluntary acts of the mind, if there are any such.

The act of forgetting is indeed, not a voluntary act itself. But it may be, and often is, the effect of various voluntary acts, such as a desire and an effort, to employ our minds on other and more engrossing subjects.

But because belief is necessary, and consequently involuntary, in cases in which the evidence is complete, the author conceives it obviously, follows, that in cases of doubt the effect produced must be also involuntary. Now this consequence is by no means legitimately drawn. Whenever the evidence of a proposition becomes imperfect, whenever the mind begins to waver and hesitate, and doubt, it begins also to settle upon different parts of the proofs adduced, to select one argument and pass by another, according to its previous habits, and not unfrequently according to its previous wishes and desires, that one side or other may be found to be established. It is undoubtedly true, as in this work asserted, that the mind can have no power to change the nature of the evidence before it. But it appears to have a power to fix attention on one part of that evidence more than on another, to withdraw itself altogether from some of the features of it, and to fix itself exclusively upon others that may be more in accordance with its inclinations, and more directly leading to the conclusions at which it wishes to arrive. It may be perfectly true all this time, that the mind does not desire to wander from the truth ; but finding the truth difficult to come at, it desires to follow its former bent, or the bent that may be agreeable to it, but without perceiving that it has abandoned the path of enquiry. Truth, it is said, is in a well; he who is unwilling to dive for it, must flounder in the waves at the surface.

The mind can probably at no time desire to be in error with regard to any thing which it deems important ; but it may consider things as trivial which are not so : it may desire to avoid the trouble of enquiry, and it may be inclined to avoid unwelcome information while there is a chance of its not being true.

The author's second argument to prove the mind to be involuntary in the formation or adoption of its opinions, is, that it is passive in the reception of all the impressions that influence belief or disbelief. "By mere volition," says he, "we cannot call up any idea, nor, therefore, any number of

ideas forming an argument ; such an operation necessarily implying the actual presence of the ideas before the will is exerted." This doctrine is also sanctioned by the statements and opinions of metaphysicians of the very highest name. But notwithstanding these very great authorities, the few following facts are, with the utmost possible humility and deference, submitted as some ground for entertaining a strong suspicion, that the mind does actually possess some influence in directing, at least to a certain degree, the current of ideas that are continually passing through it, and consequently, in affecting, more or less, the opinions which it forms on a certain description of subjects.

The simple circumstance, that we can, by a certain process of mind, recall to our recollection, things and ideas which we had forgotten, and do not at present remember, is a proof that we possess some such power. This is undoubtedly a voluntary operation of mind ; for we actually set our attention to seek for the idea we had lost or forgotten, and continue to turn over all the furniture with which our memory is stored till we meet with the thought which we are in quest of. It is very true, and often happens, that we cannot immediately summon up the idea we are in quest of. We cannot instantly command its presence in the imagination. We cannot, like the magician, stamp with our foot, and instantly obtain what we want. But such is the power of recollection which the mind possesses, that we generally succeed at last in recalling the fugitive thoughts. We may be some seconds, even some minutes, on the rack ; we may even spend hours in the painful search ; nay, days may pass away before we succeed in calling up the lost and valued idea. And if no record of it exists, it is possible, but only barely possible, that it may be lost for ever.

Now, let it only be considered what must necessarily happen, should any individual, in forming his opinion on some important subject, lose in this manner the remembrance of some essential circumstance required for the formation of a correct opinion. And let us suppose further, that, to avoid the trouble and delay, and exercise of patience, necessary for recollection, that he proceeds instantly to draw his conclusion and form his decided opinion from the premises already at his mind's command. Is it not manifest, that he is blameable for haste and precipitancy of judgment ? Has he not committed a voluntary fault ? And supposing this voluntary and meditated neglect to lead to some capital error in his conduct or in his belief ; who can say that such an error is not the effect of volition ? And who will pretend that he is not

justly chargeable with the injurious consequences to which such an error may lead ? If he had made serious and persevering efforts of recollection, and yet not succeeded ; we might then acquit him of all blame. But without at least a moderate effort, we cannot upon any principle of moral reasoning hold him blameless.

It is, however, well deserving our attention, to observe in what manner these important efforts of recollection are performed. The mind, as already hinted, has no direct method of making them. It is possessed of no talisman to call up the idea required. It must and can only proceed in its accustomed tracts of association, summoning up the various trains of ideas that are supposed to be connected with it, and may be expected to bring it along with them. This incapability of calling up the precise idea required, is probably all that is meant by the illustrious metaphysicians referred to, when they assert the impossibility of bringing by volition any idea into the mind which is not actually present to it. They could never have intended to deny that the mind is possessed of a certain management, a certain tact and art, by which generally, though not universally nor with absolute certainty, it attains the end proposed. This management and tact is learned by experience, and is acquired universally. No man is without it. He who would neglect its assistance in the formation of important opinions, could never be held free from blame. His errors could not be held involuntary. It is true he did not actually intend being wrong ; but it is equally true, that he did not use the necessary means of being right.

It may, perhaps, be here urged, that we are thus putting an extreme case. In answer, let it be observed, that, though a strong case is here put for the sake of illustration, it is probable that slighter cases occur with great frequency. There are also many other causes besides absolute forgetfulness, that are suffered to turn away the mind from the correct view of many of the questions that involve some degree of doubt. Of this kind are all the various biases to which different minds in different degrees are exposed. And it is only in cases that involve some degree of doubt, and require some deliberation, that there is room for the operation of such biases. Where the evidence is clear and decisive, the assent of the understanding is unavoidable.

Our author's third argument is that every mind is conscious to itself of being utterly incapable of changing its belief or disbelief, in consequence of any volition. "Take," says he, "any controverted fact in history. Let a man make himself perfect-

ly acquainted with the statements on both sides, and at the end of his investigation, he will either believe, doubt, or disbelieve the fact in question. Now apply any possible motive to his mind, blame him, praise him, intimidate him by threats, or allure him by promises, no alteration can, by such means, be produced in his discernment of the truth or falsehood of the fact."

Now this statement is, without doubt, perfectly correct as far as external means are concerned. No degree whatever of outward force can in any way change the state of the mind's assent or dissent. But the same thing is not true of the mind's own partialities, its own affections, habits, likings or dislikings. These not only may, but actually do in very many cases, give a coloring to the result of the mind's enquiries, and affect it in almost every case of uncertainty and deliberation. It requires much care and attention to free the understanding, even to a moderate degree, from those prepossessions. Hence the frequent and repeated exhortations of the lovers of truth to all enquirers, to free their minds from such influence. Hence the difficulty of finding historians, or men fitted to write history in consequence of their freedom from all improper bias and partiality. How necessary such a quality is in a historian, all confess; and yet how few have been famed for the possession of it in any eminent degree. Not one can be cited, who has not, in some instances, failed in the practice of it.

The result of these considerations, appears to be, that belief is so far from being entirely involuntary, that it is so in such cases only as are accompanied with such evidence as to render the assent or dissent necessary. In other cases it ought to be so also; it ought to be moved even in its doubts only by evidence and probability. But what man continues to be that compound of habits, passions, partialities, and antipathies that he now is, it is too much to expect, that in all his opinions, he will be governed by evidence alone.

In section third, the author proceeds to consider the opinions of writers who have treated of this subject; but they will be found remarkably to coincide with the view which has been given in these remarks. A quotation is given from Locke, in which is stated strongly and most justly, the impossibility that there is of the mind's refusing its assent to any proposition which is clearly understood, and its evidence decisive. But this quotation is concluded with the following important sentence:—"Yet we can hinder both knowledge and assent, by stopping enquiry, and not employing our faculties in the search of any truth."

This surely is an admission, that the mind possesses at least an indirect influence over its conclusions.

Lord Kames is another author whose opinions are referred to on this subject. He states, indeed, very distinctly, and for reasons which he details, that the mind cannot call up ideas at will, and as it pleases. Yet he adds:—"But though we cannot add to the train an unconnected idea, yet it frequently depends on our will, to attend to some ideas, and to dismiss others."* This is all that is necessary to render our opinions voluntary, to a certain degree at least, on a variety of subjects.

Another celebrated metaphysician referred to, is Mr. Dugald Stewart. His opinion coincides with those of the authors already quoted. After making statements similar to theirs, he adds:—"Notwithstanding the immediate dependence of the train of our thoughts on the laws of association, it must not be imagined that the will possesses no influence over it. This influence is, indeed, not exercised directly and immediately; but is nevertheless, very extensive in its effects." It is no small pleasure to the author of these remarks to find them so fully confirmed by the authors who had been cited to prove the very opposite position.

What has probably led so many great men to consider belief, as in every case, completely involuntary, is the supposition that the understanding acts the same part in cases of decisive, as in those of doubtful evidence. Now many, or most of the important propositions that are submitted to the understanding, have for, or against them, some liking or dislike. We have our wishes on the one side or the other. Wherever the evidence, as seen by the mind, is clear and indisputable, belief or disbelief will of course follow, according to the nature of that evidence. The understanding must yield. But wherever the evidence is such as to give rise to much balancing, pondering, and deliberation, these previous preferences and dislikes will generally have some effect, and in many cases much. Our author admits that this wilful partiality of attention or examination, is possible; but he thinks "its effects are very circumscribed and uncertain." It is highly probable, on the contrary, that they are very extensive. And as to their being uncertain, this circumstance rather serves, and indeed, serves much, to augment the evil arising. There exists among a large portion of mankind, a very strong and general desire to think

* Elements of Criticism, chap. 1, part I.

all alike. And this desire has no regard to evidence. There is among another portion less numerous, but more influential, a strong desire also to be distinguished for singularity. This desire, also, so far as it goes, has no regard to evidence; and is for it, or against it, as the case may be.

This consideration, along with a host of others that might be mentioned, were there time for it, will go a great way towards accounting for the great diversity of opinion that exists among mankind. The involuntariness of opinion might indeed account for the continuance of that diversity when it once had an existence, but can give us no assistance in understanding or conjecturing how that diversity first arose. As the circumstances of mankind were originally alike, their opinions, if involuntary entirely, must have been so also; and so they must have continued. See sect. v. and vi.

In sections seventh and eighth, our author proceeds to the consideration of the subject of *persecution*, one of the greatest evils unquestionably, to which men have been exposed, and one of the most enormous crimes of which they have been guilty. He conceives that this hideous iniquity has always been more or less connected with the supposition that belief was voluntary. If this could be clearly established, it would indeed be no evidence either way; but it would create a very natural, and perhaps a pardonable and no doubt a strong prejudice against the truth of the supposition in question. But, as it could be no evidence on either side, let the subject be considered according to its merits.

The great and enormous evils and injustice, and cruelty arising out of persecution for conscience's sake, render it a subject well worthy of grave investigation. It would be extremely desirable fully to investigate its natural history. In these brief remarks, there is not room for doing justice to such an enquiry. It may, however, not be out of place just to notice two leading causes which seem, in all ages, to have contributed to introduce and perpetuate this dreadful scourge of the human race.

The first is an excessive and unreasonable conviction which men have ever been apt to form of the incontrovertible certainty of their own opinions. Having never paid the least attention to the grounds of any opinions but their own, they imagine, and are in fact convinced, that every contrary one is maintained only from prejudice, interest, obstinacy, or some other culpable motive. They conceive that their opponents have at bottom the same opinions with themselves, but that they

are too obstinate, or too dishonest to own it.—Their own opinions appear so undeniable that they cannot possibly imagine how any man can in his heart deny them. That is, in short, their own belief being involuntary, necessary, and unavoidable, their opponent's must be equally so, and he justly deserves to be punished or exterminated, on account of his obstinately refusing to acknowledge what he knows to be true, and of wilfully propagating known errors. Those who have had opportunities of conversing with intolerant persons, or bigots, know that this is the way in which they reason. If you can once convince them that their opponents may be in error, that they may be honest in their opinions, you have thus cured them of their intolerance, their bigotry is eradicated, they would not any longer recommend or support persecution. Bigotry, it is plain, is simply, the spirit of persecution shorn of its power.

The reason given by the best of the Roman Emperors, or by their Ministers, for persecuting the ancient Christians, offers a singular confirmation of this view of the subject. They admitted that the Christians were guilty of no crimes whatever; but said, they deserved to be punished for their obstinacy,—*pernitentia aut perveracia*. It is impossible to suppose this expression to mean any thing else, than, that they conceived these persons to be wilfully and obstinately persevering in known error, and needlessly deviating from the customary practices. They evidently conceived the recommendation, to their system and practices, so palpable, that assent to their propriety was involuntary and unavoidable in every honest mind.

It appears, therefore, that the sentiment entertained by many liberal and highly eminent individuals of the present age—that the opinion of belief being voluntary, was connected with the support of intolerance—is founded in error. The reverse appears to be the more general fact.

The other cause of persecution deserves to be mentioned from its importance, but needs not to be dwelt upon, since not particularly connected with the present enquiry. It has been an unfortunate and prevailing opinion among men of talents and men in power, that the great body of mankind, are utterly incapable of forming any correct sentiments at all on important subjects, and that, therefore, they must, in all cases, be restrained in the use of their understanding, and compelled to adopt and retain the reigning belief—the belief of their superiors. If this unfavourable view of mankind is at any time correct, it is only when their minds have been long debased by slavery and grinding oppression. In every other case, the

understanding of every man of ordinary intelligence is at least a better guide for directing him in his ordinary duties and the regulation of his belief than that which any other human authority can provide for him.

There are many other observations which might be made on this important subject; but brevity must be studied.

The great moral lesson to be learned from the view that has been taken, is the paramount obligation of mutual forbearance. The right of private judgment, is perhaps the most important right of men existing in society. If it be once fairly and fully admitted, every species of intolerance will hide its head.

Another moral lesson, of hardly less importance, which the same view strongly forces upon our attention, is the necessity of pursuing all important enquiries with strict impartiality of mind. To shun all bias and prejudice, is particularly enjoined upon us by the doctrine, that many of our opinions are, to a certain degree, dependent on an exercise of volition. Such an admonition would be perfectly useless, if opinions were universally and completely independent of the will, or of any resolution that we could form. Were all belief necessary and unavoidable, it would be equally useless to advise and to receive advice, on the subject of following truth with an unprejudiced mind. The mind must, in that case, abide by the decision to which it has come. No exhortation to dispassionate enquiry, or to laborious research, can be of the smallest avail. And the numbers of exhortations to that effect, with which the works of moralists abound, must be thrown aside as so much useless lumber, and an unnecessary waste of words. It were indeed extremely to be wished, that mankind had arrived at such a degree of impartiality and total exclusion from prejudice and passion, as to remove all necessity for such admonitions. That they are not yet arrived at that state, or rather, are nearly as far removed from it as ever, hardly any wise man will deny. And the writer himself, before us, admits the charge in its utmost latitude, notwithstanding the very different conclusion which he has drawn from it.

Writers on mathematics and on other branches of pure science, give no admonitions on the importance of impartial enquiry. The reason is obvious. It would be utterly useless. The truth here forces its way, and cannot be resisted. Belief and disbelief, in this case, are entirely involuntary. If they were so in other cases, there would be no necessity of advice to pursue truth, and to shun error. There would be no occasion for the very

excellent and rational exhibition written by this author himself, and forming part of the following essay, of the great importance of truth. Truth would, then, in all cases, not only recommend itself, but secure its own reception.

The immense distance that is seen to exist among different portions of the human race in respect to literature, science, and the arts, diminishes greatly in its extent, when we come to consider them in relation to morals and the common actions of life. There they are much more nearly on a level; and no one is so unfavourably dealt with, that he cannot form some opinions as to what he ought to do, or ought not to do; what it is his duty to follow, and what to avoid.

The science of morals, if such it can be called, being the science of happiness, is open to the whole human race. None are excluded from the knowledge of its distinctions, none from the perception of its motives. The sciences by which a high renown is obtained, those by which genius lives in the memory of future generations,—these sciences are imparted to a few. This is the signal distinction obtained by rare talents. But moral distinctions, the principal means by which the felicity of minds is affected in every condition of life, are imparted to every individual who wears the countenance, and possesses the intellect of man. Differences may exist, and do exist, in no small degree, in the possession of this important quality; but the spirit of moral perception, the *vis vivida* of the science on which all happiness depends, is distributed to every mind. Can we conceive it possible for the Author of existence to mark by more striking indications his supreme disposition to benevolence?

After the very full consideration which has been given to the first essay in this work, on the formation of opinions, it will not be necessary to dwell at any length on the second. It is entitled "On the Publication of Opinions." It is like the former, written with much dispassionate coolness, and accuracy of reasoning. As the conclusion to which he comes, is pretty generally admitted, there seems to be no necessity for entering into any lengthened discussion of it.

He is an advocate for the free and unreserved publication of all opinions of whatever kind, provided only, that such publication is conducted in a proper manner. In every well informed and properly constituted mind, there can scarcely be any doubt as to this principle. And, accordingly, the British government has always shown the greatest and most laudable forbearance on this subject. No person, who publishes his opinions

with proper temper and moderation, has ever been disturbed or restrained in this proceeding. It has been justly considered that truth, is its own firmest support, and most effectual defender. The trite maxim usually repeated to this purpose, is not more trite than just: *Magna est veritas et prevalebit.*

Quebec, October 1, 1835.

RELIGION IN HOLLAND—THE SCOTTISH CHURCH, ROTTERDAM—THE DUTCH CHURCH.

From the Church of Scotland Magazine.

All are aware of the fact, that Scotland and Holland had much intercourse in early times; but we have been struck with the amount of intercourse which subsisted between them—commerce doubtless had its influence—but religious persecution seems to have been the grand cause. The Saviour exhorted his followers when persecuted in one quarter to flee to another, and under his gracious government it has usually been ordered that persecution has seldom raged in several countries at once, so that one country has supplied an asylum for the persecuted faithful of another. When suffering under the Popish tyranny of Philip II. of Spain, Holland applied to Queen Elizabeth of England for assistance, and with the zeal of Protestantism, she immediately sent 6000 troops who were of essential service. So early as 1572. three regiments, well known under the name of the Scottish brigade, among the oldest regular troops of Europe, were raised and sent to the aid of the Protestant cause. After remaining 200 years on the continent, and rendering various important services to the interests of true liberty and religion, they became naturalized in Holland towards the close of last century. As in these pious times, neither commercial companies nor regiments of war went forth without a suitable complement of chaplains, so in this way a great many British came to be resident in the Netherlands, and even church courts were regularly organized in the army. In return for the services thus rendered to Holland by Britain, the Dutch at a later day, the day of Scotland's persecution—opened up a refuge for our suffering ancestors. Vast numbers were scattered over Holland at the end of Charles II.'s reign. Not less than 1000 Scotch were resident in the one city of Rotterdam, and many of the ministers who successively dispensed divine ordinances to them were eminent in their profession. The first was old Petrie, the historian of the Church of Christ, who resigned his charge in Perthshire, and became minister at Rotterdam. After a short interval, he was succeeded by the well known Robert M'Ward, the secretary of Samuel Rutherford, and one of the ministers of Glasgow, who was obliged to leave his country for the faithfulness of

his preaching. He again was succeeded by the celebrated Robert Fleming, the author of the "Fulfilling of the Scriptures," who, from the study of the prophecies, predicted the outbreaking of the French Revolution 100 years before it took place, and whose work, it is said, Mr. Pitt found it necessary to use means to suppress, in the fear of its interfering with military discipline. Nor was it the natives of Scotland only who found an asylum in Holland; when, in consequence of the revocation of the edict of Nantes, a million of Protestants were driven from France, many of them found a home in Holland, so much so that 200 of their ministers were resident there at one time; and it was not mere protection which the Dutch Protestants afforded their persecuted brethren of France and of Scotland, they treated them with the utmost kindness, and have all along supported their religious ordinances from the public funds, putting the ministers on the same footing with their own—in the case of our countrymen at Rotterdam supplying them with an additional minister where this was necessary, and a site for their church when rebuilt.—Another proof of the extensive intercourse which subsisted between the Protestants of this country and Holland at an early and even a later period is to be found in the numerous theological works which were translated from English into Dutch. Thus so early as 1668, Guthrie's Great Concern was translated and published at Amsterdam; Rutherford's Letters in 1673; Naphtali in 1668; Binning's Common Principles of the Christian Religion, 1678; Durham's commentary on the Book of Revelation, 1744; Henry's Communicant's Companion, Hague, 1738; Witherspoon on Regeneration; Boston on the Covenant of Grace; Marshall on Sanctification. With the exception of Henry, these works and many others which were translated are works of Scotch theology, plainly showing not only the intercourse of the nations, but the identity of the religion. Indeed in the course of last century large numbers of British received part of their education in the universities of Holland. The university of Leyden could number not less than 2000 British scholars at one time.

But to return to the Scotch church of Rotterdam, this church, like its parent in this country, has proved herself the friend of education and the poor. For more than a century and a half, she has maintained a school under the charge of the session, in which the principles of religion, English, and the usual branches of education are taught; the seminary has been of eminent utility, and has been instrumental in introducing to reputation and honor not a few who might otherwise have lived and died unknown; and with regard to the poor, so early as 1727, the Scotch church at Rotterdam established an orphan's hospital for children of Scotch extraction who had lost their parents, carefully provided for and instructed them, and paved the way for their establishment in life. Their efforts were attended with the best results. When the insti-

tution, after dispensing good for 90 years, was owing to particular circumstances broken up, its annual expenditure was not less than L.300. But interesting as these facts are, we are not to imagine that through the long period during which the Scottish church at Rotterdam has existed, Holland has been always blessed with a highest tone of christian doctrine. She suffered the same remarkable decline of piety which characterized the other churches of the Reformation in the course of last century. The Rev Dr. Kennedy, one of the Scotch ministers, says, in 1718, in explanation of his publishing a volume of discourses, that his design was "to bear witness to the great doctrines of grace and to place those important truths in a striking light that are now seldom met with but in creeds and confessions, and thus as much as in me lies to help to stop the course of that defection that is going forward from the grace of the gospel to the covenant of works in a new shape." By far the most plausible arguments against establishments are drawn from the unsound doctrine and inefficiency with which they have been occasionally chargeable, and especially towards the close of last century. But it is important to bear in mind that these did not necessarily spring out of the principles of Church Establishments, but were owing to a remarkable withdrawing of the influences of the Spirit of God which affected all the Protestant churches, established and dissenting of Christendom at the same time. The Dissenters of England and Ireland suffered as grievously or more grievously than the established churches—so did the churches of America, and the church of Holland was not exempted.

Such a general eclipse at the same moment can obviously be explained only by a very comprehensive cause—a cause more comprehensive than the operation of Church Establishments—a plain proof of which is, that true religion and practical efficiency have returned to established, as well as to dissenting churches at the same time. It is most unfair, therefore to charge the unsound doctrine and occasional inefficiency of the established churches upon the principle of a civil recognition of Christianity. In part as the effect, and partly doubtless as the punishment, of the irreligion and spiritual deadness which infected the Protestant Churches of the Reformation, the French Revolution of 1792 was allowed to break out; and while it scourged Popery, it did not spare cold-hearted Protestantism. Few countries suffered more seriously than Holland. French principles spread among the people; and in 1795 the Church was separated from the State. At the same period a similar proposal was made in this country, but without effect. The seeds were, however, then sown of the present controversy. Some ignorant men imagine, where there is no alliance between Church and State—where the government, as regards religion, is an infidel—that there can be nothing which savours of intolerance and persecution. The experience of Holland teaches another lesson. The National Assembly of France, which was

thoroughly *voluntary* in its religious views, was as keen a persecutor at home as almost any Papal power could be, and it did not fail to show its spirit even at a distance. The French decreed that no church bell should be tolled in Holland; that no minister or preacher should appear in official dress: they demolished the monuments erected to the memory of the Scots and Dutch in the cathedral church of *Campver*, stripped it of all its furnishings, and turned it into a house of correction. At the same time they failed to pay the salaries which, after the abolition of Church and State, they had guaranteed to the ministers for three years! Is this not interfering with religion?—and yet they were *Voluntaries*, and, of course, could not be persecutors! But infidelity, like all other evils, has an appointed course. After the churches in Holland, and the people also, had suffered severely from France, and been taught some salutary lessons, the House of Orange was restored in 1813, and the different Protestant communions were immediately put in possession of the rights and privileges of which they had been deprived. Unhappily the voice of expediency was listened to so far that all religious sects were taken under the charge of the government, and are now salaried by it. This was a most pernicious measure, especially as regards the Roman Catholics, but it does not seem to have prevented the revival of the Protestant Church. Many of her outward arrangements are remarkably good. The ministers are increased in number according to the demands of the Protestant population. A community or parish

Under 1600 is entitled to 1 pastor.

From 1600 to 3000 to 2

3000 5000 3

5000 7000 4

7000 10,000 5

10,000 13,000 6

13,000 16,000 7

16,000 20,000 8

For every additional 5000 souls, another minister is allowed by government. Happy would it have been for the Church of Scotland had she been provided in the same way.

According to a printed statement in 1829, there were then 1600 ministers in Holland, of whom 1175 belonged to the Reformed or Calvinistic church, 63 to the Lutherans, 35 to the Baptists, and 24 to the Remonstrants or Arminians; and according to the census of 1830, the population of Holland amounted to 2,426,206, or about two and a half millions, which is nearly the population of Scotland. As nearly 837,000 of this number are Roman Catholics, and 16,000 Jews, there is not only apparently a full provision for the Protestant population, but opportunity afforded to the ministers of the truth labouring with effect among that part of the people who are sunk in heresy and error. As the church property was, during the French supremacy, merged in the general property of the nation, the clergy are now paid

directly from the State, like the Presbyterians of the north of Ireland. The maximum salary is about £200; the minimum, little more than £50; but the energy in country places has a free house, &c. Of course, these sums are much more valuable than the same amount in this country.

But, better than any external arrangements, and doubtless in part as the fruit of them, a remarkable revival of true religion has of late years appeared in Holland. Her newspapers and periodicals of literature, as well as public proceedings, and attention to the religious instruction of the poor, bear striking evidence to the reality and extent of a renewed religious spirit. We make the following short extracts from an interesting review of Dutch periodicals, by a friend who is well acquainted with the subject, in the January number of the *Edinburgh Presbyterian Review* :

“The revival of true religion in Holland may well interest the whole Christian world. We have seen some striking fruits of such a recovery in England and North America. Are the Hollanders less likely to surprise and rejoice the Christian world by ‘fruits meet for repentance?’ They are no ordinary people, and have never been so. In the earliest notices that appear of them in history, they are spoken of, even by a Roman, not as powerful in war, but as weapons set a part for no other purpose. For the long period of eighty years, interrupted only by a twelve years’ truce, they stood forth a small but indomitable band, assailing, sometimes alone and against all Europe besides, the sacred cause of the Reformation. Even in latter times, and in the lowest depth of the depression into which they sank on forsaking the principles and maxims of their forefathers, Napoleon was awed at the aspect of that indelible nationality which he could expunge from the maps of his empire, but could neither break nor bend in the spirits of his Batavian subjects. In the very patience with which they waited the time of God’s deliverance, he saw more to fear than in the wildest ebullitions of their revolutionary and refractory neighbours.”

“What may we not expect from such a people, rendered wise by long and bitter experience, and filled at the same time with fresh energy, derived from a faith as powerful as ever in awakening and animating all the powers and faculties of the soul? From the long lists of church collections for poor foreign churches, annually reported in the *Boekzaal*, and from various articles in that and other periodicals of those now before us, the interest now felt by the Dutch in the progress of religion abroad is very manifest; but if the present revival continue, it is scarcely possible to set limits to what we may expect from the future exertions of their christian zeal, tried prudence, and constitutional energy. Be it remembered, that Holland swarms with the descendants of faithful men from all parts of Europe, who found a refuge in her hospitality from the persecution of the vultures of the Vatican before their talons were clapt, she may now be regarded as an epitome of all reformed Europe; and that from her, therefore, it is not unreasonable to expect a reforming influence to go forth, not into Protestant States only, but even into France, Austria, Italy, Spain, and Portugal.”

We cannot refrain from saying, in conclusion, that the character, position, and attainments of Holland, as a whole, form a striking proof of the elevating power

of true religion, and of the Presbyterian Establishment. How singular, that a people, small in number, should have reclaimed a marsh from the sea, and planted it with the most thickly studded towns and cities of Europe, and with the most conspicuous indications of industry and wealth—should, in the twenty years of the French supremacy, have contributed, apparently without injury, one hundred millions sterling at the call of their masters, and should, in the next twenty years, have acquired as much in the pursuit of honest industry! How singular, that a people not more numerous than the people of Scotland should bear rule over eight millions of subjects scattered in the most distant foreign lands, and that Dutch intelligence and industry, enterprise and religion, should be known throughout the world!

From the *Scottish Christian Herald*.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF THE LATE
REV. JAMES MARTIN, A. M.,
Minister of St. George’s Parish, Edinburgh.

The memory of “the saintly and apostolic Martin,” as he has been truly termed, lives in the hearts of multitudes. His career was short, but it was truly brilliant, and in reference to no individual, perhaps, could the saying of the poet be more appropriately quoted,—

“That life is long which answers life’s great end.”

He has passed from amongst us, but we dwell with a kind of melancholy satisfaction upon the recollection of one who possessed a rare combination of intellectual and moral excellencies, such as led all who knew him at once to admire and love him. With high talent he possessed an amiable and affectionate heart. To delineate his character is both a delicate and difficult task, but one which, for the sake of our readers, we gladly undertake, that possibly, by a view of his varied Christian graces, they may be led to “be followers of him, even as he,” with such beautiful consistency of character, “was a follower of Christ.”

James Martin was born at Brechin, on the 30th July, 1800. At school he soon became conspicuous among his companions by his abilities, his diligence and perseverance; and such was the rapidity of his improvement, that at the early age of twelve, he entered Marischal College, Aberdeen, and even ventured to compete for one of the bursaries. During the whole course of his attendance at the University, he dedicated himself with unwearied assiduity to the varied departments of knowledge which successively engaged his attention. His classical acquirements were of a high order. In mathematics and philosophy also he made great progress. But when at length he had resolved on preparing for the church, he entered upon the study of theology with redoubled energy. And the fruits of such exertion were apparent

in his after life; for he was regarded by all his acquaintances as an accomplished scholar and an enlightened divine. It is pleasing to notice, that while employed in the prosecution of theology as a science, he appears to have been deeply impressed with the necessity of attaining a personal experience of the truths which he hoped to proclaim to his fellow-men. In proof of this, we may quote from the interesting Memoir prefixed to the published volume of his Sermons,* a memorandum written at the close of the college session of 1818 :

"The session, now nearly completed, has flown swiftly, swiftly away. I hope, however, by the blessing of God, it has not been spent trivially or unprofitably. My studies have been pretty regular and constant. They have been on the three great heads of Revealed Religion,—the Trinity, the Decrees of God, and Original Sin. They have also included a considerable share of Church History. My spirit has, in general, and particularly when alone, been inclined to the sombre. I have mixed but little in society, yet I am surely inclined to it. My heart participates in the happiness of my fellow-creatures, and pants to increase it to the utmost,—I love to see them happy.

"Yet I have often thought that I could see through the veil that envelopes my present state, and that God was dealing with me in love,—that he was shewing me the vanity of the world,—weaning me from its enjoyments, and teaching me to lay up for myself treasures in heaven. I have often found comfort,—might I say instruction?—in the idea, that one day on earth I shall be a child of God, and that I shall see the value of his present dealings, as preparatory steps for an important change."

Towards the close of this year, he became tutor in the family of Mr. Oglivy of Tannandice, within a few miles of his native place. In this situation he continued for several years, in the course of which he was licensed to preach the Gospel by the Presbytery of Forfar. His first sermon was preached at Oathlaw, from the words, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ;" and his views on that occasion, are recorded in a single sentence in his note-book. "I have to lament much imperfection; but I hope I have also some right wishes, and that I sincerely lament my own sinfulness, and sincerely confess my need of God's grace."

The winter of 1821, 1822, Mr. Martin passed in Edinburgh, with Mr. Oglivy's family; and at this time he enjoyed a privilege which he valued highly,—an opportunity of regularly attending the ministry of the Rev. Dr. Gordon, then minister of St. Cuthbert's Chapel; "whose character and example," as his biographer remarks, "no less than his public ministrations, appear to have given greater depth to all his religious sentiments, to have filled his mind with a stronger sense of the high and honourable nature, as well as the solemn responsibility of the ministerial office, and to have set him forward in his course, more

intensely alive to the importance which attaches to the spiritual interests of immortal beings, and more deeply impressed with the magnitude of his own duties."

On the 8th of April, 1823, Mr. Martin received a presentation to the Church and Parish of Glenisla, in the Presbytery of Meigle, and was ordained on the September following. The deep impression of divine things which his mind had received during his residence in Edinburgh, prepared him the more effectually for entering upon the important duties of a parish minister. He felt that he was now called to occupy the responsible situation of an ambassador of Christ, and his earnest desire and prayer, therefore, was, that he might be enabled so to watch for souls as one who must give an account. Settled in a remote parish among the Grampians, as the pastor of a simple-hearted, affectionate people, Mr. Martin spared no exertions to promote the spiritual interests of those committed to his charge. He laboured in season and out of season; and the fond recollection of the parishioners of Glenisla still dwell upon the faithful devotedness of their youthful minister to the work of his Great Lord and Redeemer. The beneficial effects arising from his ministry in Glenisla are thus briefly, but appropriately, described by his biographer

"They were unsophisticated, and he was sincere, faithful, and judicious; and without compromising one principle, far less winking at any sinful practice, he commended himself to their respect and esteem, as one who had their real interests deeply at heart, and the primary object of whose life and labours was to do them good. Suiting his ministrations and intercourse to their real character and circumstances, with that tact, discrimination, and kindness of nature, which he so eminently possessed; being regular and diligent in his course of visiting and catechising, in the superintendence of Sabbath-schools, in his attention to the sick, and in waiting by the bedside of the dying; and particularly affectionate and encouraging in his admonitions to the young to seek after God,—every one of his flock, who was not utterly reprobate, came experimentally to know the value of possessing such a pastor,—a course of conduct, which uniformly operates with the same effect upon a simple-hearted people, and gains the homage even of those who may not be permanently benefited by it in their most important interests. There were two practices prevalent in the parish of Glenisla at the time when he became connected with it, which he felt had a most demoralizing effect on the minds and habits of the people, as they ever must have. The one was the encouragement given to illicit distillation; and the other, the mode in which funerals were conducted, involving a great waste of time and substance, and tending to induce or confirm habits of dissipation. Convinced that the moral influence of truth, the enlightening and quickening of the conscience, and the solemn considerations which Religion alone presents, when brought to bear upon a community, through the agency of a minister whose motives are properly understood and appreciated, are far more effectual than any prohibitory denunciations or sumptuary laws, he set himself with vigour to the removal of these evils. A complete extinction of them could not indeed be expected to be the immediate result of his anxiety and efforts; yet, in this, his wisdom and decision were far from being fruitless. And before his connection with the parish was dis-

* We are happy to understand that these excellent Sermons having rapidly passed through the first edition, a second is now in the Press. —Ed. S. C. H.

solved, he had the satisfaction of knowing, that not only the habits of many had under, one a perceptible improvement, and the duty of family-worship was more regularly observed, but that some were brought in good earnest under the power of godliness; while the occasional opposition and resistance that he experienced from the enemies of all religion, only served, as it will ever do, with minds of a similar mould, to stimulate him to redoubled zeal in his own appropriate work."

The tie which connects a pastor to his flock is intimate and endearing; but more especially in remote rural parishes. In such districts, where the minds of the people are yet simple and uncontaminated, the minister is regarded as their father, counsellor and guide. This was remarkably the case with Mr. Martin during his incumbency at Glenisla. The parishioners at once respected, admired and loved him; and when at last they were called upon to part with one who, in the faithful discharge of his duties, had gained their confidence and esteem, they mourned as for the loss of a beloved relation.

In the year 1828, Mr. Martin was unanimously chosen by the Kirk-session of St. Cuthbert's to be minister of Stockbridge Chapel, Edinburgh. It was not without reluctance and painful regret, that the offer was accepted. The pastor of Glenisla had firmly established himself in the affections of his flock; and to break asunder for ever a relation so tender, was to his amiable and feeling heart peculiarly trying. But it was sufficient to him that such was the will of his Master. He acceded to the call, and entered upon his charge at Edinburgh, with a simple dependence upon the strength of the Almighty. The text from which he first addressed his people in Stockbridge Chapel was beautifully expressive of his feeling,—“I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling.”

A brief view of the result of Mr. Martin's exertions in the extensive and interesting field in which he was now called to labour, will be best given in the words of his biographer, who appears to be well fitted both to understand and to appreciate the efforts of a faithful pastor:

“He was not long settled at Stockbridge, until the mode of his preaching, and his whole character, laid a powerful arrest on the minds of his congregation. At first he shewed a considerable degree of reserve, arising from the natural unobtrusiveness of his disposition,—that delicacy which made him instinctively retreat from every degree of observation which was not required by his real duties,—and from his antipathy to every thing like display, or to be made the object of a merely ceremonial deference, or of that bustling attention which is so often paid to those who are invested with the clerical office. But after the lapse of a short time, by his uniformity calm and dignified demeanor, he commanded the respect of every one who had occasion to observe him, and was regarded as a man of lofty integrity and independence of mind, as well as truly a man of God. There was a quickness and discernment, as well as a solemnity and impressiveness, accompanying all his intercourse with his people, which went beforehand, as it were, to

gain an entrance to the mind for every thing he said; whilst his pulpit-discourses, ere long, discovered to those who attended to them, distinct traces of much thought and scriptural study, and were delivered with so much sincerity and simplicity, as made almost every one feel how much *he* ought to be interested in the truths to which he listened, seeing that the preacher was himself so earnest in inculcating them.

“No one who attentively followed the course of his public services could avoid observing the successive steps of his improvement in the true art of preaching. He gradually threw off every thing that was juvenile, either in matter or manner,—he cast away all inflated expressions, all mere ornament in the illustration of his subjects; he dealt but sparingly in imaginative description, and not at all in mere generalizing or empty declamation. Textuality, he often said, appeared to him to be one of the chief excellencies of a sermon,—the bringing out by deep, and patient, and prayerful research, what was the mind of the Divine Spirit in the Word,—and, after having exhibited it in all its meaning and force, pressing it home on the understandings and consciences of men. He was always afraid of being guilty, and of being thought even capable, of giving fanciful interpretations or adaptations of Scripture. If, in the course of his illustration, he met with any striking truth, any important principle, or ascertained fact, in verification of which he could appeal to something which was obvious and undeniable in the experience or consciences of his hearers, upon this he seized, and, as if anxious to render it the prominent point on which their minds should rest, and that it should become a permanent element in their reflections, or interweave itself, as it were, with the hidden workings of each individual bosom, he recalled it again and again in the course of the application of his subject.

“This it was, and nothing merely adventitious or external, which formed the chief ingredient in his mode of preaching, and rendered it so interesting to those in whose hearts he succeeded in touching those chords that were in unison with the feelings of his own; which indeed, is the true secret of the success of any public speaker. Founding his arguments upon ascertained facts or acknowledged truths, and referring to something in his hearers with which these correspond, and of which they themselves are intimately conscious, he finds access at once to the seat of conviction and the springs of conduct. By telling aloud all that is in their hearts, he makes them feel as if he not only had been privy to their thoughts, but had been the witness of certain processes in their minds of which they themselves had hardly been aware, but which are now vividly recalled: they wonder, perhaps, how this man comes to know so much of their secret character, or how, at least, they had never heard these things brought home to them before. And hence, in cases where there is guilelessness and honesty, the preacher comes insensibly to be untraced in their affections as if he were a bosom-friend. If any one, therefore, is desirous of knowing what it was that rendered Mr. Martin's preaching so interesting to those who regularly waited on his ministry, and to whom it was blessed to be so useful, it may be said, that, along with the humble and dependent spirit in which the whole was done, and which gave to all his studies and discourses their appropriate character, it consisted in nothing more than this,—after drawing forth what is in the Word of God, and then what is to be found in the depths of the human heart, making the one of these, in some penetrating, instructive, or consolatory way, as the case might require, to bear upon the other. With this remark, however, it

is necessary prominently to conjoin another,—that one of the uniform characteristics of his preaching, was to be found in the strictly evangelical strain by which it was pervaded. His own mind being conclusively arrested by the great doctrines of the Cross, and his heart moving invariably under the influence of an overflowing sense of redeeming love, he was constrained, by the moral impulse of the new nature which was strengthening and maturing within him, habitually to present and to enforce upon others, that which was both the food and the cordial of his own spiritual being. And this being done in perfect keeping with good taste and propriety, and with the classical and academic style of his whole mind and character, the manner and outward form of it, at least, could give no offence to the most refined or cultivated hearer.

“There was one circumstance, with regard to his sermons, which sometimes pressed upon his mind,—the solemn apprehension which he felt of speaking in certain cases above the range of his own experience. He often remarked, that surely this thought must be harassing to every good man; and that it seemed a very awful thing for a servant of God to be proclaiming truths in which he himself did not fully and perfectly sympathize, or representing the various features in the character of true believers, the spiritual nature of Christ's kingdom, and the deep exercises which occur in the hearts of Christians, far beyond what he has ever found to be true in his own case. In like manner, after having been called into some scene of heavy affliction, he frequently observed, that he was afraid he was unfit to be a minister of comfort, seeing he himself had never known the depth of any such sorrow. Whilst there is something both very quickening and affecting in these thoughts, they must be considered as affording no unequivocal proof of the tenderness and humility of the mind in which they dwell; and it is nevertheless most true, that one reason why Mr. Martin's discourses in public, as well as his exhortations in private, were so impressive to those who heard them, is to be found in the fact, that they came to their hearts as being evidently the result of his own practical knowledge, and the real transcript of his own feelings.”

The public ministrations of the sanctuary, conducted in the manner thus described, could not fail to be attended, under the blessings of the Spirit, with the happiest effects. But it was not in the pulpit alone that Mr. Martin's pastoral fidelity and Christian worth were apparent.

“In the performance of the more private or domestic duties of a clergyman, he was not less exemplary. The visiting of congregations, and especially the families of the poor, was performed with the most untiring constancy, and nothing was allowed to interfere with the discharge of this part of his work. It was seldom possible to prevail on him to enjoy a single day's relaxation, let the occasion be ever so inviting; and that never, if the case of any of his people was in all pressing on his mind, to whom his visits might prove of the smallest comfort or advantage. In dealing with those in the lower ranks of life, his kind, yet dignified manner immediately gained their confidence and respect. They never could recognize ought in him but the clergyman, and the clergyman in no other light than that of their real friend. His remarkable tact in this department of duty exemplified how possible it is for a wise and good man to win his way to the affections even of the most insensible and vulgar, when he comes to them with a single minded concern

for their spiritual interests; for there is, in the very roughest form of human nature, something which commends a sustained course of kind and judicious dealing, first to the attention, and gradually to the heart. Although there was occasionally a boldness in his reproofs, and a fidelity in his exhortations, amounting almost to sternness, yet there was not an individual among the many for whose good he thus privately watched and laboured, who did not feel the strongest reverence for his character, and very few who did not entertain towards him a kindlier sentiment. In addition to his course of domestic visitation at Stockbridge, he established a Home-mission in the district, with two agents to conduct it, the fund for maintaining which was, to a large extent, supplied by himself, and he frequently preached in the station during the week. He had also meetings throughout the year for the different classes of the young persons of his congregation, and for those who sought admission, or who had been admitted to the Lord's Table. These occasions were very solemn and impressive, to them, there is reason to think, that not a few can look back with peculiar interest as the period of their first deep impressions of religion; and among the most valued articles in the repositories of some of these individuals, there may perhaps be found the notes of the instructions which then, as well as in public, they received from the lips of their faithful guide and humble-minded pastor.”

Such faithfulness and unwearied perseverance in the fulfilment of his ministerial duties, were not long in drawing forth from the Christian community, the strongest mark of their approbation and esteem. Upon the decease of Dr. Thomson, Mr. Martin was selected to occupy the pulpit of that distinguished individual. To one who entertained such lowly views of himself, the nomination was startling. He felt, however, that he would not be justified in refusing to accept the call to St. George's Church, knowing, as he did, that in the work of Christ, no man is permitted to shrink from duty, under a sense of his own weakness, but the more such a feeling weighs down the spirit, just so much the more room is there for the exercise of that faith, which can realize the Christian firmness and heroism of the Apostle when he said, “through Christ strengthening me, I can do all things.”

He was admitted minister of St. George's on the 6th October 1831, and entered upon his new sphere of exertion “with a mind,” to use the words of his biographer, “at once modest and courageous,—diffident, yet resolute.” His present charge differed, in many important particulars, from that which he had recently left; its duties were more varied, and much more arduous. But, proceeding in the strength of the Lord, he was enabled to walk in the steps of his illustrious predecessor, and thus to endear himself to all classes of his parishioners. At length, so great was the confidence reposed in Mr. Martin, that he was solicited to take upon him, in addition to his other labours, those of Secretary to the Bible Society, an office which had also become vacant by the death of Dr. Thomson. The duties which devolved upon him, in consequence of his acceptance of this truly honourable situation, were such as well accorded with the high toned religious feeling of his mind. It was,

in his estimation, an exalted privilege to be the instrument of disseminating the pure Word of God throughout the World; and the fine Christian spirit which pervaded his speech at the annual meeting of the Society in 1832, encouraged all who heard it to hope that the mantle of the late honoured Secretary had descended upon his successor.

Mysterious, however, and inscrutable, are the ways of God. He who now stood forth in one of the proudest positions which a Christian could wish to occupy, was destined, ere long, to be cut down in the midst of his usefulness. Not more than a year had elapsed, from the date of his promotion to St George's Church, when some very alarming symptoms in the state of his health began to make their appearance; and on the 20th September he was suddenly seized with a violent discharge of blood, apparently from his lungs.

"This occurrence, though, from the feelings which he had experienced for several days, it did not appear very much to surprise him, yet awakened the greatest apprehensions as to its consequences. He was as calm, however, and composed, as if nothing extraordinary had happened. Being placed in an upright posture, and required not to make the least exertion, or to speak, he presented the very picture of patience and submission. To one of his friends who came to him soon after this attack, he beckoned him with a smile of complacency for a slate which he had provided in order to communicate with those around him, and, in allusion to his own circumstances, and with reference to a passage on the subject of faith, in one of Traill's sermons, on which they had been some days before conversing, he wrote down these words—
"When the wearied traveller is unable to proceed a step farther, he can yet lie down when he is bidden,—this is faith."

In the course of a few weeks Mr. Martin recovered from this attack, at least so far as partially to resume his duties. By the kindness of his clerical brethren, who frequently officiated for him, and the tender sympathy of his congregation, his mind was considerably relieved from the anxiety which would otherwise have oppressed him. His bodily weakness however, still continued, and, at length, having engaged an assistant, he retired, for a time, to Rothsay, where his health considerably improved. But his recovery was merely temporary, and after a short period, his former disease returned, though with diminished violence. His medical friends now strongly advised him to try a change of climate, recommending particularly that he should spend the winter at Nice.

It was no small reluctance that Mr. Martin was prevailed upon, at length, to assent to this proposal. But the tender sensibilities, the amiable feelings of the man, yielded to the resignation of the Christian. It was the will of his heavenly father, and to that will he felt it to be at once his duty and his privilege to bow. After having made the necessary arrangements, therefore, for the supply of service in his church and parish, he left Edinburgh on the 28th September, 1833.

At Nice, he remained three months, during which,

he was able to ride out every day; and in addition to the enjoyment which he derived from the beautiful scenery in the neighbourhood, his mind was refreshed by the delightful intercourse which he had with some Christian friends who happened to be residing in the town. As descriptive of his feelings at this time, we may quote the following passage from his journal:

"I am just as happy as I could be at such a distance from my field of duty, and most thankful for past and present mercies. The Sabbath is the day when I feel my exile most. Last Sabbath, and during the psalmody, when some note was struck that brought my own dear flock before me, I do confess that I wept bitterly in the chapel, and could hardly get myself composed again. Surely I have been most self-willed and rebellious, when no less severe and bitter a chastisement than this would reclaim me!"—"To-day I went to the Protestant Chapel built by Lady Olivia Sparrow, and after service visited the little cemetery. It contained the tombs of several of whom I had heard, and of Lady Maxwell, one of the last, who has left a sweet savour of piety and charity behind her at Nice. A mournful place this little burying ground is! Why it should be more so than any other burial-ground is not very clear to reason or to faith; and yet it is one of the last feelings with which a man parts, the desire of mingling his dust with those of his kindred; though the poet has truly said, that a man can have only one country, but he may any where find a grave."

In a similar state of calm, almost pleasing, melancholy, he seems to have penned the following remarks one Sabbath, when at Rome.

"I have been falling off ever since I came to Rome, and now find myself so weak that I can hardly walk. This new affliction is very trying, especially at the time on which my friends had built so much. Yet I bless God, though I have never been worse than I am now, since my first illness, when I was very differently situated, that I feel no disposition to question the wisdom and goodness which run through this dispensation. Sometimes there was a shrinking from suffering, and a wish that all were soon over, rather than have many such conflicts to meet; but generally my mind has reposed upon God, as the present help in time of trouble, and left all consequences to him. I cannot forget the total freedom I have enjoyed from all anxiety about my journey homewards, or how I shall be able to travel. I mention this, as so contrary to my natural disposition, which is so anxious. I hope it is not indifference or recklessness, but springs from confidence in God, who will order all things aright. O how small a matter it is where one dies, if he dies in the Lord, and falls asleep in Jesus!

While at Rome his health was gradually declining, and he became anxious to set out, with the design, if possible, of reaching home. He had proceeded no farther than Leghorn, however, when he was compelled to stop. He arrived at that town in a very exhausted state, and took up his residence in the San Marco Hotel, kept by Mr. and Mrs. Thomson, both natives of Scotland. It is rather a curious circumstance, that in passing a night at this house, on his way to Rome, he expressed a wish, that, if it was the Divine will that he should not return to his native country, he might be permitted to die in that inn. And that was the very place, where, amid the affectionate

kindness of Christian friends, this devoted servant of Christ ended his days. The following passages from the letters of Mr. Hare, the English clergyman at Leghorn, and of Mr. and Mrs. Thomson, of the hotel, are furnished by the biographer, as presenting a few particulars of the closing scene.

"Mr. Hare writes,—'The decisive change did not take place until the 20th, when the physician who attended him apprised me of his approaching dissolution. From that time, the progress of his disease was rapid; but it was unattended by bodily suffering, and he retained his faculties to the end. On Thursday he breathed his last, without a groan or a struggle. I was not present, but Mr. and Mrs. Thomson were with him. As soon as they saw his end approaching, they thought of sending for me; but before they could do so, he was no more. I used to visit him every day,—sometimes two or three times in the day,—but he was not able to converse much, and could not hear me do more than read a few verses of the Bible, or make some observations, and pray. He seemed free from pain during his stay here,—even his cough was not very troublesome. He was perfectly peaceful, and appeared earnestly to desire to depart. It will be a satisfaction to know that every attention was paid him, not only by the people of the hotel, but also by many of our fellow-countrymen, who felt a deep interest in him. I can fully sympathize in the heartfelt sorrow into which this sad event must plunge the many friends of my dear departed brother. The loss is, indeed, of no common magnitude, both to them and the Church of God. But it ought to be a great assuagement to the bitterness of their grief, that he over whom they mourn, has but made a transition from a scene of much tribulation to a state of untroubled rest and unclouded felicity; and that he is separated from them by a very slight, and, it may be, a very temporary partition.'

"'On the Sabbath morning,' says Mr. Thomson, in a letter to Mr. Colclough, 'I drew his attention to the serenity of the atmosphere. 'Yes,' said he, 'this is the day which the Lord made,—you are to have the communion to-day,—' I was glad when they said unto me, Go ye up unto the house of God,'—will you come back and tell me what you have heard?—I did so, but found him unable to attend.

"'About three hours before his death, on awaking, he found me leaning on his bed, made an effort to get out his hand, and said, with a most pleasing countenance, 'How kind this is!' I went in again about three o'clock, when he requested me to read a portion of Scripture. I read the 14th chapter of John,—when at the last verse, he made a motion for me to stop, and then fell asleep. In a few minutes, he started hastily, and said, with a strong voice, 'What is meant by a free port? my reason for asking is, that I wish to import a hundred Bibles here.' These were his last words. About five, I found him dying, took him by the hand, and felt the last feeble pulse. His spirit left its earthly habitation at a quarter after five o'clock.'

"In another letter, to Mrs. Ogilvy, Mr. Martin's sister, Mrs. Thomson adds,—'On our first sight of him, when he was on his way to Rome, our affections were drawn to him,—there was something so expressive in his countenance. He was only one night with us, and in the evening joined us in family worship; he was unable to read or explain any part of the Scriptures, but gave us a most excellent prayer. On his return from Rome, he was unfit for any fatigue; so we had not the pleasure of hearing him again. He

did not like to see many people, but rather to be alone, to commune with his God; he had great faith, and said that Christ was all in all. His favorite Psalm was the thirty-ninth. He told us how mercifully the Lord had dealt with him, and that his parishioners were so kind and affectionate, and so unwilling to let him give up his church. Dear man! I do not wonder they were much attached to him,—he was so noble-minded, pious, amiable, modest, grateful, and afraid to give trouble. He said very frequently,—'What reason have I to be thankful that I suffer so very little pain;' and his death was a very happy one,—just as if he had gone to sleep,—so very calm.'

PRACTICAL SERMONS.

No. II.

DIVINE AGENCY AND HUMAN INSTRUMENTALITY IN BUILDING UP THE CHURCH.

A Sermon preached in Toronto on the 1st of September 1837, before the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of Canada, by the Rev. William Rintoul, A. M. Streetsville.

This is the word of the Lord unto Zerubbabel, saying, not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts.—Zechariah, chap. iv. 6.

The rebuilding of the temple by the restored captives of Judah was for a time arrested through the envy of the Samaritans; as Artaxerxes King of Persia, who is Smerdis the Magian impostor of profane authors, granted to the Samaritan leaders a commission to stop the work which his predecessors Cyrus and Cambyses had sanctioned and encouraged. This commission, however, continued in force only during his own short reign, he like many other usurpers having been cut off by the hand of violence.

The Jews were thus permitted to prosecute their pious undertaking, and under the direction of Zerubbabel, a prince of the lineage of David, and of Joshua the High Priest, the temple of Jehovah once more emerged from its ruins. The shouts of joy and praise which were sent forth at the founding of the temple were mingled with the weeping and lamentation of the aged men who had seen the former structure in its glory: for, doubtless, their minds were overwhelmed with the recollection of the sad calamities that had been visited upon them in their long exile; and, they could only anticipate, that the temple which they were about to

raise would be a monument of the afflicted condition of Israel, as the former one had been of Israel's glory under David and Solomon. The Jewish leaders themselves, it may be supposed, would have their own fears respecting the success of their undertaking, from the diminished numbers and resources of the people, as well as from the jealousy and enmity of their neighbours the Samaritans. But God himself, through the prophets whom he then raised up, gave them ample encouragement. He gave them to understand, that the rebuilding of His House, was the great work, which in that day, he required to be done; He assured them through Haggai, that his favour or disapprobation was manifested towards them in His providence, according as they were diligent or slack in this work; He appealed to their own experience for proofs of this; and He predicted for the house which, under many disadvantages they were building, a far higher glory, than that, which the magnificent structure of Solomon had known, inasmuch as that the Messiah, the desire of all nations, was to appear in it. Zechariah too, was charged with many comfortable messages to the restored captives. Our text is one of the lessons which he was taught to draw from a vision which he had for the direction and comfort of Zerubbabel. This lesson, and the vision, from which it was taken, recorded as they have been by the pen of inspiration, stand for the perpetual instruction and consolation of the church.

Zechariah had exhibited to him, by the Angel of the Lord, a candlestick of gold similar to that, which Moses, by the divine direction, constructed for the temporary sanctuary which the Israelites carried with them in the wilderness. This candlestick had seven branches, with so many separate lamps, and was surmounted by a bowl which served as a reservoir for the oil to feed the lamps, with which it communicated by distinct pipes.—The bowl again communicated, by two pipes, with two olive trees which grew on either side of the candlestick, and drew its supplies from the olive berries which were produced on the branches of the trees.

It is worthy of our notice, that the prophet received little information regarding the import of the vision. He was told that it was intended for the encouragement of Zerubbabel, "This is the word of the Lord, unto Zerubbabel, saying, not by might, nor by power, but my spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts. Who art thou, O great mountain, thou shalt become a plain. And he shall bring forth the head stone thereof, with shoutings, crying, grace, grace unto it." Other more specific messages for Zerubbabel are added, though, all, that

the repented iniquities of the prophet elicited was, that the two olive trees with their principal branches were, "the two anointed ones, that stand by the Lord of the whole earth," v. 14. If the prophet understood Zerubbabel and Joshua, who had severally received the royal and priestly anointing, to be thus designated (and we cannot doubt that he did so) then, he had the fullest assurance, that the work which was itself commanded by God, and in which they were God's instruments, yea, and types of the GREAT ANOINTED ONE, would be abundantly prospered.

The text, it will be readily admitted, looks far beyond the work which Zerubbabel superintended, important as that work was. The temple on Zion, was but an emblem of the Church of the redeemed which rests on Christ as its foundation, while it is raised through the labours of his servants under his administration. And, in reference to this spiritual building, it is with eminent propriety said, "Not by might nor by power, but by the Spirit of the Lord of Hosts."

In addressing you from these words, it may be proper, First, to advert to that condition of the Church which God claims as the result of the agency of His own Spirit. Secondly, to consider the operation of the Holy Spirit in producing this result in connection with the instrumentality which he employs. And, Thirdly, to notice some of the lessons which it suggests to us, the assembled Rulers of a portion of the Church of God. And may the Holy Spirit lead us to the knowledge and application of the truth in the important bearings in which the text presents it to us.

I would then, First, glance at that condition of the Church, of which, it may be said, "Not by might, nor by power, but by the Spirit of the Lord of Hosts." The golden candlestick, in Zachariah's vision, with its many branches burning brightly, and, these supplied with oil from a fountain on the top of the candlestick, and that fountain again, from the olive trees which grew beside it, is a beautiful emblem of what the Church of God is, wherever she is found in purity and vigour, and of what she is destined universally to become. For, she is lighted up with Divine Truth, and reflects it unto the world. Nor is there, in the world, any truth worthy the name of *light*, but that which the Church communicates to it. She possesses and holds forth the revealed knowledge of the character and counsels, and works of God; and this is eminently the *light of life*. There is indeed a knowledge of many of the works of God, and of many of the relations which he has established between different parts of his works, which is

embodied in the arts and sciences of life, and, this knowledge has existed apart from revelation — But, if the importance of any thing to man, is to be estimated by its connection with his immortal destiny; then, is the light of science, as it is called, in itself, utterly insignificant. It is but feeble artificial light, a taper which has its uses for the short hour of man's continuance on earth, it can do nothing to light his path to immortality. It may be shining after its measure, with the intensest brightness, on men, and yet, they, at the same time, may be involved in the deepest night of spiritual ignorance and death. The revelation of the knowledge of God diffuses a light which discovers to man his origin, his high capacities, and destination, his present condition as fallen and lost through sin, and the way of recovery, and everlasting life through the boundless love of God. And the Church is constituted the depository of this light. She possesses it in the records of inspiration. The ministry of the Gospel of the Son of God, and the various institutions of his kingdom are designed to hold it forth to men, and, every one of his followers is illuminated with it, and reflects it around him by his profession, his character, and conduct. — Believers have had the eyes of their minds opened, and as they gaze on the Son of God, the light of the knowledge of the glory of God shines into their hearts; thus "have they the light of life," "they are changed into the very image of God," and a divine light radiates forth from them. "They had been once darkness, but now they are light in the Lord." So too, the Apostle teaches when he thus exhorts, "Do all things without murmurings and disputings, that ye may be blameless, and harmless, the sons of God without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as light in the world, holding forth the word of life." Such also, is the import of the Saviour's exhortation, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." Now, where the members of the church do thus happily realise the transforming influence of the truth, and the ministry presents it, in its purity, to the contemplation and reception of the world, and the church is regulated by the laws and ordinances which the Saviour has prescribed for his kingdom on earth, the church is like the golden candlestick when its many branches were lighted up, encircled with an orb of light. And, that light manifests and reproveth the wickedness of the world, and in a season of merciful visitation breaks in on the darkened minds of some, to enlighten and save them. Had all the churches of Christ been diligent in receiving the light from its great

fountain-head, the Sun of Righteousness, and been more faithful in exhibiting it to the world, then, even long before this our day, the darkness of the world would have been all dispelled, and the nations would have been walking "in the light of the glory of the Lord." But, the vision of Isaiah concerning the Church still tarries: "Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people; but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising."

This condition of the Church, to whatever extent it is realised, is the result of the agency of the Spirit of God. She shines by no light of her own, but because "the glory of the Lord has risen upon her." And when she thus corresponds to the emblem, which John as well as Zechariah saw in vision—a golden candlestick with many lamps burning brightly—we say of her, "Not by might, nor by power, but by the Spirit of the Lord of Hosts."

I would now in the Second place, call your attention to the operation of the Holy Spirit in producing this result, and the instrumentality which he employs.

The text most peremptorily denies to human agency in any of its forms, a co-ordinate place with that of the Holy Spirit, in bringing about the result referred to; whether that be primarily, the erection of the temple by Zerubbabel, or secondarily the building of the spiritual temple in the world by the Ministers of Christ. And we may learn from the emblem which the prophets vision afforded, that, as man can neither create a tree, nor give to any tree the power of producing olive berries, nor cause the olive tree to grow; so, neither can he do any thing to illuminate the church with the light of life. The spirit of the Lord of Hosts alone is competent for this result.

Yet, there is nothing in the emblem, or in the work of Zerubbabel which the prophets vision was intended to encourage, that countenance the supposition that God dispenses with the instrumentality of men in his operations in the church. For what was the candlestick but a piece of nicely adjusted mechanism for the production of light? And, in the erection of the temple, a work which God claims as exclusively his own, all that was visible, was the labour of man. There were the thousands of the Jews hewing stone and timber, constructing a scaffolding, rearing the walls, and roofing and finishing the building. There were the decree of

was authorising the work, and stated issues from the Imperial treasury for the prosecution of it. And there were also the superintendence of Zerubbabel and Joshua, as well as the ministry of Prophets, directing and inciting all classes of the people to labour perseveringly toward its completion. It is impossible, indeed, to conceive of any system of means better adapted to an end, than that which the emblem of the candlestick and the building of the temple present. And so, while in applying the text to the building of the spiritual temple, we exclude human agency from a co-ordinate place with the divine agency in that work, we yet learn from the vision which the text interprets, and from the work of Zerubbabel which it was designed to encourage that, a system of human means is employed in all that God works in and through his Church. The agency of the Spirit of God is supreme and efficient; that of man is subordinate and instrumental. Every individual believer is a constituent part of the church, he is a living stone built upon the rock, Christ, or, describing him, in allusion to the emblem employed in Zechariah's vision, he is radiant with divine light, and contributes to make up the bright luminous orb which encircles the many-branched golden candlestick. Now, all that is peculiar in the character of believers is the production of the Holy Spirit. The opening of the eye of the mind to the reception of the knowledge of God, and of Christ, is His operation. From Him too, is derived the power with which the heart grasps the Son of God, seen to be the glory of the Father and an omnipotent Redeemer. And the blessed change which passes upon the whole man in peace with God, purity of heart, the graces of holiness, and a hope of glory and immortality—all acknowledge the Holy Spirit as their author. And so does the union of believers in a visible fellowship; for the faith which unites them to one Head and the love to him and to each other which they cherish, are the results of the Holy Spirit's operation. Yet, in order to these effects, an instrumentality is prepared in all respects as perfect as was that, by which, the lamps on the golden candlestick blazed forth with light, or the walls of the temple were raised. For, according to the constitution of God's spiritual kingdom, the word must be introduced into the minds of men through the ordinary avenue of the senses in order to their believing it. And the agency by which this is done, is not such as is competent for any intellectual capacity; there must be on the part of the minister of the word, an intelligent co-operation with God—if we may so speak of instrumental agency,—and Paul's language warrants us to speak of it, for he says, "Now then we are fel-

low workers with God." Ministers must appreciate the high ends of their office, the salvation of immortal souls, and the manifestation of the glory of the Godhead, and they must pursue these ends, and observe the laws which are prescribed for the ministry.

Thus in regard to the mere utterance of the truth he may learn from what Paul says of his own practice, that it is not every kind of announcement of it that the Spirit of God will render available for the conversion and salvation of men. He tells us, that he studiously avoided the embellishments of oratory lest his grand theme *The Cross of Christ* should be injured by them. The historian of his labors too, in one place, in which he is describing the success of his preaching and that of Barnabas, intimates in an incidental way, that the manner in which they spoke the truth had its own place in the chain of causes toward the grand result, the salvation of men, for he tells us that at Iconium "they so spoke, that a great multitude," both of the Jews and also of the Greeks believed. It is obvious indeed, that a great variety of conditions must combine in order to the successful ministry of the truth. Thus, the vouchers which the conduct and character of a minister afford for the authenticity of his commission have a certain influence on the reception of his message. Then again, the adaptation of the message itself, to the circumstances and capacities of his hearers, is another important element to its success; and so is the very mode of its utterance, for solemnity, simplicity, and affection, are all becoming the gospel message, as the opposite qualities of elocution are unsuitable for it. And in addition to fidelity and diligence in addressing the gospel message, there is required in the preacher, a prayerful dependance on the Spirit of God for his blessing, and there may be required also the concurrence of the prayers of others in behalf of those who are the subjects of his ministry. These, are but a few parts of that instrumentality by which the word is conveyed alike to sinners for their conversion, and to the members of the church for their edification. We have said nothing of the process of preparation for the ministry, of the arrangements which must be made for its support, of the various pastoral services distinct from teaching and preaching, which must be attended to, or of the influences accessory to that of ministers which is derived from the conduct and character of all those who have professed themselves the subjects of Christ's kingdom. Neither have we spoken of that instrumentality which is of an unconscious or involuntary kind, such as the events of providence. And

yet, varied and complex, and nicely adjusted, as the whole is, the energy which saves the soul is not in it—"not by might, nor by power but by my Spirit saith the Lord of Hosts." The regeneration of individuals and communities, the deliverance from sin and the second death of one soul, and of the whole host of the elect, is the proper work of the Holy Spirit. This doctrine is beautifully exhibited in an appeal which Paul makes to the Corinthian church. The members of that church, blind to their high and proper dignity as followers of Christ, vied with each other for a pre-eminence according to the imagined superiority of the ministers by whom they had been severally converted. One said "I am of Paul" another "I am of Apollos," another "I of Cephas" and another again, arrogating some more special connection with the Saviour, "I am of Christ." Paul's mild but firm reproof to this spirit was, "who is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers, servants, by whom ye believed even as the Lord gave to every man. I have planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase so then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase." And, how distinct and uniform is the testimony of scripture on this subject, examine it, how, and where, you may. The counsels and superintendence of Haggai and Zechariah, of Zerubbabel and Joshua, the labors of thousands of hands and the decrees, yea and stipends of heathen princes, must all combine in order to the rebuilding of the temple of Jerusalem: and yet, even that work is attributed to God, in a way that no human agents can divide the glory with him. So too Paul and Apollos well accomplished, as they were, by the powers of genius, the acquirements of study, and miraculous gifts, for moving the hearts of men, confessed themselves to be nothing for the production of those grand results which they sought, and which they also saw following on their labors—the bringing of men into subjection to the Son of God, and beautifying them with the graces of holiness and preparing them for heaven. And so, brethren, whether by the ministry of the word we seek to bring men to submit to the yoke of the Saviour, and to instruct and comfort, admonish and reprove those who have engaged in His service; or whither we endeavor to obtain additional laborers to take part with ourselves in the ministry of the word in this land; or whether we meet to direct the affairs of the church in which we preside, must we cultivate a single and absolute dependance on the Holy Spirit. The grand results at which our ministry aims, are to be obtained, "Not by might, nor by power, but by the Spirit of the Lord of Hosts."

This subject is fraught with many interesting lessons: and, constituted as I am for the present the instructor of my brethren, and that by themselves, I shall not, I am persuaded, be deemed chargeable with a want of humility and modesty, if I attempt to press some of those lessons which are applicable to them rather than to a promiscuous coagregation.

In the First place, we who are intrusted with the ministry should endeavor to cultivate proper views of the work to which, in this land we are called.

In the kingdom of providence, as we call God's eternal government of the world, we see that means are followed by their ends, even when there may not be on the part of the intelligent agents who have employed them, any professed or real acknowledgment of God. And from this circumstance, in connection with the spiritual imbecility which characterises us, we are prone to forget God in His spiritual kingdom, and to think, that all has been accomplished, when the external service has been attended to; so alas, it may be, that we are satisfied with ourselves when we have studied the discourse, and preached it, and offered up the customary prayer, or when we have given the expected exhortation, or dropped a word of counsel and comfort as the circumstances of those whom we are visiting require, or, as when we have attended to the sacramental ordinances in their season. But ah! when our views terminate on the mere *opus operatum* of the ministry, we are far from accomplishing God's work in it. For, our ministry is substantially the same as that in which the apostles were employed. It is designed, as is expressed in Paul's commission, "to open the eyes of men, and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them that are sanctified by faith that is in Christ." Our work, as it respects men in their natural condition, is to bring them into a connection with the second Adam, the Lord from Heaven, that they may be accepted in His righteousness, and renewed by His Spirit, and brought into subjection to Him; and, as it respects those who are disciplined into the Saviour, it is thus they may be kept in the enjoyment of the blessings which he dispenses and trained up in holiness and a meetness for heaven. The ministry, in these grand views of it, is the same in all ages, and in all circumstances; and as it possesses a transcendent dignity, so does it involve an overwhelming responsibility. It is therefore a matter of comparative insignificance in what circumstances it be exercised. Pastors and Missionaries now,

Whatever be the field of their labor, may, alike with an Apostle, confess their unworthiness of being employed in preaching the unsearchable riches of Christ, and, like him also, must seek and find all their sufficiency for the work in God. Yet, just because the instrumentality employed in God's spiritual kingdom is in all respects nicely adjusted, must we attend to the specialities which are found in our allotted field of labor. It will be readily acknowledged that we have difficulties to contend with, which are peculiar to a newly settled country: as in the scattered state of the population, the unfavourable change which has passed on the characters of many with their removal from the Christian society in which they had been brought up, their change of pursuits, and it may be their long destitution of Christian ordinances, and the scanty maintenance provided for ministers. These things however must not be allowed to discourage us. I appeal to you, my beloved brethren, whether we would not have ample encouragement under all our difficulties, were they even tenfold greater than they are, in the work itself in which we are engaged; seeing, that it is the work of God, and of Christ, and that it directly subscribes the everlasting salvation of men. The very trials and privations which any of us may have to encounter are most honorable. Nor should it be a light ground of encouragement with us—as I believe it is not—the consideration, that we are laboring for generations that are yet to diffuse themselves over the vacant territory in which we dwell. God in His wisdom has kept it to a great extent untenanted by men, during ages, through which, as there is reason to believe, a denser population would have added only to the extent of the kingdom of Satan. Oh, that we may deeply feel, that, it is at once to our honor, and to our responsibility, to be laboring in a community yet in its youth while, the direction of the giant strength it may afterwards obtain, to be wielded either for good or for evil, is to some extent committed to us.

2. Let us cultivate a habitual sense of our absolute dependance on the Spirit of God for success in the work to which we are called. We may describe the end of our ministry in another expression of Paul's—that it is, “to present every man perfect in Christ Jesus.” And, we can no more accomplish this, by any power given to us under the ordinary economy of Providence, than we can evoke the bones from the grave and unite them to each other, and clothe them with sinews and flesh and skin, and animate them with the breath of life. And so, we must feel, that all that we ourselves can do, in the actual exercise of our

ministry, is in itself unavailing to the end of the ministry. That with an eloquence fervid as was that of Apollos or Paul, we should still, without the Spirit of God, be nothing towards converting and sanctifying men; that, though we could even now transplant to this land any or all of the schools of the prophets that are found in Britain, we could not of ourselves form “Pastors and Teachers for the work of the ministry;” and that if a tithe of her vast revenue were now expended in maintaining Pastors and Missionaries and Teachers of every kind, even this, would not of itself secure the bringing in of the kingdom of God amongst us. For, the sentiment in the text is most absolute—“Not by might, nor by power, but by the Spirit of the Lord of Hosts.”

And, dear brethren, we must not think it enough to bring forward this truth occasionally in a discourse as a barren thesis. We must feel it, and act it out in our whole ministerial work, as in studying for the pulpit, and in addressing our people from it, in our pastoral visitations, as well as when we sit in our judicatories for administering the discipline or government of the church. And, as prayer is the utterance of this sense of dependance, we must pray without ceasing, and must also teach our people, that they can be fellow-workers with us, by striving together with us in prayer for the success of the ministry.

3. But the doctrine we have been considering does not permit us to disparage our own agency. Our labour is indeed powerless to the production of the result which it contemplates: and yet, it is constituted a means for the exertion of the Divine agency. And this is honour enough for poor dependant creatures, such as we are: yea, an infinite honour for those who owe their own deliverance from sin and condemnation to the clemency of God, and the blood of His Son, to be connected with that kingdom which has the Son of God for its head, and the everlasting salvation of men and glory of God as its immediate and ultimate object, and to be employed also in advancing that kingdom in the world. Oh, for spiritual illumination to know the honour thus bestowed upon us, and for wisdom to be for ever humbled under a sense of it.

But, herein also, we are to see our duty—our duty to labour in the ministry of the word, because God calls on us to do so, and because our work is subordinate to His great work. The harvests which now wave around us, or are being gathered by the husbandman, are God's, for he is Lord of all, and by Him “the valleys are covered over with

corn;" and yet, who that views them in contrast with the dark and barren woods that encircle them, is not reminded that man has been lavish of his toil, in clearing the ground, and breaking it up, and fencing and sowing it. And so, brethren, we too must labour, in order to gather a harvest into the garner of God. We must "break up the fallow ground," and sow, and plant, and water, and fence. And the reclaiming of the spiritual wastes around us can be effected only by an increase of laborers. And these can be furnished only by the church, where she is in a state of greater maturity than in these provinces; though the time has surely come, when we ought to exert ourselves in providing for the training of the few amongst us, who are desirous of being commissioned in the Lord's vineyard. Again, as the labourer is worthy of his reward, and should be maintained in the spiritual field undistracted by the cares and employments that are connected with providing for his temporal necessities; so must there be made some arrangements for his support, whether that be obtained from offerings at the altar, or, as in the days of Zerubbabel, from the treasury of the state. Thus, an extensive and varied instrumentality must be employed, in order to the establishment of the kingdom of God amongst us. And while we cherish a sense of our own utter impotency to the attainment of this result, we are not, therefore, discharged from labouring. God will work through us, when we work according to his will.

4. Let us study to give its own proper place to the varied instrumentality we are called to employ in God's spiritual kingdom; in other words, a proportionate attention to every department of ministerial labour. We are prone, as I have said, to forget the ultimate end of the ministry, and to terminate our views on the work itself, or, at least, on results far short of the salvation of men, and the glory of the ever-blessed God. And when this is the case, we are not likely to be very diligent in it, though, in the absence of the higher motives, there are many inferior ones that may lead to a certain kind and degree of ministerial activity. Now, when the higher motives are not operating upon us, we are very apt to give a disproportionate attention to particular parts of ministerial service; to attach an undue attention to some, and to treat others with comparative neglect. And, in this case, we are not in the way of doing the work of the Lord, for he must be honored in all his ordinances. The dislocation of any part of the mechanism of the golden candlestick, between the branches of the olive trees and the lamps, would have been fatal to the production of light. And so, we cannot transmit a divine influence from Christ,

the Head to those who are under our ministrations unless we study to honour Him in the observance of all His institutions.

A prayerful and diligent study of the word of God, and an affectionate application of it to the hearts of our people, are undoubtedly the principal functions of the ministry; yet, some of us may have reason to confess that studies, only indirectly connected with the ministry, or, the business of our church courts, or the secularities of life and of our pastoral work, obtain an undue importance in the actual distribution of our time, so that we may be very far from coming up to the apostolic injunctions, even as accommodated to our circumstances, of giving ourselves wholly to the ministry—of preaching the word in season and out of season. Oh, brethren, let us beware ourselves, that our own salvation is wrapped up in our fidelity in the ministry. We must save ourselves, by serving Christ, in saving our fellow men. The business of our church courts should receive a measure of attention; but let us remember that they are designed to direct, rather than to produce spiritual influence. Teaching and preaching are fitted to make men christians, and to keep them christians—that is, to build the spiritual house, the church; government must regulate its affairs, after it has been built. Let us feel then, that we are engaged in the very highest work of the ministry when we are preaching, or expounding the word, catechising the young, or exhorting from house to house.

5. Finally, let us study to adapt our exertions to the existing circumstances of the church.

It is noted of the men of the tribe of Issachar, who came with the representatives of the other tribes to exalt David to the supreme power in Israel, that "they had understanding of the times to know what Israel ought to do." Such men are necessary at all times amongst the leaders of the church, and eminently so amongst ourselves at the present time. For, while difficulties beset us from our own immaturity and feebleness, and the condition of the political world, there is a peculiar importance connected with our work, inasmuch as that we are laying a foundation for the generations that are to come after us. It is something even to feel our peculiar difficulties, and our responsibility, for then, shall we be happily led to more humble dependence on God for his guidance and blessing; blessed be His name, that He can, and will impart to us, if we truly wait on Him, "the spirit of power, and of love, and of a sound mind." He can convert our very weakness into strength, and over-rule the events of His providence towards

the enlargement of His church in these lands.— Shall we forget, that the conquests of warriors, and the measures of statesmen and princes have ever been controlled by an unseen hand, with a view to the interests of the small, the despised, and for the time, it may be, unknown community, the church of God. We are reminded, from the connection in which our text stands, that the changes on the throne of Persia, and the councils of the palace of Shushan, where, for the time, the rod of universal empire was swayed, were all modified by the faith and the prayers of a handful of manumitted captives, who were labouring amongst the ruins of Jerusalem. And be assured, brethren, that we may still move the hand which holds the heart of the sovereign, and of ministers of state, and governors, parliaments, and councils, yea, and of the more uncontrollable populace, and turns it whithersoever he will. Our believing prayers and labours shall win a blessing from God, let who will.

The feebleness of the church for maintaining a ministry is a very prominent feature in her present condition; and the more so, that the work to which she is called is very great, both as respects the furnishing of missionaries for the scattered and destitute population, and ministers for congregations already organized, and the providing for the raising up of labourers amongst ourselves. In all these views of the church, we may well confess her poverty; and forming, as we do, a part of a state which covenants to uphold the kingdom of Christ, we may surely, with a good conscience, seek a moiety of those resources which have been professedly consecrated to that object. But, my brethren, I am bold to confess, that, in my judgment, our temporal poverty, if the destitution to which I have been alluding may be so characterised, is not the most striking feature of our condition. We are poor, poor indeed, in the graces and gifts of the Spirit of God. How little, alas, is there found amongst us of that fervency and power in praying and preaching, for which, by general consent, the ministers of our church in other days were distinguished! Who, of us, can tell of any such marked success attending on our ministry of the word and the sacraments as what history and tradition, not yet old, describe as following on the preaching and the communions of faithful ministers both in Scotland and Ireland? How little is there found in our judicatories of that zeal for the purity of church fellowship, for which our church was wont to be noted! And, how little respect does our disciple obtain from many of the members of the church, even when it is administered with a measure of tenderness and fidelity! Must we not confess the want of a deep and serious piety

amongst the great body of our people, much neglect of domestic training and catechising in the elements of divine truth, much want of reverence for the Lord's day, and of that devotional spirit in families, which at one time stood out so prominently in the Scottish character, that when a poet, in the mere exercise of his art, set himself to draw a cotter, he drew a saint!

But, why refer only to the history of the Reformed Church of Scotland for proofs that religion is in a languid condition with us here? The apostolic age unquestionably presents the church in a more perfect condition; and no minute survey of it is required to convince us that we are far, very far, from coming up to that pattern. A candlestick has been lighted up amongst us, yet does it send out only a dim and feeble light, and therefore, few are attracted towards it.

If the preacher makes these statements with hesitation and trembling, it is because his own feelings and conduct come short of what they should be with a full conviction of their truth, rather than from any fear that they will be gainsayed by his hearers. May we all, my dear brethren, be duly affected with our spiritual destitution; for, if all the forms and offices and institutions of religion are ordained only for promoting living holiness, we are more concerned to labour and pray for a revival of scriptural and apostolical piety, than for all the treasures which the piety or policy of kings ever consecrated to religion. History abundantly testifies, that if the church would earn respect and honour and riches for Christ, neither her ministers nor members must covet these objects for their own sakes, but rather despise them. Observation and the reason of the thing, we may say the constitution of the kingdom of Christ, demonstrate that a church, in which piety is in a low condition, cannot make a good use of riches or of any other talent. She may, perhaps, in such a condition possess both wealth and learning, and yet she will lack the power of consecrating them to the advancement of the kingdom of the Saviour.

Let us not then suppose that all that we require is a larger endowment from the state; this, desirable as it is for the sake of the church, and of the state too, if given to advance the truth, should yet be dreaded, and declined, if our acceptance of it were in any wise tantamount to a connivance at any form of corrupted christianity unhappily fostered by the state. Extended pecuniary resources, whencesoever derived, can avail to the advancement of the kingdom of God only when the pastors, missionaries, and teachers of any kind, on whom they are bestowed, are prayerful and laborious men of God.

ADDRESS

To the people comprising the several congregations
under the superintendence of the Presbytery of
Kingston.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN,

The Presbytery of Kingston wishing grace, mercy and peace to be continued and multiplied unto you all, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, desire to remind you, that many years ago, the fathers of this country stripped, during a war of revolution, of their all, in deep poverty, without the implements of husbandry and the necessaries of life, pitched their tents in an unbroken wilderness; but the gracious Preserver of men supported them under their privations, supplied their wants, and delivered them from many evils. The red men of the forest penetrated far into the old American Colonies, carrying ruin and desolation in their train; but God bridled the ferocity of the native tribes in Canada, and disposed them to live in friendship with the inhabitants from the first settlement of the country. Little more than half a century has elapsed since that event and, considering the mighty obstacles to be surmounted, the growth of the population and the improvements made and in progress are, perhaps, without a parallel in history. We have, excepting a few years of contest, enjoyed unbroken peace. Friendship and brotherly love have pervaded all classes. Surely all these are striking instances of the favour of God vouchsafed both to the earlier and later settlers in this land. But, some years ago, a few persons, fond of change, arose, sowed the seeds of dissension, and have now grasped the sword to shed their brother's blood. Fire, pillage, and slaughter have, in every direction, marked their course. The sorrow of widows and fatherless children is the bitter fruit of their progress; and many families, once living in comfort, are now cast on the wide world, houseless and destitute. And, to aggravate the impending judgment, they are now employing all their art and ingenuity to induce the citizens of the neighbouring country to join their ranks and invade our land, demonstrating that they seek for revolution and the separation of these Colonies from Great Britain. Now, to develop the resources of the country, to remove existing abuses and improve our institutions, to do all this, so far as practicable, is amply encouraged by the genius of the British Constitution, and is in perfect accordance with the practice and sympathies of that free and generous nation to which we belong. But, instead of confining themselves to the prosecution of measures of salutary reform, in a constitutional, peaceable and christian-like manner, these deluded men are bent on the destruction of that form of government which we prefer, and that connection with England which, under God, we deem to be equally our privilege, honor and felicity

To trace and develop that extraordinary conspiracy which was formed for these revolutionary purposes, and its no less extraordinary detection, were unbefitting the objects of this address; but not to acknowledge the hand of God in those signal interpositions, by which this conspiracy has been defeated, were nothing less than a guilty contempt of the Ruler and Disposer of all.

Dear! Beloved Brethren, at this eventful crisis the eyes of your country are no doubt directed towards you, to see how you will discharge your duty to it and to your posterity; and the warm, instantaneous and wide-spreading response which has been already given to the public demands, is an encouraging pledge and security that you will not be wanting in your duty to man; but especially remember that the eye of God is looking down from heaven upon you to see in what manner you are to fulfil your obligations to Him.

The present calamity stands not alone, but is only one of many that have recently afflicted the Province. They must be wrapt up in worse than brutish inconsideration who have not been taking note, that the judgments of God have been for some time remarkably abroad in the world in general, and most strikingly manifest in this Province in particular.

A terrible pestilence has more than once visited us and cut down no inconsiderable number of our population. During the season just gone by, a scarcity in some parts of the land almost amounting to famine and a depression in temporal matters unexampled lay heavy upon the Province, and just as it was beginning to breathe from these calamities, war in its most hateful and unnatural form has risen up.

Consider then that such calamities as these come not by chance, and that afflictions spring not from the ground; that the government of God is conducted not upon arbitrary and capricious but upon fixed and unchangeable principles, and according to perfect righteousness. In His infinitely just and wise administration there always exists an inseparable connection between the judgments he sends upon a people and their sins, and can you be at any loss to trace that connection in respect to the judgments that have already afflicted and are still afflicting our land. Was there ever a people in existence who have received a larger or more munificent share of God's favors and blessings, than that nation of which we form a part; and can it, with the least colour of truth be affirmed, that our gratitude to God, or proper use of our privileges have kept any proportion with those expectations of return, God had the clearest right to entertain; and to say nothing of our derelictions of duty to God, in this respect, have not our more open and presumptuous sins as a people been too notorious to escape observation? Have not the Sabbaths which should be esteemed a delight, the holy of the Lord, honorable and which ought to be consecrated to devotional purposes, with-

not even speaking our own words, been desecrated by both Rulers, and people, by being employed for almost every secular purpose? Has not the name of God which should be used with the deepest reverence and awe, been fearfully profaned in common conversation? Have not fraud and dishonesty lifted their cry to heaven? Has not a spirit of worldliness and covetousness, a hastening by all means and at all hazards to be rich, been widely prevalent? and have not the ordinances of God appointed for promoting our eternal salvation been esteemed less in value than those perishable objects, which can afford but a temporary comfort?

The person who does not, in all these recent calamities, see the connection between God's judgments and our sins, would scarcely see it were it written by the finger of God, in brightest characters in every part of his spacious firmament above us and around us.

But in the principles of the divine government the connection between faith, repentance, prayer, and the removal of God's judgments is no less close than between judgments and sin. And with reference to our present circumstances it ought to be most deeply impressed on our minds that though outward calamities may sometimes seem to be removed without repentance, faith, and prayer, this is no proof of their real and final removal, or of the possession of the divine favor; but on the contrary is evidence of the certainty of their sooner or later falling with a weight all the more terrible and overwhelming on the heads of the impenitent. For example, were not the judgments that fell upon Jerusalem just the full accumulated amount of that storm of divine wrath that had for ages been gathering in the heavens and which, because God's voice of warning had been, from generation to generation, despised, at last, with unrestrained and irresistible fury, burst over the devoted city? And is not the case of Jerusalem more than once referred to by our blessed Lord as a warning of those judgments unspeakably more terrible that await the impenitent in eternity? So that if escape from temporal calamities for sins unrepented of be possible, there is a day coming when retribution must overtake transgressors with a severity according to the length of space given for repentance.

But, brethren, there is one thing which at this eventful crisis demands our solemn and undivided attention because it is full of encouragement and hope. It is this that after all judgment is God's strange work; that not only is he reluctant to draw his glittering sword and take vengeance on his enemies—the impenitent despisers of his mercies and warnings—but even after having drawn it, he is ever ready to return it to its scabbard upon seeing any plain symptoms of prayerful humiliation, repentance, faith, and unfeigned desire to lay down the weapons of their rebellion and to return to their allegiance.

So very slow is our God to anger that, as you remember, he gave to the old world no less than 120 years space for repentance; and it was only after his omnipotence had been defied, his admonitions contemned, and the world had filled up the measure of its guilt, that the deluge of sin which overspread the world was swept away by a deluge of water.

Likewise the case of Ninevah, so appropriate to our present circumstances, shews that God even after he had proclaimed the ruin of that mighty city, upon seeing signs of penitence on the part of the people did not inflict the judgment threatened.

Dearly beloved brethren, we would urge it upon your attention that although God has in the midst of judgment been remembering mercy, yet matters are still in suspense because the issue of events may entirely depend upon that line of conduct towards the Supreme Ruler, which you as a people and as individuals are to adopt. Pause then and consider the way by which you are to obtain the removal of something infinitely more dreadful than any temporal calamity—the anger of God. The removal of this spiritual calamity is to be obtained, and the divine favour secured, by pleading at the throne of grace for a saving interest in the precious atoning blood and meritorious obedience of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, by profound humiliation on account of sin, by unfeigned repentance, evidencing itself in a thorough and unexceptionable amendment of life. Suffer us, then, as your spiritual guardians, and as bound to watch over you in these calamitous times, strongly to urge upon you the necessity of diligence in the use of means—of secret prayer, of family worship, of associations with your brethren for the purpose of prayer, and of regularly assembling yourselves together in the House of God. Finally, be assured that it is only by the Holy Spirit rendering these means effectual—enabling you to depend for acceptance on the free grace of God, and the mediation of Jesus Christ, and to forsake every besetting sin—that you can have any solid foundation for expecting him to deliver you from existing evils, to prosper you as citizens of time and bless, you in all eternity. Amen.

Belleville, 3d January, 1838.

The above Address was appointed to be read to the congregations within the bounds of the Presbytery at the last meeting held on the 3d of January, 1838.

ON MAKING HASTE TO BE RICH.

 I TIM. 6, 9, 10.

The obtaining wealth is an object of almost universal pursuit. For this men rise up early and sit up late; for this their minds are perpetually turning, first to the right hand and then to left, making frequent calculations whether this or that be the most profitable measure for securing the proposed end. In whatever direction we turn our eyes we perceive the proofs of this fact. Early in the morning it may be noticed how mercantile men press forward from their country residences to the cities or towns in which their business is conducted. Walk through the public streets of the principal commercial cities of Britain, America, or Canada, you will scarcely meet an individual who discovers a listless countenance. All are on the alert; the eye is fixed upon the object; every nerve is stretched, and no gladiator of ancient times could discover more anxiety, or make more exertion, than is manifested by those ardent pursuers after wealth. But from whence does all this ardour flow? It is from a strong impression on the minds of men, that it is a very desirable thing to be rich; that riches furnish numerous means of obtaining happiness, and that the more we can accumulate, the more happiness we can possess. This is the predominant sentiment and feeling of men of business. But it is not the language of experience; it is not the language of divine revelation, which warns us against such mistaken notions. The word of God brings to our view the emptiness and the unprofitableness of riches, except so far as they are means of glorifying God, and of doing good to our fellow men. Let the ardent pursuers after wealth read attentively the following passage;—"There is an evil which I have seen under the sun, and it is common among men; a man to whom God hath given riches, wealth, and honour, so that he wanteth nothing for his soul of all that he desireth, yet God giveth him not power to eat thereof, but a stranger eateth it; this is vanity, and it is an evil disease."

It would afford pleasure to every genuine Christian to perceive, that the desire of wealth in professing Christians is kept within those limits which are wise, and compatible with the obligations which they are under to God, and the regard which they should cherish for the honor of pure and undefiled religion. Instead of which, it is lamentable to see them determining to obtain wealth at all hazards, even at the expense of every high christian principle, and of almost every personal, relative, and religious duty, even sacrificing a good conscience and hazarding the everlasting salvation of the soul.

The passage of scripture which has suggested these reflections, exposes that dangerous line of conduct which all real christians should carefully avoid. It is also manifest, from many fatal examples, that those who "will be rich" pursue a course of action extremely sinful, and which must be productive of many and awful mischiefs to the soul. I shall state some examples of this kind, and I pray God that they may not be exhibited in vain.

That man certainly "makes haste to be rich" who sacrifices either religious duties or religious privileges to the prosecution of his great object of procuring riches. How frequently have I heard the neglect of reading the scriptures and prayer, both in the family and in the closet, thus apologized for:—"I have a family to support, and my business engrosses so much of my time, that it is next to impossible to attend to these things at present; I hope soon to get forward a little in the world, and then I shall have more leisure, and will then undoubtedly give more attention to these things." Such persons forget the wholesome advice, or, I might say, the solemn injunction of the Great Teacher. In summing up an interesting discourse upon the duty of trusting Divine Providence, and guarding against all sinful anxiety respecting temporal things, he says, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."

Eagerness to accumulate wealth is discovered also by the neglect of the public worship of God, and the institutions of the christian sanctuary. Our Lord has beautifully and powerfully portrayed those who fall into this sin, and think to excuse the neglect of their souls and things eternal by the obligations they are under to attend to the duties of their temporal callings. It is in the parable of the great supper, Luke 14, 18. &c. The master is represented as having made an ample and a rich provision for a large body of guests, and, at supper time, he sent forth his servants to announce his kindness and liberality, and invite the poor, the lame, the halt, and the blind; the most unworthy and insignificant were not exempted; and the messengers were to say, "Come, for all things are now ready." But how was the message received? "They all began with one consent to make excuse. The first said unto him, I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it; I pray thee have me excused. The second said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them; I pray thee have me excused. And the third said, I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come." The first two of these were too intent upon getting money to attend to the things of God, the soul and eternity. It was no sin to buy a farm, or to buy five yoke of oxen, to plough the land when bought; it was no sin to marry a wife; but when these things interpose between God and our souls, cherish a worldly spirit, and obstruct the performance of our most essential duties, they are our sin and our curse. It is a sad cmen, when God gives

any thing in wrath. This is the case often in regard to riches; and then, instead of yielding happiness, they are altogether useless, or even become the means of distracting and destroying the unhappy individuals on whom they have been bestowed.

Another way in which men make haste to be rich, and fall into temptation is, by indulging the spirit of monopoly; and, therefore, strike out into many different lines of business, or multiply shops and stations in one and the same business. I have been surprised to see not only men of the world pursue this line of conduct, but even professing christians. One, whom I well knew, had many branches of business, they lay so remote from each other, and involved him in so much care and anxiety, that early and late he was all bustle; he was running from Dan to Beersheba to borrow money, or to procure discounts; he broke his promises to his friends; was so irritable in his family, that his wife and children could scarcely procure a kind or a civil answer; and, in the midst of all this eager pursuit to amass wealth, he was snatched away by death, and left his affairs in so disorganized a state, that it required no little time and sagacity to disentangle them; and thus after having given his eyes little slumber, and his hands and feet no rest, and after working harder than any of his own dependants, instead of having amassed, as some thought, a good fortune, it appeared that his family were left with but a scanty support, and were of course painfully disappointed.

Wherever I see this disposition to engross an undue share of the public favour, I think I see one who is "making haste to be rich." It has been said, that "a covetous man can scarcely be an honest man." One person, and he a great talker about religion, not long ago openly declared himself in language that seemed to intimate, that he should rejoice in the ruin of all those who were of his own profession in that neighbourhood. What can be the issue of such a temper of mind but disappointment and disgrace on the one hand, or, if successful in amassing riches on the other, must these not be embittered by shame at the recollection of the means by which they have been procured? How often have we seen the wealth of some men so weigh them down with remorse and despair, that they would have parted with the last farthing if they could have procured sleep for their eyes and peace for their consciences! How true the words of Solomon—"There is a sore evil which I have seen under the sun, namely, riches, kept for the owners thereof to their hurt."

Some make haste to be rich by downright fraud. They have a variety of tricks to set off their goods and induce the purchaser to take them; and when they have carried their point, they glory in the success of their iniquitous manœuvres.

There are many ways in which this may be done. One way is, by giving an appearance to an article

which is altogether fictitious and delusive. Another is, by concealing some defect, which, if seen, would inevitably lead the purchaser to decline the article, or take it at an inferior price.

Others cheat the purchaser by false measures, false weights, &c. Solomon has delivered many interesting lessons of instruction upon these evil practices; the injurious effect of which generally falls most heavily on the poor—to rob whom is one of the greatest abominations in the sight of God. "Rob not the poor, because he is poor; neither oppress the afflicted in the gate; for the Lord will plead their cause, and spoil the soul of those that spoiled them."

Some make haste to be rich by an unjustifiable withholding from others what is their due; they cheat their families of what is rightfully due to them for the comfortable supply of their personal wants, and the maintenance of their respectability in society. They are often pinched in their food, in their clothes, and other domestic comforts, and so stinted in pecuniary supplies, that they are seldom or never able to indulge the best feelings of human nature, in imparting assistance to the poor and afflicted.

They exact from their servants and labourers an undue portion of service, without cause diminish their wages, and withhold what is due to the tradesman, that they may take advantage of any speculation that may seem to promise an increase of their gain. To such the apostle James says, "Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rest of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days. Behold, the hire of the labourers, who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth; and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth."

Others make haste to be rich by absolute robbery. They rob God, the church, and the poor. That proportion which they subscribe to their clergy, for their support, they for a short time pay, but they do even this grudgingly; and when applied to for some charitable contribution, either to objects of distress, or for religious purposes, they never fail to talk of the provision made for both by the government or parliament, and how cheerfully they contribute; than which nothing can be farther from the truth. It was to men of this class that God said, "Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me."

All the wealth which God bestows upon a man is to be considered as a talent, given to him in trust. He is a steward, and must give an account to God. The responsibility of rich persons is therefore very great, and it is so solemnly stated in the parable of the talents, Matthew 25, 15—30, that I take the liberty of urging a close attention to it upon all rich persons, but especially upon rich professors, and most of all upon those professors whose wealth is still increasing.

Is the niggardly heart of any *earth-worm* saying, what shall I do? Where shall I bestow my goods? I answer, put them out to interest, under the direction of inspired truth. Give a due proportion to the Lord, to the church, and to the poor, and they will pay you far better interest than you will ever obtain elsewhere. "He that giveth to the poor lendeth to the Lord." No man can eventually be injured by what he either gives or loses in the cause of God, of truth, and of righteousness. Hear the testimony of Christ, then, covetous soul, and let go thy fond grasp of those perishable riches; they are best used when used for God. "We have left all," said Peter, "and followed thee. And Jesus answered and said, verily I say unto you, there is no man that hath left house or brethren, or sister, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake and the gospel's, but he shall receive an hundred fold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life."

We call upon those who are making haste to be rich to attend to the claim which God makes upon them for providing, upholding, and keeping in a good state, the houses of God in our province: remembering what he said to his ancient people, "Bring wood, and build the house; and I will take pleasure in it, and I will be glorified, saith the Lord."

We call upon you, rich Christians, to provide for the Ministers of the Christian Sanctuary, and the administration of divine ordinances. Thus God addressed the ancient Jews:—"Bring ye all the tithes into the store house, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of Hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it." The law of tithes departed with the old dispensation, and now God claims, and expects your free-will offerings. There is a new law, but it is equally appropriate and equally binding. "If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things?"

If the things I have written have any truth in them, if they have the sanction of God's word, what an awful state are they in who have already made haste to be rich, or who are in progress to this end by any of the means which I have been censuring!—Then how awful your state! Your riches are as the spoils of robbers in the estimation of God. They will rust in your hand; they will melt away like wax, or will make to themselves wings and flee away, or, if they abide with thee, you will exhibit the very image of the individual so correctly portrayed by the prophet—"As the partridge sitteth on eggs, and hatcheth them not, so he that getteth riches, and not by right, shall leave them in the midst of his days, and at his end shall be a fool.

West Gwilliamsbury.

M.

THE PRESBYTERY OF KINGSTON,

At a meeting on the 7th of June last, held at Cobourg, appointed a special meeting for prayer to be held in all the churches under their jurisdiction on the evening of the first Monday of every Month. A minute, explanatory of the nature and objects of this appointment, was drawn up, approved of by the Presbytery, and sent to the different ministers to be read by them to their respective congregations. Since that period these monthly meetings have been established, it is believed in all their churches, are engaged in with much interest by the ministers, and the attendance of the people is very respectable.

The minute read from the pulpits as ordered by the Presbytery is as follows:

"Feeling a deep interest in the progress of pure and undefiled religion in the world at large, and particularly in the congregations under their superintendance, the Presbytery think it highly necessary and becoming that in all their churches, there should be held a special monthly meeting for prayer and supplication to God, that the Holy Spirit may be poured down upon the Pastors, the Elders and the people, that so we may experience a time of spiritual refreshment from the divine presence—and also upon Christians of other denominations towards affecting the removal of ecclesiastical abuses, religious errors and practical ungodliness which may exist either amongst us or them—the illumination and conversion of Heathen, Papal and Mohammedan communities preparatory to the introduction of the latter day of glory. And as there is a great destitution in many parts of this land of religious advantages, the people are rapidly sinking into a state of great spiritual indifference—perishing for lack of knowledge, the young growing up without scriptural instruction, and not a few of them from whom on account of their former privileges and habits, better things might be expected—the Presbytery recommend that these and similar evils should be deprecated in those prayers and supplications which may be presented at the throne of heavenly grace, and the divine blessing earnestly implored upon all the exertions made by our church to promote the cause of the gospel of Christ, both in regular congregations and in the destitute settlements of this country. And the Presbytery further enjoin upon the brethren to labour to impress on the minds of true Christians the duty of engaging in *earnest habitual prayer to God* for accomplishing these results.

It is to be understood that this monthly meeting shall in no way interfere with or supersede other meetings for prayer already established in congregations."

Another meeting of the Presbytery was held also at Cobourg, on the 30th of August last, when the

Rev. Robert Macdowal of Fredericksburg presented himself for admission, before the Presbytery; on being quite satisfied with the testimonials he produced, the Presbytery did, in terms of the minutes of Synod 1833, authorizing them so to do, duly admit him as a member, gave him the right hand of fellowship and ordered his name to be added to the roll.

In joining our church Mr. Macdowal has forfeited voluntarily his right to the government allowance which he enjoyed as a minister of the United Synod of Upper Canada; and as the government grant to the Synod of Canada, is too small to allow us to extend the benefit of it to all the brethren Mr. Macdowal has evinced the strength of his attachment to our church, and his disinterestedness in uniting with us in those circumstances.

Having been disappointed in their exertions to procure missionaries from Scotland to labor within their bounds, the Presbytery wishing to lessen the evil as far as lies in their power, resolved to appoint one of their number to act as corresponding Secretary and Treasurer, to receive all missionary funds and appropriate them under the direction of the Presbytery, to correspond with the different brethren from time to time and to collect all the information possible respecting the state of the different places within the sphere of their observation, and to report the result at the different meetings of Presbytery; as also to correspond with Societies in Scotland, for the promotion of the missionary cause in Canada, and the Presbytery appointed the Rev. Thomas Alexander to the said office. Towards the further advancement of these objects the Presbytery appointed Messrs. Roger and Alexander, to visit the Western part of the Newcastle District—Messrs. Ketchan and Alexander, the Eastern part together with the District of Hastings—Messrs. Macdowal, Machar, and Gordon, the Midland District and the District of Prince Edward, and to report at next meeting of Presbytery, if possible, the spiritual state of these parts.

J. K.

THE PRESBYTERY OF QUEBEC.

Beauharnois, 12th Nov. 1837.

At Montreal 18th Sep. 1837. The Presbytery of Quebec met by appointment. When the various papers and documents laid on the table at a former meeting by Dr. Black, relating to his exertions for the Scottish church in Canada, both with the Government and the General Assembly were taken into consideration, and were ordered to be kept *in retentis*.

It was unanimously agreed to that the thanks of the Presbytery be offered to Dr. Black for the zealous, diligent, able and successful manner in which he exerted himself to promote the interests of the Scotch church

in this Province, both with the Government and the General Assembly, during his late visit to Britain, as also for his generosity in disclaiming all remuneration for the expenses which in the prosecution of that object he necessarily incurred—which thanks were given by the Moderator.

The Presbytery expressed their regret that the General Assembly did not see fit to memorialize the King in Council as suggested to Dr. Black, at the bar of that Venerable Court, as the Presbytery is of opinion that it might have been of benefit to their cause.

It was unanimously agreed to that the thanks of the Presbytery be offered to the Rev. David Brown late of Valcartier, for his zeal and promptitude in proceeding to London to meet with Dr. Black, and for the assistance he rendered him in pleading the cause of our church in this Province.

It was unanimously agreed to, that the warmest thanks of the Presbytery be respectfully offered to the Right Honorable E. Ellice M. P. for the countenance and support which as Seigneur of Beauharnois, he has hitherto given to the Clergy of the Scottish church in this Province, and more especially for his zealous and cordial co-operation with Dr. Black in his recent transaction with his Majesty's Government.

It was unanimously agreed to, that the thanks of the Presbytery be respectfully offered to J. C. Colquhoun Esquire M. P. of Killermont, for his zealous and active co-operation with Dr. Black, in his recent transactions with his Majesty's Government in reference to our church in Canada, and for the attention he has on all occasions shewn to the interests of the Scottish church in the Colonies.

The Moderator, Dr. Black, and Mr. Blackwood were appointed a committee to memorialize the Colonial Secretary to fulfill the promise made by Lord Bathurst of date June 1825, until the Clergy Reserves are available and to transmit the same to Mr. Mathieson.

The Presbytery again met on the second October.

When Mr. David Black preacher of the gospel delivered the several pieces of trial prescribed to him in the prospect of his ordination to the holy ministry, to the congregation of the Scotch church at Laprairie, in all of which he was approved, and Thursday the 19th of Oct. was appointed for the Presbytery to meet at Laprairie to proceed with his ordination according to the laws of the church.

A minute of a meeting of the congregation of St. John's church Quebec, was read granting leave of absence to Mr. Clugston for 6 months to visit Scotland; also a letter from Mr. C. requesting the Presbytery to sanction the said leave of absence was read. Where-

upon the Presbytery sanctioned the arrangements, entered into between Mr. Clugston and his congregation.

The Presbytery again met at Laprairie, on the 19th of Oct. for the purpose of ordaining to the holy ministry Mr. David Black preacher of the gospel as Pastor of the Scotch congregation in that place. When after a suitable discourse by the Rev. J. C. Muir of Georgetown, the questions appointed by the laws of the church were put to Mr. Black in the face of the congregation, to which satisfactory answers were given; whereupon by prayer by the Moderator and the laying on of the hands of the Presbytery he was set apart to the office of the ministry of that church. Suitable and impressive exhortations were given by Mr. Muir, the officiating Clergyman, to Mr. Black and the congregation respectively. After divine service the members of this newly formed congregation, warmly congratulated Mr. Black on his entrance on the public discharge of his duties amongst them.

W. R.

CABINET OF THEOLOGY.

CORRUPTION OF CHRISTIANITY.

Sad it is to think, how that doctrine of the gospel, planted by teachers divinely inspired, and by them winnowed and sifted from the chaff of overdated ceremonies, and refined to such a spiritual height and temper of purity, and knowledge of the Creator, that the body, with all the circumstances of time and place, were purified by the affections of the regenerate soul, and nothing left impure but sin; faith needing not the weak and fallible office of the senses, to be either the ushers or interpreters of heavenly mysteries, save where our Lord himself in his sacraments ordained; that such a doctrine should, through the grossness and blindness of her professors, and the fraud of deceivable traditions, drag so downwards, as to backslide into the Jewish beggary of old-cast rudiments, and stumble forward another way into the new-vomited paganism of sensual idolatry, attributing purity or impurity to things indifferant, that they might bring the inward acts of the spirit to the outward and customary eye-service of the body, as if they could make God earthly and fleshly, because they could not make themselves heavenly and spiritual; they began to draw down all the Divine intercourse betwixt God and the soul, yea, the very shape of God himself, into an exterior and bodily form, urgently pretending a necessity and obligation of joining the body in a formal reverence, and worship circumscribed. They hallowed it, they fumed it, they sprinkled it, they bedecked it, not in the robes of pure innocency, but of pure linen, with other deformed and fantastic dresses, in pails and mitres, gold and gewgaws fetched from Aaron's old wardrobe, or the flamen's vestry: then was the priest set to con his motions and his postures, his liturgies and his lurries, till the soul, by this means of overbodying herself, given up justly to fleshly delights, bated her wings apace downward; and finding the ease she had from her visible and sensuous colleague the body, in performance of religious duties, her pinions, now broken and flagging, sifted

off from herself the labour of high soaring any more, forgot her heavenly flights, and left the dull and droiling carcass to plod on in the old road and drudging trade of outward conformity. And here, out of question, from her perverse conceiving of God and holy things, she had fallen to believe no God at all, had not custom, and the worm of conscience nipped her incredulity: hence to all the duties of evangelical grace, instead of the adoption and cheerful boldness which our new alliance with God requires, came servile and thralllike fear: for, in very deed, the superstitious man by his good-will is an Atheist; but being scared from thence by the pangs and gripes of a boiling conscience, all in a powder shuffles up to himself such a God and such a worship as is most agreeable to remedy his fear; which fear of his, as also is his hope, fixed only upon the flesh, renders likewise the whole faculty of his apprehension carnal; and all the inward acts of worship, issuing from the native strength of the soul, run out lavishly to the upper skin, and there harden into a crust of formality.—*John Milton.*

"OWE NO MAN ANY THING."

I shall next consider the usual modes of liquidating debt. The most obvious mode is unquestionably the best—payment by cash. But we have already seen the difficulty of paying both principal and interest. While the circumstances, which tempted the debtor to borrow, are, if not rendered worse, probably little improved, the heavy amount of his debt, even though exacted only by instalments, will long teach him, by sad experience, how much better it had been, to have touched not a farthing, beyond the produce of personal labour.

Another mode of liquidating debt is payment by goods. This method is inconvenient; even in the mutually desired bargains of simple barter. But when agreed to, as an accommodation to the debtor, it must always be with some sacrifice of value, which he of all men is least able to make. And when it is the effect of legal seizure, the sacrifice is beyond all calculation destructive, while the expenses of prosecution, falling wholly on the devoted head of the insolvent, unite to hasten and to augment his ruin.

A common method of liquidating debt, is by bills of long date. These put off, but do not lessen the evil day. While the debtor is tempted by forbearance to pursue his hopeless speculations; the unwary are involved in the snare of becoming his security. The desperate game may proceed, while bills can be renewed, with the certain consequence of increasing the amount, and the number and responsibility of the sureties. But the catastrophe, which comes at last, and often sooner than was expected, must be proportionally dreadful.

There is still another method resorted to, for liquidating debt, which sadly prevails, and which is surely of the most unprincipled and disgraceful nature. It is exemplified, when debtors combine in drawing fraudulent bills, that they may discount them, in turn, for their mutual accommodation. In this case, the imposition on the discounter is obvious. What is a bill? It is a certificate of a transfer of property. An essential clause, expressed or understood, is, "value received." But if no value has been received, the bill is a deliberate solemn lie, sanctioned by the signatures of all who have joined in subscribing it.—They are guilty of nothing less than downright forgery. They have not, indeed, forged the signatures, for that would be dangerous; but they have forged the transaction, and this they think lawful, because it is

safe. To the breach of law, they have added evasion of law; effecting their nefarious purpose, but saving their necks, that to an indefinite extent they may repeat a crime, for a single act of which, so many forfeit their lives.

On the whole, we see that the best method of liquidating debt is difficult and expensive; and all other methods are wasteful, dangerous, and delusive to ourselves, and others; and that some of them are base in the greatest degree. Nothing, therefore, could so much facilitate business; nothing be at once so safe and honourable for all parties, and so helpful to the needy in particular, as the universal demand, and practice, of immediate payment. "Withhold not good from them to whom it is due, when it is in the power of thine hand to do it. Say not unto thy neighbour, Go, and come again, and to-morrow I will give; when thou hast it by thee."—*Sermon on Abstaining from Debt, by the Rev. Greville Ewing.*

REPENTANCE.

The work of repentance is a work which must be done ere we die; for unless we repent we shall all likewise perish. Now, the easier this is in our estimation, we will think it the less necessary to enter upon it immediately. We will look upon it as a work that may be done at any time, and let us therefore put it off a little longer, and a little longer. We will, perhaps, look forward to that retirement from the world and its temptations, which we figure old age to bring along with it; and falling in with the too common idea, that the evening of life is the appropriate season of preparation for another world, we will think that the author is bearing too closely and too urgently upon us, when in the language of the Bible he speaks of "to-day," while it is called to-day, and will let us off with no other repentance than "now"—seeing that now only is the accepted time, and only the day of salvation, which he has a warrant to proclaim to us. This dilatory way of it is very much favored by the mistaken and very defective view of repentance which we have attempted to expose. We have somehow or other got into the delusion that repentance is sorrow, and little else; and were we called to fix upon the scene where this sorrow is likely to be felt in the degree that is deepest and most overwhelming, we should point to the chamber of the dying man. It is awful to think that, generally speaking, this repentance of mere sorrow is the only repentance of a death-bed. Yes! we will meet with sensibility deep enough and painful enough there—with regret in all its bitterness—with terror mustering up its images of despair, and dwelling upon them in all the gloom of an affrighted imagination; and this is mistaken not merely for the repentance, but for the very substance of it. We look forward and we count upon this—that the sins of a life are to be expunged by the sighing and sorrowing of the last days of it. We should give up this wretchedly superficial notion of repentance, and cease from this moment to be led astray by it. The mind may sorrow over its corruptions at the very time it is under the power of them. To grieve because we are under the captivity of sin is one thing—to be released from that captivity is another. A man may weep most bitterly over the perversities of his moral constitution, but to change that constitution is a different affair. Now, this is the mighty work of repentance. He who has undergone it is no longer the servant of sin. He dies unto sin, he lives unto God. A sense of the authority of God is ever present with him, to wield the ascendancy of a great master principle over all his movements—to call forth every purpose, and to carry it forward, through all the opposition of

sin and of Satan, unto accomplishment. This is the grand revolution in the state of the mind which repentance brings along with it. To grieve because this work is not done, is a very different thing from the doing of it. A death-bed is the very best scene for acting the first, but it is the very worst for acting the second. The repentance of Judas has often been acted there. We ought to think of the work in all its magnitude, and not to be put off to that awful period when the soul is crowded with other things, and has no maintain its weary struggle with the pains, and the distresses, and the breathless agonies of the death-bed.—*Chalmers' Introductory Essay to Baxter's Call.*

THE FRAILTY OF MAN.

In some hour of pensive thought, every one must have experienced a strange mixture of feelings, in contemplating the aspects of external nature, with reference to the short and uncertain duration of human life. Some objects in nature present, indeed, a fair emblem of our fleeting existence. The lily, which blooms and fades in spring; the rose, which summer expands, and which sheds its leaves ere summer is closed; the thousand insects which glitter in the morning sun, and which are brushed to the pool by the breeze of evening; the vapour which rises from the earth, and floats for a season in the sky, but is dispersed so soon as the meridian sun pours its full flood of light and heat over the earth and sea; these objects, so beautiful, and yet so transient, seem to be faithful emblems of the shortness and uncertainty of human life, and, as such, they are referred to in the sacred page, when man, in all his glory, is compared to the "grass which groweth up," and to "the flower of the grass which flourisheth," and "to the vapour which appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away." Other objects in nature are of a firmer texture and more enduring form; such as the mighty oak, which centuries have confirmed in strength,—the trees of the forest, which our grandsires planted, and under which our fathers rested, and which, after all the storms that have raged around them, still afford us their shelter and shade. In contemplating such objects, a melancholy feeling is apt to steal over us, a feeling as if our age were as nothing in comparison with theirs; and we are ready to remember, with pensive sadness, the many generations of our friends whom they have survived, and to think, with sadness still more pensive, that the same branches may wave in the wintry wind, or grow green in the spring, or cover the earth with their shadow in autumn, when our frail bodies shall have been laid in their narrow home, and our eye for ever shut to all the loveliness of nature. Yet, even in these objects we may discern the symptoms of age and frailty; the oak may be gnarled and bent, and here and there a branch may exhibit that rottenness which is the prelude to universal decay;—but other objects there are, which have had a still longer existence, and yet exhibit no tendency to change; the everlasting hills, on which the eyes of our forefathers looked, are still before us; we live amidst the mountains to which they repaired as a barrier against invasion, or a refuge from ignoble thralldom; but where are the millions of our race whom these mountains sheltered? where the eyes which once rested on their verdure? where the limbs which toiled up their steep ascent? A thousand generations of our race have passed away, but these mountains are still substantially the same; and in contemplating such scenes, who has not felt a sense of his own insignificance stealing over his spirit, while he thought of the contrast which their stability presents to the frailty of man? But what shall we say, if even those objects

which are *most* stable and enduring, shall be declared by God himself, to be frail and perishing in comparison with our-selves; if the everlasting hills shall be held up as a faint emblem of our immortal and imperishable being; and if, after all the lessons which the flowers of the field, and the fleeting vapours of the sky, and the swiftness of the shadow, have been made to teach us of the vanity and uncertainty of our existence here, those objects in nature which are of the firmest texture and most enduring form, shall be found, notwithstanding, too frail and fleeting to bode forth our immortality? Above all, what shall we say, if those very objects which fill us with the deepest sense of our own frailty, by presenting a contrast in their enduring age to our own uncertain life, shall be selected by God himself, as emblems of his faithfulness to a promise which *eternity* alone can fully accomplish; and if even the everlasting hills shall be found too transient to represent the perpetuity of that kindness which he bestows on us, and of that peace which he is willing to confer? "The mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed, but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee—*Mr. Buchanan of North Lath.*

MISCELLANIES.

CHURCH OF SCOTLAND.—There is something in the original constitution of the Church of Scotland, strikingly adapted to make its General Assembly a representation of national Christianity. The combination of laymen and clergymen in all its courts, the right of the whole members of the Church to a voice in the election of its office bearers, and its independence of external control, made it wonderfully calculated to combine the energies of all, who hold the doctrine, contained in its formularies. And when we consider the rapid progress making by the Church, to return to its original principles, there is no small reason to believe that the day is not distant, when it will embrace again all the sound-hearted Presbyterians of Scotland. There is no Protestant country in which the inhabitants are less divided on essential points; and we hail the prospect of the speedy re-union of the Original Burgher Synod with the national Church, as what we trust will be the earnest of the return of more than one, of the branches which have been lopped off in the storms of a former period. We thought this body would have been restored to us this year, but we anticipate no great delay, from the unexpected difficulties which have prevented so speedy a consummation. When we consider the united aspect which the darkness of the world assumes, is it too much to use every exertion to persuade men, agreed as to the great essentials of religion, to lay aside minor differences, and enter on one common enterprise to promote a nation's regeneration, as the great end of civil establishments of Christianity. With a system so adapted to unite in one all our countrymen professing the same common principles, so calculated to extend over the length and breadth of a nation, and so fitted to reform itself from the abuses which may have crept into its machinery, what true-hearted Scotsman would refuse to lend his energies to resist the rude violence which would scatter to the winds the civil standing of Scotland's Church, or to remove from it every real corruption, or to offer up his prayers, that the Spirit of God may water this vine, that it may bring forth fruit in abundance, destined to blossom in eternity. In perilous times like the present, we would earnestly entreat all the friends of the Church, to beware of

bitterness in maintaining those views of Ecclesiastical discipline and government, in which they may conscientiously differ from each other. Never was there a period, in which it was of more importance, the religious men of all parties, should unite in defending their common confession, and their common Protestantism. But, above all, let the members of the Church of Scotland seek their father's God, that in their fathers' steps, they may have their fathers' strength, and that their Church may appear still, a bush burning, but unconsumed.—*Inverness Herald.*

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN CANADA.—We have been gratified to learn, that a memorial, from the students in divinity and teachers of this town, has been already forwarded to Lord Glenelg, and that another, from the inhabitants generally, is in course of preparation, praying that in the emoluments which arise from Church-lands or Clergy-reserves in Upper Canada the Presbyterian Church, equally with the Episcopal may participate proportionably to the number of its members. We feel indignant that while Roman Catholic Priests are conveyed to Australia, and supported there, by a professedly Protestant government, the Church of Scotland in Upper Canada where there are large tracts of land expressly set apart for the maintenance of true religion, should be so long and so shamefully overlooked. Various Presbyteries in America have loudly remonstrated against this injustice, and the General Assembly of our own Church, at its meeting of May last, followed up their remonstrances in a clear and forcible memorial to the present government. It is unseemly, to say the least of it, that while few or no licentiates can at present be induced to accept charges in Canada, owing to the extreme uncertainty, more than the scantiness, of any provision made dependent on the people,—it is unseemly that, in these circumstances there should be (as stated in the *Scottish Guardian* of June 13th) about £70,000 sterling of money obtained from the sale of church-land, quite unoccupied and seemingly unappropriated, in the hands of the Commissioners. We are glad that an attempt has been made, and is now making, to bring about a better arrangement; and if it fail of success, it will afford one other convincing proof of the goodwill which on present rulers bear to the spread and maintenance of religion. It is some species of melancholy consolation, that if heretofore it will be told that one of our most flourishing Colonies was left destitute, in a great measure, of religious ordinances, and of sound educational institutions, it will be added, as it to alleviate the disgrace of our country in permitting such a fearful oversight to pass uncorrected—that such a lamentable state of things arose, not because Britons were insensible to the wants of immortal souls, but because British rulers refused to supply them.—Although we thus entertain fears of the result, we need hardly say that we fervently wish the present application of our townsmen for the endowment of the Scottish Church in Upper Canada may be crowned with success.—*Inverness Herald.*

POPULATION OF THE EARTH.—According to a recent and ingenious calculation it would appear that the whole human race, if collected together in one spot, would not occupy a space much greater than the extent of that on which our metropolis stands. It supposes the population of the globe to be equal to 1,000,000,000 souls, and the average space occupied by each individual to be 1½ square feet, the whole of the human family collected together in one column would cover a square of 47,063 feet, or of about 8½ miles.

INCREASE OF POPULATION.—Notwithstanding the great and increasing number of emigrants who are every year leaving this country, the population so far from being diminished has increased; for the annual addition, or the excess of the births over the deaths, as shown by the decennial census, must now be about 350,000; or to put it in another shape, there are (saving the effects of emigration) *about 1000 persons more in the British Isles every day than there were on the day before!*

INCREASE OF CHRISTIANS.—The following table exhibits the progressive increase of Christians, from the first age to the present time :

1st age	500,000	11th age	70,000,000
2d do.	2,000,000	12th do.	80,000,000
3d do.	5,000,000	13th do.	75,000,000
4th do.	10,000,000	14th do.	80,000,000
5th do.	15,000,000	15th do.	100,000,000
6th do.	20,000,000	16th do.	125,000,000
7th do.	25,000,000	17th do.	185,000,000
8th do.	30,000,000	18th do.	250,000,000
9th do.	40,000,000	19th do.	260,000,000
10th do.	50,000,000		

MATRIMONIAL STATISTICS.—At the age of 60, there are but 22 unmarried men alive for 48 married; at 70, 11 bachelors for 27 married men; and at 80, for three bachelors, who may chance to be alive, there are nine benedicts. Very nearly the same proportion holds good in the female sex, of whom while 72 who have been married, attain the age of 45, only 52 unmarried reach the same term of life.

POLITICS OF CHRISTIAN MINISTERS.—There is only one case in which it is conceived that the partisanship of a Christian minister is at all justifiable. Should the government of our country ever fall into the hands of an Infidel or demi-Infidel Administration—should the men at the helm of affairs be the patrons of all that is unchristian in the sentiment and literature of the country—should they offer violence to its religious establishments, and thus attempt what we honestly believe would reach a blow to the piety and the character of our population—then I trust that the language of partisanship will resound from many of the pulpits of the land, and that it will be turned in one stream of pointed invective against such a ministry as this; till by the force of public opinion it be swept away as an intolerable nuisance from the face of our kingdom.—Sermon by Dr. Chalmers on the death of the Princess Charlotte.

To the Editor of the Dublin Record.

PLENARY INDULGENCES.—DEAR SIR,—Some time since, my attention was directed to an account in your paper of a gift made by the present Pope, of the body or sacred relics of St. Valentinus to the Order of Carmelites in this city. Last week a coarsely printed hand-bill was circulated about town, stating that the body had arrived, and was deposited in the Carmelite Chapel, in Whitefriar Street, adding, also, that the Pope had attached a PLENARY INDULGENCE to the repetition of certain prayers in said chapel before the sacred relics. Yesterday I visited the chapel, and having passed through the crowd to the altar, to which I was led by one of the numerous attendants in the place, I saw a grating fixed underneath the altar, and

through this grating, what appeared to be a coffin or case covered with crimson velvet, fringed with gold lace. There was a group of worshippers prostrate before the grating, whose actions surprised me not a little; they continued to thrust their fingers through the grating, and to rub old gloves and fragments of linen cloth against the velvet covering of the coffin. Having enquired of the guide the meaning of this proceeding, he informed me, with great animation, that the people were extracting holy virtues from the blessed saint's body, in order to cure, by those sanctified pieces of cloth, all manner of diseases. Perfectly disgusted with the whole business, I left the chapel immediately, and thought it right to give publicity thus to what I had witnessed. When such an imposition can be fearlessly practised on Roman Catholics of every rank by their priests, I would ask what may they not be inclined to believe and do by the same masters? When such superstition openly prevails, are we not guilty, in the most awful degree, if we do not use every honest means in our power, by Scriptural education and controversial preaching, to deliver our poor fellow-countrymen from such a system of iniquity?

I remain, your obedient servant,
C. M. FLEURY.

Dublin, November 13, 1837.

The following is copied *verbatim*, from a hand-bill which has been industriously circulated about the streets of Dublin by the monks of Whitefriar Street. We (*Dublin Record*) thank them for it, as it distinctly shows that Popery only wants "a clear stage" to exhibit all the abominations of the dark ages, whatever her double-tongued advocates may pretend to the reverse:—

"PLENARY INDULGENCES.

"CARMELITE CHURCH, WHITEFRIAR STREET.

"On Wednesday, the 8th instant, there will be seen the Holy Body of Saint Valentinus, martyr, for forty successive days, in the CARMELITE Church, Whitefriar Street, sent from Rome by his Holiness Pope Gregory XVI.

"HIS HOLINESS, POPE GREGORY XVI.,

"Has granted to all Christian faithful of either sex, who, being truly penitent, and having confessed, and received the holy communion, shall visit the church of the Carmelites, Whitefriar Street (which has been appointed by the Archbishop of Dublin for the exposition of the blessed body of Saint Valentinus, martyr), a Plenary Indulgence, commencing at first Vespers, and continuing until sunset of said day, and with the privilege of applying those indulgences, by way of suffrage, to the faithful departed; and also an indulgence of forty days, if they shall before his holy body (placed in said church), with contrite heart, devoutly recite daily, three times, a Pater, Ave, and Glory be to the Father, in honor of St. Valentinus, and according to the intention of his Holiness.

"** The miracles wrought by St. Valentinus were numerous.

"O'Hanlan, Printer, Great Strand Street."

VALUE OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.—Let the following testimonies recommend the careful perusal of the sacred book:—

JOHN LOCKE.—Study the Holy Scriptures; especially the New Testament; therein are contained the words of eternal life. The Bible has God for its Author; salvation for its end; and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter.

SIR MATTHEW HALE.—I have been acquainted with men and books: I have had long experience in learning and in the world. There is no book like the Bible

for excellent learning, wisdom, and use; and it is want of understanding in them who think or speak otherwise.

HON. ROBERT BOYLE.—The Bible, that matchless book! It is impossible we can study it too much, or esteem it too highly.

JOHN MILTON.—There are no songs comparable to the songs of Zion; no orations equal to those of the Prophets; and no politics like those which the Scriptures teach.

DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON, on his death bed, to a visitor.—Young man! attend to the advice of one who has possessed some degree of fame in the world, and who will shortly appear before his Maker. Read the Bible every day of your life.

LORD BACON.—There never was found, in any age of the world, either philosopher, or sect, or law, or discipline, which did so highly exalt the public good as the Christian faith. Thy creatures have been my books, but thy scriptures much more. I have sought Thee in the courts, fields, and gardens; but I have found Thee in thy temples.

BISHOP HOANE.—Indited under the influence of Him to whom all hearts are known, and all events fore-known, the Scriptures suit mankind in all situations; grateful as the manna which descended from above, and conformed itself to every palate. The fairest productions of human wit, after a few perusals,—like gathered flowers,—wither in our hands, and lose their fragranc; but these unfading plants of paradise become, as we are accustomed to them, still more and more beautiful; their bloom appears to be daily heightened; fresh odours are emitted; and new sweets extracted from them. He who hath once tasted their excellencies, will desire to taste them yet again; and he who tastes them oftenest will relish them the best.

ST. AUGUSTINE.—The Scripture so speaketh that, with the *height* of it, it laughs proud and lofty-spirited men to scorn; with the *depth* of it, it terrifies those who, with attention, look into it; with the *truth* of it, it feeds men of the greatest knowledge and understanding; and, with the *sweetness* of it, it nourished babes and suckings.

POETRY.

IN BEREAVEMENT.

BY JAMES MONTGOMERY.

Lift up thine eyes, afflicted soul!
From earth lift up thine eyes,
Though dark the evening shadows roll,
And day light beauty dies;
One sun is set,—a thousand more
Their rounds of glory run,
Where science leads thee to explore
In every star a sun.

Thus, when some long loved comfort ends,
And nature would despair,
Faith to the heaven of heavens ascends,
And meets ten thousand there;
First faint and small, then clear and bright,
They gladden all the gloom,
As stars, that seem but points of light,
The rank of suns assume.

CHRISTIAN KEEPSAKE.

MEMENTO MORI.

Millions of feet entraversed here,
Where are their parted spirits?
Each in a dark or glorious sphere
Its own reward inherits:
Where they are fled we soon shall fly,
And join them in eternity.

The crowd who earth's arena tread,
Each busy in his station,
Are few compared with all the dead,
Of every age and nation.
The world of life counts millions o'er—
That of the dead hath many more.

It is a solemn thought that we,
Life's little circle rounded,
Must launch upon that endless sea
Which shore hath never bounded;
A sea of happiness and love,
Or depths below and clouds above.
A holy Judge—a righteous doom—
A bar where none dissemble—
A short quick passage to the tomb—
How should we stop and tremble!
Great God, as years pass swiftly by,
Write on each heart—Thou, thou must die!

JAMES EDMESTON.

THE COMMUNION OF SAINTS.

BY JAMES MONTGOMERY.

Free, yet in chains, the mountains stand,
The valleys linked run through the land;
In fellowship the forests thrive,
And streams from streams their strength derive.

The cattle graze in flocks and herds,
In choirs and concerts sing the birds;
Insects by millions ply the wing,
And flowers in peaceful armies spring.

All nature is society.
All nature's voices harmony,
All colours blend to form pure light;
Why then should Christians not unite?

Thus to the Father prayed the Son,
"One may they be, as we are One,
That I in them, and Thou in Me,
They One with Us may ever be."

Children of God, combine your hands,
Brethren in Christ, join heart and hands,
And pray, for so the Father willed—
That the Son's prayer may be fulfilled.

Fulfilled in you—fulfilled in all
That on the name of Jesus call,
And every covenant of love
Ye bind on earth, be bound above.

THE CHRISTIAN KEEPSAKE FOR 1838.