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THE PRESBYTERIAN.

SEPTEMBER, 1865.



FOR the first time in many years, the late meeting of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, in Edinburgh, has commanded the undivided attention of the public, and has left the meetings of the other large religious denominations, which were held

about the same time, completely in the shade. Not only were the subjects discussed of absorbing interest, but the power brought to bear upon them, the eloquence of the speakers, and the force of the arguments—all were of the highest order, and very creditable to the Established Church. And the interest in the debates was not confined to Scotland, for they were regularly reported for and published in that great public index, the *London Times*, a compliment not often paid to our church courts. The proposed changes in the public services of the Church, the reading of a liturgy, set forms of prayer, the introduction of organs, the postures of the worshippers, and other matters, were brought prominently forward, and in connection with these, came up a matter of very great importance to the Church, viz., the power of kirk sessions to deal with such changes, by introduction and continuance, without authority other than their own will, and without interference of Presbyteries, so long as they keep within the limits of the law.

It is on this subject that we wish to say a few words. The powers exercised by the kirk sessions are considerable in themselves and of great importance to the Church. When a minister has a session of good elders—active intelligent men, of known piety, such as can always be found, fortunately, in every congregation, he is always safe in acting on their advice. It is a bad sign of a congregation, when it has no session, this is unfortunately the case with no less than one hundred and nine

congregations in the Parent Church, and it is almost equally unfortunate when the members of sessions are persons of no weight or influence in the congregation, as is very often the case in this country.

Kirk sessions are, of course, not immaculate. They have faults and failings as others have. We do not admire, for instance, the system which long prevailed, but is now nearly exploded, we trust, of making delinquents do penance on a "cuttie stool." And, it may be that, in many parishes, elders have an over keen scent after evil doers, and provoke criticism by too narrowly watching for the peccadilloes of their neighbourhood—making themselves the austere censors of the morals of the country side. But notwithstanding all that can be advanced against them, every one must admit that their rule has been, on the whole, excellent.

Some ministers seem to set their faces against sessions altogether, and never have meetings of these courts unless they cannot help it. Such men look upon sessions much in the same light as corrupt politicians look on parliaments. They would rather do without them. They prefer the "one man power" system, and like to rule their congregations as popish priests do their flocks. We do not need to tell our readers that such ministers are the least successful labourers in our Church, just as our most successful ministers are those who have a hearty desire to act with their sessions, and who take care to have, as elders, the right sort of men. The Rev. Norman M'Leod, D.D., of the Barony parish in Glasgow, gave, in the course of the debate on Innovations, an account of his own court of session and deacons, and it was most refreshing to read of the harmonious working of these courts in, what we look upon, as a model congregation in the Parent Church. It is contended, and we think correctly, that kirk sessions have ample powers to bring the service of the Church more into harmony with the age we

live in, and this without any interference from Presbyteries, so long as they keep themselves within the limits of their legal powers,—and these powers are much more extensive than most people suppose. We look on the decisions recently come to by the General Assembly, as hostile to the powers of the kirk sessions, and as having a tendency to throw more of the power of the Church into the hands of ministers than the constitution of the Church of Scotland warrants. We greatly err if in the next General Assembly those decisions will be maintained. Our opinion is that the feeling of the country in preserving intact the powers of the kirk sessions, will be unmistakably shewn, and that the people will resist, and that successfully, every attempt to curtail, or in any way to interfere with, the powers of what has always been one of the most useful courts in the Church. It is the court in which the people take most interest and have most power, and it will be a step in the wrong direction if the Church adopts, permanently, any measures that tread upon the liberties and rights of the people in matters ecclesiastical. It will be going back to the dark days of popish intolerance. But we have no such fear. It is not at this time of day that any party in the Presbyterian Church can curtail the liberty which has always been the boast of its adherents, and all such attempts will be sure to end in defeat. The following extracts are from an Edinburgh newspaper, the *Scotsman*, and our object in publishing them is, to let our readers see the interest taken in Church matters in the old country by the public press, and the able way in which these subjects are handled.

“Though petty topics and personal spites took up some of the able and interesting debate which has occupied the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland these two days, at least one very great and another very considerable question underlaid and animated the whole. It was a great question whether or not the Church of Scotland was to put or keep herself in such a position as to enable her to be, in Dr. Norman McLeod’s words, “the Church of a Nation,” not of a sect—capable of expanding and comprehending, or only of remaining fixed and frozen, exclusive and repellant. It was not an inconsiderable question whether, within a Church claiming to be National, and having national support, the liberties left by the Church’s laws were to be absorbed by the Presbyteries or to remain with the people. The decision given on Wednesday answers this latter question explicitly, the other inferentially, and both answers are, to the extent they go, unwise, and perilous (for the Church)—bad for this time, and promising worse for times to come.

The day has been, and not very long ago, when a great many people who now feel an interest in what the Church of Scotland is to be and do, regarded that subject as not worth much attention. Some thirty years ago, people thought rather more of how long the Established Church was likely to exist than how she would direct her internal policy—nobody whatever speculated upon her adapting herself to external circumstances, moving with the spirit of the age, or suiting herself to the wants and feelings of the nation. At that time, “the rains descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house,” and many of us thought that the day of its fall could not be far off. But those who raised that great storm either blew themselves out, or have been blowing at once so very hot and so very cold that their efforts are now felt little more than as the idle wind which few men respect. At a later date, at least half the strength of the Church went out of her, and it was thought that now at last her end was near. But it has proved otherwise—why, might be difficult, and how, would be needless, to explain. The Church is standing yet, and standing apparently secure, and actually unassailed; and no man of common sense now doubts, or rather no man doubted till this week that she will last at least our time. The fact is one to which even those who least like it must be content to reconcile themselves to as a fact; and when a thing becoming or continuing a fact cannot be helped, what remains is to make the best of it. At all events, it cannot be other than a matter of interest to the country at large whether the affairs of a Church maintained by the country—which, whether rightly or wrongly, is here, and likely to remain here—are managed with wisdom or folly, liberality or narrowness. As the Nation cannot get rid of the Church, it must be interesting to know whether the Church is disposed to “consider the Nation,” as Dr. McLeod well expresses it—especially to consider what the nation is, rather than what it was, and the things that are, if not that are before, rather than the things that are behind. Nations change, and National Churches must more or less change with them—else it is a matter of obvious impossibility that they can remain national. A century or two make a great difference on a nation’s knowledge, thoughts, tastes, and tendencies; and a Church which, in its laws and customs, takes no note of these changes in the people for whom and by whom it exists, may or may not be “sound,” but cannot be national—may maintain a good testimony, but is apt to become only a testifying remnant. Infallible and unchangeable Churches are not recommended by history, and are repudiated by the principle of Protestantism, whatever may be the case as to practice. The Church of Scotland’s own history is a warning. Compared with the Church of England, or indeed with almost any other Church on earth, her creed has been precise, her policy inflexible, her laws stringent—the power of the body great, the freedom of individuals small; but, or rather therefore, she has been rent and disrupted over and over again, while neighbour Churches, with less power and fewer “safeguards,” have remained intact, and have mightily grown and prevailed.

Nor was it any great change of attitude or temper that the Church of Scotland was asked to make. She was not asked or expected to go in advance of the age and nation, but only not to go the other way. She was not asked to run before the wind, nor even to part from her old anchorage, but only to ride a little more easily on the waves of public opinion. Perhaps it may even do for her at present to declare that, in matters of doctrine, everything was settled for ever in the Church of Scotland by an Assembly of divines, held at Westminster in the year 1643, "for the settling of the government and liturgy of the Church of England." Perhaps too, it may do, though we should doubt it, to tell an Assembly in the middle or end of the 19th century that matters of form were finally settled by a similar Assembly sitting in the beginning of the 13th century. But certainly it was expected of her that she should not go backwards, devise new restrictive laws, or adopt a rigour beyond her existing laws. It was, indeed, more in her spirit than in her laws that change was at this time asked or expected—and there change is essential. A Church of the spirit of Dr. Pirie, Dr. Macrae, and Mr. Procurator Cook cannot in these days be in any but a legal or technical sense the Church of Scotland; a Church of the spirit that is in Principal Tulloch and Dr. McLeod would be at least in some harmony with the nation whose name it bears, and whose confidence it must retain or win.

That the attempt too successfully made by Dr. Pirie and brethren of the Pirieite persuasion, reduces the very slender liberties already enjoyed within the Church, is abundantly clear. From Dr. Pirie's speech it might be supposed that somebody or another had been breaking a law, and a wise law too, and that Dr. Pirie appeared as the personation of order, which is more or less inseparable from liberty. But what his overture prayed was, that the Assembly should "enact, with consent of Presbyteries," that certain things that Dr. Pirie does not like, though other people do, should be rendered unlawful. What was aimed at, therefore, was not to enforce an existing law, but to make an additional one—to resort to what is regarded as of the very essence of injustice, an *ex post facto* law. An ostensible relaxation too in that proposed new law, and which forms the substance of Dr. Pirie's motion on Wednesday, adopted by the Assembly, was in reality an aggravation. The Assembly was asked by the overture, to "enact," not uniformity everywhere, but only uniformity in Presbyteries—for practically that will be the result of empowering each Presbytery, as distinguished both from congregations and from the Supreme Court of the Church, to regulate forms and postures within its bounds. And what Dr. Pirie's overture proposed to do by means of a new law, his motion does by a mere vote of "the Presbytery of the bounds," expressly without reference to the existence or non-existence of any law on the subject. This is doing a foolish thing in a lawless way—not accomplishing uniformity, and yet robbing congregations of their freedom, by setting over them, not the law, but the mere will and caprice of their neighbours,

If there is to be uniformity—if the tastes and

desires of congregations are not to rule in such matters—why should provision be made only for uniformity within each Presbytery? What loss harm is there in a want of uniformity between Presbyteries than between congregations? Why attempt uniformity at all if not throughout the Church? If, on the other hand, there is still to be choice, why take away the choice from those chiefly or only interested? Then the Synod, according to Dr. Pirie's motion, is to have power to alter the decision of the Presbytery, and of course the Assembly is over the Synod—so that, after all it is not the Presbytery that is to decide though still less is it the congregation. First, a thing is practically declared to be a matter of taste or choice, if not of indifference; then the decision of that matter of taste is wrested from the parties concerned, and is sent away through a whole series of Courts, each deciding with the more authority in proportion to its distance and unconcern.

The chief aim and fundamental principle of the Pirieites is the taking away of certain powers from the congregations to give to the Church Courts. There was indeed little that could be done or tried in that direction—the freedom or power of congregations was already so little that there was great difficulty in making it less. The laity and congregations were formerly hard enough "ridden with a classic hierarchy," but a perverse and Pirieite ingenuity (pardon the tautology) has discovered that the classic hierarchy can be enabled to ride us harder yet, and on a somewhat new principle too—ruling not by fixed laws, but by shifting votes, not by citing an Act, but by calling the roll. The learned and excitable Procurator was highly delighted with this project, and manifested the greatest horror not only of congregational but of "sessional" independence in any matters whatever. It is odd that he, above all men, should have had any uneasiness on this score—for he must know from his own experience that a session and a congregation are not identical, and that the wishes of a great majority of a congregation in this very matter of forms of worship can be effectually cashioned by a well-packed and one-sided session. His own experience and success in that matter might have contented him with things as they are, enabled him to repose his confidence in sessions, and kept him from seeking to domineer over peaceful and unoffending congregations, by also letting loose on them those dogs of war with which every Presbytery is more or less abundantly blessed. It will be easily seen that the General Assembly was a very awkward court to decide upon the proposals of Dr. Pirie and the Procurator, for taking from the congregations and giving to the Presbyteries, seeing that the Assembly is, so to speak, the concentrated essence of Presbyteries, and is supreme over them all. Therefore, perhaps, it would have been expecting too much from poor human nature, and no less poor clerical nature, to have looked to any other result than that the Assembly should, as it did on Wednesday, resolve to take power to itself and freedom from the people.

One Church preparing to read herself about a matter of music and postures, and other two

Churches preparing to amalgamate, whilst one holds that to be a homage due to the Deity which the other holds to be a deadly sin against heaven. What can those things mean—why does Dr. Pirie rage against Dr. Lee, and Dr. Harper seek to embrace Dr. Buchanan,—but that, in things ecclesiastical, we Scotch are prone to magnify small things, sometimes to “minify” great things, and to be more bitter than either sincere or consistent about both great things and small? Not that the recent proceedings of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland in regard to forms of worship were unimportant—they are the most important transactions that have taken place in that quarter for many years, if we may proceed on the assumption, which we are aware is regarded as offensive in some quarters, that a Church is composed of people or laity as well as of clergy, of congregations as well as of Church Courts. The topics may have been unimportant, but the manner in which it was dealt with was momentous—the means quite swallowed up the end. That the topic was unimportant is shown by the simple fact that no man, or at least no motion, ventured to say, that the Church either has or ought now to make any law upon the subject; and that the means of dealing with this topic was momentous is shown by the fact that, in regard to it, while an ancient liberty has been taken away, the principle of law has been set aside, and the principle of interference unlimited by law has been established. In a word, there is neither liberty nor law, but a mixture of despotism and anarchy.

If Dr. Pirie and his friends had been really thinking of “uniformity” and “innovations,” and not of taking away liberties from the people and conferring them upon themselves, they could never have taken the course on which they have entered. In truth, the motion adopted by the Assembly gives “innovations” and want of uniformity fuller acknowledgment and freer sanction than the Assembly ever gave them before. It is admitted, at least practically, that no law has been broken, for no law is to be enforced; it is admitted that no law ought to be made, or at least can be made, for no new law is proposed. It is admitted that diversities of form exist, and they are not forbidden; it is admitted that further diversities may be introduced, and regulations are made permitting, if not necessarily facilitating, their introduction. The fact of diversity is thus admitted, and the principle of innovation established—and for that thanks are undoubtedly due to Dr. Pirie. But the thanks need not be great—for the fact of diversity was there in spite of him beyond all denial; and while he proclaims the principle of “innovation,” he tries to make its practice much worse than impossible by taking away the choice and control from those chiefly or only concerned. There were two ways in which the Assembly might have dealt with the matter—to have said that there must be uniformity, and have made a law settling what that uniformity was to be; or to have said that diversities may continue and increase, the power of choosing remaining, as always and at present, with congregations—the easiest and most practical way of saying which would simply have been to

have neither said nor done anything at all. But what Dr. Pirie and the Assembly have done is to say that there are and may be diversities and innovations, but that the choice in such matters shall be taken away from congregations and given to Church Courts. It is admitted that in such matters there are differences of tastes and desires, and that these differences may be gratified; but the power of judging whether any congregation’s admittedly lawful tastes shall or shall not be gratified, is no longer in the people of the congregation who propose to take the postures which to them seem most becoming, but in some other people whose views on postures may be quite different. Varieties of taste and opinion in the modes of offering praise and prayer are allowed to be carried into practice—but not according to the tastes and opinions of the people who are to praise and pray. Everybody is to judge for everybody else, but nobody is to judge for himself. Why has this principle never before been introduced into Church management? or why, if it is to be introduced now, should it be confined to this one matter of postures? There is no law of the Church declaring that a presentee must not have red hair—congregations are free either to accept such a presentee or to show a preference for black hair. Suppose a congregation to elect or accept a presentee with red hair, and “the Presbytery of the bounds” to forbid the settlement on the ground that the members of that Reverend Court had themselves rather a fancy for black hair—that is the sort of law which the General Assembly, led by the light and wisdom of Dr. Pirie, has now established in regard to postures of worship. A congregation, say in Edinburgh, is unanimous in favour of standing in praise and kneeling in prayer, and the Church has no law to the contrary; but then the taste of the minister of Ratho differs from that of the congregation in Edinburgh, and, if he can get a majority at a Presbytery meeting to go along with him, it is to be his and not the congregation’s taste which is to be the rule. Or, if the minister of Ratho does not succeed in the Presbytery in making himself a law unto his neighbour’s congregation in matters of taste, then he goes to the Synod, and brings in the ministers of Stobo and Torphichen, and they decide the matter of taste for a congregation they never saw, and which has no desire to see them. Finally, failing the Synod, the minister of Ratho may carry his views on taste to the General Assembly, and there summon to his aid, as Dr. Pirie did last Wednesday, the ministers of the Highlands and Islands; so that in what the Church now at least admits to be a matter of taste and choice, the music and postures of an Edinburgh congregation are to be finally settled by the votes and according to the æsthetical tendencies of the ministers of Cricch and Trumisgarry. This plan of treating certain things as matter of indifference and choice, and then giving the choice, and the power of arbitrarily enforcing it, to people of different tastes from those concerned, is as mischievous as it is preposterous. But there is a deeper mischief still. Not only is the choice taken from those to whom it naturally belongs, and given to those with no means of judging, and whom the results of the

choice will not affect, but what has hitherto been a liberty or privilege of the laity has now been transferred as a new power to the clergy. Do Mr. Pirie and his embarrassingly zealous partisan, Procurator Cook, think that to be a safe achievement? If they do so, and are mistaken, the achievement will prove a serious matter for them; if they are not mistaken, it will be still a more serious matter for the Church. If the laity of the Church remain inactive under this robbery of their rights, that can only be taken as proof that they have ceased to have much care regarding the Church's interest, or any hope regarding her growth in strength and fitness.

When the question at issue was whether the clergy in other and especially the further parts of the country should, in matters of taste, rule over congregations of which they know nothing, it is natural to be somewhat curious as to the votes given by the members of Assembly belonging to different districts. Proceeding by Synods, the following is a rough analysis of the division on Professor Pirie's motion entirely against, and Professor Stevenson's motion partly for, popular or congregational freedom in form of worship:—

	Prof. Pirie's Motion.	Prof. Stevenson's Motion.
Synod Perth and Stirling .	10	15
Fife .	23	11
Angus and Mearns, .	8	17
Aberdeen,	16	17
Moray,	13	0
Ross,	6	2
Glenelg,	8	3
Sutherland and Caithness, 2	2	4
Orkney,	2	3
Shetland,	2	3
Lothian and Tweeddale, 20	20	14
Merse and Teviotdale, 5	5	10
Dumfries,	12	9
Galloway,	10	4
Glasgow and Ayr	23	22
Argyle,	13	6

It thus appears that seven Synods were for freedom, and nine against it. Among the nine Synods desiring the power to make their own tastes and fancies the rule for their distant and considerably different brethren, are all the Gaelic Synods, three in number—viz., Ross, Glenelg, and Argyle. Since the reverend mountaineers of those regions have thus taken to themselves the power of deciding how and when congregations in Edinburgh and Glasgow shall kneel, stand, and sit, what good reason is there that some time hence they should not also decree to us the adoption of their language as well as their attitudes, and give directions that, for the sake of "uniformity" and for other equally good reasons, we shall be preached to in the Gaelic? Some amount of corroboration is given to this surmise as to ulterior designs by the fact that, in the Synod of Sutherland and Caithness, which is half Gaelic and half English, all Celtic Sutherland voted for power and all Lowland Caithness for liberty. Then come those Synods, in the north-east and extreme south-west, which hold the most conspicuously bad eminence in the returns of illegitimacy—Moray, Dumfries and Galloway. The latest returns showed the proportion of illegitimate children in those regions, taken in slump, at about 17 per cent., or more than 1 in 6, while the proportion in Scotland at large is only 1 in 10, and in the Lothians and

Lanark, which these northerners especially undertake to supervise, it is considerably below the national average. Moray is splendidly pre-eminent in both departments—that is, in moral neglect of herself, and zeal regarding the tastes of others; the proportion of illegitimate children born in Moray is pretty nearly 20 per cent., or 1 in 5, and the Synod of Moray, it will be observed, voted unanimously that they were the men to look after the attitudes which people in Edinburgh and Glasgow assume when they worship.

"Ob, ye wha are sae guid yoursel,
Sae pious and sae holy,
Ye've naucht to do but mark and tell
Yer neebor's fauts and folly."

There would be something odd in the worthy minister of Birnie or of Ardelach setting himself up as the *arbiter elegantiarum* of Edinburgh, even had the reverend gentleman nothing particular to do at home; but the procedure seems a good deal worse than odd when, in the Registrar General's Return, it is seen of all men that there is a vastly greater want of common cleanliness in the north than of correct taste in the south. Perhaps Professor Pirie's "Aberdeen-awa" mind was running on these things when he charged Edinburgh people with showing a tendency to "sensuality" in their modes of worship. Further north still or rather at the furthest north, the voting, it must be admitted, was better—the Synods of Orkney and Shetland giving majorities for freedom. This seeming liberality, however, is, but too easily accounted for—the members of those Synods have long ago assumed those postures in worship which nearly a half of them would forbid the use of to other people.

The voting of a special class of members in the Assembly was wonderfully bad—but by next year will be mended. A large proportion of the elders for burghs voted for illiberality and retrogression. Is it the wish of the communities or Town Councils of Edinburgh, Glasgow, Perth, Cupar, the Fife Coast Burghs, Montrose, North Berwick, Dunbar, Selkirk, and Inverary, that their representatives should vote for taking away liberty from the people and congregations, and giving power to the clergy and Presbyteries? The matter of electing burgh elders has got into a most unsatisfactory condition. Many burghs will not elect at all, and the others take no care as to the sort of men they choose. There may be fair reasons for declining to make any election, but there can be no excuse for making bad or foolish elections. If burghs return representatives to the Assembly at all, they ought to return men who in some degree reflect the feelings of the community, not men ready to sacrifice the public interests at the bidding of the reactionary section of the clergy. The privilege the burghs have of returning lay members to the Assembly arises out of the theory that the Church Establishment is a National Church; those burghs which return elders thereby recognise that theory; and it is the business of such burghs to return representatives who will do honour to them and service to the Church, if not by promoting freedom and progress, at least by resisting that policy which seeks to render her less and less national, and more and more sacerdotal.



VARIOUS plans have been devised for promoting the cause of Missions. Their advantages in reacting upon the inner life of a Church, and the congregations composing it, have been frequently set forth. No one, for many years at least, will be found to oppose, in principle, their establishment, however deficient may be the practice. In our own Church there exists considerable diversity of opinion as to whether we should have separate and independent Missions, or should contribute to those already established and kept in operation by the Church of Scotland. Into this question we do not at the present moment intend to enter. Whichever view may be adopted, it is clear that, as far at least as we can ascertain, a very small amount is annually contributed for Foreign Missions by the adherents of our Church. It is true that the subject has not been brought prominently before the congregations; but even if it were, the paltry sum doled out to the French Mission, so ably advocated for years, does not afford much ground for hope that any great result would follow. The Report of the Sabbath School Committee, however, shews that in one department of the Church considerable activity in Mission work has been displayed. The children, out of their coppers and pence, are at this moment doing more for the spread of the Gospel abroad, than all our other members. The striking evidence this fact affords of how much can be done by united and methodical giving, should not be lost upon us. A considerable number of the schools support an orphan in India,—some of them more than one. Some contribute to other schemes. One distributes above two thousand tracts, and several have collected money enough to furnish themselves with good libraries. The lesson these results teaches, rightly applied, may be of incalculable benefit in our future operations. In most cases—in fact generally—the money raised is collected weekly. Sometimes a box is placed in some convenient place, into which each scholar may drop his or her contribution. Sometimes each class places the amount in the hands of the teacher, the sum received being handed over to a treasurer, who is able at any time to tell how much is at the credit of each class. In every instance, however, in which a Sabbath School has given liberally, a regular system of one kind or other

has been adopted, and information has been diffused by means of monthly Missionary meetings or otherwise. In congregational collections, on the other hand, we find, as a general rule, that the very reverse of all this is the case. When the time appointed for the regular collection of the Scheme of the Church comes round, the object is announced, but the members of the congregation having no intelligent feeling with regard to the particular object for which money is asked, listlessly hear read the circular which announces the appointment; it makes no impression on the mind, and they probably, unless they may happen to be accidentally reminded of it, come to church next Sabbath with the usual dole. Where congregations send large sums, a very different course is adopted; and that this is so is plain, from the fact that many of the congregations which contribute most are not those possessing great wealth. We do not here speak so much of city charges whose contributions are generally comparatively larger than those from the country. It would be unfair to compare town against country in this respect; although even in this light, with some very striking exceptions, the comparison might not be so unfavourable, using the term only as in reference to the amount raised, as people are generally inclined to believe. But we would ask the members of one congregation to compare country charges with each other, see what one is doing as compared with another, ascertain as far as possible the circumstances of each contributing congregation, and reflect on the reason why some, weak in numbers, and not rich in worldly possessions, are able to do so much more to extend operations in their own neighbourhood, and, at the same time, contribute liberally to every Scheme of the Church. Such an enquiry might lead to the personal question, "What am I doing?" that, again, to the feeling of desire to have the imputation of niggardliness removed from the congregation to which the enquirer belongs. The example set by the children, the proof placed before us of the "power of littles," cuts the ground from under the feet of those who refuse to do anything because they cannot do much. A plain and practical method of contributing might help to put us in a right way of doing things. There are certain Schemes recommended by the Synod. One of these, let us suppose, is looked upon by one man more favourably than the others, and he desires to see that object well supported. Let our supposed

contributor make up his mind that he has a certain amount which he is able to afford for the support of the Gospel, over and above what he gives for local purposes. When the time comes round for the collections, let him give what proportion he believes the importance of this Scheme demands at his hand, dividing the balance among the other objects as he thinks best. There would thus be avoided the feeling that a larger sum is wanted for religious purposes than we can afford, and, what sometimes happens, the refusal to give anything because the sum subscribed may look paltry when put alongside of that given by another. And we have used the word subscribed here advisedly, for our experience of the working of the whole system proves beyond a doubt that more interest is awakened, greater exertions are made, higher results are obtained by the collections being taken up throughout the week, and by conversation with the givers, than in any other way. In analysing the items of the subscription roll of a country congregation, in which the success of this plan has been very marked, it is found that the greater part of the amount is derived from quarter dollars and half dollars, a few give a dollar, and still fewer higher sums. No congregation will ever prosper, the members of which lean upon one or two rich individuals among them. No man cares for that which costs him nothing. A little sacrifice, a little labour, a little anxiety, and a little money given, bind and strengthen the feeling of attachment to anything which we possess. Office-bearers must learn, too, the feeling of giving is not born but made; like the body it is strengthened by exercise, and there are not a few instances of results having been obtained by a system of training, the announcement of which, at the beginning of the undertaking, would have been looked upon as the dreams of a crazy enthusiast. And the lesson of what has been done, and is doing, by the Sabbath Scholars, is sufficient encouragement to those who choose to try what can be done for the Gospel by congregations not possessed of great means.

But if there are some things in the Sabbath School Report to give us encouragement, there are others to cause us deep pain. Forty ministers have refused to comply with the instructions of the Synod, have made no return of the schools under their charge, have not, indeed, answered whether they have any schools or not. It is this want of interest, this disregard of

the injunctions of the highest court of the Church which causes us the deepest pain. How can we expect congregations to do their duty, if those who ought to lead them refuse to do theirs. We speak in all faithfulness on this subject, since it is undoubted that where one part of Christian duty is neglected, all the others suffer. Excuses are made that there are so many calls that they cannot all be attended to; but we venture to say that the congregations which contribute most largely to any one thing will be found to contribute almost without exception in a truly liberal manner to all, and at the same time to be extending their labours into the surrounding neighbourhood by opening new mission stations and Sabbath Schools, thus gathering in the destitute. Those who *give* little, *do* little. The same indifference which prevents them from putting their hands in their pockets, hinders them from making any exertion involving trouble.

The increase on the number of schools, scholars, and teachers is very marked, there being by a probable estimate about eleven thousand scholars and teachers connected with our Church. Much has been done, but still more remains to be accomplished. The work of Sabbath Schools must be kept before the people. Its importance cannot be overestimated. We do not require now to bring forward any arguments to that effect. The desirability of having a general system of lessons in all our schools has long been felt. There are many very important ends to be served by this uniformity. There is a feeling of oneness among our members, by which those removing from one part of the country to another, find that their children are still carried on without break in the same course they have been pursuing before. Teachers going on business or travelling for pleasure through different parts of the Province, may go in to one of our Sabbath Schools prepared without embarrassment to share in the lessons of the day. A singular proof of the necessity for some systematic scheme has been forcibly brought under the notice of the Committee. Only those schools which have systematic teaching contribute to the support of Missions. The others, using no scheme, and disapproving of a uniform scheme, in no single case have contributed anything. The Committee recommend that a proper scheme should be drawn up, giving very valuable suggestions for the manner in which this should be done. The
of
Montreal Sabbath School Association

our own Church has already published such a system. It is one of the best we have seen, and should obtain general circulation. The Association deserve the best thanks of the Church for their labours. Were this scheme, with some of the suggestions of the Committee taken advantage of, and the necessary additions made to a new issue for next year, we do not see why it should not be adopted as the one to be used. An active and living association of teachers like the one in Montreal would probably perform the work more expeditiously and more satisfactorily than a widely scattered committee. The Convener on Sabbath Schools (Rev. Mr. Inglis) in his report merely states that the Committee recommend that steps be taken for drawing up lessons. We, therefore, can the more unhesitatingly throw out the suggestion we have done.

Our Sabbath Schools are the nurseries of the Church. They cannot be neglected. It is to peril the whole interests of the country to suffer the children to grow up uninstructed in the Word of God and in the first principles of religion. The Sabbath School should be but the complement to household instruction, and many yet maintain that the latter should render the former unnecessary. But how many are there throughout the length and breadth of the land who know not the Gospel themselves? How many of the little ones would grow up heathens but for these schools? We speak not for our branch of the Church alone, we speak of the Church of Christ as a whole; and we maintain that deep is the responsibility of him who shall put a stumbling block before one of these little ones. Wherever we establish a Mission Station, there should a school be formed; small in its beginnings, feeble in its appearance, such a school as we have seen meeting in a little back room, has ere now grown into a flourish-

ing and prosperous church, a light on a hill shining forth into the surrounding darkness.

In December, 1863, we published some account of the labours of the Rev. William Ross, in Central South Africa. We had but then received accounts of the death of this valued servant of God, from an attack of dysentery, leaving a widow in peculiarly trying circumstances. Among the articles communicated this month will be found, "Some Glimpses of the Life of Mr. Ross," contributed by the pen of the same friend to whom we were formerly indebted for the notice of the work which he had been carrying on. In calling attention to the former article we said—

"We give in this number intelligence recently received from a most devoted missionary, the Rev. William Ross, who has been labouring under the auspices of the London Missionary Society, for twenty years, in South Central Africa. We are sure it will interest our readers. They are indebted for it to the Rev. Mr. Fisher of Flisk, Scotland, from whom Mr. Ross received his early education, and to whom is due the credit of rescuing from obscurity one of the most devoted, heroic, and successful missionaries ever engaged by the great society with which he was connected. Mr. Ross was well known in Scotland before he entered the mission field. In Africa he became the associate of Moffat and Livingstone. He commenced his work with the fullest confidence in the holy cause he undertook and in Him whose it is, and toiled on against obstacles and discouragements, with all the determination and perseverance of a man, who knows that difficulties must be contended with, yet at the same time feels certain of success. During the last few years his labours have been remarkably owned and blessed of God."

To those who may not be familiar with the name of Mr. Ross, this may form a fitting introduction to the very interesting article to which we would call attention.

News of our Church.

LAYING THE FOUNDATION STONE OF A NEW CHURCH IN SPENCERVILLE—Spencerville is the name of a village near Prescott, C. W., a place where we had lately no building, no manse or property, but only a few adherents. These under the fostering care of the Presbytery, increased in numbers and in courage, till about two years ago they united in calling the Rev. J. B. Mullin to be their minister. Under his excellent ministration the congregation has been steadily growing till it has now reached a high state of prosperity. It has been in the habit of holding divine service in the Town

hall in the morning, and in a log building some eight miles east of the village in the afternoon, a place which has become altogether too small for the congregation. The design of the people is to build two churches, one at the last named place and the other at the village. Here, already some preparations have been made in shape of stone and lime, but they do not intend building this summer; but in the first named place they have resolved to build immediately, and yesterday, was the auspicious day when the foundation stone was laid in the presence of some five hundred people. Notwithstanding

the busy season, teams might be seen from an early hour wending their way to the old log church crowded with happy people, old and young, all rejoicing in the prospect of having a house where they could worship the God of their fathers according to the dictates of their conscience, none making them afraid. At 12 o'clock, the appointed hour, the Rev. D. Morrison of Brockville, having deposited a bottle, containing the coins of the realm,—some of the provincial newspapers—a copy of the *Presbyterian*—a document containing the names of the trustees—name of the minister—names of the persons who laid the foundation stone, he laid the stone in due form, and offered up the consecration prayer, and an address, the substance of which will be found below.

The congregation then repaired to Wylie's grove, a lovely place, where a sumptuous repast was prepared by the ladies, and sweetest music was discoursed by Mr. Pellow's well trained band. There was a large attendance of the clergy from the neighbouring townships, among whom we noticed Mr. Morton, Wesleyan, Spencerville; Mr. Anderson of Kemptville; Mr. Lochead of Iroquois; Mr. Bell, Episcopal Methodist; Mr. Smith of Buckingham and Cumberland.

After dinner Mr. Thompson took the chair and called upon the gentlemen in succession to address the meeting, which they did in happiest terms. We have seldom listened to finer speaking and on themes more appropriate.

Mr. Morton, on "Progress,"

Mr. Anderson, on "Comely Places of Worship."

Mr. Bell, on "Church Architecture."

Mr. Smith, on "A Church consecrated to God should be free from debt."

Mr. Lochead, on "Unity among Christians."

Mr. Mullin, on "Pray for the peace of Jerusalem."

We understand that nearly \$100 were collected on the occasion towards the Building Fund.

The following is the substance of the address delivered by the Rev. D. Morrison at the laying of the foundation stone at Spencerville.

There are precious hours in the history of us all when it especially behoves us to recognize the divine hand—solemn moments when the heart involuntary turns to its God in thankfulness and love. The present is one of those moments of holy joy. The congregation assembled here has been greatly blessed under the ministration of Mrs. Mullan. I hear of many whose hearts the Lord has opened—many who walked according to the course of this world, now walking in the ways of righteousness and peace. I hear of whole neighbourhoods in this township that have risen as it were to a higher state of life—where meetings for prayer are held during the week, where the Sabbath is respected—where drinking is all but unknown, and where the old and the young have learned to love the word, and repair in crowds to the house of God. Originally weak in numbers and feeble in resources, you have become strong and resolved to build for yourselves a church—where you, your children and children's children, may worship God. "The little one has become a thousand,

and a small one a strong nation," and I am sure that you are ready with one heart and one voice to raise your Ebenezer and say "hitherto hath the Lord helped us; not unto us, not unto us, but unto His name be all the praise."

This church of which the first stone has just been laid, is a Christian Church, where the great truths touching man's better life will be proclaimed,—where his holiest feelings will be stored—where hopes full of immortality shall be kindled—and where his deepest wants will be met by that grace that bringeth salvation because bringing us into Communion with Him in whom all the fulness of the Godhead dwells. What are the great wants of man?—not these pertaining to the body but these pertaining to the soul. Feed the body as you may, clothe it with purple and fine linen and surround it with all bright and beautiful things, and the soul ill at ease, will cry out for something deeper, richer, and more abiding. Man has a religious nature, in virtue of which he deserves to bow down and reverence and adore some One all perfect and fair and good and true. Where is He? He has turned to the sun, the sea, the wind, and the storm for an answer. But the sea has said it is not me,—the bright sun, at whose first rays millions fall down upon the dust in lowly reverence, and exclaim, "there is one God and Mahomet is his prophet," says the same thing. So the wind and tempest and storms; but this deep want which nature cannot meet, which earth cannot supply, is met here; and this foundation stone looks to this foundation feeling and speaks to us of the great *I Am*, and says God is a spirit, infinite, eternal, and unchangeable in His being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth. But still man is not satisfied. He cannot conceive of a spirit, cannot settle his thoughts upon a spirit, and therefore cries out for some manifestation of the living God. He has an intellect that wishes to grasp him, a heart that desires to love him—that has longed and longed for some manifestation of the unseen God. He has taken the glass of the astronomer and looked for traces of his "stately marchings" in the far distant heavens—he has followed the track of the lightning's flash—for some vision of the Eternal—he has closed his eyes in prayer, and had to picture to himself some image of the Almighty, but all in vain. Behold I go forward, but he is not there, backward but I cannot perceive him. Oh that I knew where I might find him, that I might come even to his seat! Now, here is another foundation feeling met by this foundation stone, for it speaks to us not only of God, eternal, immortal, and invisible, whom no eye hath seen, but of One who is the brightness of the Father's glory and the express image of his person—One around whom our affections and feelings can gather—One upon whom the heart, weary with the battle of life and with strong temptation, can rest and find blessed peace. Another foundation feeling, equally deep and strong and universal, is the desire for pardon. The individual here and there, has no such desire—no particular consciousness of guilt, but not so with the race. There is a deep and universal sense of guilt among men, and a strong desire for its expiation. We see this in all the sacrifices of

the heathen—in every altar that is raised—in every lamb that is slain—in every pilgrimage that is made, in every self-inflicted torture that is endured. It is not for want of natural affection that the Hindoo mother commits her child to the sacred stream. It is not for the want of the love of life that the devotee throws himself down before the car of his idol, but it is his strong desire for pardon. In all these heathen shrines, and altars, and bloody hecatombs, and bloody sacrifices, and sore endurances, we see the natural cry for pardon so finely expressed by the prophet, "Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the Most High God? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, and ten thousands of rivers of oil? Will he accept of the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? The answer to this great question is only to be heard in the Christian Church, and every new temple that is raised, every foundation stone that is laid of such a building as this speaks of blood shed better than that of bulls and goats, blood that cleanses from all sin. Another feeling equally deep and universal is that of a desire for purity. The patriarch of old trembled when he came into the near presence of God, and exclaimed when he rose from his lowly bed, "How dreadful is this place: surely it is the house of God and the gate of heaven." And the prophet in his earlier years had a vision of the Lord sitting upon his throne, high and lifted up, his train filling the temple, Then said he, woe is me; for I am undone, because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips, for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of Hosts. This is more or less the desire of every soul in its better hours, and there are times that the desire is strong not only to be free from guilt but guiltiness—not of sin but sinfulness, that the smallest of men, under the workings of corruption, have been brought to the brink of despair, and cried out in an agony, Purge me O God, with hyssop, and I shall be clean, wash me and I shall be whiter than the snow. Tell me not that I am impure—weak—miserable—I know it,—feel it, but shew me where or how I may be made pure—how delivered from the hateful sin that doth so easily beset me? This other great want is also met, and fully met in the Christian church. And this foundation stone that we have laid to day points to a fountain that has been opened up to the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem—in other words the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost, shed forth on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Another foundation feeling met by this foundation stone is the desire for immortality, and the hope of a resurrection from the dead. Need I remind you of the horror with which man throughout his entire history, has looked upon annihilation—how he has longed and longed for some light on the great question as to whether there is any hereafter? Old Achilles, the brave warrior, whose sword turned not back against the mighty, stood by the grave of his friend and wept because it was so dark. The patriarch who enjoyed more light, and yet not sufficient light, in his hour of temptation exclaimed in an agony, "If a man die shall he

live again?" And the heathen sages of antiquity reasoned, groped and guessed in the darkness, and said, Yes, I think man is immortal, I think his dead dust shall arise, for every sprig I see the dead trees bursting into new life, and the grub rising from its chrysalis where it slept so still, upon golden wings, and rejoicing in the clear, fair light of heaven. Yes, I think man will rise again from the dead and rejoice in the sunny plains of immortality. But the hard thinker has come forward and said, I have no confidence in such representations; shew me a tree that has been torn up by the roots, toasted and roasted in the summer's sun for months, springing to life again, and I will believe in the resurrection from the dead; shew me a worm that has been torn and mutilated and crushed to death rising in new life and fluttering from flower to flower, and I will believe in this doctrine, but not in such poor analogies as these. But all these doubts and debates have been set at rest by the glad sound which has gone forth to the ends of the earth—namely that Christ has risen from the dead and become the first fruits of them that slept, life and immortality have been brought to light by that Gospel which is to be preached here and in every Christian church.

These great wants—a God whom he can worship—an image of this God whom he can love and know—pardon, purity, immortality—are wants pertaining to man as man, and can only be met in the Gospel; and hence every church that is reared, and every Bible that is printed, and every minister that is ordained to expound its truths is a blessing to men, and happy is that neighbourhood that has its church and its pastor to break the bread of life to perishing, thirsty, weak and wavering souls.

We congratulate you on your successes and your prospects, and may you all be enabled to build upon the sure foundation so that when the rains descend and the floods come you may be safe because having built upon a rock.

A BIRTHDAY TO THE MASS FUND OF ST. ANDREW'S CHURCH, GALT.—In a late number of "the Home and Foreign Missionary Record" of the Church of Scotland, notice was taken of the thoughtful and pious liberality of a humble member of the Church of Scotland at Leith, who, out of her hardly earned wages in the capacity of a domestic servant, had been able by a strict economy, to accumulate a considerable sum of money, which at her death she divided amongst the Schemes of the Church. We have to record a like instance of pious affection for the Church of her fathers by a member of the congregation of St. Andrew's Church, Galt. An aged widow, Mrs. Jardine, who made her first money in domestic service in Canada, had by earnest frugality been able to acquire some landed property in the neighbourhood of Galt. This she sold many years ago, as being unable to look after it herself, and lived upon the proceeds, but always sparingly, although no one was ready to listen to the claims of charity or of religious enterprises. She died on the 5th ult., and left to the Church to which she was intelligently and ardently attached, and to which she had always contributed liberally in her life, the

sum of \$25 in aid of the Manse Fund which is being raised by the congregation. Considering her limited means this was a handsome gift, and it is hoped that this record of it will stir up others both in humble and high life to remember with gratitude at death that Church which has blessed them during their lives. All the schemes of the Church are in a languishing condition, and any money left to one or all of them would be money well appropriated. It is by so doing that our Church members will lay up to themselves treasures in heaven. At least such generosity will beget a mine of wealth in their souls on earth; and whatever enriches the soul on earth is so much laid up in store against the time to come.

INDUCTION.—The Rev. J. B. Muir, B.A., was inducted into the pastoral charge of St. Andrew's Church, Lindsay, on the 31st May last. His call was unanimous, and his settlement most harmonious.

PRESENTATION TO THE REV. MR. MCGREGOR.—A Committee of the ladies of St. Columba's Church, West Branch, East River, lately waited upon their Pastor, the Rev. Mr. McGregor, at the Manse, and in the name of the ladies of that portion of his charge, presented him

with an elegant pulpit-gown and cassock, accompanied with an address to which Mr. McGregor replied in suitable terms.

PRESENTATION.—The ladies of St. Andrew's Church, Ramsay, lately presented their pastor, the Rev. John McMorine, D.D., with a silk pulpit gown, accompanied with an address expressive of their feelings of attachment to him. It is nearly twenty years since the Rev. Doctor was inducted to his present charge, and nothing has ever occurred during that period to mar the harmony or to lessen the good feeling which has existed in the Congregation. The gown has been presented on the occasion of Mr. McMorine's elevation to the degree of Doctor of Divinity. Dr. McMorine answered in very feeling terms. He expressed his gratitude to the ladies for their invariable kindness, encouragement and active assistance to him as a minister. He felt that he could not hope long to wear the gown, but he thanked God for the long time of peace and comfort which the congregation had enjoyed, and which they all felt to be a great blessing. He prayed that the peace might continue and that God might shower down the precious gifts of his grace on the donors and on the whole congregation.

Articles Communicated.

GLIMPSES OF THE LIFE OF WILLIAM ROSS, THE BECHUANAN MISSIONARY.

ABOUT OUR FIRST INTERVIEW.



ABOUT thirty years since we were waited on one morning by a young man desirous of studying Latin. We were then master of the Parish school of Aberyst, a beautiful spot on the braes of the Carse of Gowrie, Perthshire, Scotland. The people were agricultural, and respected by all around. Every class seemed then really anxious for advancement in knowledge; and no knowledge was more earnestly desired than that of Divine truth. Our youthful friend was William Ross. We agreed to teach him in the mornings, and in return he was to assist in having part of the day, in the conducting of our numerous school. We fulfilled with mutual gratification our covenant, for some time, till it was considered advisable that he should go to town, to give his undivided attention to the study of the classics.

William was well built, and probably 5 feet 10 or 11 inches in height, of a very cheerful countenance, with dark eyes, ruddy complexion, and black hair. He had a manly step and

strong voice, sometimes a little husky. In all his circumstances he was tidy in his dress. He was indeed "every body's body," yet always kept himself up, and so in every group of his associates he stood out marked by an undoubted respectability.

GIFTS SENT BY HIM FROM AFRICA.

With William we held a constant intimacy ever after. And a few years ago he sent us from Likatlong in the desert, a box, which, besides Geological and other specimens, and various curiosities, part of which are in the excellent collections of the Right Honourable Lord Ainslie, Rossie Priory, Carse of Gowrie, and of the University of St. Andrews. Also contained notes, to which with other authentic documents, we are privileged to refer. Prefixed to the former of these writings is a letter the tenor of which follows.

"My very kind and beloved brother

"I wrote these few and unpretending notes about 1847, when I was at MAMUSA. As my infant and motherless children were at that time separated from me, and thinking that as all men are mortal, I might soon be called to give my account, I determined to write a short

outline of what I was and what I had gone through, that they might know something of what is very natural for good and obedient children to enquire after. As you are one of my very kindest friends, perhaps what I have written may divert you and your beloved family, and also any of your kindly and affectionate associates among your honoured brethren, who may wish a perusal, and to whom you may think it wise and prudent to give it. I have also drawn out a very short outline of the life of my first beloved partner, that her dear children might know something of their anxious loving mother. These few hints of one so deserving as she was, may not be altogether useless, but be a small source of enjoyment to you all. As I account them only a letter, pretty long indeed, and like most of my communications, hastily got up, in the midst of my varied labours, please do not publish them without my consent.

"I am,

"Yours very truly,

"(Signed) W. Ross."

Any writings sent by him to us, were, as a general rule, entirely left to our own discretion. And we trust, we have desired, and desire to make no use of any part of them, but for God's glory, and the advancement of the great cause of missions. And we are not aware of having ever trespassed or given the least cause of offence to any one, by what we published from his numerous and important letters.

HIS BOYHOOD.

William was born in August, 1802, at Gormach, in Errol parish, Garse of Gowrie, and was the eldest of the four children of Robert Ross and Grace Keit. The parents were dissenters, and attended the ministry of the Rev. Mr. Watson of the Secession church, in the village of that parish. The missionary says, "I was baptized by him, and from what I have learned of his piety, I have no doubt at all, but he prayed that my name might be written in heaven; and the fervent prayer of the righteous man availeth much." The father reared a small farm, Sanny Hall, which proved to be too dear, so he gave it up; then crossed over the river Tay to Newburgh, and after a few years of residence there and at West Drom, and Elliot Head, he became Greerer to Alexander Greig, Esq., of Hall Greig, Kinross, whose farm of Pitkinchie Aberayrte (and latterly belonging to Alexander Grekie, Esq., of Baldownie), was superintended by him during the remainder of his life. William appears to have received his early education at the Parish

schools of Damberney, Kinross, and the subscription school of Milnashort; and had evidently been an apt scholar, and fond of his teachers on the whole. His memory had been tenacious at a very early age, for he had a distinct remembrance after fifty years, of the streets, the harbour, and the ships, he saw at Newburgh when he was only three. Although constitutionally rather irritable, yet he was not fond of quarrelling and fighting, and strove to act fairly and honourably. He was, it might be said, rather gentle among his school-fellows, as in after life he was peculiarly genial, yet courageous, when he thought circumstances called for the display of courage. He was emphatically candid, and had great pleasure in showing respect to his superiors in age and rank. He could not bear deceit in young or old. He was fond of his home, and loved intensely all the circle. He says: "how true was it that in boyhood, foolishness was bound up in my heart; for I can remember how sweet it was to copy the example of sinners, and steal away with the 'herders' to enjoy the 'fooleries' of young persons. My mother frowned upon me for doing so, but, as I loved her very much, and as I knew she so loved me, I was able soon to please her again, by doing some little thing to aid her, and by presenting to her some small token as a peace-offering. I was delighted when again I found myself enjoying her favour." When he accompanied his father to the Secession chapel of the Rev. Mr. Lawrie, Abernethy, a distance of three miles from Newburgh, the journey proved rather great for him. He could scarcely remember anything of the sermon; but the conversation of the company by the way, led by a sensible, God-fearing man, James Graham, made an impression even then on his tender mind. While in regard to the congregation he seems to have felt, as it is so beautifully and simply written by the immortal Isaac Watts:—

Lord, how delightful 'tis to see,
A whole assembly worship Thee!
At once they sing, and they pray,
They hear of heaven and learn the way;
I have been there, and still would go,
'Tis like a little Heaven below!"

The frigid teaching of the Sabbath evening, with the repeating of the shorter catechism and proofs, and the conversation on these, and on mystical and kindred subjects, of all sects also, repeating the psalms and paraphrases, with the brief explanations, were greatly his delight, and were never effaced from his recollection. And in the general, he says, "I can recall to my memory the many things I had of which I was ashamed,

the conclusions I sometimes erroneously formed, not knowing all particulars, and also how keenly I felt when at any time accused falsely. I can yet go through all the windings of those sweet years of my life, and distinctly see how kind my Heavenly Father has been to me in leading me in ways I knew not, and in paths I had not trod, to make me a teacher of the Gentiles, in sincerity, and truth." William seems to have had a constant view of himself as if inferior to others; yet was he determined not to remain behind, knowing, that what one has done, the like another may do.

AT PARISH SCHOOLS.

He profited greatly in our public model parish schools, in which it may be said the education is that of the "religion of common life." Much owing to himself we doubt not he was becoming however almost stagnant in his learning.

AT A SUBSCRIPTION SCHOOL.

When he was about twelve or thirteen years of age the voluntary question began to be much agitated in Scotland; and so a party in Milns then started a subscription school, and appointed Mr. William Ferrier, son of Dr. Ferrier, Paisley, to be the first teacher. To this school William was sent. He began now to learn with new life, to think and act in a manly way, and as a young Christian.

Mr. Ferrier was a young man of moderate acquirements, and had the happy knack of making his pupils thoroughly to understand their various exercises, and of stirring them up to aspire to be men and women of principle.

"My improvement," he says, "under my beloved teacher was evident; for all my powers of body and mind began to work with fresh vigour, and for the first time in my life I entertained the sanguine hope of rising in the world.

"The kind of teaching, my honored master employed also, had a telling effect on my spirits and on my whole actings.

"Mr. Ferrier had the peculiar talent and felicity of bringing before us the leading and most useful men of modern times, of various spheres. 'These men,' he would say, 'were once boys like you. They were just like yourselves; and some of them in circumstances exactly similar to those you now occupy. They set about improving their minds. They determined to rise in the world, if possible, and in the meantime to excel in their classes, and in the esteem of their fellow scholars as well as in that of their teachers; and even in their healthful, lawful,

games; and through truthfulness, honour, good-conduct and perseverance, they had succeeded beyond their fondest anticipations; much to their surprise and delight.' He often exclaimed 'now or never;' and, again 'I may be cheered and honoured, in meeting some of you in after life who have risen to be great men, respected and esteemed by the community.' Such was the plan which proved so successful in kindling a flame of fervent zeal in my soul which has continued and increased to the present moment. And although my energetic and excellent teacher has long been mouldering in the dust, the effects of his affectionate labours will continue with me while I have a being. I bless the day that ever I met with William Ferrier.'

"I left school at the age of fifteen anxious to get at work, buoyant of hopes of entering upon manhood, and not at all daunted at the prospect of encountering any difficulties that lay before me. I gladly became amanuensis to my Father at Pitkindie, and kept the farm-books. I must still confess that although my advancement in knowledge had been real, it had been by no means rapid. Through Divine mercy I was holding on in the path of virtue, studiously shunning the company of the profane and of the daringly wicked."

For sometime now, William was away from under his parents' eye, and lived much among young Bothy men, not very famed for fearing God in general, although in their same Bothy, afterwards, the first man acted the part of a father, and led religious exercises, we trust to the delight and benefit of all. On William returning to his home, he was noticed by his mother to retire to bed, without committing himself, by prayer, to the care of his Heavenly Father. He felt greatly affronted when spoken of this sad, unwonted omission. So much so, that he never afterwards forgot the faithful hint of his devoted mother; nor was he ashamed, in presence of whatever companions, henceforth to engage in this blissful exercise.

We now come to the turning point of his life for time and eternity—his first communion—and the great change—But here would we pause—only we may add a very few incidents, without adhering to any particular order, referring to the period embraced in the above. "On the Saturdays the parish-school master at Dunbarney gave us a great enjoyment, by telling us familiarly and in an interesting, instructive and solemnizing way, about the wonders of creation, providence and redemption.

"What a blessing it is to read the word of life, from day to day, under a pious master in the

school, and again when seated around the fire at home!

"When I was eight years of age I was certainly advancing somewhat in religious knowledge, as well as in other branches. I remember having one Sabbath read a most enticing pamphlet on family worship; and in the evening was able to tell in our little circle the various points contained in it. An excellent mode of impressing a subject on the memory of him who tells as well as of those who listen.

"The Rev. Dr. Somerville, secretary of the U. P. Foreign Missions, was a school-fellow of mine, and greatly esteemed by his compeers."

William was glad to add to his little stock of knowledge, by listening to the conversation of men and women of intelligence, keeping in mind that he had but one tongue though two ears—saying to him "listen much and eagerly, but speak little."

"Various things now and then occurred which indicated how greatly superstition, now happily passing quickly away, mingled with the training of the former generation. I recollect seeing my mother throw some bread over the head of the woman who carried brother Andrew home from the church on his being baptized. 'She would also doubtless give a bit of bread to the first she met in going.' I had a great dread of the ministers of the Gospel. Indeed I never then entered into their presence without fear

and trembling. They appeared to me to be so very far above common people, for knowledge, holiness and every qualification fitted to inspire with awe and respect. Such was at that period generally the feeling of the young when before the servants of Christ.

"For the first time death entered into our family-circle, and snatched from us my interesting brother Robert. All were deeply afflicted, our dear mother particularly so. She for a time seemed to murmur at the hand of our Heavenly Father; yet I trust the event was sanctified to every one of us, to prepare to meet our God. I hope from what he said on his deathbed that he expected to see redemption 'through the blood of the Lamb,' and that he is with Jesus. How earnest should we be to leave behind us, to our dear friends, reasons for well grounded hope that we are—'not lost but gone before'—in glory!

"In 1811 there was an abundant crop, while for a time very great difficulty was experienced to get it housed in good condition, when a large and very beautiful comet appeared, most providentially, as it proved to be of vast service in giving light to those engaged in the important labours of the field, reaping and leading. O God, how manifold are thy blessings!"

P. F. F.

Fife, Scotland, August 9th, 1865.

The Churches and their Missions.

PRESENTATION.—The Queen and Robert Vans Agnew, Esq., of Sheuchas and Barnbarroch, have each been pleased to present the Rev. Robert Paton to the parish church and united parishes of Kirkinner and Longcastle, as assistant and successor to the Rev. James Reid, the present incumbent. The question of the patronage being in dispute, two separate presentations, have been issued in favour of Mr. Paton.

ST. MICHAEL'S CHURCH, DUMFRIES.—On Thursday last, the Rev. John Duncan, late of Abbotshall in the Presbytery of Kirkcaldy, was inducted by the Presbytery of Dumfries to the charge of the Parish of St. Michael's, to which he has been presented by the Crown. The Presbytery met in the Church at noon, and there was a large attendance of the congregation. The Rev. Mr. Wilson, Newabbey, preached and presided. The Rev. gentleman took his text from 1st Corinthians iii. 9—"We are workers together with God," from which he delivered a very able and carefully prepared discourse. The usual questions having been put to Mr. Duncan, he was formally inducted in the charge, the presiding minister first addressing Mr. Duncan briefly, and afterwards the con-

gregation. At the close of the services Mr. Duncan received a very cordial welcome from the congregation.

MONTROSE—SUCCESSOR TO THE REV. MR. BURAS.—A meeting of the members of the Montrose Parish Church was held on Monday evening, for the purpose of taking such steps as might be deemed necessary for the filling up of the vacancy consequent upon the translation of the Rev. Mr. Buras to the Cathedral Church, Glasgow, and also to hear the report of the committee appointed to aid them in the selection, with a view to the recommendation of the same to Sir George Grey. Mr. Savage, writer, presided, and opened the meeting with prayer, after which he detailed the proceedings of the Committee and the result at which they had arrived. Mr. Savage stated that out of a list of names which they have made up, they were unanimously of opinion that the Rev. Mr. Taylor, Dumfries, was the gentleman best fitted for the charge at Montrose: and after detailing the various characteristics of which the committee considered Mr Taylor possessed, he submitted the selection to the congregation for their consideration. Mr. William Moir moved that the selection be accepted by the

congregation; which was seconded by Mr. James Adams, grocer. The meeting unanimously approved of the same; and, after a vote of thanks to the chairman, the proceedings terminated.

ABBOTSHALL PARISH CHURCH—On Sunday afternoon the Rev. John Duncan preached his farewell sermon on the occasion of his leaving Abbotshall Church, having accepted a unanimous call to the charge of St. Michael's, Dumfries. The church was crowded in every part, many standing throughout the services—great numbers of various denominations from the churches in the neighbourhood being present. Mr. Duncan preached a long and eloquent discourse, during the delivery of which many of the audience were visibly affected. After bearing testimony to the happy days and years he had spent among them, he bade them an affectionate but regretful farewell.

A meeting of the parishioners of Abbotshall was held in the parish church on Monday evening, to take farewell of the Rev. J. Duncan. The meeting was opened with devotional exercises, conducted by the Rev. Dr. Dick Brownlee, of Bethelield, United Presbyterian Church, Kirkcaldy, after which ex Provost Beveridge of Kirkcaldy, in a highly-eulogistic address, presented Mr. Duncan with a handsome gift from the parishioners. Mr. Duncan replied in his usual felicitous manner. The Rev. Robert Wallace, of Trinity College Church, Edinburgh, was present, and added greatly to the happiness of the meeting by an address which he delivered.

**THE SUBSCRIPTION BY ELDERS TO THE CONFES-
SION OF FAITH**—Mr. Lee, of Roxburgh, read to the General Assembly, the report of the Committee on the Eldership, of which we give the following:

"As instructed, the committee issued queries to all the Presbyteries—(1.) As to the number of parishes which, in the opinion of their respective Presbyteries, are provided with a sufficient staff of elders; (2.) As to the number of parishes altogether without kirk-sessions, and also as to the number of parishes in which kirk-sessions are constituted by the aid of assessors appointed by the Presbyteries; and (3.) As to the reasons of any difficulty which may exist in the bounds of any Presbytery in obtaining the consent of qualified persons to undertake the duties of the eldership. In reply to these queries, returns have been received from sixty-nine out of the eighty-four Presbyteries of the Church. The returns relate to no fewer than 866 parishes, equally distributed over the several Presbyteries and Synods, and thus represent approximately the state of the eldership in all parts of Scotland. The Committee are glad to be enabled to state that as many as 758 parishes are returned as having at least a quorum, and a large proportion of these as being supplied with (in all respects) a sufficient number of elders; the Synods of Glasgow and Ayr, Angus and Mearns, and Aberdeen (so far as can be judged from returns, which are not complete), being conspicuous for the efficient state of the church within their bounds in this respect. Founding upon the particulars furnished to the Committee, the average may be stated at five el-

ders for each of the 758 parishes returned as having kirk-sessions; and it is believed that a similar average will be found in a considerable proportion also of those parishes—nearly 200 in number—as to which no returns have been received. On the other hand, the committee have to state that no fewer than 109 parishes are returned as without kirk-sessions. That so large a number of parishes in all parts of the country should, on any account, be destitute of so important a class of office-bearers, cannot (the committee feel assured) but be regarded with extreme regret by the General Assembly. Some of the cases of destitution are of a temporary nature, arising from recent deaths or removals, and likely to be supplied immediately, while others are not complete, the eldership being partially represented in several parishes in which a quorum to constitute a kirk-session is returned as wanting. But, making all allowance for such cases, the statement now submitted is one which must be considered as of very serious import. It is true that, in almost every instance, an attempt appears to be made to supply the means of discharging some of the functions of ordinary ruling elders in parishes unprovided with these office-bearers, by the appointment of presbyterial assessors to assist the ministers in holding kirk-sessions. In eighteen of the parishes as to which returns have been given in, even this expedient for conducting the ordinary discipline of the church is neglected. It appears, however, to the committee, that whatever may be the authority for the appointment of assessors to undertake the duties now in practice assigned to them by presbyteries, such assessors at best supply very inadequately in any respect, and in some respects fail altogether to supply, the place of ordinary ruling elders. The committee venture, indeed, most respectfully to direct the attention of the General Assembly to the whole subject of the appointment of assessors in kirk-sessions, as involving questions of some difficulty, and of very great importance."

PRESENTATION TO THE REV. DR. COOKE, BELFAST, IRELAND.—It will be gratifying to the relatives and friends of this distinguished clergyman to learn that on Thursday the 13th of July last, his friends and admirers assembled in the Music hall, Belfast, for the purpose of presenting him with an address and a cheque for upwards of fifteen hundred pounds sterling—£1547 13s—as a slight acknowledgement of the eminent and life-long services he has rendered to the cause of civil and religious liberty and social progress. The hall was crowded by the elite of the town and neighbourhood, and the large and fashionable assembly was ably presided over by the Most Noble the Marquis of Downshire, who, on taking the chair, gave expression to the extreme satisfaction with which he occupied the position to which he had been called "as nothing in the world could gratify him more than to be called upon to do anything which could do honour to our excellent friend, Dr. Cooke." The Mayor of the town, after reading the address and making the presentation, spoke as follows: "My Lord, the sum I have had the privilege and the honour of handing to our

esteemed friend, Dr. Cooke, indicates in some measure the extent of the esteem in which he is held by the community; but, I may say this, that if the object had been more extensively or widely known than it was, a sum fully double might have been readily obtained. Yesterday and to day many gentlemen waited upon me as Treasurer, expressing their surprise that it was not publicly made known that such a thing was going forward, and volunteering their subscriptions, stated that many of their friends would cheerfully have subscribed had they known such a matter was in contemplation."

ENGLAND. — The missionary of the London City Mission among the cabmen gives an interesting view of the work in which he is engaged:

"I am happy," he says, "to be able to report that the six-day cabs increase in number every year; and I have good cause for hoping that ere very long we shall find the majority of cabs plying in London are those which are worked only for six days in each week. The total number of cabs in this city has not yet reached 6000; and of these 2100 or more are six-day ones. This is very gratifying, as every Christian cannot but rejoice when he reflects that more than one-third of the London cab-drivers, or from 2100 to 2200 men, who, up to a comparatively recent period, were compelled to work on the Lord's day, now rest on the Sunday, and enjoy the blessed privilege of attending public worship with their wives and families. And I am most thankful to be able to say, many of them also attend to the one thing needful. It is surprising how quickly a difference is noticed in a man when he becomes a six-day driver, both as regards cleanliness and behaviour. He becomes cheerful and conversant; and as his body has the rest which nature requires, so his mind becomes more clear and capable of serious thought. In short, the Sabbath-day's rest is one of the greatest blessings to every man who is privileged to possess it, as is proved by his soon showing himself a better husband, father, and citizen. Surely six days is enough for these men, as, according to the mechanics' hours, the cabman makes nine days each week if, as is ordinarily the case, he works fifteen hours daily for six days; and many work eighteen hours per day. My experience has proved that all those who work every day alike suffer severely in mind and body: they become bewildered as scarcely to know what they are doing. I know of one man who did not go to bed for several weeks because his wife had offended him, but worked his cab continually night and day; and he told me that towards the latter part of the time his mind was in such a confused state that he could not tell whether he was putting to the horse, or taking him out of harness. Hundreds of these poor men are in an exactly similar state of mind, some even so bad as to require removal to lunatic asylums. There is one man now at Colney Hatch asylum, called 'Black Sam,' whose mental derangement, it is supposed, was occasioned by overwork and too frequent application to strong drink as a stimulant. I am quite confident no man can so well appreciate rest on the Sabbath-day as he who by the grace of God has been rescued from his

former slavery to be a partaker in the blessed privileges of the 'holy day;' privileges which extend their influence over the whole family, converting discord and unhappiness into joy, peace, and comfort.

"The cab masters of London are, in most instances, practical men. The majority of them having been drivers, are of course entirely conversant with everything connected with horses, cabs, provisions, and the practical parts of their trade. If it were not so they would not be able to stand against the outgoings of this most expensive business. The six-day masters are more considerate and kind to their men than the seven-day ones. Many keep their drivers for a long period, some as long as ten years. Some number of these masters are members of Christian Churches; and all proprietors of six-day cabs are reformed men, having, I believe, in every instance at least an eye turned to eternal things, although some look more deeply into the all-important subject than others. The horses and cabs are in much better condition than the seven-day workers; while master and man, as well as both their families, are in a better state of mind, and their health and circumstances improved far beyond those of the seven-day masters and drivers."

IRELAND. — The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland has held its annual meeting at Belfast. The Moderator—the Rev. John Rogers—preached the opening sermon on Monday evening, the 3d of July, choosing Philippians iii. 12—14 for his text. Having addressed the members on the business of the past year, acknowledged the courtesy shown to him during his tenure of office, and declared that having subscribed Presbyterian standards, Presbyterians were "bound to propagate, teach, and defend Presbyterianism, and to push it into every place where it can benefit men, and exalt a nation—the Moderator yielded up his trust. The Rev. Dr. Wilson, of Limerick, was elected in his stead, and addressed the Assembly especially as a representative of his brethren scattered through the west and south of Ireland. In the Reports of Synods five new congregations were noticed, and from one Synod there was a recommendation to revive the primitive office of deacon. A discussion on Assurance between two ministers led to the charge of heretical doctrine by one against the other. A commission was appointed to examine the theological bearings of the controversy, and report to next Assembly. A minister licensed by the Old-School Presbyterians of America was received in the same standing here, although a large party supported the views of the students that, as his curriculum was much short of theirs, he should comply with the authorised course of study. Dr. Carden, rector of the Episcopal Church in Philadelphia, was received as a Presbyterian minister, and confirmed in his appointment to Adelaide Road, Dublin. After the Synodical business was concluded, the Assembly proceeded to hear reports. Those on Temperance, Sabbath Observance, and Sabbath Schools, presented no new features. It was recommended that sermons should be preached on the sanc-

tity of the Lord's Day ; and grateful reference was made to the success and probable influence of the Conference on Sunday Schools, reported last month. The report on the State of Religion noticed the progress of lay preaching in the south and west ; suggested the appointment of one or two ordained evangelists ; affirmed, from very recent inquiry, that there were many permanent spiritual results from the revival of 1859 ; and lamented that there was at the same time spiritual declension. A lively discussion followed.

In the report on Foreign Missions, it was stated that one of the missionaries, Mr. McKee, had been obliged to return after twenty-four years' labour ; that two new missionaries had arrived out ; that a third would sail in September ; that three more were wanted to bring up the number to ten, and have two at each station. There are 300 communicants and 1000 school-children connected with the mission, and there were seventy-five baptisms during the year.

The Jewish Mission reported that there were 200 communicants of the church at Hamburg, but very few of whom were Jews ; that evangelistic labours were carried on as usual at Bonn ; that Mr. Robson and Mr. Wright are at Damascus ; that Mr. Ferrette has resigned ; and that another missionary is to be appointed.

The Colonial and Continental Mission reported that its field was so large as to be embarrassing, and statistics from the colonies and the principal countries of Europe were brought forward to show the condition and progress of the churches.

In moving the adoption of the report on Popery, the Rev. Dr. Kirkpatrick mentioned that upwards of 100,000 copies of the Douay Bible had been sold in Ireland by Mr. Duffy, a Roman Catholic publisher. He believed that the absence of missionary successes was neither from the power of the priests, nor from the superstition of the people, but from the absence of faith, love, sympathy, and prayer in their own Church. The Roman Catholic mission has sustained a serious loss in the death of the Rev. Robert Allen, who left thirty schools and an orphan asylum at Ballina dependent on his own energy and influence for their origin and support. All Scripture-readers are now required to act as colporteurs. Forty-one congregations have been aided by the Home Mission. The Fund for Assistant Ministers continues to increase, and was 111*l.* over last year. On behalf of Ministerial Support, it was stated that 208 congregations had increased, and 152 reduced their stipend, and that 121 were stationary. On the whole, 501 congregations contributed an average of 61*l.* 8*s.* 3*d.*, to sustain their ministers. The treatment of this subject was entirely committed to laymen, and the speeches so thoroughly drew the attention and respect of the house that it was proposed to print them in a pamphlet for general circulation. The committee for the Church and Manse fund have expended nearly 30,000*l.*, and have exhausted their funds. To the new Church, Manse, and School fund 14,000*l.* has been subscribed by eighty-seven congregations, but the subscribers refuse to pay the money until the subscription reaches 20,000*l.* The Committees on Elementary and

Intermediate Education had nothing new to report, except that the number of persons at school or college, studying for the ministry, is forty-nine in excess of last return. Deputations from England, Scotland, and America, addressed the meeting.

The most important business before the Church was the appointment of Professors to the Magee College, which is to be opened at Londonderry in the autumn.

Of the seven professors appointed, five are ministers of the Irish Presbyterian Church, and two are the sons of ministers of the same body.

The Assembly also reconstructed the Home Mission of the Church, and decided that there should be three Boards—one to take charge of the mission to Roman Catholics ; one for Church Extension, to organise and foster new congregations until their endowment ; and one for the Sustentation of Assistant Ministers, and of Endowed Ministers, whose annual stipend is less than 50*l.*, and of whom it was stated that there are over 100. It was proposed, but not carried, that to avoid offence, the mission to Roman Catholics should be called the Home Mission. It was decided that the Assembly should meet next year at Belfast. Steps were also taken to procure an Assembly Hall, and the ladies of the Church intend to follow the example set them in Scotland, and collect the money. The statistics of the Church show that 87,903 families claim connection with it ; that there are 130,497 communicants, 2,155 ruling elders, 103 deacons, 5,412 members of committee, and 69,920 stipend payers, while there is church accommodation to the amount of 229,683 sittings. A comparison of these figures with those collected in 1864, will show an increase of 6,277 families, 7,707 communicants, 93 ruling elders, 430 members of committee, 3,155 stipend payers, and 11,899 sittings. 76,490*l.* 10*s.* has been raised over the Assembly for all purposes during the year, a sum less than that returned last year by 6,661*l.* 11*s.* 0*d.* In this amount are included 10,824*l.* 13*s.* 1*d.* of ordinary Sabbath collections, 10,232*l.* 15*s.* 9*d.* of mission collections, 2,567*l.* 9*s.* 11*d.* of other religious and charitable collections, 375*l.* 2*s.* 9*d.* Sabbath-school collections, 18,866*l.* 3*s.* 1*d.* raised for building and repairs and debt, and 33,624*l.* 5*s.* 5*d.* of seat rents and supplemental contributions, which go under the general name of stipend. The debt over the Church is 41,766*l.* 13*s.* 0*d.* Last year the debt was 45,203*l.* 13*s.* 9*d.*, showing a decrease of 4,437*l.* 0*s.* 9*d.* There are over the Church, under the management of its ministers or members, 608 National Schools, 1,102 Sabbath-schools, 7346 teachers, and 58,716 scholars.

IRISH PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.—The *Banner of Ulster* of Tuesday states that, at the annual meeting of the Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, held on Monday evening, the Rev. Dr. Wilson, of Limerick, was elected Moderator for the ensuing year.

FRANCE.—While Catholicism does not even attempt a needful reaction against the two enemies by which it is being secretly undermined—superstition and theocracy—Protestantism in France is engaged in an energetic

struggle against a subversive principle, which it must expel at any cost, if it wishes still to live and grow. That principle is the exclusive and absolute authority of the individual conscience—in other words, the denial, express or implied, of the supernatural, historical revelation, presented to us in its highest form by Jesus Christ. That denial is, in the present day, asserted or understood in a great number of the productions of the new school; it troubles and tears the Reformed Church of France. It sometimes masks itself under the noble aspirations of liberty and truth, which have a legitimate attraction for every one worthy of the name of man. But it is the parent of bondage only, and we may repeat to the believers in this system what Rousseau affirmed of materialists and atheists: "They say that the truth is never injurious to mankind, and this is, in my opinion, a great proof that what they teach is not the truth."

GENEVA.—On Monday, June 19, the annual meeting of the Geneva Missionary Society took place at the Auditoire. After singing and prayer, M. Barde, the chairman, gave an introductory address. He announced that the debt which had burdened the Basle committee was removed. It was reported, that without counting 44 agents in the service of foreign societies, that of Basle has under its direction 137 missionaries, while 103 pastors occupy fixed posts, especially among the scattered Germans in America. The total receipts of the Geneva committee amounted to 37,613 francs, including 8,000 francs arising from the weekly sou for missions. Although an auxiliary of the Basle Society, the Geneva committee is interested in others, and raised 5,402 francs for that of Paris. M. Nagle dwelt upon the impending celebration of its jubilee by the Basle Society, which in fifty years has sent out 430 missionaries from its institute. Its first year's income was 20,000 francs, and now it receives from 700,000f. to 800,000f., and it is out of debt. In 1834 it had not one station, but now it has twenty-six, constituting thirty-three churches. M. Casalis, Principal of the Paris Missionary Seminary, showed that the friends of missions promoted the work of God at home, and he dwelt upon various other advantages resulting from the good work. The Bassuto mission progresses; 104 members have been received this year, and 160 persons are candidates for admission, while 11 native catechists are employed. In Tabiti, also, things are encouraging; the churches are reorganized, the schools are reopened, and a society has been formed there to aid public instruction. M. Reichel (Moravian) spoke of the great work of his church, which has 323 missionaries and 83 stations. Among the fields to which he alluded as presenting a cheering aspect were Surinam and New Holland.

On Tuesday, June 20, the Bible Society held its fiftieth anniversary in the Auditoire, under the presidency of M. Gautier, who gave a rapid sketch of the society's progress. It has always been happily associated with the British and Foreign Bible Society. Its resources are limited, and it reports a deficit of from 5,000 to 6,000 francs, but it has put in circulation a

considerable number of the Scriptures, and has aided in the printing of Bibles for the blind. M. Goudet narrated some interesting facts on the subject of colportage, and M. de Meuron spoke of the work of the auxiliary society of Lausanne on behalf of the blind. M. Casalis testified to the value of the Bible Society's labours in mission fields. M. Convers thanked the society for its share in promoting the publication of a translation of the New Testament for the people of Malabar.

ITALY.—The Claudian Press in Florence adheres strictly to the rule of printing only a pure Christian literature, and it is a good sign that in 1864 its varied productions enjoyed a large sale, some of its tracts being reprinted and sold in large quantities by secular publishers; while clerical efforts of every kind were, on the other hand, put forth to counteract its influence on the public mind. The more Gospel truth is known, the more will the incompatibility of an alliance with Papal Rome by a free people be felt and acknowledged, and the more useless will appear the attempts of the new Catholic party—the liberal priests' movement—represented by the *Esaminatore*, and bearing the names of Savonarola, Arnold di Brescia, Paolo Sarpi, Scipione de' Ricci, Rosmini, Gioberti, Reali, and Perfetti on its banners—to reform the Church of Rome by abolishing the celibacy of the priests, rendering confession optional, performing the services in the vulgar tongue, and freeing the Book of God of the Papal ban against its circulation.

As it is, light on these questions is thickening. The priests had little to do with the great Dante Festival which made Florence so brilliant a few weeks ago. Nor were they even invited—and they took umbrage at this, and a paper war has arisen—to the holiday rejoicings in honour of the great poet at Ravenna, where his bones have recently been discovered. These were great civic festivals, and stood clear of church machinery and influences, formerly thought an absolute necessity, in order to gild with *prestige* any cause in the eyes of the people. Milan adheres to its protest of last year, and sends no musical bands nor soldiery to the Corpus Domini procession, and other large towns have this year followed its example. All this, because at the national fests in June the only dark objects in the general illumination of the townships of Italy are the cathedrals and buildings occupied by priests. Only the other day, the people of Cagliari, in the Marches, tore down the Pontifical escutcheon from the Archbishop's door, on the ground that the Italian arms are never allowed to be displayed in the Papal States, nor is a vessel with the Italian flag allowed to enter the harbour of Civita Vecchia. The statistics of State support to the priesthood are being looked into; for the discovery that no less a sum than 43,000L sterling was spent in 1854, according to the War-office balance, for expenses of worship in the various regiments of the Italian army, has caused great talk of late.

In January last, we spent about a fortnight at B—, on our way to San Remo. Our hotel-keeper, Mr. L—, is much interested in the work of evangelization. He told us that there

was a little band of converts, amounting to, perhaps, eighteen or twenty, scattered in the neighbouring valleys, who had been brought to a knowledge of the truth three or four years ago, through the instrumentality of copies of the Scriptures brought thither by colporteurs. They had had no external help or teaching, except by means of an occasional colporteur since. Nevertheless, they had kept steadfast in the faith, and met from time to time in each other's houses to read the Word, despite the opposition of neighbours and friends. It was thought that it would be desirable to gather together some of these poor people during our stay, and that I should read the Scriptures with them and speak to them, as I had been accustomed to do at my own little meetings at home. One of their number, who is the syndic of one of the valleys, offered a room in his house for the purpose, and on Sunday afternoon I went there, accompanied by Mr. L—. About twelve persons assembled in that little upper chamber, and Mr. L—, at my request, opened the meeting with prayer. I then read and spoke on the 3rd chapter of St. John. Most of them had Bibles and Testaments, and carefully looked out the passages referred to. After Mr. L— had closed with prayer, he asked if they would meet together on succeeding Sundays in the same manner. Gladly and thankfully was the offer accepted, and the syndic having offered the use of his room, it was agreed that Mr. L— should continue the meeting regularly.

I continue to receive from Mr. L— interesting accounts of the progress of the work. At Ventimiglia great eagerness has been manifested to become possessed of the Word of God, and when the priests tried to interfere, the people took the part of the colporteur. He was summoned to appear before the authorities; but after examining his papers and books, they informed him that he was perfectly at liberty to dispose of the books in any way that he thought proper. He sold many to the soldiers in the fortress. The demand for Bibles, Testaments, and tracts, became very great, so that a fresh supply from Florence was gladly welcomed. The colporteur began his work about the middle of April, and on May 26 Mr. L— writes to say that the work had increased so rapidly that there was urgent need for an evangelist. He was then about to hire a room at Ventimiglia, capable of containing 300 persons, and he expected the crowd would be great.

GERMANY.—The Protestant Church at Constance is preparing to erect a monument to the great fererunner of the Reformation, John Huss, who was, a hundred years before Luther, condemned and burnt in that city. But, happily, it is not a statue which this community thinks of erecting in memory of the holy martyr. It is a church, of which it has much need, that it is going to build outside the city, as near as possible to the place where the pile was raised which consumed the witness for Jesus Christ. In the spring of this year, the council of this Church published an appeal asking the help of the friends of the Gospel, to whom the memory of John Huss and Jerome of Prague is dear and sacred. No doubt this

appeal will be heard. The council hoped to lay the foundation-stone of this monumental church on the 6th of July, 1865—that is to say, 450 years after the death of John Huss.

TURKEY.—At Marash there is a large and flourishing Protestant community, with two churches. From the first it has been very common for Turks to attend the services in these places of worship, but now strict orders have come from Constantinople forbidding this. A few Sabbaths ago, a Turkish gentleman, unknown to the missionaries, attended one of these services, apparently from mere curiosity, but on leaving he was seized by the guards, taken to the kouak, beaten, and afterwards thrown into prison. By another order from Constantinople, all the Arabo-Turkish books of the American mission at Marash, and several other places, have been seized by the Pashas. These books, without exception, were printed at Constantinople and approved by the Government censorship. At Adabazar, where there has been a flourishing Protestant community for many years, the public sale not only of these but of all other Protestant books, has been prohibited. In Constantinople itself a colporteur has, within a few weeks, been arrested several times and imprisoned for selling a little tract in Turkish, issued by the American Mission, which is nothing more than a commentary on the last verses of the 25th chapter of Matthew, extracted from a commentary on that Gospel, just published here with the approval of the censorship. In Casarea, not long ago, a Protestant girl was abducted, and married by force to a gipsy, the Pasha pretending that he did not dare to interfere lest a tumult should be raised in the city among the Armenians, who were engaged in this outrageous plot. Only yesterday I learned from the same place that the Protestants there were beginning to suffer from the old methods of persecution—from false accusations, feigned claims, forged notes, &c.—against which they can find no protection in the Turkish courts.

It is my impression that there is not only in the interior, but in Constantinople itself, a general revival among the Turks of the old insolent contempt of Christians which prevailed before the Crimean war. I have certainly seen more of this within the past six months than for years before; others have noticed the same thing. Still, I would not mention this as anything more than an impression, as the facts which I have noticed may be only accidental coincidences.

If ever there were criminals who deserved death, they were the men who have just obtained from the Porte a full and free pardon for the Syrian massacres. Achmet Pasha, of Damascus, who was executed by Foad Pasha, was an innocent man in comparison with Kurchid Pasha, of Beyrout, and the others who have just been pardoned. This pardon has been granted nominally at the request of Abdel-Kadir, but it is universally believed here that he has been, in reality, nothing more than the cat's-paw of the French Ambassador. Indeed he is himself little more than a French agent. He has no influence with the Turks, except that which he derives from this relation.

The French are able to control their Maronite population of Lebanon through their religious associations; but the Druze and the Mohammedan population has been much more friendly, heretofore, to England than to France. The pardon of these Druze and Turkish criminals through French influence has created great excitement in Constantinople, and it is believed here that it will give to France the complete and absolute control of Mount Lebanon.

The annual meetings of the American Mission, the Constantinople Branch of the British and Foreign Bible Society, and the Turkey Branch of the Evangelical Alliance, were held in this city during the last week in May. The reports from the different stations of the American Mission in European and Asiatic Turkey, except in respect to the Turkish work, were much more favourable than they have been for several years past. The Sabbath congregations are everywhere increasing, and in some places there have been interesting revivals. The various theological and training schools seem to be all progressing successfully, and the desire for education is extending throughout the empire. Various questions of great interest were discussed; among others, whether the higher schools of the mission should be strictly confined to those natives having the ministry in view, how far native churches should be aided by foreign funds, what relation should exist between the missionaries and the native pastors, and what relation the salaries of native pastors should bear to the average incomes of their people. It would appear that the American war had decreased the number of young men who were willing to be missionaries; so that the force of American missionaries in Turkey had become very much reduced. As the war is now over, it is to be hoped that this want will be supplied at once.

His Excellency Sir Henry Bulwer presided at the Bible Society meeting, and made a brief address. The meeting was well attended; the addresses were of deep interest; and the report of the secretary very encouraging in regard to the work of Bible distribution, except of Turkish Scriptures, the sales of which have almost ceased since the persecutions of last year. Rev. Dr. Riggs presided at the meeting of the Evangelical Alliance, and the proceedings were, as usual, very interesting.

INDIA.—From Travancore, the Rev. F. Baylis, of the London Society, reports, as the result of native evangelization in villages and by the wayside, in one division of the Neyoor district, besides additions to most of the congregations, the formation of three new ones, comprising 223 adults, and 125 children. Eleven places for devil-worship, three or four of which were of large size and better build than ordinary, have been destroyed, with the full consent of the owners, and the implements of worship, clubs, spears, &c., given up.

LABRADOR AND GREENLAND.—The Moravian missionary ship *Harmony* left the Thames on the 20th June, on her annual voyage to Greenland and Labrador. She carried five missionaries, two of them, after a visit to Europe, returning to the field in which they have laboured

for a period of nineteen years, the remaining three going out for the first time. They were accompanied by two gentlemen, members of the Society of Friends, who are desirous of paying a visit of Christian sympathy to the brethren in Christ in that dreary region. A meeting was held on board two or three days previous to the *Harmony* setting out on her voyage, when the ship, with her precious cargo, her crew and passengers, was commended to the gracious care and guidance of Him whom winds and waves obey; and the company present united in praising the past mercies vouchsafed by the Lord God to the little missionary vessel which, for almost a century, has been the instrument by which alone the communication has been kept up between Labrador and the Church at home. For ninety-five years the Moravian missionary ship has performed an annual voyage to that dangerous and inhospitable coast (the present vessel being the ninth that has been employed in the service), and during all this time no serious accident has ever befallen her, nor has there been any loss of life among crew or passengers. In view of this proof of God's power and mercy, the Christian friends, assembled on the deck of the *Harmony*, could not do otherwise than praise the Lord for His goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men.

NEW ZEALAND.—A correspondent favours the *Record* with private letters from the Bishop of Waiapu and Mrs. Williams to a lady in this country, referring to the recent catastrophes:—

From Bishop Williams.

After twenty-five years of comfortable residence in peace and quietness, we have been obliged to rush off at almost a moment's notice. The newspaper I send you of this day's date will give you some account of this horrible delusion, which has been making its way through the country. It has been set on foot, not on account of its religious association, but simply as a political movement, for the purpose of binding the natives together against the Government. When they made their appearance at Turanga, after the murder of Mr. Volkner, it was hoped that they would have been ordered off with the greatest expedition, but they have used that craft and subtlety in their proceedings that they have gained a footing first with a tribe who were wavering in their minds, and then they gradually worked upon those who, upon their first approach, were up in arms, and ready to resist them by open force. Matters got worse and worse, and our own trusty natives in the school were becoming uneasy. I cannot but regard this movement as a part of those fearful events which are passing over the world, and which all seem to indicate the times of the end. God, we know, is directing and accomplishing His wise purposes, and that the grand consummation of all will be the establishment of His kingdom.

NAPIER, April 6, 1865.

From Mrs. Williams.

I am afraid that before you receive this, newspaper rumours of an alarming character may have reached you. I wish I could say

there was no foundation for them ; but I fear there is reason to believe that the news about our poor friend, Mr. Volkner, is only too true, and that Mr. Grace is a prisoner in the hands of the natives. A party of these wretched fanatics, the Pai Mariri natives from the other side of the island, have been the instigators of the awful proceedings.

Another party of fanatics have just arrived from Wairoa, to the south of us. The first party were about forty in number, the second about 120. While they are here we cannot but feel in some danger. Still, greater is He that is for us than those who are against us. God is the Rock of our strength and our refuge, and not a hair of our heads can be touched without His permission. It is very sad, after living for twenty-five years with perfect confidence, to feel our foundations, as it were, trembling under us.

Articles Selected.

LUTHER'S PICTURE, AS DRAWN BY ONE OF HIS FRIENDS.

I.

HOW MARTIN LUTHER WAS MADE PROFESSOR AT WITTENBERG.

In the year 1540 a guest sat daily and not unobservantly at Luther's table in Wittenberg. He was a man of about thirty-six ; a simple student, keen-eyed, eager inquisitive ; genial and cheerful, moreover, and known to the rest as a warm friend of Dr. Martin. He would sometimes leave the room with Jonas to walk in the garden, and learn what was stirring in the Electorate ; sometimes Melancthon would seize him, to ask his judgment on some knotty problem in the school theology ; or Eber's dwarfed figure would be seen beside him, as they discussed Pliny's Natural History and the discoveries of Paracelsus. But his chief happiness was in listening to Luther himself, watching his ways, following him to lecture, and from the lecture to the pulpit, and not so much out of blind hero worship as of a thirst for the truth, and a genuine unbigoted thoughtful love of the man. It was one of Luther's books, fallen accidentally into the hands, that had first made the scales drop from his eyes, and with what glimmerings of light he thus had he journeyed to the Saxon University, where he studied with an ardour that won the encomiums of the senate, and where the full truth took possession of his soul. From this quiet bookish life he was called to one of the busy mining valleys of Bohemia. He taught and organised the parish school with all his might, introduced the new Wittenberg life and faith, and then, after some years was seized with a mighty longing to return to his old college and be a learner once more. It was an age when men were not ashamed to be learning all their lives, when, above all, they had need not to be ashamed ; when a man scarcely knew what he might be called to teach, and yet felt that above all he must teach only what he knew, that he was to help men to the same truth that he held in part, that till it was fully known they must all be learners together. And so Matthesius went joyfully back to Wittenberg, and studied, this time, not only books, but men. The fruits of that study have come down to us in an interesting form. When Luther died, Matthesius wrote his life. It is the first biography of the Reformer—more simple, fresh and picturesque than any other. It

is not drawn from books, but from the life. Luther himself furnished the materials. When he sat at table and spoke of his old boyish days of the convent, and his visit to Rome, and Tetzel, and how the great change had come about, Matthesius preserved every word. He had himself seen the people of the story : his father had denounced Tetzel without any dainty choice of phrase ; and he, like Luther, a miner's son, had sung for his bread in the streets of Nuremberg with the poor scholars of his day. Something in their outward life was the same ; something, too, in their inward ; enough to help them to understand each other. It is of his friend that Matthesius thinks as he writes he fancies himself still at the well-known inner-table ; the least incidents have not escaped him. And thus we gain a picture of Luther which is unique, as valuable in its way as one of his portraits painted by Lucas Cranach ; a little hard, perhaps, and stiff, but truthful, the man as he had been seen to act and speak.

He comes to table with a book in his hand ; sometimes heavy with thought, and falling into deep silence that outlasts the dinner ; but mostly cheerful and eager. He asks for the news, and the oldest guests are the first to reply. Gradually the conversation warms and grows general. Questions are put which he answers with equal readiness and knowledge ; discussions take place, where he modestly joins, but will also break out with his natural impatience of contradiction ; the words that have puzzled him in his translation of the Bible are submitted to the company ; and this company is composed of his coadjutors in the University, personal friends, distinguished students and strangers attracted from foreign countries, so that there often fell out, Matthesius says, brilliant and noble discourses. Luther's share in the table talk was called by his guests their table-radish, with sportive wordplay on its seasoning, and his way of getting to the roots of things. It was pure in a coarse time ; " I have never heard a coarse word from his lips ; and he used to say : He is not a man of honour who speaks ill of women, rulers, or clergy." Protesting against all shams, he could not bear the formal complimentary speeches of the day. " My dear friends," he said to a deputation after their preliminary flourish, " what do you want ? " " A christian preacher." " I understand that : you shall have one ; " and he bowed them out. Matthesius lets us hear him comparing certain preachers to a full cask, that, when you tap it, runs out to the dregs ; or commend-

those who knew when to stop. "When is that, dear doctor?" says a guest. "When you see the people listen and quite still." And when he was told of a clergyman who was caught by a nail in descending from the pulpit, he would insist it must have been a punishment because he could not stop his sermon. He enters the room before dinner and finds an aged clergyman reading one of his books; "God be praised," he cries, "the Bible is ready: you need read my books no more." For he was as modest and simple as a child. Morning and evening, and at supper he would silently pray, as if the old habit acquired in the cloister was still upon him; and then say his Catechism like any boy. At dinner he would often sing, and ask Matthesius to join him, or let him hear some of the Bohemian airs. During part of that year of 1540 he related at table most of the incidents of his life; troubled sometimes by headache, vexed sometimes by others: but always brief, picturesque, and pleasant. "Nothing," says Matthesius, "could be more fresh and delightful:" and we can easily imagine his joy in the beautiful spring of that year as Luther, Jonas, and he walked about among the blossoms and talked as freely as the birds sang overhead.

Matthesius himself went back to the valley where he had taught his school, and ended his days in it as a pastor. He married a wife whom he dearly loved, lived a happy domestic life, and worked out faithfully an entire parish reform. His people were miners, and he preached to them in their own tongue of the treasures of gold and silver and such other metals as God had stored in the earth, of the qualifications of a spiritual miner, of the virtues and lessons of the miner's calling. He wrote hymns for them to sing at their work, poured out his own heart in pious songs, and would sometimes make the tedious journey across the mountains to Wittenberg to read to Luther the verses that his children sang in church. So, doing faithful parish work, and singing hymns for the church of Christ, he lived and died. The last picture we have of him is on his way to the churchyard, to which, with his children, he made solemn procession every year to visit the grave of his wife, bidding them think of her joys in heaven, and of death, and urging them and himself to be faithful. Nicholas Hermann, the village precentor, his old friend and fellow singer, had gone before him to those upper harmonies where his ears would be no longer vexed by the discord of the school children. He paced the beech woods alone, with sadness creeping over him as he heard from some miner's cottage the hymns that they two had written together with little thought of there being sung down all the after ages of the church. The tall houses in the village street stood the same as ever; but he felt the old faces were wanting. One Sunday morning he mounted the pulpit for the last time. When he came down the book dropt from his hand. "I must unyoke," he said; "I must go home." And as they bore him to the parsonage, "Not there," he murmured, "but home with Jesus." They buried him softly among the fallen leaves in the quiet valley of Joachimsthal, and sang

over him Hermann's funeral hymn, and carved upon the stone his own epitaph, "I have lived, and I have not died."

It is time to allow him to speak for himself and to tell the story of his teacher in his own utterly simple way.

On St. Martin's Eve, the 10th of November, 1483, Martin Luther was born at Eisleben in the Hartz, of John Luther, an honest miner, and Margaret his wife. John Luther had removed from the village of Mōra by Schmal-kald to Eisleben, where God blessed his work, and bestowed on him two furnaces or smelting ovens at Mansfield, so that by this honourably-won estate he was able to bring up his little son. When Martin came to years of understanding, his father, with hearty prayer, sent him to a Latin school, where the boy learned his ten commandments, Children's Creed, and Lord's Prayer, with grammar and Christian hymns, and learned with industry and quickness. Afterwards, in his fourteenth year, his father sent him to Madgeburg, to a school which was then famous above most. There did the boy, like many another child of honourable and well-to-do parents, sing for his bread, singing before the houses of the folk. Great things must have small beginnings; and if children are tenderly and luxuriously brought up, they suffer for it their life long.

The year after, by direction of his parents, Martin betook himself to Eisenach, where his mother had friends. As he sang there for his bread before the doors, a devout woman took him into her own house, having conceived a strong liking to him on account of his singing and his earnest praying in church.

In the year 1501, his dear parents sent him to the High School at Erfurt, where they supported him, by God's blessing upon their honourable estate.

Here, with great earnestness and especial industry, he began to study the liberal arts, and for some time applied himself to the study of the law. Although by nature of a quick and merry spirit, yet every morning he began his studies with earnest prayer; for he was wont to say: "Well prayed is more than half learned." Moreover, he never missed a prelection, was ready to ask his teachers questions, respectively conversed with them, and when there was no public lecture he always withdrew to the University Library.

Once, as he looked over the books one by one that he might learn to know them, he came upon the Latin Bible, which he had never seen in all his life before. With great astonishment he noticed that there were many more texts, epistles, and gospels therein than were read in the ordinary devotional books or heard from the pulpit. As he looked into the Old Testament he came upon the stories of Samuel and Hannah which he swiftly read through with hearty pleasure, and since it was all new to him, he began to wish from the very bottom of his heart that God would sometime grant him such a book of his own; the which, his wish and sigh, was abundantly fulfilled.

Not long afterwards, as he fell into a heavy sickness, wherein he had no hope of his life, an aged priest visited him and spoke to him in this comfortable way: "My Bachelor, be of good

cheer. You will not die this time: our God will yet make off you a great man who will comfort many people."

In the year 1505, Martin Luther, who had carefully studied the liberal arts, as they were then taught in the schools, was made a Master of Arts at Erfurt. In the end of the same year, when one of his companions had been stabbed, and a great storm and horrible thunder had much alarmed him, he was strongly terrified for the wrath of God and the Last Judgment; so that he made a vow with himself that he would enter the cloister, there to serve God and to win everlasting blessedness by cloister holiness. Therefore, and not out of laziness, stupidity, or poverty, he became an Augustinian monk at Erfurt; yet without knowledge and will of his dear father, who took it with a deep displeasure, saying but these words to his son:—"Take care that your fright was not a cheat of the devil. Men should obey their parents according to the Word of God, and do nothing without their knowledge and counsel." And this was afterwards a constant pain to Dr. Luther until he had put off his cowl.

Before he made his profession in the cloister, the monastery gave him at his request a Latin Bible, which he read through with the greatest diligence and prayer, and learned much of it by heart. But the monkish folk were hard upon him, and insisted that he must be janitor and do the common house-work; and would have made him also a begging friar, saying, openly, "The cloister is served by begging not by study." But as he was an honourable member of the Erfurt schools, and a Master of Arts, the honourable university took up the cause of its member, and begged from his prior and "convent" that he should be partly exempted from the physical labour.

When he had made his profession and put on the cowl, the monks took away the Bible from him. Yet once Dr. Usinger, his teacher, said to him, "Eh? Brother Martin. What have you to do with the Bible? You ought to read the Fathers, who have extracted the sap of truth from the scriptures. The Bible may stir up confusion." So they put into his hands the books of their teachers and sophists, which, out of obedience, he diligently read. Yet, when he had time and opportunity, he hid himself in the monastery library, and held steadfastly by his beloved Bible, and as a devout monk, read the mass for fifteen years in the devoutest way.

For all this, although he prayed and studied day and night in the cloister, and chastised and emaciated himself by watching and fasting, he was continually sad, and all his holding of masses gave him no comfort. Then God sent him into the monastery an aged brother for confessor. He verily comforted him, and directed him to the gracious forgiveness of sins. This was a living comfort in our Doctor's heart, as, indeed, he often took occasion to mention of this his confessor.

Shortly before this time the Most Honourable Elector, Duke Frederick of Saxony, had founded the University of Wittenberg, through Dr. Martin Mellerstadt, and Dr. John Staupitz (who was then placed over forty Augustinian monasteries in Meissen and Thuringia); and

because Dr. Staupitz had, among other orders, this to look out learned men and bring them to Wittenberg, and because he perceived in the man a singular ability and fervent piety, in 1508 he brought brother Martin to the monastery at Wittenberg, where the university had sprung up six years before.

Here brother Martin applied himself to the Holy Scriptures, and began to dispute in the High school against the sophistry that was everywhere in vogue, and held the writing of Prophets and Apostles, since it had proceeded out of the mouth of God, to be higher, and deeper, and surer, than all theology of the schools. At all this good people did very much marvel at the time, like that worthy Dr. Mellerstadt, who often said that there was so lofty a spirit in the man that he could not but think Luther would bring a new style of teaching into the schools.

In the year 1510 his "convent" sent him on business of the monastery to Rome. There he saw the Pope and his profligate court, whereby he was so greatly strengthened when afterwards he wrote strongly against the Romish abominations, and as he has often intimated at table, he would not take a thousand guilders and not have seen Rome.

In the year 1516 his vicar and "convent" determined that Brother Martin should be Doctor of the Holy Scriptures. Dr. Staupitz brought this resolution before him under a tree in the monastery at Wittenberg. Brother Martin declined it in the humblest way, and among other reasons, at last alleged this, that he was a weak and sickly brother, who had not long to live, and that they should look out more healthy and serviceable men for the honour. To this last Dr. Staupitz only replied, playfully, "It is plain that our God will soon have much to do in heaven and on earth, and therefore we will need many young and working doctors. Whether we live or die, God in His own counsel has need of you. Therefore do what your 'convent' lays upon you by the obedience you owe to me and to them. As for the cost, our most gracious Elector will pay the expense out of his treasury"—(for the Elector had heard him preach, and marvelled how rich he was in understanding, how mighty in word).

Whereupon Brother Martin was dispatched to Leipzig to obtain such money from the Electoral rent-receivers, but they kept him waiting so long, after ancient fashion of Courts, that he was of a mind to have returned without the money, if his obedience to the monastery had not compelled him to remain. And so it came that Brother Martin, with such privilege and power as Lord Maximilian, Roman Emperor, and the Chair of St. Peter's had granted to the university ten years before, was promoted to be Doctor of the Holy Scriptures at Wittenberg, on the day of St. Lucia, having publicly sworn a solemn oath on the same Holy Scriptures and promised that he would study and preach them his life long, and would defend the Christian faith against all heretics, so God would help him.

Often afterwards has he comforted himself with this regular and public calling, conferred by so honourable a university in the name of

His Imperial Majesty and of the chair of St Peter's, according to the advice and decision of his superiors, and through the most gracious furtherance of his own prince. For sometimes, when he was timid, and would say, who has commanded me? and how could he answer for having made such a noise in all Christendom? he would remember his regular Doctor's degree and solemn oath, and comfort himself with them. And so he held on undaunted, until he had bravely carried out his work, with God's help, in the name of Christ.

Now when this man was called to be a regular Doctor of the Holy Scriptures, he took up his Holy Word with zeal and read it through with the greatest diligence; brought the old fathers and teachers of the church to his help, that he might understand and explain the Word; and applied himself to the Greek and Hebrew tongues, learning both with diligence, that he might draw his doctrines from the right fountain. Moreover, at the instance of his superiors, he commenced to read and to preach, and wrote many comfortable letters to anxious souls, admonishing them out of the Holy Scriptures.

About this time, the excellent Dr. John Reuchlin, of Pforzheim, made some stir, not being able to consent that, at the instigation of Pfefferkorn, the baptized Jew, and the Grand Inquisition at Cologne, the Hebrew books should be burned, since one could in no way do without Hebrew books in Christendom, for the right and blessed understanding of the Prophets. When Luther was asked his opinion of Reuchlin by certain good friends, he applauded him in this business. Erasmus, also, of Rotterdam, who had made some stay at Rome, came forward with writings, in which he attacked the unspiritual character and life of the clergy, and strove to raise up again the study of languages, and the wholesome teaching of the schools. Meanwhile Dr. Luther held on his way, and in all his lectures treated chiefly of this question, whether it is out of the Holy Scriptures or from the godless heathens—Aristotle and the quarrelling Sophists—that we can learn the true faith—to live a Christian and to die happy? For this he was cried down as a heretic, and condemned by many, as if he despised all high schools and learned men, because he would have the word of Jesus Christ alone necessary to faith and a good conscience. But although his brethren, and the monks of other orders, opposed him, they could bring up nothing against him and his fixed principles. He broke down all opposition with the Holy Scriptures.

About this time the Elector of Saxony, who had been to the Holy Land, founded a new *Stift*, in the name of All Saints, in his castle of Wittenberg, and therein he gathered relics of every sort. And when, to this end, Dr. Staupitz was sent into the Netherlands to fetch relics out of a certain monastery, Martin Luther was charged with the office of vicar and with visitation of the Augustinian monasteries. So, for a time, he bore his witness from cloister to cloister, helped to establish schools, and urged upon all those around him to cleave to the Bible, and to live holy, peaceable and chaste lives.

II.

HOW DOCTOR LUTHER BECAME A REFORMER OF THE CHURCH.

In the year 1516, while Luther was visiting the monks, John Tetzel sold Romish indulgences for money on German soil; and this he did by order of certain bishops who sought to pay for their episcopal robes by this indulgence money. He set forth his indulgence wares at Jüterbock, twenty miles from Wittenberg, and went about with great pomp. This grace of indulgence is the grace whereby we are reconciled with God, without feeling need, rue, sorrow, or repentance for sin, if only a man has bought his safety letter of the Pope; for so soon as the penny chinks in the money-box, the soul departs from purgatory to heaven.

So, as Tetzel boldly extolled his frauds, there ran much people to the indulgence fair, and would purchase grace and buy eternal life with their money. Then Dr. Luther in his monastery began to warn his hearers against these indulgences; and taught, at first with great moderation, that poor people would do better to give alms after Christ's commandment than to purchase such uncertain grace for money. He who repents all his life, and turns to God with all his heart, obtains the heavenly grace and forgiveness of all sins which the Lord Christ hath purchased for us through His blood, and offers to us through grace alone. Whereupon he began to handle these things also at the University cautiously, and always grounding what he said on the words of the Prophets and Apostles.

When this came to the indulgence-dealer, who bartered Roman letters and seals for good groschen and florins (at Freiberg alone he obtained ten thousand florins in two days), Tetzel began to curse and to swear, and so provoked Dr. Luther as an archheretic. But Luther attacked him in the name of God, and taught with confidence that such indulgence is a dangerous cheat. So contention was raised between Dr. Luther and Tetzel, the which, indeed, at first, Dr. Luther did not kindle, but only sought that the matter might be more becomingly handled, so that the great name of the Pope, under whose authority the indulgence was proclaimed, might not be slandered. For it did then concern the pious monk to maintain the honour and loftiness of the Romish Pope.

But when Tetzel and his followers defended their absurdities by Roman and episcopal authority, Dr. Luther was constrained, by his oath and his doctor's degree, to set propositions and theses against John Tetzel, and all who were in the same boat with him, and on the day of Church-festival to fix them on the castle church at Wittenberg, and to print them: all which happened on the last of October, 1517. And thus he began: "Our Lord and Master Jesus Christ said, 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.' And the sum of his doctrine was that the righteous does not live by his works, nor by the law, much less by the Romish Indulgence, but by faith in Christ Jesus."

In little more than fourteen days, this dispute spread through all Germany, and soon reached Rome, and penetrated to all high schools and

monasteries. Pious monks who thought to be happy in the cloister, welcomed this short tract with gladness; as, for example, it was said of pious Dr. Fleck, that he cried aloud for joy, and said, "Ho! ho! he will do it. — He is come for whom we have waited so long." But as many as had fled to the cloister for good living and honour and repute, began to abuse and write against Dr. Luther.

Now when Luther saw and heard that Tetzel's indulgences were defended, and that the comfortable doctrine of true repentance and remission of sins was fought against, he went to the Archbishop of Mayence, who had expedited such indulgence wares, and to the Bishop of Brandenburg, to whose diocese the church and school of Wittenberg belonged, and begged them, in the humblest way, as a common plain doctor of the Holy Scriptures, they would repress this scandalous trade, lest it should be to the prejudice of the Church. No answer came from the Archbishop; but the Bishop of Brandenburg, to whom Dr. Luther had also written, answered that he should stay still; the matter was weighty.

Then Dr. Luther stood up, and publicly preached and wrote against the indulgences, and taught what is true Christian repentance, whereby a man is righteous before God; and sent these sermons, with exposition of the ten Commandments, to the printer. Thereby he kindled a mighty fire, and summoned against himself whatever was great or clever or learned. But the truth soared up on high, so that many excellent and also learned men applauded this doctrine, and helped to further it by their teaching and their writings.

About this time, Dr. John Renschlin, the man so learned in the Greek and Hebrew tongues, at the gracious desire of Elector Frederick, sent his cousin Philip Melancthon, of Bretten, in the Pfalz, to Wittenberg, as a Professor of Latin, that is, as he writes in his letters, with God's help, to form a new school of the liberal arts. Many excellent people drew to this young man (he was then but twenty-two years old) and heard him with pleasure: for he was not only a brilliant teacher of the tongue, but with great gentleness he helped to oppose the unchristian teachers: and what Dr. Luther brought out somewhat more fully in his sermons and writings, that he tersely expressed with exactness and sound moderation.

In the year 1518 the Emperor Maximilian held a Diet at Augsburg, which was also visited by Cardinal Cajetan as representative of his papal holiness. He sought that Luther might be brought to Rome, where his heretical doctrine could be purged. But the wise Elector Frederick of Saxony entered into negotiations with the Romish ambassador. Since the distance was great, and the journey to Rome perilous, Luther should be heard at Augsburg, if permission were allowed him to leave the Diet. This was granted; so Dr. Luther went on foot to Augsburg, commended by the Elector to the council and good friends. These wondered at his daring, that he came to Augsburg without escort; and had him remain in a monastery, where he lodged until they had procured a free and safe conduct for him from their lord, the Emperor.

Meanwhile the papal legate invited Dr. Luther to himself through a messenger, Dr. Urbanus, of Montserrat, who came riding with two servants. But Luther refused his bidding, and awaited the decision of the Emperor; so that the messenger that had often called upon him said, "Do you mean that princes and lords will take you up, and defend you against the see of Rome? Where will you lie and abide safe?" Dr. Luther gave a short joyful answer. "Under Heaven!" Soon after the safe conduct came, so he appeared before the Cardinal in all humility and respectfulness, as his friends had already instructed him.

Then the papal legate spoke with friendly words, and offered favour and great advancement to Dr. Luther if he would only retract what he had hitherto disputed, written and preached about indulgence and repentance. Dr. Luther intimated that with all his heart he would willingly do this, and more, as far as he was convinced by the Word of God that he had taught untruth. Thereupon Cajetan laid before him a passage out of the Papal decrees, by which he would prove to him that he had taught heretically. But when Dr. Luther truly explained the words of the Pope, and demonstrated how the legate had construed them, came they for five successive days together, in the presence of many learned men. Cajetan accused Luther of teaching two manifest heresies, in that he had attacked the Papal indulgences, and moreover taught that the Holy Sacrament could not be rightly received without personal faith. These he must retract. Dr. Luther would not and could not, because he had good and certain grounds for his teaching in God's Word and the testimony of the holy fathers. A few days after, he set out this his faith, in a special tract.

But when the legate had no success, and, moved thereby, would have sent his adversary away, Luther tarried yet some days, and then wrote two letters to the Cardinal, wherein he explained his meaning, and laid before notary and witness a formal appeal to the Pope. And although he was urged from many sides to preach—for every one pressed in to see and hear him—he gently but steadily refused. When the legate made no answer to Dr. Luther's writings, the long silence seemed suspicious to many friends, so that they feared evil designs. Dr. Staupitz therefore procured him a horse: the Council of Augsburg an aged outsider, who knew the roads; and Mr. Christopher Langenstetel helped him by night through a by-gate of the town. The first day he rode eight miles: afterwards somewhat slower; and journeying by Nuremberg, whither Dr. Staupitz had preceded him, happily reached Wittenberg. When the legate heard that Dr. Luther had departed, he was very wrathful, and wrote the Elector of Saxony a hot letter, wherein he demanded that Luther should be sent to Rome, or at least banished out of Saxony. Such unexpected issue of the matter at Augsburg made the peacable Elector so anxious, that at first he thought of greatly distancing Dr. Luther. He had him spoken to about this, yet at the same time urgently counselled him not to go to France, whither

Dr. Luther in his high esteem for the University of Paris would have betaken himself.

But the Elector soon grew braver, and when he had read Luther's thorough answer to the legate's accusation, he replied with emphasis that the Cardinal's demand was unnecessary, since Luther was in no way convicted of heresy, and offered to submit him to an impartial examination in Germany. Elector Frederick was confirmed in this opinion not only by the University of Wittenberg, which boldly stood by Luther as its most honourable member, but by his dearest friend, Lawrence von Bibra, the admiral Bishop of Warzburg, who wrote to him, "Your Love would surely not allow pious Dr. Martin to depart; for it would be doing him an injustice." And Emperor Maximilian himself, who had suffered much all his life from Popes, said to the Elector by his councillor Degenhard Pfefinger, "He should by all means preserve the monk. He might depend on it that he would be need of him." Soon after, the Emperor died. By custom Elector Frederick became charged with imperial duties in Lower Germany, and he was thereby able to take up Luther's cause the more powerfully.

It was not long, however, till Pope Leo made a new decree, wherein, without reference to Luther, he confirmed his indulgence, and decreed "that it should be held the greatest treasure of Christendom." Whereupon Dr. Luther appealed from the Pope to a free, general, and Christian council.

When the Pope saw that he could not suppress Dr. Luther's joyous and resolute teaching by power, he despatched his chamberlain, Charles von Miltitz, to the Elector of Saxony, and sent with him a Golden rose which he had blessed at Mid-lent. With him, moreover, he sent letters, wherein he required that the Elector should send Dr. Luther to Rome, or at least no longer tolerate him in his Electorate. But Miltitz found little heed, and dared not so much as present the rose to the Elector. Yet at Altenburg he was permitted to have an interview with Dr. Luther: wherein the said doctor consented that he would refrain from further controversy, provided his opponents did the same; and that he would, according to the Word of God, appear in German territory before certain bishops. "If they had only let his writings go free they would long ago have sunk into silence, and his song would have been sung and everybody tired of it." He was now willing to do all and to suffer all, so that only he might have no occasion to rise up again; for he would have nothing to do with recanting. With this Miltitz was well pleased, and parted from Dr. Luther with the greatest friendliness and with good hope. Luther even suffered himself to be persuaded to write again with all reverence to the Pope. But the time was come that the folly of the adversary should be made known, and therefore gentle treatment could have no influence in the matter.

For now with great fire fell into the dispute Dr. John Eck of Bavaria, and assailed Luther's doctrine of true repentance, and defended the Pope's indulgence; wherefore he arranged a disputation with Dr. Luther at Leipsic, and brought him a safe conduct. The theology of

the schools had been already overturned by the Word of God; and after this Leipsic conference, the authority of the Pope began to decline in many hearts, especially when Dr. Luther had openly testified that Jesus Christ is the only head of Catholic Christendom.

It is true that many writers, both German and Italian, come forward in the wake of Dr. Eck, and defended the Pope's authority by help of the old teachers, or as they say, with the long spear and the short word of custom. But Dr. Luther, who before had only questioned the papal power, and would willingly have helped to sustain and reform it, was now convinced by the plain Word of God that the Pope of Rome, whom everybody had held for a god upon earth, had made Christendom submit to him by force. A book of Lawrence Valla, on the supposed donation of the Emperor Constantine, and which the knight, Ulrich von Hutten, had just printed, gave him much light on this point. So in the year 1520, he attacked with great earnestness and zeal the sovereignty of the Pope, and the awful power he exercises in excommunication. Soon after, by God's Word, he threw to the ground monastic vows, celibacy, and above all, the *Winkelmesse*. For he wrote himself to Pope Leo the blessed book on Christian Liberty, wherein he proved out of God's Word that we were bound to obey the rulers and all secular government howsoever it be wisely ordered over land and people, body and estate, for the sake of the Lord Jesus Christ, who himself, by His Word confirmed the secular power, and honoured it by His obedience. But the inward and new man is an unbound and free man, owing no more than the obedience of his body, whose soul and conscience can be seized by no human ordinance against God's Word. For Christ our Lord, who frees us from sin and death, doth also free the hearts and consciences of the baptized and faithful, so that they owe no obedience to any human statute whereby men would establish divine worship and articles of faith, and help the soul to eternal life. And as a citizen of an earthly kingdom swears obedience, and does homage to its governors, its order and its laws, so any one baptized into the kingdom of faith obeys the Word of God alone. Christian freedom leads to this, that a baptized member of the Church of Christ owes obedience to no human ordinance that opposes the plain Word of God. In April, 1520, Dr. Luther wrote to Pope Leo upon these two articles, with a noble preface, wherein he offered to obey in all that the Pope charged upon him, if only he were not asked to recant any doctrine which he confirmed by the Word of Jesus Christ—a word that was not to be construed and judged by human wisdom.

In this year also Dr. Luther wrote his book on Excommunication and the Babylonish Captivity. And, he himself tells how, as day by day things grew clearer, he assailed the forged worship of God in its entirety, and taught that Jesus Christ had established the whole Supper of the Lord, and prayed that the entire sacrament of the body and blood of the Lord would be restored to the faithful. Dr. Eck, however, had attached himself to the chair of St. Peter's, and procured a horrible Bull against Luther.

As soon as this Bull reached Germany, Dr. Luther defended those plain articles which were condemned therein as heresy. And because the most worthy King of Spain, Lord Charles, was newly elected Roman Emperor, Dr. Luther wrote to that noble spirit, of whom he always thought well, and besought him with the most humble prayer that he would not suffer himself to be influenced by outcry of wanton people, nor suffer his doctrine to be condemned without trial. Moreover he was induced to repeat his former appeal to a free and Christian council, and wrote a pamphlet addressed to all secular powers.

Meanwhile Martinus and Alexander arrived at Cologne, with letters from Rome, wherein the Pope once more demanded of the Elector of Saxony that he should burn Luther's book, make him a prisoner, and send him to Rome. But the worthy Elector met the Pope's messengers with skilful answers, so that they could allege nothing in reply. So they betook themselves to higher places, and sought to entice and move the Emperor to root out Luther's doctrine with the sword. The Emperor, however, made them answer that he would first speak with his cousin, the Elector of Saxony. Upon this, the Papal Embassy offered to Erasmus of Rotterdam a rich bishopric if he would enter the lists to write against Luther.

But Erasmus declined, and is reported to have said, that one leaflet written by Luther was of more account than all Thomas Aquinas.

Then when at Louvain and other universities and monasteries Luther's books were attacked with red fire, the Spirit of God came upon him, so that he had a great fire kindled at Wittenberg before the Elstergate, on the 10th December, 1520, into which he cast the canonical books of the Pope and his Bull, with these words, "Because, thou godless book, thou has afflicted the Lord's saints, be thou afflicted and consumed in everlasting fire."

The day after, Dr. Luther exhorted his hearers, as long as they lived, to avoid all books of the Court of Rome, and to live steadfastly by the Gospel of Jesus Christ, in faith and a good conscience. He also published a pamphlet, in which he showed on what grounds he had publicly burned the Pope's books—namely, that in St. Paul's time, as is to be read in the Acts of the Apostles, nineteenth chapter, the godless books were burned; and as he was a Christian, a regular Doctor, who had sworn upon the Holy Scriptures, and an ordained preacher, his Christianity, his baptismal vows, his Doctor's degree, his oath, his office, and his conscience constrained him to help in extirpating, or at the least combating, godless and heretical books.

Sabbath Readings.

THE GOOD OLIVE-TREE.

Rom. xi. 24.



It is not by chance, and it is not for nothing, that the olive-tree still flourishes all over Palestine. The vine grows scantily, save in a few places, such as the hills around Hebron, where the spies once gathered, more than three thousand years ago, the clusters of Eschol. The fig-tree is not, as once it was, abundant everywhere. The cedar has well-nigh vanished from Lebanon. The palm has gone, save here and there, where in spite of neglect it shoots up its tall stem, and waves its spreading top to the sun by day and to the moon by night. There is not a palm now in or around Jericho, the city of palm-trees. Jerusalem has only three or four, and these but poor and stunted, unfit to furnish with branches a multitude such as that, who, when they heard of the approach of Jesus to Jerusalem, 'took branches of palm-trees, and went forth to meet Him, crying, Hosanna' (John xii. 13). There are one or two in the plain of Esdracoon, one or two by the Sea of Galilee, and a few along the sea-coast, from Sidon down to Gaza; but the palm can no longer be the representative of Israel or Israel's land, and the figure of Judæa left sitting sadly under her shadowing palm is only a memorial of the past, of triumphs and glories to which for more than eighteen centuries she has been a

stranger. There are far more palms in the desert of Sinai than in all Palestine; and if the sons of Israel are to be represented as sitting down under that tree, it must be in solitude, under some desert palm. The tree of victory is no longer hers.

Yet the olive-tree still lives and thrives and yields its ancient fatness, though, from want of hands and capital, not to the same extent as in former days. You find it around Hebron, and still more plentifully around Bethlehem, both on hill and hollow. You see it waving to the wind, with its alternate green and silver, on the heights of Beit-jalah. You find it around Jerusalem and Bethany; and the shaggy, venerable olives of Gethsemane and the vale of the Kedron are memorials of a more fruitful age, as well as remembrancers of Him who there knelt and cried and sweated great drops of blood, in the agony of His awful trial, when on His way to Golgotha.

Suppose you sit down under one of these old olives,—say on some calm afternoon,—with oriental sunshine filling the sky and listening on each olive-leaf. You see at once that the tree is very old. It is perhaps one of those which have three or four stems, all of them venerable, each a goodly tree in itself. It must have been cut down ages ago and shot up again, four stems from the one old root. You remember that Titus cut down every tree around the city, and you please yourself with the thought that this was one of the very trees in Gethsemane under which the Saviour prayed cut over by the Roman axe, but revived again.

You look beneath you, and you see the crimson anemone springing up as the grain, and you call to mind the great drops of blood falling down to the ground. On the one side of you there rises the wall of the city, and on the other the Mount of Olives, still sprinkled over with its favourite tree. As you sit, some turtle-dove takes refuge in the branches above you, and you remember the words, 'The voice of the turtle is heard in our land.' No hum of crowds is heard, for Israel's highways are silent, and her fields are deserted; a shepherd with a few sheep passes across the valley; a solitary Arab is finding his way along the road to Anâta, or up the hill to Kefr-et Tur, on the top of the hill, or along the slope to the Bethany road, past the wall of the Latin Gethsemane; or some dweller in the city on his way homeward to the St Stephen's gate, up the rough ascent.

Thus you sit and meditate. What spot more favourable, more fitted to suggest interesting as well as holy thought? some of it dark, some of it bright. Past, present, and future come before the eye in connection with that olive which now forms your shadow from the heat. The past, the present, the future of Israel come up to view, as you look up alternatively to Jerusalem and Olivet, with that volume open on your knee, in which it is written concerning the *past*, 'Happy art thou, O Israel, who is like unto thee, a people saved by the Lord?' concerning the *present*, 'Zion shall be ploughed as a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps, and the mountain of the house as the high places of the forest,' concerning the *future*, 'Awake, awake; put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city. . . . Shake thyself from the dust; arise, sit down, O Jerusalem: loose thyself from the bands of thy neck, O captive daughter of Zion.'

In the olive we find one of the most indestructible of trees. It clings to a land or to a district with intense tenacity, and even when left to itself does not easily die out. Cut it down, it shoots up, and out of one root come many stems. We do not wonder at seeing it cling to Italy or Greece, for there are hands to cultivate it; but it is marvellous that, with so little tillage, and so many discouragements, it should still cling to Palestine. Yet here it is, striking its roots deep into the rocks, taking shelter beneath that very rubbish that would wither up every other tree. True type of Israel! whose roots are in the barren rock, and whom the nations of the earth have in vain tried to extirpate, not only from Palestine but from the face of the world. What nation is like this, so mysteriously indestructible? Every axe has been lifted against it,—Assyrian, Babylonian, Persian, Grecian, Roman, Saracen, Egyptian,—and strokes without number, that have reverberated through the world, have descended on its massive stem; but there it stands, facing enemies, storms, lightning, persecution, contempt, hatred, torture, oppression for ages; striding its roots deeper and deeper, spreading its branches wider and wider; of all that crown the orchard or the hill or the vale, the one ineradicable tree, the one indomitable nation; dying yet living, scat-

tered yet united. Driven from its own land and metropolis, it can call every city of earth its own! Like the persecuted Church of God, it has, to use another figure, come successively under the hammers of the nations, and it has shattered them all. Strike on, strike on, said one of our Reformers to a persecuting prince;—the Church is an anvil that has worn out many hammers. So has it been with Israel. It has worn out a hundred hammers, it will wear out a hundred more, itself unbroken, unworn.

But in the olive we find fruitfulness and fatness. The olive-berry and the oil-olive are known over all the earth; and even at the present day, Palestine, unable to consume her olive produce, exports it to other lands. Israel is the fruitful nation, with enough for itself, and enough for others. 'Israel shall blossom and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit.' Bethlehem-Ephrath and the hills of Ephraim still show their ancient fruitfulness, and are still specimens of the land and nation whose symbol is the fruitful olive. Israel's past is fruitfulness, her present is barrenness; but her future is to be fruitfulness again, greater fruitfulness than in the day of her youth. 'Her fruit shall shake like Lebanon, and they of the city shall flourish like grass of the earth.' Fruitful days for Palestine, fruitful days for the earth, are pledged to us in this symbol of the goodly olive-tree, whose root is Messiah, whose stem is Abraham, whose branches are Israel, under which the Gentiles shall yet sit down, and from which they shall gather endless fruit.

But this olive speaks of peace and security, and deliverance from the judgments of God. Long before Israel's day the olive-branch is mentioned. It was with this in its mouth that the dove returned to Noah, announcing the abatement of the waters, and proclaiming a delivered earth. In subsequent ages it was the symbol of peace and reconciliation. And as we sit here in Gethsemane under its shade, we call to mind Him who is our peace, Him who hath delivered us from the wrath to come, Him who hath accomplished the reconciliation between us and God. We rejoice in the gospel as the olive-branch brought to us by the heavenly Dove, to tell of rescue from judgment, of the flood past, of danger at an end, of forgiveness and everlasting life. The olive is not indeed the palm. But still it is the olive. The palm is *triumph*, but yet the olive is *peace*; and that is our portion now. In heaven it is the palm, not the olive, for all is triumph there. The olive is no longer needed where there is no breach, no danger, no wrath. But the palm is yonder, for it is the day of triumph and the land of victory. The great multitude is seen with white robes and palms in their hands.

But this olive is the tree of oil, and Israel knew no oil but that of her own olive. It was this oil that Jacob poured upon his stone; it was with this oil that the unleavened cakes were tempered; it was this oil that covered the meat-offering; it was this oil that was used in sacrifice; it was with this oil that the temple lamps were supplied; it was with this oil that kings and priests were anointed; it was this oil that was the symbol of the Holy Ghost; it was from this oil that Messiah took his name, the Anointed One, and Israel, as His people is

called the anointed people (Isa. x. 27). It is from this oil that the symbol is taken in reference to the saints, 'Ye have an unction from the Holy One; and it is to this oil that allusion is made in the parable of the wise and foolish virgins. What a tree must Israel's olive be when it can furnish material for such varied use, and for such significant symbols, not only for Israel, but for Messiah, and for the Church of God!

It is interesting to notice how much this tree was used in Israel's temple service. The lamp of the holy place was to be fed with 'pure olive beaten for the light' (Ex. xxvii. 20). The cherubim which Solomon made for the temple, in addition to those formerly in the tabernacle, were of olive-tree, covered with gold; the two doors were made of olive-tree, and the posts of olive-tree (1 Kings vi. 23, 31, 33). Thus, as the shittim was the tree of the desert and the tabernacle, so the olive was (no less than the cedar) the tree of the land and the temple.

How many symbols and figures are constructed by the prophets out of this tree! Zechariah sees in vision two olive-trees, two sons of oil, two olive-branches, emptying their golden oil into the bowls; and John in the Revelation takes up the symbol, 'These are the two olive-trees standing before the God of the earth' (Rev. xi. 4). 'His beauty,' says Hosea of Israel, 'shall be as the olive-tree' (Hos. xiv. 6). 'The Lord called thy name a green olive-tree,' says Jeremiah (xi. 16). 'I am like a green olive-tree in the house of God,' says David (Ps. lxxiii. 8). 'Thy children shall be like olive-plants (shoots) round about thy table,' (Ps. cxxviii. 8). 'The wicked shall cast off his flower as the olive' (Job xv. 33); and Israel, in the day of transgression and judgment, shall be 'as the shaking of an olive-tree' (Isa. xvii. 6, xxiv. 13).

These are some of the figures which the Apostle Paul had in view when he compares Israel to the good olive, and the Gentile to the wild olive, grafted in contrary to nature into the good olive-tree.

Thus, sitting under this old olive, this representative of Israel as a nation, and musing over all these figures framed out of the olive, we think upon the past, the present, and the future of this nation, and of their city, close beneath whose eastern wall we are resting.

Jerusalem's past, Jerusalem's present, Jerusalem's future, all come up into view.

As to the past, it is strangely mixed with evil and good, from the days of Melchizedek. Salem, Jebus, Jerusalem, Aelia, the Holy City, —these have been its names. War and peace, shame and glory, the siege and the deliverance, the overthrow and the upbuilding, the rain and the splendour, the enlargement and the contraction, the liberty and the bondage,—all these has Jerusalem known, not once, nor twice, but many times, age after age. Amorite, Hittite, and Jebusite; Assyrian, Babylonian, Persian, Grecian, Egyptian, Roman, Moslem, with the various nations of Europe and Asia, have all been here. Seventeen desolations has it endured, wave after wave rushing over its walls and towers. No city of earth, not even Rome, has endured such calamities or passed through such ages of change.

Its present condition is one of degradation and wretchedness. She retains few traces of her former self, save in her hills and valleys, which, in spite of all changes, remain the same. There is Olivet still, though bald and gray, with its few olives sprinkled here and there. There is the valley of the Kedron still, with Gethsemane, and Hinnon, and Akeldama, and Siloam; and tombs, Jewish, Moslem, Christian, sprinkled everywhere. But its walls and bulwarks, its gates and towers and palaces, how different from what they were in the days of Solomon, or Hezekiah, or the Maccabees, or Herod! Massive strones, here and there, built into the walls, tell the story of other days. Its pools, within and without, carry us back to the days of Jewish kings. But the city itself is shrunken up into meagreness. It stands upon the ruins of itself. Zion is ploughed as a field. The houses of joy in the joyous city are gone. The temple has passed away, and all that tells you of its stateliness are these vast stones in the western wall, where, every Friday afternoon, the poor Jew comes to weep. Its songs have become silent; its altar no longer burns; its streets are poor and narrow; its buyers and sellers are few; the shout of its multitudes has ceased. 'How doth the city sit solitary that was full of people; how is she become as a widow, she that was great among the nations and princess among the provinces; how is she become tributary?' She is 'trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.'

But Jerusalem has a future, and one such as belongs to no other city upon earth. After passing through woes and desolations unparalleled, she arises from the dust, clothes herself with her beautiful garments, and puts on her crown once more. The uncircumcised and the unclean are purged out of her; her sons and daughters return to her from the ends of the earth; she doffs her widow's weeds, and, married to her long-absent husband, to whom she had proved so unfaithful, she takes her place as queen of the nations, metropolis of the world, the joy of the whole earth. What a day shall that be for her when her walls shall be rebuilt, her gates replaced, her palaces restored, her King in the midst of her, and the glory of the Lord her canopy and her defence!

'Ah, never then
Her light again,
Jerusalem shall miss,
For the Lamb shall her light,
Filling her with bliss.'

'And the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with songs, and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness; and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.'

But, like Jerusalem, Israel has a past, a present, and a future of no ordinary kind. Like her own olives, she rooted herself in Palestine, and for ages waved her green branches on every valley and hill. From the day that, under the leadership of Joshua, she passed over Jordan, and took possession of it in the name of the Lord God of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, till the time when Jerusalem fell, and her temple was laid on heaps, and her people

were led forth into captivity by Titus and his Romans, she held the land. For fifteen centuries, in spite of reverses, defeats, invasions, captivities, she could call it hers. But from that awful day,—that fatal ninth of Ab,—which she still, in all parts of the world, commemorates in sackcloth,—she has been an exile and an outcast; a nation without a city or a country or a home; increasing in numbers, unmingled with the nations (the Goyim, whom she still looks upon as an inferior race); drawing to herself the gold and silver of earth, she is still homeless; with a proud sense of her past dignity, and a vague impression of an importance in reserve for her in the history, not of Europe only, but of the world.

Yes; we acknowledge a future for Israel; for God has revealed it. We anticipate for them influence, honour, national elevation, because God's promise embodies these, and His purpose respecting the nations in the latter days requires these. For the Church there is the heavenly glory; for Israel, the earthly,—earthly but not carnal; and while in the glory of these coming days all nations shall share, to Israel shall be given pre-eminence in glory, as she has had for so many ages pre-eminence in shame. The goodly olive-tree, which was uprooted from its native soil, and had its leaves and branches scattered over earth, has miraculously retained its life; and when transplanted from the Gentile desert, to which it has never become acclimatized, and where it has never been able to flourish, into its own valleys again, shall strike root at once, as if recognising the soil, and send out its branches all over the old land with a vigour and a verdure far beyond what the best of its past ages has witnessed. Israel's light shall come; the glory of the Lord shall rise upon her. The sons of the stranger shall build up her walls, and their kings shall minister unto her. The glory of Lebanon shall come unto her; the fir-tree, and the pine-tree, and the box together, to beautify the place of her sanctuary. Her sun shall no more go down, neither shall her moon withdraw itself; for the Lord shall be her everlasting light, and the days of her mourning shall be ended.

Meanwhile the remnant, according to the election of grace, is being gathered in out of every nation. And for this end it is that we preach to the Jew the gospel of the grace of God, the good news concerning Him whom his fathers slew and hanged on a tree.

We know how hard it is to win a Jewish heart to Christ. Israel still rejects Messiah. He comes unto His own, and His own receives Him not. Their heart is hardened; the veil is on their faces; they will not look on Him of whom their prophets spoke, and whom their fathers slew. We have seen the Jew in many a Gentile city; we have seen him in Jerusalem; we have seen him in Rome; we have seen him in his synagogues on Mount Zion; we have seen him at the wailing-places, on the western wall of his ruined temple; we have seen him burying his dead among the tombs of his fathers in the valley of Jehoshaphat;—and we have found him the same everywhere,—accessible, yet impenetrable; not, like the Romanist, the victim of credulity, but the prey of unbelief, yet of

unbelief professing to rest itself upon a *true* basis,—viz. the history of his fathers, and the Scriptures of truth. That wondrous history and that divine word are the refuges of their unbelief, from which it is so difficult to dislodge them. In vain you take them back to the past, and show them how much has been fulfilled of their Scriptures in Jesus of Nazareth: they appeal to the future, and show you how much is unfulfilled.

Hence the necessity, in dealing with a Jew, to have right views of Israel's *future*. In vain you argue with him, if you shut up that, and allow him no *national future*. His prophets are so full of that, that you seem to him as one that mocks, or as a denier of Scripture, if you tell him that *the present history of the Church is Israel's future*; that Zion and Jerusalem and Israel are only Zion and Jerusalem and Israel in so far as the curse and the judgment and the scattering are concerned; but that in so far as the blessing and the restoration are concerned, these names are representatives of that Gentile body called the Church, or of individual saints. How can we reason with a Jew when we thus cut his prophets in twain, mystifying his faith and hope, dealing arbitrarily with his Scriptures, literalizing his past, but spiritualizing his future?

The present age is a worshipper of power,—simple power, apart from right and truth. Hence the encouragement given to Romanism; the palliation of its past enormities and present intolerance are acknowledgments of its *power*. Were its numbers reduced, were two or three continental kings and kingdoms to fall away, its pride, dogmatism, mummery, would be indignantly resented by kings, emperors, statesmen, and people; and its theatrical worship, its harlequin dresses, its bowings, crossings, kneelings, would, instead of finding imitators amongst us, meet only with mockery; nor would its jail-convents, its woman-traps called oratories, its societies, guilds, and other treasonable associations, be recognised as compatible with religion or freedom, or even with what is called the liberality and enlightenment of the age. But these are the agencies or utterances of a system which has *power* at its back, and therefore they are to be treated with deference. Were some small sect to adopt the tenth part of the fooleries, or utter the tenth part of the arrogances which are daily paraded by the Church of Rome, it would become a serious question with the Legislature whether it ought to be tolerated in the land.

Israel has no such power at its back, and therefore the age gives them none of its homage. Statesmen do not think it worth their while to court or to flatter them. The worshippers of power are not on the side of Israel.

Another thing that exalts Romanism, and palliates its hideous pretensions, is its history,—its 'magnificent history,' as it has been called. Its history is indeed that of the city of Rome itself; for, having absorbed into itself all the paganism of pre-Christian ages, it suggests to those who walk the streets of the eternal city, and gaze upon its churches constructed out of pagan temples adorned with the marble colonnades of heathenism, in which are celebrated the old festivals of idolatry

under Christian names, that the history of the Church of Rome is that of the Latin nation and the eternal city. Beneath the shadow of this wondrous history, a Romanist sits down with exultation, and even an infidel with some feeling akin to wonder, if not to faith; and by it has many a Protestant felt himself for a moment overawed, especially as that history is not a mere thing of past ages, but still moving on in something of its ancient greatness.

But with Israel it is different. They have a history no doubt; and one of unparalleled splendour,—a history of greater length; for Abraham left Ur of the Chaldees twelve hundred years before Romulus was suckled by the wolf on the Palatine; a history of truer grandeur, made up of miracles and revelation, and patriotism and holy doings; such as no other nation can tell of. But it is a peculiar one: having no brilliance, no bulk in the eye of the world, its influence has been all invisible, not a recognised power. The surrounding nations depreciated Israel, and the great empires of Greece and Rome held them in ridicule: their territories were narrow, they maintained no armies, sent out no colonies, cultivated no commerce, cared for no foreign sympathies: their whole system, nay, their existence, was a protest against the religion of every other people, great or small. Their history to us is the sublimest and most marvellous that has yet been written down; but its greatness was an invisibility to every eye but that of faith. And then we may add, that its history has been interrupted for now eighteen hundred years; the thread has been broken, and the fragments of it float all over Christendom.

Yet, in spite of all this, we may well call their history a noble one. A magnificent past has been theirs; they have a more magnificent future in reserve. The Romanist, when pressed in argument, falls back on the history of his Church, and takes refuge there against all conviction. A Church with such a history, such an ancestry, must be the true one. More truly might a Jew do this; and indeed he does it. He clings to the past, his own wondrous past; and when that does not avail him sufficiently, he betakes himself to the future. There he entrenches himself. And no wonder; for there is no future like his in magnitude and glory. Hitherto his has not been a commanding position among the kingdoms of earth; it shall be so ere long. His has not yet been the dominant race; it shall be so in the ages to come. The worshippers of power shall yet have ample scope for their worship. The admirers of a great history, and a noble ancestry, and a successful dynasty, shall be satisfied. The boasters of apostolical succession shall find themselves overshadowed by a nation, all whose sons shall be holy, who 'shall be named the priests of the Lord, the ministers of our God.'

Israel's present unbelief leans on his marvellous past; and when driven from the latter, takes refuge in his more marvellous future. If we would deal successfully with him, we must handle both of these wisely. A frank recognition of Jewish hope and Jewish history is the best disarmament of Jewish prejudice. As honest interpreters of these we shall be listened

to; but as deniers of a national future to the sons of Abraham, as appropriators of their prophecies to the Gentile Church, as refusers of a place to them in the world's glorious future, we shall find but the closed ear and perhaps the mocking lip. 'Who are you,' the dark-eyed Rabbi would say, 'that you should call yourselves Israel, and your Church Zion; denying to us the name and city of our fathers; grasping for yourselves hopes and promises that were meant for us; absorbing into what you call the Church of the future, our glorious future; leaving us no heritage, no patrimony, and scarce any blessing but some fragments of Gentile alms?'

Let us approach the Jew as believers in the past and future history of his nation; for such surely, as Christian men, we are. We shall then be in a position to reason with them out of their Scriptures, as Paul did in his hired house at Rome, 'expounding and testifying the kingdom of God;' bearing witness to the sufferings of (the) Christ, and to the glory that is to follow; showing them that this duality in Messiah's work (at which they now stumble) is the very thing of which their prophets spoke. Not two Messiahs, as their Rabbis tell them—one of Judah, one of Joseph, but one Messiah. One Messiah, with a twofold work, a twofold character, and a twofold advent.

We tell them of the glory to be revealed—the glory for Israel, as well as for the Gentile; we obscure none of Israel's hopes, nor abate aught of Israel's honour. But we tell them that Messiah has come; that the work which saves is done; that the blood of the great burnt-offering has been shed; and that in receiving the testimony of Jehovah their God to all this, they become sons of God in a higher sense than they have ever imagined. We expound to them the true meaning of their own past history, their own temple service, their own altar, their own mercy-seat, their own priesthood. We take them down into the depths of these, showing them wonders in all of them which they never dreamt of, and bringing out a fulness of love and grace from them, fitted above all things to penetrate impenetrable hearts. Thus we deal with them, bringing home to them this great point—that everything concerning their past or future centres in Jesus of Nazareth; and that in denying Him, they are misinterpreting their own history, obliterating their expectations as sons of Israel, the nation whom God has chosen for His own.

But whether they believe or believe not, the future of their nation remains the same. The generation of murmurers perished in the wilderness, but Canaan remained still the land which God had sworn to the nation; for the gifts and calling of God are without repentance. So Israel's latter-day glory is sure, though every Jew now living should reject Jesus. It will come, though all Judaism should oppose it, though all Gentiles should protest against it, though all potentates, ecclesiastical and civil, should confederate to obstruct it. It will come, and the world shall see it. The good olive shall be replanted in its ancient valleys, and shall re-flourish in its native soil. Israel shall blossom and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit.

BLOSSOMS.



RE ye not tired, O sweet and timid things?
 Not tired of lavishing your fragrance round?
 So soft and white—like noiseless angel-wings—
 Ye flutter down and cover all the ground.

O blossoms! do ye know that human feet
 Will trample on your sweetness, heeding not
 The gentleness which looketh up to greet
 The beauty which hath marked the lowly spot?

Do ye not know that human hearts will pass,
 Nor stop to gather up your sweetness there?
 Yet human eyes will miss you on the grass,
 And let you lie so lone, so meek, so fair?

And will ye still so lavishly breathe out
 Your fragrance in this chill and thankless air?
 Will ye still cast your sweetness all about,
 And let your beauty lie unheeded there?

O blossoms! *I* am tired! Kind blossoms, hear!
 I, too, have breathed forth sweetness all around;
 I, too, have flung heart-treasures, year by year,
 And there they lie unheeded on the ground!

These human feet have trampled on my love;
 These human hearts have shut my sunshine out;
 And eyes have missed me—looking more above—
 And left my soul-wealth scattered all about!

O sweet and tender blossoms! must I still,
 Like you, give out and look for no return?
 So—humbly, freely working God's great will,
 I'll only seek his loving smile to earn.

