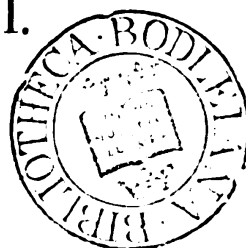


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MDCCCLXXVIII.

on the subject, I shall read you one or two sentences from it. The writer says—

“If the Free Church is prepared to sanction the erection of such paintings on the windows or walls of her places of worship, she is certainly resiling from the position which Scottish Presbyterianism took up at the era of the Reformation. Many of those who do not sympathise with the extreme position in regard to purity of worship adopted by the party headed by the Rev. Dr. Begg will be scandalized by this innovation, and regard it as opening the door sooner or later to the whole ritual of Romish worship. Can it be pleasing to God, or is it in itself seemly or lawful to adorn or disfigure the house of God with spurious portraits of his only Son? Is it any honour to Sir D. Brewster to insert his portrait among the Babylonian Sages engaged in adoring the infant Saviour, thus rendering the whole picture grotesque as well as fanciful?” The writer concludes by calling on the Free Church to nip in the bud an evil that is already threatening to work havoc throughout our Scottish Presbyterianism.

(To be concluded in our next.)

THE DISCIPLINE OF THE REFORMATION.

BY D. HAY FLEMING, ST. ANDREWS.

I.

To Knox and his colleagues the prospect in Scotland before the Reformation must have looked dark and dreary, for darkness covered the land and gross darkness the people. The Roman Antichrist had reigned supreme for centuries, and though his deadly sway was once and again protested against by the faithful witnesses whom God had raised up, they had either perished at the stake, or been forced to flee from the realm. The oppressed country was groaning under the lordly dominion of the dignitaries of the Church, and the dissimulation and bigotry of the queen-regent. And even when the darkness of death began to vanish before the light of the evangel, when the flower of the nobility took the lead in reforming, when the people were grasping the truth, and even after the nation by its rulers and representatives had turned from Popery to Protestantism in 1560,¹ there re-

¹ “It is true, that had the Reformers not received the support of the civil power, in all human probability the infant Reformation would have been strangled at its birth, as it actually was in Spain and Italy, and the whole of Europe might have been yet lying under the dominion of Antichrist.” M’Crie’s Sketches, 4th ed., vol. I., p. 19.

mained much to be done, the land had still to be possessed, and there were formidable difficulties in the way. The Church was neither organised nor endowed, and preachers were scarce.¹ A handful of devoted men had to face the poverty of the country, the selfish greed of the nobles, the blandishments of the beautiful but frail and Popish Mary, the policy of Morton, the tyranny of Lennox and Arran, the intrigues of "Jesuites, Seminarie Priests, and traffiqueing Papists," the duplicity and king-craft of James, and the ignorance and superstition of the land. But there were giants in those days. Our Reformers were men of great wisdom, undaunted courage, irrepressible zeal and strong faith. They relied not on human expediency, vain traditions, or worldly wisdom, but on God's promised blessing on His own means. They went direct to the Bible for all their plans, and the result was that every rag of rotten Popery, and every relic of the Amorite was purged away, and cast forth as things accursed into the region of eternal detestation, and the pure evangel set up instead. In the language of the renowned George Gillespie :—"The Church of Scotland was blessed with a more glorious and perfect reformation than any of our neighbour Churches. The doctrine, discipline, regiment, and policy established here by ecclesiastical and civil laws, and sworn and subscribed unto by the king's majesty and [the] several presbyteries and parish churches of the land, as it had the applause of foreign divines ; so was it in all points agreeable unto the word ; neither could the most rigid Aristarchus of these times challenge any irregularity of the same."² The great object of our zealous Covenanted Reformers was to win Scotland for Christ, and they could not rest satisfied until every person in the realm, at least professed Christianity. They longed to see the promise fulfilled in their own beloved land—"Thou shalt no more be termed forsaken ; neither shall thy land any more be termed desolate : but thou shalt be called Hephzi-bah, and thy land Beulah : for the Lord delighteth in thee, and thy land shall be married." To effect this noble aim, the doctrine, worship, discipline, and government of the Church were admirably adapted. The Calvinism of the first, the purity of the second, the strictness of the third, and the strength and vitality of the fourth were thoroughly scriptural, for they "took not their pattern from any kirk in the world ; no, not from Geneva itself ; but laying God's word before them, made reformation according thereunto,

¹ For some time Knox was the only minister of Edinburgh, and even in 1596 there were "above four hundreth parochie kirks destitute of the ministrie of the word, by and attour the kirks of Argyle and the Isles." The Booke of the Unversall Kirk of Scotland. Peterkin's ed., p. 437.

² Preface to the Dispute against the English Popish Ceremonies.

both in doctrine first and then in discipline, when and as they might get it overtaken."¹ The great agency, of course, in spreading the Reformation was the powerful preaching of the gospel, "they studied not the smooth and pawky prudence that is now so much applauded,"² but fearlessly delivered the whole counsel of God ; but the circulation of the Scriptures in the vulgar language must not be forgotten ; neither must we overlook the simplicity of the worship which had nothing in it to divert attention from the realities of the gospel, nor anything to fill men's minds with vain and frothy imaginations. As Gillespie has well said—"The policy, then, which is most simple and single, and least lusted with the pomp and bravery of ceremonies, cannot but be most expedient for edification. The king's daughter is most like herself when she is all glorious within, not without, Ps. xlv. 13, and the kingdom of God appeareth best what it is, when it cometh not with observation, Luke xvii. 20, 21. But 'superstition (saith Camero), the mother of ceremonies, is lavish and prodigal ; spiritual whoredom, as it is, it hath this common with the bodily ; both of them must have their paintings, their trinkets, their inveiglements.'"³ Now-a-days, the term ecclesiastical discipline is generally used in the restricted sense, of correction of manners, admonitions, excommunications, and receiving to repentance ; but in Reformation times it was often used in its widest sense, namely, for the whole policy of the kirk, hence the two books containing this policy were called the Books of Discipline ; and it was sometimes used as comprehending also the acts, constitutions, and practices agreed upon, and recorded in the registers of the general and provincial assemblies, presbyteries, and kirk-sessions. Although at the Reformation, from the scarcity of preachers, the Presbyterian form of Church government could not be fully carried out, and necessitated the appointment of readers⁴ and superintendents, yet the results achieved showed the great advantage of having adopted the scriptural system.

The more immediate object of this and the succeeding articles is to show the nature of the discipline,—using the word in its restricted sense,—then in use, the manner of carrying it out, the power it had for good, and to give a few illustrations from the old session-records of West Anstruther. The earliest volume⁵

¹ Row's History, Wod. Soc. ed., p. 12.

² Hind let loose, ed. 1770, p. 18.

³ English Popish Ceremonies, part 2, chap. 4, sec. 1.

⁴ Calderwood remarks :—"So howbeit they allow readers, they allow not reading ministers."

⁵ The next volume contains the following entry :—"Decimo quinto Apr., 1649. Laurence Hay and Isobell Fermore his spous haid ane bairne baptised neamitt

extant, of the records of this parish, extends from 1577 to 1601, and as a note on the title-page informs us contains the "Transactions of the several kirk-sessions of Kilrennie, W. Anstruther, Pittenweem, and Abercrombie, with marriages and baptisms, &c., interspersed from 1586 to 1601." Fully thirty years ago there was a dispute among these kirk-sessions as to the possession of this volume, and on the 31st January, 1844, the Presbytery of St. Andrews decided that the custody of it should be given to the session of West Anstruther, and that it should be open to all the sessions connected with it; but it is now in the Edinburgh Register House. This volume, which is mostly written in a cramped hand, abounding with contractions, is, with the exception of a few pages, in such a good state of preservation, that it is perfectly legible to those who are acquainted with the old hand, and who can bring time and patience to bear upon it. It contains interesting references to James Melville, to the renewing of the Covenant in 1596, &c., but into this tempting field we cannot at present enter.

It would be very difficult to describe the end of ecclesiastical discipline better than it is done in the following words :—"That the kingdom of Christ may be set forward; that the paths of the Lord be made straight; that His holy mysteries may be kept pure; that stumbling-blocks may be removed out of the Church, lest a little leaven leaven the whole lump, or lest one sick or scabbed sheep infect the whole flock; that the faithful may so walk as it becometh the gospel of Christ, and that the wandering sheep of Christ may be converted and brought back to the sheep-fold."¹ There is a twofold power of the keys which must be distinguished: the one is executed in doctrine, the other in discipline; the one *concionalis*, the other *judicialis*.² The former is "proper for pastors alone, whose office and vocation it is, by the preaching and publishing of God's word, to shut the kingdom of heaven against impenitent and disobedient men, and to open it unto penitent sinners; to bind God's heavy wrath

Laurence. Witnesses Jon. King, Andrew Lousone, and David Fermore." To say the least, it is more than likely that this is the same Laurence Hay who, with Andrew Pittilloch, suffered martyrdom in the Grassmarket on the 13th July, 1681, whose testimonies are in the "Cloud of Witnesses," and whose heads were fixed to the Tolbooth of Cupar, where they remained until the Revolution, when they were buried with one of the hands of the valiant Rathillet.

¹ The One Hundred and Eleven Propositions, prop. 70.

² The real meaning of the power of the keys affords a satisfactory explanation of that clause in the 30th chapter of the Westminster Confession, which, as Principal Cunningham said, is rather startling at first sight :—"To these officers the keys of the kingdom of heaven are committed, by virtue whereof they have power respectively to retain and remit sins."

upon the former, and (by application of the promises of mercy) to loose the latter from the sentence and fear of condemnation."¹ The latter—the power of binding and loosing by the keys of external discipline—belongs to the whole Church, that is to every particular church or congregation collectively taken, but as He who is the God of order and not of confusion hath committed the exercise of no ecclesiastical jurisdiction to a promiscuous multitude, the reformers held that the execution and judicial exercising of this power pertained to that company and assembly of elders in every church which the Apostle calls (in 1 Tim. iv. 14) a presbytery, but which we in Scotland call a session. And again, while they boldly maintained that there is no part of ecclesiastical jurisdiction in the power of one man, but of many met together in the name of Christ, yet they held that the execution of some decrees enacted, by the power of jurisdiction, belonged to ministers alone, as imposition of hands, the pronouncing of the sentence of excommunication, the receiving of a penitent, &c. But lest the ministers might seem to claim the sole power of jurisdiction, which the prelates of old had arrogated to themselves, and as there was a difficulty, especially in landward parishes, of getting a competent number of understanding and qualified men to make up an eldership, they ordained that "three, four, more, or fewer particular kirks may have one eldership common to them all, to judge their ecclesiastical causes,"² though each was to have its own elders. Another remedy for this was provided by the planting of presbyteries throughout the country, but this accounts for the early register of West Anstruther containing the records of four different parishes.

As the Reformers saw that the true religion could not endure long without good discipline, they exercised it with a strictness and impartiality, which, to the easy-chair-Christians of this declining age, would seem rigorous and severe, perhaps even harsh and repulsive. Their strictness and impartiality were both manifested in 1567, when the Lady Argyle,—who "once being at the table of the Lord Jesus, and professing his Evangell, had revolted therefrae, in giving her assistance and presence to the baptizing of the King in ane Papistical manner,"—was ordained to "make publick repentance in the Chapell-Royal of Stirling, upon ane *Sunday*³ in tyme of preaching⁴." But,

¹ English Popish Ceremonies, part III., chap. 8, digres. 4.

² Second Book of Discipline, chap. 7.

³ "Some of the fathers, such as Justin and Tertullian, in their apologies to the heathen emperors, called this day 'Sunday'; the reason whereof is plain; they were speaking to heathens, who always called this day by that name, and so would not have known certainly what day they meant, if they had not called it Sunday."—*Willison*. Our first Reformers had a similar reason.

⁴ Booke of the Universall Kirk, p. 73.

had they been content with the discipline,—or rather want of discipline,—of the present day, the Reformation might have been a failure. They declared, that, “to discipline must all the estates within this realm be subject, as well the rulers as they that are ruled; yea, and the preachers themselves, as well as the poor within the kirk¹.” Means were not only used to cure prevailing evils, but plans were adopted to prevent them from being perpetuated. They did not forget, that

“On each side walk the wicked, when
Vile men are high in place,”

and accordingly declared in their first General Assembly, that none ought to be made ordinary judges, or judicial officers, such as, Lords of Secret Council, Sheriffs, Stewarts, Provosts, Baillies, or other judges, unless they were “Professours of the Treuth of the true word of God.” And this was given effect to, by the Parliament of 1567. Many of the poor labouring country people were as hardly oppressed by their lords and lairds at the Reformation as they had previously been by the cruel Papists who exacted from them, “the uppermost cloth, corps-present, clerk-mail, the pasch-offering, teind ale,” and even “teind sybows, leeks, kail, onzions,” &c. Against this abuse the Reformers boldly protested, maintaining that it was unjust for any man to possess the teinds of another, and that these exactions should be clean discharged. And further, that the teinds were the proper patrimony of the Kirk, and ought only to be applied to the sustentation of the ministers, the schoolmasters, and the poor, the repairing of kirks, and other godly uses. The poor for whom they were so anxious to provide, were not the stout and strong beggars, who, they declared, should be compelled to work, but the “poor indigent members of Christ’s body,”—the widow, and the fatherless, the aged, the impotent, and the lame.

Before the Reformation the principal towns only had schools, but our Reformers perceived that the godly upbringing of the youth would confer an incalculable blessing upon posterity; they therefore stated in the First Book of Discipline (drawn up in 1560) that every several kirk should have one schoolmaster appointed, and “that no father, of what estate or condition that ever he be, use his children at his own fancy, especially in their youth; but all must be compelled to bring up their children in learning and virtue.” The parochial system so early planned was not, however, fully carried out until the Second Reformation. They earnestly contended “that none be permitted to have charge of Schools, Colledges, or Universities, or yet privately or publickly to instruct the youth, but such as

¹ First Book of Discipline, seventh head.

shall be tryed be the superintendents or visitors of the Church, sound and able in doctrine, and admitted be them to their charges:" that "the youth be not infected be poysonable doctrine at the beginning, whilk afterwards cannot be well removed away." To this the Parliament agreed in 1567¹. Every one was to get a good plain education at least, and those who were "found apt to learning and letters" were charged to continue their studies. Calvin's Catechism held a prominent place in their system, which was of a thoroughly religious nature, for they never dreamed of such a thing as a timetable clause. And they enacted that on Sabbath "afternoon must the young children be publickly examined in their catechism, in the audience of the people; whereof the minister must take great diligence, as well to cause the people understand the questions proponed, as answers, and that doctrine that may be collected thereof."² And to find out how parents were training their children in the true religion of Jesus Christ, the General Assembly of 1570,—“Ordainit, that ministers and elders of kirks shall, universallie within this realme, take tryall and examine all young children within their parochines that are come to nyne years, and that for the first tyme; thereafter, when they are come to twelve years for the second time; the third tyme, to be examined when they are of fourteen years, where through it may be knowne what they have profited in the school of Christ from tyme to tyme.”³ Verily! Sabbath Schools, Children's Churches, and Bands of Hope are, at the best, poor substitutes for the grand old system of the Reformation.

The Papists with strange inconsistency held marriage to be a Sacrament, and yet, in the very face of Scripture which declares that "marriage is honourable in all," they also held it to be a work of the flesh, unlawful for spiritual persons, as if they could not please God therein, as being in the flesh. John Brown of Haddington characterised this as a "Popish doctrine of devils, to forbid even clergy to marry." Because the ordinance of marriage had been so much perverted by the Papists, our Reformers thought good to show how, in their judgment, such confusion might be avoided in times to come. And, first, while holding that the voluntary and mutual consent of both parties is necessary to constitute marriage, they declared that no person under the power or obedience of others had a right to contract marriage privately and without knowledge of their parents, tutors, or curators, under whose power they are for the time, and in this they were thoroughly scriptural, for in the words of John Brown,

¹ The Booke of the Universall Kirk, pp. 29, 68, and app. 88 and 91.

² First Book of Discipline. Ninth Head.

³ The Booke of the Universall Kirke, p 121.

"No where is the least shadow of power given to children to marry without their parents' consent. Nor do I know of a single instance of marriage in Scripture contracted without regard to the consent of parents, which was not followed with some visible judgment, temporal or spiritual, sooner or later."¹ But they made this provision, that if cruel or selfish parents, for their own evil ends, perversely crossed the honest and lawful desires of marriage in their children, they might require the minister or magistrate to travel with their parents for their consent, and if they found no just cause why the marriage should not be fulfilled, and if after sufficient admonition the parents still refused their consent, then they might take the parents' place, and consent to the marriage. But,—in the words of Principal Baillie,—"this case is so rare in Scotland that I professe, I never in my life did know, nor did heare of any child before my dayes, who did assay by the authoritative sentence of a magistrate or minister to force their parents' consent to their marriage." And he adds, as for "ministers compelling parents to give portions to their children, that the Church of Scotland hath any such canon or practice is an impudent lie."² The Second Book of Discipline (chap. iv.) declares that it belongs to the minister, "*after lawful proceeding in the matter by the eldership*, to solemnize marriage betwixt them that are to be joined therein." The following entry from the old Record of West Anstruther, explains how the eldership proceeded in the matter:—

"25 March 1588. Patrik Gib & katrin Hendersoun compeired desyring ther bandes to be proclaimed which efter exhortatioun & admonition ves [*i.e.* was] granted to them."

When the would-be bride and bridegroom appeared before the Session, the examination of their knowledge of religion was not merely formal, as this other extract shows:—

"26 August 1589. The which day compeired David Donaldsoun & Margrat dairsy desyring ther bandes to be proclaimed, which efter admonitione vpone conditione that they suld learne better agane this day aught dayes wer granted to them."

Here, then, was the starting point of that family religion,—or as it has been called hearth-stone religion,—which has so long proved the back-bone of Scottish piety; so that the foundation was laid, even before marriage, for that family devotion and exhortation, of which our national poet has said,—

"From scenes like these old Scotia's grandeur springs,
That makes her lov'd at home, rever'd abroad"

¹ Dictionary of the Bible : Article, Marriage.

² Review of Doctor Bramble's faire warning against the Scotese Disciplin. Delf, 1649, pp. 76, 77.

They had no favour for secret marriages, and, consequently, ordained that the banns should be publicly proclaimed, by the minister or reader, for three several Sabbaths, in the congregation to which the parties belonged, to the intent that if any person had interest or title to either of the parties, they might have sufficient time to make their challenge. And as marriages were sometimes celebrated in other parishes than those in which the parties had been proclaimed—in 1565, “The haill assembly, with one voyce, statutes and ordaines, That no ministers hereafter receave the parochiners of ane uther parochine to be married, without ane sufficient testimoniall of the minister of the parochine wherefrae they came, that the bands are lawfullie proclaimed, and no impediment found, so that the order that has been taken be the kirk, in sic affairs, be dewlie observed under the paine of deprivation frae his ministrie, tinsell of his stipend, and uther paines, as the General Kirk shall hereafter think to be imponed.”¹ The First Book of Discipline states, that “in a reformed kirk, marriage ought not to be secretly used, but in open face, and public audience of the kirk,” however honourable the persons be. And in 1570, it was ordained “that all marriages be made solemnly in the face of the congregation, *according to the ordour published.*” And again in 1581:—“It is concludit be common consent of the haill brethren, that in tymes comeing, no marriage be celebrate, nor sacraments ministrat in private houses, but solemnlie according to good order hitherto observit, under the paine of deposition of the persones that uses the said ministrations from their office and functione of the ministrie in tyme cuming.”² The “*ordour*” referred to, is that in the Book of Common Order, which was used in Scotland even before 1560. There were no ceremonies used with “The Form of Marriage,” which breathes much of that plainness and simplicity, so characteristic of reforming times. They declared that, “the Sondag before noon we think most *expedient* for marriage, and it be used no day else, without the consent of the whole ministry.”³ Of course when it was celebrated in the church on Sabbath forenoon, there were always plenty of witnesses, and so it was thoroughly publick, this seems to have been the chief, if not the only reason of the expediency. Perhaps their earnest desire to suppress all riotousness might be another reason, but, be that as it may, the profanation of the Sabbath, which ensued, caused them to celebrate it also on week days, when there was preaching, which in towns was once a week besides Sabbath. At length, in 1602, “The assemblie ordaynes that no marriages be

¹ The Booke of the Universall Kirk, p. 39.

² Booke of the Universall Kirk, pp. 126, 221.

³ First Book of Discipline.

celebrate early in the morning or with candlelight, and finds lykewayes that it is leisum [lawful] to celebrate the said band of marriage *upon the Sabbath day, or any wther preaching day, as the pairties shall requyre and think expedient*: and ordaynes the same to be indifferently done, and that no ryotousness be used at the same upon the Sabbath day."¹ By the time of the Second Reformation, the expediency of celebrating marriage on Sabbath, had passed the post of indifferency, and turned the other way, for it was then ordained, that it be publickly solemnized "in the place appointed by authority for publick worship, before a competent number of credible witnesses, at some convenient hour of the day, at any time of the year, except on a day of publick humiliation. *And we advise that it be not on the Lord's day.*"² The following entry from the old Record of West Anstruther shows how riotousness was put down:—

"30 August 1592. This sam day it ordaned, that the persones that ar to be maried, in tym coming befoir they be maried thay sall consigne ane pand which sall be als gud as fourtie shillings or therby in pledg that ther sal be na dancing nor insolent behavior without ther house or at least without the boundes of ther clos and yaird, and in case that any fit thing be the pledg or value therof sall forfeat and at the sight of the session be imployed on the pure [i. e. the poor]."

Perhaps of all outward distinctions between Protestant and Popish countries, the observance of the Sabbath is the most prominent, as therefore—"The corruptions by which the Christian religion was universally disfigured, before the Reformation, had grown to a greater height in Scotland than in any other nation within the pale of the western Church,"³ it was only natural for our ignorant ancestors to profane the Sabbath in a shameless manner, "be ganging of milnes, salt-pannes, schearing and leading of cornes, carrying of victuall to and from burrowstones," and by holding markets and fairs on the day of rest. Strenuous efforts were required to suppress this gross violation of the fourth commandment, and the strong arm of the civil power had to be invoked, and even after the markets ceased to be held on Sabbath, the Church was grieved by the labours and journeyings occasioned by them, as in most great towns they were held on Monday. Principal Baillie informs us, why this was not amended until the Second Reformation. "For remedie heerof, many supplications have been made by the Assembly to the Parliament: but so long as our Bishops satte there, these petitions of the

¹ Booke of the Universall Kirk, p. 527.

² Westminster Directory for the Publick Worship of God approved by the General Assembly of the Kirk of Scotland in 1645.

³ M'Crie's Life of Knox. Blackwood's ed., 1861, p. 9.

Church were alwayes eluded: for the prelats labour in the whole Iland was to have the sunday no Sabbath, and to procure by their doctrine and example the profanation of that day by all sorts of playes, to the end people might be brought back to their old licentiousnes and ignorance, by which the Episcopall Kingdome was advanced. It was visible in *Scotland*, that the most eminent Bishops were usual players on the Sabbath, even in time of divine service. And so soone as they were cast out of the Parliament, the Churches supplications were granted, and acts obtained for the careful sanctification of the Lord's day, and removing of the mercats in all the land from the Monday to other days of the week."¹

But the incubus of Popery had brought on the land, not only the profanation of the Sabbath, but also an overwhelming flood of every kind of vice and crime; for the extirpation of which the exertions both of Church and State were urgently needed. The jurisdiction of the former extended to all sorts of offences and crimes except such as were purly civil.

The Kirk-session "took cognizance of all open violations of the Moral law, not only unchastity, but also non-attendance on religious ordinances, profane swearing, Sabbath-breaking, undutifulness to parents and other relations, neglect of the education of children, drunkenness, slander, backbiting, and even scolding."² And it was as strict in the inspection which it exercised over its own members; "for it is not seemly, that the servant of corruption shall have authority to judge in the Kirk of God." From the fourth and eighth heads of the First Book of Discipline, we gather, that none were to be settled in the ministry but godly and learned men. And "if a minister be light of conversation, by his elders and deacons he ought to be admonished. If he be negligent in study, or one that waits not upon his charge or flock, or one that propones not faithful doctrine, he deserves sharper admonition and correction." If any minister teach heresy, "he ought to be deposed for ever. By heresy we mean pernicious doctrine plainly taught, and openly defended, against the foundations and principles of our faith." And, "not only must the life and manners of ministers come under censure and judgment of the Kirk, but also of their wives, children, and family, judgment must be taken, that he neither live riotously, neither yet avariciously." And "the elders and deacons, with their wives and household, should be under the same censure that is prescribed for the ministers." The act anent the entry and conversation of ministers, adopted in 1596, and revived in 1638, in depicting the

¹ Review of Bramble's Fair Warning, p.42.

M'Crie's Life of Melville, 2nd ed. vol. 1. p. 337.

corruptions, of the ministry, presents a perfect though negative portrait of what the ministry ought to be. In those days the annual administration of the privy censures, was very solemnly gone about. "On that occasion, the ministers, elders, and deacons were removed one after another; their conduct, both in and out of court, was judged of by the remainder; and each was commended, admonished, or rebuked, as his behaviour was thought to have merited."¹

THE INSPIRATION OF SCRIPTURE.

III.

THE evidence submitted in our last paper in support of the doctrine that all Scripture is plenarily inspired went mainly, though not exclusively, to establish the inspiration of the Old Testament. Considering the close relation in which the two Testaments stand to each other, the one being the necessary complement of the other, it may seem superfluous to adduce additional proof of the inspiration of New Testament Scripture. As both Testaments are manifestly from the same Divine source, and embody substantially the same great truths and doctrines—embracing *one* revelation from one and the same Revealer—the presumption must be of the strongest kind that, if the one be inspired, so is the other. If it has been satisfactorily shown that the writings belonging to the old economy were given by inspiration of God, may we not warrantably conclude that the Scriptures of the new economy, which is emphatically the dispensation of the Spirit, must have been given in the same manner? Such a conclusion has been come to by all who admit the fact of inspiration in any form; for none set the inspiration of the Old Testament above that of the New, the tendency being rather the opposite way. As, however, a number of the objections commonly urged against the doctrine in question are professedly grounded upon certain expressions found, and certain errors or inaccuracies alleged to exist, in the New Testament writings, it may be well to glance shortly at some of the arguments for inspiration which have a more direct bearing upon this portion of the sacred record.

It is evident that those writers of the New Testament who were clothed with apostolic authority—and all were apostles save two—occupied a higher official position than even prophets, whether under the old or the new dispensation. Apostles are mentioned first amongst the gifts conferred on the Church by the ascended Redeemer

¹ Ibid. p. 338. For an illustration of the method of privy censures, see *Life of Melville*, vol. i. p. 475.

are small and despised, the least among the tribes of Israel, God will honour us, by making us, in part at least, the channel through which His own truth will flow down to generations yet unborn; and thus hasten the coming of the bright millennial day, when "the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea."

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BY D. HAY FLEMING, ST. ANDREWS.

II.

THE Reformers distinguished three classes of sins, *First*,—Those that were capital, and therefore deserved both excommunication and death. In this class were placed,—wilful murder, adultery, sorcery, witchcraft, conjuring, charming, giving of drinks to destroy children, and open blasphemy, as if any renounce God, deny the truth and the authority of His holy Word, railing against His blessed sacraments. *Second*,—Those that did not fall under the civil sword, and yet deserved public repentance. This class included,—fornication, drunkenness, swearing, cursed speaking, chiding, fighting, brawling, and common contempt of the order of the Church, breaking of the Sabbath, and such like. Of these some are more heinous than others. *Third*,—Those that are less heinous, and yet deserve admonition,—as wanton and vain words, uncomely gestures, negligence in hearing the preaching, or abstaining from the Lord's table when publicly ministered, suspicion of avarice or of pride, superfluity or riotousness in cheer or raiment, these and such others, that of the world are not regarded. Persons who had committed any sins of this latter class, were to be admonished privately "by one or two of those that did first espy the offence; which, if the person suspected hear, and give declaration of amendment, then there needeth no further process: but if he contemn and despise the admonition, then should the former admonishers take to themselves two or three faithful and honest witnesses, in whose presence the suspected offender should be admonished, and the causes of their suspicion declared, to whom if then he gives signification of repentance and promise of amendment, they may cut off all further accusation; but, and if he obstinately contemn both the said admonitions, then ought the first and second brethren to signify the matter to the ministers and elders in their session, who ought to call the offender before the complainers, and accuse him as well of the crime as of the contempt of the admonition."¹ No one can fail to perceive how

¹ Order of Excommunication and Public Repentance.

faithfully the Master's command (Matt. xviii. 15—17) was hereby obeyed. For private admonition, three excellent rules were laid down. "First, that our admonitions proceed of a godly zeal and conscience, rather seeking to win our brother than to slander him ; next, that we be assured that his fault be reprobable by God's word ; and finally, that we use such modesty and wisdom, that if we (? he) somewhat doubt of the matter whereof we admonish him, yet with godly exhortations he may be brought to the knowledge of his fault."¹ If the offender, when called before the session, acknowledged his offence, and was willing to satisfy the brethren before offended and the session then present, then there was no further publication of his offence. But if he declared himself disobedient to the session, then next Sabbath both the crime, and the order of admonitions passed before were publicly declared to the church, and, without naming the person, he was admonished to satisfy in public that which he refused to do in secret. If he shewed himself penitent before the next Sabbath, and satisfied the minister of the church, and the brethren that were before offended in their assembly, then next Sabbath, without naming him or causing him to compare, the minister, by command of the session, declared his repentance and submission. On the other hand, if he was not penitent, then next Sabbath he was named, and his offences and stubbornness declared. After this, no satisfaction could be received except in public, and not even there, until he had humbly required it of the session. If he continued stubborn, then on the third Sabbath, he was publicly charged to satisfy the church for his offence and contempt, under the pain of excommunication. "Thus a small offence or slander may justly deserve excommunication, by reason of the contempt and disobedience of the offender." Before considering the *second* class of sins, it may be as well to refer more particularly to two of this *third* class, viz :—non-attendance on public worship, and abstaining from the Lord's table. From the old Record of West Anstruther, we learn that visitors were regularly appointed to look after those who absented themselves from public worship, and the following extract shows how stubborn and perverse parishioners were dealt with.

4 April, 1598.—"The magistrates yet again desyred to tak order with Sandie reid & the rest that was absent fra the kirk the last Sabeth."

Had our modern voluntaries been alive then, they would doubtless have protested against this ; but our Reformers understood thoroughly the nature, duties, and ends of the civil and ecclesiastical powers,

¹ Order of the Ecclesiastical Discipline.

they knew wherein they agreed, and wherein they differed, and were always careful to distinguish between the power of the sword, and the power of the keys. They held that all the actions of the civil magistrate even when employed about ecclesiastical matters are in their own nature essentially civil; that it belongs not to the ministry to compel the disobedient, and that any compulsion, in or about ecclesiastical matters, is not from the nature of ecclesiastical power, but is adventitious from without, to wit, from the help and assistance of the magistrate. To the supposed case of a Christian convert coming from China to a country or city where there are many Churches, Samuel Rutherford answers;—"One congregation more than another cannot compel the *China-convert* to be a member of their congregation; but if he be baptized and profess, the godly magistrate may compel him to hear the word, and receive the seals in the place he resides, so it be a sound Church. The magistrate cannot compel him to faith and heart duties, but he may compel him to external profession; . . . the ruler cannot compel a man to love his neighbour, but he can compel him to the external duties of love, and punish him, if against love he beat or kill his neighbour. He cannot compel any to the faith, but if one come to years desert his faith professed in baptism, both the Church and the magistrate may punish him as a runaway. . . . *The magistrate makes no rule of constitution of Churches, nor any ecclesiastical rule, as Mr. H[ooker] saith. But it follows not, therefore, he cannot impose it, when it is made. The magistrate makes not the hearing of the Gospel to be lawful; but it follows not, ergo, as the preserver of both tables of the law, he may not command Christian subjects to hear the Gospel: yea, to me it's most probable, he may compel heathen people lawfully conquered to desist from idolatry, blaspheming of Christ, and to hear the Gospel.*"¹ In treating on this point, James Durham refers to the difference between constraining a circumcised or baptized people to worship God in the purity of ordinances, as they have been engaged thereto; and the constraining of a people to engage and be baptized, which were not formerly engaged. And after pointing out how Josiah caused the people to stand to the covenant, and having removed all idolatrous worship, made Israel to serve the Lord, he says:—the magistrate "might order them to keep the ordinances, and in going about them to keep the rule, because that is but a constraining of them in the means whereby religion worketh, and a making them, as it were, to give God a hearing, leaving their yielding and consenting to him, when they have heard him, to their own wills, which cannot

¹ Rutherford's Survey of the Survey of that Summe of Church-discipline, penned by Mr. Thomas Hooker, 1658, pp. 282, 283.

be forced ; yet it is reason, that when God cometh by his ordinances to treat with a people, that a magistrate should so far respect his glory and their good, as to interpose his authority to make them hear."¹ Even the English Brownists of the sixteenth century held that Princes "ought to compell al their subjects to the hearing of God's word in the publike exercises of the Church : yet cannot the Prince compell any to be a member of the Church, or the Church to receive any without assurance by the publike profession of their owne faith, or to reteine anie longer, then they continue & walke orderly in the faith."² Though the Parliament of 1567 decerned and declared that all "that refusis the participatioun of the holy sacramentis as thay ar now ministrat, to be na memberis of the said Kirk within this realme now presently professit, swa long as thay keip thame selfis so deuydit [*i.e.* divided] fra the societie of Christis body ;"³ and though those suspected of Papistrie were admonished to subscriyve the Confession of Faith and "participat the communione," yet the Reformers "were very far from approving of the promiscuous admission of persons of all descriptions to the peculiar privileges of the Church of Christ."⁴ They were certainly anxious that every grown up person should communicate, but not unless they were qualified to examine themselves, and led a life becoming the gospel. "There was nothing in which the Scottish Reformers approached nearer to the primitive Church than in the rigorous and impartial exercise of ecclesiastical discipline, the relaxation of which, under the Papacy, they justly regarded as one great cause of the universal corruption of religion."⁵ And the three chief causes for exercising this discipline were, that the vile should not be numbered among God's children, that the good should not be infected by companying with the evil, and that those, thus corrected or excommunicated, might be ashamed of their faults, and so through repentance come to amendment. According to the ninth head of the First Book of Discipline, the Lord's supper was to be administered four times a year, but never "without examination passing before, and specially of them whose knowledge is suspected," for such as "be so dull, and so ignorant, that they can neither try themselves, nor yet know the dignity and mystery of that action, cannot eat and drink of that table worthily. And therefore of necessity we judge, that every year at

¹ The Dying Man's Testament to the Church of Scotland. Ed. 1740, p. 228.

² A plaine Refvtation of M. Giffard's, Booke intituled, a short treatise against the Donatistes of England. 1591. Preface to the Reader.

³ Booke of the Universall Kirk. App. p. 89.

⁴ M Crie's Life of Knox, p. 205. See also prop. 16.

⁵ Ibid. p. 251.

the least, public examination be had by the ministers and elders, of the knowledge of every person within the kirk; viz., that every master and mistress of household come themselves, and their family, so many as be come to maturity, before the minister and the elders, and give confession of their faith. If they understand not, nor can not rehearse the commandments of God's law, know not how to pray, neither wherein their righteousness stands or consists, they ought not to be admitted to the Lord's table."¹ If such an examination were made now, how the churches would be thinned! Craig's Catechism was afterwards written and adopted as the form of examination before the communion.² Those who withdrew themselves for a long period from the society of Christ's body and from the participation of the sacraments; or those who had been partakers with the Reformed Church in doctrine and sacraments, and returned back again to Popery, or gave their presence to any part of their abominations, were deemed worthy of excommunication, albeit not so summarily as those who committed capital crimes. They were first called and exhorted to repentance, and their danger pointed out to them. If the offender heard, then a day was appointed for his public repentance, but if he continued stubborn, then next Sabbath his defections and stubborn contempt were declared, and this advertisement being given on two Sabbaths, the sentence of excommunication might be pronounced on the third. There were other persons who, while professing "the veritie of the Gospell," yet under the pretence of deadly feuds refrained from the Lord's table. The General Assembly of 1595 ordained all Presbyteries to charge these persons within their bounds, "as it becomes Christians to do, to participat the said holy table; and in caise they be obstinate and refuse, to proceed with the censures of the Kirk against them." But this rider was put upon the ordinance,—“it being always considerit be the Presbytrie, that if there be any infirmitie or hinderance of conscience that refuses, in that caise the said Presbytrie shall travell with the saids persones to bring them to their deutie and participations of the said table, granting with good advyce and discretione some reasonable tyme as to resolve themselves.”³

Sins of the *second* class, if known, were not suffered in any person,

¹ Suspension from the Lord's table is sometimes called the publican's excommunication, and is commonly (though not properly) called the lesser excommunication, to distinguish it from excommunication proper, which is the cutting off of a member, and which in contradistinction is called the greater excommunication.

² It was customary at the Reformation, for the congregation to convene on the Tuesday before the March Communion, for redressing grievances and reconciling those at variance. Calderwood's Hist., 1678, pp. 722-803.

³ The Booke of the Universall Kirk, p. 414.

but the offender was called before the session, where his sin and trespass were proved and "aggreded," so that his conscience might feel how far he had offended God, and what slander he had raised in the kirk. If he shewed himself penitent, then a day was appointed, when the whole kirk convened, that he might testify his repentance in presence of all. But the session only admitted him to public repentance after having examined him sharply regarding his fear and terror of God's judgments, his hatred of sin and grief for the same, and his sense and feeling of God's mercies. If found ignorant of these, he was diligently instructed, "for it is but a mocking to present such to public repentance, as neither understand what sin is, what repentance is, what grace is, nor by whom God's favour and mercy is procured. Then after that the offender shall be instructed in the assembly, so that he have some taste of God's judgments, but chiefly of God's mercies in Christ Jesus, he may be presented before the public church upon a Sunday after the sermon, and before the prayers and psalm."¹ The minister in presenting him declared his crime, its heinousness, and his readiness "to witness and declare his unfeigned repentance, the thirst and the care that he hath to be reconciled with God through Jesus Christ, and with you his brethren, whom he hath offended." Public repentance was then proved to be the institution of God, and not the invention of man. From our Master's "commanding that if any have offended² his brother, (in what sort soever it be), that he shall go to him and be reconciled unto his brother," it was argued, that if the offending of one brother required this, much more did the offending of a multitude require it; for, that woe, which Christ pronounced against every man that offends the least one within His church, remains upon every public offender, until he let the offended multitude understand his unfeigned repentance. The minister then pressed the congregation to consider, in the fall and sin of this their brother, the corruption that lurked in themselves, and "how prone and ready every one of us is to such and greater impiety, then shall we in the sin of this our brother accuse and condemn our own sins, in his fall we shall consider and lament our sinful nature, also we shall join our repentance, tears, and prayers with him and his, knowing that no flesh can be justified before God's presence, if judgment proceed without mercy." After

¹ Order of Excommunication and Public Repentance.

² It is hardly necessary to explain that the word *offend* as used in the Bible, and by our Reformers does not mean to displease. "Scandal or offence is not the grieving or displeasing of my brother; for peradventure when I grieve him or displease him, I do edify him. Now edification and scandal are not compatible; but scandal is a word or deed proceeding from me, which is, or may be, the occasion of another man's halting, or falling, or swerving from the straight way of righteousness." English Popish Ceremonies, Part ii., chap. 8, sect. 2.

dwelling on God's readiness to pardon, and the benefit arising from not being ashamed thus to humble ourselves and confess our offences, the offender was solemnly charged to consider earnestly with what mind and heart he was presenting himself, and was reminded that his sin would not separate him from his God, nor from His mercy in Jesus Christ, if repented of ; but that hypocrisy and impenitence are nowise tolerable before His presence. The offender then protested before God that he was sorry for his sin, and unfeignedly desired God to be merciful unto him, and that, for the obedience of His dear Son our Lord Jesus Christ. The minister then said ;—" we can only see that which is without, and according to your confession judge, leaving the secrets of the heart to God, who only can try and search the same ; but, because unfeigned repentance for sin, and simple confession of the same, are the gifts of God, we will join our prayers with yours, that the one and the other may be granted to you and us." The merciful and everlasting God, who sent His only Son to suffer, "not for the just, but for such as find themselves oppressed with the burden of sin," was then besought to touch and move their hearts that they might come to a true knowledge of their sins ; but chiefly, that He would move the heart of this their brother, and theirs also, that he and they might condemn sin without hypocrisy, and attain to the assurance of mercy. That he might be granted repentance of heart, and sincere confession of mouth, to the praise of God's name, to the comfort of the Church, and to the confusion of Satan. And that they might not only be kept from falling into horrible crimes, but receive grace to live holy and innocent lives, that men seeing their good works might glorify God. The prayer being finished, the minister turned to the penitent brother, asking him, as he had heard what was his duty towards the Church which he had offended, and the affection and care of the Church towards him, that he would openly and simply confess his crime, and give them a testimony of his unfeigned repentance. The penitent then openly confessed his crime, whatever it was, desiring God's mercy, and prayed the Church to call to God for mercy with him, and desired to be joined again to their society and number. But if the penitent was confounded with shame, or unable to speak distinctly to the comfort and instruction of the Church, the minister made repetition, and on the penitent answering that this was his confession and belief, the minister asked the congregation if they required any thing more for their satisfaction, and for reconciliation of that brother. No contradiction being made, the minister charged the penitent that as the Spirit of Jesus Christ had confounded the devil in that he to the glory of God had openly condemned himself and his impiety, and had implored grace and mercy, and as this strength, submission, and obedi-

ence, was the gift of the Holy Ghost, that so he would acknowledge it to be given unto him by Jesus Christ, and take heed lest, at any time, he was unmindful of this great benefit, and again fall into such or more horrible crimes ; and that he would resist the devil, live in sobriety, be instant in prayer, and unfeignedly commend himself to God who would give him the victory over sin, death, and Satan, by means of our Head and sovereign champion, Jesus Christ. The congregation were next admonished to take this their penitent brother for an example : first, in being unfeignedly displeased in their own hearts at their own sins ; secondly, that they would confess their offences in the sight of God, imploring grace and mercy for them ; and lastly, that if any of them should hereafter publicly offend, they would not refuse to satisfy the Church of God. They were further charged to remit and forget all offences which they had conceived by his sin and fall ; to accept and embrace him as a member of Christ's body ; and not reproach or accuse him for any offences of the past. And that he might be assured of their good will and reconciliation, hearty thanks were rendered unto God for his conversion and repentance. The thanksgiving being finished, the minister asked the penitent if he would be subject to the discipline of the Church, if he after offended ; on being answered in the affirmative, the minister said in manner of absolution :—" If thou unfeignedly repent thy former iniquity, and believe in the Lord Jesus, then I, in His name, pronounce and affirm that thy sins are forgiven, not only on earth, but also in heaven, according to the promises annexed with the preaching of His word, and to the power put in the ministry of His Church." Then the elders and deacons, in the name of the whole Church, took the reconciled brother by the hand, and embraced him, in sign of full reconciliation. After singing part of the 103d Psalm, the congregation was dismissed with the benediction. Though "the Form and Order of Public Repentance" is only given above in outline, every one must be struck with the manner in which faithfulness and tenderness are combined.

But, if an offender when first summoned before the session was found to be stubborn, hard-hearted, or without any sign of repentance, then he was demitted, with an exhortation to consider the dangerous estate in which he stood, and was assured that, if no other tokens of amendment of life were found in him, they would be compelled to seek a further remedy. If within a certain space, he shewed his repentance to the ministry, then he was presented to the kirk ; but if he continued impenitent, then the kirk was advertised, that such crimes were committed among them, as had been reprehended, and the persons provoked to repent ; the crime was mentioned, but not the person, and the

congregation was required "earnestly to call to God to move and touch the heart of the offender, so that suddenly and earnestly he may repent."¹ If he still continued impenitent, on the next day of public assembly, both his name and his crime were notified to the kirk, and it was put to them, if in their judgments such crimes ought to be suffered unpunished among them, and his nearest and most discreet friend was requested to endeavour to bring him to the knowledge of himself, and of his dangerous estate, and all were commanded to call to God for his conversion. On the third Sabbath the minister asked if the impenitent had declared any signs of repentance to one of the ministry, if he had, then after examination, if repentance appeared both for his crime and his long contempt, he was presented to the kirk, to make public satisfaction; but if neither the accused nor any one in his absence signified his repentance, then he was excommunicated. Sometimes the offender did not even appear before the session when cited, if so, it was ordained that, "summons ought to pass to the third time; and then, in case he appear not, the church may decern the sentence to be pronounced."² The following entry from the old Record of W. Anstruther shows how contumacious offenders were compelled to appear before the session.

17 March 1594. "Katrin & bessie gilgours called, compeired not, therfor the magistrats desyred to impreson them till tysday."³

As the kirk-session met every Tuesday, the object in imprisoning these offenders till next Tuesday is obvious. It is noticeable that both in this, and the preceding extract, the magistrates were *desired*, &c. The reason of this in principle, has been already given, and in practice the Church courts did not inflict civil punishments. "The parliament, or the magistracy of particular burghs enacted punishments of a corporal kind, against certain crimes which were ordinarily tried in the Church courts. Some of these existed before the Reformation, and some of them were posterior to it; but the infliction as well as the enacting of them, pertained to the civil magistrate. Knox, p. 269. In the minutes of several kirk-sessions, however, the sentences inflicting

¹ First Book of Discipline. Seventh Head.

² The order of Excommunication.

³ The following extract shows the reciprocal manner in which the elders and magistrates acted:—9 March 1591. "Because of the great contempt of magistrates, & disobedience to them, be ignorant & orderles persones heirfore it is statut & ordeined be the session that whosoever sall be convict in this offence, sall be debarrit fra all benefit of the kirk, till thay have satisfied according to the ordinance of the counsell of the town, and session of the kirk." In the extracts quoted in this article from the Records of W. Anstruther, contracted words have been extended, though otherwise the spelling has been adhered to.

them, are found recorded along with censures, properly ecclesiastical.”¹ “In boroughs, it was the almost invariable custom to have some of the elders chosen from among the magistrates. This circumstance, connected with the nature of the offences usually tried, and the punishments decreed against them, by the legislature, led to that *apparent* confounding of the two jurisdictions, which is apt to strike those who happen to look into the ancient records of kirk-sessions, as an anomaly, and a contradiction to the principles of the Presbyterian Church.”² In the Buik of the Kirk of Canagait, in all instances in which any civil penalty is added, this form of expression is used:—“*Thairfoir the baillies assistane the assemblie of ye kirke ordanis*” &c.,³ “By cap. 27, Parl. 11, James vi., it is enacted that, troublers of the kirk, or who raise any fray therein, or in the kirkyard, in time of divine service, be punished by loss of all their moveables. *If the magistrate be present*, no doubt, he may ordain the disturbers to be removed, and secured, till they find bail to answer therefor.”⁴ Another explanatory proof, from the greatest authority on the matter in modern times, will suffice for this point. “I have”—says Dr. M’Crie—“in my possession (extracted from the records of a kirk session) a commission, granted by the sheriff-depute of Berwickshire, constituting one of the elders, session-bailie, for executing the laws against profaneness, agreeably to an act of parliament authorising the appointment of such an officer in parishes within which no ordinary magistrate resided.”⁵ This explanation must be kept in view, and it must not be forgotten that our Reformers had not only difficulty in getting Parliament to make laws for the suppression of vice, but in getting them to enforce them after they were made.

Some moderns—anxious no doubt to escape from everything like Erastianism,—seem to forget that God’s ordinance of Magistracy “is wholly intended for the preservation of mankind, the punishment of vice, and the maintenance of virtue.” For example, Dr. Ross in his very valuable book on “Pastoral Work in Covenanting Times,” (pages 174, 175)—in referring to the General Assembly of 1648, recommending “every congregation [or parish] to make use of the 9 Act of the Parliament of 1645, at Perth, for having Magistrates and Justices in every congregation, and of the 8 Act of the said Parliament against Swearing, Drinking, and mocking of Piety, and all other Acts of Parliament for restraining or punishing of Vice; particularly

¹ M’Crie’s Life of Knox. Note D D D.

² M’Crie’s Life of Melville, 2nd. ed., vol. 1. p. 335:

³ Ibid. note G G.

⁴ Pardovan’s Collections, Book 3, Title 6, Sect. 4.

⁵ Life of Knox, note D D D.

for the better restraining of the sin of whoredom, that each Magistrate in every congregation exact," &c.,¹—says, "We are not defending the principle involved in this procedure, we are merely explaining the meaning of the allusion." So far is Dr. Ross from defending the principle that he really condemns it, for he goes on to say that,—
 "The strength of Christian discipline lies in tender yet faithful dealing with the conscience of the offender, and it is always to be regretted when a court of Christ's Church seems to attach importance to anything inflicted in the way of punishment, as this is ready to take the place of true penitence and its fruits. In an ill-regulated family a hasty word or an angry blow sometimes takes the place of serious rational dealing with an offending child, but this short and easy method is not followed by satisfactory results. And there is an evident analogy between parental discipline and that administered by a Church Court." This is no doubt plausible, but is altogether fallacious. For Dr. Ross entirely overlooks the fact that the General Assembly of 1648 propounded these as "*CIVILL REMEDIES*," *over and above* the "*Domestick Remedies*," and "*Ecclesiastick Remedies*," for the grievous and common sins of the land. Can he think it wrong in the civil magistrate to punish swearing, drunkenness, mocking of piety, and whoredom as civil crimes; seeing that he believes "the profession of witchcraft is a crime that should be punished in some way or other by the civil magistrate?"² And has he a right to assume that the magistrate necessarily punishes in haste or anger? Still more, though Church discipline is of a fatherly nature, this, instead of proving his point, proves the very opposite, for a parent is sometimes constrained to chastise his erring child; and we have inspired authority for saying,—*"He that spareth his rod hateth his son: but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes."* It should rather be regretted that the means then adopted for suppressing vice have not been more faithfully carried out. Every person in this kingdom is bound by the Solemn League and Covenant to endeavour in their several places and callings the extirpation of "*profaneness, and whatsoever shall be found to be contrary to sound doctrine and the power of godliness.*" The best commentary on this is "*The Acknowledgment of Sins and Engagement to Duties*," (1648), which says:—*"We shall be so far from conniving at, complying with, or countenancing of malignancy, injustice, iniquity, profanity, and impiety, that we shall not only avoid and discountenance those things, and cherish and encourage these persons who are zealous for the cause of God, and walk according to the gospel; but also shall*

¹ Records of the Kirk of Scotland, pp. 511, 512.

² Pastoral Work in the Covenanting Times, p. 196.

take a more effectual course than heretofore, *in our respective places and callings, for punishing and suppressing these evils*; and faithfully endeavour, that the best and fittest remedies may be applied for taking away the causes thereof, and advancing the knowledge of God, and holiness and righteousness in the land." The following proposition has been often assailed, but is nevertheless impregnable. "Every member of the church (and so also the faithful and godly magistrate) ought to refer and order his particular vocation, faculty, ability, power and honour, to this end, that the kingdom of Christ may be propagated and promoted, and the true religion be cherished and defended: so that the advancement of the gospel, and of all the ordinances of the gospel, is indeed the end of the godly magistrate, not of a magistrate simply: or (if ye will rather) it is not the end of the office itself, but of him who doth execute the same piously."¹

As relapse into open sin was held in abhorrence, relapse was still more so. It was accordingly ordained by the December Assembly of 1564, that the Superintendent should give those who relapsed "the third tyme in any kinde of cryme, sic as fornication and drunkenness," "sic injunctions as they think may make the offence to be holden in horror. But chiefly that they compell the offender to satisfie the Kirk where the offences were made moe dayes nor ane, as the Superintendent shall think good."² And in such cases they required very decided evidence of true penitence in the offender, before he was allowed to make public repentance. In 1596 an offender, who had relapsed the third time, and who after being seriously dealt with by the kirk-session of West Anstruther without showing signs of sincere repentance, was ordered to be shut up within the steeple for twenty days, to see if the Lord would work repentance in his heart.

KNOWLEDGE OF THE LOVE OF CHRIST.—It is a peculiar kind of expression where the apostle prays that the Ephesians might "know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge." We may know experimentally that which we cannot know comprehensively; we may know that in its power and effect which we cannot comprehend in its nature and depths. A weary person may receive refreshment from a spring, who cannot fathom the depth of the ocean whence it proceeds.—*Owen*.

HOW TO PREACH.—Foxe thus describes Bradford's preaching.—"Sharply he opened and reprov'd sin; sweetly he commended Christ crucified; pithily he impugn'd heresy and error; and earnestly he persuaded to a godly life.

¹ One Hundred and Eleven Propositions, Prop. 69.

² Bcoke of the Universall Kirk, p. 27.

ABUSES REMOVED AND ENEMIES DEFIED.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "READINGS IN DANIEL," &c.

NEHEMIAH v.-vii.

"I want not vulgar fame,
 I seek not to survive in brass or stone ;
 Hearts may not kindle when they hear my name,
 Nor tears my value own.
 But might I leave behind
 Some blessing for my fellows, some fair trust
 To guide, to cheer, to elevate my kind
 When I was in the dust ;
 Within my narrow bed
 Might I not wholly mute or useless be,
 But hope that they who trampled o'er my head
 Drew still some good from me !
 Death would be sweeter then,
 More calm my slumber neath the silent sod,
 Might I thus live to bless my fellow-men,
 Or glorify my God !"

SUCH were the heart-cravings of the Christian poet Lyte ; and the same were essentially the desires of Nehemiah. Influenced by no selfish aims, the Governor of Jerusalem loved to spend and be spent for the benefit of his brethren, and the glory of Jehovah. When, therefore, unquestionable proofs were laid before him of the oppressive covetousness of the richer Jews, his whole soul revolted against their rapacity.

The descendants of Jacob were not permitted by the Divine law to exact interest upon loans made to each other. "Thou shalt not lend upon usury to thy brother," says Moses in Deut. xxiii. 19, 20. "Unto a stranger thou mayest lend upon usury, but unto thy brother thou shalt not lend upon usury ; that the Lord thy God may bless thee in all that thou settest thine hand to." They were to look on each other as members of the same family, and to live ever in brotherly kindness, doing good and lending to those of their own nation who were in need, without expecting a profit upon their loans. The very opposite, however, had been the conduct of the richer portion of the Hebrews who had returned from Persia to Palestine. Taking advantage of the necessities of their neighbours, they sold their corn at exorbitant prices. In order to raise enough to sustain life and pay their taxes, many poor people had been obliged to mortgage all their earthly property, and even to sell their sons and daughters into bondage. No wonder that the distress grew continually more and more overwhelming, for the rate of usury which the bondholders demanded was 12 per cent. per annum. Such appears according to the best rendering of the 11th verse (ch. v.) to have been the charge—the hundredth part of the amount borrowed being payable once a month.

By most business men in Britain 12 per cent. per annum would be

esteemed a very heavy—indeed, an almost crushing—rate to pay for borrowed money. The borrowers in the case before us were small farmers, struggling to keep soul and body together. “Oppression will make even a wise man mad.” No wonder, then, that the cry of the sufferers was both loud and bitter.

Not without reflection did Nehemiah take action. At whatever cost, he felt that he must do his painful duty ; and he did it, but, as we believe, by appealing privately at first to the chief offenders. Calling thereafter a public meeting, he told the richer people among them plainly but kindly of their faults. The Jews in Persia had, he said, exerted themselves for the redemption of brethren under heathen bondage ; and it was sad that Hebrew should oppress Hebrew. He pleaded with them to abandon their exactions, to restore the possessions of their neighbours, and no longer to insist upon the monthly instalments of interest on loans, whether the interest was payable in cash or in produce. The wealthy had really not a word to say for themselves. To the Governor’s proposals they at once agreed. Summoning the priests, he made the rulers and nobles take a solemn oath to fulfil their engagements. Then shaking the lap of his robe, he exclaimed, “So God shake out every man from his house, and from his labour, that performeth not this promise.” The assembly responded with a loud “Amen,” and uttered thanks to God ; and the happy result is recorded that the rich people did according to their agreement.

In this appeal to the wealthier Jews, Nehemiah’s own open-handed liberality gave him most powerful support. He hinted to them that he and the officials under him might exact a great deal from the people, but that they had not demanded a fraction for themselves. In explanation of this statement, the Governor himself tells us that for the whole twelve years during which he held office, he lived solely at his own charge, and paid all his servants out of his own purse. Certain governors of Judea after the time of Zerubbabel had demanded 40 shekels, *per day*, as is commonly understood, in order to meet their expenses. This would amount to about £1800 a year ; and they received in addition large supplies of bread and wine from those over whom they ruled. Not only did Nehemiah refrain from thus taxing the Jews for his support, but he also kept open house, entirely at his own expense. One hundred and fifty Jews and rulers, besides strangers, took their meals every day at his table. The supply required daily was one ox, six choice sheep, and a large number of fowls ; while sufficient wine of all sorts was furnished every ten days. No doubt this was a great downcome from the condition of things at the royal table in Solomon’s reign. Then thirty oxen, and one hundred sheep, besides harts, and roe-bucks, and fallow deer, and fatted fowls were every day consumed in the palace. It should not be forgotten, however, that Nehemiah’s government cost his subjects nothing. For their benefit he lived and not for his own ; and consequently he knew the happiness to which the Lord Jesus referred when He said, “It is more blessed to give than to receive.” Not

from man did he desire any recompense. Love to God and to God's people prompted his generous acts ; and he looked for reward only to the all-gracious One who has promised that even a cup of cold water, ministered to those who belong to Him, shall be returned in showers of blessing on the giver's head.

An inquiry might here arise as to whether the custom of requiring a premium for the use of money lent is quite just among Christians ; and it might be urged that if a Jew should, according to the law of Moses, look for no interest on loans made to a Jew, a true follower of the Saviour should deal not less liberally with his poor friends. In reply, it is only right to state that in our times, the term *usury* is applied almost entirely to any exorbitant charge for the use of money, such as that which the rich Jews had been compelling their poor brethren to pay in the days of Nehemiah. The term *interest* is employed now to designate any moderate rate. As between Christian and Christian, there appears nothing unfair in a lender's bargaining for a small return for the use of his capital, no more than there is injustice in a proprietor's asking a rent from the tenant of his house or his land. The rate usually paid in Great Britain for the loan of money, for which good security is given, is from four to five per cent per annum ; and if, as is common enough, a borrower can make ten, or fifteen, or twenty per cent during the year by trading with a lender's money, the lender is justly entitled to share in the profits. Without his money the profits could not be made at all.

Amongst Christians, there is, withal, much of the very same spirit which the law inculcated on the Hebrews. Many of them not only lend but give, without looking for any return from the needy whom they help. "Be kindly affectioned one to another, with brotherly love," and "Distribute to the necessities of the saints," are precepts less generally forgotten now by Christians, than ever they were by any people since the world was made, except, perhaps, during a brief period following the Day of Pentecost. Love is the motive which should actuate Christians in dealing with those around them, but the regulating power, both in lending and giving, is their responsibility as being simply *stewards for God*. Not a few *professing* Christians are to be found, who live merely by plundering their neighbours ; and no real follower of Him, who ever delighted in doing His Father's will, can be justified at the bar of his own conscience, or of heaven, in giving any encouragement in their evil courses to the idle, the lazy, the extravagant, or the drunken. Dealing with our money as under the eye of Him whose children and servants we are, we shall be neither foolishly generous on the one hand, nor hard-hearted and niggardly on the other. We shall *do good*, as we have opportunity, to all men, and especially to them who are of the household of faith.

If the settlement as to money matters which the Governor of Jerusalem effected, occurred during the period when the wall was being built, it is not difficult to understand how rapidly the work would then proceed. The poor, freed from an overwhelming burden

of debt which had restricted their daily bread and almost broke their hearts, would labour with a zeal such as had not been manifested before. Their richer brethren would not be less alert, for they had the joy within them which ever follows noble deeds nobly done. The fortifications were ere long completed all round the city, and the setting up of the gates was all that was necessary to finish this portion of the Governor's special task.

At this period a message reached Nehemiah from Sanballat and Geshem, those inveterate foes of God's cause and people. They asked him to meet with them in one of the villages of the plain of Ono in Benjamin, a few miles from Jerusalem. Having substantial reasons for suspecting that they intended to slay him, and so put an end to the good work in which the Lord was so manifestly blessing him, he refused to comply with their request. Three times was the verbal message repeated by them, with the view of worrying him into consent, but his reply was ever the same—"I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come; why should the work cease, while I leave it, and come down to you?"

The next movement of these enemies of Israel was Sanballat's forwarding an open letter to Nehemiah. In the East, letters to persons of quality are always carefully sealed, and then enclosed in a bag made of silk. The sending of an open epistle by the hand of a slave was therefore peculiarly insulting. Everybody whom the bearer met might read it by the bearer's permission, and thus the contents might become known. And the words of the communication added injury to insult. It stated that it was commonly rumoured, and that Gashmu or Geshem averred it, that Nehemiah intended to set himself up as king of the Jews. It went on to say that he had actually engaged prophets to promote this object among the population; and it asked whether such tidings should be reported to Artaxerxes? "Come, then," said Sanballat, "and let us have a meeting, at which we may talk the matter over."

If they thought thus to frighten the Governor, they got their trouble for their pains. He sent a reply simply denying every averment in the letter; and lifting his eyes to heaven, he cried for grace to maintain his courageous front—"Now, therefore, O God, strengthen my hands."

Tobiah, the Ammonite, was doubly connected by marriage with some of the richer Jews in Jerusalem. He had thus managed to get a considerable party on his side; and these traitors within the walls seconded the efforts of the haters of God without. Even prophets and prophetesses so far forgot their duty to Israel and to Jehovah, as to take bribes for the utterance of lies intended to frighten Nehemiah. One individual did all in his power to induce the Governor to take refuge in the temple, and shut himself up there, lest he should lose his life in a night attack by Sanballat. If he had weakly yielded, the Jews in the city would have lost heart, and Jerusalem itself would have become a prey to the enemy. "Should such a man as I flee?" exclaimed the noble-minded ruler. "Who is there, that, being

as I am, would go into the temple to save his life? I will not go in." His very boldness was his safety. His mind, conscious of rectitude, was not easily accessible to fear. Such wisdom and prudence were ministered by his heavenly Master, as enabled him to defeat all the machinations of his foes.

In the life of the true Christian there are usually many attempts on his integrity, similar to the reiterated endeavours of Sanballat and Geshem to draw Nehemiah from his duty. Temptations under various forms and from all quarters assail him again and again. Suddenly an old lust will rear its head when it was thought to have been destroyed for ever; and the fear of man will often be an element in the influences that are brought to bear upon him, to cause divergence from the narrow path.

In the midst of such attacks, only the all-supporting arm of Jehovah can preserve the believer. To the hills of salvation he *must*, he *will* look for the aid which alone can uphold him. There are, however, subsidiary or secondary means which should not be neglected, and the chief of these is *work*.

For *work* all creatures have been formed. Says a quaint but forcible writer:—"There is not a man or a thing now alive but has tools to work with. The basest of created animalcules, the spider itself, has a spinning-jenny, and a warping-mill, and a power-loom within its head." By another author it is wisely remarked that—"Men who have half a dozen irons in the fire are not (generally) the men to go crazy. It is the man of voluntary or compelled leisure, who mopes, and pines, and thinks himself into the madhouse or the grave. Motion is all nature's law. In action is to be found both the bodily and mental health of man. And yet, nine men out of ten are wistfully looking forward to the coveted hour when they shall have leisure to do nothing, or something only if they feel to like it—the very siren that has lured to death many a *successful* man. He only is wise who lays himself out to work until life's latest hour; and that is the man who will live longest, and live to the best purpose."

But work, and plenty of it, is withal one of the best means to enable us to resist temptation. When the mind is vacant, or only half occupied, allurements to evil have double power; but if we are kept very closely engaged at daily duty, there is the less chance of our being successfully attacked. Let us see to it, however, that, like Nehemiah, we are trying to do something directly for the Lord and His cause. We can at any rate do *every* task *as for Him*. He has set us in the position in which we find ourselves; and the humblest occupation, discharged with an eye to the glory of God, will become worship in the believer's hands. With mind and body thus engaged in what is useful to ourselves or others, we are doing "a great work," because it is a service to Christ. When, therefore, human triflers would draw us away to indulge in idle gossip, or when temptations to actual sin assail us, we shall have good reason, like the Governor of Jerusalem, to reply, "I am doing a great work, so that I cannot

come down : why should the work cease, whilst I leave it, and come down to you ? ”

If we are really trusting in the Redeemer, He sets us daily to fight against all sin, and to purify ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and of the spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of the Lord. To this the well-known lines refer—

“ A charge to keep I have,
My God to glorify—
My never-dying soul to save,
And fit it for the sky.”

Earnestly engaged in working out our own salvation, because we know that it is God who worketh in us both to will and to do of His good pleasure, we shall give little heed to tempters, except to say to them, “ I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down.”

It was not pride, but proper dignity which led Nehemiah, when traitors would have induced him to yield to foolish and faithless fears, and hide in the temple, to say, “ Should such a man as I flee ? I will not go in.” All who have accepted Christ as their Saviour have thus become children of the King eternal ; and in the hour of temptation each of them should also stand humbly on his dignity, saying :— “ Should such as I condescend to do this vile or shabby thing ? Should such as I tremble, as those well may who know not the Rock of my salvation ? I am God’s child. I cannot so debase myself, or do dishonour to my Father in Jesus ! ”

When the wall had been completed, gates were duly placed in the openings left for them. Thereafter sundry re-arrangements were made in connection with the Temple service, and two rulers appointed over the entire city. One of these was Hanani, brother of the Governor-in-chief ; and the other was Hananiah, the principal steward of the palace. Regarding the latter we have a noble certificate of character under Nehemiah’s hand—“ He was a faithful man, and feared God above many.” To these rulers, special directions were given regarding the opening and closing of the city gates. Only during broad day-light were they to be unbarred, and the inhabitants, who were still very few compared with the size of the place, were to watch alternately, each opposite his own house. These precautions were all required, because enemies around would have taken advantage of any slackness to rush in and seize the city.

The greater part of the seventh chapter is taken up with a list of those who came up at the first with Zerubbabel from Chaldea. There are some slight differences between it and the roll of the same company given in the second chapter of Ezra. The latter appears to have been drawn up before the returning Jews left Chaldea ; the former after their actual arrival in Canaan. We need not further refer to these lists, but it is worth while again to notice the character of Hananiah, who was “ a faithful man, and feared God above many.” Certainly it affords a practical illustration of the Heavenly Teacher’s precept, “ Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.”

The ungodly may be compelled to read the lesson of a holy and consistent life, when they will not look upon a page of the Bible, or listen to any preacher.

Close upon the high road leading from a village to a church, there stood a sawmill. The owner was an infidel, who wrought on Sabbaths just as on other days. It was observed, however, that for a short period before the assembling of the congregation for worship, also for about the same length of time after its dismissal, the mill invariably ceased its clatter. Some were curious enough to watch the sawyer's intermissions of work more narrowly still, and they discovered that the cessation of labour on the Lord's day invariably occurred only when a certain deacon was passing to and from the house of God. Whenever this deacon was out of hearing, on went the mill again, no matter who might be on the road. These curious neighbours ventured to ask the infidel how it was that he showed such reverence for that special office-bearer of the Church. "O!" said he in reply, "Deacon B. *professes* just the same as the rest of you; but he also *lives such a life*, that it makes me feel bad *here* (laying his hand on his heart) to run my mill while he is passing."

What a glory to the Lord it would be, if all who are called by His name would aim at such a heavenly walk and conversation, as would in like manner prove a standing rebuke to those who are far from God, and be a constant witness to them for Christ!

A minister of the Gospel was one day walking along a country road, and was induced to enter a newly ploughed field, attracted by the brilliant glistening of something that he saw on a ridge, a little way from the gate. It was shining like the most resplendent diamond. Nearing the spot, he found it was only a bit of broken earthenware, receiving and giving off again the rays of the unclouded mid-day sun. Worthless as the piece of delf was, considered by itself, it became exceedingly lustrous when shone upon by the ruler of the day. And more lovely far (as the clergyman remarked when relating the incident) may the humblest man or woman become, who basks in the light of love divine, beaming from the face of the Sun of Righteousness. The sweet rays that are ever being emitted from the countenance of Him, who died that we might live, are not only heart-warming, but soul-transforming. Let us close with His offered love. Let us walk continually in the light thereof; and we, too, shall hold forth the Word of life, and be ever glorifying God in our bodies and our spirits, which are His.

Literature.

History of the Westminster Assembly of Divines. By W. M. Hetherington, D.D., LL.D. Fourth Edition, with Notes and Fac-similes of Title-pages of the original editions of the Confession of Faith; the Catechisms, Larger and Shorter; and the Directory for Church Government; and Ordination of Ministers. Edited by the Rev. Robert Williamson, Ascog, Rothesay. Edinburgh: James Gemmell, George IV. Bridge. 1878.

It is with peculiar pleasure that we welcome this handsome and

much-improved edition of Hetherington's valuable History of the Westminster Assembly. More than twenty years have elapsed since the last edition was issued by the author, and it has been out of print for a considerable time, even a second-hand copy being obtained with difficulty. The public, therefore—and particularly those who take an interest in ecclesiastical history—are much indebted to Mr. Williamson and the enterprising publisher for issuing this new edition, and it is to be hoped their appreciation of what has been done will be shown in the practical and encouraging form of a large demand for the volume. Having compared it with the last edition, which is also before us, we can confidently bear testimony to the superiority in every respect of the present one. The editor, well qualified for the task, has done his work admirably. He has divided the six long chapters of which the book was composed into ten shorter ones. With the help of the *Original Minutes* of the Assembly, discovered since Dr. Hetherington's death, and published in part lately, he has been able to make several corrections and interesting additions in the body of the work, while to the appendix he has added a number of notes, embracing extracts from the above-mentioned *Minutes* relating to the drawing up of the Confession of Faith, and the two Catechisms. The fac-similes of the title-pages of the original editions of the Westminster Standards are neatly executed, and cannot but be viewed with interest by all who prize these invaluable theological productions of the famous Assembly. The usefulness of the book is enhanced by the addition of copious indices of names and subjects, while in respect of type and binding the volume is all that could be desired.

It would be superfluous to write in commendation of a work which has so long been justly regarded as a standard one—it being indeed the *only* one on the subject. Nothing could be more opportune than its republication at the present time. When our venerable Confession of Faith is being so ruthlessly assailed, and the learned and pious men who framed it are being charged with utter incapacity for the right performance of the work assigned them, it is well that people should thus have placed within their reach the means of making themselves acquainted with the characters and qualifications of the framers of the Confession, and with the spirit and manner in which they discharged their important functions. This is a book which should be studied by every one interested in the history and cause of Presbyterianism, and in the ecclesiastical discussions and theological controversies of the present day. And if we mistake not, it is a book that is likely to be more sought after during the next few years than it has been for some time past. Though we may not be prepared to endorse every statement made or sentiment expressed, yet this does not prevent us giving the work, as we now do, our warmest recommendation.

The Word and Works of God : A Course of Addresses to Young Men. By Maurice Lothian, F.R.S.E. Second and revised edition. Edinburgh : Johnstone, Hunter, & Co. 1878.

WE rejoice to see this excellent volume has reached a second edition.

As it received a favourable notice in our pages on its first appearance, some eighteen months ago, we need do little more than refer our readers to what was then said regarding it. While no material changes have been made in the matter of the addresses, the revision of the work has considerably improved it in some minor respects. Being tastefully got up, it forms an admirable book for presentation to thoughtful young men by friends interested in their religious welfare. And if carefully and candidly perused, it cannot but tend, with the Divine blessing, to save them from the rocks of infidelity on which so many are in danger of making shipwreck.

The True Psalmody: or, the Bible Psalms the Church's Only Manual of Praise. With Prefaces by the Rev. Henry Cooke, D.D., LL.D.; Rev. John Edgar, D.D., LL.D.; and Rev. Thomas Houston, D.D.; and recommendations by eminent Presbyterian Divines. Edinburgh: James Gemmell, George IV. Bridge, 1878. Crown 8vo, pp. 212. Price 2s.

THE subject of this little volume is one of vast importance, though it is far from being generally viewed in this light. In reference to it the question with very many is not, "What does God Himself require of His worshippers?" but "What does man, the offerer of worship, wish?" Not the divine word, but human taste is allowed to regulate both the matter and the mode of praise in the worship of the sanctuary. This is a sore evil, and one that is rapidly growing, and the consequences to religion and the Church cannot but prove disastrous in the extreme. We rejoice, therefore, in the republication of this standard work, as furnishing, to some extent at least, a most excellent antidote to the evil we deplore. Here we find the question of what should be the matter of the Church's praise very fully discussed, in the light both of Scripture and of Church history, and the position most conclusively established that the inspired Psalms alone ought to be used. We should like very much to see some of our prominent advocates and users of human compositions in the worship of God set themselves seriously to the task of replying to the arguments so admirably put in this volume. This they are surely bound to do in self-vindication, and to show that their procedure is in harmony with Scripture, which they acknowledge to be "the *only rule of faith and practice.*"

Some time ago, we heard a good deal about the importance and even necessity of using hymns in "revival meetings," it being virtually asserted that there could be no revival of religion without them. When we have heard such statements made, our feeling invariably has been, "so much the worse for the revival that can be promoted only by excluding God's own inspired Psalms." The following is the manner in which this point is dealt with in "The True Psalmody," and we quote the passage as a fair specimen of the contents of the volume:—

"It is said that the Psalms are not adapted to a season of religious reviving. This objection could scarcely be offered by one acquainted with the Psalms themselves, and with their history. We have already asserted and shown, that the Psalms do give expression to the liveliest Christian emotions and affections, that

they have been singularly esteemed and loved, habitually read, and studied, and sung by many of the most spiritually-minded and devoted of the servants and ministers of Christ. Surely, the Apostolic Church was a living and active church, but it is acknowledged that the Psalms were then sung ; and, so far as the evidence goes, no other religious songs. The Waldenses sang the Psalms and nothing else in their Alpine valleys ; and in their seasons of persecution found in these inspired Psalms strength and hope. The French Church, and the Churches of Switzerland, used nothing else in song during the palmiest days of their religious life ; while those sacred songs contributed not a little to the spread of the gospel. These Psalms constituted the only psalmody of the Scottish Church in her first and second Reformations. These were the songs whose melody was heard in the cottages, in the glens, in the moors, and on the mountains, and often on the scaffold, and at the stake, in the dark days of Scottish persecution. In these Psalms, the multitudes who waited upon the preaching of Livingstone, celebrated God's praises in that day of the Lord's power, when five hundred souls were converted by means of one sermon at the Kirk of Shotts. The thousands who turned to the Lord, flocking as 'doves to their windows' during the season of genuine and extensive reviving subsequent to that day, used none but Bible Psalms. These Psalms were the sacred songs of the revived Church in Ireland, in the days of the Bruces, the Welshes, the Blairs, the Cunninghams, and Livingstones, when large districts were aroused and turned, almost as one man, to God. The early Presbyterians of this country (America) used none other during those 'golden days, when souls were enlightened with such a knowledge of Christ, as if the light of the sun had been sevenfold, as if the light of seven days had poured at once on the worshipper with healing in every beam.' The Bible Psalms *are* adapted to any season of *genuine* reviving of religion. They have been tried. They have never been found wanting. The revival to which these Psalms are not adapted should itself be suspected."

The work was first published in America twenty years ago ; it was reprinted in Ireland in 1861 ; and now we have a Scotch edition, for which we feel grateful to the spirited publisher. As it is a book not at all suited to the prevailing taste, in these days of hymn-book making, hymn-singing, and organ-playing in the Churches, it is to be feared the demand for it will be comparatively limited ; and we would express the hope that the friends of purity of worship will do their utmost to promote its circulation. Were it widely diffused, and everywhere candidly studied, the best results might be expected to follow.

The Papal Hierarchy for Scotland. A Note of Alarm in Eight Letters. By Watchman. Edinburgh : Maclaren & Macniven. Price 3d.

WE have in this pamphlet a much-needed and well-sounded "Note of Alarm," timeously given, but, alas, there are evidently few ears to listen to it, few hearts to respond to it, few hands to unfurl, at its call, the banner for "Christ's Crown and Covenant" in the face of the foe. The foe is already within the citadel, and the vast majority of those who should have united to withstand him have either been fighting among themselves, or folding their hands in ignoble ease, murmuring "peace, peace," when there is and can be no peace, unless it be the peace of death.

Notes on Public Events.

THE PAPAL HIERARCHY.—As was to be feared, Rome has carried her point, and the re-erection of her hierarchy in Scotland is an accomplished fact. The

land of the covenants is once more cursed with a yoke which our reforming ancestors struggled to the death to cast off, and we their degenerate sons are tamely submitting to its re-imposition. It is plain that either our forefathers were martyrs by mistake, or we are acting the part of fools. Yet none who claim to be Protestants will venture to assert that the covenanters were wrong in abjuring Popery and abolishing the Pope's jurisdiction in the land ; and if they were right in what they did, it must be the most egregious folly in us to act as we are now doing. A host of enemies infinitely more to be dreaded than the ancient Philistines, sworn to compass our destruction, has come in upon us, and Scotland is asleep in the lap of the Delilah of indifference ; and when she awakes it will be to find herself shorn of her boasted strength, and at the mercy of those who will show no mercy. Had there been a tenth part of the concern manifested regarding this Papal aggression that has been shown over the question of war with Russia, it would have been a more hopeful symptom as to the state of the country. But few meetings have been held, and few Church courts have taken the matter up—some even refusing to consider it ; and the poor result has been some resolutions passed about the importance of instructing the people on the subject of Romanism, as if *future instruction* were sufficient to meet the *present emergency* ! The spectacle that has of late presented itself, in several quarters, of speaker after speaker at public meetings loudly deploring and condemning this aggression, and yet in the same breath deprecating any direct action being taken to arrest it by those alone competent to do so, has been to us a melancholy one ; and it is one which must have afforded no little amusement to those against whom the empty declamations have been launched. It is all very well to speak, but when *speech* is made to take the place of *action* the result is far from satisfactory. What has been *done* to prevent the establishment of this Papal hierarchy ?

FURTHER CONCESSIONS AND DEFERENCE TO ROME.—At the time of their accession to power, it was fondly believed in many quarters that a Conservative Government would stand by our Protestant Constitution and resist the insatiable demands of the Papacy ; and there is reason to believe that in the reaction caused by the infatuated policy of those previously in power in relation to Popery, the Conservative party obtained the support of not a few moderate "Liberals" who place the preservation of our national Protestantism above all questions of mere politics. Recent events, however, have shown that the one party is no more to be relied on than the other, but that both are alike unprincipled in their procedure when Popery is concerned. Has not the Romish hierarchy been set up in Scotland without a word of disapproval or remonstrance being uttered by those in power, pledged though they be to maintain our Protestant Constitution ? We firmly believe that an emphatic word spoken by our Government in time, to the effect that the step contemplated could not, and would not be allowed, would have saved us from this additional insult and disgrace. In connection with the Navy Estimates recently passed through Parliament, it was intimated that provision was henceforth to be made for the maintenance of Popish chaplains in our Navy ; and this further concession to the demands of Rome's emissaries appears to have been made as a bribe to silence their threatened opposition to the measures of the Government. Such unprincipled truckling is most despicable, and in its consequences must prove ruinous to the country's interests. It has been further announced that the new, and apparently astute, occupant of the Papal chair has ventured to ask our Government to enter into "diplomatic relations" with the Vatican, and that our Government has expressed their readiness to do so on certain conditions—though what these conditions are we have not seen stated. Here is

another Romish mesh being skilfully prepared for the entanglement of our country, and more infatuation on the part of our rulers in blindly encouraging its formation. All experience and history show that nothing but evil can possibly result from the opening up of such relations, and, no matter what the conditions may be, such relations ought not to exist. When one looks at what is transpiring, does it not seem as if there were a deliberate conspiracy in high quarters to betray our country entirely into the hands of her direst foe? Most fully do we agree with "Watchman," when he says in his seasonable "Note of Alarm:"—"It was truly a dark day for truth, for freedom, for the world, when Britain passed the Act of 1829, by which she entrusted to the hands of Roman slaves the power of legislating for British freemen; and it is calculated to make one's blood boil with indignation to see how, in consequence of that fatal Act, concession after concession is made, each strengthening the foreign usurpation."

THE HERESY CASES.—Both in the Presbytery and Synod, Professor Smith and his friends have carried the day, and the result has been the throwing out of the libel by the Presbytery on the question of its relevancy, and the exculpation of the Professor. Such a collapse in the case, though perhaps not quite unanticipated, must have pained the hearts of many of the friends of truth, not only in the Free Church, but throughout the whole country, and filled them with anxious forebodings. For it can hardly be looked upon in any other light than as an ominous indication that the views challenged in the libel are widely sympathised with and regarded as views which ought to be tolerated within the Church. The case will come before the General Assembly by appeal, and it remains to be seen how it will be dealt with there. Should the Assembly follow the example of the lower courts, the consequences, it is to be feared, must be very serious to the cause of truth; but we hope that wiser counsels and greater faithfulness will prevail. In the case of the Rev. Fergus Ferguson, a libel has also been framed, and at the time we write the Presbytery has entered upon the consideration of the relevancy of the several counts. In the discussion upon the first count, bearing upon the cardinal doctrine of the atonement, in which some undignified scenes are reported to have taken place, several speakers warmly defended the statements of Mr. Ferguson, and in doing so gave expression themselves to very questionable sentiments, and it was only by a majority of eleven that the count was declared relevant. It is to be hoped this case will not miscarry so grievously as the Aberdeen one has done, and that it will be shown that the Presbytery concerned, and the Church at large, are not prepared to abandon the clearly stated Scriptural doctrines of the Confession of Faith, for Mr. Ferguson's unintelligible, would-be philosophic, erroneous utterances.

THE STORM IN THE FREE CHURCH.—The order having gone forth from the head quarters of "the majority," a storm of overtures has been raging throughout the Free Church for some time past, over the alleged unconstitutional procedure of the "constitutional" minority, in presuming to approach a government official on the subject of the proper adjustment of the relations between Church and State, without the knowledge and sanction of said majority. The irritation this move has caused in the Free Church disestablishment camp is not to be wondered at, but we are surprised at the pettiness of the whole affair. Surely the Church has more important work to do than to quarrel over such a matter. While we sympathise so far with the general position and aims of the "constitutionalists," we are of course in no way concerned to defend this particular part of their conduct. It may be they have acted unadvisedly and in a way fitted to give offence to brethren. At the same time, it appears to us that they have only been exercising the liberty of

individual and united action which their brethren of the majority claim and exercise. Many of those in favour of disestablishment have no hesitation in appearing on Liberation platforms and asking government to put an end to the existing connection between Church and State on the ground that it is hopelessly bad—incurably Erastian. And if they are allowed to act thus with impunity, why should they flare up so passionately and denounce their brethren of the minority for taking a different course—for doing what they feel in conscience bound to do in consistency with what they regard as the constitutional principles of the Claim of Right, to bring about a further improvement in the present relations of Church and State in Scotland? We do not see how any consistent Free Churchman can object to a proposal, honestly made, that a commission be appointed “to inquire into the causes which keep asunder the Presbyterians of Scotland, with a view to the removal of any impediments which may exist to their reunion in a National Church, as established at the Reformation, and ratified by the Revolution Settlement and the Act of Union.” And if in place of denouncing one another as traitors to their principles, both the majority and minority in the Free Church were to unite their efforts to secure such a thorough inquiry, the spectacle would certainly be more edifying, and the result, we think, would be much more satisfactory both for the Church and for the country at large.

Ecclesiastical Intelligence.

INDUCTION AT EDINBURGH.—On Thursday 21st March, the Edinburgh Presbytery met at Victoria Terrace, Edinburgh, for the purpose of inducting the Rev. John Sturrock, late of Stranraer, to the pastoral charge of the congregation there. In addition to the members of Presbytery, there were present the Rev. John Robertson, Ayr; the Rev. Professor Aitken, Glasgow; the Rev. W. B. Gardiner, Pollokshaws; the Rev. Alex. Stirling, Arbroath; the Rev. Alex. J. Yuill, Glasgow; the Rev. Andrew Miller, Kirkintilloch; the Rev. Peter M'Vicar, Coupar-Angus; and the Rev. Alex. D. King, Carnoustie. There was a large attendance of the members of the Congregation and their friends. After devotional exercises conducted by the Rev. John Robertson, the Rev. Thomas Matthew, Midlem, preached an able and suitable discourse from 1 Corinthians iii. 6, “I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase.” The Rev. Thomas Hobart, Carluke, then put the questions of the formula and offered up the induction prayer, after which he addressed the newly-inducted pastor in appropriate terms; and the Rev. William Hamilton, Kirkcaldy, tendered suitable exhortations to the people. The services were concluded with devotional exercises, conducted by the Rev. Peter M'Vicar. In the course of the afternoon, the members of Presbytery and other ministers and friends present were hospitably entertained to dinner by the office-bearers of the congregation in the Cockburn Temperance Hotel.

In the evening a meeting was held in the church at which several interesting and instructive addresses bearing on congregational work were delivered. At this meeting the newly-inducted pastor received three different presents from parties in connection with the congregation. Mr Hobart, who had acted as moderator of session during the vacancy, was at the same time presented with a purse of sovereigns in recognition of his services. These gifts were suitably acknowledged.

On Sabbath the 24th, the usual introductory services were held, when the Rev. Professor Aitken, M.A., preached in the forenoon from Acts xvi. 14, "And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard us; whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul;" and in the evening from Heb. xiii. 18, "Pray for us; for we trust we have a good conscience, in all things willing to live honestly." And in the afternoon Mr. Sturrock preached from 2 Cor. iv. 7, "But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us." At all the diets of worship there was a large attendance. We congratulate our friends in Edinburgh on once more beholding their teacher, and trust that his ministrations will be acknowledged of God, whose blessing alone can render any ministry successful.—*Communicated.*

POLLOKSHAW'S — SOCIAL MEETING.—The annual social meeting of the Pollokshaws congregation was held in the church on Thursday evening, the 21st February last, and was numerously attended. The Rev. William B. Gardiner occupied the chair. After tea, the chairman referred to the changes that had taken place in the congregation during the year, and mentioned, among other things, that 12 of the members had been taken away by death, that 36 new members had been added to the roll, and 25 had been baptized. The Bible classes on Thursday evening had a roll of 114 young people, who had raised £4, 10s. during the past year for mission purposes. The chairman exhorted the members to seek the prosperity of the congregation by earnest personal effort and effectual fervent prayer. Mr. William Kyle submitted the financial statement, which was highly encouraging,—the revenue both from the weekly collections and the seat-rents being on the increase. Mr. James Mitchell reported on the Sabbath School, and stated that there were at present 29 teachers and 262 scholars on the roll. Mr. Robert Smith presented the report of the Young Men's Sabbath Morning Fellowship Meeting, and Mr. John L. Algie gave a cheering report of the Temperance Society. Interesting addresses were delivered by the Rev. A. J. Yuill, on "Personal Influence;" the Rev. Professor Aitken, M.A., on "The Papal Hierarchy;" and the Rev. John M'Kay, on "The Bible Tithe." Several pieces of music were well rendered by a few members of the singing class, under the leadership of Mr. Robert Arbuckle. After a few remarks from Messrs. Robert Sproull, J. Mitchell, Archibald Hart, and James Finlayson, in proposing the customary votes of thanks, the meeting was closed with praise and the benediction.

It is with much pleasure we observe that Mr. Alexander Smellie, student of Divinity, has obtained the degree of *Master of Arts* in the University of Edinburgh, and that he has gained the *second* of three prizes (£15) offered by the Association for the Defence of Purity of Doctrine and Worship, for an Essay against "Recent Innovations in Public Worship, especially the Use of Instrumental Music."

Obituary.

It is our painful duty to record the death of the Rev. John M'Beath, Orlig, which took place on the 15th March last, in the 66th year of his age and the 35th of his ministry. His end was peace. A short account of his life and self-denying labours in taking up and in maintaining our testimony for the covenanted cause will appear in a future number.

THE ORIGINAL SECESSION MAGAZINE.

JULY, 1878.

THE MEETING OF SYNOD.

WE feel that we need do little more than solicit the attention of our readers to the full account of the proceedings of the recent meeting of Synod contained in the present number. From that they will be pleased to learn that during the past year the various schemes and operations of the Church have been vigorously carried on, with some encouraging measure of outward success both at home and abroad. In this there is certainly much cause for gratitude; and while we render thanks to Him from whom all prosperity comes, let us earnestly seek that the great ends which should be aimed at, in all efforts for the furtherance of the gospel, may be gained—the conversion of sinners, and the spiritual enlargement of believers.

It is matter for thankfulness that only one name had to be dropped from the Roll of the Synod—that of our lamented brother, Mr. M'Beath, whose memoir, we regret to state, cannot appear till September, owing to the demand upon our space for Synod reports. Another name has been added to the Roll, through the happy settlement at Kirriemuir, so that the number of ministers stands the same as at last Synod.

A great trial to which as a Church we are being subjected at present is that of the want of probationers. Congregations, therefore, must aim at complying with the apostolic injunction—"Bear ye one another's burdens." It is gratifying at the same time to know that there is the prospect of one preacher being on the field in the course of a few months, and that there are several students diligently prosecuting their studies. It surely becomes all concerned for the maintenance of the cause for which we appear, to make it matter of

special fervent prayer that He who has the hearts of all in His hand would incline more of the young amongst us to devote themselves to His service in the ministry of the gospel, and keep them faithful to the solemn engagements under which they come. For this, as for all other blessings, the Lord will be inquired of to do it for us.

The Report on Home Mission work will be found to be of a cheering character. In no fewer than seven localities mission operations are being carried on among the careless and neglected at home, and in some of these places there is every likelihood of the work issuing ere long in the existence of self-sustaining congregations. With error and infidelity and impiety of every kind abounding so much in our land, how loud and urgent is the call to continue, and if possible to redouble, our efforts to bring the gospel in its purity to our fellow-countrymen, and how fervently should we pray that these efforts may not be in vain.

The deeply interesting Report on our Indian Mission was listened to with mingled feelings of gratitude and sorrow—of gratitude for the signal increasing prosperity that has attended the work, and of sorrow on account of the painful tidings just received of the illness from sun-stroke of our esteemed missionary, occurring at the very time when he was beginning joyfully to reap the first-fruits of his patient and prayerful labours, and when his presence and energetic services were never more needed for the on-carrying of the work. It will gratify our readers to learn that according to the latest intelligence the case has not proved so serious as was anticipated, and that there is reason to hope, that, through the Divine blessing, Mr. Anderson will soon be restored to health and able to resume the discharge of duty. We are sure that he and his family have had and will continue to have the deepest sympathies and constant prayers of the entire Church.

The able Reports on "Public Questions," and on the subject of "Intemperance" will be perused with deep interest and satisfaction. In connection with the former it was very happily remarked, with reference to the Convener of Committee, that we had "struck upon a new vein," and from what has been produced on this occasion high hopes are cherished for the future. To the important question of "Intemperance"—one of the most urgently practical questions of the day—it is gratifying to find that earnest attention is being increasingly directed, both within the Church and without it. There is, we are afraid, a sad want of discipline in connection with this frightful evil. We are persuaded that were ecclesiastical discipline to be everywhere, in all sections of the Christian Church, faithfully

administered upon those chargeable with this sin, the results would speedily be of the most salutary character. We trust the practical recommendations of the Committee on this subject, sanctioned by Synod, will meet with due consideration and be widely adopted and acted upon.

The Finances of the Church continue on the whole in a satisfactory state—the decrease on the regular contributions to the different schemes for the year being less than might have been anticipated from the depression in trade that has so long prevailed. One pleasing feature to record is the fact that the minimum stipend is this year a shade higher than ever it has been, though it is very far yet from being what it ought to be. But as this is not due to an increase in contributions, but to a decrease in the number of aid-receiving congregations for the year, there must be greater efforts made if the position reached is to be maintained in future, not to speak of further improvement.

All must feel regret that the negotiations for union with our brethren of the Reformed Presbyterian Church have not proved successful. For our own part we are free to acknowledge that our *hope* of success was never so strong as our *desire* for the gathering into one of the friends of the Reformation in these days of rapid and widespread defection. Most sincerely would we have rejoiced had the exertions of the two committees terminated otherwise. Apparently the time for the healing of this breach in Zion has not yet come, wherever the responsibility may lie in the matter. The negotiations, however, will not have been in vain, if, as the result of them, the two bodies have come to know each other better and to respect each other more, as equally conscientious in adhering to their respective positions, and if they be found ready to make common cause, as far as this can consistently be done, in maintaining and furthering our common covenanted scriptural principles, and in opposing whatever is hostile to these. And let us never cease to pray that the time may soon arrive when those who are so much at one may be brought to see eye to eye and to contend together, in perfect unity, for the faith delivered to the saints.

MODERATOR'S ADDRESS.

FATHERS AND BRETHREN, it is written, "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." These words were addressed primarily to the Church of Smyrna. They are in like manner the command of God to all the Churches of Christendom now; and are to be listened to by us as spoken to that Church to which we belong.

One is "faithful" when he truly and fully executes any trust committed to him. At the command of God Jeremiah placed wine before the sons of Rechab, and said, "Drink ye wine. But they said, We will drink no wine: for Jonadab the son of Rechab our father commanded us, saying, Ye shall drink no wine, neither ye, nor your sons for ever. Neither shall ye build house, nor sow seed, nor plant vineyard, nor have *any*: but all your days ye shall dwell in tents; that ye may live many days in the land where ye be strangers." They were "faithful" to the trust committed to them by their father Jonadab. God gave our reforming ancestors a trust, consisting of certain doctrines and principles. These doctrines, as they were tabulated in the symbolic books which they compiled, were the clearest, the most comprehensive, and the most forcible exhibition of the doctrines of grace ever given to the world. And the principles which they espoused and maintained were the most complete, as a code, ever deduced from the Word of God. A few of these doctrines were—the plenary inspiration of the Scriptures; the total depravity of man; eternal and unconditional election by God the Father; particular redemption by Jesus Christ; effectual calling by the Holy Spirit; and the final perseverance of the saints. And a few of the principles which they held were the following:—Jesus Christ is the alone King and Head of the Church; God is not to be worshipped in any way not appointed in his word; Presbytery is of divine right; Jesus Christ is the King and Head of Nations; and our national covenants are of continued obligation. These are some of the doctrines and principles which they saw in Holy Writ, and which they consequently were led to adopt. These were the trust which was thus committed to them by the Most High, and which they were commanded to teach clearly, and to maintain fully. To this trust they were very faithful.

In the providence of God this inheritance, in its entirety, has been handed down to us. I need not remind you of what took place when the Erskines were driven from the Established Church; nor of the unhappy splits by which the Secession Church was rent. It is enough that I say here that we teach the same doctrines, and maintain the same principles, and occupy the same ground exactly with our forefathers of the Second Reformation. This is the trust which has been committed to us, and which we have promised, through grace, to maintain. Concerning this God says to us, "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."

It must be admitted that faithfulness to this trust on our part is very difficult. The larger Churches of the land have allowed some of the man-humbling and God-glorifying doctrines of grace to be disregarded or denied. Doctrines are proclaimed which are more agreeable to

our fallen self-righteous natures. And this makes it difficult for us to preach in their integrity those pure and searching doctrines of grace which are so wounding to the pride of the carnal heart. The larger Churches do not maintain all the principles of the Second Reformation, and so they tolerate practices in public worship which are very acceptable to the popular mind, but which we cannot countenance, as we deem them to be unscriptural. The larger denominations contain many men distinguished for learning and eminent for piety. And as these great men have seen fit to remain in connection with Churches which have departed from the attainments of the Reformation, we are liable to be pointed to with the finger of scorn as self-righteous bigots, because we continue to remain apart from them, and to testify against their defections. They are also very wealthy, and consequently are able to give to their ministers a minimum stipend in some measure corresponding to the position they must maintain in society. Aspirants to the office of the holy ministry in connection with this Church have not the same alluring prospect, and yet we are glad to think that there is an improvement in this respect. Thus, when we remember that in the larger Churches doctrines are taught, and practices are encouraged which are agreeable to the masses, but which we cannot sanction ; and that their average stipend is much better than our own, it may be easily understood that it is difficult to be steadfast in the midst of such adverse influences.

Nevertheless, faithfulness to our divine trust is our duty, our privilege, and our honour. The great question for us to consider is, Are these doctrines and principles really scriptural? Are they the truth of God? If we be persuaded of this we are bound to be faithful thereto. If they be the truth of God to us, here we must stand. It will be at our peril if we depart therefrom. The opinions of the Reformers are controverted by many of the ecclesiastics of this generation. But whether did the Reformers of that day, or do the dreamers of this day, possess the greater powers of mind? Which of them will be found ultimately to have been most deeply taught in divine things by the Spirit of God ; or to have accomplished most good? By asking such questions we answer them. The Reformers, in fidelity to their trust, had to oppose the heresies of the day in which they lived. And now it is our part, in a like-minded faithfulness to the same trust, to oppose the defections of the day in which we live.

Are these doctrines and principles the truth of God? Good men, of great mind, and great in grace, sought, with deep and prayerful study, to discover the mind and will of God as it is revealed in His Word. Many of them were constitutionally severe and earnest men ; they were surrounded by dangers ; they sought to lay deep a founda-

tion for the welfare of the Church and nation that would endure to all coming time ; and they desired above all things to promote the declarative glory of God. Did they, could they, in these circumstances, fail to know the doctrines and principles which the Holy Spirit has taught in His inspired Word ? Surely the promise was fulfilled to them, "Ye shall seek me and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart." Their work was sealed with so many tokens for good in the reformation of religion and in the conversion of many souls, as to make it evident that God had revealed Himself unto them. And if it were so, assuredly the Romanism, the Arminianism, the Voluntarism, and the incipient Rationalism so prevalent in our day, are not from above. That divine fountain cannot send forth both sweet waters and bitter.

We are a small Church, and while it may be said "We have not wrought any deliverance on the earth," it is also to be observed that we have been enabled in some measure to be faithful to our trust. This is not said in the spirit of self-congratulation. A consciousness of the deceitfulness of our hearts, and of our many imperfections, and of the numerous defections from our ranks that have taken place on the part of ministers, probationers, and people, should be sufficient to prevent any such feeling from arising within us. But in the spirit of thankfulness to God I observe that He has enabled us in some measure to be faithful to the trust committed to us. Nor is this steadfastness to received truth to be attributed to inertness of mind. We need clear knowledge, and a deep conscientious conviction of the truth of our position, to strengthen us in our comparative isolation, and to preserve us in our fidelity thereto. Let it be ours to pray very earnestly that God would give us grace to continue in our fidelity to His cause and truth, and that we may not be carried away by the abounding defections of the age. Let us perseveringly pray for grace to hand down our testimony unimpaired to those who will come after us. Let us not be oppressed with the thought that we are doing little amid the mass of workers throughout the Church at large. If our means and numbers, as well as our work, be contrasted with those of larger denominations, it may perhaps be found that we are not so very far behind. But let it be granted that we cannot point to much that we have done, yet the fact of having been faithful through grace to our divine trust, may ultimately be a great service to the cause of Christ. The Waldensian Church was for long as limited in numbers and influence as we have been, yet, as they have now come forth to the light, it is acknowledged by all the Churches, that they, by their fidelity in their obscurity, have rendered a great service to the Church's King.

If the attainments of the Reformation were the most complete embodiment of divine truth ever taken from the Word of God, be assured that He will honour and reward fidelity thereto. If the work of the Reformation was from God, it will be revived and completed at the millennium, if not sooner. And when the history of the Church comes to be written fully and impartially as it will be, the connecting links between the faithful Reformers and the divinely-developed Church of the latter day will be traced, and honour will be paid to those who formed those links, in the way of maintaining a full testimony for the whole of the attainments of the Reformation. When the will of God concerning our Church comes to be fully revealed, our connection with it will not be to us a circumstance of which we shall be ashamed. As our present enjoyment we have the peace of a good conscience, through adhering faithfully to what we believe to be the cause and truth of Christ ; and we should have a lively hope of receiving the commendation the Great Master will give, not to the successful, but to the faithful :—" Well done, good and faithful servant : thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things : enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

MEETING OF THE UNITED ORIGINAL SECESSION SYNOD,
HELD AT GLASGOW, MAY, 1878.

THE Synod of United Original Seceders met in Mains Street Church, Glasgow, on Monday the 6th May, and was opened with a sermon by the Rev. Ebenezer Ritchie, Toberdoney, the retiring Moderator, from Psalm lxxxvii. 3—"Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God."

After sermon, the Synod was constituted with prayer by the Rev. Ebenezer Ritchie, Moderator, and the roll of members was called. It was then reported by the Clerk of Ayr Presbytery that, since last meeting of Synod, the Rev. Ebenezer Ritchie had been loosed from the pastoral charge of Toberdoney congregation with a view to his being inducted to the pastorate of Aberdeen congregation ; and that the Rev. John Sturrock had been loosed from the pastoral charge of Stranraer congregation, with a view to his induction as pastor of Edinburgh congregation. It was reported by the Clerk of Edinburgh Presbytery that, since previous meeting of Synod, the Rev. John Sturrock, late of Stranraer, had been inducted as pastor of Edinburgh congregation, and he moved that Mr. Sturrock's name be replaced on the roll. It was reported by the Clerk of Perth and

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tion for the welfare of the Church and nation that would endure to all coming time ; and they desired above all things to promote the declarative glory of God. Did they, could they, in these circumstances, fail to know the doctrines and principles which the Holy Spirit has taught in His inspired Word? Surely the promise was fulfilled to them, "Ye shall seek me and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart." Their work was sealed with so many tokens for good in the reformation of religion and in the conversion of many souls, as to make it evident that God had revealed Himself unto them. And if it were so, assuredly the Romanism, the Arminianism, the Voluntaryism, and the incipient Rationalism so prevalent in our day, are not from above. That divine fountain cannot send forth both sweet waters and bitter.

We are a small Church, and while it may be said "We have not wrought any deliverance on the earth," it is also to be observed that we have been enabled in some measure to be faithful to our trust. This is not said in the spirit of self-congratulation. A consciousness of the deceitfulness of our hearts, and of our many imperfections, and of the numerous defections from our ranks that have taken place on the part of ministers, probationers, and people, should be sufficient to prevent any such feeling from arising within us. But in the spirit of thankfulness to God I observe that He has enabled us in some measure to be faithful to the trust committed to us. Nor is this steadfastness to received truth to be attributed to inertness of mind. We need clear knowledge, and a deep conscientious conviction of the truth of our position, to strengthen us in our comparative isolation, and to preserve us in our fidelity thereto. Let it be ours to pray very earnestly that God would give us grace to continue in our fidelity to His cause and truth, and that we may not be carried away by the abounding defections of the age. Let us perseveringly pray for grace to hand down our testimony unimpaired to those who will come after us. Let us not be oppressed with the thought that we are doing little amid the mass of workers throughout the Church at large. If our means and numbers, as well as our work, be contrasted with those of larger denominations, it may perhaps be found that we are not so very far behind. But let it be granted that we cannot point to much that we have done, yet the fact of having been faithful through grace to our divine trust, may ultimately be a great service to the cause of Christ. The Waldensian Church was for long as limited in numbers and influence as we have been, yet, as they have now come forth to the light, it is acknowledged by all the Churches, that they, by their fidelity in their obscurity, have rendered a great service to the Church's King.

If the attainments of the Reformation were the most complete embodiment of divine truth ever taken from the Word of God, be assured that He will honour and reward fidelity thereto. If the work of the Reformation was from God, it will be revived and completed at the millennium, if not sooner. And when the history of the Church comes to be written fully and impartially as it will be, the connecting links between the faithful Reformers and the divinely-developed Church of the latter day will be traced, and honour will be paid to those who formed those links, in the way of maintaining a full testimony for the whole of the attainments of the Reformation. When the will of God concerning our Church comes to be fully revealed, our connection with it will not be to us a circumstance of which we shall be ashamed. As our present enjoyment we have the peace of a good conscience, through adhering faithfully to what we believe to be the cause and truth of Christ; and we should have a lively hope of receiving the commendation the Great Master will give, not to the successful, but to the faithful:—"Well done, good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

MEETING OF THE UNITED ORIGINAL SECESSION SYNOD,
HELD AT GLASGOW, MAY, 1878.

THE Synod of United Original Seceders met in Mains Street Church, Glasgow, on Monday the 6th May, and was opened with a sermon by the Rev. Ebenezer Ritchie, Toberdoney, the retiring Moderator, from Psalm lxxxvii. 3—"Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God."

After sermon, the Synod was constituted with prayer by the Rev. Ebenezer Ritchie, Moderator, and the roll of members was called. It was then reported by the Clerk of Ayr Presbytery that, since last meeting of Synod, the Rev. Ebenezer Ritchie had been loosed from the pastoral charge of Toberdoney congregation with a view to his being inducted to the pastorate of Aberdeen congregation; and that the Rev. John Sturrock had been loosed from the pastoral charge of Stranraer congregation, with a view to his induction as pastor of Edinburgh congregation. It was reported by the Clerk of Edinburgh Presbytery that, since previous meeting of Synod, the Rev. John Sturrock, late of Stranraer, had been inducted as pastor of Edinburgh congregation, and he moved that Mr. Sturrock's name be replaced on the roll. It was reported by the Clerk of Perth and

none of the members enriched in oral prayer, or capable of speaking to their neighbours to edification and comfort, is poor indeed. The Churches of Macedonia abounded in liberality. A parish is poor in liberality that spends more on tobacco and intoxicating drink than on sending the Gospel to the heathen. Yet in our own country less than a million is given for Missions to the heathen, and more than fourteen millions on tobacco, and one hundred and fifty millions on intoxicating drink. How poor is such a country in Christian liberality! I should like to know that it is different in this parish from what it is elsewhere, and that you give more to send the Gospel to the heathen than others do. Will you contribute to the enrichment of the Church by applying to Him in whom are unsearchable riches? Will you apply to Him that He may enrich you, not only with the things necessary for your personal salvation, but also with such gifts as will make you useful Christians in your day and generation, in utterance, and knowledge, and diligence, and love, and liberality? It is well known, that with my whole heart I agree with my friend who addressed your pastor on the subject of Church Discipline. But that does not rest with the minister only, or the session only; but the raising of a public spirit on this matter is needed. It is laid on every individual member of the Church to take part in the carrying on of a proper discipline (1 Cor. v. 9-13). This is a rule binding on every man's conscience; and he is a poor blind man who says, "It is nothing to me that that man was drunk last week, and is now sitting beside me at the Lord's Table." The Lord Jesus Christ, the great Shepherd of the sheep, bless the pastor and the flock, that the enemies of the Lord may be seen submitting themselves to Him, and that this congregation may eat the finest of the wheat, and be satisfied with honey from the rock.

After prayer and the singing of Psalm cxxii. 6-9, the benediction was pronounced; and the congregation welcomed their newly ordained minister by shaking hands with him at the door of the Church as they retired.

THE DISCIPLINE OF THE REFORMATION.

BY D. HAY FLEMING, ST. ANDREWS.

III.

IN the old record of West Anstruther there are occasional cases of men being cited "for gouging on Sabbath," and women for laying out clothes on that day. But, as these cases are very exceptional, they show what a powerful hold the Reformation had taken of this district even at that early date. And this is the more surprising, as James Melville's predecessor,—William Clark, a pious and laborious minister,—was burdened with the care of all the four parishes.

"After that all admonitions, both private and public, be past, as before is said, then must the Church proceed to excommunication, if the offender remain obstinate." Accordingly, on the Sabbath after

the third public admonition, the minister being before charged by the session, signified unto the Church, after the sermon, that, as they knew, the minister and the whole Church had with lenity and carefulness sought N. &c. to satisfy the Church, and declare himself penitent, but unavailingly ; so his disobedience could be no longer winked at, and therefore the said N. must be given "into the hands and power of the devil, to the destruction of the flesh, if that, by that means he may be brought to the consideration of himself, and so repent and avoid that fearful condemnation which shall fall on all disobedient in the day of the Lord Jesus." But lest any should think this to be mere presumption, the Scriptural command and authority to excommunicate, was manifested, from Christ's commanding that such as would not hear the voice of the Church should be held as heathens and publicans ; and from the fearful sentence, which Paul, though absent, pronounced against the incestuous person, with his sharp rebuke to the Corinthians for not expelling him with greater zeal and expedition from among them ; and also from God's precept given under the law, to expel the leprous from the midst of His people. The utility of excommunication was then briefly pointed out, in purging the Church of open evil doers ; in retaining every member of the Church in obedience and fear ; and in keeping the flock of Christ in purity of manners, and without danger of infection. The minister then stated that to avoid the appearance of usurping power over the Church, or doing anything without the knowledge and consent of the whole body, the sentence would be delayed for this present, and willed such as had anything to object, either to propose the same next session-day, or signify it to some member of session. He then earnestly implored God that as he had "first sought, called, accused, and convicted our father Adam after his transgression," and gave him a new life and strength to repent, "when he was so dead in sin and thrall to Satan, that he could neither confess his offence, nor yet ask mercy for the same ;" so He would pitifully look upon this His creature, once baptised in His name, and pierce his heart with the fear of His severe judgments, and mollify and anoint it by the unction of the Holy Spirit, that he might unfeignedly turn unto Him, and give unto Him that honour and obedience required in the Word, and that he might humble himself to the just ordinance of the Church, and avoid that fearful vengeance that would most assuredly fall upon all the disobedient.

Next Sabbath after the sermon and public prayers, the minister, in audience of the whole Church, asked the elders and deacons if he who had last day been admonished under pain of excommunication to satisfy the Church, had by himself or by any other offered his

obedience to them. They answered as the case might be, yea or nay. If he had promised obedience, further process was delayed, and he commanded to appear at the next meeting of session, that order might be taken for his public repentance. If he had not laboured to satisfy the Church, then the minister remarked that though it was grievous to the body to have one member cut off, yet it ought to be more fearful to that member, who, without the body, could do nothing but putrify and perish. But as his rebellion might partly proceed from ignorance of what excommunication is, and what is the danger of the same; these were thus opened. "Lawful excommunication (for the thunderings of that Roman Antichrist are but vanity and wind) is the cutting off from the body of Jesus Christ, from participation of His holy sacraments, and from public prayers with His Church, by public and solemn sentence, all obstinate and impenitent persons, after due admonitions: which sentence, lawfully pronounced on earth, is ratified in heaven, by binding of the same sins that they bind on earth." The great danger in being cut off from Christ's body was then pointed out, and also the terrible vengeance that hung upon them and their posterity, was shown from examples recorded in Scripture. After charging his familiar acquaintances to declare these dangers to him, and to urge him not to tempt the uttermost, public prayer was again made for his conversion.

On the third Sabbath the minister put the same question to the elders and deacons that he had done on the second. If repentance was offered, order was taken, and the Church charged to praise God for the conversion of that brother: but if repentance was not offered, then the minister expounded wherein he had offended, and how oft, and by whom he had been admonished; and demanded of the elders and deacons if it were not so, and asked the whole Church if they thought that such contempt should be suffered among them. If none made intercession for the obstinate, then the minister declared that though most grievous to their hearts to give over the said N. into the hands of the devil, it must now be done—not only for his crime, but much rather for his proud contempt and intolerable rebellion—and desired them to join once more with him in praying to God for his conversion. If after this prayer the obstinate appeared not to offer his repentance, then the minister proceeded to say, that as this obstinate and impenitent person N., could by no means be brought to repentance, it was evident that he had fallen from the kingdom of heaven, and from the blessed society of the Lord Jesus; and therefore he would now pronounce the sentence of excommunication. But that it might not be of his own authority, but in the name and

power of the Lord Jesus, His name was invoked in prayer to excommunicate the impenitent. "Our assurance, O Lord, is thine expressed word ; and therefore, in boldness of the same, here in Thy name, and at the commandment of this Thy present congregation, we cut off, seclude, and excommunicate from Thy body, and from our society, N., as a person slanderous, a proud contemner, and a member, for this present, altogether corrupted and pernicious to the body. And this his sin (albeit with sorrow of heart), by virtue of our ministry, we bind and pronounce the same to be bound in heaven and on earth. We further give over into the hands and power of the devil the said N., to the destruction of his flesh, straitly charging all that profess the Lord Jesus, to whose knowledge this our sentence shall come, to repute and hold the said N. accursed, and unworthy of the familiar society of Christians : declaring unto all men, that such as hereafter before his repentance shall haunt or familiarly accompany with him, are partakers of his impiety, and subject to the like condemnation." The Lord was desired to ratify this sentence pronounced in His name ; and yet, as he came to save that which was lost, if it was His good pleasure, that He would look in mercy upon him and convert him ; and further that he would enable *them* to bridle *their* corrupt affections and keep them all the course of their lives. After the sentence was pronounced and the prayer ended, the minister admonished the Church, that all the faithful do hold the excommunicate as a heathen, that no man use his familiar company ; and yet, that none accuse him of any other crime than this for which he is excommunicated, but that all secretly call to God to grant grace unto him. Ministers upon license of the Church might speak with him so long as hope rested of his conversion ; but if he continued obstinate, then all the faithful were utterly to abhor his presence. And yet they were the more earnestly to pray that in the end, Satan might be confounded, and the creature of God set free from his snares by the power of the Lord Jesus. After the congregation had sung a part or the whole of that most appropriate Psalm—the 101st—they were dismissed with the benediction.

The three foregoing paragraphs are a mere abridgement of "The Form of Excommunication." In the seventh head of the First Book of Discipline, it is ordained that :—"As the order and proceeding to excommunication ought to be slow and grave, so being once pronounced against any person of what estate or condition that ever they be, it must be kept with all severity ; for lawes made and not kept engender contempt of vertue, and bring in confusion and liberty to sinne. . . . After which sentence may no person (his wife and family onely excepted), have any kind of conversation with him, be it in

Social exclusion for the excommunicate. Something not quite absolute 'shunning,' but approaching it compared to present day customs.

eating and drinking, buying and selling, yea in saluting or talking with him; except that it be at commandement or license of the ministerie for his conversion: *That he, by such meanes confounded, seeing himselfe abhorred of the godly and faithfull, may have occasion to repent, and so be saved.* The sentence of excommunication must be published universally throughout the realme, lest that any man should pretend ignorance. His children begotten and born after that sentence and before his repentance, may not be admitted to baptisme till either they be of age to require the same, or else that the mother or some of his speciall friends, members of the kirk, offer and present the child, abhorring and damning [*i. e.*, condemning] the iniquity and obstinate contempt of the impenitent."¹

According to the laws and custom of Scotland, civil penalties accompanied the sentence of excommunication, but they formed no part of ecclesiastical discipline, or even a necessary appendage to it. The laws enacting them were allowed to remain in force at the time of the Reformation, but the government suspended their execution whenever they pleased. Some of the ministers would have been pleased with their abrogation, while others wished for their continuance, because the government was so remiss and partial in punishing certain vices and crimes, and also because they were a protection against the attempts of the papists. Dr. M'Crie says of the penal laws:—"There can be no doubt that they were one means of saving the country from the Popish conspiracies about the time of the Spanish Armada; but still they were radically wrong, capable of being made an engine of the grossest persecution, and consequently were wisely and happily abolished at a subsequent period."²

Sins of the *first* class, were those reckoned capital crimes,³ deserving both excommunication and death. Dr. Ross in his *Pastoral Work in Covenanting Times*, says (p. 162)—"There is, no doubt, a class of crimes of an aggravated nature, regarding which the Reformers held the view that they should be dealt with capitally. In this class

¹ Principal Baillie, writing in 1649, says:—"Let excommunication be so severe in Scotland as is possible, yet the hurt of it is but small: it is so rare an accident, men may live long in Scotland, and al their life never see that censure execute; I have lived in one of the greatest cities of that land and for fourty-seven years even from my birth to this day, that censure to my knowledge or hearing was never execute there in my dayes but twice; first upon one obstinate and very profaine Papist; and nixt on some horrible scandalous prælats."—*Review of Bramble's Faure Warning*, p. 64.

² Life of Melville, vol. i. p. 156.

³ The Reformers generally held the untenable opinion, that Christian nations are bound to enact the same penalties against all breaches of the moral law, which were enjoined by the judicial laws of Moses.—Life of Knox, 283.

were placed such crimes as blasphemy, adultery, murder, and perjury." And, on page 163, he adds:—"One thing should not be forgotten, that *the Reformers excepted from ecclesiastical discipline this aggravated class of crimes*, deeming them to belong to the civil jurisdiction." Here Dr. Ross has fallen into a serious mistake, for in 1565, the General Assembly declared that: "The Kirk may and ought to purge herself of all sic notorious malefactors, provyding the offender be lawfully called and convict, either be their owne confessione or be witnesses."¹ And in the "Order of Excommunication and of Public Repentance,"—penned by John Knox at the desire of the Assembly, and ordained by them to be printed,—we find that "it is to be noted, that all crimes that by the law of God deserve death deserve also excommunication from the society of Christ his Church, whether the offender be Papist or Protestant." And after enumerating the crimes worthy of death, it is added:—"Such, we say, ought to be excommunicated from the society of Christ's Church." Again, blasphemy, perjury, incest, and adultery are in the list of faults, which the king in 1586 agreed should be *censured* in the Presbytery.² And again, if we turn to the act anent the entry and conversation of ministers adopted by the Assembly of 1596, we find it ordained that discipline in kirk-sessions (for there all processes against church members do first begin) "strike not only upon gross sinnes, as whoredome, bloodshed, &c., but upon all sinnes repugnant to the word of God."³ This act was unanimously revived and approved by the famous Assembly of 1638.⁴ In 1600, it was a matter of lamentation that the Secret Council hampered the Church in exercising her discipline against such criminals as "adulterers, murtherers, and uthers sclanderous persons," whereby "the brydle wald be lowsit to all impietie and licentious living."⁵ Proofs of this kind could be multiplied to any extent; but their production would be superfluous, more especially as we have still to refer to the manner in which such crimes were tried, how the sentence of excommunication was carried out, and how public repentance was to be made for them. In regard to the practice of the Church on this point, one well-known example will suffice. When the Good Regent was assassinated, "the General Assembly, at their first meeting, testified their detestation of the crime, by ordering the assassin to be publicly excommunicated in all the chief towns of the kingdom, and by

¹ Booke of the Universall Kirk, p. 40.

² Ibid, 303.

³ Ibid, 427.

⁴ Records of the Kirk of Scotland, pp. 34-36.

Booke of the Universall Kirk, pp. 479, 480.

appointing the same process to be used against all who should afterwards be convicted of accession to the murder."¹ Dr. Ross has probably been misled by the first sentence under the seventh head of the First Book of Discipline; a sentence which clearly disproves his statement, for though it says that "blasphemy, adultery, murder, perjury, and other crimes capital, worthy of death, ought not properly to fall under [the] *censure* of the kirk;" it gives as the reason "*because* all such open transgressors of God's laws ought to be taken away by the civil sword." Of course, if the civil sword did its duty, the *censure* of the kirk was so far inept. "For scandals in matters criminal, if the magistrats sword of justice do strike, in removing the person from the land of the living, there is a prevention of any further dealing; if he neglect his duty, the Church is to follow the ordinary methods for gaining the person's soul, and removing the scandal."² But further, the same sentence, in the First Book of Discipline, explicitly states that ecclesiastical discipline, stands in reproving and correcting of the faults, *which the civil sword either doth neglect, or [may] not punish.*" And in the same "seventh head," under "the Order for Public Offenders," it is said:—"we have spoken nothing of them that commit horrible crimes, as murderers, manslayers, adulterers; for such, as we have said, the civil sword ought to punish to death: but in case they be permitted to live, then must the kirk, as is before said, draw the sword, which of God she hath received, holding them as accursed even in their very fact." See also under the article "of marriage" in the First Book of Discipline, where the magistrate is called upon to punish whoredom and fornication severely, and adultery with death, but "if the civil sword foolishly spare the life of the offender, yet may not the kirk be negligent in their office, which is to excommunicate the wicked, and to repute them as dead members."

Sins that had both a civil and ecclesiastical aspect were only tried by the Church Courts concerning the slander. In the Act of Assembly of 1565 anent notorious malefactors, part of which has been already quoted, it is said:—"For civil things we remitt to the magistrates." And in answer to the question:—"What order ought to be used against sic as oppress children?" the same Assembly said:—"As concerning punishment, the civill magistrate ought therein to decerne. As touching the sclander, the offenders ought to be secluded from participation of the sacraments whill [*i.e.*, until] they have satisfied the kirk, as they shall be commanded."³ Again

¹ M'Crie's Life of Knox, pp. 312, 313.

² Forrester's Hierarchical Bishops' Claim, 1699, part 3, p. 25.

³ Booke of the Universall Kirk, pp. 40, 42.

the General Assembly in 1575 declared that :—"The kirk hes power to cognosce and discerne upon heresies, blasphematione of God's name, witchcraft, and violatiōne of the Lord's day, *not prejudgeand the punishment of the civill magistrate.*"¹ As the civil and ecclesiastical powers are distinct in subject, object, and end, therefore the same sin, in the same man, may be punished one way by the civil, and another way by the ecclesiastical power; for as the magistrate's power is to punish the outward man with an outward punishment, which the presbytery cannot hinder, so, "he may civilly bind whom the presbytery spiritually looseth, and civilly loose whom the presbytery spiritually bindeth, and that because the magistrate seeketh not the repentance and salvation of the delinquent by his punishment, as the presbytery doth, but only the maintenance of the authority of his laws, together with the quietness and preservation of the commonwealth. Whence it cometh that the delinquent escapeth not free of the magistrate, though he be penitent and not obstinate."² Calderwood in his *Pastor and Prelate*, first published in 1628, says (part 6)—The Pastor "joineth the censures and the spiritual sword of the kirk with the sword of the magistrate so impartially, that none are spared; with such expedition and diligence, that sin is censured and not forgotten; with such authority that the most obstinate hath confessed that the kirk had power to bind and loose; with such sharpness and severity, that malefactors have been afraid; and so universally, that, as there is no crime censured by the kirk but the same is punishable by temporal jurisdiction, so he holdeth no sin punishable by civil authority, but the same is also censurable by spiritual power—the one punishing the offender in his body or goods, the other drawing him unto repentance, and striving to remove the scandal."

The Order of Excommunication explains how those charged with capital crimes (for a list of these crimes see above, p. 603) were to be summoned before the superintendent and his assessors,—“except in reformed towns and other places where the ministry is planted with minister and elders,”³—to hear his crime tried “touching the truth of it, and to answer himself why the sentence of excommunication should not be pronounced publicly against him.” If he being lawfully warned, appeared not, inquisition being taken of the crime, the sentence was publicly pronounced next Sabbath. But if he appeared and alleged that he would not be fugitive from the law, but would “abide the *censure* thereof for that offence,” then the sentence of

¹ Booke of the Universall Kirk, pp. 152, 153.

² Assertion of the Government of the Church of Scotland, part I. chap. 12.

³ See Booke of the Universall Kirk pp. 40, 41.

excommunication might be suspended, till the magistrate had been required to try that cause ; wherein if the magistrate was negligent, then the church might proceed to public admonition, that he might be "vigilant in that cause of blood, which crieth vengeance upon the whole land where it is shed without punishment." In striking contrast to the conduct of the Good Regent who was anxious that justice should have its course, King James, by his culpable negligence and favouritism, screened convicted and notorious murderers from punishment against his best interests. As Dr. M'Crie has well said, the joint influence of the doctrine and discipline of the Reformation "presented to James a powerful instrument, not possessed by any of his predecessors, for suppressing the feuds of the nobility, purifying the administration of justice, and civilising and reforming the morals of the people. Had he known how to avail himself of this, his reign in Scotland might have been tranquil and happy." The Order of Excommunication further declares, that if the offender procured civil pardon, or illuded the severity of justice otherwise than by proving his innocence, he was to be excommunicated. But if the assize absolved him, then the Church was not to pronounce that sentence upon him, but might exhort him, and enjoin him to make such public satisfaction to the Church as would bear testimony of his obedience and unfeigned repentance. "If the offender be convicted, and execution follow according to the crime, then upon the humble suit of him that is to suffer, may the elders and ministers of the Church not only give unto him consolation, but also pronounce the sentence of absolution, and his sin to be remitted according to his repentance and faith." And yet further, if the offender be fugitive from the law, the Church ought to delay no time, but upon the notice of his crime, and that he is fled from the judge, "it ought to pronounce him excommunicated publicly, and so continually to repute him, until such time that the magistrate be satisfied : and so whether the offender be convicted in judgment, or be fugitive from the law, the Church ought to proceed to the sentence of excommunication." In public audience of the people, the minister named the culprit and his crime, and said that because the magistrate often winked at such crimes, the ministry was compelled to "excommunicate from the society of Christ Jesus, from His body the Church, from participation of the sacraments, and prayer with the same, the said N. And therefore in the name and authority of the eternal God, and of His Son Jesus Christ, we pronounce the said N. excommunicated and accursed in this his wicked fact, and charge all that favour the Lord Jesus so to repute and hold him (or her) until such time as that

¹ Life of Melville, vol. i. pp. 373, 374.

either the magistrate have punished the offender as God's law commandeth, or that the same offender be reconciled to the Church again by public repentance; and in the meantime we earnestly desire all the faithful to call upon God to move the hearts of the upper powers so to punish such horrible crimes, that malefactors may fear to offend, even for fear of punishment; and also so to touch the heart of the offender, that he may deeply consider how fearful it is to fall into the hands of the eternal God, that by unfeigned repentance he may apprehend mercy in Jesus Christ, and so avoid eternal condemnation."

The much more summary manner in which sinners of this class were dealt with than those of the other classes is very noticeable; as well as the ray of hope which was shed even upon these notorious criminals. Even in the act of pronouncing the sentence of excommunication, the final repentance of the erring one was not lost sight of. This Christ-like spirit is quite in keeping with the whole legislation of the Reformed Church. In "The Order of the Ecclesiastical Discipline," it is said, that as excommunication is "the greatest and last punishment belonging to the spiritual ministry, it is ordained that nothing be attempted in that behalf without the determination of the whole Church; wherein also they must beware and take good heed that they seem not more ready to expel from the congregation than to receive again those in whom they perceive worthy fruits of repentance to appear; neither yet to forbid him the hearing of sermons who is excluded from the sacraments and other duties of the Church, that he may have liberty and occasion to repent; finally, that all punishments, corrections, censures, and admonitions, stretch no further than God's word with mercy may lawfully bear."

According to "The Order to receive the Excommunicated again to the society of the Church," if those who had been excommunicated for other than capital crimes earnestly sought the favour of the Church, a day was appointed for him to present himself before the session, when diligent inquiry was made into his behaviour since he was excommunicated, the satisfaction he would give the Church, and to whom he had exposed "the grief and dolor of his heart." If penitent and obedient in all things, the minister informed the congregation next Sabbath of his humiliation, and commanded them to call to God for increase of the same. Next session-day he was appointed such satisfaction as was most expedient, to which, if he fully agreed, then a day was appointed when he should fulfil the same. "For this is principally to be observed, that no excommunicated person may be received to the society of the Church again,

until such time as he hath stood at the Church-door at the least, more Sundays than one." This was to test his penitence. After the satisfaction was complete, some of the elders, when the prayer was ended, brought him into the Church, and conducted him to a "certain place appointed for the penitents," where he stood "in the same habit in the which he made satisfaction," till the sermon was ended. The elders who brought him into the Church, then presented him to the minister, who first rendered thanks to God for that part of his humiliation, desiring the Church of God to do the same with him, and then addressed the excommunicated person, laying his sin before him; the admonitions that had been given him to satisfy the Church; and the proud contempt and long obstinacy for which he had been excommunicated. He was required to make particular confession of each, accusing himself and detesting his impiety. God was then thanked for his conversion into which he had not so much ashamed himself, as he had confounded and overcome Satan. But as man can only see that which is external, prayer was then made that his humiliation might proceed from the heart, as was done in receiving the penitent according to "The Form and Order of Public Repentance;" in the same manner (see above, pp. 609, 610,) the Church and the penitent were admonished with this exception that his crime was always mentioned. The Lord Jesus Christ was then implored to look mercifully upon this His creature whom Satan had so long held in bondage, that he had not only drawn him into iniquity, but so hardened his heart that he despised all admonitions; for which sin and contempt he had been excommunicated. And as the Spirit of the Lord had so far prevailed on him that he had returned to the society of the Church, that so it would please the Lord to accept of him, that his former disobedience might never be laid to his charge, but that he might increase in all godliness, till Satan was finally trod under his feet by the power of the Lord Jesus Christ. The minister then pronounced the absolution as, viz. :—"In the name and authority of Jesus Christ, I the minister of His blessed Evangel, with consent of the whole ministry and Church, absolve thee, N., from the sentence of excommunication, from the sin by thee committed, and from all censures laid against thee for the same before, *according to thy repentance*, and pronounce thy sin to be loosed in heaven, and thee to be received again to the society of Jesus Christ, to His body the Church, to the participation of His sacraments, and, finally, to the fruition of all his benefits, in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen." The minister then calling him brother, admonished him to watch and pray, and be thankful for the mercy showed him, and to show the fruits of his conversion in his life and conversation. Thereafter the whole minis-

try embraced him, and so did others of the Church who were next him, and then a psalm of thanksgiving was sung.¹

In 1570 the General Assembly ordained that those excommunicated persons who had not been members of the Church before, but were now anxious to submit themselves and be received into the society of the faithful, should be "receavit be the minister in low and humble habite, with sackcloth, observing the order prescryvit in the book of excommunicatioun in all uther poynts."² The General Assembly in 1573 enacted that:—"Greit men offending in sic crymes as deserves sackcloath; they should receive the samen as well as the puire." And further that:—"No Superintendent nor Commissioner, with advyce of any particular kirk of their jurisdictione, may dispense with the extreamitie of sackcloath prescryvit be the acts of generall discipline, for any pecuniall soume *ad pios usus*."³

Those who had been excommunicated for capital crimes were not suddenly admitted to public repentance, albeit that pardon had been purchased of the magistrate. If a murderer,—inquiry was made if he had satisfied the kindred of the slain man, which if he had not done, and was unwilling to do, then the Church would not hear him. And as in no case could the excommunicated be received by the Church at his first request, so if guilty of a capital crime, forty days at the least after his first offer were appointed to try his repentance. During which time the Church might comfort him by wholesome admonitions, assuring him of God's mercy if he was verily penitent; and admitting him to the hearing of the word, but in nowise to participation of prayers either before or after sermon. After these forty days were expired, upon his new suit, the superintendent or session might enjoin such pains as would test his penitence.⁴ In 1568 the General Assembly ordained that "nane that hes committit slaughter, adulterie, or incest, or hereafter shall committ the same, shall be receavit to repentance be any particular kirk, till that first they present themselffs before the Generall Assemblie, thair to receive their injunctions; and thereafter they shall keep the same order that was prescryved to Paull Methven in his repentance; this being addeit, that he or they shall beir in their hand at all the tymes of their publick repentance the same or lyke weapon wherewith the murther was committit."⁵ The said Paul Methven was

¹ In Cyprian's time, it seems that no one, who had been excommunicated, was received into church-communion again, without imposition of hands.—*SMECTYMNVVS*, p. 40.

² *Booke of the Universall Kirk*, p. 127.

³ *Ibid*, p. 139.

⁴ *Order of Excommunication and Public Repentance*.

⁵ *Booke of the Universall Kirk*, p. 100.

enjoined to appear at the kirk-door of Edinburgh, when the second bell rang for public worship, "clad in sackcloth, bareheaded and barefooted, and there remaine whill he be brought into the sermone, and planted in the publick spectacle above the people, in tyme of every sermone," on three several preaching days, the last being a Sabbath, he was at the close of the sermon to profess his sorrow before the congregation, and to request their forgiveness; upon which he was again to be "clad in his own apparell, and received in the societie of the kirk, as ane lyvely member thereof."¹ When they presented themselves before the General Assembly the second time to receive further instructions, they had to do so in linen clothes, bareheaded and barefooted. In 1570 [71] it was ordained that, as diverse of the said offenders are far distant from the places of General Assemblies and others for poverty or deadly feuds could not or dared not travel so far through the country, they should therefore appear before the half-yearly Synods. And in 1588 when Presbyteries had been established through the country, they were to make satisfaction before them.² In March 1569 [70] it was concluded that homicides, incestuous persons, and adulterers, not fugitive from the law, but "continually suteing to be receavit be the Kirk to publick repentance," should be received, "to give the signes of their repentance in their awne kirks, according to the order appoyntit before, at qwhilk tyme the minister shall publickly notifie their crymes, that thereby the civill magistrates may know the crymes, and pretend no ignorance thereof." The same Assembly ordained that those who had not suffered the sentence of excommunication for their offences should make their public repentance in sackcloth, bareheaded and barefooted, three several preaching days, while those who had been excommunicated were to present themselves six preaching days. Those who had not been excommunicated, "shall be placit in the publick place where they may be knowne from the rest of the people, bareheaded the tyme of the sermones, the minister remembering them in his prayer in the tyme after preaching;" while those who had been excommunicated were to stand at the kirk-door, "secluded from prayers before and after sermone, and then enter in the kirk, and sit in the publick place bareheaded, all the tyme of the sermons, and depart before the latter prayer."³ As it was then customary in the Church of Scotland for the people to keep their hats on during the sermon, the uncovering of the penitents distinguished them in another way

¹ Booke of the Universall Kirk, p. 45.

² Ibid, pp. 120, 125, 326.

³ Ibid, p. 118.

from the congregation.¹ According to the order of Excommunication, the murderer, while standing at the church door, with the bloody weapon in his hand was to confess his crime and its enormity; express his desire to be reconciled again to the Church; and crave the people entering to pray with him to God that his greivous sin might be pardoned, and that they would with him supplicate the Church, that he might not abide thus excommunicated to the end. After his satisfaction was completed, he was received back into the Church in the manner already described.

INFLUENCES OF THE LIFE OF GRACE.

BY SAMUEL RUTHERFORD.

CHAPTER XIII.

ELIHU most gravely speaketh (Job xxxiii. 13). "Why dost thou strive with Him, for He gives not an account of any of His matters?" And it is strange that any dare chide or scold with the Sovereign Lord.

But 1. Jacob's striving and wrestling in a holy wilful peremptoriness in praying, the Lord being on Jacob, the wrestler's side, really to bear him up by His grace, is a lawful striving.

2. There is a difference betwixt a mere temptation and a threatening. The woman of Canaan strives not against Christ's not answering her one word (Matt. xv.) What! He is Master of His own answers! When Christ says: "I came not but for the lost sheep of the house of Israel," she strives not. He is Master of His own journey from heaven to earth—yet that answer weakens her not in the duty of praying and worshipping. But when she is reproached as to her interest in Christ: "It is not meet to take the children's bread and cast it to dogs," she mildly, yet in the boldness of faith, contradicts Christ.

3. It is a gracious behaviour in the Man Christ that He is affected with grief for the Lord's forsaking, and expresseth it with tears and strong cries (Heb. v. 7). Should not the child weep when the Father is angry? The privation of the greatest good, such as the overclouding of the Lord's favour, is a due cause of sadness. "Woman, why weepest thou?" saith the angel to Magdalene. "Why weep I? They have taken away my Lord." "It wants not reason I weep, for my father is dead: there is my mother's grave: she is very new buried,—therefore I weep: all my goods are taken away,

¹ "A man coming into one of our churches in time of public worship, if he see the hearers covered, he knows by this customable sign that sermon is begun." English Popish ceremonies. Part 3, chap. 5, sect. 6.

THE DISCIPLINE OF THE REFORMATION.¹

BY D. HAY FLEMING, ST. ANDREWS.

IV.

DR. Cumming of London, in the preface to his edition of the Book of Common Order, says:—"A liturgy was generally preferred by the Scotch clergy and laity at the Reformation." "The Scotch Church never objected to a written liturgy in her public worship, provided there was room left in the service for extemporaneous prayer." And that the First and Second Books of Discipline "enjoin its use." But the Second Book of Discipline, so far from enjoining it, does not even refer to it. And though the First Book of Discipline expressly approves it, still it does not prescribe it. In support of his statement he gives these three references to the First Book of Discipline;—"Chap. ii. sec. 2, chap. iv. sec. 14, chap. xi. sec. 3." Now the first of these merely proves that the "Order of Geneva" was used in some of our churches so early as 1560, and that it is sufficient to instruct the diligent reader how both the sacraments may be rightly ministered. The second only explains that where no ministers can be had presently, the most apt men that can distinctly read "the common Prayers and the Scriptures," must be appointed to exercise both themselves and the Church. And his third and last reference only proves that the catechism was bound up in "the Book of our Common Order." No doubt the General Assembly in 1562 concluded;—"That ane uniforme order sall be taken or keepest in ministration of the Sacraments, and solemnization of mariages and Buriall of the Dead, according to the Kirk [? Book] of Geneva."² But this does not prove that the book was used as a liturgy. Indeed, as regards the burial of the dead, the liberty given to the minister,—if he be present and required to go to the Church, if it be not far off, to make some comfortable exhortation to the people touching death and the resurrection, after the corpse is laid in the grave,—does not seem to have been embraced in Geneva any more than in Scotland. And though the General Assembly in 1564 ordained "that every Minister, Exhorter, and Reader, shall have one of the Psalme Books lately

¹ This note should have appeared at p. 770:—"We do not teach that men are to be excommunicated, for whatever scandalous sins deserve death at the hand of the magistrate, *whether they openly repent or not*; if any give evident signification of their repentance for murder, they are not to be excommunicated, for the end of excommunication, being once obtained, which is the visible and known repentance, and saving of the offender's soul, the mean is not to be used, which is excommunication."—*Rutherford's Divine Right of Church Government and Excommunication*. 1646, p. 494.

² Booke of the Universall Kirk, p. 13.

printed in Edinburgh, and use the order contained therein, in prayers, marriage, and ministration of the sacraments ;” this certainly does *not* prove that “every *minister* shall use the order contained therein, in *prayers*, marriage, and ministration of the sacraments,” as Dr. Cumming forces it to prove, by this garbled version which he gives on his title page. For as Calderwood, after recording the act, acutely adds :—“This must be understood *respective* ; for none but Ministers, by the Book of Discipline, might minister the Sacraments.”¹ Calderwood says that :—“None are tyed to the prayers of that book ; but the prayers are set down as samplers.”² Baillie says :—“The warner is heer also mistaken in his belcefe, that ever the Church of Scotland had any liturgy, they had and have still some forms for helpe and direction, but no ty [*i.e.*, tie] ever in any of them by law or practise.”³ The book itself proves that it was never intended for a liturgy. Dr. Cumming himself observes, “that it presents at once liberty and assistance. ‘Or in such like words,’ is appended to many of its forms.” At the end of the account of the public service of the Sabbath this intimation is subjoined :—“It shall not be necessary for the minister daily to repeat all these things before-mentioned, but, beginning with some manner of confession, to proceed to the sermon ; which being ended he either useth the prayer for all estates before-mentioned, or else prayeth as the Spirit of God shall move his heart, framing the same according to the time and matter which he hath intreated of.”⁴ Again, at the end of the Order of Excommunication and of Public Repentance, it is stated that “This order may be enlarged or contracted as the wisdom of the discreet minister shall think expedient ; for we rather show the way to the ignorant than prescribe order to the learned.”⁵ The Order of Geneva was composed by Knox, Whittingham, Fox, Gilby, and T. Cole, and obtained its name from the circumstance of its having been first used by the English Church at Geneva. It must not be confounded with the Order of the Genevan Church, which was used by the Church at Geneva of which Calvin was minister. The Order of Geneva was called in Scotland the Book of Common Order, and is sometimes called Knox’s Liturgy. The Form and Order of Election and Admission of Superintendents, the Order of Excommunication and of Public Repentance (wholly composed by Knox), the Treatise of Fasting (chiefly composed by Knox), and some prayers, which were

¹ Calderwood’s History, ed. 1678, p. 39.

² Ibid, p. 25.

³ Review of Bramble’s Faire Warning against the Scot’s Disciplin, 1649, p. 75.

⁴ Book of Common Order, Cumming’s ed., 1840, pp. 16, 17.

⁵ Ibid, p. 175.

penned by occasion of troublesome times, were afterwards inserted. Our frequent quotations from the Order of Excommunication and of Public Repentance render these remarks necessary.

Dr. Ross says :—"It is greatly to be regretted that any means but those of a moral kind were ever used by the Church in dealing with delinquents. No doubt all the modes of punishment referred to in the minutes of these early days—appearance before the pulpit, the jugs, the branks, the stocks, the sack-gown, &c. &c.,—came down from Popish times ; and they were as zealously resorted to in the Episcopalian as in the Presbyterian periods of Scottish Church history."¹ Candour compels us to characterise this as a tissue of inaccuracies. We have already proved that the discipline of the Reformation did not include civil punishments. The Second Book of Discipline, (chap. i.) states that, "The civil Magistrate craves and gets obedience by the sword, and other external means ; *but the ministry, by the spiritual sword, and spiritual means.*" And in the 10th chap. it says, that the office of a Christian Magistrate in the Kirk, is, "To assist and maintain the discipline of the Kirk, and punish them civilly that will not obey the censure of the same, without confounding always the one jurisdiction with the other." Of course, we do not know, whether or not Dr. Ross includes banishment under his ambiguous, " &c. &c.," but he is by no means the first who has charged the Reformers with encroaching on the civil power, for, Rabbi Coleman, an Erastian champion, made a similar charge in 1645. "I myself (said he), did hear the presbytery of Edinburgh censure a woman to be banished out of the gates of the city." Gillespie warmly repelled this, as "at the best a most uncharitable slander ;" adding that :—"There is no banishment in Scotland but by the civil magistrate, who so far aideth and assisteth Church discipline, that profane and scandalous persons, when they are found unruly and incorrigible, are punished with banishment or otherwise." And,—perhaps to save Coleman's reputation for truthfulness—suggested that he might have heard in the presbytery "somewhat which was represented to, or reported from the magistrate."² As for the jugs, Baillie, in his answer to Bishop Maxwell, says :—"What you bring of pecuniary mulcts, imprisonments, banishments, jogges, cutting of haire, and such like, it becomes neither you to charge, nor us to be charged with

¹ Pastoral Work in the Covenanting Times, p. 190.

² Nihil Respondes. And Male Audis. chap. 6. A few years ago the Established Church presbytery of Lewis, experienced great difficulty in dealing with a case of discipline, because witnesses though legally summoned did not appear. But on application, the court of Session unanimously compelled the witnesses to compear and give their evidence. This shows how the Magistrate may aid the Church in executing her discipline without encroaching on her domain.

any such matters : No Church assembly in Scotland assumes the least degree of power to inflict the smallest civill punishment upon any person ; the Generall Assembly itselfe hath no power to fine any creature so much as in one groat : It is true, the lawes of the land appoint pecuniary mulcts, imprisonment, joggs, pillories, and banishment for some odious crimes, and the power of putting these lawes in execution, is placed by the parliament in the hands of the inferior magistrates in burroughs or shires, or of others to whom the counsel table gives a speciall commission for that end ; ordinarily some of these civill persons are ruling elders, and sit with the eldership : so when the eldership have cognosced upon the scandall alone of criminall persons, and have used their spirituall censures only to bring the party to repentance, some of the ruling elders, by virtue of their civill office or commission, will impose a mulct, or send to prison or stocks, or banish out of the bounds of some little circuit, according as the act of parliament or counsell do appoint it. But that the eldership should employ its ecclesiastick and spirituall power for any such end, none of us doe defend. That either in Scotland or any where else in the world the haire of any person is commanded to be cut by any church judicatory for disgrace and punishment, is (as I take it) but a foolish fable. That any person truly penitent is threatened in Scotland with church censures for non-payment of monies, is in the former category of calumnies."¹ When Baillie wrote this he had the historical collections of Calderwood in his possession. If Dr. Ross had said that appearance before the pulpit and the sack-gown came down from the times of the primitive Church, he would have been nearer the truth than in saying they came down from Popish times.² But where did his own pulpit-gown come from ? As for his apologetic comparison between Presbyterian and Prelatic discipline, we emphatically deny that they were the same either in strictness, impartiality, or mode of execution. Gillespie, in speaking of the Presbyterian dis-

¹ Historical Vindication of the Government of the Church of Scotland, 1646, pp. 17, 18. Cited by M'Crie in his Life of Knox. Note DDD.

² Life of Knox, p. 251, and Aaron's Rod Blossoming. Book 3, Chap. 17.—As public confession of sin is a *substantial*, and not a *circumstantial*, preaching might as well be said to have come down from Popish times, as appearance before the pulpit. Objection might also be made to his terming appearance before the pulpit a punishment, for :—"It is not *pœna* a proper punishment that the Church doth inflict, nor doth the Scripture speak so, nor is the thing itself punishment, . . . we know how the adversarie side here with Papists, who make all Church censures to be pennances inflicted upon penitents against their will ;" whereas they "prove if Jesus Christ have a willing people, Psal. 110, and if rebukes and censures be to the saints as medicine that will not break the head, Psal. 141, 5 ; no medicine is received unwillingly by wise men, and no medicine is a punishment." *Rutherford's Divine Right*, pp. 632, 633.

cipline, says :—" I dare say divers thousands have been kept off from the sacrament in Scotland, as unworthy to be admitted. Where I myself have exercised my ministry, there have been some hundreds kept off; partly for ignorance, and partly for scandal. The order of the Church of Scotland, and the acts of General Assemblies, are for keeping off all scandalous persons; which every godly and faithful minister doth conscientiously and effectually endeavour."¹ How different his testimony is on this point respecting the prelates! "There was both rules and practice in the Church of Scotland for debarring ignorant and scandalous persons from the sacrament before he [*i. e.*, Coleman] was born, though *all was put out of course under the prelates*," who "were above thirty years' standing."² But let us contrast them a little more closely. Pastors were subject both in calling and conversation to the discipline of the kirk. On the other hand, prelates exempted themselves in respect of their episcopal administration, and as they were prelates, from all censure, and scorned to submit themselves to any ecclesiastical judicature; pretending that the sole power of proceeding belonged to them by virtue of their place and office. Again, the Presbyterians not only did not require the magistrate to punish criminals, if he were not convinced that they were guilty, but, though in ecclesiastical matters they allowed no appeal to go higher than the General Assembly, yet in case of wrong being done by the ecclesiastical courts, they allowed complaints to be made to the king and parliament, who might interpose their authority, and cause a due proceeding.³ While prelates had themselves power to confine, imprison, &c. In the High Commission, ecclesiastical and temporal men were joined together, *both armed with the same power*, in judging and punishing. Ecclesiastical men therein had power of fining, confining, warding, &c., and the temporal men had power of excommunication, suspension, deprivation, &c. All sat there as the king's commissioners, and *eo nomine*, exercised this jurisdiction; temporal men taking hold of the keys, and ecclesiastical men taking hold of the civil sword, which was neither right, regular, nor allowable.⁴ And again, the Pastor sat "with his brethren in session, presbytery, and assembly, administering the holy discipline holily, that is, in sincerity and faithfulness, with-

¹ Nihil Respondes.

² Male Andis. chap. 6.—In 1637, Gillespie complained that,—“Idle and idol-like bishopping hath shut too the door of painful and profitable catechising.” English Popish Ceremonies. Part 3, chap. 8, sect. 32.

³ Booke of the Universall Kirk, pp. 15, 247, 301. Baillie's Review of Bramble's Warning, p. 20. English Popish Ceremonies, part 3, chap. 8, Dig. 4. And Aaron's Rod Blossoming, Second Book, chap. 8.

⁴ English Popish Ceremonies, part 3, chap. 8, Dig. 4.

out prejudice or partiality, and never ceasing till the scandal be removed, the kirk be purged, and the offender, if it be possible, be won unto God ; and *all this, as being Christ's own work, he doth with Christ's own weapons, that is, with the spiritual sword of the word*, which is mighty through God to subdue everything exalting itself against God, and to bring sinners to repentance."¹ Whereas, the Prelate passed small offences without any censure, and treated greater sins so partially that the greatest sinners escaped uncensured, or so superficially, that boldness in sin was encouraged rather than repentance. He swayed the course of discipline as best pleased him. "Processes begun for trying of slanders, if the party, never so wicked, have argument of weight for my lord, or his receiver, are incontinently, by the word of his monarchical authority, stricken dead. Hereby it cometh to pass, that where prelates rule, sin reigneth, and the nearer the bishop's wings, the greater liberty for sin, as is seen in their own houses and trains. And for this reason is it that both atheists and papists like the episcopal discipline better than the pastoral, which they call strait-laced, because it troubleth their corruption, whereas the other layeth the reins upon their necks. *And if the prelate happen to proceed against offenders, his discipline consists not so much in spiritual censure, as in worldly power and civil punishment*, as fining, confining, imprisoning, &c., which have no power to work upon the consciences of sinners, to bring them to repentance, though this be what is sought by the preachers of the gospel, and the chief end of kirk discipline."² "The Prelates never durst, indeed, take upon them to suspend all scandalous persons from the sacrament ; for if they had, it had been said unto most of them, 'Physician, cure thyself,' besides the losing of many of their party." Moreover the proceedings of the lordly prelate "in ecclesiastical censures, came neither from Christ, nor from the purest antiquity, but from the Pope's canon law. *What then hath presbytery to do with prelacy?*"³ Under Popery and Prelacy "all church discipline . . . degenerated into tyranny."⁴ "The prelates did presume to make law binding the conscience, even in things indifferent, and did persecute, imprison, fine, depose, excommunicate men for certain rites and ceremonies acknowledged by themselves to be indifferent (setting aside the will and authority of the law makers). This the presbyterial government abhorreth. . . . They did excommunicate for money matters, for trifles, which the presbyterial government condemneth. . . . The

¹ Pastor and Prelate, part 5.

² Ibid, parts 5, 6.

³ Aaron's Rod Blossoming, book 3. chap. 1.

⁴ Ibid, book 2, chap. 8.

prelates and their high commission court did assume *potestatem utriusque gladii*, the power both of the temporal and civil sword. *The presbyterial government meddleth with no civil nor temporal punishments.*"¹ Again, if we turn to the last period of prelatical domination over the Church of Scotland, we find that in that "Diocesan Erastian Prelacy, underprop't by blood and Perjury, headed by a civil papacy, embracing in its bosome all foul errours,"² the sword and keys were "made one, promiscuously used, and put into the same hands."³ As for the time of the Restoration, the same eminent authority says :—"What an Inundation and Deluge of Debauchery, and Profanity of all sorts, came into this nation *pari passu* with Prelacy, and attended their wicked ejecting of a Godly, faithful, conscientious ministry, to the number of three or four hundred, and filling their places with such a gang and set of men, as were for the generality, the shame and scandal of the Gospel, and guilty of most notorious profanity, . . . all Scotland have such a sense, and hath so long smarted under the effects thereof, as neither this, nor probably any succeeding age will blot out the remembrance and impression of the same." The same author (Principal Forrester) refers to the efforts of the Prelatists after the Revolution, in getting "many profane, debauched wretches . . . to withdraw from the inspection of the Lord's servants, and from the deserved censures of their scandalous immoralities."⁴

It is not for a moment asserted that any church discipline can purify men, and work in them the power of godliness, for that is the work of God by His word and Spirit. But it cannot be denied that the faithful exercise of discipline has always acted as a powerful curb on irreligion and vice, and without it there can be no practical Reformation in keeping the ordinances of Christ from pollution, in shaming away profaneness and scandals, in commending and magnifying piety, or in extirpating heresy and unsound, dangerous doctrines.⁵ How prophetic have the words of our great Reformer proved :—"If the hedge of discipline be taken away, the doctrine, and even the evangel will not long stand." The old church-refining and sin-censur-

¹ Aaron's Rod Blossoming, book 2, chap. 3.

² Rectius Instruendum, 1684. Preface.

³ Ibid, part 1, page 49.

⁴ Review and Consideration of two late Pamphlets, 1706, pp. 37, 40.

⁵ Alexander Henderson, in describing the Church of Scotland at the Second Reformation, said :—"No scandall of proud sinners escapeth censure, no heresie or error is sooner hatched, but is either presently spied out and crushed by some of the inferior assemblies, or, if it be kept on foot and gather strength, it is quite suppressed and extinguished in the generall assemblie which meeteth once in the year, and never suffereth such bastard births to grow to be one yeare old."—*Government and Order of the Church of Scotland*. 1641, p. 61.—How different now!

ing discipline, has fallen into abeyance, and the name, as well as the reality has almost been forgotten. And what are the results? The Church of Scotland, once beautiful as Tirzah, and comely as Jerusalem, has been shattered into fragments. And though the gospel is faithfully preached in many of the pulpits of all the sections of the Presbyterian Church, the beauty of the larger bodies is greatly marred by the prevailing laxity in doctrine, discipline, and worship, while the government of some is undermined. Let us take the Free Church for example, and we do so the more readily, as she so vauntingly claims identity with Knox, Melville, and Henderson. Her dawning glory soon "became shaded and clouded after she began to occupy the position of a settled institution in the land,"¹ and the late union-movement accelerated her downward course. She has long practised free-communion, and dispensed private baptism; she has sanctioned human hymns in God's worship, and instrumental music seems likely to follow; the festival days of popery are beginning to be observed in some of her churches, and the mark of the beast has been freely adopted as an architectural ornament on her buildings; while something suspiciously like private-communion has been lately mooted by one of her ministers. Not only are the bastard articles of Perth making way within her borders, but rationalism is openly sapping in her the very foundations of the Christian faith. For long her misfortune has been to be ruled by a little coterie of self-elected tyrannical men, whose monopoly, if unchecked, threatens her ruin.² She has made the humbling confession that her supreme court is incapable of judging fairly and calmly in cases of discipline; and is considering the advisability of appointing a committee to hear the cases appealed to the Assembly. The present proposal is acknowledged to be part of a scheme, for changing the whole judicial functions of the Church. No doubt the powers of the proposed committee are restricted, and well guarded, but the past history of the Church shows how all such caveats can be violated. We need not point out how this scheme is a slur upon the presbyterial form of church-government, (discipline being government in operation), nor how it may be worked by "the leaders;" for, its tendency to bite is clearly shown by the anxiety displayed to have it properly muzzled.

At the time of the Reformation, how appropriate were the words of the Psalmist—"Thou hast brought a vine out of Egypt: thou hast cast out the heathen, and planted it. Thou preparedest room before it, and didst cause it to take deep root, and it filled the land."

¹ See "The Decline of the Free Church."

² See three very able articles on "Oligarchical Rule in the Free Church," in the Watchword, Nos. 68, 72, 75.

That heavenly discipline whereby brotherly amity, and sacred harmony were so continued and increased, that all as one man did stand together for the doctrine, sacraments, and kirk-government, against the adversaries either lurking or professed, was a wall for defence, and a bond for peace and progress of the gospel. "It was the hedge of the Lord's vineyard, and the hammer whereby the horns, both of adversaries and disobeyers, were beaten and broken."¹ Now it becomes us to say with the Psalmist:—"Why hast thou then broken down her hedges, so that all they which pass by the way do pluck her? The boar out of the wood doth waste it, and the wild beast of the field doth devour it. Return, we beseech Thee, O God of hosts: look down from heaven, and behold, and visit this vine."

It is frequently remarked that people now-a-days would not submit to the discipline of the Reformation. But, why not? will Christians of the present day not submit themselves to the strict rule of Christ's house? No doubt the profane and the vicious would stoutly object, but the carnal heart has always been enmity against God. "Calvin was subjected to a sentence of banishment from the senate of Geneva, and exposed to a popular tumult before he could prevail on the citizens to submit to ecclesiastical discipline."² And when Knox first proposed it in Scotland, it was derided as a "devout imagination." And he was not the only preacher who was dreaded and hated by the licentious and profane for reproving their vices; for, some of the ministers even suffered violence on that account. Carnal reason suggests that:—"Reformation must not grieve, but please; it must not break nor bruise, but heal and bind up; it must be an acceptable thing, not displeasing; it must be 'as the voice of harpers harping with their harps,' but not 'as the voice of many waters,' or 'as the voice of great thunders.' Thus would many heal the wound of the daughter of Sion slightly, and daub the wall with untempered mortar, and so far comply with the sinful humours and inclinations of men, as, in effect, to harden them in evil, and to strengthen their hands in their wickedness; or at least, if men be moralised, then to trouble them no farther. Saith not the Apostle, 'If I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ?' So that either we must have a reformation displeasing to God, or displeasing to men. It is not the right reformation which is not displeasing to a Tobiah, to a Sanballat, to a Demetrius, to the earthly-minded, to the self-seeking politicians, to the carnal and profane; it is but the old enmity between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent (Gen. iii. 15); nay, what if reformation be displeasing to good men,

¹ Preface to the Books of Discipline.

² Life of Knox, p. 206.

in so far as they are unregenerate, carnal, earthly, proud, unmortified (for 'who can say, I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin,' Prov. xx. 9)?"¹ The divisions of the Church are a great hindrance to the revival of the discipline of the Reformation, still the Churches could do much to restore its exercise. These divisions cannot excuse the want of it, more especially since they were mainly caused by its relaxation. The abounding iniquity and fearful apostasy of the present day call loudly for its revival. "Thus saith the LORD, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, we will not walk therein."

Dr. Ross says, that, "The leaders, both of the First and Second Reformation in Scotland, . . . did not attempt to legislate for all time as to the methods to be employed for securing the great ends they wished to bring about. It is distinctly laid down in the Second Book of Discipline that the assemblies of the Church have power 'to abrogate and abolish all statutes and ordinances concerning ecclesiasticall matters that are found noysome and unprofitable, and *agrie not with the time*, [the italics are his] or are abusit be the people.' There are sticklers for old forms and methods in the present day, who would be considered sad laggards by the very men whom they profess so greatly to revere."² It might be asked, whether this taunt was thrown out to screen the defections of the Free Church, or to reproach the small Presbyterian bodies, who—keeping their garments clean,—have faithfully testified for the whole covenanted work of Reformation? It is to be feared that the sentence quoted from the seventh chapter of the Second Book of Discipline, is often quite misunderstood. It must be taken with the parallel passages in the Confession of 1560, and in the Westminster Confession. In the 20th article of the old Scotch Confession it is stated:—"Not that we think, that any policie, and an order in *ceremonies*,³ can be appointed

¹ Gillespie's sermon to the House of Lords, 27th August, 1645.—The Erastians held that Church censures should be "put forth only upon heretics, apostates, or such as are unsound in the faith, but not upon profane livers in the Church." This seems to have originated in the popish opinion, that "the Pope might be deposed for heresy, but not for a scandalous life." On the other hand, Arminians and English Sectaries held, that the censure of excommunication should be "put forth upon loose and scandalous livers within the Church, but not for those things which the reformed churches call heresies." *Treatise of Miscellany Questions*, chap. xii.

² *Pastoral Work in the Covenanting Times*, p. 106.—Notwithstanding the blots we have pointed out in this book, it is an excellent volume, and one that was much wanted. Every true blue Presbyterian who reads it, will find in it a great deal to please, profit, and instruct.

³ Gillespie, in replying to the Bishop of Edinburgh, shows that the word *cer-*

for all ages, times and places : for as ceremonies, such as men have devised, are but temporall : so may and ought they to be changed, when they rather foster superstition, than edifie the Church, using the same." Calderwood says, these " words are not so to be taken, as if the Kirk had power to institute sacred rites ; but only to make institutions of order and decencie, in the ministration of such rites and parts of divine service, as the Lord had already instituted : As may be seen in the [First] Book of Discipline, where in the heads of the policie of the Kirk, they distinguish betwixt things necessarie to be observed in every Kirk, and things variable, to be ordered by every congregation ; and allow every particular Kirk to have a particular policie of her own, without prejudice of the common or general ; as for example ; whether the congregation should assemble this or that day of the week, or how many dayes in the week, or if but once. In this or the like, every particular Kirk may appoint their own policie. The [First] Book of Discipline was accomodat to the time, in some points ; and liberty was reserved to the posterity to establish a more perfect, as you may see in *Mr. Knox* his historie. That which was temporary may be discerned from that which they esteemed not to be alterable, by some reason or respect alledged. And indeed we may safely say, that *the whole was recommended to be perpetually observed, except some few things*, as the office of Superintendents, Exhorters, Readers, and some other things, whereunto they were forced, as they thought, through necessity ; the policie of the Kirk being so defaced before, in the time of Popery, that it could not be perfectly repaired in haste."¹ The Westminster Confession, (chap. i. sect. 6) says :—"There are some circumstances concerning the worship of God, and government of the Church, common to human actions and societies, which are to be ordered by the light of nature and Christian prudence, according to the general rules of the word,"² which are always to be observed." Gillespie says :—"There is nothing which any way pertaineth to the worship of God left to the determination of human laws, beside the mere circumstances, which neither have any holiness in them, for as much as they have no other use and praise in sacred than they have in civil things, nor yet were particularly determinable in Scripture, because they are infinite."³ These extracts show how much (or rather how little) power, the *Re-monies* in this article, "must be understood of *alterable circumstances*, unto which the name of *ceremonies* is but generally and improperly applied." English Popish Ceremonies, part 4, chap. 8, sect. 6.

¹ Calderwood's History, p. 25.

² The general rules of the word are in 1 Cor. x. 31 ; xiv. 26 ; Rom. xiv. 5 14, 21.

³ Preface to English Popish Ceremonies, admonition 8.

formers believed the Church to have in making "statutes and ordinances concerning ecclesiastical matters." As for the abrogating and abolishing things that "are abusit be the people," the abuse cannot take away the use where the thing itself is necessary, it is enough that they be purged from the abuse, for, has the Lord's supper, the ordination of ministers, and other ordinances of the gospel, not been perniciously abused? "Yet who will say that things necessary (whether the necessity be that of command, or that of the means or end), are to be taken away because of the abuse?"¹ Gillespie's argument is this:—"All things and rites which have been notoriously abused to idolatry, if they be not such as either God or nature hath made to be of a necessary use, should be utterly abolished and purged away from divine worship, in such sort that they may not be accounted nor used by us as sacred things or rites pertaining to the same."²

Not only is the correction and punishment of offenders included among the things which are "utterly necessary," in the First Book of Discipline (ninth head); but in the 18th Article of the Confession of 1560, "ecclesiastical discipline uprightly ministered as God's Word prescribeth, whereby vice is repressed and vertue nourished," is given as one of the three notes whereby the true Kirk is discerned from the false. It cannot be said of discipline at least, that it is abused by the people, for they do not know what it is. And contrariwise, the very things, which are abused by the people to superstition and idolatry, are now thought to *agree with the times*.

In the dying words of the noble Marquis of Argyle—the proto-martyr of the Covenant—"God hath laid engagements upon Scotland; we are tyed by covenants to religion and reformation; these that were then unborn are yet engaged; and in our baptism we are engaged to it. And it passeth the power of all the magistrats under heaven to absolve them from the wise oath of God."³ The National Covenant binds us to *continue* in the discipline, as well as in the doctrine of the true reformed Church of Scotland. For this is the form of the oath, "Promising and swearing, by the great name of the LORD our GOD, that we shall continue in the obedience of the doctrine and *discipline* of this Kirk, and shall defend the same, according to our vocation and power, all the days of our lives; under the pains contained in the law, and danger both of body and soul in the day of God's fearful judgment." "And without all doubt, they who sware the oath meant by *discipline* that whole policy of the Church

¹ One hundred and eleven Propositions, prop. 28.

² English Popish Ceremonies, part 3, chap. 2, sect. 1.

³ Naphtali, ed. 1693, p. 288.

which is contained in those books [*i.e.* the two Books of Discipline]. Gillespie also says:—"No reformed Church in Europe is so strictly tied by the bond of an oath and subscription, *to hold fast her first discipline* and use of the sacraments, and to hold out popish rites, as is the Church of Scotland. And who knoweth not that an oath doth always oblige and bind, 'when it is taken concerning things sure and possible, truly and without deceit, with deliberation and with judgment, justly, for the glory of God and the good of our neighbour?'¹ What one of all those conditions was here wanting? Can we then say any less than a pope said before us:—"It is not safe that any person whatever should act contrary to his oath, unless it be such as, when kept, would lead to the loss of eternal salvation?"² O damnable impiety, which maketh so small account of the violation of the aforesaid oath, which hath as great power to bind us as that oath of the princes of Israel made to the Gibeonites, had to bind their posterity (2 Sam. xxi. 1, 2); for it was made by the whole incorporation of this land, and hath no term at which it may cease to bind. Nay (in some respects) it bindeth more straitly than that oath of the princes of Israel. For, 1. That was made by the princes only; this by prince, pastors, and people: 2. That was made rashly (for the text sheweth that they asked not counsel from the mouth of the Lord); this with most religious and due deliberation: 3. That was made to men; this to the great God: 4. That sworn but once; this once and again."³

Again, the Solemn League and Covenant binds us to endeavour, "the *preservation* of the reformed religion in the Church of Scotland, in doctrine, worship, *discipline*, and government, . . . the reformation of religion in the kingdoms of England and Ireland, in doctrine, worship, *discipline*, and government, according to the word of God, and the example of the best reformed Churches;" and to "endeavour to bring the Churches of God in the three kingdoms to the nearest conjunction and uniformity in religion, confession of faith, form of church-government [this means *corrective* government], directory for worship and catechising."⁴ "Now, setting aside the circumstantial,

¹ "*Quando est factum de rebus certis et possibilibus, vere ac sine dolo præmeditate ac cum judicio, iuste, ad gloriam Dei, et bonum proximi.*"

² "*Non est tutum quolibet contra juramentum suum venire, nisi tale sit, quod servatum vergat in interitum salutis æternæ.*"

³ English Popish Ceremonies, part 4, chap. 8, sect. 2, 8.

⁴ "In Mr. Crofton's sense, and in the sense of the Presbyterian covenanters in England, the government engaged unto in that article, is that platform of Presbyterian government contained in these two books of discipline, which adversaries themselves do grant to comprehend an intire frame of Presbyterian government." *Rectius Instruendum*, part 2, p. 63.

there is not any substantial part of the uniformity according to the covenant which is not either expressly grounded upon the word of God, or by necessary consequence drawn from it, and so no commandment of men, but of God."¹ When the English Parliament ratified the Westminster Confession, they did not reject, but recommitted "particulars in discipline," but as the Parliament was dissolved by Cromwell, the report of the committee was never returned. These particulars are said to have been the thirtieth and thirty-first chapters, and the fourth section of the twentieth chapter.² But at any rate when the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland approved of the Directory for Public Worship; the Form of Presbyterian Church Government; and the Confession of Faith, it was provided that the former should "be no prejudice to the order and practice of this Kirk, in such particulars as are appointed by the Books of Discipline, and Acts of General Assemblies, and are not otherwise ordered and appointed in the Directory ;"³ the second was approved (10 Feb. 1645) not only because they desired, "an Uniformity in Kirk-government betwixt these Kingdomes," but from a solicitation to preserve "the Form of Kirk-government in this Kingdome, according to the Word of God, Books of Discipline, Acts of General Assemblies, and Nationall Covenant ;"⁴ and the latter was "found by the

¹ Treatise of Miscellany Questions, chap. 15.

² Hetherington's History of the Westminster Assembly, ed. 1843, p. 304.

³ Records of the Kirk of Scotland, p. 419.

⁴ Records of the Kirk of Scotland, p. 422. The General Assembly and the Parliament of Scotland approved the Propositions concerning Kirk-government and Ordination of Ministers (now called, the Form of Presbyterian Church Government), "as a ground-work of the intended Uniformity in Kirk-government according to the Covenant ;" and earnestly desired and expected that the remanent parts of Uniformity would be expedited, especially that the materials of Kirk-government which had been so long in the hands of the Assembly of Divines, might be "formed into a *practical Directory* with all possible diligence."—*Minutes of Westminster Assembly*, foot-note, pp. 80, 81.—At length, "A Directory for Church Government, *Church censures*, and ordination of Ministers" was agreed upon by the Westminster Assembly, and which the General Assembly, in 1647, ordered to be printed, that it might be "examined by Presbyteries against the next Assembly." In 1648, it was continued to the next Assembly ; and in 1649 it seems to have been again referred to the next General Assembly ; but alas ! in 1650 the Church was divided. See *Records of the Kirk of Scotland*. pp. 482, 519, 555.—A collection of confessions published in Edinburgh, in 1725, contains this Directory, reprinted from that issued by the General Assembly in 1647. In most respects it is substantially the same as the Form of Presbyterian Church Government though the arrangement is slightly different, and some parts are enlarged. It also includes a Directory for Church Censures, which fills six closely printed pages in 12mo, and is not in the Form of Presbyterian Church Government at all. Many of its phrases and sentences bear a striking resemblance to those of the Order of Excommunication and of Public Repentance, in our Book of Common Order ; indeed, it may almost be described as a concise epitome of it.

Assembly to be most agreeable to the Word of God, and in nothing contrary to the received Doctrine, Worship, *Discipline*, and Government of this Kirk."¹

The first step of defection in Scotland from the Covenanted Work of Reformation, and that which led the way to its overthrow, was the public resolutions of church and state, which brought in the malignant party, first to the army and then to the judicatories, "on making a superficial and counterfeit profession of repentance." In 1661, the State buried the Covenanted Work of Reformation under the infamous Act Rescissory. And now the Voluntary theory, "may be viewed as an *Act Rescissory*, in the *ecclesiastical* sense, annulling, setting aside, and burying all the public laws which have been made in support of religion in this land since the period of the Reformation."² "We are to this day an unhumbled and an unprepared people; and there are among us both many cursed Achans, and many sleeping Jonahs, but few wrestling Jacobs; even the wise virgins are slumbering with the foolish (Matt. xxv. 5.); surely, unless we be timely awakened, and more deeply humbled, God will punish us yet 'seven times' (Lev. xxvi. 18, 21, 24, 28) more for our sins; and if He hath chastised us with 'whips,' He will chastise us with 'scorpions;' and He will yet give a further charge to the sword to 'avenge the quarrel of His covenant' (Lev. xxvi. 25)."³ Scotland is at last cursed with the re-erection of a popish hierarchy, while many of the watchmen of Sion are singing the siren song of toleration. "O Scotland! understand and turn again, or else, as God lives, most terrible judgments are abiding thee!"

PERSONAL RELIGION AND ITS EVIDENCES.⁴

PERSONAL religion must mean the religion of the person, or the individual who professes it. But that religion is the truth as it is in Jesus applied by the Spirit. He operates on the faculties of the soul, and produces evangelical knowledge, lively experience, and growing exemplification. Not only is there light in the understanding, but this is from the Sun of Righteousness. For God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness shines inwardly "to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus

¹ Records of the Kirk of Scotland, 475.

² M'Crie's Statement of the Difference, ed. 1871, p. 78.

³ Preface to Gillespie's Sermon to the House of Commons, 27th March, 1644.

A paper read by the Rev. John Powell, Lisburn, before the Synod of the Secession Church, Ireland, at its meeting in Lisburn, July 2, 1878, and published by request.