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THE CANADIAN

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FOR THE CHRISTIAN EXAMINER.

ON THE GENUINENESS OF THE WRITINGS OF IGNATIUS AND THE SCHEME OF CHURCH GOVERNMENT DESCRIBED IN THEM.

MR. EDITOR:—

A friend in Scotland who had seen some of the numbers of your Journal, has sent me a paper on "THE LIFE AND WRITINGS OF IGNATIUS," with permission to offer it, as I now do, to your pages. He had intended it in a somewhat different form for another work, which, however, circumstances have prevented him from carrying through. It may be interesting to some of your readers, and if it be also useful, this will be, as I well know, in accordance with the prayers of the writer.

I shall presume on his indulgence and that of your readers, in prefixing to it, as it passes through my hands, one or two remarks.

And first, I think my friend has too unhesitatingly assumed the genuineness—at least the integrity of the text of the Ignatian Epistles. Two versions of these Epistles have come down to us, and these so different from each other, that they cannot both be genuine; and the one of these which has the fairer claims to be regarded as a genuine document, has some internal marks of interpolation.

That great scholar, and not less distinguished Minister of the gospel, Archbishop Usher, who first edited these Epistles, and in a sense, recovered them from the wreck of ancient learning, had his doubts of the genuineness of the Epistle to Polycarp. Mosheim thus closes his remarks on the question concerning their genuineness.

"But to whichever of these editions (the two versions above referred to,) we give the preference, we shall never, do what we may, entirely deliver these Epistles from all suspicion of corruption and interpolation. In my judgment, therefore, the great controversy concerning the Ignatian Epistles, in which so many eminent men have taken a side, is still undecided, and must remain so, unless more versions, and these of a higher antiquity than the existing ones be discovered, or other ancient literary remains which shall throw a clearer light upon it. That these Epistles are very ancient is most certain, that they are entire forgeries is utterly incredible; but how far they can be accounted free from corruptions cannot at present be determined."*

I am not aware that any additional light has been thrown on the question since the days of Mosheim.

* Moshemii De Rebus Christianorum ante Constant. Commentarii, p. 161.

Some of the most suspicious passages in the Epistles, relate to the rulers of the church. These and their authority seem studiously brought forward in every Epistle, as though the tendency of the christians of that day had been to spiritual insubordination. In the accompanying paper, my friend ingeniously accounts for this by saying that it was to the doctrine taught, and not to the teacher that the submission was sought; but the language of the Epistles strongly savours of the doctrine that the authority is in the men who are ordained to ecclesiastical functions—a doctrine, which, growing out of the mistakes of good men, and fostered by the fraud of bad men, has been the fruitful germ of spiritual tyranny. It is very true, that some of the early fathers exhibited christianity after a more perfect pattern in their lives than in their writings. We may say of them—varying somewhat a remark of Luther concerning one of his contemporaries—“what we write, they lived.” And so we must not be too ready to refer to corrupters of their writings, those sentiments which appear to be unworthy of themselves. Yet, this consideration cannot altogether remove the suspicion that the writings of Ignatius and others have been unfairly dealt with by designing men in after ages: and neither must it be permitted to diminish our sense of the vast importance of the form of sound words, since deadly error in many forms, has for more than a thousand years, been striving to maintain its ground in the church under the shelter of the authority of the writings of these fathers, and the fame of their virtues.

Secondly. The question in regard to the genuineness of the suspected passages in the Epistles of Ignatius is not after all, of so great importance as at first sight appears. It is admitted, that they describe the church under a certain definite form of government. Now, if they are genuine, then, we know what was the polity of the church in the year 107. But if they were introduced into the text of Ignatius by some weak and crafty ecclesiastic, some two or three centuries after, then we learn what the polity of the church was when the interpolation was made. So that the real question in regard to the external form of the church is mainly one of chronology. It is undoubtedly highly interesting and important for us to know how the church was modelled in the Ignatian age: this may even assist us to understand the writings of the inspired writers themselves. But neither Ignatius, nor any or all of the contemporary Fathers or their successors have any authority in the church of God. She acknowledges the apostles and prophets under her Great Head, the Son of God, as her sole legislators.

Those who have written in support of prelacy have very generally claimed Ignatius, as a witness to the apostolicity of their favorite scheme of church policy, and have on this account, we may believe, been the more disposed to contend, as they have done for the genuineness and integrity of his writings. But the episcopacy of Ignatius is not a diocesan episcopacy. His Epistles, indeed, furnish ample testimony to the existence of the three orders—Bishops, Presbyters and Deacons: yet, alas, nothing but the names and the number of these remain to modern prelacy. The Bishops of Ignatius were men who had the oversight of particular congregations, and had no control over other Pastors.—Hear how he addressed himself to his brother Polycarp, bishop of the Church of Smyrna: “Let not the widows be neglected: be thou after God their guardian. Let nothing be done but with thy knowledge and consent: neither do thou any thing but according to the will of God, as also thou dost, with all constancy. Let your assemblies be more frequent: inquire into all by name. Overlook not the man and maid servants.” The minute inspection of the flock implied in the observance of these exhortations is obviously competent only to one who has a special charge of it—and would in vain be sought for in the prelate or diocesan bishop.

The presbyters or elders of Ignatius in like manner, are types rather of the ruling elders of Presbyterians than of the priests of Episcopalians. In his epistle to the Smyrnæans he thus writes: “It is not lawful without the Bishop either to baptize or to celebrate the holy communion.” And his Deacons, judging from what is said of several individuals who are mentioned by name were evidently a kind of assistants or servants to the Pastor in his spiritual functions.

These rulers, Bishop, Presbyters and Deacons, constituted the *Presbyterium* or Eldership, who administered the affairs of each Church or congregation. That any one Church in the present day has an organization of officers, in all respects the counterparts of these, I will not affirm; but that the session of a Presbyterian Church, consisting when properly constituted of a Pastor, Elders and Deacons does approximate to this, much more closely than any convocation of a diocesan bishop, and his clergy is to me, at least, clear as demonstration.

I make these remarks, Mr. Editor, with no hostile feelings to the Ministers or members of the Episcopal Church. The modern prelate has, I believe, little in common with the primitive bishop; and I am free to confess my opinion, that even the

parish or congregational pastor is in too few cases, his counterpart. I shall close these remarks with a quotation from Mosheim on the bishops of the primitive church. This writer, eminent for the extent of his researches, was a Lutheran, and so may be supposed to have been free from any prejudices against what is called episcopacy. I quote in this case, as before in English, for the sake of your ordinary readers.*

“ * * * * This, however, is beyond all controversy, that they egregiously err who estimate the power, revenues, advantages and rights of the most ancient bishops, from the state and authority of those who in our own day are honoured with that name. The bishop of the first age was the minister of a single christian society, which ordinarily a single house could contain, who himself taught the people, administered the sacraments—as they are called, waited on the sick and the poor, but entrusted to the elders some of those things which he himself could not attend to—who with the elders, as his councillors, examined into disputes amongst the people and settled these; with them, too, watched over the common interests of the church and brought before the congregation any measure that he thought would be for its advantage, but could himself determine and sanction nothing—executing only what had been determined on by the elders and the people. If I am not mistaken, the most of those who in our day contend so keenly for bishops and their authority would decline the dignity of bishops on these terms. Concerning the emoluments of the toilsome and perilous office, I say nothing; for it will be at once seen, that these were very slender, when it is considered, that churches had no revenues except the free-will offerings—known as *oblations* of a christian people composed for the most part of men of moderate fortune, and that these offerings were divided amongst the bishop, the elders, deacons, and poor.”

I remain yours, &c.

PRESBYTER.

ACCOUNT OF THE LIFE OF IGNATIUS—WITH SOME REMARKS ON HIS WRITINGS.

In the Holy Scriptures, the sayings and discourses of good men are recorded, and their lives are recorded also, so that precept being conjoined with example, we learn to choose the good and refuse the evil. It is natural for us when we receive counsel, to weigh the character of him who gives it. Does our instructor conform his own life to what he requires of others? is a reasonable question. His words are good, but do his actions correspond with them? And if upon examination,

we find there is no jarring between them, we incline our ears and receive the instruction as of a friend. And though the words may be all plainness, nevertheless, coming from an upright person, we receive them into our hearts, and by wisdom are edified.

Those who know the times in which the early christians lived, know well that they were such as to prove the sincerity of their faith. And accordingly, the writings of such of them as passed through the fiery trial, have been esteemed worthy of much consideration. Ignatius, who wrote seven short Epistles, now generally admitted by learned men to be genuine, belongs to that order of worthies, and that we may peruse them with more advantage, it is of importance to keep in mind the particulars recorded of his life.—It is uncertain in what country Ignatius was born; and with respect to the time, all that we can ascertain is only an approximation to the truth. According to the learned Archbishop Usher, he suffered martyrdom in the year of our Lord, 107; and as he is said to have been forty years bishop of the church of Antioch, he must have been ordained in the year 67. And as we may suppose him at this period to have been about thirty years of age, it may be presumed he was born about the year A. D. 37. Nothing is known of his early years. He appears to have assumed the name Theophorus in after life; and as this may either mean one who is borne or carried of God, or one who carries God, certain writers understanding it in the former sense, have asserted that Ignatius was that child whom the Lord Jesus took up in his arms, and set before his disciples as a pattern of humility. But as we shall find Ignatius himself, who appears to have gloried in this name explaining it in the latter sense, that is—as referring to the spirit of God dwelling in him, so the story can receive no support from this supposed origin of the word. It is, moreover, mentioned by Chrysostom, who died in the year 407 (who appears not to have heard of the circumstance referred to) that Ignatius was not one who was privileged to see the Lord Jesus in the flesh, and we may therefore infer it was the invention of later times, and so unworthy of credit.

It is recorded of him, however, that along with Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna, he was a scholar of John the Evangelist, and apostle of our Lord Jesus Christ; and that he was acquainted with the other apostles who appointed him to the church of Antioch, and set him apart for the work of the ministry by the imposition of hands. We are not informed of any particulars of his life during the long continuance of his ministerial labors, saving a summary preserved by those who have drawn up

* See the Commentaries above referred to, Century I. s. xlii. p. 136.

an account of his martyrdom. "He was a man," say the writers, "in all things like unto the apostles, that as a good governor by the helm of prayer and fasting, by the constancy of his doctrine and spiritual labor, he opposed himself to the floods of the adversary, and that he was like a divine lamp, illuminating the hearts of the faithful by his exposition of the Holy Scriptures."

Ignatius being thus faithful in the work appointed to him, could not escape persecution, as the Lord Jesus, when on earth, informed his disciples—"Behold, I send you forth as lambs in the midst of wolves"—"they shall cast you out of the synagogues, yea the time cometh that whosoever killeth you, will think that he doeth God service." And so it was in the experience of this good man. It appears from some expressions in his Epistle that he had undergone many troubles while engaged in ministering the Gospel, and these continued as they doubtless were through so many years, would be instrumental in leading him to long earnestly for the reward which the Lord bestows on the faithful, and this desire, as will appear, he was now about to obtain.

The Roman Emperor, Trajan, being in Antioch, took offence against the Christians, because of their not worshipping the Idols which himself and the rest of his people worshipped, and threatened them with violence if they refused to comply. Ignatius having come before Trajan, in behalf of himself and of the flock committed to his care, Trajan said to him, "What a wretch art thou thus to endeavour to transgress our commands, and to persuade others also to do likewise to their destruction."—

Ignatius answered, "No one ought to call Theophorus after such a manner, for as much as all wicked spirits are departed far from the servants of God. But if because I am a trouble to those evil spirits you call me wicked, with reference to them, I confess the charge; for having Christ the Heavenly King, I dissolve all the snares of the devils."

Trajan replied, "And who is Theophorus?"

Ignatius. "He who has Christ in his breast."

Trajan. "And do not we then seem to thee to have the Gods within us, who fight for us against our enemies?"

Ignatius. "You err in that you call the evil spirits of the heathens, Gods. For there is but one God who made heaven and earth, and the sea and all that are in them; and one Jesus Christ, his only begotten Son, whose kingdom may I enjoy."

Trajan. "His kingdom, you say, who was crucified under Pontius Pilate?"

Ignatius. "His who crucified my sin with the

inventor of it, and has put all the deceit and malice of the devil under the feet of those who carry him in their heart."

Trajan. "Dost thou then carry him who was crucified within thee?"

Ignatius. "I do, for it is written, 'I will dwell in them and walk in them.'"

Then Trajan pronounced this sentence against him: "For as much as Ignatius has confessed that he carries about with himself, Him who was crucified, we command that he be carried bound by soldiers to the Great Rome, there to be thrown to the wild beasts for the entertainment of the people." When Ignatius heard this sentence, he gave thanks that he was accounted worthy to suffer in the cause of Christ, and to be bound in irons after the manner of the Apostle Paul; and before he was led away, he prayed for the Church and commended it to the Lord.

Some have professed to wonder that Trajan should have sent him so long a voyage to Rome, when he might with less trouble to himself, have ordered him to be thrown to the wild beasts in Antioch. But it does not appear there is much ground for wonder, as Trajan gives the reason for this part of the sentence—it was for the entertainment of the people at the great Rome; and doubtless this reason could not so well have applied to the people in Antioch seeing the long residence of such a person as Ignatius among them, must in some measure, have conciliated his enemies. And the violent death of one revered because of his age and virtues could not have been acceptable to the people; whereas, in Rome where he was a stranger, the idolaters hearing of him only as a christian, would rejoice in his fall—viewing it as a victory over the faith of the Gospel. It should be remembered, moreover, as the Lord hath said, that not a hair shall fall from the head of his people without his permission; and he makes the wrath of man to praise him, so it might be supposed he would make this Emperor, who had stretched out his hand to persecute his people, an instrument in getting glory to his name, howbeit he meant not so in his heart. And this the history of the transaction has manifested; for when we follow the progress of Ignatius to the place of suffering, he is rather like one proceeding in a triumph, and out of the fulness of his consolation capable of bestowing blessings upon others, than like an afflicted prisoner going to die. His example would animate those christians and their pastors who were witnesses of his faith and patience; and not only so, but he continues to instruct the men of distant generations who hear the

report thereof. So true is it that the Lord overcomes the counsel of the crafty.

Ignatius being thus condemned by the Emperor Trajan was entrusted to the keeping of a band of ten soldiers—of whom we find him speaking in one of his Epistles. "I fight," he says, "with beasts both by sea and land, both night and day, being bound to ten *leopards*, that is to say, to such a band of soldiers, who though treated with all manner of kindness are the worse for it. But I am the more instructed by their injuries, yet am I not therefore justified." Having left Antioch and gone to Silencia, he embarked in a ship to go to Rome. And as we learn after a good deal of toil, they arrived at Smyrna, in which city, Polycarp, his fellow-scholar, was bishop, and so being landed, Ignatius was permitted to remain with him for a season. When tidings of his arrival were spread abroad, the bishops and other persons from the neighbouring cities, Ephesus, Magnesia and Tralles came to meet him, not more from esteem for so excellent a person than with the desire of spiritual improvement to themselves. And though thus happily in the midst of friends who loved him as they loved their own souls, he does not forget the baptism that is before him, but he beseeches them and the whole church "to contend with God in his behalf, that being suddenly taken by the beasts from the world, he might appear before the face of Christ." It would seem he remained some little time in Smyrna, as it was four months after this before he reached his destination. And while here he writes epistles to the churches in these cities by their bishops and others, in which he urges much on them charity among themselves, and unity of spirit, with those who were set over them in the Lord. Thus writing to the Ephesians, he says: "Wherefore it will become you to run together according to the will of your bishop, as also ye do. For your famous presbytery, worthy of God, is fitted as exactly to the bishop as the strings are to the harp. Therefore in your concord and agreeing charity Jesus Christ is sung, and every single person among you makes up the chorus; that so being all consonant in love, and taking up the song of God, ye may in perfect unity, with one voice, sing to the Father by Jesus Christ, to the end that he may both hear you, and perceive by your works, that ye are indeed the members of his Son: wherefore it is profitable for you to live in an unblamable unity, that so ye may always have a fellowship with God."

It was in Smyrna, also, that he wrote his epistle to the Romans—and which he committed to the care of certain friends who were to proceed to

Rome before him. In this epistle, too, he expresses the same earnest desire to depart and be with Christ. And with the views he had, this was the more needful, as it appears there were members of the Church in that city who might have been able to procure a respite of the sentence—and at all events who wished to "appease the people that they should not desire the destruction of the just." All such services, however, Ignatius positively declines; "I beseech you," he says, "that you show not an unseasonable good will towards me. Suffer me to be food unto the wild beasts, that I may be found the pure bread of Christ." And again, "all the ends of the world and the kingdoms of it will profit me nothing: I would rather die for Jesus Christ than rule to the utmost ends of the earth. Him I seek who died for us. Him I desire who rose again for us. This is the gain that is laid up for me." There can be no doubt that Ignatius erred in declining to use the means that were in his power to procure his deliverance. His duty to the church required this at his hands. Doubtless, he had labored long in the vineyard, and had borne the burden and heat of the day, and in the evening of life, he desires rest from his toils; nevertheless, this must be in subordination to the will of God. And so long as he had any lawful means in his power of preserving his continuance among his people, he ought not to have declined them. It may be supposed at the same time that if he had been permitted to enjoy the fellowship of his brethren in Smyrna, he would have been comforted in spirit, and might have expressed his longings for dissolution with less earnestness.—It appears, indeed, that he had a desire to pitch his tent for a longer season among them, but the soldiers were bent on proceeding that they might be in time for the spectacles, and therefore urged their prisoner to hasten forward in the voyage. Accordingly leaving Smyrna along with certain brethren of the church there, and of that in Philadelphia, they set sail and arrived in Troas; and while at this place he wrote his remaining epistles—namely, to the Philadelphians, Smyrneans and Polycarp. In his former epistles from Smyrna, we find him expressing his concern about the state of his people in Antioch, and beseeching the prayers of all the churches in their behalf, but now having arrived at Troas and hearing that the persecution against them had ceased, he is filled with joy for their sakes. And so writing to the Smyrneans he says, "Your prayer is come to the church of Antioch which is in Syria: from whence being sent bound in chains, I salute the churches; being not worthy to be called from thence, as being the least among them. Nevertheless, by the will of God

I have been thought worthy of this honor ; not for that I think I have deserved it, but by the grace of God, which I wish may be perfectly given unto me, and through your prayers I may attain unto God. And, therefore, that your work may be fully accomplished both upon earth and in heaven, it will be fitting and for the honor of God, that your church appoint some worthy delegate who being come as far as Syria, may rejoice together with them, that they are in peace, and that they are again restored to their former state, and have again received their proper body."

Leaving Troas, and still sailing up the Egean sea, they came to Neapolis, a city in Thrace ; and probably with the view of saving time, they travelled over land to the Adriatic sea ; where getting a vessel at one of the ports, they crossed over and came again into the Mediterranean sea ; and as it appears passing Rhegium, they came within sight of Puteoli, the port at which the apostle Paul had landed in his voyage from Melita. When this place was pointed out to Ignatius, he desired to land and to travel thence to Rome. But an adverse wind arising they were obliged to yield to it, and sail forward. And so his friends who attended him in his voyage, go on to say, "And the wind continuing favourable to us, in one day and a night, we indeed were unwillingly hurried on, as sorrowing to think of being separated from the holy martyr ; but to him it happened just according to his wish, that he might go sooner out of the world, and attain unto the Lord whom he loved. Wherefore sailing into the Roman port, and those impure sports being almost at an end, the soldiers began to be offended at our slowness ; but the Bishop with great joy complied with their hastiness. Being therefore soon forced away from the port so called, we forthwith met the brethren (for the report of what concerned Ignatius was spread abroad) who were full of fear and joy ; for they rejoiced in that God had vouchsafed them the company of Theophorus, but were afraid when they considered that such an one was brought thither to die. Now some of these he commanded to hold their peace who were the most zealous for his safety, and said they would appease the people, that they should not desire the destruction of the just, who presently knowing this by the Spirit, and saluting all of them, he desired that they would show a true love to him ; disputing yet more with them than he had done in his epistle, and persuading them not to envy him who was hastening unto the Lord. And so all the brethren kneeling down, he prayed to the Son of God in behalf of the churches, that he would put

a stop to the persecution, and continue the love of the brethren towards each other. After this prayer was ended, he was led into the Amphitheatre and thrown into the wild beasts, which speedily devoured his mortal part, leaving only a few bones that were carried back to Antioch—"the dust returned unto the dust from whence it was taken, and the spirit returned to God who gave it. He was faithful unto death, and doubtless received a crown of glory."

SOME REMARKS ON THE WRITINGS OF THE EARLY FATHERS.

It appears that in consequence of the apostasy of the Jewish people, the Christian church was placed in peculiar circumstances, seeing that the Gentile converts who were to become teachers of others, were by their early education poorly provided for their work. The Old Testament is the source from which the inspired writers of the New have uniformly taken their illustrations of gospel mysteries : and of the things written in that book, the Gentile converts had not only been ignorant, but their minds were formed after a different mould.

The church from the earliest ages, has been in the attitude of protesting ; and if it was needful in diverse rites and observances prescribed to the Jews to guard them against the proneness of men to idolatry, it was if possible more needful to guard against that philosophy which only gratified men's vanity, and so led them farther than before from the simplicity of the truth : and such a safeguard is provided in the word of God. This appears in all the books of Moses, but more especially in the book of Leviticus, which is the great repository of the ceremonial law ; and whose plain observances, as all the commentators show, are types and shadows of gospel mysteries : and not only so, but now that these have been unfolded by the coming of Messiah, they serve by their palpable character to guard men against abstract speculation, as well as to convey the truth to babes in understanding.

The Gentile converts who were received into the bosom of the church must have laboured under a great disadvantage, when they sat down to write concerning those truths which they believed, and through which they were enlightened. Their pagan education had little congruity with their christian character. They could not compare spiritual things with spiritual, but with carnal—the truths of the gospel with the fancies of their philosophers—the wisdom of God with the rhetoric of man. And as the truly pious must needs have dis-

carded, as far as might be, such folly, so they were ill provided with the means of unfolding those things they had received, and in which they found peace. And accordingly this may help to explain what otherwise would be somewhat perplexing—the discrepancy between what they *did* and what *they wrote*. Their words are often feeble and obscure, while their doings are noble and excellent.

We, on the other hand, who live in modern times, have advantages which the early Gentile converts had not. The limits between what can and what cannot be known, have been accurately defined; while at the same time, in consequence of the care with which the scriptures have been studied by systematic writers, the doctrines they contain have been fully unfolded. The clouds that darkened the minds of men are now removed, and not a speck remains above the intellectual horizon that has not been dissipated. Seeing it is certain however that intellectual discernment and moral excellence are not necessarily united, so when we compare the modern writers with the ancient, we shall find, notwithstanding our superior knowledge in many things, we are inferior to them in faith and charity. And as the moral is of more value than the intellectual, it will be of some importance that we be not lifted up by our superiority; and in perusing the Epistles of Ignatius that we set about the task, not as masters but as scholars. The ancients felt more than they have written, whereas it is to be feared, we have written more than we have felt. And inasmuch as truth excels empty sound, so it will be by the grace of God, to the profit of Christians in modern times to mark the excellent graces of their ancient brethren, their deadness to the world and its pleasures, their hatred of life for the sake of the gospel, their charity towards the brethren and joy in their prosperity, and their victory over death and all the terrors of the enemy, yea their joy in departing to be with Christ, which indeed is far better. These things surely are worthy of our imitation; and in these the ancients may be set as our exemplars. We indeed surpass them in having a form of sound words; and while we hold this fact as being under God a fence against the assaults of the enemy, nevertheless let us keep in mind that the excellency of the church consists in her being glorious within; and if a separation is to be made between things that ought to remain united, it would be better that the fence were removed, than that the glory should depart and Ichabod be written on our Sanctuary.

It is needful, moreover, to keep in mind the precise character of the epistles of Ignatius. The

writings of the apostles are intended for the edification of the church in all ages. But Ignatius not being of the number of the apostles, his epistles partake of the nature of ordinary letters which good men may write to their friends, and the doctrine they contain is to be tried by the scriptures. It is needful to note this, that we may guard against error; for there are several passages in these epistles in which the writer requires obedience to office-bearers in the church in such a way as, if not explained, would be injurious to the doctrine which is according to godliness. Thus we find him writing to this effect:—"I cried whilst I was among you: I spake with a loud voice, "attend to the bishop, and to the presbytery, and to the deacons;" and again, "See that ye follow your Bishop, as Jesus Christ the Father;" "Hearken unto the bishop that God also may hearken unto you." Now, viewing these as private epistles, the counsel given might be good and profitable, because Ignatius would know the office-bearers of the churches in those parts, and knowing them to be approved and faithful men, he could hardly enjoin upon the people too strongly to yield them obedience, for this was in other words urging them to continue in the faith which the bishops preached, and to submit for edification to their discipline. But as the epistles of Ignatius are no longer confined to the persons who received them, but being published, seem as if addressed to the general church; so it is needful to enter a caution against the wrong inferences that might be drawn from a defectiveness of doctrine in this matter.

It is very obvious in the passages above noted, that Ignatius does not contemplate any separation between the office of Bishop and the doctrine they were to teach, these being united in the brethren to whom he made reference. And had all succeeding bishops been men of the same mind, there might have been need to add nothing more than what he had written. But all history proves that it has been far otherwise, and that men may hold the office without doing the work. And therefore to say, "Follow this guide," because he bears the name of bishop, would he to take the blind as our guide, and fall with him into the ditch. The counsel of Ignatius, however good it might be in reference to individuals that he knew, is defective in reference to other times and other men, in two respects:—*First*, because he does not with sufficient plainness distinguish between the true bishop we are to obey, and the false from whom we are to withdraw. The mere name is not enough, for that may be assumed. We must have his character described, that we may know who he is. And

accordingly in the writings of the apostles, we find the church fully informed on this point. A bishop is one who is "a pattern of good works, in doctrine showing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, sound speech that cannot be condemned." "He teaches wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the doctrine which is according to godliness."* But *secondly*, it is defective, because in enjoining upon the people an implicit obedience to their bishops, he is not careful enough to specify the matter of their obedience. He does not always say, obey them "for their works' sake," or "because of the faith that is in them," which is truly the ground of the church's obedience to her spiritual rulers, as the apostles testify. "Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God, whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation, Jesus Christ the same yesterday and to-day and forever."† In this way the church is secured against the adversary; the wolves are distinguished though they come in sheep's clothing, while the matter of obedience is defined. And as Ignatius is defective in both these respects, he is in so far an unsafe guide; and were there no other the church would be more exposed to the hypocrisy of designing men.

MEMOIR OF ANDREW THOMSON, D. D.†

Dr. Andrew Thomson was born at Sanquhar, in Dumfries-shire, on the 11th of July, 1779. His father was the late Dr. John Thomson, one of the ministers of Edinburgh; at the time of his son's birth, minister of Sanquhar, and, subsequently, of Markinch in Fife. The subject of this Memoir, without affording any striking proof of premature scholarship, from which an augury of his future fame might have been drawn, was remarkable from his earliest years for intelligence and vivacity, and especially for that free, manly, open-hearted character, which, *in after life*, gave him so strong a hold on the affections of all who intimately knew him. It is difficult to say at what precise period his thoughts first turned seriously to the ministry: but he had not been many years at college before he exhib-

* Titus, ii. 7, 8; 1 Tim. vi. 3; also 1 Thes. ii. 10, 14. v. 12, 13; i. Tim. vi. 11, 14; i. Peter. v. 2, 5.

† See also Romans, xvi. 17, 18; i. Cor. iii. 4, II: iv. 17; ii. Cor. viii. 23.

† Abridged from the Memoir prefixed to "Sermons and Sacramental Exhortations, by the late Andrew Thomson, D. D."

ed symptom of the power of that vital religion, which forms the fast and best qualification for the sacred office.

Early in 1802 he was licensed to preach the gospel, by the presbytery of Kelso; and on the 11th of March of the same year, he was ordained minister of the parish of Sprouston, within the bounds of the presbytery from which he had received licence. Shortly after his settlement at Sprouston, he married Miss Carmichael, by whom he had ten children, seven of whom are still alive. The result of this union was all the happiness which the marriage relation can afford; interrupted only to the afflicted survivor, by the melancholy event which has deprived her and her family of the society of one, who, if possible, was still more attractive and delightful in the family circle than he was commanding and distinguished in the public walks of professional and active life.

During his ministry at Sprouston, Dr. Thomson displayed the same vigor, earnestness, and fidelity, by which his labors, in more extensive spheres, were subsequently characterized. His interest in the external affairs of the church, was manifested by the share he began to take in the business of the ecclesiastical courts of which he was a member, while of his anxiety to promote the higher interests of religion, a satisfactory evidence exists in the catechism on the Lord's Supper, which he published for the benefit of the young among his parishioners; and which we have reason to know, has proved eminently useful to many besides those for whose use it was originally designed.

In the year 1803, Dr. Thomson was removed to the East Church, Perth. Here, in conjunction with his brother, and others of his friends, ministers of Perth and its neighbourhood, he lived happily, and labored successfully, till the spring of 1810, when he received a presentation from the magistrates and council of Edinburgh, to the New Greyfriars church in that city. In this situation, better adapted to his talents, and to the active character of his mind than either of the preceding, he entered on a course of ministerial service, which proved in no ordinary degree acceptable and useful. Many who have since distinguished themselves for Christian worth and attainments, owed their first religious impressions to his discourses in the New Greyfriars. To the young, especially, and the students attending the university, his ministry was at this period peculiarly attractive.

A few months after his admission into Edinburgh, Dr. Thomson, with the assistance of several of his clerical brethren, in the church and in the secession, commenced the publication of the Christian Instructor, a work that, in spite of the disfavor with which, in certain quarters, it has been regarded, and a want of the support which it justly merited from the friends both of religion and of the establishment, has been

the means of doing incalculable service in many ways, to the cause of Christianity. As a monument of Dr. Thomson's indefatigable activity, the work has no parallel. For many years, not only did the task of editorship fall exclusively upon Dr. Thomson, but to him it was indebted for a large proportion of the best articles, whether in the miscellaneous or critical department, which, in the face of circumstances that tended to obstruct its circulation, and injure its popularity, continued to extort for it, from the religious public, a great share of favorable regard.

The charge of the Christian Instructor was not, however, his sole literary undertaking. To the Edinburgh Encyclopædia, conducted by Dr. Brewster, he contributed many articles, some of them of considerable interest, and all of them indicative of the patience of his research, the soundness of his judgment, and the unaffected vigor of his style.

In the year 1814, St. George's church, which had been for some years building, was ready for public worship, and was opened on Sunday, the 5th of June, of that year, by the late Rev. Sir Henry Moncreiff Wellwood, Bart., who preached from Ecclesiastes v. 1. As the individual best qualified to fill a very large structure, situated, at that time, at the extremity of the city, Dr. Thomson was fixed upon as its minister, and to this charge he was admitted on Thursday, the 16th of June, 1814. Here the more public and brilliant part of his course commenced. He had difficulties to encounter, both in collecting and in retaining a congregation, which would have had a depressing effect on the mind of most men. To Dr. Thomson, however, who of all men was formed to contend with, and to master difficulties, these only gave interest to his new situation.

Over a description of persons, by many of whom, at the commencement of his ministry in St. George's, the peculiar doctrines and obligations of the gospel were little known or relished, Dr. Thomson speedily acquired an influence scarcely ever possessed by any preacher. Nor is it necessary to say, that he owed this enviable ascendancy to no compromise of principle—to no unworthy accommodation of divine truth to the prejudices of his audience. In addressing himself to a congregation, peculiarly exclusive and sensitive, he stood upon the high ground of his office as an ambassador for Christ; and with the apostle of the Gentiles, to whose bold, unfeared character, his own, in many points, bore a striking resemblance, he determined to know nothing, as the subject of his ministry, but Jesus Christ and him crucified. How fully, effectively, and perseveringly, he adhered to his system, the recollection of his hearers, as well as the strain of his published discourses amply testify. The peculiar qualifications which he brought to his task are, at the same time, not to be overlooked. To a manner of great animation and fire, yet restrained and dignified, he added a style of uncommon simplicity and spirit,

which nature enabled him to set off to advantage by the tones of a voice remarkable for compass and harmony. He delighted in argument, but his arguments were of that direct, palpable, practical character, which stimulate attention, and admit of being appreciated and followed by the most ordinary understanding; while the truths he labored to establish, were all of acknowledged importance, bore so intimate a relation to the system which, as a Christian minister, it was his province to illustrate and enforce, and came so closely and powerfully home to every man's heart and conscience, that nothing could appear more natural than the pains he took to explain and defend them.

But Dr. Thomson was not satisfied with merely preaching the gospel. For many years after his appointment to St. George's, he employed the interval between the forenoon and afternoon services, in catechising the young belonging to the congregation: and this exercise he performed in a manner that had the effect, in an uncommon degree, of uniting to him the hearts both of parents and children.

Among the excellent practices recommended by the standards of the Church of Scotland, and by the example of the best of her ministers in the purest times, is that of week-day meetings in the church, for the purpose of instruction in the principles of religion, as these are taught in the Shorter Catechism. To attendance on such meetings in a city like Edinburgh some practical objections have been raised; and with a view to obviate these, Dr. Thomson instituted a lecture, in which, without placing any one in the trying situation of a catechumen, he made use of a question in the catechism by way of text; and explaining and illustrating it in a manner adapted to all capacities, he went over the ground usually traversed in the exercises. For several years he continued these week-day expositions, during a limited period of the summer months, and was only induced to relinquish them, in consequence of repeated and alarming attacks of indisposition, which taught him the necessity of imposing a restraint upon the otherwise unwearied zeal of his active and benevolent mind.

In the youth of his congregation, Dr. Thomson, as we have observed, took a warm and affectionate interest. In his parish, he found there were many of this class whom his Sabbath instructions could not reach—young persons who either did not attend his church, or whose circumstances and those of the parents rendered a greater degree of tuition necessary, than it was possible to afford them on the Lord's day. To meet their case, accordingly, Dr. Thomson projected a week-day school. As his experience in the task of instructing the young of his congregation had shown him how much could be done with young people, by adding their understanding and their affections, he undertook at once to compile suitable books for the different classes into which the school was divided, and for a time to act as teacher and superintendent in the

school. Far from despising what to other minds would have appeared drudgery, regarding it indeed with fondness, and entering into it with his whole heart, he spent entire days in teaching the children of the lower classes of his parish the elementary principles of education and religion, and passed from the school-house to his study, only to prosecute the other department of his labor of love; and, amid the humble toils of an author of first books for children, to lose sight of those more inviting objects of ambition, after which a mind like his might have been expected exclusively to aspire.

From nature he had received an exquisite ear and taste for music; and, upon the principle of consecrating all the gifts of nature to the service of his Master, he undertook a reformation of that part of the devotional service of the sanctuary which consists of praise. To him, in a great measure, are to be traced the recent improvements that have been effected in the psalmody of several churches in Edinburgh. His own church set the example; and for their use, and the better to accomplish his object, he drew up a collection of the most approved psalm tunes, all of which he carefully revised; and to which he added several original compositions, and a few of great beauty of his own.

Nor were his private labors less abundant. Great as he was in the public sphere of his exertions, it may be questioned whether he did not appear even to more advantage in the less noticed walks of pastoral visitation among the families of his flock. His breast, naturally full of kindness, expatiated, as in a congenial sphere, while he sat by the sick-bed of those who looked to him for consolation, or directed the hopes of the bereaved and the dying to the land of promise and of rest. They who knew him only as he appeared in the field of controversy, or on the high places of debate, or even in "the great congregation," where he poured forth "words that breathed and thoughts that burned," and held attention chained, till conviction came and owned his power, can scarcely imagine the air of tenderness and unaffected brotherhood and sympathy, that pervaded his look and manner, in the more private offices of pastoral intercourse with the afflicted. In his kindness there was nothing like effect; nothing like exaggeration; nothing that bore the remotest resemblance to acting. Nature reigned in all his words and deeds; and his whole conduct left on the mind the impression only of genuine, unpretending friendship. It was the same man who in other circumstances could lighten, and agitate, and hold imperial sway over the passions of the most crowded meeting; who sat beside you as a friend, and addressed you in the words and accents of undissembled interest and regard.

But it was not merely as a parish minister, performing the full round of ordinary pastoral duty, that Dr. Thomson was remarkable. As a minister of the

Church of Scotland, he was a member of her judicatories, and entrusted with the functions of an administrator of her laws. Justly conceiving every part of his duty to have a claim upon him, and appreciating the beneficial influence which his situation enabled him to exert on the interests of the establishment and of Christianity, he appeared regularly in his place in church courts, and took on him a large proportion of the burden of the business that came before these assemblies. Indeed, for the last few years of his life, such was his acquaintance with form, such his aptitude in the application of precedents and statutes, such his ability and eloquence in debate, and such the estimation in which his opinions and character were held, that that party in the church to which he was conscientiously attached, and which must always regard it as not the least of its distinctions and recommendations to have numbered him among its adherents, spontaneously, and by silent consent, looked up to him as its leader.

If to him the church be not indebted for a return to the principles and practices by which she was characterized in the days when, purified by persecution, she stood first among the churches of the Reformation—to him, and to the kindred labors of our Erskines and our Moncreiffs, whose mantle he had caught, does she in a great measure owe the remembrance of these principles and practices. By his exertions, in no inconsiderable degree, the ancient landmarks of our ecclesiastical constitution have been kept prominently in view; a desire for something better than the existing order of things has been preserved and transmitted; the watchwords of primitive order and popular rights have been dignified and hallowed by an association with a mighty name; and a prospect has been opened to the hopes of the church of brighter days, and of "times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord."

As a minister of the church of Scotland, he was deeply and conscientiously attached to her institutions and her interests. But because, as a churchman, he walked about our Zion, and went round about her, telling her towers, admiring her palaces, and employing all his energies in the defence of her bulwarks, his was not that exclusive and churlish spirit which saw nothing but barrenness beyond the enclosure, within which Providence had cast his lot. He mingled freely and cordially with dissenters of all descriptions, in whom he could trace the characters of genuine Christianity. The strength of his own convictions, as a churchman, only gave him a stronger sympathy in the conscientious convictions of the persons who differed from him. He felt too, that the cause he had embraced, was in no danger from any compliances which, on the ground of good feeling, or social observance, he might be induced to make. Above all, he felt that the differences between the great bodies of dissenters in this country, and the church of

which he was a member, bore no proportion to the bond which unites Christians of every name in the fellowship of one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all."

Although it was impossible that a mind like his could be indifferent to anything that concerned the well-being of his country, he took no public share in party politics. That he had decided views on all the important questions that divided the political world during the eventful period in which he lived, is certainly true; and that in private, or on any occasion in which his duty as a member of ecclesiastical courts called for the expression of his opinion, he was ready to express that opinion frankly and fearlessly, is equally true: but to his honor, it is to be recorded, that with a mind peculiarly awake to whatever involved the interests or the fame of his country, and with talents that peculiarly fitted him for maintaining the first place in all discussions of a public and exciting nature, so strong was his sense of the sacredness of the ministerial character, and so ready was he to sink all inferior or individual considerations in a regard to the solemn interests that were suspended on his relation to his flock, that he uniformly stood aloof from scenes of political contention, and bequeathed, in his example, an instructive illustration of the power of religious principle in enforcing self-denial, as to things in themselves lawful, but which in certain circumstances may not be expedient.

In addition to the interest which he felt and manifested in whatever was connected with his duty as a minister, he took upon him a large share of the management of the city charities and of those public institutions which have for their object the alleviation of the temporal wants or of the spiritual miseries of mankind. He was ever ready at the call of the public, either to act as a director of its various societies, or to plead their cause from the pulpit. And this co-operation on his part with all that was benevolent and useful, was rendered with a cordiality and a cheerfulness, that put the idea of obligation out of sight; and invited new and increasing demands on his leisure and attention.

From the commencement of the British and Foreign Bible Society, he entered warmly into its views. With the great body of the Christian public, he regarded its institution as an era in the history of the church of Christ; he saw in it a mighty instrument of enlightened philanthropy; and he hailed it as a presage of the predicted glory of the latter days.—When it was struggling for existence against the calumnies and attacks of mistaken and narrow-minded zeal he fought its battles: and with justice he was esteemed one of its warmest friends and ablest advocates. Unhappily, however, when war had ceased without, the elements of a more fatal convulsion began to gather and to show themselves within. To the astonishment of the confiding friends of the institution,

it was demonstrated, beyond the possibility of dispute, that while, according to the leading principle of the Society, the Bible, without note or comment, was the only book which its directors were empowered to circulate, its funds were applied to the printing and circulation of a Bible unknown to the protestants of this country—a Bible in which the writings known by the name of "the Apocrypha," were mixed up, and put on a level with those "Scriptures which are given by inspiration of God." It is not too much to say, that the discovery came upon the Christian public with the force of a thunderbolt. All confidence in men, or in the most solemn protestations and professions, seemed to be at an end; and the first impulse, on the part of all who gave the subject an unbiassed consideration, was to demand not only that there should be an immediate return to the primary principle of the Society, but that its management should no longer be committed to men who had shown themselves incapable of being bound by what appeared the strongest obligations of Christian principle and moral feeling. Here it had been well, if first impressions had been consulted. To many of the friends of the institution, however, the Bible Society had been so long identified with the Bible which it professed to circulate, that the idea of abandoning it, seemed fraught with hazard to the best interests and hopes of Christianity. When, therefore, the directors of the Society, instead of listening to the remonstrances that were addressed to them from all quarters, and especially from the friends of the Society in Edinburgh, attempted to justify their conduct, on the pretext of an alleged ambiguity in the terms in which the object of the institution was expressed, and even on the ground of expediency, many of those with whom Dr. Thomson had previously associated, withdrew their testimony against the proceedings in question, expressed satisfaction with certain half measures to which the directors pledged themselves for the future, and intimated an earnest anxiety that all farther allusion to the past should be dropped. To the ardent mind of Dr. Thomson, such a course, whether on the part of the directors in London, or of their friends in Edinburgh, seemed nothing short of a dereliction of the first duty which man owes to the gracious Being who, in giving us a revelation of his will, has entrusted us with a talent which we can never do enough to guard from injury, and to preserve untarnished and entire as it reached us from his hands. With his characteristic energy, he enlisted himself on the side of what he conceived, and rightly conceived, to be the cause both of God and man; and summoning the resources of his powerful mind to the task, he devoted many of the days and nights of the latter years of his life in following the misjudging adherents of the British and Foreign Bible Society, through the maze of misrepresentation and sophistry, into which their short-sighted policy or obsequious predictions had plunged them. In this labor, worthy of a mind devoted, in the face of good report and of bad report, to the service of God, but from which a mind

cast in a less firm mould would have shrunk, he had the satisfaction of carrying with him the convictions and the suffrages of a large majority of the people of Scotland. Yet if for a moment he dreamed that the path on which he had entered was level and smooth, he was speedily destined to learn his mistake. Reproaches and misrepresentations assailed him from quarters whence he had the least reason to expect them. Some of the persons who had stood by his side at the commencement of the conflict, and who had rendered themselves conspicuous by the forwardness of their zeal, if not by the soundness of their discretion, thought fit to desert him, and others, on whose countenance and aid he might reasonably have calculated, looked coldly on, and chafed his spirit, if they could not sour his temper, or damp his exertions, by the tone of their advice.

It is not to be doubted, that the effect produced upon Dr. Thomson's mind, by the manner in which some of the leading advocates of the directors of the British and Foreign Bible Society conducted their share, of what has been called "The Apocryphal Controversy," made an impression on his health. Naturally of a more than usually robust constitution, he was capable of undergoing great fatigues; nor was his temper of that sensitive and morbid character which dwells upon imputed injuries, or exaggerates petty slights into serious wrongs. Still the personal tone which the controversy assumed in the hands of persons who, in the absence of argument, had recourse to recrimination and insult, combined with the sleepless nights and busy days which the part he had undertaken imposed upon him, silently wore down the strength of his constitution, and prepared it for yielding to that blow, unexpected perhaps by all but himself, which put a perpetual period to his labors and anxieties. In a state of health, which, to most men, would have furnished an irresistible plea for seclusion from the excitement of public business, he paid a visit to London; where, if he did little to place the ground of controversy between the two societies of London and Edinburgh in its proper light, before the religious public of the metropolis, the failure is to be ascribed to some other cause than a deficiency of zeal, of exertion, or of eloquence on his part.

The manner in which Dr. Thomson managed his share in this controversy must not be passed in silence. It was with all his heart and soul that he entered into the controversy: he brought all his powers to aid him in doing justice to it; and for a time at least, his whole mind and time were absorbed in it. In the object contended for, he beheld a principle at stake, which, as a Christian, a protestant, and a minister, he was bound to vindicate and maintain. It was not merely whether certain funds had been wisely or imprudently applied; whether certain individuals, to whom the public had been taught to look up with confidence, had been faithful to their trust: whether a less degree of good had been done, than the world,

who heard of the operations of the society, had been led to imagine. Important as these considerations were, they were not the questions which especially struck his mind, in the discoveries which accident had made, of the proceedings of the directors and agents of the British and Foreign Bible Society. In the conduct of the society, as represented by these individuals, he beheld the grand leading principles of morality and religion placed in jeopardy. He saw the marked line of separation, which the Divine Being has drawn between his word and the imaginations of his fallible creatures, trodden down, and, so far as the operations of the society on the continent were concerned, in danger of being obliterated. He saw the broad seal of heaven wrested from the page on which it had been impressed by the finger of God, and placed unscrupulously, and without discrimination, on lying legends and on "the true sayings of God." In all this, he beheld an object fitted to awaken all the energy of a mind trained to tremble at the Divine Word, to rouse into indignation and irrepressible feeling all the sensibilities of a soul that was "very jealous for the Lord God of Hosts."

If we would form a correct estimate of the conduct of Dr. Thomson, in relation to the British and Foreign Bible Society, we must at once possess something of his character, and find ourselves placed nearly in his circumstances. The very features of his character as a controversialist, which may seem most to require softening, were connected with qualities for which his memory deserves most to be honored. If he assumed a decided attitude, and made use of strong language, it was not because he cared little for the feelings, or was reckless of the character of his antagonists, but because his zeal for the truth made him less alive than were the lukewarm and the timid, to the effect his occasional warmth might have, on those with whom a sense of duty brought him into collision. In a struggle, unusually protracted, and in which, on the side of the opposite party, in some memorable instances, not the courtesies of debate merely, but the restraints of Christian feeling and ordinary decorum were violated, it is not to be wondered at that he should at times have caught the tone of his assailants—that he should occasionally have descended from the high ground of principle to occupy a position, in which, though he was not less formidable, he appeared personally to less advantage—that, in short, like Luther and Calvin, and others, his predecessors in the task of correcting great abuses, he should occasionally have been tempted to forget that "long forbearing" is sometimes the surest parent of "persuasion," and that it is "a soft answer" which the wise man tells us "breaketh the bone." If more need be said on the subject, he himself has said it, in terms that leave us only to

• See Dr. Thomson's speech at the extraordinary meeting of the Edinburgh Bible Society, on the 1st March, 1830.

regret the close alliance of great virtues with occasional errors, and which must satisfy even those who have least sympathy with the workings of such a nature as his, that insensibility to his imperfections formed no feature of his character.

The last great public effort of Dr. Thomson was in behalf of the slave population of our West India colonies. In a note to a sermon published in his volume of "Discourses on various Subjects," he had taken up the question of the remedial measures proposed in behalf of that oppressed class of our fellow-subjects, and, with his characteristic frankness, declared himself an advocate for immediate emancipation. The opinion he thus expressed was not the result of sudden impulse, but of a deliberate and well weighed consideration of the subject of compulsory servitude in all its bearings. On the one hand, he looked to the principles of morality and of the Scriptures; and from them he learned that to hold a fellow-creature in bondage is directly to violate the rule which dictates the same treatment of our neighbor as we ourselves have a right to expect from him.— And to the mind of Dr. Thomson it appeared no less a crime to assume a right of property in a man under the tropics, than it would be to transfer that claim to the mother country, and to extend it over those who go out and come in among ourselves.

With the friends of humanity and religion, and it may be added, of true policy, Dr. Thomson was so far cordially united. The only point in which his views differed from those of any of this class, related to the time at which the grand measure of abolition should be carried into effect. He declared for immediate steps with a view to this object. When, therefore, the Directors of the Edinburgh anti-slavery society proposed to hold a meeting in October 1830, and some of them requested Dr. Thomson to attend and address the friends of the institution, he declared his determination, if he attended, to bring forward his own particular views, and to deprecate all half-measures, which he foresaw would be productive of no good. On the day of the meeting, accordingly, Dr. Thomson was present in the assembly room; and after Mr. Jeffrey, now Lord Jeffrey, and some other speakers had addressed the meeting, he craved permission to state the conclusions at which he had arrived. With a power of argument, and an earnestness and elevation of tone which can never be forgotten, he entered on the subject; and, in a brief speech, explained the points in which he differed from the former speakers, as well as those in which he agreed with them. Never was the triumph of truth and eloquence more complete. Before he had concluded, the majority of the meeting was with him: the confidence of the directors of the society in the measures they had come forward to recommend was shaken; and in the rapturous acclamations of a crowded assembly, he had the satisfaction of listening to

the first of those echoes, which Great Britain has since through all her provinces sent back, to the call of justice and religion, in behalf of the injured children of her colonies.

Subsequently to these proceedings, a meeting took place of the friends of immediate abolition, at which Dr. Thomson attended, supported by the directors of the anti-slavery society, who with a few exceptions, had obeyed the general impulse, and entered cordially into his enlarged and energetic views. His appearance on this occasion has been described by a writer of the day, as "a most splendid and varied display of wit, argument, and impressive eloquence." The moral dignity of the subject seemed to have imparted its character to the man and to his eloquence. Never perhaps did he appear more truly great.

Up to the period of his death, Dr. Thomson occupied much of his time in promoting this object, so dear to the friends of freedom and humanity. He may almost be said to have expired while pleading its cause; a worthy termination to the labors of a life, of which love to God, issuing in love to man, had been the governing principle.

For some time before his death, his mind, it is believed, experienced something of a presentiment of the approaching event, which may have been vouchsafed in love, to perfect his preparation for his sudden change. More than once, when urged by the members of his own family to relieve himself of some portion of the burden of affairs which pressed so heavily on him, he replied with affectionate solemnity, "I must work the work of Him that sent me while it is day; the night cometh when no man can work." The increasing earnestness, richness, and variety of his prayers, both in private and in public, are also circumstances that struck many, and none more than the writer of these pages.

On the 9th of February, 1831, the day on which he died, he appeared to his family in his usual health. As was his custom, he rose and breakfasted at an early hour. During the devotions of the family, which he conducted as usual, he read the last three psalms, and he concluded the service by a prayer remarked at the time for its spirituality and fervor.— After baptizing a child, he left his house to pay some visits to the sick; and at a later hour he appeared in his place at a meeting of the presbytery of Edinburgh, specially convened for the purpose of ordaining a minister to one of our West India settlements. During his attendance at the presbytery, he displayed his usual interest, and took his usual share in the business of the court. At the close of the meeting, about five in the afternoon he proceeded homeward; and with a friend, who met him by the way, he conversed with animation and cheerfulness till he reached his own door, on the threshold of which, without a struggle or a groan, he suddenly fell, overtaken by that

summons which recalls the "good servant" from his labor to his reward.

In a stroke so sudden, so unexpected, and in all its circumstances so well calculated to produce a strong sensation, the public of Edinburgh, and it may be added, of Scotland, testified the liveliest interest.—Many mourned the loss of a friend, a counsellor, a brother in adversity, a spiritual father. His congregation felt that they had experienced an irreparable bereavement. The church of Scotland lamented the removal of one of its strongest pillars and most distinguished ornaments. And the friends of religion in general beheld in his death an event, to the consequences of which they could not advert without deep anxiety. The feelings of party were merged in the general grief; and they who had known him while living, chiefly as a formidable antagonist, hastened to accord to his memory the tribute of that affectionate regret, which is usually reserved for tried and valued friends; a fact honorable at once to the departed, and to those by whom the tribute was paid.

Dr. Thomson is interred in a piece of ground connected with St. Cuthbert's church-yard, divided only by a wall from the spot where lie the remains of his venerable friend and father in the church, Sir Henry Moncreiff. His funeral was attended by ministers from all parts of the country, by the students of the divinity classes, who specially requested permission to attend, by the members of his own congregation, and by the better descriptions of persons of all persuasions and denominations in Edinburgh; while throngs of spectators lined the streets through which the procession passed, testifying by unequivocal signs how sincerely they partook of the feelings of the mourners.

On the following Sabbath (February 20th) a funeral sermon was preached in St. George's church, in the forenoon, by the Rev. Dr. Chalmers, from Hebrews xi. 4.; and another in the afternoon, by the Rev. Dr. Dickson of St. Cuthbert's from Psalm cxii. 6.

ON THE SUPPORTING INFLUENCE OF CHRISTIAN FAITH IN SEASONS OF DISTRESS.

There are no principles equal to those of christianity for enabling us to overcome the various evils of our present condition. In proof of this, let us contrast the manner in which some of these evils are met by one who refuses its authority with that by which they are met by him who acknowledges and submits to it.

In respect to the sicknesses and diseases of this life, let us see how the man who has no belief in the gospel sets about bearing them as he ought. He finds that sickness and diseases of various kinds, are universally allotted to men; and why should he be found to murmur against what is not peculiar to himself? Of the Great Being who has thus appointed him to suffer, he professes to know but little; but since he is in his hands, and has no means of resisting the execution of his purposes, it is the wisest thing he can do to submit, without weakly complaining. Besides he feels that, in these circumstances, complaining only tends to increase his sufferings.

Such are the sentiments with which affliction is encountered by him who will not embrace the offers of christianity. But what are the views which actuate the believer when called to endure affliction? He indeed acknowledges that in the hand of God he is altogether powerless, that it would be vain in him to think of resisting almighty strength. It is not, however, as an Almighty Being, alone, that the christian looks up to God; when under the pains of bodily distress. He does look up to him in that character; but he looks up to him also in another—in one more gracious, in one in which faith reveals him. He looks to God, in the hour of trouble, as his Father in heaven, who afflicts not willingly, nor grieves the children of men. He beholds him as wise, even when raising the rod of chastisement; nay, as good, even when inflicting pain. For the christian is conscious of a disease, and he has been informed by the great Physician himself, that affliction is one of the remedies, and not infrequently one of the most effectual remedies which can be applied to his case. To reconcile him to the severity of the remedy, he is told of those whom God loved and yet afflicted—he is told that Jesus himself was made perfect through sufferings. He is told that his afflictions are designed to work out for him the fruits of righteousness, and that in the enjoyment of these fruits he shall have peace.

Now we would ask what are the appearances which the sick beds of these two individuals would present? Appearances, assuredly, differing essentially in their nature. Both are suffering; but how differently! The one is, at best, silent upon the cause of his sufferings. He is, however, more frequently gloomy in his temper, and a prey to internal anguish. You see that his submission is constrained; that when he says he is willing to yield to the general order of things, his heart is not in unison with his tongue. The other is all meekness. The intervals of pain are employed in the

pleasing contemplation of those wise arrangements of God by which the remaining hardness or impenitency of his heart is to be removed. They are both desirous that their afflictions should terminate; but the one looks to earthly aid alone for this purpose, and refuses to seek any of a higher kind; the other employs the means also within his reach, but not without beseeching the blessing of heaven to render them effectual; the one complains that the means employed are not adequate to his recovery; the other resigns himself to the will of the Supreme Disposer of health and sickness, saying "Not my will but thine be done." In this instance we cannot fail to perceive that faith is the only sure friend in distress; that it alone will enable us to overcome the diseases and sicknesses of the world.

In regard, again, to the views taken of the reverses in the outward circumstances of our lives, the sentiments of both persons are widely dissimilar. What is the usual effect of disasters of this nature upon minds destitute of religious principle? Experience shows us two of these effects. The first is a sullen apathy, with respect to all honourable pursuits, a disposition to let things move on as they may, with a determination to exert no longer those energies which have brought only disappointment and poverty upon their possessor. This temper leads the person under its influence to harden himself against all the reproofs and remonstrances of friends, and to seek gratification in the indulgence of the lowest and most degrading vices.

The second effect of such disasters on undisciplined minds is more awful, though of less common occurrence. But still it has occurred with sufficient frequency to warrant us in mentioning it as one of the results of the want of christian faith. On the first information of their worldly speculations having failed, and the prospect of dependance being forced upon them, some men have forgotten all the claims which mankind at large, had upon them, all the tender ties by which they were bound to their friends and their families, and in a moment of frenzied disgust towards the world and its concerns, have rushed into the presence of Omnipotent Justice. What greater proof can we have of the insufficiency of all principles inferior to those of religion for steadying and guiding the mind in the hour of those storms and tempests which so often visit us in this world than such a fact as we have mentioned? How, then, it may be asked, does faith in Christ save the mind from the evils here stated? Why, the first lesson which this faith

inculcates, is to place but a very moderate reliance upon the riches of this life?

"Love not the world," says St. John, "nor the things of the world." "Set your affections," says St. Paul, "on the things above not on the things of the earth." "What shall it profit a man," asks our Saviour, "if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" "Look not," exhorts St. Paul, "at the things which are seen and temporal, but at the things which are unseen and eternal." And, says our Lord, "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: but lay up for yourselves, treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust can corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal:" and adds he, "where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."

Now, it is plain, that he on whom the faith of the gospel has produced so great a moderation of desire towards the wealth of this world, as these precepts are intended to create and cherish, cannot be in any danger of being overwhelmed in his mind by the severest reverses of fortune. And he possesses none of the spirit of those passages of scripture, who is deficient in one of the most distinguishing graces of Christianity.

Faith supplies us with another most powerful principle for counteracting all despondency on account of vicissitudes of worldly fortune. It teaches us that God, who is the governor of men, in all the affairs which belong to them, designs, by blessing one with riches, and subjecting another to poverty, to try them both. There is no doctrine more clearly revealed in scripture respecting the providence of God than this; and it is a doctrine of the very first importance, that riches are not a sign of the Divine favor, nor poverty of the Divine displeasure; but that both are intended to serve moral purposes in the administration of heaven. The whole of the book of Job was evidently written to illustrate and impress upon the minds of men this consolatory doctrine. The christian, therefore, when his affairs, in spite of all his just and honourable efforts, go wrong, when he finds himself, from a state of affluence, reduced to one of indigence, and from being a master, obliged to become a servant, reflects that such a change in his lot has not been brought about by any capricious agency, but has been effected by that wise and good Being whose eye takes in the whole term of his existence, and who by the hardships of a few years, is preparing to secure for him the happiness of eternity. Amid the heaviest of his calamities, accordingly,

the believer is disposed to say, with the patriarch to whom we have now referred, "the Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord." What a comfortable state of mind is this! This is the state of mind to which genuine faith will bring us.

Again, in respect to death, there can be but little room to doubt of the superiority of the christian principles over all others, in enabling us to gain a victory over its terrors.

What is death to one set of unbelievers? It is the utter destruction of being—a returning to dust, the wreck of the thinking principle, that by which we know and love, and are capable of enjoyment. Death to one set of unbelievers is this! To such men, how unmingled must the terrors of death be. No idea can be so overpowering as that of complete and irrecoverable annihilation. Every heart must recoil at its admission, for it threatens eternal destruction to its best affections.

What is death to another set of unbelievers? It is an event which is to close all communion with the present scene of things. It is to break every tie, how tender and endearing soever it may be. It is to terminate their earthly wishes, their earthly pursuits and happiness.

But is it not to open up a new and better scene to their view? To carry them to a world where greater order, and harmony, and joy prevail? Ah! no. This is what no infidel is assured of. Another life is, with him, only an object of hope, of desire. And when death approaches, his own imagination, fertile in objections, will not fail to darken, if not extinguish, the few rays of light which had served to shed something like comfort over the tomb.

But what is death to the christian? It is a release from all his heavy cares; from all his contentions against sin; from all his troubles, his sorrows, his disappointments. It is a call from God to come up to the abode of purity and joy; it is a call from Jesus to join his glorified society, to share in his unbounded love. It is an invitation from the spirits of the just made perfect, to throw off the cumbrous load of clay, and fly, on the wings of adoring affection, to the source of immortal delight.

True it is also, a parting with many here who deserved and enjoyed his best regards, but such parting is accompanied with nothing that is permanently painful, because the assurance of meeting in heaven, the habitation of the good, preserves the mind in peaceful serenity.

Such is death to the true, the obedient disciple

of the Lord Jesus. Need we ask whether his faith enables him to overcome its terrors? That it does so, must be abundantly evident. To the believer, Christ has brought life and immortality to light, and has thus deprived death of its sting and the grave of its terrors.

How great a blessing, then, to the world is christianity! It is a religion which confines not its influence to any one state of human existence.—It extends to all. In the deepest distress to which human beings can be reduced, it is fitted to console and comfort the mind. Nor does it restrict its regards to the couch of distress—it extends them also to the heart, pierced by the bitterness of that grief which a consciousness of sin excites. It speaks peace to the wounded conscience; it strips the judgment seat of its terrors, and places at the right hand of the majesty on high, a tender and all-prevailing Advocate, who not only pleads for forgiveness, but for grace to help us in every time of need. When nature faints and fails, when earthly objects have lost all their power to attract and gain our attention, it is the strength of our hearts and our portion forever. On the dark valley of the shadow of death, it causes the light of a new and more glorious world to spring. It conducts us peacefully and virtuously to the end of our earthly journey, and when its last step is taken, it raises us to joy unspeakable and full of glory, to the general assembly of the first born in heaven, to God the Judge of all, and to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant.

C.

M.

PRACTICAL SERMONS.

NO. VI.

By the Rev. W. T. Leach, of Toronto.

And I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and give you an heart of flesh.—Ezekiel, xxxvi. 26.

It may not be a very striking, but out of doubt, it is a very weighty argument for the truth of our holy faith, that it makes most effectual provision for the cultivation of moral rectitude. In this respect, its enemies, for the most part have acknowledged its consistency, and any one who has the prudence to consider, and the intelligence to understand the efficacy of the motives which it supplies, and the means and assistance which it fur-

nishes, can scarcely fail to perceive that it is a work not of human contrivance but one which bespeaks the amplitude of an infinite and divine intelligence. It never confounds, like every other religion that ever has exercised, or which yet exercises any influence upon the minds of men, the distinction between good and evil, right and wrong, or righteousness and unrighteousness. It never justifies nor cherishes, like the religion of the ancient heathens, the indulgence of any brutish propensities, nor does it dignify with the name of virtue what was only a certain firmness of purpose in the work of destruction—an impudent dexterity in the art of killing their fellow-creatures. Its provisions are not calculated for the vain pride of empire. It seeks the benefit of individuals rather than the advantage of nations, and it seeks that end by the only means which are greatly calculated to promote it, not by adapting its institutions, its moral precepts, and its promises to the naturally depraved sense and corrupted heart of man, but by turning the affections of his heart into another and an unusual channel, by correcting the disorder of its passions and preparing it for the enjoyment of a holy and heavenly existence.

The religion of Jesus Christ addresses itself neither exclusively to the imagination, nor exclusively to the reason, nor exclusively to the heart of man. To each of these faculties or parts of his constitution, it allows its due occasion of exercise and its proper influence; but while it indeed requires them all, it demands the affections of the heart as peculiarly indispensable. This is the temple where it loves chiefly to dwell, where its influence is most sensibly felt, and indeed, where its power is most urgently required. This is the seat of its warfare, the field where its battles are to be fought and its triumphs to be won. Upon this throne it must sit, if not without dispute at least in reality—and in effect the sovereign and ruler of the individual kingdom of man.

1st. The religion of Christ, we have said, does not consist in the lively exercise of imagination upon the facts of divine revelation. It is not enough, that the great transactions and facts revealed in the Bible, the fall of man and the means of his recovery from the second death, the blessedness of the angels, the glories of heaven and the miseries of hell; it is not enough that these and similar themes be contemplated with wonder and profound interest or delight. Pleasant and wondrous speculations are neither the substance nor the end of religion. It by no means consists in the gratification of those emotions that arise from the taste or the poetic fancy of the individual. But

there are many who mistake the activity of a strong imagination for its sum and substance. It behoves them, however, to remember that between these two, there is a very wide distinction. The gifts of God are not the grace of God; for the natural advantages which the providence of heaven may bestow upon any person, however rare and admirable they may be, are no indication that they who possess them are peculiarly in favor with God. The man to whom it is given to meditate easily and intently upon matters of religion, to think of them as a connoisseur, or as one revolves in his mind afterwards the strange sights he has seen and the curious adventures which he has performed in a dream, but to whom it is not given to reduce any doctrine or precept of the gospel to practice, nor to be tremblingly alive to the immense stake which he himself has involved in the matter—that man has no more reason to suppose that God intends his salvation, merely because he has given him the power of contemplating these things, than a rich man has to imagine that he has secured the favour and forgiveness of God, because God has granted him riches, and waters his fields with the rain that falls from heaven. It is a property very observable in those who only imagine religion, that they always fly to its loftiest pinnacles and seek only to explore its dark and mysterious recesses. Some slight of fancy always hurries them away from the useful and practical, and instead of diligent meditation, instead of prudent discipline and well ordered devotion, instead of seeking to have their hearts established by grace, they indulge their contemplation without any design of making it effective, they take up with high speculations, doubtful interpretations of unfulfilled prophecies, and any dark subjects which their imaginations may fill with the immense and marvellous, forgetting all the time that one grace of the heart, one word spoken in christian charity—and with unaffected meekness, that a cup of water administered for Christ's sake, is worth a thousand speculations of the head, though they reached as far as an angel's.

In alliance with the ardent imaginations of revealed truths, there is often found a depraved self-esteem—a combination which gives birth to a moral phenomenon of a very deplorable character, though not of rare occurrence. Of all the sources of error and guilt, there is none, either in the impenitent or in the believer himself, that requires to be more suspiciously guarded against and to be subjected to severer scrutiny and mortification, than the self-love which persuades a man to believe that whatever the case of others may be, he is certain of being exempted from the anger of God, or which fills his

mind with a vain and groundless confidence that he has reason to believe himself a special favorite of God. In the impenitent, it is often the source of that persuasion by which he is brought at last to look upon his sins without shame, and by which his heart is steeled against every impression of fear, till he can outface the aversion and scorn of men, and perpetrate iniquity before the eye of God with heroic confidence and courage. His self-esteem gives him the delusive idea of exemption from the strictness of God's law. He sees not the flame in the eye of his Maker, and cannot suffer himself to believe that it will ever strike him with terror. In the believer, it is an element of character that is infinitely dangerous—it enables him to construct a morality of his own. It can only be neutralized and kept in chains from the work of sin, by an extraordinary portion of divine grace. A depraved self-esteem in combination with a powerful imagination, is the infallible precursor of an insane fanaticism. It diminishes the distance between God and the sinner, and converts the devout and reverent communion of the soul with its Creator, into a familiar companionship—into the easy terms of a profane intimacy, while it makes its possessor the subject of its imposture. What a cunning, what a dangerous passion is an exorbitant self-esteem, united with a lively imagination of the mysterious truths of our holy faith, when finding no food to satisfy the largeness of its appetite in the ordinary path of good and happy men, it betakes itself rapaciously to the pastures of the boundless fields of heaven. It can revel there in an immensity of transports, and see sights which no eye ever saw, and receive gifts, as it supposes, that put to shame the whole world of living men, and by special inspiration, becomes, no doubt, the sole depository of the secrets of God on earth. Its property is to subdue all things to itself. It assumes the patronage of conscience by an easy assault and makes that very faith, which is the holy instrument of a sinner's salvation, the means of ministering to its appetite for ideal transports. Let a young man in whose character an overgrown self-esteem exists in combination with an ardent imagination, carry the unabated magnitude of the passion into the new field that has been opened up to him—into the glorious and unfathomable mysteries of religion.—Hitherto, from the day of his birth, his intercourse with his fellow-creatures has directly controlled the passion which lurked and ruled in him. No one allowed the claim, of which it was earnestly intent upon procuring the admission. There was an immense discrepancy between the respect which was sought for and arrogated, and the grounds upon which it was demanded. He asked it, because

he passionately desired it; but no one, save himself, could see a sufficient reason for so great a demand. The passion, therefore, in thus his prior intercourse with the world was beaten back, confronted and forced to be moderate. But thereafter, when the whole radiance of religious truth begins to dawn upon him, the pent-up passion rejoices in the things of heaven and eternity, as all its own. What has been denied to men, (were truth its utterance it would say) will be granted to me by God. It proudly commits itself, therefore, upon the mysteries of eternity—and from the very devotedness of its zeal, it derives an argument by which it flatters itself into the belief of an altogether extraordinary and peculiar intercourse with God. The royal and open high-way by which other men slowly travel in the journey to heaven, by the arduous duties of their calling, and with faith sometimes bright and sometimes dim, is no road for a spirit of this sort in which to exercise the part of a pilgrim. He soars aloft—the high hills are no impediment, his sins are no burden, and what are temptations to others to tarry by the way-side, he can surpass at a bound, and never rests satisfied till he is constituted prime minister in the religious affairs of an accursed world, and sent, as a matter of course, the only accredited ambassador to men from the court and sanctuary of heaven. The message which he supposes himself to have been instructed to convey, appears generally to others as neither genuine nor credible, and doubtless, it seems to him a matter of great astonishment that it is not implicitly received. But the consequence of this rejection by others, deserves to be noted. It is the conclusion of the mental and moral process of self-love and religious idealism—and is in exact coincidence with numberless instances with which the history of mankind furnishes us; he denounces to the wrath and punishment of God every one who refuses to receive the matter to which he testifies. *The crisis and conclusion of his passionate imagination of religious truth terminate in a malign proscription of his whole species to the woes of everlasting death.* How invaluable to such a person would be a serious and constant inclination of his mind to the precept of the Psalmist, "Stand in awe and sin not, commune with your own heart upon your bed and be still;" for religion is a still, a sober, and silent thing, and consists not in sportings of the fancy nor in whirlwinds of passion, but in a new heart, a heart of kindness, charity, or "flesh."

Again, religion does not consist in the understanding merely of the truths of divine revelation. One may have a large measure of religious knowledge, a clear and accurate understanding of all its

doctrines and institutions ; the house of his reason may be replenished with all the learning of the fathers, and may be capable of containing all the details of religious truth, and of embracing within its comprehension the whole system of its principles, and yet the person may be possessed of little or no religion. Unless his knowledge be brought into the temple of the heart, it can never be an acceptable offering for the altar of God—he will not accept of it as a sacrifice. It can never rise up in sweet memorial before him; for though in itself, it be a most desirable advantage, yet, having no connection with the heart, it is an offering altogether unfit for religious purposes. It is the mere skin of the victim or as the flesh of swine, no proper material for the high priest and bishop of our souls. If the degree of religious knowledge were a fit measure of the religion of a man, then a sensualist and a cheat, a proud man, a malicious man, and a profane person, might at the same time be a religious man ; and it is to be feared, that it is by no means uncommon to find those who are well versed in the language and doctrines of the scriptures, who can reason with a clear and piercing intelligence, and state the abstract points of theology with great precision and nicety of expression, utterly devoid of that which constitutes the very life and soul of religion, a new heart, a heart of flesh.

It will not be inferred from this, it is to be hoped, that we have any intention of disparaging the acquisition of religious knowledge, or of undervaluing the duty of a rigorous application of the mind to the understanding of the truths of christianity. It is obvious to every one, that there can be no christianity at all where its doctrines are neither known nor understood, and the man whose heart is most deeply interested in the matter, will always be the first to desire, and the most diligent in seeking the knowledge of that divine charter which is the instrument of his salvation from death, and reconciliation to God. Still, it is necessary to settle it well in the mind, that to know the truth is a thing widely different from its being an effectual means of salvation. One may know all mysteries, or suppose that he does so, and be acquainted with the road that leads him fairly to heaven; but what signifies his knowledge if it have no power to persuade him to holiness, or what avails to be acquainted with the way to heaven if he prefers the road that conducts him to hell? The case, however, is mightily altered, if together with the knowledge of the truth, he joins the love of it in his heart ; if by the grace of God, it has been made efficacious for the production of holiness, if the stony heart has been taken away and a heart of flesh substituted, then, indeed,

the business of the man's salvation has been brought to a favorable conclusion ; then may he lift up his soul in perpetual thanksgiving, and take to himself, without the imputation of a vain and fanatical spirit, the consolation and joy which belong to an heir of immortality—for he has the best assurance that God has not forgotten to be gracious to him, and salvation has already come into his house.

It is a proof of the wisdom of God, that the revelation which he has made for the recovery and salvation of men, is not adapted merely to the circumstances of a few, but is fitted to the state and circumstances of all. No one can say, that the means of salvation are suited to the case of another, while it is impossible they could ever have been designed for him. Had the glad tidings of redemption, before they could have had any practical effect and communicated any blessing, required large measures of knowledge, and extraordinary learning and research, then would he that is wise according to the flesh, have had the best chance of becoming wise unto salvation. But the case is widely different, and it was one of the distinguishing circumstances of the mission and transactions of Jesus, that the poor should have the gospel preached unto them ; that no order or class of men should be peremptorily excluded, but that all might humble themselves before the majesty of God, and seek to walk in the only way which he has opened up to the joys of heaven.

If a man's heart be right with God, there is no great danger of his being miscarried by such a speculative error as amounts to an apostacy from the truth. When the truth is erroneously taught, it is no unreasonable suspicion, that sin may have blended with the error—at least, it is commonly understood in matters of religion, that such a charge is implied ; and as it is far from being a pleasing theme, to be warned of our danger by the sound of an alarm, or to have our natural pride offended by finding our errors exposed and our fond opinions strongly impugned, it often happens that he who has erred from the right, wanders the farther astray when the truth in Christ is vindicated, that his passions take the governance of his reason, that he identifies himself with his opinion, till he brings himself to such a pass, that his mind is incapable of conviction and his heart past persuasion.

The history of the Church of Christ furnishes but too many examples of this melancholy perversity ; and we owe it to the bounty of a merciful God, that those dark and evil influences which have

combined in all ages to assail the Holy Word, have not quenched its light upon the earth and muffled from our souls forever the secret of a Redeemer's love.

It is not from any want of evidence that men are averse to the belief of the scriptures, nor from any deficiency in the faculty of reason that they are so often unable to appreciate the evidence which demonstrates the truth of the gospel. It can furnish no apology to the unbeliever, that he either supposes the evidence to be deficient or his reason incompetent. There is no just cause of complaint for deficiency of these, but there is the evil bias of a treacherous heart, a certain loathing of what is pure and sacred, an utter disrelish of every thing in which God is obviously concerned, and a settled reluctance of nature against the strictness of the law which God has prescribed. These are the things that interpose between the reason of men and God's instructions, and render a new heart so indispensable for the full apprehension of the truth. This is the moral darkness which blinds their eyes and makes them incapable naturally of perceiving any excellencies in God, or the beauties of that holiness which God requires. This is the natural ungodliness, the original inclination to sin, to retreat from God and be in love with what is opposite to his character and commandments, which is so variously represented in the scriptures, and so repeatedly pressed upon our conviction; and this were sufficient to make dark the understanding of an angel, though placed under the wings of the cherubim and in the open radiance of the divine glory.

That the judgments of men are much influenced by their affections, is a fact that might receive its illustration by instances in every department of human knowledge. The cause is prejudged, even when reason pretends to be the sole judge and you have only to consult your experience to recollect innumerable cases of that mental delusion which renders all reasoning nugatory, because the ground was pre-occupied by some private prejudice—cases, in which the clearer your demonstration, the greater the determination of the opponent to maintain the ground and fortify the defences of his error.

In morals and religion, persuasion against the heart is a contradiction in terms, and however irresistibly a conclusion may be shewn to be deduced from a series of reasonings, such reasonings are found to be no match for human passions, and no sufficient instrument for the production of a state of grace and salvation. It need not be matter of

wonder, then, that so many disbelieve the truth in Christ, since there are so many who from the earliest prime of life till life's last day, whose passions have engaged them in a constant defence of their objects, and by consequence, in course of uniform hostility against that divine revelation which seeks to put them in chains and correct their disorder. They live and move and have their being in God, but have turned away from the light of his countenance with careless indifference or determined aversion. They may acknowledge it abstractly to be a good and pleasant thing to love and obey him, who has always loved them and been their best friend and bountiful benefactor, but have ever found it most acceptable to their heart, to act as if there were no God, and have really desired when opposite claims came to present themselves, that no God were. His goodness has ever been to them a fountain of never failing blessings, but with what gratitude have they received them? and the sorrows which he designed should have led them to seek a treasure in heaven, have fallen to the ground without good, and left the heart more hardened than before. However impressively God may have called them, they have had no inclination to hearken to his voice, and if at any time serious thoughts have arisen, they have shut them out as injurious to their peace and contentment. They have resolved, in short, to hold no correspondence with God, and, therefore, have plunged more deeply into the business of the world, and more largely drunk of its joys—have resolved to serve no God, but to please themselves.

How then, it may be asked, would such a person be likely to act if at any time, he should take up the word of God from curiosity, to observe what it contained or what evidence of truth it possessed. He would not have proceeded many pages before he discovered that all men are by nature guilty in the sight of God, and that there is but one way to escape the misery of his everlasting curse. But this is a truth which he will not believe, because the belief of it would inspire an intolerable apprehension. Or if he should read that there is a day to come when God will call every work into judgment which man has done under the sun, and when we shall all appear before the judgment seat of Christ: this again he would be disposed to discredit, because he has no sufficient clearness of perception of the nature and enormity of sin, no sense of his long forgetfulness of God, and consequently no ground for framing a correct judgment of the necessity and equity of such a procedure. Need it then be matter of wonder, if he should be inclined to thrust the book aside, to keep his feet from

drawing near to the courts of God's house, and be- take himself with greater ardour to dissipate, by flat infidelity, his unpleasant reflections, and secure what he calls his peace of mind from the invasions of truth.

Again, such is the purity, and so broad the measure of God's law, as to produce almost of necessity, a dislike and revulsion in the mind of the natural man. The length and breadth of the duties which bind the disciples of Christ, alarm his fears and reprove his defects. The self sacrifice which they require, is deemed too great, yea, impossible to be borne. If the terms of salvation had been easier, his belief of divine truth would have been wonderfully facilitated. But how, for instance, can he brook to become humble, according to the example and express precepts of the Redeemer? Nothing can be more at variance with the most powerful principles of his nature and the ends which he has proposed to himself as absolutely indispensable to his present happiness. This first commandment of Jesus, therefore, were sufficient to turn the full tide of his affections against the belief of the gospel.

Again, it is requisite for him that would become wise unto salvation, to receive the truth in Christ with docility of mind, and with meekness of heart, willing to be led, as it were, by the hand, into the road to heaven, praying to be filled with God's love, and to be enlightened with the knowledge of divine truth; and surely no disposition and practice could be more becoming in a creature towards its Creator, in him who was fashioned out of the dust towards an infinite and glorious God. But this is not a rule which can very readily commend itself to a person over-confident in his own wisdom. He will condescend to be a believer only in his own way, and supposes himself qualified to demonstrate the truth or falseness of God's word. He will feed his objections, demur and stagger at every seeming obstacle, till he becomes as blind to the open radiance that beams from every page as he that is blind is to the beauty and magnificence of external nature.

In the same manner, it might be spoken of every other besetting sin and sinful error. Single or combined, they form a barrier to the reception of the truth into the soul that can be broken down and removed only by the power of an Almighty God. Reason cannot surmount the fence which innumerable sinful habits have drawn around it. It is carried captive by every passion, or thrust aside when it refuses to judge on the side of inclination. "I will do whatever I please," is the natural language of

every human heart; "I will believe only what pleases me," is its no less natural and universal sentiment.

What then is the main distinction of the christian character? What is that which is the chief badge of his profession? Is it that he loves to contemplate the mysteries of christianity, that he roves in imagination among the stately pillars and through the magnificent and splendid apartments of the temple? Or is it that he has duly studied the proportions of the edifice and is acquainted with its whole plan from the foundation upwards, through all its passages and inmost recesses? Neither of these constitutes the chief distinction of a believer. Neither the lofty imagination of religious things, nor the sharp understanding of religious truths can save the man in the hour of his need. His gifts may perish with him and may only load him, in his condemnation, with a heavier curse.—What then is that, being possessed of which, we possess all things, and wanting which, we yet want all things? It is that which the Lord our God has promised in the text, "I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh."

A heart of flesh is one of those general expressions which designate that great moral and spiritual change which is at once the effect and evidence of faith. Is it not the great and declared intent of the scriptures, of that revelation which God has there recorded for our use, to prepare the heart—to furnish the soul with meekness to dwell with him in heaven? And is this present life of believers not manifestly represented as a condition of probation, in which by manifold trials, by unwearied patience and constant endeavours there is, as it is represented, a race to be run, and so run, as that the prize be obtained—a work to be achieved while it is day, and a battle to be fought. This being the nature of his state, it is evident that the believer will have to encounter and overcome a multitude of dangers and difficulties. His faith is no faith unless it have the power to sanctify him, unless it teach and dispose him to die unto sin and live unto righteousness—that is, unless his heart is changed, so as to love what God loves, which it did not do before, and to hate what God hates, which it did not do before. Else, why in almost every page of the sacred word are there precept upon precept, and line upon line—moral directions inexpressibly various and innumerable? Else, why do we find such minute distinctions laid down for us between the sins that God abhors, and the acts of righteousness and mercy which he loves? And why has the believer written for him an elaborate chart of the

road to heaven and so precise a description of his spiritual enemies? Why, above all, is it said, that so great a thing must be as that the spirit of God must dwell in the heart of a man, but that he may know with all possible clearness, and strength of conviction, that he must have a heart of flesh, before he has any reason to expect the approbation or favor of God—the prize or crown which God will bestow.

A heart of flesh implies that sensibility of conscience which enables a person to discriminate easily between sin and holiness. It is full of fear and self-abasement when it has offended God, and cannot continue, without outraging its own promptings and affections, in a course of transgression. It is full of gratitude and love when it contemplates the goodness and mercy of God, and every sin which it is conscious of, it considers and feels as an act of unkindness committed against its best Friend and most bountiful Benefactor. It were easy to extend this part of the discourse, by a reference to every virtue which properly belongs to the heart of flesh, but it is necessary to bring them to a narrow conclusion. There is the love of God and the love of our neighbour, which is the fulfilling of the whole law. There are the graces of the spirit which Christ so well exemplified, and which the apostle so well expounds. There is gentleness which forbids the harsh construction, the rude deportment, and the injurious suspicion. There is meekness which casts out pride—whatsoever pride it be—that looks with a disdainful eye on any creature which God has made and loves. There is long suffering that stifles the vindictive impulse which always calls aloud for punishment. There is peace, which preserves in its golden bond the unity of the spirit, allaying dissension, and heart-burnings, and anger. There is temperance which seeks not a vain show, but uses the things of this world as not abusing them. There is the love and charity with which the believer regards the salvation of his fellow-creatures, and which inclines and obliges him to make a personal sacrifice to cure their temporal or natural distresses. There is in short all those graces of the spirit that constitute the crown of the believer—a crown that shall rest lightly on his brow and that forever; for his faith shall have an end when it is changed into vision, and his hope shall be useless when his joy is full, but these shall “smell sweet and blossom in the dust,” when the outward man has perished, and their fragrance shall go with him—yea, before him into heaven. This is the distinction of a christian, and in this manner his faith becomes a blessing. Out of the heart are the issues of life, but life only then when the heart of

stone has been changed into a heart of flesh according to that ancient promise of God, to whom be the praise and glory forever.—AMEN.

HINTS ON THE APPROACHING MEETING OF THE SYNOD.

This number of our Magazine will be put into the hands of our readers just before the time of the meeting of Synod: that supreme judicatory of our church being appointed to meet in Montreal on the 2d day of August, at 12 o'clock, noon. We can well reckon on the indulgence of our brethren, its members, in tendering to them one or two counsels on this occasion. The attendance both of ministers and elders at the last two meetings was less than usual; and this we fear, is attributable in the case of ministers at least, to their diminished resources. We know well, that almost all of them are straitened in their incomes; yet we would say to them, do your utmost—make all prudent sacrifices to take your own proper part in the business of the church.

And, we would say to those who administer the pecuniary affairs of our congregations, come forward with your contributions to your pastors, at least, if not also to your elders, that they may assemble in council on the affairs of the church. Remember that they meet not for any distinct interest of their own, but, if true to their office, for your spiritual welfare, and the establishment and advancement of the kingdom of the Saviour in these regions. Consider that some critical questions are already under the discussion of the Synod, or may fall to be discussed—such as the stand to be taken for the rights of the church under the Treaty of Union, the extent to which the church should acquiesce, in the distribution of the clergy reserves amongst all the religious denominations in the Province, the measures to be adopted for educating those youths amongst us who are already aspiring to the ministry, and for founding a permanent collegiate institution. It is not fit that questions like these should be left to the decision of a small and partial representation of the church. Those to whom it may be conceded to act as leaders amongst us, however convinced of the soundness of the measures which they support, and which also they may be

able to carry in a thin house, must yet proceed with a certain faltering and hesitation in the execution of them, when they know not how far they can count on the co-operation of many of the absent brethren.

Besides, meeting as the Synod does, at different times, in places so remote as Toronto and Montreal, there is no small danger, that the business of the church shall be conducted in each place, not only by different men but but also, in some respects, in different ways and on different principles.

In ecclesiastical as well as civil matters, sentiments and opinions, important enough to constitute a partizanship amongst those who entertain them, are often local; and hence, a reason for the members of a court, like our Synod, to attend it from all quarters of the territory. But, in order to the attendance of those who are at an extreme distance from the place of meeting, they should be assisted with pecuniary aid from congregational funds. We dare not put on record how great a proportion of the whole stipend of some ministers in the Upper Province would be consumed in taking them to and from Montreal—to say nothing of the expense of living there.

Our brethren who are preparing to attend, must bear with a word of counsel from us.

And 1st, we would say, let those who are intending to originate any new measures or to discuss measures already proposed, endeavour to come to the discussion of them with views well studied and matured. This is due not less to the Synod than to every measure that may be proposed in it.

2d. Let those who have any measures to propose, ponder well the practicableness of them. The past records of the Synod afford sad memorials of resolutions that have never been carried into effect, and of the appointment of committees that have never met, or at least, never reported their proceedings, and we fear we may add, of the reference of business to Presbyteries that has never been taken up.

3d. Let ministers and Presbytery clerks be faithful in producing their several statistical returns. Much may be made of these, both by those who are aiming at promoting the internal improvement of the church, and those who are contending for her temporal rights.

4th. Let us all keep in mind that the great objects of our meeting—subordinate to the glory of God, are—the purity, peace and enlargement of the church; and that these are attainable through the

Divine blessing only by wise counsels, enlarged charity, firm decisions, and self-denying labours.—Let us come together, then, in a dependance on the grace of our common Lord and Master. And as we leave our flocks for a season, let us earnestly crave their prayers in our behalf, that the word of the Lord may run and have free course and be glorified.

CRITICAL NOTICE.

THE DUTIES OF SUBJECTS TO THEIR RULERS, WITH A SPECIAL VIEW TO THE PRESENT TIMES; A SERMON PREACHED IN THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF SCARBOROUGH, ON A DAY OF THANKSGIVING.—BY THE REV. JAMES GEORGE, MINISTER OF SCARBOROUGH.

Pro Rege, Lege et Grege.

Christianity pours no small contempt on military glory. It ranks the occupation of the soldier in the same class with that of the officer of a municipal police and the common executioner. And yet, in proportion as the art of war is thus debased, the christian may exhibit the greater moral heroism when he begirts himself with arms. Oh, how opposite to many of his strongest feelings, to spill the blood of a fellow-creature—to his sense of the immense importance of time as a period of probation for eternity, to be employed in cutting short that time to those whom he cannot but regard as ill prepared for their final account! And yet, when the maintenance of law and order, of liberty and all other earthly possessions, yea, and eventually, of the spiritual privileges of the community, requires the christian to take up arms; his feelings of pity to wretched traitors and public enemies must be suppressed—he goes forth as “the minister of God to execute wrath on those who do evil.”

Amongst the thousands of our population who were recently in arms, were many members of our church, not a few elders, and even one or two ministers. And we know from the testimony of several, what we could otherwise well have believed—that many of them felt a peculiar struggle, when they received the musket and fixed the bayonet—not with the emotions of fear for personal interests, but with the fear of doing violence to all those principles of the Gospel which stands out in opposition to war.

The members of our church in the township of Scarborough, were eminently distinguished for the part

they took in repelling the recent insurrection. They were amongst the first who repaired to the relief of the city of Toronto: they were in the front of the battle, or rather pursuit, of the rebels in Yonge street; and in their barracks and on their march, like the soldiers of the Covenant 200 years ago, they had their pastor with them. And now to their higher honour be it said, they have called on him to print the sermon which he preached to them on the occasion of the public thanksgiving for the suppression of the insurrection, and that sermon, we venture to say, was amongst the best that were preached on that day.

Like all the sermons of Mr. George which we have heard, and like the one which he published, and which we reviewed in an early number of this Journal—it is a powerful and massive discourse. We perceive some want of care or of art in the jointing and polishing its minor parts, but it has many substantial excellencies. It is founded on these words of Paul: "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers."—Romans, xiii. 1., and the scope of it is to set forth the duties of subjects to their rulers. These are illustrated and enforced under the following heads:

I. *That it is the duty of all good subjects to pray for their rulers.*

II. *That it is the duty of subjects to pay taxes, that the Government under which they live, and by which they are protected, may be supported.*

III. *That subjects ought to honour their rulers.*

IV. *It is the duty of subjects, in all cases, to aid their rulers; and, if assailed by violence, to defend them.*

In the illustration of these, there is greater minuteness in expounding the principles of the British Constitution and of other topics which go to constitute the argument for the expediency of submission to rulers, than what we conceive to be strictly proper for a pulpit discourse; but, a considerable latitude must be given to preachers on such occasions, and certainly no minister who was himself a good subject, could on our day of public thanksgiving have contented himself with an illustration of the duties of subjects in the abstract.

We earnestly wish an extensive circulation for this sermon in our congregations.

We take a few passages from it at random; any one page of it is a fair specimen of the whole.

Under the fourth head, which states it to be "the duty of subjects, in all cases, to aid their rulers, and, if assailed by violence, to defend them," we quote the following remarks:

"This may be looked at under two aspects. First, it is the duty of all subjects to aid their rulers in carrying the laws into effect. It really matters nothing, how excellent soever the laws may be, unless the people generally are ready to lend their assistance in de-

fecting offenders, and in bringing the guilty to punishment. Without such aid from the people, the magistrate will be impotent, and the law become a dead letter. And this truth and its consequences are just the more apparent the freer the civil institutions of a country are. Where disregard to the laws begins, all safety ends. Nor can there be a more dangerous state of things, than when criminals can count on impunity, from the protection thrown around them by the morbid sympathy of a community ignorant or regardless of the high claims of justice. Every man—the meanest not less than the greatest—should feel that he has a deep interest in the laws being fully supported, and the claims of justice being ever held inviolate. Hence, it is his duty to give all the assistance he can to the ministers of justice—the servants of Government.

"But, second, subjects must defend rulers if they are assailed by violence. Under ordinary circumstances, the regular force of the state is quite sufficient for the protection of authority. There may, however, be emergencies—you are at no loss to conceive of such—when this force may either not be at hand, or may not be sufficient. The path of duty is then plain—if the Government be unprotected, and assailed by violence, every man who does not wish it overthrown will rush if he possibly can, to its defence. And when he has done so, and exposed himself to danger, he has done nothing more than what was barely his duty.

"But the discharge of this piece of duty rests, of course, on the supposition that defensive war is lawful. This, you are aware, has, of late, in this Province, been frequently called in question. This opinion is not novel, although it has acquired, in our times, rather a novel form; and is found to embrace principles neither wise nor safe, and, in some cases, far from being honourable to those who hold it. I beg that it may be distinctly understood, that it is my sincere conviction that war on any other grounds whatsoever than those purely defensive is the most heinous wickedness. And were it possible to collect all the curses which the prophets of God ever pronounced against sinners, and pour them forth in one deep denunciation, that denunciation ought to fall on the guilty heads of those men who have been the means of originating and carrying on unlawful wars. Aggression in this matter is a sort of wickedness that has hardly any parallel. But does the criminality of this hellish conduct render defensive war unlawful? We think the very reverse. It is just because men will make aggressive wars that defensive war becomes absolutely necessary, and, on the plainest and most sacred principles of justice, clearly lawful. I shall not take up your time by any lengthened argument in support of this. The people whom I address do not need argument on so plain a matter; and they have, I trust, too much honesty and loyalty to pretend perplexity of judgment, where there is merely perversity of will! Those who deny the lawfulness of defensive war for the sake of consistency, ought to go a step further, and deny the use of all civil Government. For in such a world as ours—and we must just take men as they are, and not as we could wish them to be—a Government without force will very quickly be resolved into a number of persons who bear titles—wear certain symbols—play their respective parts in a national pageant—complacently hear, and impotently announce opinions. If contending parties choose to listen, good; if not, the matter, as far as the Government is concerned, is at an end. But if force is used by those in authority, in order to carry out their decision, and if violence must be employed in giving effect to law—in defending the innocent—or in bringing the guilty to punishment—whether this shall be the work of

five men, or of fifty thousand—the principle is the same.

"In a word, a Government without force among depraved creatures, is *will*, in place of *law*. To this it must come: and this, as it appears to me, is just no Government at all. Excellent state of things this for the cunning sharper and the ruffian, greedy for rapine: what it might be to the virtuous, peaceable and simple-minded citizen, is quite another matter. But the whole thing is as far wrong in an international point of view, as it is in a municipal. Assuredly, my brethren, the time will come "when nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." Universal submission to the Prince of Peace will bring all this to pass. But ere this consummation takes place—a consummation for which all christians are bound to pray and to labour—it will be too soon "to beat our swords into ploughshares, and our spears into pruning-hooks." It would be well if persons who speculate on this matter would look a little more carefully into the cause—the true cause of universal peace. The complete triumph of the Redeemer's kingdom alone can bring about this. But to expect universal peace in a world "that lieth in wickedness" is what neither reason nor prophecy warrants. And to suppose a Government to exist without power to enforce all its just claims, in the various relations in which it stands to its own subjects, and to foreign states, is the height of folly. A folly, it is true, quite congruous with the other notions bred in the minds of crazy enthusiasts. But what shall be thought of those who are now clamouring against defensive war, but who neither ask, nor are entitled to, the same apology which, in all fairness, ought to be made for the enthusiast? Who can forbear to smile, when he sees this affected humanity employed to hide principles as different from justice and mercy, as they are from loyalty? Defensive war murder! Pity it is that John the Baptist did not understand this matter better, so that, instead of telling soldiers "to be content with their wages," he ought to have told them, in plain terms, that they were murderers. We wonder much what these persons would have said to St. Paul, when he accepted a guard of Roman soldiers, to protect him from the daggers of assassins, on his way from Jerusalem to Cesarea? On more occasions than one did this Apostle find, that human law would have been to him a poor protection, had the magistrate borne no sword, or borne it in vain. It is not a little surprising sometimes, to see extremes meet. The upholder of despotic authority cries out, there must on no account whatever be any defensive war. Lie down and die. The man who is secretly preparing arms to overthrow the Government, exclaims how horrible to think of men kept on pay to destroy their fellow-creatures—all war is murder. All war, we presume, but his own.

There is something wrong—the intellect of the conscience is diseased, or it is mere hypocrisy in a man to declaim against defensive war. To excrete as murderers all who have drawn the sword in defence of law and human rights, is to excrete some of the noblest for moral worth whose names adorn the page of sacred or profane history. While to condemn the principle in unqualified terms, is to shield the guilty—to hold out an inducement for the commission of the most horrid crimes—is to be wiser and more benevolent than Almighty God—is to play the fool or the knave in a manner truly deplorable. What! are we to see a horde of men—men in nothing but the form—plundering, burning, and murdering around us, and shall we meet them only with opinions and appeals? Is violence, when suffering helpless innocency is flying before its gory weapons, to be met with nothing but cool reasoning.—Contemptible madness,

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cruel mercy were this. And when you see the Government and the Constitution under which you live, and in which you find so large a share of all your earthly happiness treasured up, openly assailed by wicked men, are you to stand coolly by and witness all, all torn to pieces, and scattered to the winds, and a whole country filled with confusion, lamentation, and woe? This you have not done. This, I venture to affirm, you will not do. All boasting apart, as morally indecorous, I fearlessly aver, that ere that glorious symbol of liberty that waves on a thousand towers, from the banks of the Ganges to those of the St. Lawrence, is torn to the dust in our Western Canada, by the hands of home-bred traitors, or foreign sympathizers, there are many hearts in Upper Canada that will warm to desperate defiance: and if that day of deep desecration and woe comes, that shall see our Constitution and British connection perish, there are many hearts now warm that will be cold ere that day's sun shall go down."

ECCLESIASTICAL INTELLIGENCE.

THE PRESBYTERIES OF BATHURST AND TORONTO.—

It is our earnest desire that the end and aim of our journal should be one and single—the advancement of "the truth which is according to godliness;" and if this object be but feebly promoted by it, we fear that some of our brethren on whose co-operation we had reckoned, and were entitled to reckon, will not easily exonerate themselves from blame. Few pens have recently been employed to lend us a helping hand; and even the clerks of presbyteries seem to have forgotten that the proceedings of their courts might be profitably known beyond their own immediate precincts.

We have accidentally seen in the hands of a friend, a circular of the Presbytery of Bathurst which we have much pleasure in copying. Subjoined to it is a scheme of appointments for preaching in 20 different stations by six of the brethren. According to the scheme, each minister is out eight successive days in the half year, preaching ten times during these days so that each place is visited three times during the half year. Other presbyteries, we know, are acting on a similar plan, though not, we believe, so systematically as the Bathurst brethren.

According to the VI. article in the annexed plan, the Bathurst Presbytery seem desirous to employ a "Lay Missionary." We fear that some hypercritical committee of the Synod in revising their records may move for a note to be affixed to this unecclesiastical like language. We presume that our devoted brethren of the East meant a catechist, or reader, or exhorter. This order of labourers is known in our scheme of church government. But if they will consult M'Crie's Life of Knox, they will find that these labourers of old

were not easily restrained within the limits of service assigned them, but were ever intruding into the functions of the preacher; and our own observation of the procedure of one whom the presbytery of Toronto employed, makes us doubt the practicability of employing such labourers to any considerable extent in consistency with our practice of admitting to ministerial ordination only those who with higher gifts, possess those of literature and science.

The exhortation of the catechist may be a sermon or a lecture in his own account and that of his hearers; and it is very natural for him to expect when in his own opinion and that of others he exercises his gift well, that he should be eligible to the ministerial work. And he will fret against the regulations which exclude him from this, as do the inferior officers in our armies against those regulations which all but deny the rewards of rank to mere military virtues however eminent.

Catechists or *Lay* exhorters, if we may use the phrase—for we have our doubts as to the propriety of its use in our presbyterian nomenclature—should either not be employed at all, or they should be taken from the order of men who are under training for the ministry, and to whom it is accessible. But we are wandering from our subject. The following is the paper to which we have referred:

PLAN FOR CONDUCTING MISSIONARY LABOURS, ADOPTED BY THE PRESBYTERY OF EATHURST; AND PREACHING APPOINTMENTS FOR THE PRESENT YEAR.

PLAN.

I. That a certain number of preaching stations be selected, which shall be divided into two parts, each part to be supplied once in three months, by a Minister of the Presbytery, the members of which shall officiate in rotation.

II. That at each station, the people attending be organized as a Congregation, Managers be appointed, and if practicable, a fit person to lead their devotions, when on the Sabbath they have no regular Minister to officiate.

III. That in each Congregation there be a Subscription list opened, under the direction of the Managers, who shall pay over, half yearly, in the months of January and July, what they have collected, to the Treasurer of the Missionary Fund, under the direction of the Presbytery. From this fund, the Preachers employed shall be allowed a reasonable allowance for their travelling expenses, by an order upon the Treasurer, at each meeting of Presbytery.

IV. That at each station, the subscribers, with their families, and such poor persons as are not able to contribute any thing, shall constitute the congregation.

V. Each Preacher employed shall, at the next meeting of Presbytery, report the result of his labours, when farther instructions shall be given, so that the work may be carried on in a uniform manner.

VI. That a lay person, if one qualified can be found, be as soon as possible engaged by the Presbytery, to act as a Missionary under their direction, in the destitute settlements within their bounds.

(Signed)

T. C. WILSON,
Presbytery Clerk.

NOTE.—The scheme of appointments which we do not quote, runs from June 26th, 1838, to January 9th 1839.

From a member of the presbytery of Toronto, we have obtained the following interesting intelligence. At their meeting in the month of May, in the City of Toronto, "On a reference from a member of the court for advice in regard to the course to be pursued by a session towards a person applying for church privileges who had taken part in the late insurrection, the presbytery declare it to be the duty of the session, to endeavour to bring him to a sense of the heinous wickedness of his conduct, and, in the event of their being satisfied with his contrition, and with his views and deportment in other respects to admit him to church privileges; and they further declare, that it is the duty of sessions in case of their knowing that any members of the church had had art or part in the late insurrection, to deal prudently and earnestly with them in order to impress them with a sense of their guilt, and to admonish and reprove them as they shall see good for edification. And in any case in which no contrition for guilt of this kind is expressed, the presbytery recommend sessions to suspend the offenders from the communion of the church, and to report any such proceedings to the presbytery.

At the meeting of the same presbytery in Toronto township, on the 10th and 11th inst., it was resolved to overture the Synod to take farther measures for directing and encouraging the young men who have already avowed their desire to study for the ministry, and to prosecute vigorously the foundation of a theological college. Also, to overture the Synod for the admission into the church, of ministers and probationers of the Synod of Ulster, who shall have subscribed the Confession of Faith.

On a reference for advice as to the course to be pursued towards members of the church who absent themselves from preaching and from sealing ordinances—"The presbytery declare it to be the duty of sessions to deal patiently and affectionately with such persons, and in the event of their giving no satisfactory reasons for their conduct, to admonish and ultimately suspend them from the communion of the church if it be thought necessary—that such cases be reported from time to time to the presbytery, and no

farther steps taken without the consent of the presbytery."

We should have before mentioned what the same informant has told us, that the Rev. William Ritchie, formerly of St. Luke's, Demarara, has been inducted to the pastoral charge of the congregation of New-Market. The next meeting of the Presbytery is to be held at Toronto on the 2d day of October, at 7 o'clock P.M. Mr. Ritchie to preach on the occasion.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND.—On Thursday, May the 17th, the Venerable Assembly of our Church met in Edinburgh. About 12 o'clock, the Lord High Commissioner (Lord Belhaven) and suite repaired to the High Church. The Rev. Dr. Gardiner of Bothwell, Moderator of last General Assembly, preached from 2d Cor. iv. 7.

Divine service being concluded, his Grace the Commissioner and suite proceeded to the Tron Church, where the Assembly met, and was constituted with the usual solemnity.

Dr. Gardiner after acknowledging the high honour which had been conferred on him by the kindness of the last General Assembly, proposed as his successor, the Rev. Dr. William Muir, who thereupon was elected Moderator, and took the Chair accordingly.

A full report of the proceedings will, of course, not be expected here. We shall therefore give a brief outline of some of the most important questions discussed by the Venerable Assembly.

OVERTURES RELATIVE TO THE CONVERSION OF THE JEWS.

Mr. Lorimer said it was needless to take up the time of the House by the reading of all the overtures on this interesting subject, as all of them were to the same effect. The Presbytery of Glasgow to which he had the honour to belong, in common with many Presbyteries, and not a few Synods, had sent up a most cordial overture on this very important subject.—Not less than twelve or fourteen overtures to the same effect were lying on the Assembly's table. The first Overture which, he believed emanated from the Presbytery of Glasgow on this subject, originated, not from ministers, but from a large number of influential christian laymen; and in his mind it contained a fresher and deeper interest on that account. The gentleman who drew up the memorial which led to this overture from the city of Glasgow, he was happy to say, was a member of this Court; and as he inherited no small portion of the spirit, talent, and christian love of some of the most distinguished fathers of our Church, he would not hesitate to give his name, Mr. Robert Wodrow, well known in Glasgow, a man admired and esteemed by all who knew him. It would be presumptuous in him (Mr. L.) in such an Assembly of fathers and brethren as this, to urge the claim of the Jews upon them, from the consideration of their past history; their present condition, or future prospects. He was satisfied that the only feeling of which they would be conscious in connection with the claim which the Jews had upon them, must be the feeling of the church of Christ—the feel-

ing of regret that they had been so long in taking up their cause. He trusted that they should no longer forget ancient Israel, and that the delightful harmony which had prevailed in their inferior courts on this subject was an earnest of the warm-hearted unanimity with which it would be received in this Court; and that the time when God intended to favour Zion was at last approaching. The only difficulty he had heard started was the danger of distracting the attention of the church with too many separate objects. He confessed he was much impressed with the importance of this consideration. One of the great errors in the prosecution of missionary objects had been undue expansion; but the Jews stood on a footing so very peculiar, that he conceived no danger of their breaking in upon the concentration of christians in the benevolent efforts they were making for enlightening the darkness of thousands of their other fellow creatures. No parties could plead the same argument as the Jews for being admitted into the christian church. They could do nothing as a church for the Jews unless they decidedly and distinctly took up their case. They had not yet fathomed the liberality of their people. Never had any of them been impoverished by giving to the cause of God; and the zeal which had been manifested in all parts of the country in sending up these overtures, was a proof that there was a great deal of latent affection towards God's ancient people, and which must lead them to believe that it had only to be called forth by the church. It would not interfere with the claim of the missionaries. The one cause would aid the other. God never made one duty inconsistent with another. The great Head of the church had already in a remarkable manner established a connection between the cause of the Jews and the India mission. At this moment the India mission were instructing twenty Jewish children in one of their schools in Bombay. Jewish parents were applying to the mission for the admittance of their children to the benefit of christian education. When good people were thinking and praying at home about what steps they ought to take in the matter of their conversion, a voice came from abroad—from their missionaries, inviting them to enter into the Jewish field, and assuring them that there was ample scope for labour at their very doors. Mr. Lorimer concluded by moving that the General Assembly approving of the object contemplated in the many overtures transmitted to them, appoint a committee to take into consideration in what way it might be best carried into effect, and report to the Assembly.

Mr. Dempster of Denny rose to second the motion. It was certainly a most interesting subject in itself, and it was not the less interesting that the subject of the conversion of the Jews, the ancient people of God, should have been brought before the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, and for the first time he believed in any established church, on a day which is dear to the Jewish people, and hallowed in their minds by many sacred recollections. He could not avoid stating that the conversion of the Jews would be of the utmost advantage to the cause of christianity among the Gentiles, for with them would the fulness of the Gentiles be brought in.

Mr. Buchan of Kelloe rejoiced that this subject received so large a share of the attention of the Church of Scotland, and anticipated the happiest results from it. The Jewish nation had been scattered over the face of the earth like chaff before the wind. In all their trials and their afflictions they had remained unmingled with other nations, a circumstance which had never occurred with any other people. It was the infallible word of prophecy that the Jews were to be restored, and it was surely their most incumbent duty to do every thing in their power to spread the light

of the gospel of Jesus Christ among the chosen people of God. In doing this to the utmost they would only be repaying a debt of gratitude to the Jews, to whom had been committed the oracles of God. It might be said with great truth that christianity had been nursed in the lap of Judaism. In some places already the exertions on behalf of the Jews had been successful to a very gratifying degree. He himself had seen a converted Jew, baptized at Plymouth, and he was now a zealous minister of the gospel of Christ. There was a large body of the Jewish people in India, and he could see no good reason why the support of the Church of Scotland should not be extended to aid in the good work now going on. The Divine favour had been often manifested towards the Jews, not only by rewarding nations which have befriended them, but by disapproval of those who have treated them with wanton severity. The Assembly could not adopt a better step than in forwarding the objects of the overtures.

Dr. Dewar did not consider himself called on to say whether the words of the prophecy, in relation to the Jews were properly interpreted; yet we were under great obligations to the ancient people of God. If it was their duty to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature; if they are to convey the glad tidings of salvation to all who are within their reach, surely it is their duty to do all in their power for the conversion of the Jews. There were many encouraging signs of the times, and he trusted they would be encouraged of God to the prosecution of this great undertaking. He approved of the appointment of the committee.

After a few words from Mr. Bridges the committee was appointed.

OUVERTURE ANENT THE SALE OF LIQUORS ON THE LORD'S DAY.

On the motion of Dr. Forbes, the Assembly next proceeded to the consideration of the overture on this subject from the Presbytery of Glasgow. The overture was read by the Clerk as follows:—

"That whereas the existing law in regard to public houses does not make adequate provision against the sale of malt or spirituous liquors on the Lord's-day: And whereas, in consequence of this laxity on the part of the law, a great traffic is carried on during that day in ale and spirits, especially in the large towns, whereby the public profanation of the Sabbath, and much drunkenness, with its attendant evils, disease, profligacy, pauperism, and crime, prevail in the land, the Presbytery do humbly overture the ensuing General Assembly to take this alarming evil into their most serious consideration, and devise what measures to them may seem best, whether by application to the Legislature or otherwise, for putting a speedy and effectual check on the great and flagrant evils of the present system."

Dr. Forbes said, that it appeared to him that very little would require to be advanced in support of this overture. Every member of the Court must have witnessed, and must have deeply lamented the extent to which the evil prevailed in almost every quarter of the country. The Presbytery of Glasgow had had the subject brought frequently before them, and so much did they feel on the subject, that they considered it their duty to go to Parliament by petitions, to bring under the notice of the Legislature the fearful extent of the evil. They conceived, from the report of the Committee appointed to inquire into the causes of the spread of drunkenness, and increasing profanation of the Sabbath by the sale of liquors, that much of the evil arose from an unfortunate misconception as to the state of the law regulating public houses. Some years ago, an act had been introduced into Parliament for

the regulation of public houses, and there could be no doubt that it was the intention of the framer of that act to put down, as far as possible, the demoralizing practices of which they complained. But it had unfortunately happened that a restriction in that act against the sale of liquors during divine service on the Sabbath, had been construed into a permission to do so at all other hours of that day. The act to which he referred was generally known by the title of Home Drummond's Act. It had also happened that this view of the law had been given effect to by a decision in the Court of Judiciary, although the bill had passed by the House of Commons on the distinct understanding that the act, though passed in its present shape, would not affect the operation of the common and ancient laws of Scotland. It was a belief in some quarters that the ancient statutes of Scotland against the profanation of the Sabbath were still in force; but their operation, if in force, were paralysed by this act, and the magistrates were averse to put them in force against offenders in this doubtful state of the law. The publicans, of course, presume upon this state of uncertainty, and carry on the evil practice with impunity. Considering, as he did, that it was peculiarly the duty of the General Assembly to watch over the morals of the country, he hoped they would use every endeavor within their power to put a check to the evils of which he complained. It was really lamentable to contemplate the extent to which these demoralizing practices were carried, not only in the large towns, but even in the country parts of Scotland. There was scarcely a district in the kingdom where the evil was not felt and acknowledged.

Dr. Esdaille considered a great part of the evil to arise from the practice of paying wages on the Saturday nights. After receiving their wages, many of them sat drinking all the night, and next day were fit for nothing but to lie in bed to the total neglect of religious ordinances. The evil was the work of the night before; but they began to drink again on the Sabbath night. He would propose that the spirit shops be shut after six o'clock on Saturday nights, as well as kept shut all the Sabbath.

Mr. Kirkwood of Holywood said the evils complained of were not only Sabbath, but were every-day evils. The principal cause was that there were by far too many public houses licensed in Scotland. In the town of Dumfries, for instance, there was a population of 11,000, and for these there were no fewer than 240 licensed public-houses. It was no uncommon thing to see on a Lord's-day morning, at the break of day, fifteen, twenty or thirty people, staggering along on their way home to desecrate the Sabbath. In the village of Annan, where the population was 4700, there were 65 public houses; and some of these houses reflected no great honor on those who had the management of the licenses. Some of the houses were only for the grossest system of tipping.

Mr. Bridges, W. S., said there would be the greatest difficulty in getting Parliament to do any thing for the promotion of the sanctification of the Sabbath, as was evident by the reception such proposals of late had received. He thought that the idea was too readily acquiesced in, that Home Drummond's Act had overthrown the Sabbath laws of Scotland. The sale of spirits on that day was as much prohibited as the sale of any other commodity, and there was also a greater disposition to punish and prevent the sale of spirits. The act did not directly affect the Sabbath law. There was not a word on that point in the body of that act and it was only in a clause in the form of a license appended to the act, that the license was declared forfeited if spirits were sold during the hours of divine service. If the question were properly tried, it would be seen that these few words would not affect the an-

cient laws of Scotland on the subject of the Sabbath. The case required yet to be well tried, for he was convinced the case in the Court of Judiciary was not well pleaded. While on this subject, he considered it his duty to state that there were mills about the city of Edinburgh which were kept going on the Lord's day; and he could name the mills if it were necessary.

Mr. Carment of Rosskeen seconded the proposal of Dr. Dewar. He considered it would be proper and desirable to do something to get masters to pay their men on Monday, instead of Saturday. He would tell his Glasgow friends, that when he was a poor chapel minister in that town, he had himself put a stop in a great measure to Sabbath profanation, by getting the Magistrates to send out the police officers to take up the offenders and fine them.

A special committee was then appointed to petition Parliament for a declaratory act; for a change in the penalties imposed by the Scots acts; and against the proposed new law. The Assembly then adjourned till 11 o'clock on Tuesday.

ASSEMBLY'S RESOLUTIONS ON CHURCH EXTENSION.

MAY 22.

1. That in the year 1834 and 1835, the General Assembly called the attention of his late Majesty's Government to the lamentable deficiency of the means of religious instruction and pastoral superintendence prevailing in many of the towns and parishes of Scotland.

2. That in the month of July, 1835, a Royal Commission was issued to inquire into the facts of the case, and that from the issuing of that Commission, from the language employed by the members of Government, by whom its appointment was moved for, from the terms in which it was expressed, instructing Commission to report, from time to time, "in order that such remedies may be applied to any existing evil as Parliament may think fit," the General Assembly was warranted to conclude that wherever a deficiency of the means of religious instruction and pastoral superintendence was proved to exist, the aid which the Assembly had solicited would undoubtedly be supplied.

3. That the spiritual destitution alleged by the Church to exist, has been fully and unanswerably proved by the inquiries, so far as their results have yet appeared, of the Royal Commission, and especially in the two great cities of Edinburgh and Glasgow, in regard to which, taken together, the melancholy fact has been established by the Commission, that there are at least 100,000 of their inhabitants of an age to attend public worship, and these almost exclusively of the poorest classes of society, who are living in total and habitual estrangement from the ordinances of the Gospel.

4. That relying with confidence on the pledge implied in the professions and proceedings of Government relative to this momentous subject, the General Assembly, aided and supported by the generous contributions of the people of Scotland, has been going forward erecting additional churches in destitute localities, of which churches 187 are already built, or are now in progress, at an expense of upwards of £200,000, and which churches, as well as the 63 previously existing chapels of ease, while they sufficiently demonstrate the necessity out of which they have arisen, can never become efficient parochial institutions for the religious instruction of all classes of the people without an endowment.

5. That on the authority of a deputation from the Church Extension Committee, appointed to confer with Government on this subject, in the month of March

last, the General Assembly has heard, with equal surprise and sorrow, that it is the intention of Her Majesty's Ministers to propose to Parliament a measure in regard to religious instruction in Scotland, of which the Right Hon. Lord Melbourne, First Lord of the Treasury, has acknowledged the following to be an accurate outline:—

"1. That the bishops' teinds shall be applied in providing for the religious destitution in certain Highland, and other rural parishes, having no unexhausted teinds.

"2. That an alteration shall be made of the Act 1707, respecting the division of parishes in Scotland, so as to afford increased facilities for the application of the unexhausted teinds in the hands of private proprietors, to relieve the destitution of such rural parishes as have unexhausted teinds belonging to them.

"3. That nothing shall be done for the towns; that no grant shall be made from any source to provide additional means of religious instruction for them."

6. That while the Assembly pronounces no opinion as to the particular funds from which additional means of religious instruction ought to be supplied, and while they accept with thankfulness a proposal to provide for the destitution of the rural districts, they are bound to deprecate in the strongest possible terms a measure which assumes that no grant from any source is to be made to relieve the enormous amount of religious destitution prevailing in the towns, and that in all the circumstances of the case, the Assembly could not but regard the proposing of such a measure as involving not only the dereliction of a public duty, but a departure from the pledge held out by the previous proceedings of Government, and in so far as the great towns are concerned, to the Church and people of Scotland.

7. That in the circumstances narrated in the preceding resolutions, the General Assembly resolve humbly to petition both Houses of Parliament, embodying in the petitions the preceding resolutions, and entreating them, by a regard to the temporal welfare of society at large, and to the eternal interests of 100,000 immortal beings, whose spiritual destitution the Religious Instruction Commission has so incontestably proved; that care be taken to include in any measure for providing additional means of religious instruction in Scotland, an adequate grant to meet the spiritual necessities of the town as well as of the rural population.

8. That while the very announcing of such an intention on the part of Government as the foregoing resolutions describe, is fitted to operate most injuriously on the Church Extension cause, the General Assembly confidently trust that the friends of this great christian enterprise will not suffer themselves to be discouraged; that with a resolution, and energy, and perseverance, proportioned at once to the difficulties to be encountered, and to the inestimable importance of the high end they have in view, they will continue to prosecute their labours, and that by the grace of God they will never relax their efforts till, crowned by his Divine blessing, they have secured the triumph of their cause.

OVERTURES ON THE INDEPENDENCE OF THE CHURCH.

The Assembly proceeded to take up the numerous Overtures to the Venerable Court, to adopt measures for asserting its spiritual independence.

Mr. Buchanan of Glasgow opened the debate by supporting the principle of the Overtures. He commenced by meeting the objection, that the very nature of an Established Church implies a surrender of her independence to the State. A Report had lately issued from the press, and was circulating under the sanction of the supreme Civil Court of Scotland, and in which

this opinion was gravely laid down. He had no intention to notice the poetic licence allowed to counsel at the bar, but it was extraordinary to find the sentiment he referred to coming from the bench of Scotland which had done more real injury to the Church of Scotland than the combined energies of her enemies had effected for the last five or six years. It was their bounden duty to contradict and discountenance such Erastian opinions. It would appear from the statements of the high authority to which he had alluded that they thought the Church, by entering into conjunction with the State, had undergone a kind of mental psychosis more degrading than they read of in Oriental romance. He quoted the opinions of Principal Hill and Dr. Inglis, clearly defining and strongly vindicating the great principles of the Church's spiritual independence. He appealed to the Standards of the opinions of any man, but directly he quoted the Second Book of Discipline, chapters 23, 30, 31. Would any man say in the face of these standards that the Church is the mere creature of an Act of Parliament? After distinguishing the relative positions of Church and State, he went on to consider the argument that the Second Book of Discipline was not ratified by Act of Parliament, and the Confession of Faith was explicit in its declarations of the Church's spiritual independence. But he maintained that the Act of 1592 did recognize and ratify the Second Book of Discipline, and stated his reasons at considerable length. He then adverted, in confirmation of his views, to the declarations of the Church against intrusive settlements, in the First and Second Books of Discipline, repeated in 1538, in the Directory of 1649, and long afterwards, even after the restoration of patronage, in 1736. Whatever the consequences might be, he hoped the Church would never abandon her own laws. Without entering into or anticipating difficulties that might never arise, he remarked that the Church was bound in present circumstances to vindicate her own independence of the State, and her fealty to her Great Head. The Rev. Gentleman concluded by a solemnizing appeal to the Assembly on the deep responsibility they were about to incur by their deliverance of this day. He moved a resolution in accordance with the principle of the Overtures.

Dr. Thomson of Perth seconded the motion. He repudiated the sentiments that had emanated from the influential quarter referred to. He denied that the Church was the creature of a State enactment—she was the creature of the Lord Jesus Christ, her only Head.

Dr. Cook agreed with the general principles of the resolution that had been proposed, although he dissented from the conclusion to which it came. He proceeded to discriminate between the ecclesiastical rights of the Church, and the civil rights of her presentees and ordained clergymen. To allow the former to infringe upon the latter, what was it but to go back upon the principle of one civil privilege after Church, which, grasping at one civil privilege after another, at last sunk the nations for ages in spiritual and civil thralldom? He did not care to refer particularly to the opinions of the Court of Session, as they could not be expected to be so accurate in their statements of ecclesiastical questions as this Court; but he would not regard the civil opinions of the General Assembly of the Court of Session. He did not believe, any more than his friends who had preceded him, that the Church was the creature of a State enactment. He held that as a Church of Christ they had no other Head but Christ, and that they would stand in that position although the connection between the Church and the State were done away to-morrow. He regarded the object of the resolution they had heard as tending to that result; for it obviously went to compel disobedience to the civil law of the land.—He proceeded to consider the principle of the civil law as of the resolution, as setting the civil law at defiance, as inflicting punishments on their presentees for obeying the civil law, and as wholly irreconcilable with the idea of an Establishment. In support of these opinions he quoted largely from the standards and history of the Church. Probationers were, as the resolutions stated, bound to obey the laws of the Church, but only so far as the jurisdiction of the Church could go; and there was an antecedent obligation incumbent upon them to obey the laws of the land, and their ordained ministers had sworn to do this by their oath of allegiance. There could not be two contrary obligations in force at once; and it was an axiom in politics that an *imperium in imperio* could not exist. It would blow the whole system into a hilation. Yet such was the state of things to which the resolution would lead them, by lording it over the civil power. They were now seeking, and justly seeking, endowments for their new churches; but would their present movement strengthen their position with any sane Government? He thought they would put the Establishment in danger by their present course. It would be admitted from their experience down till 1834, that the principle now contended for was not essential to the existence of an Establishment, and that great and good men had grown up within her pale. Why, then, endanger their position by pressing forward a principle, the tendency of which was to bring the State into collision with the Church, and which would embarrass any Government in their plans for the welfare of the Church? He also opposed the resolution as coming within the scope of the Barrier Act. He had no objection to a Christian Church; but the resolution as a Christian Church; but the object of this resolution he looked upon as destructive of the good of the Church, which ere long, if persisted in, would scatter in the dust the towers and bulwarks of our Zion. He concluded by moving a counter resolution, affirming that the spiritual power of the Church is conferred upon her by the Lord Jesus Christ, her only Head; that nevertheless, it is incumbent on all classes of men to yield obedience to the existing laws, as declared by the supreme civil tribunals of the country; that on account of the prevailing differences of opinion in reference to the decision in the Auchtarder case, the question ought to be brought under the review of the House of Lords, and that the Assembly dismiss in *hoc statu* the overtures now on their table.

Mr. Pirie of Dyce, while he approved of Dr. Cook's motion, would go farther than the Rev. and Learned Doctor, in maintaining the independence of the Church. He regarded some of the conclusions come to in the Court of Session as subversive of that independence. He had the honour to be a member of the Assembly of 1834, which passed the Veto Law, and he then did what he could to oppose it; but after it was passed, as a son of the Church, he recognized its binding obligation, and he was now most desirous to ascertain in the House of Lords whether it was a competent law or no. While he went along entirely with the principles embraced in the debate was opened, admirable speech with which the debate was opened, he must dissent altogether from the conclusion he had reached. That motion, if carried, would leave no reason why their connection with the State might not be dissolved to-morrow. The drift of the motion was not to preserve the independence of the Church, because that could be accomplished by giving up their connection with the State; the real object of it was

to preserve the temporalities of the Church. He seconded Dr. Cook's motion.

Professor Brown of Aberdeen supported the first motion. The effects of carrying out the arguments of the Rev. Doctor on the other side, would be to deprive the Church of all spiritual power whatever. The Rev. Doctor had told them what apprehensions he entertained from the Church coming into collision with the State. Did he not know that a Church based upon the State, and nothing else, was baseless? Was he not aware how much the Church had profited from the confidence and affection with which she had ever been regarded by the people? And that if any thing went out from this House derogatory to her independence, that confidence and esteem to which they owed so much would be weakened and impaired? And after losing the power of public opinion, which they had heard so eloquently spoken of yesterday, as the great means for influencing the Government in behalf of the extension of the Church, how could they hope to succeed in securing that important end? He counselled the Church to adhere to principle let the consequence be what it might; and if she fell, she would fall in the defence of that cause for which their forefathers shed their blood.

Mr. Carment said there was no great danger of losing their emoluments, as their friends opposite seemed to think; but if this were the alternative, give him the principles, and let the emoluments be flung to the winds. He was surprised to learn from the Rev. Doctor, that they were acting on the principles of the Church of Rome. The Doctor seemed to think that his side of the House were arrogating to themselves a kind of Popish infallibility; but while he did so, he attributed the very same thing to the Court of Session, whose dictum he would not once allow us to call in question. What would the holy men of the Glasgow Assembly of 1638 think, could they look up and see any one of their descendants standing up on the second centenary anniversary of that memorable Assembly, and handing over even the least of their blood-bought privileges to the Court of Session or any Court on earth? (Hear, hear, hear.) Let them, like the great men of that Assembly dare to assert their rights, in the face of all assaults, from whatever source they might come. Were they to barter the independence of the Church, and surrender the dearest rights of the people of Scotland to any class or order of men?

Mr. Cook of Laurencekirk, referring to the various enactments on the settlement of ministers, said there was not a period in the history of our Church, from the Reformation downwards, in which they did not find the State, with the concurrence of the Church, thus interfering, as it might be called, in things spiritual. They were standing in the place of their fathers when they held the same opinions as to the settlement of ministers which they held. The settlement of ministers was not, therefore, a purely spiritual matter. If they refused any longer to permit such interference, then there was an end of the compact between the Church and the State. The Church might declare anything to be spiritual, and they would not permit the State to declare anything to be civil; what result could they expect from such a perilous course? They were told that they were vindicating the rights of the people—but the people were not to be deluded with such a declaration. The people know that it is the Church's power those on the other side were seeking to vindicate. He was not yet prepared to deprive the people of this country of the privileges they had derived from an Established Church, but which could not long be secured to them when the covenant between the Church and the State had been broken.

Dr. Forbes denied that the State had ever, in its communications with this Church, through its recognised organs, addressed sentiments to them such as those which had been uttered in the present discussion by the gentlemen on the opposite side. He went on to argue for the necessity of resisting the encroachments on their spiritual privileges, and recommended that the great principles of the question should be considered irrespective of such apprehensions as were entertained by the gentlemen opposite.

Mr. Loudon of Inverarity observed that the State had given no declaration of its opinions, for no one would affirm that a decision of the Court of Session was the opinion of the State. A decision of the Court of Session by a majority of two was certainly not a thing to frighten them from asserting their independence. He regretted the apparent collision, for it was no more, that had taken place; but he would not regret it after the delightful expression of independent feeling he had heard this day.

DIVISION.

Mr. Buchanan's motion, 183
 Dr. Cook's amendment, 142

Majority, 41

MISCELLANIES.

THE AUSTRALIAN COLLEGE—SYDNEY.—We are happy to learn, that this infant institution, so creditable to the zeal and perseverance of Dr. Lang, is in a state of rising prosperity. From January 1835, up to the latest accounts, there has been a steady and gradual increase of scholars at the end of every successive quarter. It is now attended by 80 pupils, and upwards of 20 boarders, and 9 other boarders are engaged to begin their studies after the vacation. In a pecuniary point of view, the Institution is also in a prosperous state, its present income considerably exceeds its expenditure. (From the *True Colonist*, June 1, 1837.) Besides the Principal, (Rev. J. D. Lang, D. D.) there are three Professors in this Institution—the Rev. Robert Wyldie, the Rev. David Mackenzie, and the Rev. Thomas Aitken, all gentlemen of talent and accomplishment.

PRAYER.—The laws of nature are "ordinances" of God establishing certain invariable connexions. It is a law in the material world that the loadstone should attract iron; it is equally a law in the spiritual world that prayer should attract to itself certain spiritual blessings. Why does the loadstone attract iron? Simply because God has decreed that it should. And God has no less decreed that prayer should secure certain definite blessings. When I attract iron towards myself by means of a loadstone, I take advantage of one of the laws of the universe; and it is only another law of the universe, of which I avail myself, when I secure to myself spiritual blessings by means of prayer.
 —Nisbet.

POETRY.

THE PARISH CHURCH.

BY GEORGE MENZIES, NIAGARA.

Mine own beloved Zion, built upon
The eternal Rock of Ages! wheresoe'er
I roam, the blessed sabbath-memory
Of the old Parish Church is with me still—
The holiest link that binds me to my home.
Peace be within thy walls, prosperity within
Thy palaces. O! if a day should come,
In which my country owns no Parish Church,
How dim will be her gold—her most fine gold,
Alas how changed! Then *Ichabod* will be
The epitaph inscribed upon her tomb.
And she will be a hissing and reproach
Like other lands that have preceded her
In this the modern *reformation*.

God

Hath stamped his seal upon the martyr-blood
That yet is on its pillars as a sign
For the destroying angel to pass by,
And leave unskathed the holy Parish Church.

Albeit the broad Atlantic intervenes,
Mine own old Parish Church is vividly
Before me, and a thousand memories
Of sunny Sabbath-days are on my heart.
Methinks I hear the gray-haired man of God,
Whom I regarded as a father—well I might—
Uttering in deep and solemn earnestness,
The promise and the prophet-warning to his flock.
I pause from more befitting thoughts to trace
Again my own initials rudely notched
Long years ago, upon the "bible-board;"
The old familiar faces are around;
And I am seated in my own old pew,
Beside the young, the beautiful, the dear.
Along the board is ranged a row of books,
With here a faded rose, and there,
A sprig of fragrant thyme or southern-wood,
Between the leaves, to mark the preacher's text.

Within that Church the name I since have borne,
Before unheard beyond the household-heart,
Was first revealed amid the holy words
Of the baptismal rite—the sprinkling hand
Long, long ago hath mouldered into dust;
And the first voice that breathed a prayer for me,
(Except a mother's and a father's prayer,)
Hath joined the diapason of the just
Made perfect, near the throne of God.
Within that Church, it was with fear
And trembling that I first approached
The table of the Lord. While in my hand,
I held the symbols of the sacrifice,
And touched the chalice with a quivering lip,
I felt upon my soul the awful vow,
Then registered in heaven, but ah! too oft
Forgotten since, though since repeated oft.

The Parish Church!—Behold its ancient spire,

Peeping from forth the tall ancestral elms,
Beneath whose shade thousands are sleeping well,
In undistinguished and forgotten graves;
While here and there are old gray stones inscribed
With quaint memorials—images of *Death*,
Time with his sandless hour-glass and his scythe,
And legends of high hopes for ever crushed,
Of young loves blighted, and of elder ties
Dissolved, not broken—*scripture-texts*,
Old epitaphs and rudely chisselled rhymes.

The Parish Church!—A blood-sealed Covenant
Is written on her tablets; and the gates
Of he'll shall not prevail against her. There
She stands, a moral oasis; and here—
Even here in the deep forest-wilderness,
She hath a voice that speaketh peace on earth,
And good will unto men. O, let my tongue
Cleave to my mouth, and may my right hand lose
Its cunning, if I e'er forget my own
Old Scotland and her Parish Church!

PARTING WORDS.

"And he said let me go, for the day breaketh."—
Genesis xxxii. 26.

Let me go, the day is breaking—
Dear companions, let me go:
We have spent a night of waking
In the wilderness below!
Upward now I bend my way;
Part we here at break of day.

Let me go; I may not tarry,
Wrestling thus with doubts and fears;
Angels wait my soul to carry
Where my risen Lord appears;
Friends and kindred, weep not so—
If ye love me, let me go.

We have travelled long together,
Hand in hand, and heart in heart,
Both through fair and stormy weather,
And 'tis hard, 'tis hard to part:
While I sigh, "Farewell!" to you,
Answer one and all, "Adieu!"

'Tis not darkness gathering round me
That withdraws me from your sight:
Walls of flesh no more can bound me,
But translated into light,
Like the lark on mounting wing,
Though unseen, you hear me sing.

Heaven's broad day has o'er me broken,
Far beyond earth's span of sky;
Am I dead? Nay, by this token,
Know that I have ceased to die.
Would you solve the mystery,
Come up hither—come and see.

J. MONTGOMERY.

The Mount, near Sheffield, June 26, 1837.